

County Shares Physical Security Solution with Multiple Groups



Georgetown County used the Smart+Connected Communities approach to maximize return on investment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Georgetown County, South Carolina

- State and Local Government
- Georgetown, South Carolina
- 600 Employees, 65,000 Residents

CHALLENGE

- Provide physical security for new judicial building
- Extend solution to other county locations
- Minimize management overhead

SOLUTION

- Cisco Video Surveillance and Cisco Physical Access Control
- Cisco Smart+Connected Communities approach, increasing return on investment from network solutions by extending them to other departments

RESULTS

- Enabled collaboration between Sheriff's Department, court system, and MIS
- Built foundation to share video surveillance system with schools
- Avoided vendor fees for system changes

Challenge

Located on the South Carolina Coast between Myrtle Beach and Charleston, Georgetown County spans 815 square miles and is home to 65,000 residents. The county's natural beauty makes it a popular vacation spot.

With just 600 employees, the county actively seeks out technology to deliver government services efficiently and effectively. "We're a small county and work closely with the county school district and city governments," says Leslie Thomas, director of management information systems (MIS) for Georgetown County. "None of us has enough resources to accomplish what we'd like, so we share technology and resources whenever possible."

When the county began planning a new 79,000-square-foot judicial building, the initial design called for an analog video surveillance system, physical access controls, intercoms, and audiovisual systems. The MIS department immediately realized that a centrally managed IP solution would better serve the county's needs. "It's less costly to manage one network for voice, video, and data than three separate networks," Thomas says. "In addition, we could share an IP-based

video surveillance system with other county departments and the school system, enabling better collaboration while reducing costs."

The appeal of sharing had already attracted the MIS department to the Cisco® Smart+Connected Communities approach. The premise is to put the network at the center of public safety, justice, healthcare, education, and more, to deliver services more efficiently, create safer communities, and enhance community quality of life. To that end, the county had previously implemented a shared Cisco Unified Communications system supporting 420 Cisco Unified IP Phones, a Cisco Unified Wireless Network providing pervasive access in several county buildings, and desktop Cisco TelePresence™ systems for video arraignment and interdepartmental collaboration.

A video surveillance system that operated atop the county's existing IP network would create another opportunity to share services across multiple county departments.

Solution

After evaluating several IP-based physical security systems, Georgetown County selected Cisco IP Video Surveillance and Cisco Physical Access Controls. "We've had an excellent experience with Cisco Unified Communications, and Cisco has become a trusted vendor," says Thomas. "Cisco's open-platform approach to safety and security was a key factor in our decision, because we wanted to integrate video surveillance with our existing unified communications, wireless, and data security systems."

Approximately 60 IP video surveillance cameras provide coverage of the interior and exterior of the new judicial building. Two security officers monitor the video feeds 10 hours a day, using Cisco Video Surveillance Manager. They can also quickly retrieve archived video to investigate incidents, without any involvement by the MIS team.

The Cisco Physical Access Control solution controls entry to the judicial building. Employees are authorized to enter specified areas based on their role, and swipe their badge for access. People without badges press a button on a Cisco Unified IP Phone to signal the security officer, who can view the person on a feed from a nearby video surveillance camera and remotely unlock the door. The Cisco Physical Access Control system keeps a record of who enters each area, as well as unsuccessful attempts to enter unauthorized areas. "We were able to set up access privileges over the network, instead of having to individually program every door," Thomas says.

After implementing Cisco Video Surveillance Manager for the judicial building, the county followed the Smart+Connected Communities approach by extending it to other locations and needs:

- Newly remodeled detention center, which is monitored using 48 Cisco Video Surveillance 2500 Series IP Cameras inside and outside the prison entrances.
- Sheriff's Department. "With Cisco Video Surveillance, the MIS department can manage the underlying platform while giving the Sheriff's Department full control of viewing and retrieving video," Thomas says.
- Landfill and recycling centers. Staff can supervise loads going in and out of the facilities without taking the time to constantly walk back and forth.
- Renovated historical courthouse.
- Marina and soon at county park.

