

Austrian courts use Axis network cameras: Trials conducted efficiently with video recording.

Five Austrian courts use Axis cameras to log hearings and transcribe questioning.



Organization:
Austrian Justice Ministry

Location:
Austria

Industry segment:
Government

Application:
Remote monitoring and recording, operational efficiencies

Axis partners:
Ce2 GmbH, Multicon IVCS

Mission

Not long ago, a court reporter had to be present at every trial in Austria to fully document the proceedings. However, some years ago, a reduction in permanent staff and a shortage of properly qualified people led to a lack of court reporters – even though it is mandatory that each trial be recorded. This led the Austrian Ministry of Justice to seek other options. In 2007, the Austrian justice ministry commissioned the Vienna company Ce2 to provide a stable, secure, easy-to-operate pilot installation with network cameras.

Solution

In five Austrian courts, trials are no longer recorded by court reporters, but by a solution involving networked camera technology from Axis Communications. The installation provides stable, fully secure video and sound recording that can be easily and reliably used for court reporting, and which is only transcribed as needed.

Additionally, the technology allows transmission into other chambers or even live conference links for protected questioning or witness statements. This smart court solution is called MULTICON IVCS and provides all this using a Windows-based computer, a microphone and a network camera from the specialists at Axis in Sweden. The name reflects the solution's most important features: IVCS stands for "Integrated Video Recording, Communication and Control System".

Result

The modern video recording solution gives the court in Korneuburg the option to record proceedings with video and sound and to use teleconferencing links to conduct them more efficiently – without regard to location. This helps the court stay in constant compliance with all constitutional regulations.

“We’re more than satisfied with the video recording system at our court. This technical solution not only alleviates the lack of personnel, but it also opens up new, simple, easy-to-use options that greatly benefit all trial participants. Above all, it helps optimize the constitutionality of criminal proceedings, because every statement is recorded word for word. We’re excited to see what innovations are still to come in digital recording technology.”

Dr. Wilhelm Tschugguel, president of Korneuburg District Court.

During court proceedings, even minor wordings and formalities can influence or change the whole trial. The whole process depends on every word that is spoken. For later access to every statement that trial participants make, a court record is a must.

“The availability and security of the recording are crucial to the IT department. This is why we went with Axis network cameras for the recording solution,” says Kurt Mayer, CEO of Ce2 GmbH.

The camera used is the IP-based AXIS P1346. This network camera offers outstanding HDTV video quality with progressive scanning in several individual H.264 and Motion JPEG video streams. One of its features is a precise iris control function that allows both high contrast and high resolution to be achieved. The fine tuning function for the flange focal distance allows the focus to be finely adjusted via computer.

Thanks to these functions, the recording solution captures all of a trial's details with optimal image quality. Additionally, the AXIS P8221 Network I/O Audio Module equips the video system with eight configurable input/output jacks and audio functions. The two Axis components were chosen for having the right combination of outstanding image and sound quality and for the openness and integration options of the software solution. The resulting technical solution — a PC solution from Ce2 with camera components from Axis Communications — is mainly used in the courts during criminal trials. Because all events are recorded, the proceedings can also be transcribed at a later time. This means that no trial has to be canceled or postponed due to lack of personnel.

“Thanks to the sound and image recording, there are no more problems with motions to amend the court record. We have also noticed that the discipline of all trial participants has improved, because the whole proceeding is being recorded,” explains Dr. Tschugguel, president of Korneuburg District Court.

It soon became evident that the IVCS video recording solution was of great benefit to the court, so starting in 2010, the project was extended to the district courts in Krems, Vienna, Eisenstadt and Wiener Neustadt.

Now five different courts, with a total of 14 courtrooms and nine interrogation rooms are equipped with Axis cameras. And the Austrian State Prosecutor's Office for Economics and Corruption also relies on the solution from Ce2 for all its hearings. Judges accepted the solution quickly thanks to its very simple operation and automatic processes, and they now operate the AV technology very intuitively from computers.

Project in cooperation with:

