CASE STUDY

CUSTOMER INDUSTRY:
Public Transport

WEBSITE:
www.soundtransit.org

LOCATION:
Seattle, USA

BUSINESS NEED:
Flexible deployment with all call types
Efficient call search and retrieval
Effectively handle/route calls that come into the control room

NICE SOLUTIONS:
■ NiceVision

THE IMPACT:
■ Expansion and centralized control
■ Real-time alerting, monitoring and post-incident reconstruction
■ Improved video quality
■ Enhanced redundancy and improved video management with local and centralized storage

SOUND TRANSIT

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER:

Sound Transit operates a network of express buses and commuter trains, shuttling some 61,000 passengers each day in the tri-county area of Snohomish County, King County and Pierce County, on Seattle’s Puget Sound.

THE CHALLENGE:

Back in 2005, Sound Transit embarked on a multi-year project to retrofit its downtown Seattle transit tunnels and stations. The primary goal was to provide a facelift to infrastructure and passenger service, but the project called for safety and security improvements, too.

At that time, Sound Transit used video surveillance cameras in its transit stations, but the video recordings were only captured locally on VCR-like machines. The video quality needed improvement; tapes had to be changed daily; and there was no easy way to transmit recorded video back to the surveillance control center, short of making a trip to a station to retrieve a tape.

At the same time the retrofit was underway, the agency was also updating its long-range expansion plans to accommodate an anticipated surge in ridership. That meant adding light rail lines and outfitting more stations with cameras, a prospect that intensified Sound Transit’s search for an alternative video surveillance solution that offered centralized management and control.
THE SOLUTION:

With NiceVision, Sound Transit’s security team has been able to keep pace with growing ridership and security challenges, no small feat given double-digit passenger growth. Since first installing NiceVision, Sound Transit has quadrupled the number of surveillance cameras while still maintaining centralized control.

Sound Transit employs DVRs at each of five transit stations to record 4CIF video from fifty cameras dispersed among the sites. But the video isn’t just stored locally. NiceVision’s level of service algorithms adapt to Sound Transit’s network bandwidth, enabling video to be streamed from DVRs over the network back to a Central Storage Server at Sound Transit’s control center. This approach simplifies and centralizes video management while ensuring that video is always available for investigations. Staff have the ability, if an event occurs, to access four days worth of high resolution 4CIF video off the DVRs over the network. If an event is outside of that four-day window, stored video can be retrieved from the server.

That’s because Sound Transit’s video surveillance system also transmits a 1CIF signal from the cameras to the control center’s Central Storage Server where video is stored for 30 days.

Sound Transit’s NiceVision system will be expanding in the near future. A new light rail service line between downtown Seattle and Sea-Tac International Airport is scheduled to open in summer 2009. At that time Sound Transit will add 9 more stations and 125 more cameras. All will be recorded and monitored using NiceVision. Through NiceVision’s user interface, Sound Transit will be able to add DVRs and program cameras by entering the names of the cameras, a description of their locations, and other preset values. Sound Transit is using NiceVision’s real-time alerting, monitoring and scenario reconstruction capabilities in a variety of ways, to enhance passenger service, safety and security. Included among these are:

- Monitoring pedestrian flow to see how many people are entering which stations at what times, to determine how to accommodate additional capacity.
- Monitoring cameras in the tunnel bores between the stations to keep watch for potential fires or other conditions. Tunnel cameras equipped with motion detection can also trigger alerts in the control center if they detect any suspicious activity.

NiceVision also allows Sound Transit to see what’s going on on the platforms. If a disturbance or medical emergency is seen or reported, the camera enables the control center to immediately assess the situation while assistance is sent, helping Sound Transit respond rapidly in such situations.

“We WANT TO BRING THE CITIZEN’S VOICE FURTHER INTO THE CALL HANDLING OPERATIONS. INTERACTION ANALYTICS WILL DELIVER INSIGHT ON HOW OUR AGENTS AND SUPERVISORS IN THE CONTROL ROOMS CAN BETTER HANDLE THE VASTLY DIFFERENT TYPES OF CALLS RECEIVED IN THE CONTROL ROOM AND RESPOND WITH APPROPRIATE COACHING, STANDARDIZING THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CITIZEN FOCUSED SERVICE ACROSS THE ENTIRE FORCE,” ADDED”.

Inspector Roger Carter, Call Management Support Unit of Hampshire Constabulary

ABOUT NICE SYSTEMS

NICE (NASDAQ: NICE) is the worldwide leader of software solutions that deliver strategic insights by capturing and analyzing mass quantities of structures and unstructured data in real time from multiple sources, including, phone calls, mobile apps, emails, chat, social media, and video. NICE solutions enable organizations to take the Next-Best-Action to improve customer experience and business results, ensure compliance, fight financial crime, and safeguard people and assets. NICE solutions are used by over 25,000 organizations in more than 150 countries, including over 80 of the Fortune 100 companies. www.nice.com