



Washington County, PA

Success Story

SSGOV-0606-01



Success Story: Government-County

Washington County, PA – Courthouse



Personal Panic Buttons + IP Communications = Judges Security

Leveraging the Cisco IP Communications network, the IPsession™ server is integrated to provide a safe and secure environment for judges in the courthouse. All courtrooms are equipped with a “panic button” (a mobile transmitter) operating on a radio frequency system within the county complex, placed at the judge’s bench.

Challenges

- Judge’s safety
- Facility Security
- Outdated Security Panel System

Causes

- Judges murdered in another town
- Existing Security System needed to be moved, however no extra value

Solution

- RFID Panic Buttons for every judge
- RFID Door, Window and Temperature Sensors placed in areas
- RFID Alerts from Panic Buttons, Door Sensors and Window Sensors delivered to Cisco IP Phones and other endpoints

Each alert button is uniquely identified in the IPsession server, so that when that button is pushed, an automated text and text-to-speech message is sent to pre-defined Cisco IP Phones as well as other endpoints types. This pre-defined list includes offices adjacent to the particular courtroom, the sheriff’s office and any other IP voice terminal user that makes logistical or functional sense to define. Other numbers can also be dialed – cellular, off site concerns (police), pagers, as a part of the definitions.

“We are so pleased with this solution that we are working closer with IPcelerate to find more ways to leverage our IP Communication environment.”

- Washington County, Network Administration

Special location receivers have been installed in the parking garage of the county. In this case, all judges park on a single floor. With a personal panic button, provided to each judge, any attack can be signaled in similar fashion to the above alerts and the location of the judge can be defined down to which half of the parking garage on which the button was activated. This capability can be tightened down to a smaller area location as well as expanded to the entire garage.

For more information please visit our website:
www.ipcelerate.com.



Technology
Developer
Partner

About the Customer

Washington County, PA is a historical county formed in 1781 serving a population of 208,000 with a land area of 864 square miles. The county seat is a third-class city, whose county residents and businesses have been welcoming visitors to experience one of the most historical and economically growing areas in the nation. The county also boasts a major university, three colleges, three premier hospitals and efficient access to all cultural, retail and sports activities. The County is located just 30 minutes south of one of the larger cities in this northeast region.



Challenge

Faced with an aging and minimally functioning hardwired Honeywell panel based system alerts system, Washington County needed an improved and reliable method of providing security for the judges within the courthouse building. Having the foresight the county looked to leverage the existing Cisco IP Communication infrastructure with integrated applications across the campus complex. The main control panel needed to be moved, due to renovations. Additional capabilities were also required to support the administrative functions on campus. The cost to simply move the panel would provide no additional functionality or expansion for the county.

The county IT department knew that the strategic placement of the Cisco IP Communication infrastructure was to support future applications enablement – so they began to explore how to leverage this capability and dramatically increase the functionality available to the county.

During this time of evaluation, attacks on law enforcement were on the rise and the recent shooting inside of an Atlanta courtroom, made the **need** for additional security a top priority for the county. Given cost and functionality the county knew that they could invest in the development of their IP network and come up with a better return than the older technology solution provided by their current security vendor. The top concern; the IT Department wanted their judges to feel safe and confident that a call for help would be heard and responded to in an immediate fashion. As a secondary benefit, they also wanted a system that could be expanded to include other awareness alerting functions, integrated into their VoIP infrastructure.

Solution

IPcelerate, Inc.'s IPsession™ server integrated with the Cisco IP Communications solution, wireless “panic-button” transmitters, and wireless location antennas. The “panic-buttons” were given to all the judges in the county and location antennas were strategically placed throughout the government offices and parking structures. Judges that that sense or are in any type of dangerous situation are now able to press a single button and invoke a safety and security process within seconds. Panic button capability has also been programmed onto the Cisco IP Phones.

The second application involves monitoring of other types of alerts received by the IPsession server. Because there is a wireless radio backbone within the county complex, other types of alert awareness devices were able to be placed, all using the Cisco VoIP system to deliver any alerts within the system. Each of the four data centers has been equipped with wireless smoke, high temperature and motion sensors. Any of these events will be captured by the appropriate wireless device and through the IPsession server; notifications will be made throughout the VoIP system, as defined.

Results

This county government benefited by serving an immediate need – the safety and well being of their judges and employees – as well as expanding awareness of other parts of their business. By leveraging the strategically installed Cisco VoIP system with the IPsession capabilities, this organization wisely spent their funds by continuing to build applications on the IP infrastructure and positioned their technology for future applications.

Next Steps

The county will be looking to add additional capability to this wireless alerts system in the future. Flame, moisture and low temperature sensor applications are being considered for immediate applications. Additionally, as the county explores further integration of this system, video is being considered. The IPsession server could be used as a notification device to activate video recording, based on the logging of an alert event. Once an alert event was received, the IPsession platform could send along the instructions to a networked video camera system, to begin recording.



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