



Keeping an Eye on Crime and Safety

Once Plagued by Aging and Unstable In-Car Video Systems, Dade City Police Department Enjoys Years of Reliable Video - on Patrol and at the Office

Case Study, August 2010

Working with a video surveillance system that was often dysfunctional and had no technical support available, Florida's Dade City Police Department found itself in need of an upgrade to its mobile and facility video surveillance. A new system would have to withstand the region's grueling heat and the rigorous activity that comes with the job, be consistently reliable, require little maintenance and be easy to operate and access. Above all, it had to ensure officer safety on patrol and at the station.

Serving central Florida's historic Pasco County, the Dade City Police Department protects and serves more than 6,500 residents, visitors, businesses, and property owners within the department's jurisdiction. Captain David Duff, a 25-year veteran of the Dade City Police Department, oversees a small department of four sergeants, 12 patrol officers and one sergeant and officer who are handlers of two K-9 units. He is responsible for the department's operations, as well as Dade City's emergency assistance and public safety.

In 2005 Duff sought to relieve the endless operating headaches caused by aging cameras and related equipment. Ready for an end to the hassles, Dade City PD embarked on a search for a replacement where reliability and software compatibility across the fleet would never be in question. And, given that officers are often alone at the station with prisoners in custody, he also had to ensure that a new system would allow sergeants to monitor activity at the facility from the field.

The department discovered Apollo Video Technology, a mobile video surveillance provider with a track record of providing reliable in-car video systems. Apollo Video's RoadRunner system would provide immediate access to live video feeds of areas throughout the police facility and outfit the Dade City police car fleet with a surveillance system that would produce quality recordings of police chases, traffic stops and other incidents.



Despite the fact that K-9 vehicles are a notoriously difficult environment for electronics, the original systems installed in these vehicles in 2005 are still operating reliably today.

Captain Duff made the "easy decision" to go with Apollo Video several years ago and "I haven't looked back since," he said. "This has been a major step up compared to what we had before, and now we have Apollo's system deployed throughout the facility as well as our K-9 units and patrol cars."

Dade City Police Department was the first law enforcement agency in the state of Florida to equip every new vehicle with the RoadRunner Law

Enforcement system, which is customizable with accessory options including displays, GPS and wireless capabilities and the ability to record up to four cameras. Despite the fact that K-9 vehicles are a notoriously difficult environment for electronics, the original systems installed in these vehicles in 2005 are still operating reliably today.

Throughout the facility, all camera feeds can be viewed from a flat screen monitor in the dispatch center or from a patrol car through an in-car laptop.



Photo courtesy of Denice Weigand

After years of success throughout the mobile fleet, a facility 12-camera surveillance system was installed in 2009 to record the holding cell, booking area, breathalyzer room, lobby, sally port and parking lot. Apollo Video's software allows access to facility-based cameras from a remote location, making it possible to watch prisoners and support officers without utilizing additional officers. Throughout the facility, all camera feeds can be viewed from a flat screen monitor in the dispatch center or from a patrol car through an in-car laptop.

The in-car and facility surveillance systems and resulting video has aided in court cases as evidence, and has captured video of police pursuits, DUI traffic stops and subsequent breath tests, police brutality claims, and homicide suspect interviews. The software provided with the RoadRunner system features encryption and password protection to easily maintain a chain of custody, reports Duff.

With very minimal down time, the video systems tend to run flawlessly from the moment a squad car is turned on, says Captain Duff. "When we do have support needs, or are interested in upgrading systems, the Apollo Video team is always available and has a knowledge of the system that is second to none," said Duff. "The support team is one of the best things about having this system."

In addition to being a durable system with a responsive support team and reliable video recordings, the video is easy to access. From the department's internal network, video feeds are available from any terminal with permissions to either watch or save video.

"The ease-of-use and quality of video is better than any I've ever seen. Apollo Video makes a first-class system that exceeds every expectation we've had when it comes to quality of content and reliability," said Duff.

"We never had second thoughts about the Apollo Video system. Since the initial installation we've only needed very minor fixes. And those have been needed on only some of our oldest units. I am eager to put Apollo Video in all of my new cars – every time I spec out a new car, I spec out a RoadRunner system for it.



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