NEXTIVA®
Success Story

Metro Transit Police Department

The Customer
Metro Transit Police Department
Serving the Minneapolis/St. Paul Area

Industry
Transportation

Solutions and Services
Nextiva® Video Management Software™

Region
Americas

Results
- Single video management platform streamlines security efforts and optimizes transit operations.
- Ease of use minimizes the need for operator training.
- Agency is empowered to be more proactive with its security measures.

Opportunity

Metro Transit is one of the largest transit systems in the U.S., providing more than 80 million annual passenger trips throughout the Minneapolis/St. Paul region. It operates the METRO Blue light rail line, Northstar commuter rail line and 125 bus routes. Metro Transit employs its own sworn police force committed to the safety of its customers and employees, and serves eight counties and 85 cities in the area. Starting in 2010, it embarked on a four-year construction project to expand operations with an 11-mile line connecting downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis with existing lines. The initiative, known as the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT), is adding 47 new light rail transit vehicles and 18 new stations.

Solution

Taking a proactive approach to security, the Metro Transit Police Department launched an initiative to standardize its transportation and security technology platform in conjunction with the CCLRT Project. Since 2009, Metro Transit has leveraged a wide array of Verint® security solutions to monitor portions of its operations — from its mobile fleet and light rail systems to its stations — while migrating from analog to IP-based video. Based on its experience and success using Verint solutions and the technology's open architecture platform that integrates easily with third-party systems, Metro Transit selected Nextiva® Video Management Software™ to help achieve the objectives of the CCLRT standardization initiative. Taking a phased approach to implementation, the organization began its rollout in September 2012.

"Safety and security are critical initiatives within our organization," said Brian Weaver, Senior Asset Protection Specialist, Metro Transit Police Department. "With the support of our trained drivers, our sworn police officers and the capabilities of our technology systems, we can identify possible criminals or those who are looking to cause harm within our environment while ensuring a high level of safety for our passengers."

The project consists of a multi-layered security approach consisting of strong policies and innovative technology platforms. The video system installed at Metro Transit is one of the largest in the state of Minnesota, totaling approximately 5,500 video surveillance cameras. The transit agency began transitioning to IP technology in 2009 and since that time, has added only IP-based surveillance devices to its network. Before standardizing on the Verint Nextiva platform, Metro Transit had eight separate systems that managed its video streams.

The comprehensive camera system is used to monitor areas along critical transit points, including high-risk stations and populated areas of service. Between 30-50 terabytes of video evidence are pulled on a regular basis, and that number increases approximately 30 percent year over year, Weaver said.

"The video evidence we collect is critical in any investigation," commented Weaver. "High-quality video evidence has proven to be an indispensable tool for Metro Transit Police as well as our bus and rail operations divisions."

Beyond security, the surveillance network is also used for operational purposes, including monitoring, training and providing evidence to address customer complaints or injury and accident claims. Being able to leverage the system to manage operations provides a higher return on investment, Weaver noted.

VERINT

Solution (continued)

At the center of the system is Nextiva Video Management Software (VMS) from Verint. The powerful video management application includes video viewing and distribution, system health monitoring and investigation management. It streamlines security operations and helps transit personnel quickly assess and respond to video and data. The Verint VMS solution also provides real-time situation awareness, with the ability to export video for investigation and evidence to law enforcement and other authorities. The solution enables permissions to be customized to help ensure restricted and policy-based viewing, while mobile and web-client applications offer officials flexibility in how they can access — and respond to — information.

"Standardizing our video management platform provided a significant cost savings," Weaver stated. "First, we no longer have to train our operators how to use eight different systems, and second, we have sped up our investigation process. We want to be as efficient as possible with our video systems, and this unified system enables us to be as productive as possible and pursue investigations more thoroughly."

Nextiva Video Management Software also provides automated video system health monitoring to help maximize system uptime and ensure video availability 24/7. At Metro Transit, the Verint VMS solution captures video from thousands of cameras and provides a fully redundant solution to monitor the growing mass transit system.

Results

Since standardizing its video management system, Metro Transit has realized the benefits of ease of information retrieval and streamlined investigations. In addition, the high-quality video allows images to be employed for operational purposes.

The most significant factor in the project is the enhanced layer of security protection realized for the transit system's customers and employees. Increased image resolution has been integral in assisting with the identification of individuals who have committed crimes, and the quick export function allows images to be exported rapidly to police.

"The ability to leverage one video management solution across our infrastructure enables proactive response and enhanced situation awareness," Weaver said. "Our goal is to provide the highest level of safety to our network of passengers and area residents, and this platform is a critical component of this initiative."

Metro Transit's safety and security record received recent national and local acclaim. The agency landed three safety-related awards from industry groups, including a "Gold Standard" rating for its transit security program from the Transportation Security Administration. The TSA rating is based on a voluntary, comprehensive review focused on security planning, training and outreach. Metro Transit received high scores across all categories in the TSA's review. Metro Transit was also awarded the Gold Award for Bus Safety Excellence for large transit systems by the American Public Transportation Association for a suite of safety measures involving both operations and communications. This is the second time in five years Metro Transit has received the prestigious award.

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