

IDIS Technology Safeguards City of Mesa Ancient Native American Cultural Site



Industry

Municipal,
Historic Cultural Site

Customer

City of Mesa

Region

Mesa, Arizona, USA

Background

An ancient cultural legacy at risk

At the Mesa Grande Cultural Park, history is revealed daily for the many archaeologists, historians, and visitors who explore the active excavation site each year. Though much of the ancient native culture of the American southwest has been lost to time and development, the Mesa Grande mound is a rare exception, preserved and protected through the years as the site of powerful cultural heritage.

The ancient Hohokam people built and used the Mesa Grande platform mound between 1100 and 1450 AD. It served as the public and ceremonial center for one of the largest Hohokam villages, a residential area that extended for over a mile along the terrace overlooking the Salt River. Mesa Grande was one of the two largest temple mounds of the Hohokam and offers a rich look into the life and traditions of an important native group in what is now the American southwest.



Challenges

Present day threats to timeless antiquity

Though preservation efforts protected the Mesa Grande mound from the ravages of modern development, the site is tightly situated amidst a residential subdivision, healthcare center, and an industrial development, posing a variety of safety and security challenges for the active archaeological site and the staff and visitors who spend time there. In recent years, the semi-seclusion of the walled and fenced site, and nature of the priceless cultural mounds and excavated water canals have proven a lure to trespassers, including dirt bikers inflicting immeasurable damage to the ancient site.

In addition to damage inflicted by trespassers and vandals, trash and litter was frequently dumped at the site, particularly at night, and multiple incidents of vandals stealing and using equipment, including golf carts, associated with the active archaeological dig further placed one of the area's most important cultural legacies and the work conducted there at risk.



Solutions

Modern innovation to protect priceless history

To meet these challenges and ensure the overall safety and security of the site for workers and visitors alike, the City of Mesa sought a powerful virtual guarding solution, powered by a comprehensive next-generation total surveillance solution, able to address each of the Mesa Grande Cultural Park's unique security needs. The City of Mesa commissioned a state-of-the-art 24/7 virtual guarding solution from the Scottsdale-based Surveillance Acquisition & Response Center (SARC), powered by IDIS total surveillance technology.

With an on-site installation of more than 14 IDIS cameras, SARC and the City of Mesa are empowered to monitor nearly every part of the ancient site. Leveraging an IDIS solution consisting of cameras, network video recorders (NVRs), and the powerful IDIS Solution Suite video management software (VMS), SARC operators are able to detect, observe, document, and deter would-be vandals, trespassers, and others engaged in potentially harmful activity. The solution's comprehensive coverage provides further protection of the site's workers and visitors through the monitoring of overall site safety and security and the detailed documentation of relevant events.



Results and Benefits

History and culture protected for future generations

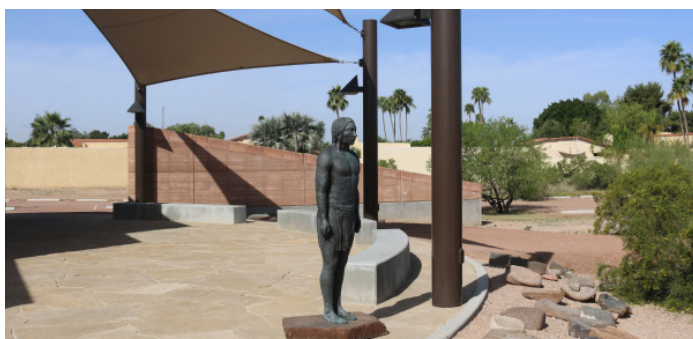
The installation of the SARC virtual guarding solution, powered by IDIS total surveillance technology, has already resulted in substantial benefits for the caretakers of the Mesa Grande Cultural Park. On a nightly basis, the SARC operations center—exclusively staffed by security professionals with relevant law enforcement, military, and related experience—identify and deter potential threats to the site using IDIS technology and SARC's remote "voice down" protocol, which informs would-be bad actors via loudspeakers that they are under live surveillance and should cease and desist immediately.

Since the IDIS-powered SARC virtual guarding solution went live, the Mesa Grande Cultural Center has eliminated the types of vandalism, trespass, and desecration of the ancient site too often seen prior to the adoption of the security solution. Staff, visitors, equipment, and the excavation site itself are measurably more secure, as a result.

“ There are few responsibilities more important than understanding and preserving the cultural legacies and traditions of those who came before us for current and future generations. Protecting these historic treasures from modern-day challenges is made easier and effortless with virtual guarding and comprehensive surveillance. Our staff, visitors, and site are more safe and we are able to focus on the work at hand, knowing the site's security is in good hands. ”

Dr. Jerry Howard

*Curator of Anthropology, Arizona Museum of Natural History
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