A slice of small system surveillance with Axis.

King's Subs & Pizza's uses an AXIS Camera Companion
edge storage solution for cost-effective analog replacement.

Organization:
King's Subs and Pizza

Location:
Andover, MA, USA

Industry segment:
Hotel/Restaurant/Tourism

Application:
Loss prevention, safety
and security, business
operations

Mission

Following an attempted break-in, Andover, MA restaurant King's Subs and Pizza needed a cost-effective security solution. As a small business in an industry with razor-thin margins, King's Pizza went looking for the highest quality surveillance system that fit within their budget. They also needed cameras that could provide the most flexibility of installation to cover all the important areas with minimal hassle. Additionally, as self-admitted technology novices, King's Pizza required a system that was user-friendly and easy to learn.

Solution

After contemplating installing a consumer-grade analog DVR system, King's Pizza elected to go with the similarly-priced, yet much higher quality Axis IP solution with in-camera edge storage. They installed five 720p HDTV-quality AXIS M10 Series Network Cameras in key locations throughout their store.

All video footage is recorded onto the SD cards within the cameras, and the system, once configured, runs self-contained without the need for a computer or laptop thanks to the AXIS Camera Companion software. King's Pizza can even access real-time or recorded video on a smartphone whenever they need.

Result

Not only does the IP surveillance system provide reliable, round-the-clock security for the restaurant, but the owner can also use the footage to track business operations, monitor cash register transactions and investigate incidents. The ability to view archived video has had an immediate positive effect on the restaurant's bottom line. The owner can track whether an ingredient such as premium steak is being used too much, or see if there is a reason for discrepancies in each night's receipts. Every dollar counts for small businesses, and Axis network cameras help ensure they are all counted correctly.

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An order of surveillance, but hold the DVR

Owner Dave Young purchased King's Subs and Pizza in 1996 after working there as a cook since 1991. Today, King's has 15 employees, including delivery men, with anywhere from three to seven working at one time.

Following an attempted break-in, Young began shopping to replace his long-broken analog camera. After comparing similarly-priced analog and IP solutions, he found the high quality video and cost-effective edge storage options offered by Axis cameras to be the best fit.

Five 720p HDTV-quality AXIS M10 Series Network Cameras were installed throughout the restaurant to cover the front and back doors, cash register, customer counter, and kitchen, as well as the office where the money is counted at closing time. The edge storage capability meant that all surveillance video would be recorded to the cameras' internal SD-cards, while AXIS Camera Companion software turned the system into a self-contained recording solution. The cameras connect to a standard networking switch – not even a computer is needed for the system to record.

Because King's opted for edge storage and eliminated the need for a costly and maintenance-heavy DVR, the pizza shop was able to utilize a much higher quality IP camera solution at a comparable price.

Easy as pie: Searching for cost–saving evidence

While the fear of being robbed was the initial impetus for looking for a new surveillance system, the IP solution has proven to be more of an operational asset than Young could have ever imagined.

"It's is helping to improve the bottom line," Young said. When the shop is busy, it's all hands on deck. Yet, sometimes those hands make mistakes. "Waste is a huge deal in this business," explains Young. "My hamburger is cash to me. If I start to see irregularities in our food costs, I can review the video to answer, 'Why am I losing here?'"

Young will log in to the viewing client and focus on the kitchen to see, for instance, if too much steak is being cooked for a particular meal, or whether food was dropped and had to be thrown out. Other times, it's simply a matter of a hot selling order that week.

In one instance, Young noticed a major discrepancy when balancing the register. A review of the video revealed the shift manager had reversed a refund at the customer's request. Not only was money not stolen, but the video showed the manager making a correct decision and reinforced Young's confidence in the recently-promoted employee.

The ease-of-use of the new IP system helps Young recoup time he lost in the past playing detective without any clues.

"I am not what you'd consider a tech guy. The fact that I can get in there and figure it out without anyone really showing me how, that says something." He regularly uses the Investigation Mode to move the video frame-by-frame to pinpoint what he's looking for. He also discovered that the snapshots enable him to zoom in on the 720p image.

"It's phenomenal. I rarely ever need to zoom in because of the clarity of the cameras, but I have that option. There's nothing to it: just a few clicks and you're good to go."

Security to go

Despite his exceptional staff, Young doesn't take many days off as the owner. But the ease of use, clarity, and remote monitoring capabilities of the IP system just might allow him to fully relax while spending a day doing what he loves most: fishing.

"I downloaded the TinyCam app on my Droid," says Dave, "and if I'm away running errands or actually take some time off to do some fishing, it's great that I can check in on the restaurant wherever I have a connection. I've got a tremendous staff who I trust implicitly. But the ability to check in – even just to see how busy we are – gives me that extra little bit of comfort."

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