The Emergency Command Centre (ECC) is 'First-to-Serve' the citizens and public safety communities of Orange County. The ECC is staffed by dispatchers who work shifts across a 24/7, 365 days a year rota.

911 Call Center

Orange County Fire Authority

Established in 1995, Orange County Fire Authority is a regional fire service agency. It serves 23 cities in Orange County and all incorporated areas, protecting over 1.6 million residents from its 72 fire stations located throughout the county. The Emergency Command Centre (ECC) serves as a secondary 911 Public-Safety Answering Point (PSAP) with dispatchers working across a 24/7, 365 days a year rota.

CHALLENGE

Providing 911 Operations for 23 cities in the County of Orange, CA is a constant challenge. The OCFA wanted to increase the reliability of its systems and embrace newer technology to improve the working environment of its dispatchers.

Citizens who dial 911 expect help in critical situations; therefore, 911 call centers need to work efficiently to respond promptly and reliably to dispatch the necessary assistance for many different types of emergency situations. Emergency Command Centers need to have the resources and infrastructure to be able to handle responses to ongoing daily demand as well as large-scale disasters. With the volume of calls and the percentage of non-emergency calls growing, and nearly one third of emergency calls coming in from cell phones, dispatchers face more challenges than ever before.

The OCFA had a few objectives in updating its Command Centre. Replace outdated PS/2 with USB peripherals, maintain current single and dual head VGA monitors, improve ergonomics for each console and utilize standard IP infrastructure throughout the building. 18 dispatch consoles; each with one operative and five screens also had to be able to access four computers located away from the operatives in an access and climate controlled area.

SOLUTION

The OCFA IT Infrastructure group thoroughly researched the best solution to update the aging components and improve functionality of the 911 dispatch system. In the end it found that Adder's solution provided the best video and USB extension technology available.

OCFA deployed multiple AdderLink X-50 and the AdderLink X-50MS (multiscreen) to extend the keyboard, video and mouse from each computer to each of these consoles. Providing single and dual head video at 1920x1200 resolution and fully transparent full speed USB using standard Cat5 cable up to 150" from the computer source to the operative console this was viewed as the perfect solution.

An Adder Command and Control switch (CCS-USB) was also deployed at each of the 18 consoles. Physically discreet and providing the ergonomic improvement that was required, the Adder Command and Control switch has integrated Free-Flow technology, providing seamless management of multiple systems using a single mouse and keyboard. This allows each dispatcher to easily and seamlessly select and use a system by moving the mouse from one screen the next.

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environment whilst still providing every operative instant access to each of the disparate systems required for the emergency response role.

"The Adder Command and Control switch and the AdderLink X-50 have been great additions to our 911 Dispatch System," said Scott Johnson, IT Supervisor, for OCFA. "We now have the flexibility to move across multiple systems seamlessly. The dispatchers work across three 27" screens and two 19" screens to perform their jobs and can now do this more efficiently thanks to the Adder solution," he added.

With the addition of the Adder X-50 and Adder CCS-USB, OCFA is experiencing a great improvement in the management and reliability of the updated 911 Dispatch System. Operatives are able to seamlessly switch between computers and IT are spending less time working on connectivity issues giving the dispatchers a chance to work without interruption.

RESULT

The OCFA Emergency Command Center is a 24/7 operation and is built with full redundancy. The upgrade needed to take place without disrupting this critical public service.
The smooth deployment of the Adder solutions provided critical infrastructure for the 911 dispatching operations, which have four computer systems and five screens that the dispatchers need to be able to reliably switch between in order to provide critical services. The Adder solutions have updated the infrastructure, improved ergonomics at each dispatch station and allowed the removal of computers from the critical operating

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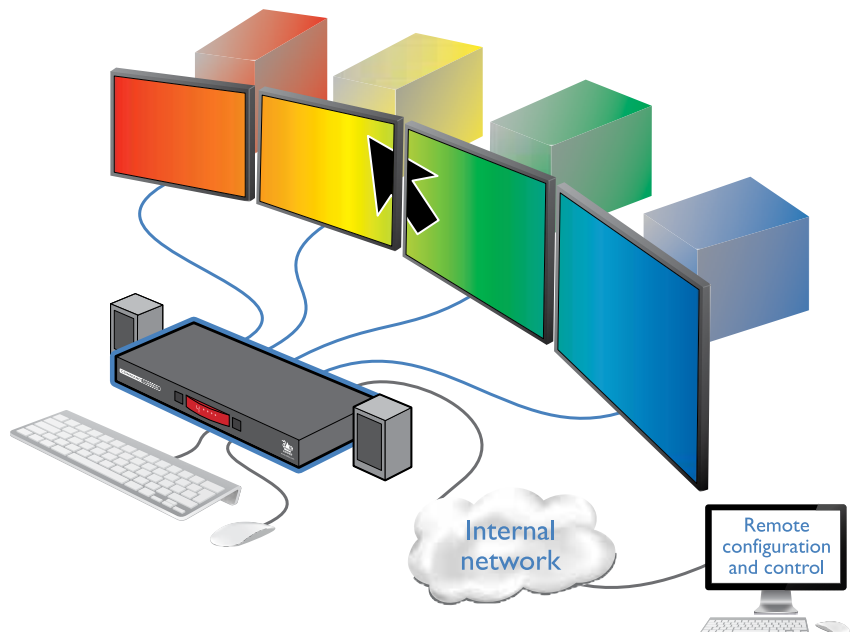
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