

Newark Housing Authority (NHA)

Quick Facts:

- ◆ 45 housing developments; 10 devoted to the elderly and disabled; 35 for families.
- ◆ Buildings provide housing for over 20,000 residents.
- ◆ A large measure of NHA's success is attributed to the Latitude's scalability, flexibility, and overall ease-of-use.
- ◆ "One of the greatest things has been the visual changes we see at the family properties in a very positive way—quality of life has improved"

Background

NHA buildings are located in nearly every neighborhood in the city of Newark, comprising over 8,700 units, and providing housing for over 20,000 residents.

Many NHA developments were rife with drugs and gangs, mothers and children were prevented from moving freely throughout their neighborhoods, and seniors needed more protection.

In 2006, the Newark Housing Authority was laboring under the threat of a Federal takeover and hired a new Executive Director, Keith Kinard who completely revamped the organization. Budget cuts meant staff cuts and replacing the in-house NHA security guard unit with a private security service.

Business Challenges

The NHA realized it needed to upgrade the physical security systems to provide more effective assistance to Housing Authority security staff. The NHA's initial security strategy was to lock down all the buildings housing elderly residents with improved access control and a 24/7 guard presence.

Prior to installing state-of-the-art surveillance technology from DVTEL, Newark

Housing maintained low-tech, black and white cameras that were unmonitored. If an incident happened, the video could aid in an incident investigation, but it was not an ideal means of security.

The DVTEL Solution

NHA installed a fiber optic backbone connecting all buildings, providing a strong infrastructure for a high-performance IP camera solution connected directly to the network. A dedicated command center was established to be staffed by at least two operators at all times.

DVTEL's Latitude was chosen to manage all video feeds covering upwards to 50 of the Authority's buildings. Security staff trained and supplied by Winfield Security, monitor more than 600 cameras located throughout the Housing Authority's many properties. The cameras are a mix of fixed and PTZ.



Newark Housing Authority

About DVTEL INC.

With thousands of installations spanning five continents, DVTEL is a world-class developer of open video surveillance solutions including video management systems, cameras, encoders, video analytics, custom integration and applications.

DVTEL works in partnership with system integrators, end-users as well as with other leading industry players to be an all-inclusive provider of open solutions on a platform that provides full integration.

DVTEL's product line delivers scalability, flexibility and functionality with the ability to grow seamlessly. Regardless of what you have today; without loss of investment; small, medium or large scale projects, DVTEL ties everything together. For more information: +1-201-368-9700 or www.dvstel.com.

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The Solution

Millennium Communications Group advised on interior and exterior placement for the hundreds of cameras to be installed.

Each building's lobby guard monitors that building's cameras and each building's manager(s) have access to the video as well.

In addition, NHA upgraded access control throughout many of its buildings with Emerge from IEI which was integrated to DVTEL's Latitude.

The Highlights

The DVTEL Latitude VMS manages video feeds from over 600 cameras, 24/7 and 365 days a year providing crisp, clear images for two or more staff in charge of the Command Center.

- ◆ Command center also receives fire alarm and integrated access data, and with one-way intercoms, has a direct line to a Newark Police dispatcher and building security officers.
- ◆ Multiple video wall screens display single camera views, multiple tiles of views, maps of locations, and access control information.
- ◆ Results in fighting crime have been impressive. Charles Whitner, NHA Director of Security recounted a number of stories how he and his staff, in cooperation with Newark Police, "staked out" problem areas within the NHA developments and gathered video evidence to connect suspects to the crime.

Results

"The DVTEL system has resulted in numerous arrests and convictions," said NHA Executive Director, Keith Kinard. "The judges have been very interested when we bring our laptops to court and show them footage of what has happened. Some of them are caught off-guard at just how clear the images are."

Prosecutions coming out of the NHA have included aggravated assault, petty thefts, vandalism, and numerous drug crimes.

"What we're hearing from our residents is that those who have cameras on the first floor of their building want them on higher floors. Those family developments that don't have cameras want cameras."

Monitoring over 600 cameras is a lot of information to focus on. Operator experience, in tandem with DVTEL technology, has proven key to improving residents' safety.

Newark Police take a more active role in policing the properties. As Whitner recounted, "The NPD response is excellent, and with our camera views we're able to provide helpful guidance, such as telling them exactly who they're looking for and where he is.

"We use it for management purposes as well as crime." For example, cameras installed above security guard desks allows the guarding company to monitor officers remotely.

"From a quality of life perspective, it's a huge improvement."