DELLEMC

Public safety enhanced by immediate video access

With faster video retrieval, police in Huntsville, Alabama, can review incidents in minutes rather than hours, while the city's IT staff save hundreds of hours each month in managing this critical storage

HUNTSVILLE
The Star of Alabama

State & Local Government | United States

Business needs

Given nearly a petabyte in storage demands for video from law enforcement body cameras and patrol car cruisers, the city government of Huntsville, Alabama, required a cost-effective, simplified data storage platform that could provide rapid retrieval and incident review.

Solutions at a glance

- Dell EMC Isilon Scale-Out Network Attached Storage
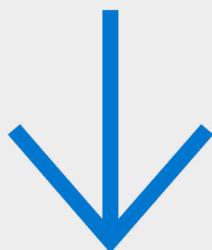
- Dell EMC ProSupport Plus

Business results

- Provides law enforcement with high-speed video retrieval

- Simplifies data management, including backup

- Saves IT staff hundreds of hours every month

- Eliminates 30 file servers and their maintenance

Shrinks rack space by

70%

and power usage by

46%

Saves

$326,000

in operating expenses over five years

In cities across the U.S., law enforcement has deployed video cameras in patrol cars, police departments, jails and, most recently, as "body cams" on their uniforms. The technology requires enormous amounts of storage and immediate accessibility to be most effective in better protecting the public's safety by documenting incidents for forensic reviews. Huntsville, Alabama, adopted its own law enforcement video platform several years ago as part of its mission to protect the city's nearly 200,000 citizens. Senior Systems Administrator Chris Davis, who is responsible for data storage, figured that nearly a petabyte of storage would be needed.

Cloud storage: Too expensive, too slow

"We first looked at the cloud but found it 10 times more expensive than the premises-based Isilon platform we chose," Davis says. "File retrieval from cloud storage could also take up to six hours or more, which can be a non-starter when you need the video for incident reviews."

According to Davis, the city started with a Dell EMC Isilon scale-out network attached storage (NAS) platform, which he found cost-effective and easy to deploy. Then, with a planned move to a new data center, he upgraded to the newly released A200 version, which has delivered even greater simplicity and cost savings. "The biggest savings for us was the cost of going with new nodes amortized over a five-year support period versus extending support on our existing nodes to cover that same period," he says.

Simplification saves hundreds of hours a month

"We eliminated 30 file servers by moving all our file data onto our Isilon NAS, which freed up block space that was being used for file services. This simplifies our data backups tremendously," he says. "We save hundreds of IT staff hours a month that we can use to focus on more strategic projects, now that the Dell EMC Isilon NAS is in place."

> **"*By giving our police fast access to video when needed, public safety is enhanced and justice better served, all with behind-the-scenes help from Dell EMC Isilon storage.*"**
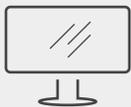>
> Chris Davis
> Senior Systems Administrator,
> City of Huntsville, Alabama

For service support, Davis chose Dell EMC ProSupport Plus with four-hour response time. "We've only called for critical help once so far that I can remember, for a power issue on our old storage nodes, and our tech Mitch arrived in about 20 minutes and had us up again inside an hour," he says. "We have his cell phone number, which we can call anytime."

$326,000 in operating savings over five years

Davis figures the upgrade to Isilon A200 nodes from what they had before reduced rack space by 70 percent and power usage by 46 percent. "With these reductions, we should save $326,000 in operating savings over five years," he says. "That's a big return on our investment, not counting all the time we save."

Although Davis cites his own "peace of mind" as one of the benefits from having the Dell EMC Isilon A200 platform now storing all the city's data and automating its backup, he sees a broader community benefit, too: "By giving our police fast access to video when needed, public safety is enhanced and justice better served, all with behind-the-scenes help from Dell EMC Isilon storage."

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