Genetec™

Erickson Senior Living

Unifying security across senior living campuses

Name
Erickson Senior Living

Industries
Residential Campuses

Location
United States

Products
Security Center, Omnicast, Synergis, Synergis Cloud Link, AutoVu

Partners
ASSA ABLOY

Erickson SENIOR LIVING™

Erickson Senior Living standardizes with Genetec Security Center to enhance multi-campus security and resident services

Erickson Senior Living is a national leader in senior living and health care in the United States. The company develops and manages a national network of continuing care retirement communities across 11 states and its footprint is growing fast. Erickson Senior Living offers its 28,000+ residents more than an enriching, community-focused lifestyle. They also provide exceptional healthcare services, integrated wellness initiatives, and five-star community perks. This ensures they can continue to fulfill their core mission— helping people live better lives.

Facing the limitations of older video and access control

Keeping residents happy and safe is all part of a day's work for the Erickson Senior Living team. Across all communities, dedicated security teams rely on video surveillance and access control technology to uphold community safety and well-being for residents, employees, and visitors.

In recent years, some of these security technologies began showing their age. For video surveillance, each community had different systems from various vendors. This made it difficult for corporate teams to have a global view of their operations and security.

Their access control system was also becoming more difficult to maintain and upgrade. The team had innovative ideas about how

to use wireless locks to enhance resident safety, but the access control software couldn't support these newer technologies. Knowing they wanted more options from their systems, the team at Erickson Senior Living was ready for a full security upgrade.

According to Alex Seymour, Senior Business Analyst at Erickson Senior Living, "We started hearing from our communities that had older video and access control systems in need of improvement. We also had a few communities that were managing a large number of physical keys. That was becoming a big issue because when a resident unit key or master key was lost, the rekeying process was complex and costly. All these issues were adding up. So, we began looking for a new physical security system that could help us streamline and improve our operations."

The goal was to develop a standardized model for security deployments across all communities. They were looking for one unified security platform to manage video surveillance, access control, and other systems at each site. An open architecture platform was also a must. This would help them reduce upgrade costs by using existing hardware while remaining open to future innovations.

Finally, they wanted a partner they could rely on as they continue to evolve with their security operations and business. Genetec™ and the Security Center platform checked all the right boxes for Erickson Senior Living.

Standardizing with Genetec Security Center across communities

Today, Erickson Senior Living has converted 16 communities to the Genetec Security Center platform with the remaining 5 planned to be converted by Q1 of 2023. In total, these consist of 350 cameras, 600 door readers, and over 1,500 wireless locks. They've also deployed the AutoVu™ automatic license plate recognition system to streamline gate entry at two of their newer campuses and are in the process of adding it to at least one existing community.

Standardizing on a single platform makes it easier for corporate team members to quickly review incidents or investigate operational issues from the main office. Teams can now easily monitor alarms and quickly pull up video recordings from any of the communities for investigations. They can also retrieve access control reports, which show door activity, card activity, and in some cases link that activity with a camera.

"Since investing in Genetec Security Center, we're now building a more consistent approach to security across all our sites, which has made such a huge difference to our operations. The unified platform also gives us the flexibility to keep evolving and growing as we explore new innovative applications and launch more communities. It's much easier to customize our deployment to meet our growing security needs," said Seymour.

Upgrading security with Wi-Fi locks and Synergis Cloud Link

The support for wireless locks was a big driver for investing in Genetec Security Center. With the new unified platform, the team was able to swap out physical keys on resident apartments for new ASSA ABLOY wireless locks.

Now where the technology is implemented, residents simply use an access control card to enter their units, on-site amenities, and other secured areas. If they lose their card, the security team can easily log into Security Center to deactivate the card and re-issue a new one. It's a seamless process that doesn't involve costly re-keying of their locks.

With the new wireless locks, Erickson Senior Living has also modernized a critical community service—welfare checks for residents. In the past, a security officer would walk through buildings every morning, visually verifying that a resident has opened their door to drop a latch to indicate they were up and okay. But sometimes residents would forget. The officer would then knock on the door and make sure all was well, possibly disturbing a quiet morning. Now, using the wireless door contacts, they can simply run a report and check for activity to see if a resident has opened their door.

