Case Study

Arming officers with mobile technology creates higher caliber work force for Security One

SECURITY ONE
SOI Security

About Security One, Inc.

In just over 40 years Memphis-based Security One, Inc., has become one of the largest contract security providers in the Southeast and Midwest. Its clients include Fortune 500 companies, financial institutions, government facilities and a broad spectrum of commercially owned and managed properties that include residential communities, retail centers, commercial, medical and hospitality facilities, and distribution centers.

Situation

A focus on customer service has helped Security One expand into six other southeastern and mid-western states, where it is licensed as SOI Security. Even as the company nurtured relationships with existing clients and attracted new ones, Security One has always looked for ways to improve its services to be a true security solutions provider. The Security One leadership team wanted to replace officers' paper-based reporting processes to boost the speed and quality of information provided to clients and at the same time enhance officers' safety. Because officers work on client premises, the solution had to be mobile; it also needed to be environmentally friendly and introduced without a major investment in infrastructure.

Solution

Security One determined that Actsoft® from AT&T, a suite of location-based workforce management applications, was the most flexible, robust and cost-effective solution available. It enables the company's officers to use smartphones or tablets equipped with a global positioning system (GPS) to collect data, take photos, create reports and send them to supervisors and clients. The solution improves customer relations by providing richer, timelier reports; strengthens officers' safety by transmitting their location; and increases workplace efficiency by eliminating redundant tasks.

Better Tools for the Job

On any given day, several hundred Security One employees begin their daily rounds patrolling commercial, industrial and residential locations. They're available to clients around the clock, but most are assigned

the afternoon and overnight shifts, said Joe Joiner, Security One Vice President of Business Development. "The rule of thumb in our industry is, 'we go to work when the city goes home.'"

Joiner understands that adage better than most as he has been in the security industry for nearly 30 years. Starting out as an officer when he was a college student gave him a perspective of the industry and drove home the importance of customer service. "If something happens, the clients don't need to know about it the next morning – they need to know about it immediately," he said.

Security One has built a reputation for outstanding customer service, but the thoroughness of its processes sometimes meant delays in communicating with clients. Previously when an incident occurred, officers used two-way radios to summon supervisors, then took photos

Security One Facts

Business Needs
Boost remote worker safety and accountability; deliver information to clients faster and with better detail

Networking Solution
Mobile workforce management application provides near real-time information that clients can access through a web portal

Business Value
Enhanced worker safety, increased efficiency, improved customer service

Industry Focus
Security Services

Size
600 employees

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and wrote a report at the scene, which was later scanned and only then transmitted to the client.

Joiner, who spearheads technology initiatives for the company, began researching applications to improve client communications and increase employees' safety and accountability. "We wanted to equip our officers with better tools so they could do their jobs more effectively," he said, "and we wanted to make it easy for clients to get information."

One Device Does it All

Security One chose Actsoft from AT&T, a set of Mobile Resource Management solutions that uses GPS and wireless technology to manage mobile workers, assets and activities in the field. The solution replaces the camera, clipboard, paper and pens officers previously carried with a single device – their smartphone or tablet. Officers access Actsoft from AT&T forms on their devices to photograph scenes and create incident reports. They embed the pictures and submit a complete report to their supervisor and clients via the AT&T wireless network.

"*With Actsoft from AT&T, we have the ability to customize each report to meet our clients' needs. Having this technology sets us apart from our competitors.*"

– Joe Joiner, Vice President of Business Development, Security One, Inc.

Using Actsoft from AT&T allows Security One to give clients a quicker understanding of any situation. Because officers can send photos with the initial notification, clients are better able to determine whether it is necessary to go to the site or if the situation can wait until morning.

John Tuttle, Security One Armed Scheduling and Technology Manager, said officers also use the phones to document potential hazards like potholes or leaky pipes. This reduces the time it takes to send the information to maintenance crews to minutes instead of days or weeks. "This has accelerated a lot of processes," Tuttle said. "The officers really feel this is a necessary tool."

A Mobile Safety Net

Actsoft from AT&T helps protect Security One's officers by transmitting their GPS location every 60 seconds. That feature enabled Security One's 24-hour communication center to dispatch emergency medical technicians to a field commander who was seriously injured in a car crash when another driver ran a red light. The officer could respond to dispatch but was unable to give his location. Using Actsoft, the Security One dispatcher was able to see his location and direct EMTs to the scene.

Additionally, Actsoft provides evidence of the officers' routes and patrols, which historically have been difficult to verify. Tuttle said customers like to see that officer patrols are random and unpredictable. "This is an excellent feature that's reassuring and creates value for the customer," he said. "It's important for those vehicles and patrol officers to be doing their job. With the help of Actsoft from AT&T

we've been able to bring real value to clients by giving them access to information that validates that Security One is doing what we're paid to do."

