

# PROVIDING MERCY

Security comes with command console: all systems monitored, operated and integrated.

By Paul Baratta

**A**s the sixth largest Catholic healthcare system in the United States, Mercy serves more than 3 million individuals a year. This organization, an operation that includes 32 hospitals, 300 outpatient locations and 39,000 employees, offers comprehensive, quality healthcare services in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

Beyond operating acute care, specialty care and critical access hospitals, Mercy also manages a number of outreach ministries and clinics in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

Overall, the network has an impressive team of more than 1,700 primary and specialty care physicians, as well as 600 advanced practitioners and supporting staff.

## PATIENT CARE CONTINGENT ON ACCESS CONTROL

For Mercy, as is the case for any medical care facility, being able to offer crucial, attentive care to all patients is highly contingent on the strength of the access control system in place at each facility. When tasked with upgrading and fully integrating the current access control system in its St. Louis and Springfield, Mo. area facilities, Mercy approached STANLEY Security with the task.

“We chose Stanley as Mercy’s systems integrator for many reasons,” said Terry McTague, manager of security systems at Mercy. “With a global footprint and long history of success stories, they have managed to amass a pool of resources that enables them to engineer, program, install and maintain nearly all elements of a security solution.”

The installation, currently in-progress, is a massive conversion of two of the largest systems in the St. Louis and Springfield area Mercy facilities.

“Our largest, and most important security system, is the access control system,” McTague said. “On a regional level, we have more than 100 access control panels, operating more than 1,000 doors at more than 20 facilities throughout the metro area. Our second largest system is our video security system, with more than 600 cameras spread throughout the region.

“Both of these systems are critical and used every minute of every day by anyone accessing secure areas at Mercy facilities in Springfield and St. Louis. Proper function is necessary and affects nearly every coworker, patient and visitor. Both are in the process of being converted to enterprise-level security systems.”

## UPGRADING AND INTEGRATING

Mercy is entering the final stages of completing a significant access control upgrade to the Lenel OnGuard Enterprise Integrated security management software and to the video security system for integration.

This breadth and depth of access control upgrade and video integration with the enterprise platform, including the system’s ability to streamline all imperative systems under a single, unified platform, database server and user interface, greatly influenced not only Mercy’s choice of system, but which systems integrator to employ that would aptly get the job done.

“One of our biggest needs was overall systems integration,” McTague said. “When I assumed responsibility of the security systems at Mercy’s facilities, all our systems were standalone, so I quickly saw the need for integration.

“Furthermore, each was not capable of talking to or working with each other, as the main access control and video security systems were as proprietary as they come. Managing multiple systems on multiple workstations made it nearly impossible for users to effectively monitor, respond to and investigate incidents in a timely manner. It soon became apparent that Mercy’s security requirements had outgrown the capabilities of our existing solutions, so it was time for an upgrade.”

## NON-PROPRIETARY SYSTEMS

After dealing with proprietary systems that did not “play well” with each other, Mercy made the decision to replace them with non-proprietary, enterprise-level systems through Lenel.

OnGuard allows corporate security and IT managers to maintain central control over the entire, integrated security system, while allowing regional offices to maintain independence and autonomous operations of their respective, individual, regional security systems by offering:

- data synchronization between multiple databases via LAN/WAN connections;
- MobileBadge functionality for enrolling;
- cardholders at remote sites;
- segmented database architecture;
- open architecture design utilizing commercial, off-the-shelf products;
- an intelligent, fault-tolerant response system;
- an advanced network design;
- powerful import and export capabilities.

## SYSTEM SCALABILITY

Imperative to Mercy’s decision to upgrade to OnGuard was the system’s scalability.

The new system supports an unlimited number of regional servers and client workstations. The powerful, transaction-based architecture allows the system to grow and expand as Mercy extends its care centers and services. The organization can also use the same access control field hardware and application software.

The system’s longevity pairs with a heightened level of power and flexibility that allows system operators to simultaneously monitor alarms in multiple regions throughout the St. Louis and Springfield metro areas. For example, regional operators are able to monitor alarm and event information locally, during working hours, while enterprise operators maintain the ability to monitor alarms from all of the regions after hours.

If Mercy chooses to expand its services further, within the state, OnGuard supports an unlimited number of regions to be monitored simultaneously and allows enterprise system administrators to configure and administer multiple regions from a single site, a significant feature in Mercy’s system-wide upgrade.

## PSIM SOLUTION

In order to manage and monitor all of the features provided by OnGuard, Mercy’s ultimate goal is to implement Stanley Security’s Commander Physical Security Information Management (PSIM) solution to bridge any remaining gaps and disconnects between the physical security, overall enterprise management and facilities.

This PSIM solution streamlines operations by providing real-time collaboration between security, facilities and enterprise management. Instead of working with multiple, disparate systems, organizations can quickly and efficiently manage situations as they arise.

The primary feature of this PSIM solution is the touch screen display, an all-inclusive portal that will control and monitor all systems in Mercy’s facilities, including access control, video surveillance, intrusion, fire, intercom, paging/notification and the enterprise information system. All essential information is available via easy-to-use, menu-driven, graphical user interfaces. Visuals of a facility’s customized floor plan take into account the day-to-day activities of any of Mercy’s acute, specialty care and critical access hospitals, while maintaining an overall look and feel that is simple and easy-to-control in crucial situations.



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