

## Études de cas

### Villa Vicenza HOA Works with Local Integrator to Install Cloud-based ACT365

With a mix of renters and homeowners requiring access to common areas at any given time, it can be a challenge to monitor a lock-and-key system. The HOA recently hired a new management company to oversee the facility and wanted to offer a cloud-based access control solution that would be used across the facility, didn't require a dedicated computer and that processed updates automatically.



#### The Customer

Villa Vicenza in San Diego, Calif., is an Italian-style condominium complex that covers both one- and two-bedroom floorplans and serves tenants looking for close proximity to the University of California - San Diego (UCSD) or commuter access to Interstate 5. The site, which has a

total of four buildings, includes two pools, two jacuzzi tubs, two gyms, a yoga room, a cyber cafe with free Wi-Fi, a salon, a volleyball court, a barbecue grill and an on-site management office. The units were originally built as apartments in the late 1980s, but in 2006, they were sold as condos to individual owners, some of whom live on-site and some who rent the units to students at UCSD. Today, the Villa Vicenza Homeowners Association is run by Menas Realty Company.

## **The Challenge**

With a mix of renters and homeowners requiring access to common areas at any given time, it can be a challenge to monitor a lock-and-key system. Additionally, the management company for the facility has changed hands a number of times during the time that security integrator Com-Sec Incorporated has worked with the HOA to install and update its access control systems.

“When we first started working with the facility, the management company was very cost-conscious, and ended up finding an access control system online and asked us to install it for them,” said Bret Hart, President and CEO, Com-Sec. “Over time, they started having problems with the system and had a hard time finding local support for it. Like many of these types of systems, it lasted for a period of time, but wasn’t a long-term solution.”

## **The Solution**

The HOA recently hired a new management company to oversee the facility and wanted to offer a cloud-based access control solution that would be used across the facility, didn't require a dedicated computer and that processed updates automatically. “In the event that the management company changed again, they wanted the ability to seamlessly transition the system and keep it in place,” Hart said.

More than a year ago, Hart visited with Vanderbilt and previewed its new cloud-based access control and video management solution during a tradeshow after looking at other vendors offering a similar product. “I’ve

been in the industry for the past 30 years, and have seen systems come and go. Up until this point, I wasn't a big fan of the cloud-based solutions I've seen, as they didn't meet the standards that we want to put our name on," he said. As a dealer of Vanderbilt's Security Management Solution (SMS), Com-Sec was interested in seeing how the ACT365 software compared as a cloud-based system. "After seeing it in action, we thought it was the right fit for the customer, and we decided to carry it as a dealer," Hart said.

Funding for the project came from a fund in place from part of the HOA fees that homeowners pay to live in the complex. When the previous system was no longer functioning as it needed to, Hart recommended the ACT365 cloud-based access control solution.

ACT365 is scalable and designed to allow the remote access control management of single or multiple locations, all from an easy-to-use interface. Each Access Control Unit (ACU) is a single door IP controller and connects to Web-based software hosted in Microsoft Azure. Users can quickly update or remove user permissions, remotely monitor system health and open a door from a PC, tablet or smartphone.

## **The Results**

ACT365 offers an intuitive dashboard that provides users with a complete status display of hardware to ensure there are no issues with the system. "The HOA's management company can tell there's a problem before the tenants ever know there's an issue, and from my experience, there aren't any other systems that do that," Hart said. For Com-Sec, the cloud-based control allows the integrator support team to log in from any location to help troubleshoot problems and remotely show users how to make changes step by step. "This is a significant savings for both the end user customer and for us as integrators, who no longer have to travel on-site to offer support," he said.

Throughout the four buildings on site, the ACT365 solution covers 25 to 30 doors, including common area entrances, elevators and entrances from the parking garage to the individual floors. Villa Vincenza

management has the ability to grant access to vendors remotely, even in the middle of the night.

ACT365 enables the operator to activate doors and analyze their status from any major Web-based browser or via the ACT365 app, as well as make immediate remote adjustments to a user's details, including updating access privileges. When a unit's tenant vacates a condo and another moves in, access can be ceased or granted instantaneously, offering greater flexibility for the management company. This is a significant advantage for a small on-site management team without a dedicated security or IT department tasked with constant oversight of and updates to the system.

As an open platform, ACT365 also allowed Villa Vicenza to use its existing card readers without having to replace the hardware, saving a substantial amount in upgrades. "It's the most tech-friendly solution I've seen on the market and is so intuitive that it could be considered 'plug and play,'" Hart said. The ability for ACT365 to be implemented with existing readers saves time and money on installation costs for both the integrator and the end user. "As a dealer that likes to get involved with the equipment, there really is nothing on the market that is as easy by way of setup as the ACT365 system," he said. "I was hesitant, so I plugged one in my office and had it communicating within 2 minutes, which is amazing when redeploying out of another unknown network configuration. It was immediately online; it was pretty phenomenal really."

And in the event of a management company change, the solution can be seamlessly transitioned without the added stress of moving a physical system from one place to another. "Now, all that needs to be passed on is a login," Hart said.

ACT365 is scalable enough to cover additional doors as new buildings are added or needs change, and Villa Vicenza is in the process of expanding the system to include pool entry, internal and external gates, the community gym and cyber cafe. The solution can also incorporate remote video management tied to the access control system, which Villa

Vicenza is exploring as they seek to deliver more security to homeowners.

“The RMR model that ACT365 offers was new to us, and RMR for SMBs hasn't been my business model,” Hart said. “We've been focused more on large, enterprise-level installations. In looking at this, it's been a new and evolving technology and not one provider had a good grasp on this. But Vanderbilt does; so we're looking at deploying a lot more of this and planning on making this a bigger offering than we've done in the past.”

“Vanderbilt as an organization is a powerhouse in the industry; over the years, I've observed that they've gotten better at what everyone else is doing,” Hart said. “As an integrator, it drives me crazy when a manufacturer tries to get into a new business but falls short of providing on the support side of things. Vanderbilt is about support for their products on the front side and through the duration of the relationship, and that sets them apart in the industry. ACT365 has delivered in this regard.”



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