SDI ON: Video Management Systems

Fundamental Considerations to Kick-Off
Your VMS Redesign or Upgrade

Delivering Intelligent Technology™

When embarking upon an enterprise video management system replacement or upgrade, your team's time, project cost and the resulting system performance can be significantly shaped by initially asking a few key questions.

When designing or upgrading a video surveillance system, it is important to understand how camera selection can impact both cost and performance. With many organizations working with budget constraints and limited resources, it is important to make sure that the hardware chosen fits the purpose required. Often in our industry, we see clients that are focused on a particular camera specification, such as megapixel, without necessarily considering the intent of the camera and the system.

When initiating the design process and collecting system technical, coverage and use requirements, it is important to make sure to bring in representatives from security, IT and facilities functions in your organization. Not only do you have to make sure that your network can support the additional traffic and storage, but you may have limitations with how and where you can place cameras. Bringing in all of the stakeholders early on in the process will avoid lengthy delays later on when additional requirements or limitations might be identified.

As you begin to work with your IT, security and facilities teams to determine your exact video surveillance requirements, there are some important questions to ask:

What areas are most critical to cover?

It can be difficult to ensure that 100% of a facility is covered with cameras—especially within the allotted budget. In many cases, trying to get the last 10% or 20% of an area with camera coverage can eat up a significant part of your spend – that might have been better used to improve upon the quality or capabilities of existing cameras.

What are you trying to see?

Remember, in most cases the goal of a camera is not to gather HD imagery, but instead to identify a specific event. In addition, some areas may demand a higher resolution in order to identify a face or a license plate. Identifying the areas that do not require a high resolution can often significantly reduce costs. Categorizing operational surveillance requirements in the following manner will help define the objectives of each camera view:

- **Monitor and control**: This level of resolution enables operators to see crowds and individuals with very limited detail. Used to understand the larger context of an event.
- **Detect**: This level enables operators to see detail of individuals' clothing and major physical characteristics.

- **Observe**: This level enables operators to observe and analyze the behavior of individuals.
- **Recognize**: This level enables operators to recognize an individual.
- **Identify**: This level provides a level of detail that is typically acceptable for evidentiary purposes.

What is the available lighting?

Some cameras, even at a lower resolution, can provide a better picture at night. In some cases, it may be cheaper to improve the existing lighting of an area than to purchase a camera designed for low lighting conditions.

These questions just scratch the surface of what should be considered when starting to identify the requirements for a video surveillance system. Most importantly, make sure all of the stakeholders are brought in to identify their specific requirements and concerns. Identifying requirements early on and selecting the proper surveillance equipment can make sure that your projects are completed on time and within budget.

SDI

Mission critical systems integrator SDI delivers intelligent technology solutions that ensure client safety, security and revenue generation. SDI specializes in designing, building and maintaining advanced security technologies and supporting infrastructure. With a corporate resume of over 25 years, SDI offers the technical breadth, depth of talent and operational knowledge of a national security integrator, along with our pristine reputation of forward-thinking, responsive and client-oriented service delivery. From the many IP video systems that SDI has deployed across numerous critical environments, to the complex integrated command centers that our Team has deployed, SDI helps our clients drive their security goals to reality.

SDI
(SDI Solutions LLC)
33 West Monroe, Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60603
312.580.7500 phone
888.968.7734 toll free
www.sdisolutions.com
LinkedIn: SDI Solutions
Twitter: @SDISolutions