



Eaton 5115 UPSs keep county alarm monitoring systems secure

Location:

Ontario, Canada

Segment:

Community Infrastructure

Problem:

Ensuring uninterrupted uptime for their phones and alarming gear to keep their customers safe and secure

Solution:

Eaton® 5115 UPS

Results:

24/7 availability to all their phone systems and alarm equipment

"We can't have downtime at all. In the worst case scenario, people could die."

Dean Collins, IT communications manager

Background

For more than 50 years, HR Security and Communication has been providing alarming and dispatch services across Grey County in Ontario, Canada. Intrinsicly tied to a wide variety of vital community services — from notifying emergency medical personnel to dispatching snow plows to helping prevent potentially deadly E. coli outbreaks — the company "seriously has its hand in just about everything," reveals IT communications manager Dean Collins.

The firm oversees a wide variety of agricultural, commercial and residential alarms that send out signals of varying importance — from temperature notifications at a local food distributor's warehouses to robbery alarms in jewelry stores. In addition, HR Security and Communication monitors all alarms for the area's public housing and dispatches maintenance crews; provides services for the Canadian Automobile Association spanning four counties; serves as a liaison between the public and police to communicate

matters such as road closures; and monitors hundreds of fire and medical alarms.

Located in an area famous for its cattle, the company also maintains phone services for numerous veterinarians, as well as monitors the purity of local wells. "If a cow defecates in a well, it sends out an alarm that high levels of bacteria are present and we call out water quality technicians," Collins explains, noting that past E coli outbreaks in the area have made this a very sensitive — and serious — issue. "Laws have really tightened around this, and that makes us integral to public safety," he points out.

And if a community member is ever in distress inside an elevator, it is likely to be HR Security and Communication to the rescue, since the company is responsible for answering calls from some 40 emergency elevator telephones and dispatching required assistance. "If you're having a heart attack in an elevator, you pick up the phone and you get us," Collins says.



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Challenge

Due to the vital nature of its business, it is imperative that HR Security and Communication maintain 24/7 uptime on all of its phone lines and alarming gear. Averaging 15,000 calls per month, "We are completely in the middle of a lot of critical communications," Collins emphasizes. "We can't have downtime at all. In the worst case scenario, people could die."

The need for continuous availability is also underscored by the firm's after-hours responsibilities. "The thing about this business is we're tied in to more than 100 other companies," Collins explains. "We are the face of your office when you leave and give us your phone service."

Yet the ability to sustain uptime is often challenged by the area's extreme weather conditions. "It feels like 102 degrees with the humidity today," notes Collins, "but in winter it often falls to 22 below."

Due to the potential for lengthy outages, the company has a natural gas generator that powers the phone systems and other equipment in four server racks. But HR Security and Communication required extremely reliable uninterruptible power systems (UPSs) to provide the ride-through until the generator can start up.

In addition, the company oversees the network of a bookkeeping firm with whom it shares the building. "For them, we mainly need coverage for power flashes, Collins says, adding, "You don't want to lose a day's work."

When Collins first started with HR Security and Communication in 1997, the firm's power protection solution consisted of "a couple of car batteries in the basement," he says. Now, however, the growing company supports a wide range of state-of-the-art, customized equipment, which must be properly protected by a quality UPS solution.

The reliability of an existing Eaton 5110 UPS led Collins to continue purchasing the brand when additional power protection was required by the company. "It worked great," he enthuses. "We had it in here for ages."

The same cannot be said for other manufacturers' units, including APC. "I have had trouble with other brands," Collins acknowledges, citing issues from poor monitoring software to frequent battery failure to power surges that "blew up the UPS."

"Because of all the things that we monitor related to safety, we now use Eaton products to hold us over until the generator kicks in," Collins reveals.

Solution

The firm has standardized on the cost-effective Eaton 5115 UPS, designed to safeguard workstations, small servers, hubs, routers, PCs and other electronic equipment. Currently operating 15 units, HR Security and Communication values the unwavering reliability of the UPSs.

Unlike other competitive UPSs in its class, the 5115 provides pure sine wave output, as well as regulates power fluctuations with Buck and Boost voltage regulation. Even more, the model is able to significantly increase battery service life with ABM® technology, which optimizes recharge time and provides advanced warning of the end of useful battery life.

The company is also impressed by Eaton's Intelligent Power® Software Suite, which delivers all the tools needed to monitor and manage power devices on the network. The innovative solution combines the most critical applications in ensuring system uptime and data integrity — not only facilitating power monitoring and management, but also graceful shutdown during an extended power outage.

"It's very good, straightforward and reliable," Collins says of the software. "I check things remotely all the time, and I always get alerts."

To date, HR Security and Communication has deployed 15 individual Eaton units among its various devices, which include four servers and six workstations, plus an additional five workstations for the bookkeeping business. And as existing older UPSs fail, the company replaces the other brands with Eaton.

"We're only as good as our last call and if we miss it, that the apocalypse," Collins reveals. "That is what we try to avoid."

And they have done just that, thanks to the Eaton UPSs. "Eaton has kept our business totally up," Collins confirms.

Implementation

The ability to seamlessly deploy the 5115 units has also been a boon for HR Security and Communication.

"They always work right out of the box," Collins says, noting that the advantage is a stark contrast to what he has experienced with other brands.

"In the past, we've bought a UPS, plugged it in, and it was totally dead," he says. "It just comes down to reliability, and with Eaton, I don't have to worry about it."

Likewise, the IT manager doesn't lose any sleep over the threat of power anomalies or downtime.

"We have had a lot of power issues over the years," Collins acknowledges, "but the Eaton units have been consistently reliable. We just plug them in and forget about them. I've never had a problem."



Eaton 5115

Results

When it comes to ensuring the integrity of his critical equipment, Collins knows his investment is secure.

"The Eaton UPSs are the one part of my whole network that I trust the most," he confesses.

With the Eaton 5115 UPSs safeguarding that network, HR Security and Communication is able to:

- Provide 24/7 availability to its phone systems and alarming/monitoring equipment
- Ensure that UPS batteries will always be operational, thanks to ABM technology
- Easily monitor and manage the network with Intelligent Power Manager software
- Prevent bookkeeping data loss with automatic, graceful shutdown

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