

Case Study

Application: Law Enforcement
Company: Inyo County Jail
Country: United States

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Inyo County Jail Protects Guards and Inmates with Sony Security Solutions



The Inyo County jail located in rural California houses County, Federal and State prisoners. In 2010, the Sheriff's department decided to upgrade the existing analog video security system with a 93-camera IP-based video security system. Sony network cameras, many capturing images in HD, provide "live" images to key posts throughout the facility. Since going "live" in January 2011, the cameras have served effectively as a force multiplier increasing safety both for guards and inmates. The Sony camera's H.264 codecs provide an economical means to meet the State of California's one-year storage requirement for law enforcement video.

Background

Inyo County is the third largest county in the United States covering 10,412 square miles. This is mostly a wilderness area that includes two national parks that are home to both the highest peak (Mount Whitney at 14,495 feet) in the lower 48 states and the lowest point in the United States (Badwater, Death Valley at 282 feet below sea level). The region's natural beauty drives a tourism-based economy with some 5.5 million visitors passing through the county annually. The Inyo County jail serves the needs of the 18,000 residents, but also hosts other visitors—prisoners coming in and out of Los Angeles County.

Challenges

Located in a remote, isolated region, the Inyo County jail handles prisoners bound for other facilities across the country. The jail houses both male and female prisoners, and segregating the genders adds complexity to the Sheriff Department's task of carrying out its duties effectively with a burgeoning prison population and tight budgetary constraints. An aging analog video security system installed in the early 2000's was inadequate. In addition to the poor imaging quality and video storage capability that was insufficient for courtroom use, a key limitation was how the analog infrastructure allowed only for viewing at a single outpost limiting its usefulness. How could a new IP-based system serve as a force multiplier extending staff's capabilities? American Security Group (ASG), a San Marcos, California based systems integrator, designed and installed the new system.

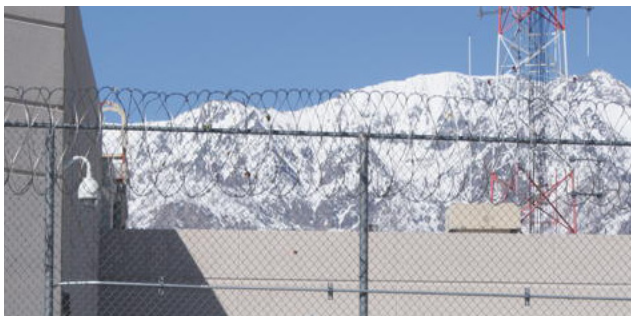
Solution

Sony Solution

ASG selected a mix of Sony network cameras to suit different needs throughout the facility. These include the SNCDM160 vandal proof dome cameras, SNCDM110 dome cameras, SNCRX570 PTZ cameras and the HD resolution SNCDH110 and SNCDH160 minidome cameras. All of the cameras are PoE capable, making for one-cable simplicity. OnSSI software provides command and control at three video watchposts located in the booking area, watchtower and 911 dispatch area. The IP-based architecture's ability to easily distribute video to the different locations multiplies the value of the system and creates a significant safety improvement. The cameras allow staff to carry out "patrols" remotely and also to instantly confirm the status of colleagues on duty. The net effect is a perceptible increase in the sense of presence that staff have throughout the facility. This ability to maintain a close watch throughout communicates an increased degree of security to inmates and safety to staff. The system went "live" in January, 2011.

Results

The arrival of the Sony-based system demonstrated an immediate and significant improvement in staff's ability to carry out its duties efficiently and effectively. The power of the system to serve as a "force multiplier" has been immediately apparent. Tangible benefits include staff's ability to cover more ground, more thoroughly from the multiple video watchposts than they had been able to do before on foot. Being able to check on colleagues' safety, too, delivers a sense of security. The evidentiary-quality images also have added an important tool in responding to any violations within the jail. The high quality video compression codecs in the Sony cameras allow for economically preserving an entire year's video archive in just 180 terabytes of storage.



Why Sony Cameras Were Selected

Beyond the necessity for rugged reliability and ease of use for the system, the Sheriff's Office request to be able to store a full year of video archives narrowed the selection process. Sony's cameras met the core technical challenge by finding the right balance between image quality and storage requirements. Sony's implementation of H.264 for HD as well as MPEG-4 delivers an exceptional value by offering high resolution imaging at minimal storage costs. The investment in Sony's superior compression and imaging delivers a superior value proposition than utilizing lower quality video and less efficient codecs that drive up storage costs.

Quotes

Inyo County Sheriff Bill Lutze

"The clarity of the images is a great enhancement over the legacy system. Accessibility at multiple watch stations has now made this an invaluable, integrated part of the staff's work routine. It is one of those advances so significant that you wonder how you managed to get along before without it. This is a great aid in relieving the pressures of high utilization of facilities within tight budgetary constraints."

"We have already used the system to investigate crimes and rule violations in the jail facility. Having court-admissible video evidence is a great help. Also, we've successfully used the cameras to find contraband in cells."

Product List

- SNCDM160
- SNCDM110
- SNCRX570 PTZ
- SNCDH110
- SNCDH160