CASE STUDY: Campbell University

Campbell University migrates to IP video with the help of ARTECO eMotion software

THE CUSTOMER

Founded in 1887 in Buies Creek, N.C., Campbell University offers students all of the amenities of a typical large-scale college campus while at the same time providing the feel of a small, close knit community. With an enrollment of more than 6,000 students, including 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students on its main campus, the private university offers courses in nearly 100 disciplines and also boasts its own medical and law schools. Later this year, Campbell will also be launching its new School of Engineering, which will provide students with yet more options from which to choose in furthering their academic career.

This will be the third new school to open at Campbell in less than five years following the opening of the Jerry M. Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine in 2013 and the establishment of the Catherine W. Wood School of Nursing in March 2015. With this expansion in degree programs and course offerings has also come new construction. Concurrent with the establishment of the nursing school last March, the university broke ground on a 72,000-square-foot building that is expected to house the nursing school, as well as Campbell's physical therapy, occupational therapy and medical research programs. Campbell is also working in conjunction with the state to erect a new pedestrian tunnel under U.S. 421 to connect its campuses.

To ensure the safety of students and faculty members in these new facilities, Campbell decided to significantly upgrade its video surveillance system beginning with its Fine Arts building. The job of updating Campbell's surveillance hardware and software fell to Charlie Price, the university's audio/visual manager, and the rest of his team that oversees the installation of physical security systems across the campus.

"There is very little crime here and we want to keep it that way," said Price. "We feel like one of the best ways to ensure our parents that we're keeping the environment healthy is to provide surveillance."

THE CHALLENGE

According to Price, the university currently has about 150 cameras deployed across campus, which are a mix of both analog and IP. For years, Campbell relied strictly upon analog solutions for its surveillance needs but with the advancements made in image quality and the costs to deploy network cameras coming down, the university has decided to make the migration to IP for all of its future projects.

Although the organization had leveraged some standalone video recorders in the past, Price said the devices had limitations and for the initial run of this upgrade, which included the installation of 20 cameras in the Fine Arts building and about 30 cameras altogether, they needed a more robust system that could help bridge the gap.

"We tried some standalone units that worked really well but you're limited to 16 channels on most of them and we were really searching for a solution that would deliver more than your average, standalone IP video recorder," said Price.

As opposed to many college campuses which opt to install one large server and then tie all of the cameras into it and thus create a single point of failure, Price wanted to safeguard against this by having a more distributed network setup, leveraging individual servers that could be viewed from a single desktop. Additionally, the audio and video team wanted its surveillance network to be separate from the rest of the university's IT backbone.

"That not only takes a load off of our computing people, but it also ensures great reliability per building," added Price. "We can just sit at our desktop, pull up a certain server from an individual building and view the cameras."

THE SOLUTION

After consulting with Accu-Tech — the distribution partner Campbell collaborated with on the project — and evaluating several different brands, the school opted to go with Arteco's eMotion software as it delivered all the benefits the school sought and more. Price said he was extremely impressed with the user-intuitiveness of eMotion, as well as the company's technical support which he described as second to none.

With built-in analytical features included, eMotion is an event-based video management software solution that allows for unlimited number of user profiles in an expandable and scalable format, making it ideal for a wide variety of applications. It includes intelligent options such as license plate recognition (LPR), privacy zones, and Arteco Everywhere to remotely activate I/O devices right from the software client, further expanding flexibility for customers, like Campbell.

Having only a five-person staff with myriad responsibilities across the campus, Price said manpower resources are stretched to the max, but he knew eMotion could help support the university's current and future surveillance infrastructure with relative ease.

"Security is one-eighth of what we do and we don't have a lot of time to dabble with it, so we're happy when we hook up something and it works," said Price. "Arteco provides great technical support and the support team is always right there to answer any questions."

Price said he was also comfortable knowing that eMotion would always be up and running in the background so that in the event an incident does occur on campus, officials will be able to retrieve the evidence needed quickly and reliably.

"Nothing is more disheartening than to have an incident, go through your video recorder and find there is nothing there," said Price. "Reliability is key for us."

With the installation in the Fine Arts building still ongoing and the upcoming projects at the aforementioned tunnel and school of nursing set to get underway soon, Price said the university has decided to standardize all of its surveillance technology on Arteco and will be ensuring all future hardware purchases are certified on the platform. However, because Arteco's software conforms to the ONVIF standard, the university will not find itself pigeon-holed into using one particular type of camera.

"I think this is going to be powerful software for us. It delivers far more benefits than we currently leverage it for. In the future, we look to capitalize on these rich functionalities as there is so much more we can use," said Price.