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The Case for Outsourcing Video Surveillance

SecureAssist Business Case

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Introduction

The need for surveillance in the electricity sector cannot be overstated. Electricity is considered the most critical of all critical infrastructure, and the utility substation is the cornerstone of distribution to your utility clients. Equipment integrity within your substation is critical to ensuring the safe, reliable, and efficient flow of electricity downstream of the facility.

An intrusion into the facility by unauthorized, typically untrained, or unqualified people is unacceptable for a number of reasons. One intrusion can seriously impair the flow of electricity, cost tens of thousands of dollars in repairs, cause loss of life or limb, significantly impact the ability of the facility to function, take long lead times to secure replacement equipment and repair, and finally, tarnish the brand and reputation of the facility owner.

There is a strong business case to outsource the video surveillance to a professional entity that knows your business.

Costs of a Facility Intrusion

Every facility intrusion results in some level of damage with an associated cost:

- Graffiti remediation can range from several hundred to thousands of dollars, depending on the square footage that is marred
- Substation fence repairs (including copper ground replacement) can range from several thousand dollars to tens of thousands, depending on the damage
- Substation structural ground repairs can cost several thousand dollars
- Substation transformer neutral and other conductor repairs cost in the tens of thousands (substation isolation is required and equipment will need to be tested)
- If a substation fire ensues, damage can range into several hundred thousand dollars

About SecureAssist

SecureAssist, powered by Util-Assist, is a multi-layered security solution specifically designed to protect mission-critical infrastructure. Our active monitoring services include the following:

- 24/7 monitoring by highly trained agents with advanced distribution and utility knowledge
- Early interventions to deter potential trespassers, such as issuing warnings via loudspeakers and turning on lights
- Triaging of incidents in real-time
- Prompt dispatching directly to police services
- Incident reporting, including regular monthly reporting and detailed reports on each incident
- Preparation of court-ready detailed reports should police apprehend and prosecute intruders
- A site-specific security action plan

Business Case Benefits

Active video security monitoring positions your utility to completely avoid the costs of a facility intrusion. Using SecureAssist to defend a site is akin to buying insurance by preventing intrusions and reducing the annual repair budget. Plus, SecureAssist provides all the protection of in-house video monitoring at a fraction of the price. A range of compelling business case benefits makes it straightforward to obtain corporate funding and support.



Saving You Money

- SecureAssist reduces your annual repair budget.
- Introducing technology to the site results in a very cost-effective pricing solution, keeping your operating costs low.
- With Util-Assist's latest applications and equipment, you don't need to make expensive technology investments.
- The cost of outsourcing is lower than the cost of performing the work in-house when considering factors such as training, resourcing, and shifting of internal production hours to video monitoring.
- In many cases, when control center staff turn their attention from their normal responsibilities to site intrusions, they find they have lost familiarity with the video monitoring technology and processes – potentially leading to losses and damage.
- SecureAssist eliminates your recurring operating expenses and efforts to train your staff on intrusion triage.



Saving You Time

- SecureAssist's real-time intervention ensures faster response times.
- SecureAssist frees your staff from acting as "security guards."
 - With utility control room staff under more pressure than ever to efficiently operate the electricity infrastructure, they have less time and bandwidth.
 - Control room staff are highly trained to operate utility electricity infrastructure in a safe, efficient manner. With the introduction of technologies such as SCADA, OMS, AMI, there are fewer control room staff performing this function.
- Our experienced staff perform the triaging of any incident in real time, leaving your staff free to focus on operating your electricity infrastructure.
- Because of our relationships with local police services, we can liaise directly with dispatch/radio rooms, instead of calling 911, ensuring police are promptly dispatched.
- We take care of the paperwork: monthly reporting for each site, incident reports, and court-ready detailed reports should police apprehend intruders and prosecute.



Keeping Facilities Secure

- With its defense-in-depth design, SecureAssist delivers multiple protective layers to keep your facility secure (deter, detect, defend).
- AI algorithms and video analytics monitor all camera feeds 24/7 and alert a live agent the moment suspicious activity is detected.
- Upon detection of a real intrusion, our staff will “talk down” the intruders, letting them know we are observing, advise that police have been dispatched, and turn on additional lights. Because it usually occurs when the intruders are still outside the fence, this strategy effectively chases away intruders and reduces the potential for facility damage.
- By preventing intrusions, SecureAssist results in increased uptime of facilities and better reliability.
- Outsourcing video surveillance provides you with the benefit of having the latest technologies in place, such as artificial intelligence (Object ID and behavioral analysis) and the internet of things.
- An ancillary benefit is safety monitoring when utility staff are on-site performing routing operating or maintenance duties.
- Action plans are specific to each site, ensuring the optimal approach to deterrence and defense is applied in each scenario.

Conclusion

SecureAssist combines real-time deterrence and response without the high cost of 24/7 security. Outsourcing your video surveillance to SecureAssist provides consistent, seamless live monitoring (helping you save money on your operating expenses), provides real-time intervention and quicker response times, and reaps the benefit of the latest in technology, all while keeping your facilities secure.

The utility sector is all that Util-Assist serves. Take comfort that our staff are trained in the electricity sector, are familiar with your substation equipment, and understand your practices and processes. SecureAssist is a holistic service that proactively protects your facility at a cost-effective price, demonstrating a compelling business case.

About Util-Assist



SecureAssist is offered by Util-Assist, a recognized innovator in technology and data-driven solutions for utilities. Our solutions merge technology with strategy to streamline processes, boost productivity, enable data-driven business decisions, and deliver enhanced customer experiences, transforming how utilities operate and deliver value to their customers. With professional services and managed services for electric, water, and gas, utilities rely on Util-Assist to help them drive digital innovation that reshapes the utility of the future.