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Hello CREDIT UNION

OpenEye Makes Managing Video Security Easier at Hello Credit Union

For Hello Credit Union, a Panama City, Florida-based credit union with branches in different time zones, being able to monitor and support its video surveillance systems remotely is important.

Hello CU operates five branches that serve about 13,500 members and manages $180 million in assets. Established in 1952, it has grown in recent years due to its acquisition of FLAG Credit Union in Tallahassee.

Hello CU's primary business is making loans and opening checking accounts. Protection of member information is paramount.

"We don't sell widgets. We don't sell paper. We sell trust," said Hello CU President and CEO Michael Akers.

Challenge

Hello CU wanted a way to easily view and manage its video surveillance system across its branches, since it did not have a wall of monitors or just one dedicated staff member overseeing security. It currently has several staff members in compliance, security and IT who use OpenEye Web Services (OWS) through a desktop client or their phones to gain needed information from the system.

Relevant staff members receive email notifications if the surveillance system or a camera goes down and when it's back up. The purpose of a security system for them is to ensure they will have usable video footage or information if and when they need it.

"Cameras only matter when you need them," said Akers. "Sometimes it's a set it and forget it situation."

So, a business needs a system that is reliable and to be able to check for common camera issues like an obstructed view.

"Sometimes law enforcement accesses an ATM camera and realizes the camera was fuzzy or pointed in the wrong direction," Akers said. "You have to be proactive and know what components you have and what condition they're in. You have to be aware. That's how you protect your organization."

In 2018, Hurricane Michael slammed into Panama City, damaging Hello CU's headquarters. The business erected a new building, which opened in early 2021, with a new video security system, installed by Panama City-based Sine Tech LLC.

Solution

Sine Tech does security system design and installations for airports, condominiums, chemical plants, utilities and other businesses within a 200-mile radius of Panama City. It has been working with Hello CU since 2018, including outfitting its temporary headquarters after the hurricane as well as its new building.

"They wanted health alerts. They wanted basically a central login for all their recorders because they have five different locations, one being in Tallahassee, which is about two hours away," said Joshua Schwinn, Sine Tech's owner.

Because of the locations and acquisition, the credit union was using three different recorder brands, each with their own login.

"It was a real big hassle," Schwinn said. "A centralized control unit is what they wanted."

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Michael Akers
President and CEO
Hello Credit Union

The credit union wanted health alerts if an ATM or camera went down. Instead of needing someone to monitor cameras constantly, the system sends a notification if there's an issue. User setups are easier, as branch managers have their own logins.

"My favorite thing about the OpenEye software is the ability to search for events," Akers said. "I really appreciate the search feature within OWS where you can get down to an event much quicker than traditional software because they require a manual search. With OWS, you can pull up thumbnails and pick a square and drill down so much faster."

If the credit union received a subpoena, it might have taken a full day to gather information. With the OWS event search, it takes 30 minutes or less.

On a recent Sunday morning, OWS sent them an alert that someone was trying to steal an ATM at one of the credit union's locations. They were able to quickly access the video, see what was happening and dispatch law enforcement.

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