



Phenomenal Partnerships and Product Reliability

Barnes & Noble College enjoys peace-of-mind with intelligent video solution

DELIVERING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES to more than 5 million students and faculty across the U.S. comes with some unique security challenges, as Steve Welk, Director of Loss Prevention for Barnes & Noble College, knows well.

With almost 800 stores, the country's leading campus bookstore operator has retail locations coast to coast, and many inside the nation's top academic institutions including Harvard, Yale, and Georgia Tech. Bookstore locations range in size from small to as large as 70,000 square feet.

Managing security across such a diverse group of locations requires a reliable video solution that is easy to use, and a video manufacturer that is attentive to the needs of Barnes & Noble College.

According to Welk, the bookseller enjoys all of that with March Networks®. ▶

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— Steve Welk

Director of Loss Prevention, Barnes & Noble College

“The features of the actual system — the hardware, the software — are easy to use for our managers,” said Welk. “But perhaps equally as important is the level of partnership we have with March Networks. This is a relationship in which I place high value.”

Barnes & Noble College first deployed a March Networks video surveillance solution in 2008, following the recommendation of its security systems integrator NAVCO. The organization has worked with NAVCO for years, and as a trusted integrator, valued its advice to standardize on one enterprise system.

Although it’s been a decade since its first March Networks NVRs were installed, many of them are still performing well today.

“In terms of reliability, they have been phenomenal,” said Welk of March Networks’ previous generation video recorders. Barnes & Noble College is currently upgrading the NVRs to March Networks’ newer 8000 Series Hybrid NVRs, which offer higher-performance video recording and management, as well as hybrid support for both analog and IP cameras.

In addition to the 8000 Series, the bookseller uses March Networks Command™ Enterprise video management software. A fully distributed solution, Command Enterprise is ideal for Barnes & Noble College because its centralized user management and customizable views let Welk and his team maintain control over who can access the system. ►





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In addition to Welk, his four regional loss prevention managers and two support team members, Barnes & Noble College bookstore managers also frequently view video from their own regions to assess operations and customer service, or help with employee training. Command’s customizable permissions ensure each store manager sees only what’s relevant to their job.

“It’s been a very good tool in terms of helping store managers oversee their day-to-day business,” said Welk.

The solution has helped Barnes & Noble College reduce shrink and uncover fraudulent behavior.

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Command’s convenient health monitoring feature helps ensure that the entire system is performing optimally and that video is always there when Welk and his team need it. The health feature alerts the team to any issues that could affect video recording.

“It helps us prioritize our response,” he said, noting that his team can very quickly learn if a hard drive needs replacing or if a more serious system issue has occurred.

The Command software also makes it easy to export video. In the event that a crime has taken place in a bookstore, Welk and his team will provide video to campus law enforcement. They also work collaboratively with many of their university clients to help maintain general security around their stores.

“In the higher education environment, there are often high-risk events taking place, such as ongoing medical research, high profile visitors to campus and gatherings related to athletic events, to name a few,” said Welk, explaining that some schools will also install redundant video systems to monitor traffic in and around the bookstores.

The overall reliability of its video solution prompted Welk to once again turn to March Networks when one particular bookstore recently made a special request for people counting analytics. ►

Using March Networks Searchlight™ for Retail software, which integrates with point-of-sale transaction data and analytics provided by a highly-accurate FLIR Brickstream 3D sensor, retailers can capture the number of customers entering and exiting their stores, learn peak traffic times, and also determine conversion rates.

The Barnes & Noble College location at a major university in Atlanta, Georgia, is now using Searchlight for Retail with people counting and seeing great success.

“It’s performing well,” said Welk. “It was nice to know that March Networks has that feature. We hope to expand people counting to more bookstores in the future.”

According to Welk, the bookseller is equally excited to deploy March Networks’ new 8724 V Tribrid NVR, which can support traditional analog video, as well as HD analog and IP video on the same recording platform. “The tribrid capability,” he said, “will help Barnes & Noble College protect its investment in its existing security infrastructure.”

“We’ve been in the business so long that we’ve got a lot of analog systems out there” said Welk. “It’s exciting to know that we can get HD quality video without having to replace all that coax.”

Overall, Welk says that March Networks’ strong customer service and willingness to help with training — even joining NAVCO in attending the organization’s annual conference for store managers — has been beneficial for the organization.

“March Networks has been great about keeping us up to speed on new product information, and the training support we’ve had is hugely appreciated. The responsiveness has been outstanding.”

The video solution itself continues to demonstrate its value, he added.

“I think in general it’s given our managers peace of mind. They know they’re able to see what’s going on when they’re not around,” said Welk. “I think it gives our customers peace of mind, too.” ▼



THE CHALLENGE

Barnes & Noble College needed an enterprise video surveillance system powerful enough to help secure almost 800 bookstore locations. The system had to be reliable and easy to use, so both the loss prevention team and bookstore managers could easily access video. Barnes & Noble College also wanted a strong partnership with their video surveillance manufacturer and systems integrator, so they could help with ongoing training and support.

THE SOLUTION

Security systems integrator NAVCO recommended a March Networks enterprise video surveillance solution for Barnes & Noble College almost 10 years ago. Today, the solution includes 8000 Series Hybrid NVRs, providing support for both analog and IP cameras, and Command Enterprise video management software. The retailer is also using Searchlight for Retail with people counting analytics in one location and hopes to extend that capability to other stores in the future.

THE RESULT

The solution has delivered the reliability and ease of use Barnes & Noble College was looking for. Loss prevention team members and bookstore managers can easily view video, while Command Enterprise’s centralized management and customizable views let system administrators maintain control over what each user can see. March Networks also provides ongoing training and support so all system users stay up to speed on the latest tools and features available to them.