S2 NetBox Success Stories: Volume 2
North Austin Medical Center Streamlines Security

Industry:
Healthcare/Hospitals

Summary:
North Austin Medical Center (NAMC) needed to improve physical security while managing costs. The S2 NetBox has reduced costs, increased efficiency and opened NAMC up to the potential of a network-based access control system.

Challenges:
- Increase overall security of hospital while managing costs
- Provide system that would expand to meet growing security needs
- Free security staff from the constraints of a dedicated PC
- Improve response time to security requests

Key Results:
- Simplified and streamlined process of adding access-controlled doors
- Enabled staff to monitor and manage system remotely via the Web
- Re-used existing field equipment
- Streamlined badge making process

System Integrator:
- Safe Sight

Solution:
- S2 NetBox

Improving Access Control on a Budget

North Austin Medical Center (NAMC) is a 210-bed full service hospital that provides Austin, Texas and the surrounding communities with state-of-the-art healthcare services. NAMC required higher levels of security than were already in place, but, like most healthcare organizations, also needed to find ways to manage costs. NAMC contacted system integrator Safe Sight about upgrading their access control system, and Safe Sight centered its winning bid on the network-based S2 NetBox from S2 Security Corporation.

New Technology Cures Legacy Pains

Securing a facility that covers 679,000 square feet and employs more than 975 physicians is no small feat. NAMC's security system consisted of doors with card access, a staff of ten security officers and a CCTV system for the building. But NAMC was not satisfied with the existing system and needed a solution that would allow the hospital to expand security incrementally, steamline security functions and still reduce costs and increase efficiency.

NAMC's access control system already managed 24 doors, including those leading to high-security areas such as the pharmacy, labor and delivery, and patient records. NAMC wanted to add 16 doors to the access control system, but given the legacy system's requirements, adding new doors would have meant the expense not just of the card readers, but of the new control panels as well. For just those 16 doors, NAMC was facing a $20,000 expenditure. Further additions to the system, which the security team foresaw, would have meant thousands more.

NAMC also needed to improve the security staff's ability to monitor the system. Officers had access to the one dedicated access control computer, but the computer was not located in the CCTV monitoring area where the security staff was stationed. To check on access alerts, the security officers were required to leave their stations to go to the access control computer. As a result, officers were not able to monitor video feeds and hospital staff members were not able to quickly gain access to critical areas of the hospital.

Additionally, NAMC's ID badging system required two separate databases: one for the information that was seen on the badge, and the second for the access credential records. Errors due to double-entries jeopardized the effectiveness of the system, and the additional time that it took to enter information twice was a drain on NAMC's resources.

Security system integrator Safe Sight proposed upgrading from NAMC's legacy system to S2 Security Corporation's S2 NetBox, a completely network-based integrated security management system that supports access control, alarm monitoring, temperature monitoring, video and intercom applications in a small-form

S2 SECURITY

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factor IP-based network appliance.

"Safe Sight's recommendation of the S2 NetBox met our requirement for a solution that would allow us to beef up our security system but that was also efficient and would help us to keep costs under control," said Robert Haugland, manager of safety and security for NAMC. "Moving to a network-based system opens up tremendous possibilities for the future of security at NAMC."

The S2 NetBox is the only network appliance-based integrated security management system. The S2 NetBox leverages existing network infrastructure and offers increased scalability and flexibility. The system's Web-based architecture provides remote monitoring capabilities from any computer connected to a network and remote access for maintenance. And the S2 NetBox eliminates the need for a dedicated server and workstation. Combined, these factors reduce the cost to install, operate and maintain the system.

Non-Invasive Installation and Immediate Benefits

Installing the S2 NetBox was a non-invasive process from start to finish. Six boxes (one housing the network controller, motherboard and several access blades) and five remote network nodes were simply plugged into the hospital's existing IP network. The 24 doors already equipped with card controls were then easily switched from the legacy system to the S2 NetBox.

Next, the 16 new doors that NAMC originally wanted to add were connected to the access control system. Later, as the need arose, NAMC found they could select additional doors and easily add them to the system. "The process for adding doors is now much more cost-effective," said Haugland.

Because the S2 NetBox uses a Web-based architecture, NAMC's security officers can now monitor the system without leaving their stations, from any computer, in any location, that is connected to the Internet. NAMC also replaced the ID badging system with the S2 NetBox, merging it into a single, easily managed database.

Valuable System, Valuable Partnerships

The move to network-based security has already increased the productivity of the security staff and has improved the level of customer service that the department provides to NAMC's workforce. And maintenance of the system has proven to be just as easy as the initial installation. Since the product is entirely Web-based, Safe Sight can diagnose and fix problems remotely.

"That is another critical benefit to moving to a network-based system," added Haugland. "The fact that our security provider can access our system offsite saves us a lot of downtime."

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—Robert Haugland, manager of safety and security, North Austin Medical Center

Integrated Security for an IP-Connected World®.

About S2 Security Corporation

S2 Security Corporation, headquartered in Framingham, Mass., provides Integrated Security for an IP-Connected World®. S2 is an innovator in the development of network-based integrated physical security systems supporting access control, alarm monitoring, temperature monitoring, video and intercom. S2's flagship product is the S2 NetBox™, a network appliance that enables facilities of all types to manage their physical security needs from anywhere over IP networks.