

Serra City Hall integrates police forces using Axis network cameras. Espírito Santo municipality replaces traditional urban monitoring with an image management model aimed at prevention.



Organization:
Serra City Hall, Department of Civil Defense

Location:
Serra, Brazil

Industry segment:
City surveillance

Application:
Urban safety and security

Axis partners:
7LAN, Digifort

Mission

Vitória, the capital of Espírito Santo, is bordered to the north by Serra, a city whose participation in the gross state product jumped from 14% to 19% during the period from 1999 to 2004. This growth generated a phenomenon that is already well known in large cities: an increase in violent crime. To address this changing scenario, new measures had to be adopted.

Solution

In 2007, Serra had 18 limited coverage cameras and analog technology. In 2009, a new project was conceived using network cameras controlled from a central office. With municipal and Federal Government funds, through Pronasci (the National Public Security and Citizenship Program), the first step of the project was inaugurated with 40 network cameras from Axis Communications, the global leader in network video.

30 AXIS Q6032-E PTZ Dome Network Cameras were installed in urban streets with a further 10 AXIS M1054 Network Cameras, of HDTV quality, monitoring the Central Office, the Data Center and the access areas. The entire project integration was carried out by 7LAN, with software from Digifort.

Result

According to the City Hall Secretary of Civil Defense, Joel Lyrio Júnior, the new system has been well received by the public and the police. "We have achieved significant reductions in the levels of violent crime in the monitored areas, bordering on 80% in comparison to previous years. We have increased the quantity of cameras and changed technology, opting for a more advanced solution with better resolution quality." The use of vehicles and human resources have been optimized, according to the secretary, creating a new management instrument for police operations.

"The system is the most modern that exists today in the state of Espírito Santo. For example, the quality of the images already allows us to disrupt gangs involved in homicides because we integrate information and plot strategies in order to anticipate crimes instead of waiting for them to appear on the screen."

Joel Lyrio Júnior, Secretary of Civil Defense at the Serra City Hall.

Intelligence work

The Central Office, where the images captured by the Axis cameras converge, currently has six terminals which operate 24 hours a day, each monitored by three operators, totaling 18 people per shift. The room is 78 m² in area and could be mistaken for others spread throughout the country, although it has one fundamental difference: the way the images are handled.

"We don't call our Central Office 'Video surveillance', but rather 'Video protection'", the secretary added. The difference is that City Hall is abandoning the traditional indiscriminate monitoring concept and opting to use the system for the prevention of incidents. "Instead of just monitoring something, we are opting to focus on the results", observes Lyrio. "This represents an important evolution of the system".

According to the secretary, the most important instrument is the generation of knowledge and its management. "We have a situation room, a crisis room, where all the data is monitored. It is here that we can view the images from all the cameras online. You can evaluate some of the images, distribute them among the police forces, measure the data and perform diagnosis of incidents. To sum up, it is a large intelligence operation". Accordingly, integration between the Military Police, Civil Police, Civil Defense, Fire department, Municipal Guard and Traffic has been achieved.

In order for this system to work, a link from the Department of Public Safety was placed inside the room where a map of a crime can be plotted from geo-referencing the incidents. When a call from a car is received, a report is generated and passed on to the violent crime observation room together with the details given by the Department of Public Safety, in a completely integrated manner.

Prepared for the future

The urban video surveillance cameras from Axis were connected through point to point radios and fiber optics. The images are kept on storage and backup discs for 30 days. The recording of incidents is carried out as required.

"Speed in the recovery of the images and the quality of these recordings allows for identification and accelerates the investigation process," argues Carlos Bonilha, director of Digifort. Due to the quality of the implemented system, the police can follow an event until its outcome, storing images from a range of cameras and searching or even recovering the images for later analysis. "With the quality of the Axis cameras and the operational facilities of Digifort software, the Civil and Military Police can monitor risk areas with the aim of rapid intervention and identification of individuals who have caused harm to society", added Bonilha.

For 7LAN, the project represents a showcase. "Due to this project, we have gained greater credibility with other clients such as the Public Prosecutor and the Department of Justice for the state of Espírito Santo", observed Janaina Oliveira, financial director of the integrator.

Thinking in the long term, the integration may become even more widespread. With this configuration, Serra City Hall can expand the system during the next few years to as much as 300 cameras. "The video surveillance project made it possible to construct the fiber optic ring in the city which will enable City Hall to integrate schools, health care units and tax checkpoints among others, to the municipal data network," affirmed Emerson Silva, technical director of 7LAN.

In addition to breaking up gangs involved in homicides, the police have turned to high-quality images to recover stolen cars and seize drugs; turning the technology into direct benefits for the public. "The idea is that we can have everything necessary to monitor an even bigger area," the secretary of Civil Defense assessed.

