VIVOTEK and Genetec™ (Stratocast) Unite to Ensure Travelers' Safety at Hotel Gran Marquise

One of Fortaleza's largest hotels, which hosts thousands of people each year and holds hundreds of events, has reinvented itself and converted analog technology to IP surveillance. Upon project completion, it is expected that the Gran Marquise will have 250 VIVOTEK network cameras installed, integrated and linked with all other hotel devices under Genetec's cloud-based video-surveillance-as-a-service (VSaaS) solution, Stratocast™.

Vertical: Hospitality

Country: Brazil/ Fortaleza

Solutions: IB8369A/ FD8166

Total Quantity: 250

VMS Partners: Genetec™

About the Gran Marquise Hotel

The Gran Marquise is a five-star hotel of 18 thousand square meters located on the seafront of Fortaleza (Ceará). With a 23 year history, the hotel has a large infrastructure of 230 apartments ranging in size from 29 to 131 square meters, two presidential suites and 21 floors in total, of which 14 are dedicated to guest rooms 7 are retained for events, recreation and administration. It is one of the most in-demand destinations among national and international authorities, artists and athletes, such as Bill Clinton, former president of the United States, Vladimir Putin, current president of Russia, singer Paul McCartney, rapper Snoop Dogg, as well as the fighters of the Ultimate Fighting Championship. In addition, the Gran Marquise was the first hotel in Brazil to achieve the ISO 22000, certificate that ensures adherence to extremely high standards of food quality and safety.

The Challenge: Enable the Unification of the Management

The Gran Marquise realized that its security system needed to be renewed. The hotel had 500 analog cameras and 22 digital video recorders installed – an extensive system, but one which only provided low-quality images and demanded heavy workload when it was necessary to locate and retrieve footage of a recorded event. "We looked at the hotel and realized that we had good internet, excellent rooms, perfect service, but if a customer asked for footage from security cameras, the only thing we could offer were noisy images," said Jussieudo Gomes, Security and Information Technology Division chief of the Hotel Grand Marquise Fortaleza. To solve this dilemma and improve the management and security of the hotel, a plan was formulated to develop a pilot project with VIVOTEK – a global provider of network cameras, PoE switches, and network video recorders, and Genetec™, a global provider of IP surveillance software, access control and license plate recognition solutions.

Divided into four stages, the goal of the project was to enable the total unification of management, security, marketing and commercial operations. In the first phase, 250 analogue cameras were replaced by a mere 48 VIVOTEK network cameras. Also installed was the Genetec™ Stratocast ™ software, a cloud-based video recorder tool that eliminates the need for any local server, making it possible to monitor and share images with fully encrypted data. Two models of network cameras were installed throughout the hotel: one is the IB8369A, a 2-megapixel camera capable of capturing high quality video, with IR illuminators effective up to 30 meters for superior image quality throughout the day and night. The camera also features Smart Stream II technology, which optimizes image quality for the most important regions in any scene; in doing so it can reduce network bandwidth consumption and storage requirements by up to 50%. The other camera installed was the small-scale, but big-featured FD8166, an ultra-mini fixed dome network camera with a tiny diameter of only 90mm.

"Because of the 'L' shaped layout of the hotel, we previously had five analog cameras installed on each floor: two in the corridor, because the distance from one side to the other was too long to be monitored by a single analog camera; one in front of the elevator; another covering the 'L' and one more covering the maid's service area. Now, each floor has only three cameras: one camera that serves the 'L' and the elevator; another that serves the corridor and one more

observing the service area. At the reception area, the same thing happens, we put a different camera on the ceiling, and with just that solution we managed to cover the lobby, the bar, a part of the reception and the stairs of the restaurant, "explained Gomes.

In the second phase, the Genetec™ Security Center solution was implemented for the internal parts of the hotel. With this platform, Gran Marquise can unify operations by combining all IP surveillance systems into one interface. Now all access control and video surveillance are connected to, and accessible through, the cloud.

The third and fourth stages are still in progress. The goal is to install 250 network cameras in total and unify the security system with access controls and the fire alarm system. In addition the KiwiVision analytical software was also installed, a system which counts people automatically through cameras and 3D sensors and detects objects added or removed from a scene. This way it is possible to automatically detect if a dangerous object has left behind or if something has been stolen from a particular area.

"The new security system has come to improve the image quality of surveillance, the layout of the hotel and the promptness of response to the customer. In the past, if we needed an image we had to expend great effort in searching whole files and spend hours watching videos to be able to select and retrieve the relevant event - not to mention the impact power failures, and malfunctions issues in power supplies, recorders and hard disk drives. ", said Gomes.

New System Producing Immediate and Tangible Results

The new IP surveillance infrastructure has already proven effective during a wedding held at the hotel. The bride had been in the spa area enjoying the luxurious Day of the Bride service. However when she went to dress up for the ceremony, she did not find the jewelry she had prepared for the wedding. Security staffs were triggered to investigate the occurrence."Through descriptions of the bag that carried the jewelry and the time when the bride last saw it, we were able to locate the footage though the synergy of VIVOTEK's camera and the Genetec™ system, and then proceed to point of precise relevance in the video. We noticed that the bride carried the purse into the car, but on exiting the car she was no longer carrying it. When we showed her the pictures, she went to the car and the purse was there. If it wasn't for the new IP surveillance solution, we would not have been able to ascertain what had happened, the bride would remember and find the jewelry only after the ceremony, and her day would have been ruined.

This entire investigation process, finding the images and resolve the case, took only 15 minutes, but saved a very important day" said the security chief.

Public-Private Partnership

The Hotel Gran Marquise's new security system is part of Genetec's private-public sharing initiative, which enables the sharing of certain cloud-recorded images with police forces. The Military Police, the Ceará State Government and the ABIH (Brazilian Hotels Industry Association in Ceará) are partners in this project along with the hotel.

The purpose of this private public partnership is that, with the monitoring carried out by private companies, the public sector can achieve a more effective action, speedily curbing the action of criminals in monitored places. The private-public partnership is founded on the belief that such sharing of private company surveillance with the public sector will enable a more expedient and effective curbing of criminal activity in such monitored areas. In this way, it is possible to expand monitored areas and reduce crime without direct public sector investment. Recorded images are transmitted in real time to the police, and a two way relationship benefits both sectors.

"The goal of projects with public-private partnerships is prevention. It is possible to increase public safety with little investment from the private sector, "explained Country Manager of Genetec Brazil, Denis André Côté. With such initiatives, we are beginning to see the benefits of advances in total surveillance systems expand beyond those companies who take the initiative to invest in them, and begin to serve the broader public.