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# SECURITY

SOLUTIONS FOR ENABLING BUSINESS

## The Brand Leader:

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# Making Unreliable Video, Reliable

By Diane Ritchey, Editor

**Y**ou just implemented an expensive IP video surveillance system. And when it goes offline, awareness is down. Important evidence is lost.

activity – looking for anything that might necessitate a public safety response. We have a strong relationship with the Philadelphia police department; they rely on our video and assistance when something happens on or near our footprint. So the case is clearly

"What we don't want to happen is a security event on campus, we go to the video and the video is not there," Spera says. "This system will tell us which server or storage or camera is down so that when we do call the technicians, they know right



Todd C. Vigneault, CPP, Sr. Manager, Enterprise Security Systems, for Symantec Corporation, recently tested the Viakoo product in conjunction with surveillance in three global locations. Photo courtesy of Symantec

That's exactly what Drexel University in Philadelphia, is trying to avoid. The urban campus has more than 500 security cameras across its 74-acre University Center campus – half IP and half analog with all video being recorded to an IP network. Internal and external cameras secure very large public spaces. In addition, says Domenic Ceccanecchio, M.S., CPP, Vice President for Public Safety, the cameras assist security personnel to conduct virtual video patrols of the campus within the campus security communication center. "The staff there is constantly taking calls, dispatching police or security officers, looking for suspicious

made that we have a heavy reliance on security video as part of our comprehensive security and safety program."

Ceccanecchio and Joe Spera, director of operations for Drexel Public Safety, use Viakoo to monitor its video to proactively identify and correct network issues. "It's a unique product," Ceccanecchio says. "We were trying to find solutions that address the reliability problems that we were having. Looking at the business case, we can see an immediate return on investment as the product provides for a better, more efficient use of our administration time. In addition, it gives us a better comfort level that our video surveillance system is up and operating properly."



At Drexel, having reliable video is especially important, as in addition to students feeling safe on campus, the Philadelphia Police Department may often ask for video feeds as part of investigations. Photo courtesy of Drexel University

where to go. It limits the amount of time they are spending on maintenance. There are a lot of stakeholders that are relying on us to have accurate and reliable video."

## What Causes Video to Fail?

At any given time, 30 percent of an IP video network does not work properly. While physical video applications work with frames, IT networks communicate in packets. There are many components along the video stream path that experience problems and cause video system failure.

IP security video networks consist of cameras from the edges, through complex computing software and networking infrastructure, to the recording hard disks at the core. There are lots of variables that create



**Cecceaneccio and Joe Spera, director of operations for Drexel Public Safety, use the Viakoo system to monitor the university's video system and to proactively identify and correct network issues. Photo courtesy of Drexel University.**

the intrinsic technical vulnerabilities that lead to missing video and video downtime. In spite of good people and technology, you still have missing video.

As problems go undetected, your costs and risks rise as situational awareness falls.

Simply, video is complicated. And that complexity leads to increased cost and risk when it is not available. There are added expenses to your security program such as service hours, inefficient routine maintenance contracts, monetary dam-

ages and the guesswork involved finding the cause. And you face increased risk in terms of regulatory compliance violations, impeded investigations and brand equity damage.

Viakoo detects and alerts customers to anything that threatens, degrades or stops a video stream from the camera across the network to the recording disks; every 20- minutes. It also points to the probable cause and what corrective action should be taken. Viakoo alerts customers to video performance issues that they would otherwise be unaware of.

Todd C. Vigneault, CPP, Sr. Manager, Enterprise Security Systems, for Symantec Corporation, found this aspect particularly helpful, given that he used the

product in conjunction with surveillance in three geographic regions around the globe.

Part of Vigneault's role is leading a team that not only implements security technology, but ensures that users understand the technologies and leverage them to their fullest capabilities, then supports the solutions throughout their lifecycle to protect Symantec assets.

"I liked how it gives you the capability to show problems on your video network that otherwise you'd have to find through manual efforts," Vigneault says. He used the product in three Symantec locations – across the globe Latin America, North America and Asia. Two locations were ones where he knew that he had existing video issues.

"With users of IP video, when you have a large network, you have people do manual audits or you have your VMS demonstrate when your video is offline in an alarm format," Vigneault says. "The first scenario is the one that leaves gap or an exposure of time between audits. That's what we were experiencing. The Viakoo product allows users to automate processes to close the gaps that exist with manual efforts." **SECURITY**