

City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Symmetry™ Meets Diverse Needs of Municipality

Case Study

After operating several out of date and disparate security systems, the City of Hobbs determined it was time to consolidate to one centrally-managed security management system. TSG Solutions, a security consulting firm, was hired to analyze their needs, research new technologies and find a solution that would best meet their requirements as a municipality with multiple locations and needs. TSG performed a risk assessment and feasibility study, and recommended AMAG Technology's Symmetry access control system. Symmetry provided a scalable, enterprise solution with many attractive features. Symmetry could grow as the City of Hobbs added more buildings and doors and integrate with the school district's existing video management platform from Video Insight.

TSG Solutions designed a scalable security system diverse enough to serve the whole city, but yet met the needs of each individual department. The design had to meet the lockdown requirements of the jail, yet the openness required of the City Hall building.

"Using AMAG's Symmetry, we had the ability to scale the system, as well as provide unique solutions for these challenges," said TSG Solutions, Inc., Director, Thomas Newton. "We were able to utilize multifactor biometric readers for high secure areas, as well as built-in Symmetry software features for required scheduling, remote notification, and accessibility for handling public accessible buildings."

VIP Systems installed the city-wide security upgrade project which consisted of 12 city buildings: City Hall, Municipal Court, four fire stations, waste water plant, library, Animal Adoption Center, jail, Public Safety Complex (police department), and the District Attorney's Office building. Either Symmetry access control and/or additional Axis cameras were installed at all buildings, plus five parks and 20 traffic intersections throughout the city.

At the heart of the system is the Emergency Action and General Law Enforcement Center, otherwise known as, the EAGLE. Beautiful new Winsted consoles and desks provide comfortable, ergonomically correct seating and six 55" monitors hung edge-to-edge create a video wall for officers to "see" the city and schools. A dedicated video wall processor allows city operators to pull up screen shots or video inputs and enlarge them to any size they want.

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The EAGLE is operated by the Hobbs Police Department and monitors over 200 cameras, and 65 card and biometric fingerprint readers. When monitoring such a large number of areas, the dispatchers can provide more information and situational awareness about a situation, so the first responders are better prepared.

“The police officer manning the EAGLE actively monitors alarms coming in that are tied to Symmetry from any video from around the city,” said VIP Systems, Business Development, Zack Spelz. “Using radio communications, they communicate with the Dispatch Center by listening to activity and transmitting the information to responding officers.”

Having police officers man the EAGLE provides another layer of security. Because they are officers themselves, they understand what is needed in the field and can respond and provide the precise information officers need to confront a situation.

“The EAGLE employees act as assistants to the Dispatch Center,” said Spelz. “Their job is to add additional information and give first responders more awareness of what’s going on so that officers know what’s happening before they arrive.”

ID BADGING

Prior to Symmetry, no one wore a badge to identify themselves. Now, critical areas are controlled with card readers and electric locks. The Human Resource department has a dedicated PC and Symmetry client where they enroll new employees into Symmetry and assign access rights. All employees and contractors wear a photo ID badge that acts as their credential and includes their name and department of where they work.

Most doors are secured with a smart card reader. Critical rooms, such as the crime lab, evidence room and narcotics room, are secured with Suprema biometric readers for an additional layer of security. Authorized individuals must use their badge and fingerprint to gain access to sensitive information.

“We will use Symmetry to track people who are entering and exiting the crime lab and evidence areas and why they are doing so,” said City of Hobbs, Chief of Police, Chris McCall. “Symmetry will be of great use to us if chain-of-custody is questioned on a piece of evidence we have in our custody.”

SCHOOLS INTEGRATED INTO SYMMETRY

The school district uses Video Insight video management software for their video security system. Video Insight is an AMAG Technology Extended Business Solutions Program partner. The open integration program allows users to expand the capability of their security system through certified, tested and manufacturer supported integrations. Once the City of Hobbs upgraded to Symmetry, over 700 cameras from 18 public schools were seamlessly integrated into the Symmetry system, giving law enforcement officers a full view of all school activity from one central location.

“Symmetry allowed the City to tap into the school’s video streams and pull those into the security system,” said Spelz. “The EAGLE team can see the 700 cameras and Symmetry provides a map view of each school which allows EAGLE employees to “walk” first responders from camera to camera in the event of an emergency. The City performed some active shooter drills in coordination with the school district to better prepare the police for that type of situation. Symmetry provides excellent situational awareness information to officers so they know what they are walking into in a live scenario.”

“School security is a high priority in today’s day and age,” said Chief McCall. “We’ve had a report of unauthorized personnel on campus and through EAGLE, we pull up feeds and track the person until the school resource officers could respond and find out who the person is and ask them to leave if there is no reason for them to be there. Symmetry is a nice tool that improves our real time situational awareness.”





TRAFFIC INTERSECTIONS

VIP Systems installed new PTZ cameras that tie back to Symmetry. All video is recorded locally and then pulled into Symmetry.

“We’ve been able to track suspects during in-progress crimes until officers get to an area,” said Chief McCall. “We utilize Symmetry during severe traffic crashes and see what is going on at the scene, so responders know what they are coming into and where best to approach from.”

PARKS

VIP Systems upgraded all the cameras and repaired the wireless network used for the five parks. The video signals are fed into Video Insight video management system for recording and then transferred to Symmetry where officers can view activity on the monitors in the EAGLE.

“We have several parks where we have large events,” said Chief McCall. “Symmetry helps us monitor activities and large crowds. It’s a force multiplier as it reports issues so we can respond immediately and gather intelligence to pass to responding units. We also hope the cameras serve as a deterrent to create safer parks for the public.”

ABOUT VIP SYSTEMS

VIP Systems is a nationwide provider of low voltage systems, network infrastructure, fire alarms and security systems. VIP Systems’ capabilities range from design/build on new construction projects to modernizing or expanding existing systems and infrastructure. They provide the industry-specific experience and advanced technology to design, build, commission and maintain the security that protects your people, property and profits.

ABOUT TSG SOLUTIONS

TSG Solutions, Inc. is a private and veteran owned small business founded in 2001 specializing in Technical Security Services and Solutions. With years of experience in physical and cyber security, their comprehensive and unique offerings provide their Federal and Commercial clients the information, tools and technology needed to enhance their security, mitigate risks, and better respond in times of crisis. Capabilities include security design, integration, implementation and operational support, and they also participate in the security planning and training processes to include anti-terrorism and force protection; consequence management; and crisis management.

STATS

- 500 cardholders
- 200 Axis cameras (City of Hobbs)
- 65 Smart Card readers and biometric readers
- EBS partner: Entertech, Suprema biometric reader
- EBS partner: Video Insight video management system
- Winsted consoles
- 12 City of Hobbs Buildings: City Hall, Municipal Court, four fire stations, waste water plant, library, Animal Adoption Center, jail, Public Safety Complex (police department), and the District Attorney’s Office building.
- 5 City parks
- 20 traffic intersections
- 18 schools, 700+ cameras tied in from school district: 1 high school, 1 freshman school, 1 alternative school, 3 junior highs, and 12 elementary schools
- Integrator: VIP Systems