"Having the support for Wi-Fi locks in Security Center has been a huge help. The platform automatically sends a report to our security teams every morning, showing which units' doors haven't been opened yet. They'll then compare that to a list of units that are unoccupied to see which resident apartments require a welfare check. It saves our team time because they can check on a few apartments,

with a phone call and then visit if needed, instead of walking every single hallway. And our residents enjoy this experience a lot more. Not only is it less intrusive, but they don't need to remember to flip a latch every day," said Seymour.

To simplify the access control upgrade, Erickson Senior Living invested in Genetec Synergis™ in each community. As Seymour explains, "Choosing Synergis gave us so much deployment flexibility. It supports a range of access control technologies and wireless locks. Plus, we didn't need to install servers on-site at every community; with Synergis Cloud Link, all data is sent back through the cloud to our corporate servers, allowing us to further reduce upgrade costs."

With one community added to the portfolio every year, this is just the beginning for Erickson Senior Living. Over the next couple of years, the company will add another 2,000 wireless locks to Security Center, swapping out more physical keys for modern access control technology.

Managing over 43,000 cardholders with confidence

At Erickson Senior Living communities, the security team handles all resident badges and human resources oversees staff badging. Managing access for over 43,000 cardholders, including residents and staff across various communities isn't an easy job. Now using Security Center, things are much simpler. A big contributor to that has been the Microsoft Active Directory (AD) feature within Security Center.

"Our previous access control system did not have the Microsoft Active Directory integration. That meant a lot of duplicate entries and extra work within different systems. Data is synced in both our AD and Security Center systems daily. The Active Directory integration allows our team to streamline the badging process, save time and ensure access rights are revoked or added quickly. The daily sync is also a huge benefit for security as it automatically deactivates the profile of employees or residents who leave our communities." said Seymour.

Other Security Center features the Erickson Senior Living team appreciates are the lockdown and threat level functionalities. In an emergency, security teams can override access rules across the community to ensure responders can get into buildings or rooms to handle any situation. They are also able to lock down an apartment using a custom lockdown macro to remove access when a resident leaves their apartment and access needs to quickly be revoked.

According to Seymour, "Genetec Security Center gives us a lot of flexibility with door rules, schedules, and lockdown macros, so we're able to customize the system to meet the needs of our resident and employees."

Enhancing the resident experience beyond security

Upgrading to Security Center hasn't only heightened security across Erickson Senior Living. It's also enhanced the resident and visitor experience. For example, across newer communities, residents can

use their access control card to purchase meals and pay for items in community shops. This gives residents a go-to card for everything on the property.

Likewise, in select communities, residents no longer need a gate fob to enter or exit the property. Strategically placed AutoVu ALPR cameras detect resident license plates and grant them entry to the property. Their license plates are all stored within the AutoVu system in Security Center and are linked to resident profiles, which also simplifies the activation and deactivation of access rights.

"Sometimes in our other communities, we have problems with gate access fobs failing, and we have to replace them. Having AutoVu ALPR at our gates helps to eliminate that. The license plates act as an access credential within Security Center, making it smoother for our residents and simpler for our team," said Seymour.

The plan moving forward is to deploy more ALPR systems across communities to monitor parking usage and visitors. Having that ALPR data at hand will give Erickson Senior Living more information on how to improve parking facilities, as well as how to be more prepared for investigations when they arise.

"We're keen to start using ALPR for parking management because we think there will be big returns on the data we can collect from the AutoVu system. We can also enhance security and operations by tracking visitor or contractor vehicles onsite. Some communities have hundreds of visitors on campus, so being able to know when someone came and left our campuses and track where people are parking gives us a lot of additional insight on our properties," said Seymour.

Pushing forward with ambitious expansions plans

Erickson Senior Living has ambitious growth plans lined up. While they're currently focused on upgrading and standardizing all existing communities, they're also refining long-term plans.

"We've been working closely with our integrator, but recently, we've made a point to build a relationship with Genetec. And so far, it's been great. We've received a lot of support from the Genetec team and they've given us a lot of great ideas about new features and how

to evolve our system. I'm excited to see what's going to come from all the additional expansion."said Seymour.

Their roadmap includes everything from adding maps and mobile capabilities to exploring hybrid-cloud options for added storage and redundancy. They also began integrating an intelligent key system into Security Center and adding people counting analytics and perimeter detection at newer gateless communities.

"We've had a great experience since deploying Genetec Security Center. Since we are a growth company, we're very excited to see how everything will come together as we add new functionalities and continue to evolve our use of the Security Center platform. We're confident that we have the right platform and support to keep up with all our plans moving forward," concluded Seymour.

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