

Creating a comprehensive security solution for an urbanizing campus.

Mount Royal University enhances campus security amid growing urban development using Axis network cameras, horn speakers and door stations.



Image from 4k Axis network camera

Organization:
Mount Royal University

Location:
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Industry segment:
Education

Application:
Safety and security

Axis partners:
Delco Security, Genetec

Mission

As urban development began to surround its once suburban campus, Mount Royal University (MRU) in Calgary knew it had to revamp its security approach to heighten the safety of its students, faculty and staff. It wanted to replace its proprietary network video recorder with a future-proof video management system that could integrate access control and surveillance as well as campus emergency call stations.

Solution

To help them realize these goals, the university turned to Axis partner Delco Security, a technology solutions firm serving all of Canada. Delco replaced the old system with Genetec™ Security Center, a comprehensive unified security platform, to manage and control all the security systems from a single intuitive interface.

The university also replaced the old CCTV camera system with more than 200 high-resolution Axis network cameras that seamlessly integrate with Omnicast™, the video management system of Security Center, without additional user interfaces.

MRU also installed several Axis network horn speakers to discourage intruders from entering high asset areas. For added security, Delco installed Axis network door stations at the university's east and west gates to screen anyone wanting to enter the campus after hours.

Result

With smart technology capabilities able to address multiple surveillance challenges, MRU is able to increase security throughout its growing campus without increasing its staff. For instance, Axis pan/tilt/zoom cameras with instant laser focus help the university catch the license plate of vehicles even when they are moving. The Axis network horn speakers effectively discourage anyone from hopping the fence into the university's critical outdoor energy generation plant. Axis multi-lens cameras enable security to monitor three-to-four directions at once from a single IP address, saving the university in camera licensing fees.



Transitioning from suburban to urban

Once sitting in a quiet suburban area of Calgary, Mount Royal University (MRU) now finds itself in the heart of urban development. With new commercial and residential neighbours, as well as new roads increasing traffic past the campus, the university's aging and proprietary security technology couldn't provide the level of protection demanded by this changing environment.

MRU decided to overhaul its security system, replacing its proprietary video management system and legacy analog cameras with new future-proof technology that could meet their current needs and adapt to any new challenges that might unfold in the years ahead. With the help of Delco Security, an Axis solutions partner serving all of Canada, MRU installed Security Center, the unified security platform from Genetec that would help them manage and control all their security systems from a single intuitive interface.

Standardizing on value

The next priority was to map out the placement of more than 200 newly purchased Axis network cameras across the entire campus. "We've grown by over a million square feet," said Peter Davison, Security Director for Mount Royal University. "But due to budget constraints, we haven't been able to add actual human assets. So, we view the Axis cameras as a strategic force multiplier."

Standardizing on the Axis portfolio of cameras was an easy choice. "In addition to exceptional image clarity, there's such a broad portfolio of models to choose from," said Davison. "We can pick the perfect camera for each location." Another appeal of the Axis cameras is that they seamlessly integrate with the new Omnicast™ video management system without additional software or user interfaces.

"We were also impressed with the level of service we received from Axis with our initial purchase of the bullet cameras," said Davison. "That was a big deciding factor for standardizing on Axis."

Looking multiple ways at once

MRU relies on a variety of Axis multisensor cameras to economize on camera count while enhancing coverage throughout the campus. Four-sensor camera models including AXIS Q6000-E Mk II PTZ Network Cameras and AXIS P3707-PE cameras give security a 360° field of view while three-sensor models such as AXIS Q37 cameras provide a 180° panorama.

"We use a combination of these multisensor cameras at just about every intersection across campus," said Davison. "We are able to monitor movement anywhere on our main street."

Catching license plates with laser focus

Like most post-secondary institutions, MRU experiences its fair share of motor vehicle incidents, whether fender benders or reckless speeding through campus. "We use a lot of captured video to prove or disprove those events," shared Davison.

Trying to catch the license plate of vehicles in motion was an impossible challenge with the old CCTV cameras. They simply couldn't re-adjust their focus fast enough. According to Davison, with the instant laser focus technology in AXIS Q6155-E PTZ cameras, campus security now gets a clear image of the license plate of offenders nearly 100% of the time.

"It's remarkable how quickly the Axis camera zooms into that plate," said Davison. "It's so fast and sharp that we're able to catch the license plate even when the vehicle is moving."

Shouting out warnings to trespassers

To be more proactive in deterring trespassers and vandals, MRU decided to augment its security system with AXIS C3003-E Network Horn Speakers at some of its high asset sites like the grounds building and the area where the Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit is located.

The network horn speakers integrate with nearby Axis cameras and automatically broadcast a pre-recorded message when the cameras detect anyone approaching the area. The combination is proving to be an effective alternative to posting security guards at these vulnerable places.





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“Our grounds building is located on the very west side of our campus and a major highway runs within 20 feet of that structure,” said Davison. “We want to discourage potential thieves from hopping off the highway and helping themselves to all sorts of things.”

As for protecting the CHP unit, “We want to deter anyone from climbing over the fence surrounding our cogeneration plant that supplies the campus with electricity,” said Davison. “So, if they come too close, the horn speaker shouts out a warning that they are trespassing and need to leave the area. It’s really loud. In fact, we had to turn down the volume, so we didn’t disturb the neighbours.”

Watching out for threats at emergency call stations

When MRU installed its Code Blue Emergency Stations around campus, the manufacturer recommended installing fish-eye lens cameras as an added safety measure. “We decided that the panoramic AXIS P37 multisensor cameras were a much better choice,” said Davison. “They give security staff monitoring the cameras a 360° view of the area, not just the face of the person pushing the call button. Plus, this camera has a wide dynamic range feature so we can clearly see if anyone is hiding in the shadows.”

Vetting people at the gate

For students’ protection, MRU locks its doors at 10 p.m. If anyone wants to enter after hours, they have to be remotely buzzed in.

To ensure that random people aren’t given access, MRU installed AXIS A8004-VE Network Video Door Stations at its east and west gate entrances. In addition to two-way audio, the door station includes a video camera that helps security vet a person before releasing the lock.

“The advantage of these door stations is that security can see the person they’re speaking to,” said Davison. “They can read their body language, see their facial expressions, and even check to see if there’s anyone lurking behind the person pressuring them to gain access to the campus.”

Evolving a comprehensive security solution

MRU continues to explore ways it can use Axis camera technology to enhance campus security. For instance, the university is moving towards the installation of AXIS Q6125-LE PTZ cameras with OptimizedIR in its server rooms and main controller room. The infrared LEDs built into the cameras allow security to remotely monitor these locations for disturbances, especially after hours when the rooms are virtually unlit.

Davison says the next step in the university’s comprehensive security program is to install Axis network PTZ cameras outside the east residence halls. “Especially in the summertime when that area is less populated, we’ve discovered people squatting in the rooms because the cleaning people forgot to lock the doors,” said Davison. He hopes putting cameras out there will prevent this sort of problem in the future.



“With our strategic placement of Axis cameras, we are able to monitor all inbound and outbound traffic at Mount Royal. This has been critical for us since our once secluded campus is now surrounded by growing commercial and residential development.”

Peter Davison, Security Director for Mount Royal University.



About Axis Communications

Axis enables a smarter and safer world by creating network solutions that provide insights for improving security and new ways of doing business. As the industry leader in network video, Axis offers products and services for video surveillance and analytics, access control, and audio systems. Axis has more than 3,000 dedicated employees in over 50 countries and collaborates with partners worldwide to deliver customer solutions. Axis was founded in 1984 and has its headquarters in Lund, Sweden.

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