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St. Thomas Aquinas School USA, Iowa

St. Thomas Aquinas School Secured by MOBOTIX

Located about 20 miles east of Fort Dodge, Iowa, in Webster City, St. Thomas Aquinas School is home to 116 students ranging from preschool through sixth grade. The school is located in the same building as St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church and a recently built parish center, which houses their preschool classrooms and a gym. All of the buildings on campus are interconnected enabling faculty and students to walk back-and-forth between buildings without ever having to go outside.

However, according to St. Thomas Aquinas Principal Duane Siepker, the school and church lacked a security system that could provide the level of protection they desired for students, staff members and parishioners.

“One thing parents are concerned about, considering all of the events that have happened throughout the country, is that their children will be in a safe environment,” said Siepker. “Knowing that no community is immune to some of the tragedies that have happened throughout the United States, we wanted to make our facility as secure as possible.”

To accomplish this, the school turned to local systems integrator Woodman Controls.

“Their goal was to secure the facility both during and after school hours,” said Brian Miller, who heads up business development for Woodman Controls. “Previously, the doors were unlocked during the school day. The organization wanted a solution where they could lock the building down, and still monitor the doors and provide access.”

A Complete Security Solution

Miller and his team installed two MOBOTIX T25 IP video door stations — one at the main entrance of the church building and one at the school entrance — along with one MOBOTIX Q25 hemispheric camera to provide video coverage of the school’s parking lot.

The T25 IP Video Door Station from MOBOTIX is a modern integrated access control and megapixel video solution. With 5 megapixels and internal memory, a built-in hemispheric door camera records the entire entrance area, with no blind spots, from wall to wall and floor to ceiling. It also features recording with sound to for two-way communication, and offers keyless entry and integrated message function.

“At 8 a.m., when school starts, school officials can lock the building down securely and if somebody shows up late, a school administrator can use the video footage to determine who it is and can buzz them in if they know who they are,” added Miller.

When the doorbell rings, a secure network connection is established with a VoIP video phone, PC or tablet that lets the device communicate via a built-in intercom. The door station’s integrated video recorder captures all individuals in front of the door when the doorbell rings or when the door opens. Likewise, the video data can be accessed from any location.

Siepker said it was paramount for him and his staff to make sure that people could not enter the school without proper verification, making the video aspect critical. Additionally, it was also important that the MOBOTIX system was easy

Full Coverage with Integrated Access Control and IP Video Systems

to use and had the capability to be controlled remotely using a mobile device.

"The mobile capability of the system is absolutely wonderful. The parish secretary uses her iPad Mini to control the system and I can use my iPhone," said Siepker. "I also have the system linked to my computer in the office too so if the secretaries are gone, I can control the doors from my laptop."

The MOBOTIX Q25, which features storage at the edge on an SD card, provided the school with the ability to store video for evidentiary purposes without the need for unnecessary infrastructure upgrades. Its hemispheric capabilities delivers 180-degree panorama images with a single camera to secure an entire room with no blind spots, which delivers a wider field of view with one camera rather than with several traditional cameras.

"The on-board storage of the Q25 is critical because we need to be able to go back and access that footage quickly," explained Siepker. "Because it is a motion-activated camera, it's not recording constantly, but if a person comes up or vehicle drives up, we're able to identify that individual or vehicle quickly and accurately."

Additionally, the system is set-up so that only authorized people have access to the video data, furthering securing the school's operations.

A Potential Tragedy Averted

Earlier this summer, the church celebrated a 25th anniversary jubilee for a nun who belongs to the parish and as a part of that celebration, the church held a mass and a reception. Following the reception, however, a door to the facility was inadvertently left open, which allowed a vandal access to the building.

Upon arriving at the church the next day, Siepker said one of the church's musicians found trash on the alter along with votive candles blown out, holy water fountains emptied with the water strewn about and apples lying throughout the church. Additionally, the vandal went as far as to deface a composite picture of the school's students in the lunchroom, as well as statue located outside the church with yogurt.

"It was just basically a mess and it was rather disturbing that someone had gotten inside," said Siepker.

Fortunately, the church was able to review the footage captured by the Q25 and provide an image of the female suspect to police. The woman, who was known to local law enforcement, admitted to vandalizing the church after being brought in for questioning. Perhaps even more frightening is the fact that the suspect told police

she had planned to set the church ablaze and that the only reason she didn't was because she thought it was "too pretty" to burn down, according to Siepker.

"I'm thinking that without the camera, she may have been able to get in at some other point and do what she intended to do and burn down the facility — our school and parish," said Siepker. "The camera helped minimize this threat and therefore, it paid for itself. I just thank God we installed this camera for fear of what this person could have done. That is a blessing in itself."

