



Upscale Ottawa Hotel Keeps Pace with Latest Technology

When the 276-room Brookstreet Hotel opened for business in Ottawa 10 years ago, the hotel industry was still in the very early stages of adopting video surveillance technology. Far more common were hotel security departments staffed by dedicated security personnel who patrolled the corridors and responded to incidents as they occurred.

In the absence of video surveillance, the Brookstreet Hotel would require a minimum of 2.8 full-time equivalent security staff at a cost of \$150,000 a year or more, figures Director of Finance Troy Hughes. But with 32 cameras covering exits and entrances, the lobby, parking garage, bar area, business center and swimming pool, the Brookstreet's March Networks® video surveillance system covers a lot more of the hotel than any manned security department.

“Without our March Networks video surveillance system, there’s no question that we’d have a dedicated security staff,” said Hughes. “Instead, we have what we call a maintenance and prevention team. They’re our eyes and ears around the building. It’s because of the video surveillance system that we’re able to do that.”

A stone’s throw from March Networks corporate headquarters, the Brookstreet serves as a testing ground for the company’s newest video surveillance technology. The hotel is equipped with three March Networks Hybrid NVRs with 2 TB of storage and a mix of analog and IP cameras, all powered by March Networks Command, the company’s web-based video management software.

The newest addition to the Brookstreet’s video surveillance system is March Networks’ recently introduced

MegaPX 360 Indoor Dome camera.

The 360 Indoor Dome captures 360-degree or 180-degree panoramic views in five megapixel resolution, eliminating blind spots and the need to deploy multiple cameras to capture the same area from every possible angle.

“The 360 Indoor Dome is awesome,” said Hughes. “We installed it in our business center, which is a fairly small space. With a traditional camera, we weren’t able to see the whole room. With the 360, we can see everything. When I log in, I see a fish eye view, but I just right-click and the image flattens out.”

Digital PTZ functionality allows Hughes to zoom in and display multiple dewarped views of any part of the room.

The Brookstreet’s 8732 Hybrid NVRs accommodate up to 32 channels of video and allow the hotel to migrate from 100 percent analog to 100 percent IP video. The recorder’s optimized H.264 compression delivers exceptional high-definition video and noticeably sharper images from legacy analog cameras without impacting storage. Built-in battery backup functionality ensures a smooth shutdown in the event of a power outage, and March Networks unique docking station architecture keeps all of the cables securely connected to the back of the unit if maintenance is required.



*Troy Hughes, Director of Finance,
Brookstreet Hotel.*

BROOKSTREET HOTEL

The Brookstreet Hotel is a 276-room luxury hotel located in Ottawa's Kanata Research Park. The 18-story boutique hotel is located adjacent to the Marshes Golf Club and features 16,000 square feet of meeting space.

www.brookstreet.ca

The 8732's four hard-drive slots provide a total of up to 12 TB of storage—more than enough to hold the 30 days of archived video required by the hotel, while the Brookstreet's web-based Command software allows authorized staff to access video from any desktop in the hotel, eliminating the need for client software and periodic upgrades by IT staff. "It's great because you can log in wherever you are," said Hughes.

The Brookstreet's video surveillance system has been instrumental in capturing evidence of numerous incidents over the years.

A March Networks IP camera positioned to capture the license plates of vehicles entering the hotel's underground parking garage has come in handy on a number of occasions.

"The ramp leading to the underground garage has a posted speed limit of 10 kilometers per hour to allow enough time for the door to open, but we've had guests who ignored the speed limit and crashed into the door, causing \$1,500 to \$3,000 of damage," recalled Hughes.

Other cameras have alerted hotel management to guests emptying bottles of bubble bath in the hot tub or getting overly frisky. In either case, maintenance staff have to drain the hot tub and sanitize it.

The motion histogram in the March Networks user interface directs Hughes to spikes of activity, allowing him to quickly zero in on video evidence.

"It's an amazing feature of the March Networks system because it allows us to find video when we're not quite certain of the time," he noted. "The motion histogram limits our search to moments when there was discernible activity, so it reduces the amount of time we spend on investigations."

The system has also captured evidence of guests and outsiders scaling the fence around the outdoor pool, passing counterfeit bills, stealing coats, and resorting to inappropriate behavior after being cut off at the bar.

A camera on an adjacent building even captured a thrill-seeking base jumper parachuting in the dead of night from a construction crane atop the hotel before it opened, "so you never know what surprises a video surveillance system will bring to light," said Hughes. ▼



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