

Research Pays Off for Credit Union



Philadelphia Financial Institution Selects Enterprise-Wide Solution from March Networks

Finding the perfect digital video surveillance system can be a real ordeal for small and medium-sized businesses lacking the time, expertise and resources to conduct a thorough review of vendor offerings.

Richard Hasson, Vice-President of American Heritage Federal Credit Union in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, put three DVR systems to the test before settling on an enterprise-wide solution from March Networks™.

Two DVR systems installed at a branch in Philadelphia's city center were called upon to produce evidence of four hold-ups in one year.

“With the first system, I could locate the video and get the information, but it was a nightmare printing, copying and storing it,” recalls Hasson. “Plus, I had to be at the branch to pull up video because the unit wasn't networked.”

He replaced it with another DVR system, but it had a problem keeping time and ate up the credit union's bandwidth.

“It would go out of synch every day and I got nothing but lip service. Finally, my security

systems integrator, Kriebel Security Inc., came in with an offer to replace it with March Networks technology.

Research

“We did some research, installed it in our city centre location and found that we liked it a lot. It was easy to use, performed well on our network and produced excellent quality images.”

American Heritage Federal Credit Union was founded in 1948 to serve employees of the Budd Manufacturing Company and assumed a broader community mandate in 1985. Today, it serves 650 select employer groups and 70,500 members at 16 branches in Philadelphia.

All of its original DVRs have been replaced by March Networks 4000 Series units featuring Linux operating systems embedded in flash memory, docking-station

architecture, intelligent hardware and software watchdog circuitry, and built-in back-up battery.

Hasson's advice to other financial institutions planning to upgrade their digital video surveillance systems is to do research before making a decision.

"Anybody can come in and say 'Look what we have. This is great.' Talk to colleagues from other businesses. This is especially important for organizations of our size. We're not a multi-billion dollar regional and we don't have full-time security staff with the time, expertise and resources of larger organizations. I spend two per cent of my time on security and have a lot of other responsibilities."

Bandwidth

Hasson also advocates getting Information Systems staff involved in the research and vendor evaluations from the start.

"I have not had any real problems with any of the units. In two years, we had one hard-drive issue and it was taken care of right away."

Richard Hasson
American Heritage Federal Credit Union

"I don't have problems now with my March Networks systems, but before I switched, bandwidth issues prevented me in some situations from accessing video during business hours. It's better if everyone, including Information Systems staff, is on board."

March Networks systems employ H.263 or MPEG-4 video compression to minimize bandwidth impact and allow users to adjust bandwidth allocation to align with the end user's network capabilities.

"Another thing I like," says Hasson, "is the way the systems alert me when there's a problem. I could be out somewhere having



American Heritage Federal Credit Union

American Heritage Federal Credit Union (FCU) (www.amhfcu.org) serves 70,500 members and has 16 locations in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. One of the top 10 credit unions in the state, American Heritage FCU has established a target of opening between two and four branches every year to 2010.

lunch or in a meeting and I'll get an email on my PDA to tell me I have an issue."

Of the four hold-ups at the credit union's city center branch, three were carried out by the same duo.

"One would jump over the counter, while the other one stood by the door. They wore masks and had guns. It was pretty terrifying," recalls Hasson.

With its March Networks system in place, he can now access video remotely from the credit union's head office and quickly email images of any incidents to police. Internal renovations that made it more difficult for robbers to dash in and out finally brought the rash of holdups to an end.

The March Networks video surveillance systems are used primarily to resolve issues relating to bad checks and the use of stolen ATM cards.

The DVR systems record video from cameras installed at entrances, lobbies, ATMs and teller stations and provide the minimum of 60 days of video storage the credit union requires.

Hasson also appreciates the reliability of the systems.

"I have not had any real problems with any of the units. In two years, we had one hard-drive issue and it was taken care of right away." ✨

Kriebel Security Inc.

Kriebel Security Inc. (www.kriebelsecurity.com) serves financial institutions in the U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. Established in 1988, the company offers a wide range of products and services, including video surveillance, access control, vaults, drive up systems and safety deposit boxes. To contact a sales representative, please call 1-800-982-8867 or email sales@kriebelsecurity.com