Axis camera network helps in car washes throughout the Czech Republic.

Automyčka Express uses over 100 Axis cameras to monitor customer traffic.

Organization:
Automyčka Express s.r.o.

Location:
Czech Republic

Industry segment:
Commercial

Application:
License plate recognition, remote monitoring

Axis partner:
NetRex s.r.o.

Mission

Automyčka Express operates a network of car care centers throughout the Czech Republic. In an effort to ensure the highest level of service, the company decided to invest in a digital camera system. The purpose of this was to improve the resolution process concerning customer and insurance claims. This video surveillance system was also to check whether the staff at each facility were washing vehicles for the prescribed amount of time and whether they were only serving those customers registered in the internal database.

Solution

Due to the multitude of uses of the whole system, the integrator, NetRex, created a comprehensive solution using various types of Axis cameras, camera software applications (ACAP) and external detectors. Selected cameras installed in car washes communicate with the order management system and, thanks to the ACAP application, can recognize license plates of the vehicles under operation.

Cameras located in offices on the premises are equipped with motion detectors and check contact with cash drawers. In total, NetRex has installed over 100 Axis devices with a minimum resolution of 1080p on the customer's premises.

Result

The surveillance system fulfilled its intended goal and proved successful in quickly resolving incidents in the car wash and customer claims. Furthermore, it also brought many other benefits. Car-to-car pairing with cars registered in the custom database significantly eliminates the possibility of circumventing the system through the use of unfair practices by some employees in the past. The cameras installed in the office have several advantages thanks to the additional sensors, from access to records during cash handling to alerts on unauthorized movement of persons.

AXIS
COMMUNICATIONS

Wide range of IP camera use

There were several reasons why Automyčka Express decided to switch from analog camera systems to Axis IP cameras. "We were mainly interested in higher video resolution. In addition, we had information that it was possible to read license plates through additional applications. We liked that as a function," says Richard Kettner, CEO of Automyčka Express. License plate reading is important for car wash operators to ensure that branch office staff only serve customers who are in the internal client database. In addition, the camera network is an important aspect in dealing with customer and insurance claims. "Sometimes it happens that there is a customer who complains that we have damaged their car in our car wash. In that case, the camera recordings will allow us to quickly resolve a vast majority of incidents," says Mr Kettner. However, the path to reliability and smooth functionality of the entire system was not without obstacles. The integrator, Netrex, had to ensure that the license plate reader outputs were connected to the order management system. "The challenge was primarily to filter incomplete license plates. In the end, however, we managed to resolve the problem," says David Capoušek, CEO of NetRex.

Quick overview on preview screen at headquarters

The cameras also have their place in offices on the premises, where they monitor the movement of persons using detectors and are also connected to cash registers.

"With these additional sensors, we can very easily filter out video footage where our staff manipulate cash or get quick access to footage while someone is in the office," explains Mr Kettner.

AXIS F41 main units and AXIS F1005-E camera sensor units perform this function. NetRex chose AXIS P3225-V Mk II Network Cameras for vehicle monitoring and licence plate reading in the car wash.
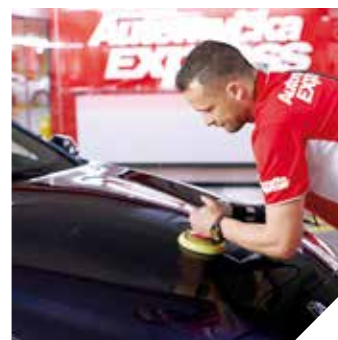
"The cameras are running ACAP application for licence plate detection and analysis, and thanks to the varifocal lens it is possible to capture the monitored brand exactly as needed," explains Mr Capoušek.

AXIS M3045-V and AXIS M3046-V are used as surveillance cameras. There are approximately 4 to 8 cameras in each car wash branch. In total, NetRex placed over 100 Axis cameras in the network of stores, all with a minimum resolution of 1080p. To allow for some situations to be dealt with immediately, NetRex created a preview screen at Automyčka Express headquarters that displays cameras online. Technically, the wall is elegantly designed – the NetRex surveillance station, a mini-computer connected to a Full HD projector, projects key shots from all locations to the wall painted with reflective white. All this is controlled via the NetRex cloud platform, which in addition to the classic VMS solution also offers convenient search for recordings according to license plates and enables automated reporting.

Cameras as preventative measures

Automyčka Express has proven itself in several ways. In addition to the already mentioned effectiveness in dealing with customer and insurance claims, cameras also have an important preventative function. They make it possible to check that staff wash vehicles for a prescribed period of time and that the client database is not circumvented by unfair practices.

"The mere presence of cameras on the premises is a good tool to help us maintain a high standard of service and profitability," confirms Mr Kettner, and continues: "I think we've made the most of our deployed cameras. We are considering extending the license plate reading system over time to other cameras to further refine the process of tracing records and even tracking a particular vehicle in the car wash."