Siepker said they are currently looking at expanding their current MOBOTIX system by adding a camera to provide video coverage for a door at the school that currently remains locked throughout the day.

MOBOTIX has developed and manufactured IP video systems, video management and analysis software in Germany since 2000.

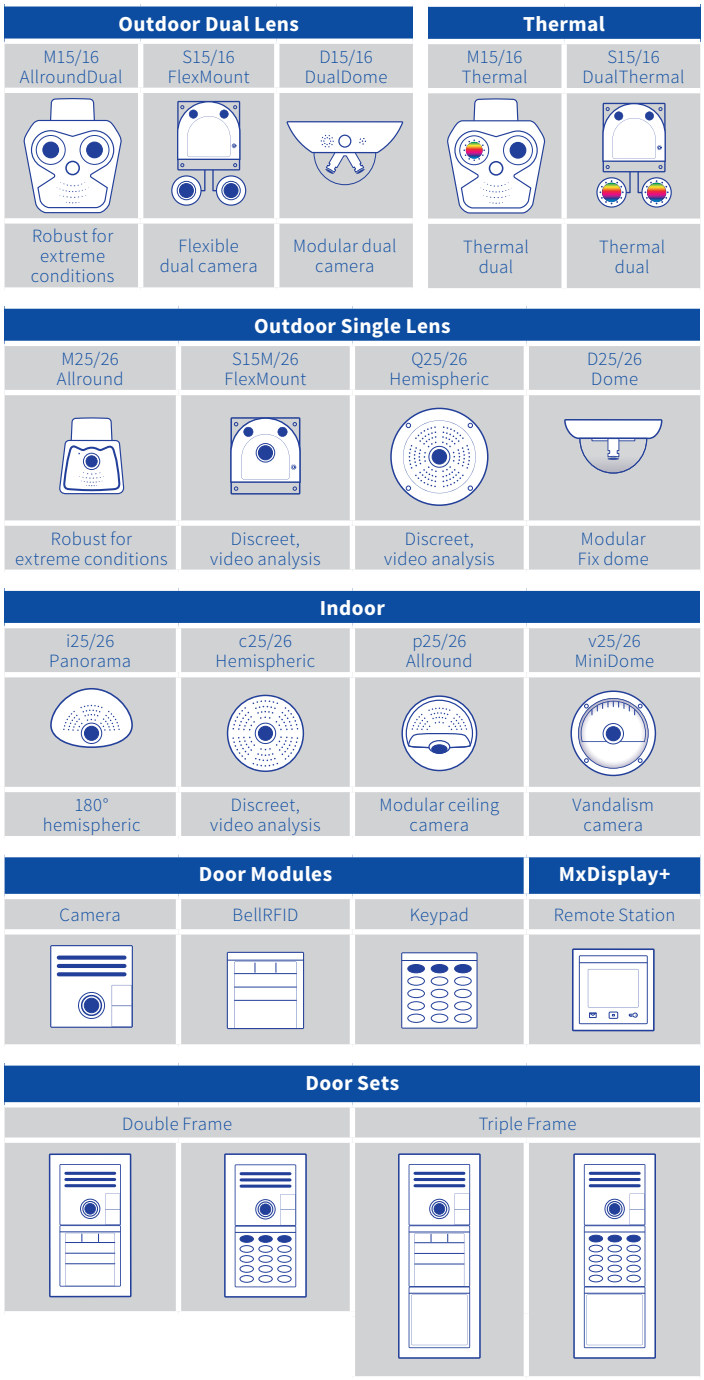
MOBOTIX stands out for its **high level of reliability**. All outdoor cameras are subjected to a stress test for temperatures between -30°C and +60°C (-22°F and +140°F). Without additional components, without heating or cooling and with no moving parts (for example auto iris), they are virtually maintenance free.

MOBOTIX delivers a **perfectly matched package**, starting with the microSD card for storage management and HD audio (microphone and speaker) with VoIP telephony through video analysis, a professional video management system and motion detection software reducing false alarms.

The **decentralized architecture** means that a central computer is not required and the network load is minimal. The intelligent cameras from MOBOTIX process and store image data themselves, trigger events and, in the event of remote access, manage the frame rate and resolution depending on the available bandwidth.

The **6MP Moonlight sensors** and complementary **thermal imaging technology** ensure reliable detection of moving objects, even under the most challenging light conditions and over long distances. As a result, it is possible to cover large areas with just a few cameras. Less power cabling, less IT infrastructure and fewer additional light sources are needed. MOBOTIX cameras are powered using standard PoE and do not require more than 4-5 watts.

An intelligent IP video system from MOBOTIX allows you to **reduce total costs**. The investment pays for itself after a short time and the free-of-charge software and updates ensure it is a future-proof investment.



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