Key to Long-Term Relationship with Customer is Listening

The relationship between security system integrator and manufacturer is a dynamic and important one. Manufacturers must be able to trust integrators to represent and install their products, while integrators want to be able to trust manufacturers to make the right products to suit end-user needs, and make them reliable. In addition, the manufacturer needs to provide technical expertise.

Both the integrator and manufacturer work together to provide end users with quality solutions that solve their real-world problems.

"It takes two to tango," says Levon Postachian, president and CEO of Select Systems Technology Inc.

Based in Torrance, California, Select Systems has provided security solutions for 30 years to grocery, retail and other businesses in the western U.S. The integrator also performs maintenance and repair of legacy equipment.

Select Systems has worked with OpenEye for over a decade, initially using OpenEye analog and IP hybrid recorders and subsequently migrating to the OpenEye Web Services (OWS) cloud-managed video platform.

"What I like about OpenEye is the level of understanding of what the customer needs are," Postachian said. "Being able to adapt to such requirements is not something every manufacturer is able to do."

The grocery chain

About 20 years ago, a major U.S. grocery chain approached Select Systems looking for an integrator to supply and install analog CCTV equipment for their new stores, as well as refurbish the aging equipment in their existing locations. Ten years later, as the customer looked to make the move to IP, they requested Select connect with OpenEye and develop an IP solution for new store locations.

In a few short years, Select had installed over 40 stores with the IP solution from OpenEye. During this time, Select Systems was maintaining about 100 existing analog stores.

What began with modernizing one store, grew to more than 140 locations with more than 15,000 cameras.

The big upgrade

In their review of VMS solutions, the grocery chain met with Select Systems and OpenEye to express their needs and pain points. The chain wanted to be able to manage their system more remotely and increase staff access to video to streamline operations.

After testing many VMS platforms, features and functions, the customer decided, in 2021, to upgrade the 100 analog stores to full IP and chose OpenEye.

The hardware is managed through OWS, which enables organizations to streamline user management, reduce IT workload, gain actionable intelligence and expedite video export and sharing.

"Hats off to the OpenEye engineering and product management teams who were able to select cameras and deliver the goods, as well as the software team who was able to introduce OpenEye Web Services," Postachian said.

The grocery chain ultimately chose the OWS platform because Select Systems and OpenEye listened to their

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> Levon Postachian,
> Select Systems Technology

feedback and developed several new features to specifically address their operational needs.

A happy customer

The satisfied customer is now using OWS and even expanded their channel count in some locations to support new operational processes through remote video monitoring.
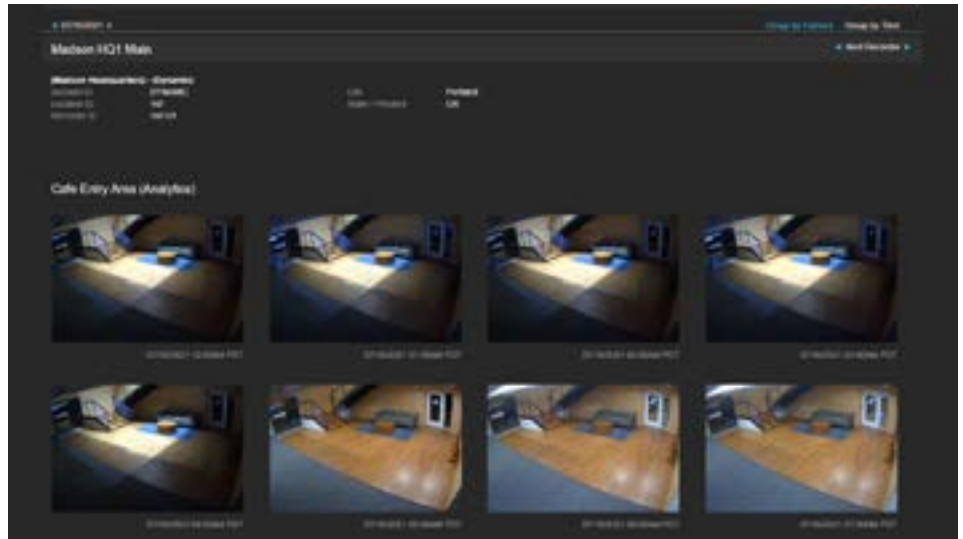
The grocery chain uses the system to perform investigations remotely, pursue prosecution of shoplifters and utilize OpenEye's exception base reporting platform, which works with an OpenEye product that allows analysis of transactions with associated video. The OpenEye platform is used by the chain's loss prevention and security teams, as well as operations and marketing.

"All of this hardware and the software combination allows for complete coverage of the store," Postachian said.

The chain is a heavy user of OpenEye's Command Station client with more than 3,000 users. Command Station is a powerful multisite video management system with high-performance video decoding for multi-monitor remote and local recorder access. Users can view and search video from multiple recorders simultaneously, using as many as four monitors.

OpenEye Command Station monitor

Example OWS thumbnail report

Command Station is integrated with the OWS platform, enabling the use of roaming profiles to access recorders. OWS integration also allows for uploading of video clips for cloud storage and sharing.

A number of the Command Station features OpenEye has developed were suggested by the grocery chain, as well as a newly revamped thumbnail report.

An OWS thumbnail report displays a series of images from one or more cameras at predefined periods throughout the day. Images are grouped by recorder and camera. These reports are useful to check on important areas and quickly spot operational or service issues.

Common use cases include checking to see if snowy sidewalks were shoveled before store opening or if signage was placed correctly.

Users can set reminders to receive emails at certain days and times or create default reports to share with managers or user groups, etc.

For the grocery chain, the report serves as an operational tool for advertising, merchandising and

other key departments. The return on investment behind utilizing such solution is very simple yet effective: a drastic reduction on travel and labor costs, thus increasing user's productivity exponentially.

"Every decision is a phone call away without visiting individual stores," Postachian said.

Conclusion

"The key to a long-term relationship between integrator, manufacturer and customer is the ability to listen," said Ed Solt, OpenEye Executive Vice President. "Not only do we have a happy customer, but we also have an improved product that will better solve the needs of other grocers as well."

Proof of this collaboration can be seen the improved thumbnail report that will soon be released to the full OWS user base.

Said Postachian, "If you don't listen to what your customers' needs are, you will be out of the market. If you focus on the solution and put resources behind it, there's nothing you cannot fix or accommodate."

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