

Focus on achieving an accurate customer count.

Construction supply and home improvement store chain, Sodimac, opens first store in Uruguay capable of tracking customer flow in real-time.

**Organization:**

Sodimac

Location:

Ciudad de la Costa,
Canelones, Uruguay

Industry segment:

Retail

Application:

Safety and security,
loss prevention, remote
monitoring

Axis partners:

Agent Vi, Anixter, Exanet,
Milestone

Mission

Sodimac is owned by the Chilean firm Grupo Falabella, with over 130 stores throughout South America that sell products for commercial and home construction and renovation. Its brand new store on Avenida Giannattasio, in Barra de Carrasco, Uruguay, covers an area of 12,000 square meters. It is the first phase of an ambitious effort to further expand within the country.

Solution

Based on the excellent results Sodimac had achieved implementing IP cameras at their store location in La Plata, Argentina, the company again called upon cutting-edge technology by Axis Communications to provide monitoring of the interior, exterior and parking lot areas at the new location. A total of 92 network cameras were installed on a project under the supervision of tech integrator Exanet, an Axis partner, in collaboration with Anixter Uruguay.

The chosen software setup consisted of video management software from Milestone Systems coupled with Agent Vi video analytics.

Result

The monitoring system provides control over access points and customer flow throughout the store, safeguarding all merchandise. As a result of being able to capture high-resolution video with incorporated real-time analytics, supervisors can respond proactively before an incident occurs and also obtain relevant data in order to improve various aspects of the business.

“This technology has allowed us achieve two important goals for the company: to detect any theft or unusual incidents that may take place on the premises; and to collect valuable information that allows us to keep improving our bottom line.”

Juan Manuel Riavec, Assistant Safety Manager of Sodimac.

Highly scalable IP video surveillance

Sodimac (an acronym in Spanish for the Construction Material Distributors Association) was founded in Chile, in 1952, as construction & building materials provider cooperative. Throughout South America the company has opened more than 130 stores and hired over 33,000 employees, and it is constantly in the process of expansion – aided to a large degree by the scalability of the technologies it has chosen to implement.

In previous stores Sodimac relied on an obsolete analog surveillance system unable to adequately monitor the facilities and thousands of shoppers and workers coming and going daily. Its store in Giannattasio, the first in Uruguay, has 160 employees and receives heavy customer traffic. But exactly how much traffic is a question that couldn't have been answered with an analog system.

“Based on the positive results achieved at the first Sodimac location where we installed a cutting-edge IP video surveillance system from Axis, we decided to continue in this direction and install a similar one in Giannattasio,” explains Juan Manuel Riavec, Assistant Safety Manager of Sodimac. The company opted for an advanced monitoring system with the ability to capture and store high-quality video, in contrast to all previous stores which had relied on analog video. “The IP cameras deliver higher quality video and they're coupled with software that makes it easy for us to access the system remotely from our personal devices,” says Riavec.

Full HD

Giannattasio thus became the second Sodimac location to go 100% IP, using cameras offering full HD resolution along with Lightfinder technology that enables color rendering in the dark. The store has its own monitoring control center that is manned 24/7. Camera units are situated at various strategic points throughout the location, including the home, patio & garden areas, and parking lots. It also allows for monitoring of the adjacent high-traffic exterior area. In total, the project required an investment of approximately \$250 million.

Among the camera models selected for the project – all delivering HD-quality video – were the anti-vandalism AXIS P3214-V Network Camera, with remote zoom and focus that eliminate the need for in-camera adjustments; AXIS PTZ P5534 with 18x zoom; and the AXIS P1354-E with Lightfinder technology for monitoring of the patio construction, perimeter and garden areas. In addition, AXIS M3004-V was selected as the ideal choice for store interiors as well as anti-vandalism tasks.

A team effort

The support of Argentine tech integrator Exanet was essential in configuring this combination of cameras that are capable of capturing high-quality video using minimal bandwidth and storage consumption – and implementation was achieved in a record 30 days. Exanet had been in charge of integration at the Sodimac location in La Plata, Argentina, as well.

“One of the major challenges for Exanet, as well as Sodimac, was to implement an integrated solution for the new store location. Key support by the distributor, Anixter Uruguay, helped finalize the scheduling and construction details,” says Exanet's Hugo Menegozzi. He also emphasized that future upgrades – to be integrated into this same system – will include technologies such as heat-mapping analytics to identify areas of interest, virtual control lines.

“As customers we value the versatility offered by the Axis camera system. It's capable of capturing high-resolution images that allow them to run various analytics – while integrating with Milestone and Agent Vi software,” says Riavec.

This project demonstrates Sodimac's commitment to adopting the most cutting-edge technologies available to provide optimal security for its stores – as well as for all customers who shop in them – while at the same time optimizing the chain's profit margin and thus enabling the company's ongoing expansion.

