

Synovus Moves to Advanced Technology

Bank Holding Company All Too Familiar With Pros and Cons of Competing CCTV Systems

Security staff at Synovus, a financial services holding company with 31 banks and more than 400 branches in the U.S. Southeast, are all too familiar with the pros and cons of competing video surveillance products. With parallel systems in place following a decision in 2007 to begin upgrading to March Networks technology, the first step in any investigation is to determine which system to access.

“If they have to retrieve video from a March Networks® NVR, they can cut their searching time in half,” said Synovus Digital Recorder Administrator Charlie Williams. If, on the other hand, the incident took place at a branch still equipped with a legacy system, Synovus security staff know that they could be tied up for awhile.

Using March Networks’ Investigator software, security staff can zero in rapidly on spikes of activity graphically displayed in a motion histogram. If they have to investigate an incident recorded on a legacy system, “they could be sitting there for hours looking through video,” said Williams.

The decision to look for a more advanced video surveillance system was based on a long wish list. As bank growth caused the number of recorders needed in the field to multiply, the overall system became more and more difficult to administer, said Omer Smith, Synovus Manager of Security Electronics. With March Networks’ Enterprise Service Manager (ESM) installed on a server at the bank’s headquarters in Columbus, Georgia, security staff are now able to remotely configure all March Networks NVRs across the Synovus footprint, manage user privileges and group NVRs by function, geography or other custom hierarchies.

The bank is also able to take advantage of the ESM’s ability to manage the health status of these recorders, hard drives and cameras at branches spread across five states.

For the legacy systems, security staff have to run a special piece of software every day to confirm that they are operating properly.

“Using the ESM, we’re able to quickly check all of our March Networks recorders to make sure they are up and running,” said Wayne Miller, Project Manager. “We know within 30 seconds what’s running and what’s not.” The ESM automatically sends designated security staff emails to their desktops and PDAs alerting them to any camera malfunction or hard drive issue, allowing them to immediately address problems as they arise.

In the event of an alarm at any of the branches, security staff at the Synovus 24/7 security/operations center can immediately pull up live video and call police if necessary. If requested, they will also access live video

Console, branch managers can keep an eye on activity both inside and outside the bank from their office. They also have access to the Investigator and Evidence Manager software modules, allowing them to review archived video, save images and share them with the police and other banks in their community.

“The branch managers know the people who come in and out of their branches a lot better than we do, so if someone comes in who doesn’t look right or if there’s a suspicious vehicle parked outside the bank, they can get that image out to those who need it quickly,” said Williams.

Archiving capacity was also on the Synovus list of priorities when it began searching for a new video surveillance system in 2007. Smith and his staff aimed for 90 days retention, but weren’t always able to

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to make sure that employees safely exit a branch at closing. By viewing video from cameras installed outside the branch and in parking lots, they can follow employees to their vehicle while talking to them on the phone.

“It’s a service that we like to offer our employees because of the peace of mind it gives them,” said Smith.

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Security staff in the field and individual branch managers also have access to video. Using the March Networks Live Monitoring

achieve it with their legacy systems. Using only two of the four internal hard drive bays that come with the March Networks 4000 Series NVRs, Synovus has more than enough archiving capacity to meet its needs. It equips its 16-channel NVRs with two 750 GB drives for a total of 1.5 TB of internal storage. The 3000 Series units installed in remote ATMs are equipped with 750 GB of storage.

As of 2009, Synovus was approximately one-quarter of the way through its conversion to March Networks technology. Within the next few years, the plan is to replace all of the remaining 400 legacy systems with March Networks NVRs. ✨



SYNOVUS

Synovus (www.synovus.com) is a financial services holding company with more than \$35 billion in assets. Based in Columbus, Georgia, Synovus provides commercial and retail banking, as well as investment services, to customers through 31 banks with 440 branches and ATMs, and other Synovus offices in Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Florida and Tennessee. The company focuses on its unique decentralized customer delivery model, its position in high-growth Southeast markets and its commitment to being a great place to work to ensure the delivery of unparalleled customer experiences.

