

ENDURA SECURES NORTH DAKOTA'S CAPITOL

by Kathleen Rhodes, Marketing Communications Writer

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ECI Systems**

Easy Access Creates Security Challenge

Covering more than 132 acres in Bismarck, North Dakota, are some of the state's most treasured buildings. Known as the Capitol Building Complex, the campus is home to the State Capitol Building, State Office Building, Department of Transportation, Heritage Center, State Library, even the Governor's personal residence.

The site poses a unique challenge for North Dakota security personnel who are charged with protecting property assets, visitors, staff members, judges, legislators, the Governor and his family.

The grounds are completely open to the public. Residents are encouraged to take advantage of the walking trails and open areas, and often do so well into the evening. But some individuals were using the Capitol Complex for some not so innocuous activities. Teenagers were skateboarding and rollerblading down staircases after dark, endangering both themselves and others. At night the buildings and monuments were also vulnerable to vandalism. Patrolling such a large area on foot was putting a strain on state security officers.

The six-building complex was monitored by an antiquated video security system whose coverage was limited. "They wanted to add more cameras and the way the old system was set-up, it was a big problem," says security integrator Chuck Hale of ECI Systems. Security personnel also were not happy with the image quality and how long it took to search through recorded video.

The Endura Solution

Because of the unique campus-like design of North Dakota's State Capitol, Hale knew immediately what the project needed. "If you have a facility where you need to secure multiple buildings," Hale says, "an Endura installation is basically the only way to go." Network-based and highly adaptable, this powerfully flexible system made adding cameras, monitors and control stations a simple undertaking. Endura delivered a security solution for North Dakota's Capitol that would grow into the future.

More than 20 Camclosure and Spectra III cameras were added to the existing 19 camera installation, expanding coverage to include exterior grounds as well as the interior of buildings and elevators. The complete Endura system includes a Pelco WS5050 Endura PC Workstation, SM5000 System Manager, NET5301T Video Encoders,

NET5301R Video Decoders and an NVR5000 Network Video Recorder along with a Storage Expansion Box. High-quality and high-performance, this decentralized, network-distributed video system offered substantial advantages over classic analog.

Rapid Results

Once the complete Endura solution was in place, security personnel saw immediate results. Throughout the day officers use Endura to watch for anything suspicious. "If there are any known individuals coming onto the grounds that we have concerns with, we can use Endura to monitor them all the way," says Sgt. Pedro Armendariz, head of security. "If we know what vehicle they are driving, we can follow them through the parking lot and into the building. We can then advise the person they are visiting that they are on the way."

After-hours, Endura continues to keep a close watch over the complex. From the main command center, the entire grounds are monitored around the clock. Thanks to the expanded real-time coverage, security personnel are able to catch loiters or vandals while they are still in the act.

Sgt. Armendariz also has the flexibility to monitor any of the cameras from his office. If an incident occurs that he wants to review, he can quickly scan through the entire day's recorded events or go directly to the time that it occurred. "With Endura, it's much better. It's so much easier to go back and pull things up." Sgt. Armendariz is also pleased with the images Endura captures. "The quality itself is clear, it's a very good quality picture."

Plans to add additional cameras are underway, and because Endura is distributed, video can flow wherever there is access to a local area network. When a device is added to a system, it announces itself and the services it has available. The existing devices acknowledge the new unit and can begin exchanging information. Hale says that makes expanding the network a straightforward process. "It's pretty simple," he says. "You just plug and play."

Since the installation, Sgt. Armendariz reports that Pelco has stood by its product. "Any issues we've had, have been taken care of either that day or the next." That comes as no surprise to the project's integrator. "The main advantage of going with Pelco," Hale says, "is the way they do customer service and the way they take care of the end-user." Ⓢ

