

# Superior Surveillance

## Charter National Bank Leverages Existing Investment with State-of-the-Art DVR Solution

Like many financial institutions around the world, Illinois-based Charter National Bank relied for years on an analog-based CCTV system to monitor and record activities at its bank branches and automated teller machine (ATM) locations.



**T**HE system itself, however, was proving to be less than reliable. Recent and intermittent technical problems meant that the system wasn't always up and running, while searching through hours of VHS tape each time the bank needed to find and retrieve footage of a specific event represented a consistent and time-consuming challenge.

Charter National's senior vice president of operations, Bill Mingotti, says the bank was contemplating an upgrade of the system when a distressing event – a robbery at one of the branches – fast-tracked the decision.

"What prompted our switch was the unfortunate incident of a robbery. Thankfully, no one was hurt, but as a result of that we brought a security group in, consisting primarily of some ex-FBI folks, to do some analysis for us and to look at our security plan in general," Mingotti recounts. "One of the things that was identified was the fact that we had outdated equipment. The consulting group recommended updating the equipment and started discussing digital equipment versus the old, outmoded tape system, and that's what pretty much got us to start looking at a digital video solution."

### Selecting the Right Solution

Charter National was in the process of evaluating digital video offerings from different vendors when it received a brochure on a

networked digital video solution for banks from March Networks™. The brochure had come from Mitel Networks – a trusted vendor Charter National had dealt with for years for its voice communications. Given the timing of the information and the fact that Mitel Networks and March Networks were working together under a strategic alliance, Mingotti immediately called his Mitel Networks contact and asked him to set up a demonstration of the March Networks solution.

"Our Mitel contact was promptly out here with March Networks. And after a couple of sessions, we decided to go with the March Networks system."

Mingotti says the digital video solution from March Networks met Charter National's key requirements, including the ability to integrate with all of the institution's existing CCTV cameras and to transmit video easily over its high speed, wide area network without disrupting business-critical data. This flexibility allows Charter National to significantly enhance its surveillance and monitoring capabilities while protecting previous capital expenditures.

The solution is also helping the bank to streamline its operating processes and therefore work more cost-effectively.



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### Remote Monitoring

"The March Networks solution gives you ease of maintenance," Mingotti says. "It's pretty straightforward to use and it's a lot easier to monitor than an analog system. Real-time video monitoring can be done from one centralized place instead of from numerous locations and you can have one individual responsible instead of several.

"The ability to retrieve footage and look at video in real time across the network – that's an incredible function that far surpasses what we had before," he continues. "You can easily move from camera to camera. You can do wonders with this thing. Before we were just fixed to a system that recorded data to tape, and heaven help you if you ever had to go back and look at it."

And there's been no down time with the system since it was installed in February 2002, he adds.

"The install went very well. The March Networks guys are technically competent, pleasant and easy to work with. The other neat thing about the install was that we didn't have to change any of our CCTV cameras – they all just fit right into the system. Ultimately we'll upgrade some of our cameras over time, but the magic part was just plugging the system in and seeing it run."

### Applications

Charter National's digital video solution is configured to transmit and record customer activity during business hours and to record events after hours

based on motion detection. Areas being monitored include bank branch lobbies, teller stations, ATM vestibules, cash vaults and safety deposit rooms. Mingotti says the bank may also use the system for traffic flow analysis, which could help ensure better customer service.

For convenient administration, Charter National uses March Networks DVR Viewer software to remotely select and monitor video being transmitted from any networked DVR in real time. The software resides on any networked PC and also provides authorized staff with the ability to search footage by date, time or transaction number, and to remotely retrieve any required clip via the feature-rich, user-friendly interface. Another PC-loaded software product – the March Networks DVR Configuration Tool – provides the bank's identified administrators with the next level of system control, such as remote configuration of video speed, adds, moves and changes, and even equipment upgrading.

Mingotti says that the March Networks solution is now a critical component of Charter National's revised security plan, far surpassing the bank's older analog system in terms of reliability, functionality and ease-of-use. Knowing that high quality video footage will be there when it's needed – and will be easy to locate and retrieve – gives staff peace of mind and is making day-to-day monitoring tasks simpler and easier for all involved. □

### About

#### Charter National Bank

Charter National Bank is a family-owned, multi-branch institution based just outside of Chicago, Illinois. It has served the community for nearly 30 years with a variety of personal, business, investment and financial services, has a customer base of more than 18,000, and assets of approximately U.S. \$130 million.

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