

Case Study

Location: Santa Monica, CA

Product: IP FSA



Zetron IP Fire Station Alerting 'Saves Seconds and Save Lives'

Santa Monica Fire Adopts 'State-of-the-Art,' IP-based Alerting

The Santa Monica Fire Department's fire station alerting operations were contracted out to the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). But when a study revealed that Santa Monica would be better served if the Santa Monica Fire Department handled those operations themselves, the City of Santa Monica decided to make that change. They also decided that to ensure the highest levels of service, they would install a new fire station alerting system based on the most up-to-date technologies.

Requirements for the new system included that it would have to be IP-based to provide the most current functionality and to connect to the City of Santa Monica's fiber-optic network. It would also have to be implemented before Santa Monica's contract with the LAFD.

Santa Monica Fire Department

The Santa Monica Fire Department (SMFD) is a secondary public safety answering point (PSAP). This means that Santa Monica's 9-1-1 calls go first to the city's primary PSAP at the Santa Monica Police Department. Calls that require a response from the SMFD are then routed to them.

Advanced Electronics

Through a competitive bidding process, Zetron reseller, Advanced Electronics, was selected to supply the SMFD's new alerting system.

With offices in Oxnard, Redondo Beach and Ontario, California, Advanced Electronics provides communications solutions, including two-way, broadband, paging, point-to-point and closed-circuit TV systems, primarily to public-safety customers throughout Southern California.

Their winning proposal for Santa Monica was based on Zetron's IP Fire Station Alerting system.

Why IP FSA?

Zetron's IP FSA was selected for the project because it met several key project requirements: it would connect to Santa Monica's fiber optic network; it would fulfill National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1221 requirements; and it could be installed in time to meet the project's tight deadline.

In addition, Santa Monica had used Zetron fire station alerting equipment when they were doing their own alerting. The system had worked reliably and well.

"We'd had good experiences with our previous Zetron alerting equipment, so we had no qualms about implementing the latest of Zetron's station alerting technologies," says Jory Wolf, chief information officer for the City of Santa Monica.

Wolf says that one attractive feature of IP FSA is that "...it supports the implementation of new, state-of-the-art, plug-and-play technologies that many cities are looking for." A system's ability to adapt to new technologies over time improves its longevity and return on investment.

Zetron's IP Fire Station Alerting

Zetron's IP FSA system includes the IP FSA Server application, the IP FSA Console client application that resides at each console position, and the station units that reside at each fire station.

The connection between the consoles and the station units allows dispatchers to view the status of various station functions and devices and to also control the PA, tones and relays at each station. The station units can be configured to activate the PA automatically, play unique tones, display apparatus status, open bay doors, control station lights, turn galley ranges off, and perform other actions for zoned alerting. The station unit's response button can be used for manual acknowledgements or to reach the communications center.

Santa Monica's solution

The solution for SMFD included:

- Zetron's IP FSA Server.
- Three IP FSA Console workstations.
- Five Model 6203 Fire Station Units, one at each of five stations.
- One Model 6204 Fire Station Unit.

Meeting the deadline

Advanced Electronics, the City of Santa Monica and Zetron worked together to prepare for and complete the installation on time.

"I served as the liaison between the fire department and Advanced Electronics," says Santa Monica public safety systems analyst, Benjamin Steers. "If a problem arose, I was there to either make the decision or get the right people involved so Advanced Electronics could stay focused on their work. Advanced Electronics worked directly with Zetron on technical issues that pertained to the system itself."

Bruce Cobb of Advanced Electronics says that once the new IP FSA system was installed, it was run in parallel with the existing LAFD system for about a month before the final cutover.

"This gave dispatchers time to learn the new system and gave us time to test it and make sure that everything was running properly," he says.

The final cutover to the new IP FSA system was completed successfully and by the deadline. "We were really under the gun to get it done so it would be ready when their contract with the City of L.A. expired," says Cobb. "And we made it."

Results

The new IP FSA is now delivering the many capabilities Santa Monica was hoping to gain from a new system. One of its most significant benefits is that it helps dispatchers do their jobs efficiently and effectively. This is an important part of ensuring that first responders get to the scene of an emergency as quickly as possible.

"Anything that streamlines dispatchers' tasks so they can get units responding to an emergency saves seconds and saves lives," says Santa Monica Fire Communications Supervisor, Shannon Comman.



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