The solution has gotten even better since Security One first deployed it, Joiner said. "Actsoft from AT&T has added a replay feature to its GPS tracking, so a customer can run a video of the routes for a 12- hour shift in about four minutes and see on the map where each vehicle is moving at any given time," he said. "It's a huge sales tool for us and a great tool for customers' operations people."

Customers can view the replays and access reports through Security One's custom portal, SecureMobile, which is powered by Actsoft from AT&T. "It's so good customers almost can't believe it," Tuttle said. "Their response has been, 'where have you been all my life?'"

Above and Beyond Competitors

Technology is changing the way security officers do their jobs, and Joiner said using Actsoft from AT&T puts Security One on the cutting edge of the industry. "Some competitors use a similar technology, but a lot of it is canned and inflexible," he noted. "With Actsoft from AT&T, we have the ability to customize each report to meet our clients' needs. Having this technology sets us apart from our competitors."

The solution has improved the speed and quality of reports by enabling officers to organize them logically according to the customers' needs. "We're able to customize them for every client, since each one wants something different," Joiner said. "And it's easy to update them at a moment's notice to meet their ever-changing needs."

Customers appreciate that the reports are logical, readable and professional in appearance. "They can email the reports directly to their insurance company or risk management department and it expedites their end of the process," he said. "It's easy for our officers to use and customers are getting clear information. Many of them have commented on how nice and professional their reports are."

Putting customers in control

Security One appreciates the completeness of the Actsoft from AT&T solution. "This does everything –reporting, tracking and messaging. It's the full gamut," Joiner said. "It gives the officers contact with our dispatch, field commanders and customers at the touch of a button and lets customers reach out and touch the officers."

Customers can easily let officers know of scheduled deliveries and events. "There may be a shipment of diamonds coming into the back dock at 2 a.m., so the customer can notify the officer to turn off the alarm and open the door," he said.

Officers communicate directly with customers as often as the customer wants to hear from them, by phone call, text or email. "We encourage customers to speak with officers directly," Tuttle said. "It gives the customer greater control over the services they receive and eliminates the middle person."

Some customers want regular messages from the officers, while others just want to know when there's a problem. When something out of the ordinary occurs, Actsoft from AT&T makes it easy for officers to send notifications with photos or videos. When a utility pole crashed into a customer's building recently the officer was able to connect

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quickly with the utility company and the customer, so the potentially hazardous situation was quickly contained.

Upping the Game

When Security One adopted Actsoft it began by introducing it only to new customers but has since begun offering the solution to everyone. "So far, every client we've talked to has bought into this solution and is willing to pay for it," Joiner said.

All have been impressed with the creativity Security One has shown in improving its security solution, giving customers better resources to manage their safety and security. For instance, one large logistics customer now uses Actsoft forms to expedite the process of tracking vehicles, trailers and other key assets. "It's a huge step for us in utilizing the technology and the client is excited about being one of the first logistics companies in Memphis to have it," Joiner said. "This will make his business function better. Having a secure lot and verifying the accuracy of every truck going out will increase sales."

Tuttle said other clients have been just as positive. "Response has been over the top. Our customers are completely impressed and really pleased with the information they're getting. They feel like Security One has upped its game."

Officers have begun using Actsoft to document safety checks as they make their rounds — using their devices to scan the bar codes on fire extinguishers, emergency phones, lighting and other safety equipment to document their location and that they're in working order. "I really feel the more we roll this out, the more we'll find things we can do for our clients," Joiner said.

Security One has recently begun to use Actsoft from AT&T outside its Memphis operations, beginning with a new customer that manages executive apartment communities. "They're spread across the south so we hope to be able to grow with them" Tuttle said. Eventually Security One plans to use the Actsoft platform in all seven of its markets.

An Investment in People

Security One provides its officers with extensive training on the use of smartphones, tablets and Actsoft from AT&T. "One of the most significant benefits is increasing their knowledge and abilities through the use of the technology," Tuttle said. "The training we provide will help them do their jobs better and they understand that it's an important tool for them."

Employees also feel more closely linked to the office and take more ownership in their jobs. "They feel like they've got everything they need right there in their hands to be able to deliver a level of service that they weren't able to do before," he added.

Getting the most from superior technology requires product and account teams that are committed to the customer's success. Joiner spoke with other companies as he considered workforce management applications, but saw clear advantages in working with AT&T. "The AT&T mobility team understood our needs and what we were looking for," he said. "Our local AT&T team has been responsive and has stayed in touch with us throughout the process.

"I believe that the flexibility of Actsoft from AT&T and the support of AT&T will strengthen our relationships with current clients and will help us attract new ones," he added.

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