

The free lunch stops here.

Axis network video prevents restaurateurs' profits from being eaten up.



Organization:
Internet Camera
Solutions

Location:
Seattle, USA

Industry segment:
Retail

Application:
Remote monitoring
of restaurants

Axis partner:
Milestone Systems

Mission

Internet Camera Solutions had a number of Seattle-based restaurant owners who needed advanced remote monitoring systems for their restaurants and bars. Although a few of the restaurants already had analog cameras in place, the owners needed a way to access the video feeds remotely, as well as to easily record and manage the images.

Solution

Internet Camera Solutions selected Axis video servers to digitize the video feeds from each restaurant's analog cameras. In addition, various Axis network cameras were added to the system to provide enhanced coverage. Milestone XProtect® software was installed to enable the restaurant owners to easily manage and store the video.

Result

With the Axis equipment in place, Internet Camera Solutions' customers can view live images from their restaurants and bars via the Internet from anywhere in the world. This allows them to keep track of customer service practices and employee safety, or prevent theft and vandalism, without spending as much time in each restaurant.

"Network video also provides clients with a way to guard themselves and their businesses against waste, shrinkage, and frivolous lawsuits."

Bruno Pirecki, Vice President and managing partner, Internet Camera Solutions

An expanded presence

Internet Camera Solutions develops high-tech digital surveillance systems that allow clients to maximize profits, control costs and deter loss through the ability to monitor businesses from anywhere in the world. In order to meet the growing customer demand for a remotely accessible system, the company turned to Axis network cameras and video servers.

Before Internet Camera Solutions began installing Axis network video products, restaurant owners were unable to efficiently monitor their stores without being physically present. For owners with multiple locations, it was extremely difficult and tiring to travel between the various locations and monitor all employees. In addition, if stock or money was missing, it was nearly impossible to determine who was responsible.

"Restaurant owners don't like to feel that they need to live in their restaurants in order to know what is going on," said Bruno Pirecki, vice president and managing partner of Internet Camera Solutions. "They need their surveillance systems to function as a remote set of eyes so that they can be more efficient in managing their facilities."

Before the Axis equipment was installed, images from the analog cameras were recorded to VCRs. However, the image quality degraded as the tapes were constantly reused and the restaurant owners had to spend hours winding through video just to find one particular event.

Less time, more management

With the Axis equipment, digital images can be stored on hard disks, so there is no loss in image quality. Images can also be accessed on-site or remotely via the Internet. In addition, search functions allow restaurant owners to zero in on a particular instance almost immediately, and the system can even be configured to store images only when motion is detected.

"Viewing activity via the Internet is a huge time saver, and the digital recording abilities allow owners to easily determine who is responsible should anything be stolen or vandalized," Mr. Pirecki said.

In fact, Maltby Pizza and Pasta, one of Internet Camera Solutions' first restaurant customers, was able to use the video from the Axis network video equipment to protect the business against a lawsuit. One night, the restaurant's employees had to remove an intoxicated customer who was disturbing others. Once outside, the man fell, injured himself, and ultimately threatened to sue Maltby Pizza and Pasta. However, the restaurant was able to produce digital video from the incident that proved the man's claim was false.

In addition, Toi Thai, a restaurant and bar in downtown Seattle, experienced trouble with liquor theft from its supply room. Internet Camera Solutions installed an IR-sensitive camera and Axis video server that allowed the restaurant's owner to view and record images of all activity in the storeroom, even in complete darkness. As a result, Toi Thai was able to catch a patron stealing a bottle of high quality scotch, and theft from the supply room has not been a problem since.

The flexible placement options with network cameras are beneficial because the cameras can go anywhere there is a connection to the network. If none is available, then a wireless connection can be used. This helps restaurants install cameras in very discreet locations, where they are not easily noticed.

According to Mr. Pirecki, it is common for restaurants to see a 3-5 percent decrease in liquor and food costs after they start using Axis network video. In some extreme cases, the cost savings can be as high as 15 percent. The technology also helps restaurant owners and managers keep an eye on safety procedures and minimize the risk of accidents.



"With network video, a restaurant's or bar's productivity tends to greatly improve in a short amount of time," Mr. Pirecki said. "Our clients possess the ability to identify theft, determine if workers are giving away food and drinks to their friends, and reward employees who are doing a great job. Axis' network video technology is the best overall time-saver and cost-cutter that we can provide our customers."

