

Real-time surveillance keeps investigators a step ahead.

Police department partners with Sprint to provide innovative solutions to improve surveillance and safety.

The **DeKalb County Police Department**, headquartered in Decatur, Ga., provides public safety services for 700,000 residents within a 271 square mile radius, including part of Atlanta. Their mission is to enhance the quality of life in DeKalb County by working cooperatively with the public to enforce the laws, preserve the peace, reduce fear and provide for a safe environment. The department currently operates out of five area precincts with a total of 1,112 sworn police officers and 498 support staff employees.

Challenge

Like many public safety agencies, DeKalb County faced the challenge of maintaining a high level of service with increasingly limited budgets. Investigators juggle heavy case loads which require time-intensive tasks like research or gathering evidence used to identify and convict criminals. Coupled with the traditional methods of eyes-on surveillance, investigators' ability to keep up with demand of heavy case loads was being hampered, potentially compromising officer and community safety. Remote video surveillance alternatives involve the expense and geographic limitations of both wired Internet connectivity and line-of-sight systems. Detectives needed to find a video surveillance system that could be deployed quickly, wherever criminal activity is suspected, allowing them to monitor from a safe distance and respond when necessary.



Solution

DeKalb County purchased a surveillance vehicle from Crime Point, one of the first in the nation that provides Internet video capabilities using a wireless data connection. Satisfied with both customer service and coverage, the department chose Sprint as their network provider and soon discovered multiple ways to utilize the wireless connectivity for tactical and investigative operations by capturing images and immediately relaying them to the field. In addition to serving as a base for manned operations, the platform serves as an unmanned force-multiplier as the video system is programmed to record on motion and email photographs, triggering the operator to log on for real-time monitoring, camera control and remote review of captured evidence.

With the introduction of 4G in the Atlanta area, DeKalb County is now able to experience the advantages of increased speed and bandwidth. Sprint and Crime Point partnered to conduct a nationwide pilot to allow police agencies to see firsthand how video over 4G can enhance their surveillance capabilities. The department was loaned a PeripherEye® video surveillance system. Not only could they observe the improvements that 4G provides, they also provided a valuable service to other police departments across the country who were able to access the camera remotely as well. The new system also provides the ability for multiple users to log on at the same time. Multiple officers can now log onto a camera simultaneously, whether at the station or in the field, to observe an event or survey suspicious activity.

"It's challenging, trying to describe vehicles and suspects to the take-down team. Instead of saying, 'It's the pick-up truck next to the third light pole from the left on the northeast end of the lot,' I just send the picture so they have accurate, immediate information so they know exactly who and what to be looking for."

– Tim Donahue, Detective, DeKalb County Police Department

Bottom Line

The department has continued to increase its use of Sprint products and services, including outfitting its entire fleet of squad cars with mobile Internet service. The ability to view and send real-time visuals has reduced operator workload and eliminated the need for double staffing, as they no longer have to rely on sending descriptions via radio while controlling the camera. The ability to capture images and relay them to the field has enhanced situational awareness and increased officer safety while reducing the possibility of mistaken identity. DeKalb County has also purchased the PeripherEye system since the completion of the successful pilot. The department has noticed improvements in image quality and frame rate for more accurate views of real-time situations. As it only takes a split second to hide a gun or hand an object to another person, the system lessens their chance of missing something critical.

The feeling of community safety has been enhanced, creating a heightened climate of security. The video surveillance solutions enable the public to continue to have a safer place to live, work and play, even with fewer officers out in the field. With cameras supplementing the eyes on the street, officers are freed up to respond to calls and handle more immediate situations, receiving notifications via the Sprint 3G and Sprint 4G networks and responding when needed. The department is looking forward to the continued growth of the partnership they have with Sprint and Crime Point, for the benefit of the citizens of DeKalb County.

For more information on Sprint solutions,
contact your local Sprint representative or visit
sprint.com/publicsafety



“With wireless video, the safety of citizens is enhanced. Sometimes there are holes, gaps in time or information between an incident or call and the ability to confront the suspect...Access to information allows the investigators to more quickly assess and create a higher probability of response, pulling the suspect off the street before further crimes can occur.”

– Darrell Black, Chief Information Officer,
DeKalb County Police Department

