

Attracting top quality tenants with Axis.

Conlin Properties improves residential life and their bottom line with Axis network cameras.



Organization:

Conlin Properties

Location:

Des Moines, Iowa, USA

Industry segment:

Commercial

Application:

Tenant safety

Axis partners:

ICS Advanced Technologies,
Salient Systems

Mission

Conlin Properties wanted to improve tenant safety in the 29 affordable housing apartment complexes it manages in the Greater Des Moines area. To that end, it joined the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program, an international prevention initiative designed to reduce crime, drugs and gangs on apartment premises. In addition to organizing intensive training for building managers and a community outreach program on crime prevention for its properties to be certified, Conlin Properties also elected to upgrade its surveillance system.

Solution

Conlin Properties teamed with ICS Advanced Technologies—an Ames, Iowa-based technology provider, integrator and Axis partner—to design a cost-effective solution that could address a variety of challenges. ICS installed a fiber optic network to connect buildings and deployed over 500 HDTV-quality fixed, dome and panoramic/360° Axis network cameras. The cameras are managed by Salient CompleteView Enterprise software.

Most properties house the video on local Salient servers, but properties with fewer cameras are hosted in ICS' data cloud servers. All the properties are connected through their Virtual Private Network service and easily accessed via the ICS Proxy. This puts all the cameras at their fingertips quickly and easily without the need to log into the VPN.

Result

In addition to achieving Crime Free Multi-Housing program certification and increasing the safety of tenants and building staff, Conlin Properties has noticed a 40 percent decrease in incident calls. Building managers have also reported a significant drop in destructive behavior and vandalism, which has reduced maintenance costs because hallway carpets and wall paint are lasting two or more years longer than they had in the past.

“The Axis cameras have become a huge selling point with current and future residents. They’re really impressed when they see the large-screen monitor in the rental office displaying all those camera views of the property.”

Beth Ehlers, Vice President, Conlin Properties.

Creating a safe haven for tenants

Conlin Properties prides itself on achieving Crime Free Multi-Housing Program certification for its low-income housing properties. This initiative greatly improved the quality of life and value of their properties due in large part to a commitment to advanced security technologies. In 2010, Conlin began upgrading their analog security cameras to Axis network cameras at the rate of 200 to 300 a year.

“When we analyzed the total cost of ownership, including the cost of service, combined with the higher image quality offered, Axis cameras made good economic sense,” said Patrick Bailey, executive vice president of ICS Advanced Technologies.

Maximizing image usability: Lightfinder, corridor format and 360° views

ICS worked closely with the property managers to choose the right Axis products to optimize the usability of images and video from each location. For cameras facing exterior doorways, ICS used AXIS P3364-V Fixed Dome Network Cameras with Lightfinder to capture color details in low light.

To prevent vandalism, smoking and fights in the hallways, ICS installed a mix of AXIS M30 Series Fixed Dome Network Cameras. The vandal-resistant, palm-size cameras deliver HDTV-quality images and are often set to vertically-oriented “Corridor Format” to achieve full views of the hallways without unnecessary footage of walls and empty space. The panoramic AXIS M3007-PV cameras provide a full 360° overview of short hallways and recessed alcoves.

“By putting an AXIS M3007-V in the middle of the hallway, we’re able to capture all the entrances with a single camera,” Bailey said. The image de-warping function allows the cameras to produce up to four separate views from sections of the coverage area without the “fish-eye” effect produced by wide-angle lenses. Conlin also uses Axis cameras to monitor the exterior grounds and the parking lots.

“They’ve come in handy for overseeing snow removal and landscape maintenance,” said Jeremy Hummel, Director of Apartment Operations “Now we have video proof as to the number of hours and the quality of work, so vendors can’t overcharge us or deliver sub-par service. That advantage goes straight to our bottom line.”

Salient’s CompleteView VMS software ties the system together and provides quick video evidence for investigating security events. CompleteView’s unique Dynamic Resolution Scaling minimizes bandwidth consumption when viewing the high resolution cameras for fast retrieval even over remote or wireless network connections.

Visibility equals security

The crisp images have played a significant role in reducing crime and making residents feel safe.

Using CompleteView’s TouchView Mobile, property managers can instantly call up video on their mobile devices when suspicious activity occurs. This can be shared with police at the scene to confirm a suspect’s identity on the spot. In one instance, they were able to successfully compare a small insignia on the shirt of a suspect who was covering his face on video with the shirt of a man police had in custody.

“That has helped increase the successful arrest rate quite a bit,” said Bailey.

According to Beth Ehlers, Vice President of Conlin Properties criminals and troublemakers learn to avoid the property as knowledge of the security system spreads through reputation and signage. The reduction in crime increases the desirability of the property, and in turn attracts quality tenants who are interested in maintaining a high standard of living.



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