



WEST CORPORATION

AMAG TECHNOLOGY RISE TO MULTI-FACILITY SECURITY CHALLENGE

West Corporation, the nation's premier provider of outsourced communication solutions, specializes in customer acquisition, customer care, and interactive voice response services, as well as conferencing and collection services.

West Corporation headquarters makes its home in Omaha, Nebraska along with nine additional branch offices. Twenty-one remote West offices are scattered from Illinois to Texas and east to North Carolina and Florida. One site is also located in Victoria, British Columbia.

With 31 locations to secure, West Corporation demanded a reliable access control solution complete with an integrated badging system. West needed the ability to network numerous sites across the country and monitor and program all access control from the corporate office in Omaha.

Making the Right Choice

West moved their corporate office into a building where Security Equipment, Inc. had previously installed an older AMAG system. After settling in and experiencing the security management system's reliability first hand, as well as SEi's outstanding customer service, they compared those two factors to their previous security system in their old building.

"Now West understood they did not have to live with a (security) system they couldn't rely on," said Tom Hruby, executive vice president, SEi. West Corporation Security Manager, Kenneth M. Lewis, chose AMAG's Symmetry Enterprise unrestricted access control solution with Symmetry multiNODE 2 controllers and MN-NIC- 3 network interface cards based on the reliability of the old system that remained in the building. Symmetry Enterprise provided the ability to function on a nationwide WAN system and the ability to convert different system's hardware and databases.

SEi designed and installed the security management solution, and combined two separate security systems that controlled West Corp's 21 remote sites throughout the eastern US and British Columbia. The remotes sites were upgraded to the Enterprise server located in Omaha via their WAN.

Each West site operates as a separate company, and therefore is in control of their own security database, said Hruby. Each office creates and prints employee badges either through a full administrative client or a web client.

"As each site was upgraded to AMAG, SEi performed a separate database conversion specifically for that site to help control the amount of information that would have to be entered into both systems during the upgrade," said Hruby.



The Network Operations Center (NOC) at the corporate office is staffed 24 hours a day, and is where they monitor all remote sites. Only West's inbound offices are open 24 hours a day. Inbound offices are offices where people call in to order merchandise advertised on television.

The remainder of their offices are outbound offices where West staff call their customer base for a designated reason.

Each facility has security guards on site during business hours and roaming guards after hours. Alarms come into the NOC and security personnel dispatch the appropriate guard in whatever city the alarm was generated from.

Badging

Approximately 300-500 employees work at each West office, resulting in over 32,000 card holders. West badges approximately 300 employees a day on average tasking the security system to process thousands of card transactions each day. Employees are required to display their photo ID badge at all times and must have valid access to enter their designated building.

While each office badges its own employees and controls its own database, it was important the Omaha corporate office have master access to all offices for standardization purposes.

"With over 30,000 employees, they are very concerned that all of their badges look the same, all the field entries are consistent and they have ultimate control on what is put into their system," said Hruby. "All the sites were originally programmed into the system from Omaha so all the terminology would be the same, all the maps would look and feel the same and all of the operator instructions would have the same terminology.

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"West utilizes approximately 325 readers throughout its 31 locations: they use proximity at the corporate office, magnetic stripe in the Omaha locations and barcode at the remote sites.

Training Challenges

Training security staff proved difficult with the numerous remote locations. "Having the networked Symmetry system and the ability to 'see what they see' from the corporate location provided essentially a 'hands on' training experience and reduced the amount of time needed to complete the training," said Lewis from West Corporation.

SEi provided training and documentation as well. "SEi developed a manual that was sent to each site prior to the upgrade as a condensed version of how to create and print badges," said Hruby. West was pleased with the results and happy that all personnel have picture ID badges, which provides better access control.

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West Corporation is constantly growing and adding new offices. "As the company expands, we plan to equip all new sites with the AMAG networked security system," said Lewis.



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