



Challenge

Leverage existing IT infrastructure to design a high-definition surveillance system that helps protect corporate assets across the Halifax Regional Municipality and ensure public safety.

Market: City surveillance
Location: Canada
Partner: Chubb Edwards

Solution

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) security manages the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system using the Avigilon Control Center network video management software. The municipality installed over 200 1 MP, 2 MP, and 5 MP Avigilon HD cameras at selected recreation centers, ferry boats and transit terminals, and at a new metro transit service garage, also equipped with an Avigilon 180° 8 MP Panoramic HD Dome camera. HRM stores 14 days of footage on servers, monitored from a central control room and at location-specific monitoring stations.

Benefits

By leveraging IT resources, HRM is able to save on costs and migrate to full high-definition as network requirements and budget allow. By dedicating a portion of its network to the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system, HRM was able to create a wireless surveillance solution with the ability to zoom in with superior image clarity. The advanced management features in Avigilon Control Center monitor areas 24/7 and help HRM staff reduce investigation times from hours to minutes.

- Leverage existing resources
- Faster investigation times
- Flexible and scalable

Featured Products



ACC Software



1 MP HD Camera



5 MP HD Camera



8 MP HD 180° Dome Panoramic Camera



Network Video Recorder



Halifax Regional Municipality Leverages IT to Secure Critical Assets with Avigilon High-Definition Surveillance System

The first British town founded in Canada in 1749, Halifax and the surrounding area has evolved to become home to more than 370,000 residents of diverse background and is a modern port city teeming with culture and heritage. Representing more than 185 communities, the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) offers programs ranging from business planning and fire and emergency to recreation and transportation services to meet the needs of its thriving population. After conducting a series of audits to determine the level of security across the municipality, HRM established a corporate security team tasked with protecting assets such as equipment, vehicles, and IT systems, and ensuring the safety of its most valuable asset – the people who routinely use its facilities. With a common security focus across all departments, HRM deployed the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system to leverage its existing network infrastructure and ensure greater security across the organization.



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Avigilon: A Unified Security Solution

HRM owns millions of dollars' worth of assets and property that are accessible to the public, so it is vital that they are protected and used properly,” explained Randy Stoddard, manager of corporate security at HRM. The new corporate security team worked closely with IT to design a unified systems approach to surveillance that would leverage the municipality's existing IT infrastructure and preferred vendors list. “Offering an IP-based, high-definition surveillance solution, Avigilon was chosen for its performance capabilities and because it could easily leverage our existing network to facilitate installation, reduce costs, and meet IT standards across the board.

HRM security personnel manage the Avigilon HD Surveillance System using Avigilon Control Center network video management software (NVMS.) The municipality installed more than 200 1MP Avigilon HD cameras, 2MP Avigilon HD cameras, and 5MP Avigilon HD cameras at three recreation centers, wirelessly on three ferry boats and their corresponding transit terminals, and at its new metro transit service garage, which also has an Avigilon 180 8MP Panoramic HD Dome camera. Monitoring traffic flow and protecting assets are the primary security goals at both the recreation centers and transit garage, while passenger safety is the top priority at the ferries. HRM stores 14 days of footage on 14 servers located across the municipality.



Leveraging IT for 24/7 Surveillance

“We immediately recognized the advantage of investing in an IP-based, high-definition surveillance solution that runs on our IT infrastructure to make the most of our available bandwidth and cable network,” said Stoddard. In fact, Stoddard has relied on the IT department to provide guidance about network capabilities at each site throughout the design and installation process. “With a clear understanding of how much space we have on the network, we can determine how many cameras we can install and where in an effort to facilitate installation and reduces costs.”

According to Stoddard, sharing resources and expertise between IT and security has been a significant benefit and critical to his team’s success. Because of his close relationship with the IT department, Stoddard was able to create a centralized 24/7 monitoring area for HRM’s disparate surveillance systems to improve system management and achieve efficiency gains. “Currently, we have a central control room manned around the clock for live monitoring of several sites across the network, but our ultimate goal is to extend monitoring capabilities to all locations as bandwidth becomes available.” Each location also has its own monitoring station onsite for additional viewing.

