Albuquerque Police Department

Enhancing public safety with data-driven intelligence

Name
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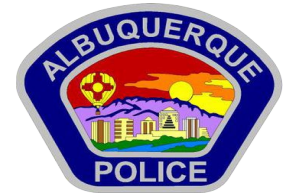
Industries
Public Safety

Location
Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

Products
Security Center, Omnicast, Citigraf, Clearance, Federation

Albuquerque PD boosts RTCC efficiency with Genetec Security Center, Citigraf, and Clearance

Albuquerque is the most populous city in the state of New Mexico and the fourth largest in the Southwestern United States. While over 900,000 residents call the Albuquerque metro area home, another 6 million visitors flock to the city every year for business, fun, and adventure. From the almost year-round sunshine and a bustling cultural and restaurant scene to countless outdoor festivals and activities for nature enthusiasts, there are plenty of reasons why people love to live, work, and play in Albuquerque.

Breaking down data siloes of older public safety systems

The Albuquerque Police Department (APD) works around the clock to keep everyone safe. Within the APD Real Time Crime Center (RTCC), officers use various video management systems (VMS) and other public safety technologies to handle incidents and expedite response. But over the years, siloed systems and databases began wearing on their team's efficiency.

According to Mark Torres, Commander of the RTCC at the City of Albuquerque, "In the past, we used many different independent systems and in-house databases to access information and share it with our responding officers. It became stressful for our RTCC operators to navigate all these different systems and provide accurate information. Our officers are depending on us, so we needed a solution that would consolidate all the information we had from various systems into one platform."

Getting more information wasn't limited to incident response. Maintaining many older, independent video systems was another big challenge for the city. According to Tikashi McConnell, Applications Project Manager at the City of Albuquerque, "Centralizing access to all our cameras and data was important, but so was gathering information about the cameras themselves. Before, we couldn't see when cameras had fallen offline. We would only find out when we would go searching for video that wasn't there. The ability to become more proactive with our maintenance was vital for our new RTCC platform as well."

Genetec™ Security Center and Genetec Citigraf™ checked all the right boxes for the APD. While the unified security platform could help the city combine all their video and public safety technologies into a single solution, Citigraf would take their RTCC operations to the next level. This strategic decision support system gives RTCC operators a unified, real-time look into emerging events. It's designed to heighten situational awareness and deliver valuable data-driven intel to public safety teams, so they can make faster, better decisions.

Enhancing RTCC situational awareness using Citigraf

Today, the APD manages over 700 cameras using Omnicast™, the video surveillance system of Security Center. At the RTCC, Citigraf has become the main visualization dashboard from which operators handle emergency response. Everything from

cameras and gunshot detection analytics to Computer-Assisted Dispatch (CAD) information and officer GIS locations are combined within the Citigraf solution. That means when an incident happens, the information they need is always at their fingertips.

"When a priority incident occurs, an icon will pop up on the map in the Citigraf dashboard. Our operators will click on it to see the CAD information, which displays everything that's known at that time of the call. The Citigraf system will show them all cameras in the area, so they can retrieve live video within seconds. They can locate nearby officers and then click on another tab to view recent reports of disturbances, armed robberies, or assaults in the area. Then, they can relay that to responding officers so they're well-informed before they reach the scene," explained Torres.

Having everything within a comprehensive response solution helps RTCC operators better understand what's happening. This empowers them to act faster and with greater confidence. "Citigraf is reducing the stress on our RTCC operators. They no longer have to move through different solutions. Having all our core public safety systems in one platform makes it easier for our operators to do their jobs. We have a lot more information at hand, which helps us better support our officers in the field," continued Torres.

In cities everywhere, more people are taking to the streets to protest and share opinions. For the APD, Citigraf has been instrumental in helping them monitor these large public gatherings while keeping officers safe. All cameras and events within a specific radius of the protest are displayed on a map within Citigraf, allowing operators to remotely keep an eye on everything that's unfolding.

"For safety reasons, we don't have to have police officers where they're not wanted, right? Using Citigraf, we can see all the cameras and events in the area so our RTCC operators can monitor protests from afar. That means we can leave our uniformed officers in an area where they're able to quickly respond, but they don't need to be mixed into the public gathering because we have a handle on what's happening," explained Torres.

Sharing insights and evidence with greater ease

Streamlining response protocols is only one area where Citigraf has added tremendous value. The RTCC team can also access historical video, information, and events to help strengthen investigations and keep department leads and decision-makers informed.

"After a string of violent crimes, our RTCC team used Citigraf to search through historical data and tie different events together to support our criminal investigators. Since we're retrieving and sharing that information, our detectives have more time to focus on closing cases. We also use Citigraf to look at trends and patterns, so we can brief our Area Commanders and our Deputy Chiefs on what we're seeing and address any critical issues in our city," said Torres.

