Des Moines Area Community College Case Study

Challenge

Prevent unlawful activity and boost student and staff safety.

Solution

Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) started the deployment by running the Avigilon Control Center network video management software (NVMS) with High-Definition Stream Management (HDSM) technology. DMACC also installed 45 Avigilon HD cameras ranging from 1 to 16MP to monitor high traffic areas and parking lots at the Ankeny, Urban, and West campuses, and plans to add up to 400 Avigilon HD cameras over the next couple of years. The college also relies on 25 Avigilon analog video encoders to improve the performance of its existing analog-based cameras. DMACC stores up to 30 days of continuous surveillance video and monitors the system around-the-clock. Security management can remotely monitor the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system from their desktops, laptops, or iPads.
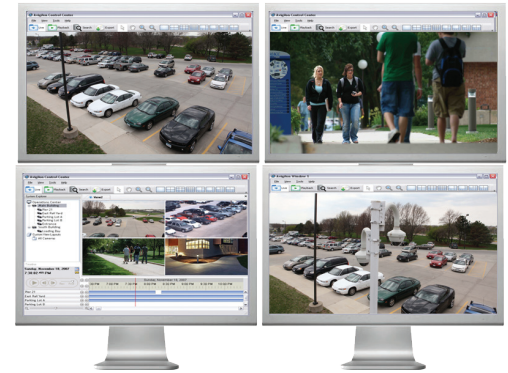
Benefits

Leveraging the advanced management features of Avigilon Control Center software, DMACC can find event details 10 times faster than before. Using Avigilon's graphic-mapping interface, the College can view footage in real time, enhancing the team's ability to respond quickly and appropriately with up-to-date information. By recommending a system configuration that better met DMACC's needs, Avigilon met image quality requirements and reduced system costs by 15 percent. With no recurring licensing fees, Avigilon saves the College $12,000 annually. The College uses the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system to resolve liability claims and improve campus traffic flow, especially during the first two weeks of school when student parking becomes a real challenge. DMACC also uses the system to confirm that the campus is being properly maintained, particularly during the winter to ensure proper snow removal and salting.

- *Increased student and staff safety*
- *Reduced system costs by 15%*
- *Ensured campus maintenance*

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Des Moines Area Community College Creates Safe Campus Environment with Avigilon High-Definition Surveillance System

Attracting students from across the country, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) is the largest and fastest growing community college in Iowa and is committed to providing each student the freedom to learn and enjoy the college experience in an orderly, safe, and lawful manner. With a growing national focus on campus violence, DMACC, along with all colleges and universities across the United States, has made campus security and student safety a top priority. To prevent incidents of crime, DMACC has implemented a focussed security plan that includes a mass emergency notification system, access control system, security guards, and a cooperative relationship with all local emergency responders. Key to its success is the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system, which was installed to provide greater and more reliable coverage across campus and, ultimately, boost the safety of students and staff.

Keeping Crime Rate Low

With close to 75,000 full and non-credit students and 3,000 full and part-time staff spread across six campuses, 48 buildings, and 1.4 million square feet, DMACC faces the daunting task of securing a vast physical space. Like all colleges, DMACC deals with security challenges ranging from accidents, theft, and student misconduct, and relies heavily on its surveillance system to capture these incidents on video. "All American colleges must, by law, report crime data on an annual basis in what is called the Clery report," explained Ned Miller, director of Campus Safety and Emergency Management at DMACC. This information is used by staff and students to determine the level of security they can expect. While DMACC boasts a low crime rate, the College is not immune to the problems that have plagued other colleges, and is driven to keep incidents of crime at bay. "The crime report becomes a significant recruitment tool to attract new students, so we want to pre-empt potential problems and stay ahead of the curve."

Avigilon met image quality requirements and reduced system costs by 15 percent. With no recurring licensing fees, Avigilon saves the College $12,000 annually.