"Cisco Physical Security solutions and the Smart+Connected Communities approach have helped to enhance public safety throughout the county and significantly improved communications between the court system, public safety, and MIS departments."

— Leslie Thomas, Director of Management Information Systems/GIS, Georgetown County, South Carolina

Results

Safer Community

Authorized county personnel can view live video surveillance camera feeds from any web browser, on a wired or wireless device. "If an incident occurs at night, for example, the Sheriff can access the feeds from home," Thomas says. Law enforcement vehicles will soon be equipped with wireless laptops that officers can use to access public safety databases or view real-time video feeds on their way to an incident, increasing situational awareness.

The county also takes advantage of archived surveillance video for forensics and training. When a window broke, for instance, deputies reviewed archived video to determine the cause. And when a medical emergency occurred in the courtroom, various county departments used the video as part of training on correct procedures.

Enhanced Citizen Services

Before planning an outing to the marina or a county park, residents and visitors can visit the county web portal to view real-time video showing crowds and parking availability. "Using video surveillance to improve the citizen experience cost very little, because we had already invested in Cisco Video Surveillance for the judicial building," Thomas says. "The only cost was for the cameras, not the management software."

Increasing Return on Investment

As additional county organizations want to adopt video surveillance, the MIS department can meet their needs with little expense beyond the cameras themselves. The only action required of the MIS department is to assign video-viewing privileges to new users. "We've already have been approached by the county school system to share our video surveillance solution," Thomas says. "The schools will save money compared to implementing a redundant video surveillance system, and the MIS team won't increase its workload."

More Efficient Arraignments

Georgetown County also uses its media-optimized network (medianet) for other types of business video, including video arraignments. Previously, two deputies had to escort prisoners from the detention center to the judicial building. In addition, the magistrates and their administrative staff had to drive out to the detention center twice a day for bonds and arraignments. Roundtrips of up to 40 miles were costly in terms of staff time, fuel, and carbon emissions. Now prisoners can be arraigned without leaving the detention center. Instead, they are escorted down the hall to a small courthouse with a desktop Cisco TelePresence system. Magistrates use a Cisco TelePresence system in their office to conduct video arraignments for bonding without travel. "Even magistrates who have been conducting arraignments the traditional way for decades quickly learned to use the video arraignment system and appreciate the convenience," says Thomas.

Following the Smart+Connected Communities approach, Georgetown County is also planning to use Cisco TelePresence for county health services, such as remote medical and psychiatric evaluations.

Increased Workforce Efficiency

Other county personnel use desktop Cisco TelePresence systems to collaborate during emergency response. In addition, the county fire and emergency medical services have begun conducting training with video to avoid the time and costs of driving a multimillion dollar fire truck to another city for in-person training.

The MIS Department itself is doing more with less, because it manages just one IP network for voice, video surveillance, video arraignment, video collaboration, and business applications. This arrangement frees time to focus on innovation to increase citizen quality of life and economic vitality.

Thomas concludes, "Cisco Physical Security solutions and the Smart+Connected Communities approach have helped to enhance public safety throughout the county and significantly improved communications between the court system, public safety, and MIS departments."

PRODUCT LIST

Physical Security

- Cisco Video Surveillance Manager
- Cisco Physical Access Control
- Cisco Video Surveillance 2500 Series IP Cameras

Collaboration

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager
- Cisco Unified IP Phones
- Cisco TelePresence Systems

Wireless

- Cisco Unified Wireless Network

Next Steps

The Georgetown County School District is considering integrating its video surveillance cameras into the Cisco Video Surveillance system. Authorized district personnel will be able to monitor video feeds from any school, and local police will be able to view live or archived video in response to campus incidents.

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Physical Security Systems, visit:

<http://www.cisco.com/go/physicalsecurity>.

To learn more about the Smart+Connected Communities framework,

visit: <http://www.cisco.com/go/smartconnectedcommunities>.



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