The APD is also saving time when sharing evidence with investigators or other officers, using the Genetec Clearance™ digital evidence management system. Operators can easily export video, events, and other incident data from Citigraf directly into Clearance with a few mouse clicks. They can then grant investigators access to the case files

so they can retrieve or view evidence any time they need it. Automated audit logs ensure chain of custody is always protected.

"Before Clearance, we'd burn evidence on CDs and have our investigators collect it so we could maintain an evidentiary trail. But our detectives are busy, and sometimes it could take a day or two for them to collect evidence. Clearance helps us speed up that process, using a secure email to transfer files to authorized individuals. And with built-in audit trails, we know that they received the evidence because we can see that they logged in and accessed the files," explained Torres.

Strengthening community partnerships with Clearance camera registry

Having Genetec Clearance has also helped the APD speed up evidence collection and strengthen ties within the community. While an existing camera registry program had previously helped the APD identify the location of privately-owned cameras, officers still had to go out to each business or residence to collect video footage.

Today, using the Clearance camera registry feature, they can quickly locate cameras on a map and email Albuquerque Community Connect participants to request specific video. Camera owners simply click on a link to securely upload the video evidence via a web-based portal. Detectives can then log in to Clearance to view it, without ever leaving their desks.

Expanding city-wide surveillance with a flexible platform

Choosing an open and scalable platform has made all the difference for the APD. For instance, using the Federation™ feature, the RTCC has been able to bring the VMS and other security sensors from the Albuquerque International Sunport airport into their Security Center platform. They are also working on doing the same with the Albuquerque Public Schools which has over 2000 cameras.

"When there's an emergency at the airport or our schools, we're responsible for coordinating response. Federation has allowed us to
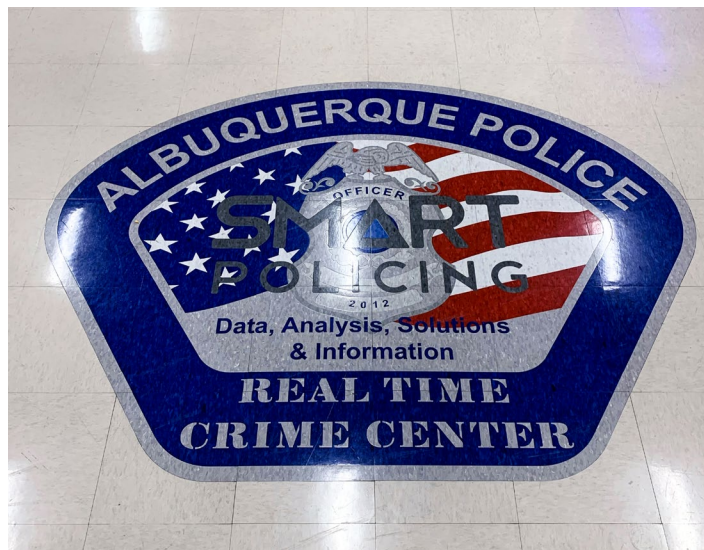
connect and centrally monitor other critical systems in our city, so we can assume command and control, coordinate with people on the ground, and use our resources to provide the most effective and efficient response," said Torres.

While the APD continues to evolve public safety initiatives, the team is happy to have the support of Genetec on their side. "When we have a big idea or particular use case, the Genetec team always jumps in to show us how it can be done. On the maintenance side alone, we've had a bunch of OMG moments. Now, we can immediately see when cameras are offline and where they're located. This has encouraged us to start thinking about our city-wide network more holistically, and how we can work with other entities such as Parks and Recreation or Municipal Development to consolidate all our video systems and enhance our maintenance processes," explained McConnell.

Improving public safety for years to come

Looking ahead, the APD has big plans to keep expanding its RTCC operations and the Genetec platform. According to McConnell, there are many possibilities on the horizon: "Understanding all the functionality and how we can best utilize those features within our environment is easily a 6-month project of learning, trialing, and expanding what we can do with Security Center and Citigraf. We have a lot on the roadmap that we want to roll out, so I can see us scaling and adding new features for the next three years, easily."

Some near-term projects include connecting their records management system (RMS) and automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) data into Citigraf. They also want to extend access to Citigraf to their Emergency Management Office as well as Albuquerque Community Services to streamline more internal processes. Adding drone surveillance, analytics, and alarm automation are also in discussion.

"Investing in Security Center, Citigraf, and Clearance has allowed us to spread the information wealth. Using this unified public safety platform, we've been able to maximize our RTCC resources to better assist other APD departments, metro partners, and surrounding communities. We're disseminating real-time information faster, supporting investigations, and tracking crime patterns in our city. All of this helps to enhance public safety for Albuquerque residents, businesses, and visitors," concluded Torres.

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