Making the Move to High-Definition Surveillance

The College's previous analog-based system, which included 10 to 15 standalone systems, was unreliable and difficult to use, making it hard to effectively monitor campus activity. After narrowing its options down to four surveillance solutions, DMACC selected the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system for its advanced management features, superior image quality, scalability, and cost-effectiveness. Working closely with Avigilon and Inteconnex, a local provider of surveillance system design, installation, and service, DMACC was able to get the system up and running in no time. "Our Systems Integration team also played a key role in setting software and network requirements," noted Miller. "They were very impressed with the Avigilon solution."

The ACC Backbone

"The Systems Integration team has built a strong backbone to ensure optimal system performance," said Miller. DMACC has installed 45 Avigilon HD cameras ranging from 1 to 16MP to monitor high traffic areas and parking lots at the Ankeny, Urban, and West campuses, and plans to add up to 400 Avigilon HD cameras over the next couple of years. The College also relies on 25 Avigilon analog video encoders to improve the performance of its existing analog-based cameras and stores up to 30 days of continuous surveillance video and monitors the system around-the-clock. Miller and Mark Baethke, physical plant director at DMACC, can remotely monitor the system from their desktops, laptops, or iPads using Avigilon Control Center Mobile.

Simplicity Generates Results

According to Miller, it was important that the surveillance system they selected be simple and easy to use. "In a very short period of time, we have been able to learn how to manipulate the Avigilon system for maximum results," noted Miller, who added that the support he has received has been superior. "Avigilon has been very responsive to our needs and tremendously helpful when required."

Leveraging the advanced management features of the Avigilon Control Center software, DMACC can find event details 10 times faster than before. "Avigilon Control Center offers many bells and whistles that facilitate our job," stated Baethke, who added that sharing footage with local law enforcement is equally straightforward. "In fact, a local police department has been so impressed that it is now considering the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system for its own purposes."

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Mapping Feature Expedites Response

DMACC has been extremely impressed with the integrated mapping capability in Avigilon Control Center, which allows operators to layout cameras and servers on an imported map for easy navigation of large surveillance systems. "We can easily create and share maps of our entire system, enabling security personnel to view footage in real time and enhancing their ability to respond quickly with up-to-date information for more effective incident resolution," revealed Miller.

Better Surveillance for Less

"Avigilon helped us design a strategic surveillance system that meets our image quality requirements and reduced infrastructure costs by 15 percent," claimed Miller. The College reduced initial investment costs further by using Avigilon analog video encoders to integrate its existing analog cameras into the Avigilon Control Center software for improved performance. With the Avigilon Control Center software DMACC will also save $12,000 annually in recurring licensing fees. "Avigilon offers a fair and equitable pricing system that works well for us," added Baethke. "We also expect lower maintenance costs and are confident that we can grow the system without having to invest in a lot more hardware."

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Managing Campus Operations

The primary goal of the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is to prevent crime and student misbehavior on campus, but it has also proven to be an effective business tool. College administrators can use the high-quality surveillance footage to resolve liability claims or accidents in its parking lots. "One of the first questions asked after a fender-bender is whether we have surveillance footage of the incident," said Miller. "Now we can confidently provide the high-quality evidence needed to help resolve these cases." The College can also use surveillance footage to improve traffic flow, especially during the first two weeks of school when student parking becomes a real challenge. "We can review footage to determine if we need to close a parking lot and redirect people to other lots." In addition, DMACC can use the footage to confirm that the campus is being properly maintained, particularly during the winter to ensure that snow removal and salting procedures are being met.

Building a Good Reputation

Triggered by recent incidents of campus violence, community colleges across the country are becoming more and more focused on student safety and security. "We are asked regularly by students and parents about our security initiatives," concluded Miller. "With the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system in place, we have boosted the college's reputation because we can confidently provide usable, high-quality, and accessible video to deter unlawful activity and provide the safest campus environment possible, helping to attract students from across the country."

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