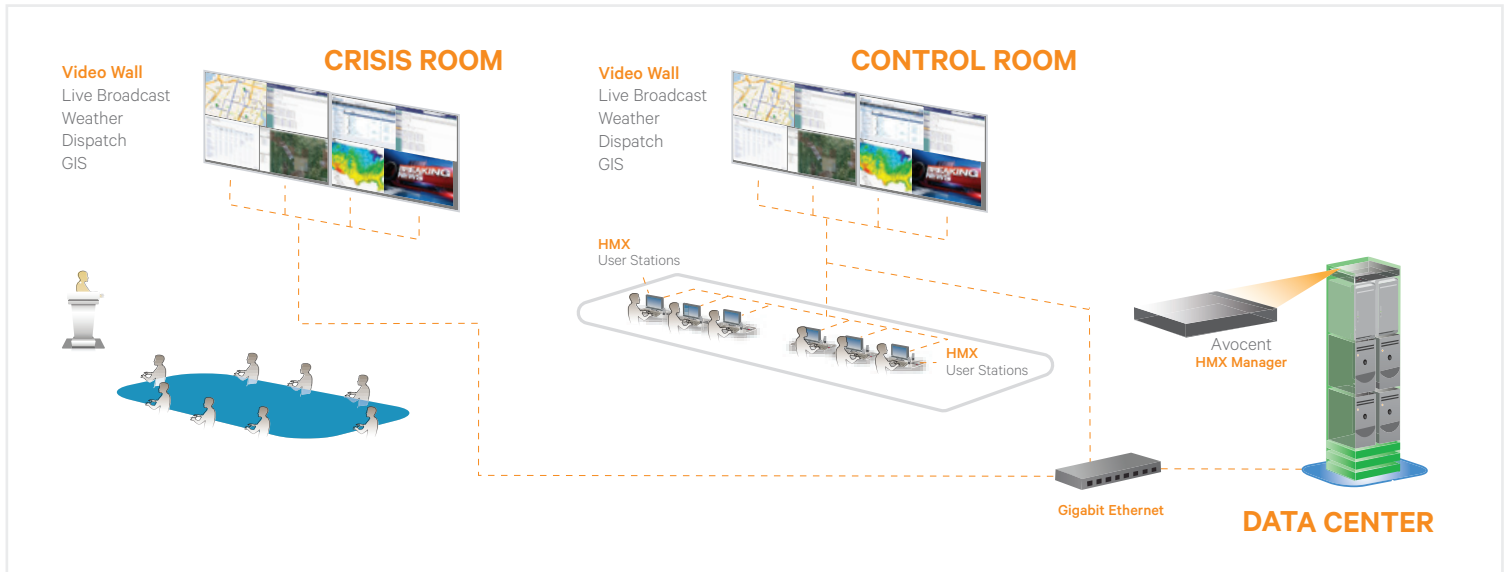


RAPID RESPONSE, RAPID RECOVERY:

Technology Solutions to Enhance Emergency Management Control Room Performance



OVERVIEW

It only takes a glance at any newspaper or news website to know that emergency and crisis management centers are essential to our well-being. Whether responding to 911 calls, handling natural or manmade disasters or protecting key infrastructure, emergency management control rooms must rapidly access, view, aggregate and share information maintained in multiple systems and delivered in disparate formats, such as video feeds, maps, photographs, evacuation plans and much more.

For many emergency management control rooms, this is easier said than done. Control rooms must buy multiple expensive systems or require staff to move from place to place to access vital information. Operators struggle with isolated systems and workstations that create information silos. Collaboration becomes nearly impossible with one-at-a-time access to essential systems. All this adds up to less effectiveness and efficiency, negatively impacting response and driving up costs.

There are technology solutions which can significantly improve performance in the emergency management control room. Look for the following key capabilities to achieve an environment that is not only conducive to demanding 24x7 operations, but also offers ease of maintenance, lower costs and higher security.

Driving Up Operator Efficiency and Productivity

A great way to enhance efficiency is to use high-performance KVM system which offers fast, simple access to an unlimited number of systems from any user's workspace. KVM systems eliminate the need for users to move physically from place to place. With just a few keystrokes, they can switch between systems in seconds right at their workstations. This promotes efficiency and collaboration, as both local and remote users can shift instantly between systems to share screens, sessions and data.

By using KVM technology that offers remote extension capabilities, systems can be moved out of the control room to create a more work-friendly environment. The key here is to make sure operators still have a high-fidelity experience. The fact that the machine is no longer sitting next to the desk needs to be completely transparent to the user. This requires KVM systems that remotely support all types systems and peripherals and offer a pixel-perfect experience with no latency.

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Simplifying IT's Job

IT organizations that support emergency management control rooms have a tough job given the complexity of the environment. There are technology solutions that can simplify installing, provisioning, monitoring and troubleshooting systems. KVM systems that offer plug-and-play convenience bring new systems online with minimal time and effort. In addition, KVM remote extension capabilities mean that equipment can be back-racked in a separate location, enabling IT to reduce risk and increase availability by keeping equipment in a properly secured and cooled environment.

In any emergency management control room, operations must continue without interruption. KVM systems are an effective way to keep the control room running smoothly even if a system goes down. Well-designed systems eliminate any single point of failure and enable instant switching to hot standby systems while continuing to deliver a high-fidelity experience. Using KVMs, you can direct each user to a different hardware target so that if the target fails, just one user needs to switch to a hot standby.

By combining KVM systems with centralized remote management, maintenance and troubleshooting becomes much easier. Sophisticated solutions for remote management deliver a single source of truth about all assets in the control room. IT can improve the process of finding, connecting to and administering systems through a single console, as well as get real-time status information and instant diagnostics to forestall downtime and diagnose problems. In addition, centralized management improves security, providing role-based user access rights that can be propagated across multiple systems and use existing services, such as LDAP or Active Directory, for authentication.

Growth at the Right Cost

While we might wish it to be otherwise, the need for upgrading and expanding emergency management systems will only grow. Forecasts International predicts that the global Homeland Security/Homeland Defense market will increase by 81% over the next 10 years.

Emergency management control centers need to accommodate this growth, bringing new users and systems online quickly and without disruption. However, this flexibility cannot come with an unlimited price tag. To expand and augment your control room at the right cost:

- Seek out KVM technology that provides an easy way to share systems between users. Sharing systems reduces operating costs and can reduce the number of primary and hot standby systems required. This can add up to substantial capital cost savings and even eliminate the need to build multiple control rooms.
- Use technology that is designed to be vendor-agnostic. KVMs that support systems and peripherals regardless of type, vendor or location offer security for the future, facilitating growth and change.
- Look for a vendor who does not force you to purchase technology that either doesn't deliver the power and flexibility you need, or demands unnecessary expense. Your vendor should be able to correctly size your control room solution to deliver an operating environment that matches your business requirements.

Avocent® offers solutions for every type of emergency management control room, providing flexible solutions that grow and evolve right along with your business.

Emergency Management Control Room Checklist

Can you support these functions in your current control room environment?

- Share systems and promote collaboration between local and remote users.
- Provide remote access to high-resolution video.
- Centralize systems in a secure, environmentally controlled location.
- Seamlessly switch between standard information and emergency broadcasts.
- Rapidly locate, configure and troubleshoot devices in multiple locations.
- Failover seamlessly in seconds with a guaranteed high-quality user experience.
- Control access with fine-grained, role-based permissions.
- Reduce the number of systems, hot standby machines and control rooms required to support operations.

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