Ottawa School District Sees Successful Deployment of Arecont Vision® Surveillance Cameras

The Customer

The Ottawa Elementary School District is in Ottawa, Illinois, a river town 80 miles southwest of Chicago. The district consists of five schools, the campuses of which include Jefferson Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School, McKinley Elementary School, Shepherd Middle Schools, and the Jefferson Elementary "Art House" building. In the spring of 2015 a variety of issues caused the schools' administration to determine that they needed a surveillance system upgrade. The district's IT director Kyle Olesen met with Nick Melnyk of systems integrator Ficek Electric & Communication Systems and the Arecont Vision regional sales team, ultimately sparking a major collaboration to redesign the surveillance systemts used by all their schools.

The Challenge

The district had been using mostly analog cameras for its school surveillance. The original cameras had been placed throughout the five campuses without a formal coverage strategy, greatly hindering the usefulness of the surveillance system. This prevented key areas from

being effectively monitored and the images that were provided by the analog cameras were of low quality.

New challenges presented themselves as the project continued. With five completely different locations to work with, it was clear that the project would be a long-term one. It was imperative that the installation efforts be planned accordingly. Part of planning was to treat each school as a separate project with its own surveillance coverage layout and system requirements.

Such a long undertaking also meant staffing challenges. The project manager changed five months into the project, resulting in the bidding process to be undertaken a second time. A Chicago-based Architecture and Engineer company was then hired by the school to help facilitate the project. Arecont Vision delivered educational sessions to bring the new firm up to date on IP megapixel camera technology.

The challenges were met by the Arecont Vision team, end user, systems integrator, and all other stakeholders.

The Process

During the first meeting with the district in 2015, the IT director was introduced to Arecont Vision megapixel single- and multi-sensor cameras. The end user was impressed, and a more in-

depth meeting was scheduled. This led to walkthroughs at each of the five campuses to outline recommendations for camera locations and models.

The individual schools were pleased with Arecont Vision's camera performance during this series of events, and the project continued into the design phase. During this period, the district received a detailed layout for each school. The layouts outlined the coverage area that each camera would provide.

After completing the design phase, the systems integrator and the school district participated in the Arecont Vision Try-and-Buy Program. This program provided the end user community with the opportunity to experience Arecont Vision megapixel cameras before committing to a full installation. Impressed with what they saw, the Ottawa School District approved the installation of Arecont Vision cameras in all five locations in July 2016.

Exacq Technologies, part of the Security Products business unit of Tyco, was selected as the video management system (VMS) provider. Exacq and Arecont Vision have thousands of joint installations for schools and other surveillance projects around the world. Exacq is a member of the Arecont Vision Technology Partner Program, and their VMS software is available in the Arecont Vision MegaLab™ certification and support facility for the best possible continued integration.

The five schools utilize an array of Arecont Vision products throughout the district. The multi-sensor, panoramic 180° SurroundVideo® and adjustable-view SurroundVideo Omni series provide coverage of large areas such as cafeterias, gyms, and parking lots. Arecont Vision pioneered the multi-sensor surveillance megapixel camera market in 2006, and has continued to lead the industry with new features, performance, and reliability. Now in their fifth generation, SurroundVideo cameras provide coverage with four individual megapixel sensors for superior situational awareness and outstanding image quality.

Arecont Vision MicroDome® G2 series cameras were used for interior areas such as for coverage of hallways and doorways. MegaView® 2 series cameras equipped with STELLAR™ (Spatio Temporal Low Light Architecture) technology were implemented for day and night outdoor coverage.

The Made in USA Arecont Vision cameras used by the project are hardened against potential cybersecurity attacks, and cannot be repurposed for malicious purposes, giving the schools an added level of security protection.

The Arecont Vision cameras are monitored both locally and remotely by the schools, using the Exacq software. Each school's administration has access to the cameras monitoring their individual campus, allowing for real-time monitoring throughout the day. Video can be accessed remotely, with playback from any camera using district laptops and tablets.

The Result

"The customer and our company are very satisfied and happy with the quality of the equipment," said Nick Melnyk, of Ficek Electric and Communication Systems, Inc. "The accessories, the mounts, everything fit very well and works very well. That all comes into play because a lot of times you can be sent cameras with wrong accessories and other things that don't fit, extending the installation process longer than it needs to be. For this project, installation went very smoothly."

"Arecont Vision provided superior image quality and a user-friendly interface," continued Mr. Melnyk. "The school district was so pleased with Arecont Vision products that they are now looking to put additional cameras onto to the surveillance systems on most of the campuses."

Upon being asked if Arecont Vision could do anything better in the future, Mr. Melnyk stated, "We are very satisfied with everything we have received from Arecont Vision."