EVERETT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Washington (State), USA

FACTS

Customer:
Everett Public Schools

Vertical Market:
Education

Product:
Ocularis

AN INTEGRATED SECURITY APPROACH FOR SCHOOLS

In the US, public schools are operated by over 13,500 school districts. It is a centralized approach to administration that delivers many advantages and efficiency gains, and enables greater resources to be focused on giving students the best possible education in a safe, secure and inspiring environment. One area many school districts still have opportunities for enhancing the safety and security of schools and children is in the centralization of their video surveillance. Underperforming cameras and disparate storage and management systems from multiple manufacturers create an overly complicated and costly infrastructure.

THE CHALLENGE

Everett Public Schools has been providing a blueprint for others to follow since centralizing its surveillance operations seven years ago. It recognized that upgrading its mismatch of standalone DVRs and analog cameras would improve operational efficiency and better support on-site police officers, campus security officers and school administrators, notably Principals and Assistant Principals.

THE SOLUTION

After much consideration, the decision was taken to implement all IP cameras across each of its campuses and Qognify's award-winning video management system (VMS) – Ocularis – was chosen to centrally manage them. Everett Public Schools prefers its security teams to be a visible and approachable presence on campus, rather than working covertly in a control room.

Consequently, Ocularis is predominantly used to rapidly locate and review footage from its expansive system consisting of 757 IP cameras. This network of mainly Hanwha Techwin cameras, is installed internally and externally, at each of its 26 schools spread out across 39 square miles. Incidents can range from rule-breaking and anti-social behavior, through to vandalism, theft and arson. The system is also used to quickly react, should an alarm be raised that a student has left the campus without authorization.

In addition to improving its response to on-campus events, Ocularis also assists Everett Public Schools in complying with public records laws, including disclosure requests regarding incidents inadvertently captured by its cameras, such as traffic collisions on public roadways outside a school. All of Everett Public School's cameras are connected via fiber to a central secure off-site data center, which can be accessed around the clock via Ocularis, by personnel with the appropriate permissions. Microsoft Active Directory is used to manage credentials and the level of access granted to perform activities from video to exporting camera footage.

THE CUSTOMER

The Everett Public School District is located in Snohomish County in Washington State in the Northwestern United States. This school district manages a total of 26 schools that serve a student population of more than 21,000.

THE RESULT

Brandon Knutson has been responsible for managing the VMS at Everett Public Schools since 2015 and boasts 14 -years' experience using Ocularis, and he comments: *"The reason we continue to trust in and rely upon Ocularis is that it continues to evolve and improve with every new version released. What's more, it supports our vision for a more integrated approach to how we use security technology."*

Since making this shift, very new security technology introduced by Everett Public Schools now becomes part of a fully integrated system. A good example of this approach is the choice of Open Options access control, selected in part for its ability to work with Ocularis. Brandon explains: *"Working with Qognify we have created an integrated VMS and access control. In doing so we can pre-select and be automatically presented with events of interest."* Examples include doors being held open for too long, or a door being forced open.

This collaborative approach between customer and vendor is an important part of the relationship Qognify has enjoyed with Everett Public Schools for many years. *"You don't get the opportunity to experience the support a vendor provides until after you have made a purchase, but we can truly say the quality-of-service provided by Qognify is a real and unique selling point."* Brandon continues: *"We know the support team is there if and when we need them, and I am proud to see some of the recommendations we have put forward have manifested themselves in the system through new releases."*

"If any suspicious activity is detected, an operator can rapidly view, review and replay all relevant footage through Ocularis," explains Hamilton. To aid the speed of response the operator also benefits from the use of visual maps to rapidly determine what cameras are available across each site, as well as video analytics to minimize time required to trawl through footage to identify activities of interest.

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