

IQinVision Megapixel Technology and IP Video Surveillance Provides Safety and Security for Loyola University Chicago



Loyola University Chicago is a private university founded in 1870 as St. Ignatius College. Loyola is ranked as a top national university and with an enrollment of more than 15,000 it is one of the largest of the 28 Jesuit universities and colleges in the United States. Two of Loyola's three campuses in the greater Chicago area were involved in an extensive and ongoing security system upgrade: the Lake Shore Campus and the Water Tower Campus. Lake Shore serves as the main residential and undergraduate campus and has more than 40 buildings. The Water Tower Campus is located just off Chicago's famed "Magnificent Mile," making for an urban campus environment. Each campus is quite different from the other, separated both by distance and by different security needs and challenges.

The Challenge

Prior to the system upgrade, Loyola University maintained a classic patchwork security system comprised of analog cameras, VCRs, DVRs, and two different unrelated types of access control readers with a variety of different access cards that students and staff needed to keep track of. Loyola approached their security consultants with a request for a comprehensive security system overhaul to include access control, video surveillance, and an upgrade to the best IP camera technology to enhance current surveillance and add new areas of coverage, both inside key buildings and throughout the campuses.

Except for a small number of DVRs, video surveillance for Loyola in practice meant a VCR system that provided little if any useable video for ID purposes and post-event analysis. The University recognized they could be at risk without proper technology to provide enhanced security and proper event investigation. Loyola needed a video platform that would provide access to video from all cameras at a central command location and from multiple

remote locations located throughout both campuses. Security management also wanted to significantly improve their camera technology.

As part of the overall project, Loyola Security received a mandate from the Vice President's office to upgrade surveillance capabilities at the Lake Shore campus, so the project team got to work finding the best camera technology. "Our selection committee [for cameras] was looking for image and cost performance," said Frank Dale, Loyola University's Manager of Electronic Security. The University maintained a number of analog CCTV cameras, but the image quality wasn't sufficient. "We could tell it was a person on the video, but not much more," said Dale.

The Solution

IQeye cameras were chosen after an extensive committee selection process that involved testing 15 different IP camera models. The camera

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selection committee was primarily looking for image quality and value, but they wanted other features as well. The IQeye cameras provided a number of important benefits including “plug and play” functionality, power over Ethernet (PoE), and remarkable network stability. Initially, about 80 IQeye cameras were deployed both inside and outside Lake Shore campus buildings, covering exits and entrances, lobbies, parking areas, and other key locations. Cameras have also been installed to monitor the perimeter of the campus, so security has views up and down the public throughways.

As part of the video surveillance upgrade phase, NVR technology provided by Milestone Systems was selected to manage a total of about 200 cameras, including all deployed IQeye cameras located in critical areas. Current plans call for additional deployments of additional IQeye cameras for the Water Tower Campus, The Fine Arts Annex, The Mundelein Center, the Lake Shore Information Center, and the Athletic Field.

The Highlights

- In an extensive comparison process, the IQeye cameras won out over all other IP cameras: “Among the 15 different IP camera models, our committee felt the IQeye was the best camera for the cost, but it also had the best image quality overall,” concluded Dale.
- The rigorous testing against seven top IP camera manufacturers proved that the other network cameras did not bring the same level of maturity

and stability, and ultimately the IQeye was chosen due to its reliability, picture quality, and the ability to recover from a variety of network and power failures without manual reset.

- At present, more than 80 IQeye megapixel cameras are located in strategic locations around the Lake Shore campus, replacing the inadequate CCTV technology, and integrated into the new Milestone NVR software. Loyola University has standardized on IQeye cameras for future expansion, and the number of cameras is planned to reach 325+ cameras.
- Beyond image quality, Dale commented on other IQeye advantages, “The IQeye cameras give us a number of important benefits: they are ‘plug and play’, and we have PoE, so not only do we minimize our coax cable runs, we don’t have to provide power to every camera.”
- The Lake Shore campus installation and a future upgrade of Water Tower campus security involve cooperation between the security and IT departments. “Initially, IT was apprehensive about camera stability and reliability and about bandwidth usage,” said Dale. “It took some convincing, but once they saw the IQeye technology in action, and they understood bandwidth was not an issue, they got on board.”
- In addition to making students and staff feel safer, the IQeye megapixel cameras increase security staff productivity, make liaison with law enforcement more efficient and effective, and potentially reduce lawsuits by proving conclusively what did or did not transpire.
- Because the IQeye is a network camera, the video can easily be distributed to campus police, campus administrators and the Chicago police by the internet, email or even on CDs/DVDs.