The Dallas Fusion Center

Case study

The future of law enforcement is now.

In 2010, the Dallas Police Department converted their special operations center into the Dallas Fusion Center — one of 72 fusion centers that have been built in the U.S. since September 11, 2001 (9/11).

This center helps the Dallas Police Department protect a population of 1.2 million people over an area of 380 square miles.

Paul Schuster, senior corporal, special projects, Dallas PD, explains how the Dallas Fusion Center came about. Since 2003 the Dallas PD had a special operations center for events such as the Super Bowl or World Cup and they had a separate emergency operations center. “We realized we needed a specialized room so if anything more advanced came up that was strictly a police function, we would be able to have some command and control in that room. When we built our new location, we designed… a flexible work space with a raised floor and the video wall. While we were building this first iteration of the room, 9/11 happened and that prompted the building of fusion centers across the country.”

After reviewing what could have been done to prevent a 9/11-type event, the U.S. federal government concluded that if there had been better communications between local police agencies and the U.S. federal government, especially better intelligence sharing, they might have been able to prevent 9/11.

The U.S. federal government started funding fusion centers; centers designed as a hub where information is gathered, analyzed and shared between police departments and the Department of Homeland Security.

Each U.S. state has at least one fusion center, and more fusion centers have been added in major metropolitan areas.

While some states treat their fusion centers as an emergency-only operations center, the Dallas PD stayed closer to the U.S. federal government’s original vision and created a

---

Customer: The Dallas Police Department (Dallas PD)
Location: Dallas, TX, USA
Industry/Market: Public and emergency services
Partner: Whitlock
Requirements:
• Bright, clear images in high-ambient light
• High-resolution image reproduction
• Color balance and accurate color reproduction
• Self-calibrating technology
• Reliable performance and low maintenance

Summary: The Dallas Fusion Center facilitates information exchange. Police officers and detectives can monitor events, tap into data and share information and analyses in real time.

Products:
• Christie MicroTiles

Results: The bright and reliable video wall, comprising 72 Christie MicroTiles, is the focal point of the Dallas Fusion Center where detectives and police officers share information with each other, with their colleagues in other cities, and with The Department of Homeland Security.
fully-staffed, 24/7 intelligence operation. The Dallas Fusion Center, commanded by Todd Thomasson, lieutenant of police, is used for crime fighting in Dallas and for anti-terrorism intelligence gathering.

The original Dallas PD special operations center had a 2x3 video wall of 60” Christie® XGA DLP® cubes. With the update to a fusion center, the Dallas PD brought in consoles, a smart board and switching capability but had not planned on a new video wall. Scott Creevy, senior account executive for Whitlock, recommended a video wall upgrade because new technology would be brighter and need less maintenance.

The resulting 12x6 Christie MicroTiles® video wall is 15 percent wider than the old video wall. A Jupiter processor runs the wall with eight electronic control modules (one is a backup).

The Dallas PD, under the leadership of Chief of Police, David O. Brown, chose Christie MicroTiles for their high resolution, brighter display in high-ambient light and low, long-term maintenance. With 24/7 use, display colors can shift, so the Christie MicroTiles’ self-calibration and color balancing were important features for the Dallas PD.

The Dallas PD had recently purchased 100 wireless cameras to take photos at “hot spots around town.” The camera feeds weren’t clear on the old video wall but are easily visible on the new Christie MicroTiles video wall. “The detectives are pleasantly surprised at how easy the tiles’ images are to see,” Schuster notes. “When they saw the new video wall, they said ‘This is what we want!’

The Dallas Fusion Center has three rows of consoles, each row seating three detectives. Schuster explains that the Dallas PD had to find detectives “who are interested in and savvy about databases and computers to dig into the monitored data. Even patrol officers have laptops and mobile phones in their cars so they can call to the fusion center or use their laptops to ask the center’s detectives for more information — right as the officers are detaining someone on the road or at a scene.”

The detectives use the video wall to display information from their individual touchscreen consoles on the big screen, allowing everyone in the room to see and share in the same information. Detectives also have a pocket infrared radio receiver and headphones for listening to police and fire department conversations, and they can watch TV reporting on separate monitors. Used all together, these different technologies keep detectives aware of what’s happening in the city of Dallas, including breaking events and the progress of emergency calls.

“The kind of police work made possible with new technology is the stuff of law-enforcement dreams,” states Chief of Police, David Brown. For example, in the Dallas area auto theft is a big crime. The Dallas PD has bait cars that are rigged. These cars have interior cameras so that suspects are easy to identify. When a suspect breaks into one of these cars, a tracking device is set off. If the car moves, the Dallas PD receives a notification. The police in patrol cars can track the bait car and take control of it — making it stop and even lock the suspect in the car. All these activities are tracked at the Dallas Fusion Center.

Contact Christie

Contact us today to find out how your organization can benefit from Christie solutions.