

Case Study

UGI Energy Services LLC

UGI Energy Services invests in Omnicast™ IP video surveillance to enhance live monitoring of sites



Leading energy services provider increases visibility of multiple sites with Omnicast™ to protect employees, assets and communities nearby

Business challenge

Formed in 1995 as a subsidiary of UGI Corporation, UGI Energy Services, LLC (UGIES) is an integrated energy company operating throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of the United States. UGIES markets, owns and operates a variety of electric generation assets in Pennsylvania as well as a variety of midstream assets that support the storage, transportation and delivery of natural gas.

As a leading energy services provider with over 43,000 customers in nine states, UGIES is focused on securing its assets and keeping local communities safe from potential threats. When a nation-wide federal plan was announced to better secure utilities and energy sites, UGIES jumped onboard.

“We were contacted by a government agency to evaluate the security of our sites, and that’s exactly what we did,” explains Joel Russell, Manager LPG Operations/Instrumentation & Control at UGI Energy Services. “While we already had numerous security measures in place, we wanted to enhance the security of our sites with live video monitoring capabilities.”

UGIES relied on the expertise of CSi, a local security integrator, who suggested Genetec™ Omnicast™ IP video surveillance as part of the unified security platform, Security Center. Genetec™ Security Center offers advanced functionality such as an intuitive mobile client which provides secure access to video from any mobile device, a map-based interface which makes it easier for operators to locate security devices and handle alarms, and health monitoring which automatically alerts administrators to potential system vulnerabilities.

Omnicast™ enhances response efficiency and minimizes false alarms

To date, Omnicast™ IP video surveillance has been installed by CSi at four UGIES propane sites in Pennsylvania. The largest site has 15 IP cameras which cover the exterior grounds, onsite equipment, propane storage and filling tanks, entry and exit gates and train tracks. The other sites have between two and five cameras each.

Since Omnicast™ offers deep integration and support for an expansive list of video devices, CSi suggested Bosch IP cameras with built-in analytics which allowed UGIES to implement

Summary

Client name: UGI Energy Services LLC

Organization size: 260 employees

Products: Security Center, Omnicast™, Mobile

Industry: Energy and Utilities

Location: Pennsylvania, USA

Partners: Bosch, Communications Systems Inc. (CSi)

motion sensors and various area intrusion analytics. When motion is detected within a specific area of a camera’s field of view or if someone crosses a tripwire, an alarm is triggered in Omnicast™ and then sent to a third-party monitoring agency managed by CSi called Security Partners.

“We have truck drivers coming and going from our sites at all hours, so if a propane truck driver or anyone else enters a restricted area, we’ll be notified,” explains Russell. “Not only has the video surveillance system increased our site coverage but it also acts as deterrent, preventing drivers from entering areas that are off limits.”

Operators at Security Partners receive an email notification with a video snapshot which they use to determine whether there is a false alarm or whether the situation needs to be escalated to Russell’s team at UGIES. If something appears suspicious, the UGIES team can quickly log in to Omnicast™ to view live video, review archives and take necessary action. The highly-granular user privileges in Omnicast™ facilitated this first-level alarm validation process, which heightens response efficiency for the energy services company.

Security Center mobile app displays video on demand

The most notable benefit of the system for UGIES has been access to live video from anywhere through the Security Center mobile app. According to Russell: “Not only has Omnicast™ been very easy to use and learn, but Security Center Mobile has given us real-time visibility of our sites which we needed in order to be compliant with the government agency’s standards. I can tap into

those cameras from anywhere with internet connectivity so I'm always a couple of clicks away."

Operationally, UGIES has also seen other advantages with the live monitoring capabilities of Omnicast™. When contractors are on-site doing repairs or maintenance, the UGIES team can remotely check-in to make sure they are safe when unreachable by phone. The team has also occasionally used the video surveillance system to identify equipment and valve locations when planning for improvements or maintenance at the propane sites.

Security platform growth continues at UGIES

As UGIES continues to expand its operations, many plans are in the works to continue evolving the company's security platform. Adding Omnicast™ video surveillance to more sites and trialing Synergis™, the IP access control system of Security Center for building and gate security at another site are only the beginning.

Genetec™ Federation™ and Cloud Archiving might also be of interest to UGIES. Federation™ will allow UGIES to manage and monitor all systems as one virtual platform from a central control station, while Cloud Archiving can provide greater disaster recovery as well as overall cost and maintenance reduction.

"Not only has Omnicast™ been very easy to use and learn, but Security Center Mobile has given us real-time visibility of our sites which we needed in order to be compliant with the government agency's standards. I can tap into those cameras from anywhere with internet connectivity so I'm always a couple of clicks away."

"Site security is very important to UGIES, not only to protect our corporate assets but more importantly to ensure the safety of the people who frequent the sites and those living in nearby communities. Omnicast™ has helped our team enhance the visibility across our operations, and we look forward to bringing other sites online and adding new capabilities so that we fully capitalize on our investment in the Security Center unified platform."

Infrastructure at a Glance

Omnicast™ IP video surveillance has been installed at four of UGIES' propane sites, which allows its team to manage a total of approximately 25 cameras. Bosch FLEXIDOME IP starlight 7000 VR cameras and Bosch AUTODOME IP starlight 7000 HD PTZ cameras were chosen as preferred video devices. Cameras are recording continuously and local onsite servers provide video retention for up to 30 days.