

Oulun Energia chose Axis network cameras for a more efficient surveillance solution.

A reliable solution with remote monitoring possibilities and intelligent video functions were the key requirements when Oulun Energia decided to upgrade their surveillance system.



Organization:
Oulun Energia group

Location:
Oulu, Finland

Industry segment:
Energy, critical
infrastructure

Application:
Safety and security,
remote monitoring,
process monitoring

Axis partners:
Stanley Security Oy,
Anixter

Mission

Oulun Energia is Northern Finland's leading energy group. Oulun Energia is a company that sells and distributes electricity, heat and steam as well as other related services. The company spans the entire value chain of the energy sector: including the production of raw material, generation, distribution and sales of electricity and heat.

Solution

In the end of the old surveillance system's life cycle, Oulun Energia made a decision to use IP-based video surveillance system in order to achieve more efficient surveillance. In the end, Axis network cameras were chosen. "Axis offered a reliable and high quality solution to carry out the system upgrade. We also had great user experience of Axis," says Kari Nykänen, Ph.D. in charge of information security at Oulun Energia.

Result

The video surveillance system at Oulun Energia is used in monitoring the energy production. In the heating plants and electricity network the video surveillance system is used mainly for surveillance of production and of the premises. Cameras are also used to help remotely operate parts of their facilities. "For us, the main benefit of the remote surveillance system is that it allows us to work remotely with the visual aid of the cameras. You can monitor the processes at the distant plants much more efficiently," says Kari Nykänen.

"Very few companies can offer the quality of camera we need in our critical industry, but Axis cameras can, and do, deliver."

Kari Nykänen, Ph.D. in charge of information security at Oulun Energia.

The work of replacing the old analog systems started in 2007 with a newer IP-based camera solution, although it presented its own unique set of challenges. Issues arose because of the strong electrical fields present at their facilities which are emitted from structures like their network transformers.

There are upwards of 100 Axis network cameras installed today at 15-20 remote sites, with more planned for the future. All these cameras are constantly recording and the company now has footage of each every ongoing process. Oulun Energia also benefits from a feature in their cameras that transmits a signal if it is out of operation, and there are plans to implement further intelligent video features into the system to help them get even more useful data.

Oulun Energia also uses their cameras to investigate incidents of graffiti and vandalism. The normal procedure following an incident is to produce video clips of the event, report the offense and process the matter further. However, the camera system can also keep them safe, as a vandal may not necessarily realize the danger they are in if, for example, they get too close to an electric field transformer. It is vital that Oulun Energia are aware of anyone who may be trespassing on their sites, which is why they also get peace of mind in knowing that their cameras work well as a deterrent, as they have clearly visible signage warning of the cameras' presence.

The cameras help the company when there has been a crisis situation on the production line too, by helping Oulun Energia investigate the cause. They can also help with planning: for instance if a building is too close to an electrical plant, it could cause problems in that location. With Axis cameras present it gives the team a clearer picture of the situation which, in short, means they can prevent incidents from happening.

The cameras are contributing to a safer work environment and help to prevent damage and costly production stops. "We have not once been in a situation where there has been no video material of an event; the recording capacity is good and it clearly meets our demands," says Kari Nykänen.

Oulun Energia asked its employees whether they minded that their workstations may be monitored by cameras, but the feedback they received suggested no one found it to be a nuisance; in fact staff reacted positively.

The company is now planning new power and heating plants where it is expected that additional camera surveillance systems will be implemented.

