

Eastern Michigan University

Opportunity

Located in Ypsilanti, Michigan, Eastern Michigan University (EMU) is a coeducational public university with more than 250 undergraduate and graduate degree/certificate programs in five colleges.

Set in a small city environment amid a major metropolitan area, EMU has more than 23,500 students attending academic and athletic sites and comprises over 800 acres with 122 buildings, 14 residence halls and three apartment complexes.

In October 2010, as part of a security modernization initiative in order to help ensure faster response and more effective use of personnel, Eastern Michigan University deployed the next-generation Verint® Enterprise Video Management Software (VMS) and our advanced IP to monitor and advance the safety and security of its vast campus grounds.

Solution

As a Verint customer for over two decades, Eastern Michigan University has continued to grow their security initiatives with Verint's technology. Mainly focused on protecting its students, faculty and staff, and securing its large geographically-distributed campus through cutting-edge technology, EMU initially deployed an analog-based surveillance system with a few cameras monitoring the parking lots and a small number of buildings. During the 1990s, Verint's technology was introduced and provided the university with a digital video solution to aid in producing forensic video around events happening on campus.

As the campus grew and technology progressed, the university decided to invest in Verint IP cameras—now up to 375 cameras—to help the police force of 33 sworn officers, who are responsible for covering campus grounds. To date, all cameras are integrated with Verint Enterprise Video Management Software.

“Verint's IP video solution is proving to be an impactful part of our focus, helping us meet important security objectives. Since we began using the technology, it has been key to our proactive approach to enhancing situational awareness and transforming threat detection from a manual, resource-intensive operation to an efficient, accurate, automated process,” said Greg O'Dell, chief of police, Eastern Michigan University Police Department.

While the cameras are primarily used as an investigative tool following an incident, O'Dell said the department recently upgraded the system to make it easier for



Customer

Eastern Michigan University



Industry

Education



Solutions

Verint Enterprise Video Management Software and Verint IP Cameras



Region

Americas

Eastern Michigan University

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– Greg O’Dell, Chief of Police, Eastern Michigan University Police Department

dispatchers to use the system during an event. “If dispatchers get a call of a suspicious person in a certain area, they routinely will pull up the cameras and have an image of the person before the officer arrives on the scene,” he said. For example, last fall an unarmed robbery occurred off campus and the suspect ran across the university’s grounds. O’Dell said dispatchers were able to go from camera to camera tracking the suspect and notifying police about his exact whereabouts in order to make the arrest. O’Dell said the investment that the school made in the Verint Enterprise VMS enabled the dispatchers to better manage and leverage its large video system. Dispatchers now have a mapping system, which allows them to easily pinpoint camera locations to follow a suspect through campus.

“There has been an incredible rise in on-campus arrests due to the powerful features of the Verint platform,” commented O’Dell. “The system plays a vital role in security on campus with capturing camera feeds as well as providing prompt data for investigation purposes.”

Results

With Verint, EMU is leveraging state-of-the-art technology to quickly resolve incidents and investigations taking place on campus grounds. Added O’Dell, “We count on Verint as a key intelligence source for video forensics and investigations, and have been amazed at the number of times we have used the system to aid us in investigations and in making arrests.”

But O’Dell emphasized that the school can’t cover its entire campus with cameras or police officers. It is critical for his program to educate students about their role in security on campus. “We only have 33 sets of eyes, but there are 23,500 sets if you include students and staff and we’re big on information sharing. And most of the crimes that occur on campus are crimes of opportunity,” he said. The school had a significant problem with students failing to lock their room doors. “People would walk down hallways trying doors and if they found one open they would run in and grab computers, iPads or other valuables,” he added. Police officers would make routine checks in residence halls, informing students to lock their doors, but this was a fairly cumbersome process.

The police department continues to see return on investment from the system. “The Verint solution is very easy to use and we have already seen a significant return on our investment. This solution is very widely used and supported across our organization—and that speaks to the results we get from the system,” commented O’Dell. As a forward-thinking security professional, O’Dell would like to see the school’s video surveillance system be even more accessible to his officers by allowing them to pull up cameras on their laptops. “We’ve had those discussions and it is still something we would like to investigate for the future,” he said.

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