

Success Story:

Lawrenceville, GA Police Department



Located just 30 miles northeast of Atlanta in the seat of Gwinnett County, Lawrenceville is home to more than 30,000 residents comprised of 48 percent White, 40 percent African American and more than 10 percent Hispanic or Latino. The growing and diverse population has commanded a strong police presence that is well tended by the influential Lawrenceville Police Department.

“Maintaining the integrity of evidence is one of the most important functions of law enforcement. And the system that Advergent and GRS Technology Solutions have put in place leaves no question that our evidence gathering process is the most secure possible and can be easily validated and substantiated.”

Major Paul King, Lawrenceville Police Department

Issue:

Blending Security Needs with Functionality

Moving from a converted car dealership into a newly constructed 72,000 square foot facility has given the Lawrenceville, GA Police Department an edge in the fight on crime. Armed with a million dollar network security system – representing more than 10 percent of the building’s \$8.5 million budget – it’s clear that the Lawrenceville PD knows the value of security.

Working with Systems Integrator Advergent, Lawrenceville PD blended security needs with functionality when designing its new police headquarters, which was funded through a voter-approved local sales tax.

“The car dealership building we were in for 21 years was never designed to be a police department,” said Lawrenceville PD Major Paul King. “Our security consisted of a few analog cameras scattered about in a system that was pieced together. It was sufficient at the

at the time that we installed it, but it was becoming clear that we needed a more sophisticated system, which we were adamant about including in our new property.”

Lawrenceville PD had worked with Advergents previously in providing a closed circuit television (CCTV) system at the City of Lawrenceville facility parking garage two years ago and the system – consisting of a 31-channel analog system – worked so well that Advergents and the PD chose GRS Cloud CCTV to provide video surveillance as part of their solution in the new HQ.

Solution:

The Best in Security and in Functionality at a Price Much Less than all of the Other Bids

Moving up from the analog system in the parking garage to an IP system operating on the network that includes video surveillance, access control, voIP, paging, intercom, gate systems, A/V, vehicle video evidence uploading via secure access point, point to point wireless from the parking deck, and many other integrations, the Lawrenceville PD HQ is a technologically progressive epicenter even though it might not look like it to the casual observer, said Advergents Director of Technology, Damon Whitlow.

“When you walk into the new LPD headquarters it doesn’t look like a high tech building, it’s not like CTU on the TV show 24,” said Whitlow.

But looks can be deceiving.

“All of the technology is on the backbone and is integrated – it’s an awesome system that offers this police department the best in security and in functionality at a price much less than all of the other bids.”

Working from the “ground up” on the new Lawrenceville PD HQ allowed Advergents to develop a strong relationship with the customer and to work on a plan to meet the very specific needs of a police department.

“For starters, we knew that we had to design a network that would support this building and operations for at least the next 25 years because community buildings have a specific life cycle with a minimum amount of time as they are taxpayer funded,” said Whitlow.

Looking at the backbone as a whole is where Advergents started. The cabling was put in with the expansion of the bandwidth in consideration. Advergents used seven Dell servers and 69 Axis cameras in the solution as well as 51 HID door Controllers for access.

“In looking at what we thought would support what we were looking for, we knew that we would go with GRS Cloud CCTV video surveillance software because it is rules driven. We knew that we could pull all of the other technologies from there – the phone, the access, etc., because they all rely on trigger events. So we said, ‘Let’s write rules inside of the GRS Cloud software to interact with all of these other systems.’”

“One of the most awesome things about GRS is the ability to adapt on the fly – we can remote in and write a rule. That was very attractive to the Lawrenceville PD.”

At the Lawrenceville PD HQ, the trigger-operated component of the GRS Cloud CCTV software interfaces with the closed circuit television system; access control; paging; wireless functions; AV; system of evidence and the IT portion overall, said Whitlow.

“There are so many capabilities with this system it’s incredible,” said Major King. “Our communications people are in our building 24/7 so our setup is very important. With this system and the notifications they can view individual cameras and keep a working knowledge of who is where in the building as well as what is happening on the perimeter of the building.”

One of the best features of the solution is how the system will aid in evidence gathering and storage.

“Maintaining the integrity of evidence is one of the most important functions of law enforcement,” said Major King. “And the system that Advergents and GRS Technology Solutions have put in place leaves no question that our evidence gathering process is the most secure possible and can be easily validated and substantiated.”



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Interview Rooms

Most of the evidence gathering in the police station takes place in an interview room where detectives interrogate suspects and witnesses. Proper audio and video recording of these accounts during this process is essential. For the Lawrenceville PD HQ, Advergent and GRS Technology Solutions have provided a solution that not only makes these recordings simple – with just the push of a button – but have also made the storage and retrieval an easy, organized and verifiable solution.

The interview evidence is stored by camera number, room number and by date and time stamp. Detectives, or approved designees, are able to go into those annotations for a segment of video and can find them by a case number, suspect or victim name or related information. And when there is a need for this evidence in a court setting, it is all verifiable with watermarks and methods to ensure that there has been no tampering. “Needless to say, our detectives are extremely excited about the new recording systems and catalogues,” said Major King.

Access

Knowing who is where, and who has been where, is essential in the protected halls of a police headquarters. Access control system with cards is a key component to any security solution, but Advergent and GRS Technology Solutions developed a system that provides verification that the card user is actually the individual with permissions.

“What if an employee lost their card and someone used it to gain access to a secure area?” posed Major King.

At the Lawrenceville PD, any time an employee uses their card to gain access into a secure area the card reader sends a signal to the system which in turn tells the GRS VMS software to record a picture at that location and store it as a file to the server, which adds to the security of physical evidence handling.

“We have rooms where we store physical evidence such as drugs or weapons,” said Major King. “We have to be sure that the people accessing those rooms are the individuals cleared to access those rooms, and there is no better way than to produce photographic evidence of who is going in and out of these secure areas.”

Whitlow says that 99.9 percent of the time Advergent leads with GRS Cloud CCTV on a video solution. Why?

“I think it’s obvious though the examples in place at Lawrenceville PD how GRS Cloud CCTV can be used with several other functions, but also because of the ability to adapt ‘on the fly’ when you are using it. For example, we can remote in and write a rule when they need something changed. That, in particular, was very attractive to the Lawrenceville Police Department.”

In addition to superior performance and adaptability, was GRS Cloud CCTV affordability, said Whitlow.

“The high bid for this project was \$2.5 million and we implemented this sophisticated and tailored project for under \$1 million,” said Whitlow.” The reason we could provide the solution for less than half of the highest bid is that we trusted that GRS could run the back end of the project. The competitors were throwing hardware at this project while GRS Technology Solutions was providing brains.”