



How to Optimize Your Correctional Security Via an Open Platform VMS

By Brad Wareham

Surveillance is an integral aspect of any prison or detention facility security plan, allowing correctional officers to actively monitor movements, activities, and interactions between inmates, staff, and visitors. Video surveillance provides the means to maintain vigilance in the

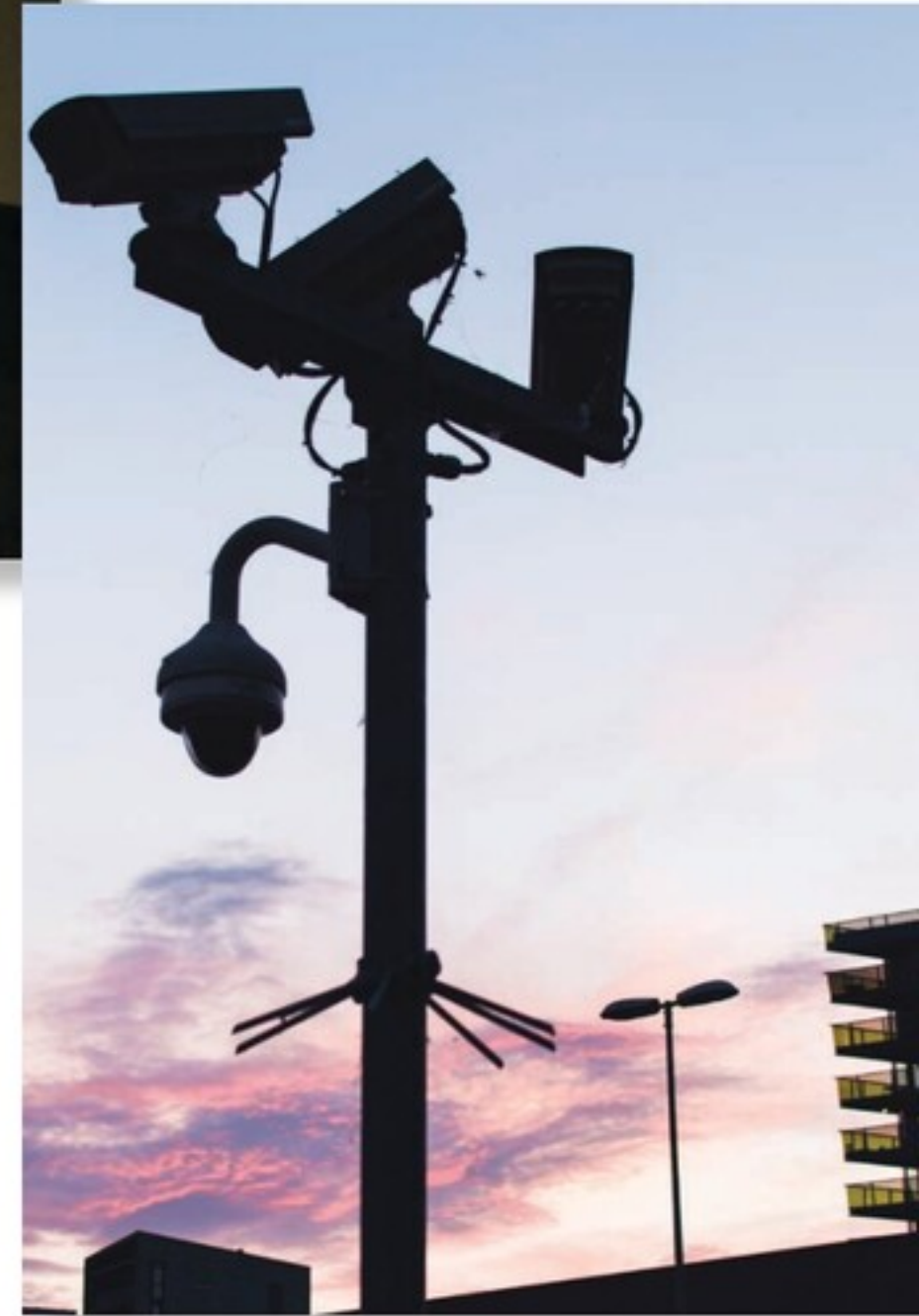
prison or detention environment and is a vital forensic investigation tool.

However, investing in new surveillance technology can be a challenge. It is not uncommon for these types of facilities to have security equipment in place that is years behind the industry's current technology offerings.

Here's how to leverage modern-day video management systems in the correctional industry to positively impact day-to-day operations and improve safety.

Enhancing Security Operations

Used as a workforce multiplier, a video management system can help



prison staff actively monitor several areas at once, from the outdoor exercise yard and indoor common areas to prison cells and hallways.

Integration with the HMI package (PLC Controller) allows seamless operation for all operator activities including camera call-ups to intercom operation, locking and unlocking doors and two-way communications, and placing a facility on lockdown.

Analytic functionality, be it system inherent or third party, such as perimeter detection technology, can also be integrated, allowing prison staff to receive an alert if the surveillance system detects suspicious activity near the shaker fence, which is the barrier between the outward prison fence and the prison itself. For example, if the system detects movement in this area, the VMS can immediately bring this to the attention of the security operations center all while having their physical or digital PTZ cameras slew to the location of the motion, enabling them to more rapidly review video footage within this area and respond accordingly.

Secure Video Clips

To ensure that video clips of an incident do not get into the wrong hands, correctional facilities need to



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be able to effectively manage video clip permissions. Tightened escalation permissions safeguard against the wrong people having access to videos or the ability to export these clips.

Using a ticketing system, a prison employee can request access to a specific video clip, and the correctional facility security operations center can review that request and grant access accordingly. Not only does this ensure tight control of exported video, but it also provides an audit trail of requests should that video become publicly leaked.

Scalability is Paramount

As funding becomes available, correctional facilities must ensure that the VMS can handle emerging technologies such as high-megapixel cameras and incorporate the latest analytics. The average lifecycle for investing in new technology is 60 months or longer, and in this time

period technology, including software, can change significantly. Investing in a VMS system that is designed to expand as needs change is critical for correctional facilities.

As employees and prison inmates need to be closely monitored, surveillance remains a critical technology as part of prison security.

Investing in a video management system not only improves the overall safety, operations, and efficiency in prisons, but it can reduce costs.

By understanding the technical requirements, prison administrators can ensure that the surveillance systems implemented in correctional facilities today can provide long-term benefits

to protect the prison population and security guards alike.

Brad Wareham is Director of Key Accounts at Salient Systems. He has nearly 40 years of extensive experience presenting the latest in video management software technologies.

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