The central control room will also monitor HRM’s intrusion and access control systems, which will be integrated with the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system for centralized management. “Because many of our surveillance initiatives are new, we are also bringing in intrusion and access control systems to create an integrated security solution, which will allow us to review footage when an alarm goes off, view the surrounding area, and determine if there is an actual disruption or if the sensor went off accidentally,” explained Stoddard.

“I can be a mile away and view live video footage, while the ferry captains can monitor passenger activity, as well as some of their systems like the engine room, onsite.”

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Added Benefits of Integration

Because the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system integrates so well with IT, which cuts across all HRM business units, there is greater collaboration across the municipality to ensure that its infrastructure can accommodate surveillance for better overall security. “Together, we can address common issues such as network capabilities to design the most effective surveillance solution possible,” said Stoddard. For example, Stoddard chose to install an Avigilon 180 panoramic HD dome camera for wider coverage at the transit garage because there was only enough wiring available for one camera. “This saved us the time and expense of having to add new wiring to accommodate multiple cameras.”



Wireless Surveillance on Ferries

Another key advantage of the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is that it was able to easily expand to meet HRM's needs for a wireless solution on its ferries. "Because the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system was already in play at several other sites, we knew image clarity and performance would be superior," commented Stoddard. "And as an IP-based system, we knew it would also work as a wireless solution for our ferry system." Dedicating a section of its network to the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system, HRM is able to monitor the ferries live at any time, on the boats themselves, and back at the central control room. "I can be a mile away and view live video footage, while the ferry captains can monitor passenger activity, as well as some of their systems like the engine room, onsite."

Avigilon's excellent image clarity was another key selling feature for HRM, a feature that has become critical to the municipality's ability to successfully monitor activity at the ferry's main entrance and exit. "There is a choke point at the main entrance where users have to pass through before they can board the ferry, so we have installed Avigilon 5MP HD cameras for greater image clarity," said Stoddard. "We can then follow those passengers through the facility using 1MP and 2MP Avigilon HD cameras and easily capture the evidence we need should an incident occur." According to Stoddard, images can be blown up by 50 percent to capture identifiable detail. "In fact, the Avigilon HD camera replaces the need in some instances for a PTZ camera because it can zoom to capture details without losing the broader field of view," he added.

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The Avigilon Control Center Advantage

Leveraging the advanced management features of Avigilon Control Center, an open network video management software platform designed specifically to manage high-definition video, Stoddard and his team were able to quickly get the system up and running. "Avigilon Control Center is very user-friendly," noted Stoddard. The corporate security team can easily search for and retrieve specific video evidence required to confirm or disprove an incident, leading to much faster investigation times and greater overall success. "With our old analog system, it could take us ten hours to go through video footage live, while with Avigilon Control Center, it only takes a couple of minutes to find what we need."

HRM has also been very impressed with the responsiveness of the Avigilon technical support team, who facilitated installation and continues to simplify system management with ongoing support and assistance. "We have turned to the Avigilon technical support team several times and have been consistently pleased," stated Stoddard.



A Common Security Focus for the Future

The HRM corporate security team was initially established to address the issue of asset loss and damage, but quickly shifted focus to the greater task of protecting the people who live and work within the community. As a municipality, HRM encompasses many different types of facilities ranging from headquarters to transit systems to recreation centers, all presenting different security challenges but sharing a common thread: the IT infrastructure. “By deploying an high-definition surveillance system that can integrate with our existing IT network, we can assure consistent, cost-effective, and reliable security right across the municipality,” concluded Stoddard. “As our older analog-based systems become obsolete, we will move entirely over to an IP-based, high-definition surveillance solution like the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system for a unified approach to protecting our people, property, and information.”

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