



## CUSTOMER STORY – CITIES

# Fighting crime together.

Connect Atlanta, a public safety program linking the city's Axis cameras with 15,000+ private business and residential cameras, helps police investigate crimes while deterring criminal activity and improving emergency response..

ORGANIZATION  
ATLANTA POLICE FOUNDATION  
AND ATLANTA POLICE DEPT.

LOCATION  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA, USA

CUSTOMER NEED  
PUBLIC SAFETY

### Building a real-time crime network

When the Atlanta Police Foundation launched Operation Shield in 2007 it provided the Atlanta Police Department (APD) with greater awareness of criminal activity happening throughout the city. The project pulled video streams from city- and privately-owned cameras into a single Video Integration Center (VIC) where it could be viewed by officers on a large 18-monitor video wall. Starting with 17 AXIS Q60 PTZ Series Cameras installed in the downtown area, the project quickly grew as other municipal departments like MARTA (Atlanta's rapid transit authority), Public Works, Watershed Management, Aviation, Parks and Recreation, and the Atlanta Public School System integrated their cameras into the network.

APD also reached out to local businesses, shopping malls, multi-housing properties, and homeowners asking them to join the program. While some chose to integrate their cameras into the police network, others registered their cameras to provide recordings upon request.

"Creating this network of city-owned Axis cameras and privately-owned security cameras from local businesses and homeowners has enabled Atlanta to affordably saturate surveillance coverage in our business district and neighborhoods. Having access to these additional resources helps our police department expedite criminal investigations and apprehend offenders more quickly," states Greg McNiff, Vice President of Programs for the Atlanta Police Foundation.

"Once an organization or an individual signs up, their cameras appear as icons on our geomap software in the VIC," explains Marshall Freeman, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Atlanta Police Department. "When an incident occurs, investigating officers can see who has cameras in the area. If need be, the system can send an auto message to registered owners with a link they can use to drag and drop requested footage. It's a lot more efficient than going door-to-door trying to find that information."

### Rethinking the security of the network

The public-private camera solution worked well for more than a decade. Then in 2018, the city of Atlanta was hit by a cyberattack and the Police Department's records system was one of five government systems infected by the ransomware. "Once the breach happened, we had to unplug everything that was feeding into our city network and Video Integration Center," states Freeman. "The incident caused us to rethink how we use our technology."

The department moved its solution to Fusus, a real-time crime center platform in the cloud and promoted the revamped initiative as Connect Atlanta (<https://connectatlanta.org/>).



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“We opted for the multisensor AXIS Q61 Series Network Cameras because they give us the ability to look in four different directions at once. We pair them with AXIS Q61 PTZ Network Cameras so we can quickly zoom in on the action without losing eyes on what’s happening in the general area, like a suspect fleeing the scene.”

Marshall Freeman, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the Atlanta Police Department

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The new ecosystem extracts and unifies video from city and private cameras, applying intelligent search and alert parameters to enhance situational awareness and investigative capabilities of the police department. In addition to a highly secure digital evidence vault, the platform incorporates rules-based sharing privileges to automate access to live video in an emergency, such as during an active shooter alert in a school or an armed robbery in progress at a store.

“We were able to scale up the implementation of Axis cameras on the platform by taking advantage of their ability to perform well over a cellular network,” shares Chris Lindenau, CEO of Fusus. “Because of Axis Zipstream technology, they can deliver great resolution at a low bit rate, resulting in a lower overall impact on the network. When combined with Fusus’ AI capabilities, this is a powerful city-wide solution.”



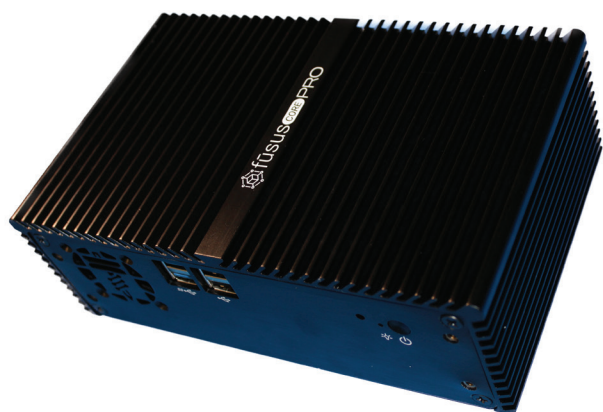
**Help Keep Atlanta Safe**

16681 Registered Cameras    16121 Integrated Cameras

**CONNECT ATLANTA** is a new public safety program enabling the people of Atlanta to help keep their community safe.

Your participation will greatly enhance emergency preparedness by enabling police, fire, and public safety professionals to better assess and rapidly respond to criminal activity and emergency situations. It will also enable investigators to easily gather evidence in case of an incident.

CONNECT ATLANTA    ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT    ATLANTA FIRE DEPARTMENT



Lindenau also cited the great interoperability between Axis and Fusus technology. “Axis has built a lot of intuitive tools into their cameras that are easy to integrate into our platform,” shares Lindenau. “One that’s particularly important in a citywide deployment like Atlanta is frame box zooming which lets you zoom in for a detailed view with a single mouse click.”

“The power of Fusus is that we can view all the cameras from a single pane,” says Marshall Freeman. “When I open my dashboard, it doesn’t matter whether I’m pulling up one of the city’s Axis cameras or someone’s home security camera at their front door. What matters is having access to any camera in the area that might have a good angle on the incident and can help us scour the streets for suspects.”

Adopting the new platform has helped Atlanta PD grow its VIC into a real-time crime network. Officers have the application on their desktops, in their patrol cars, and on their cell phones and laptops, so they can easily access live streams and archived footage they need whether they’re in the field, at the VIC, or logging on from home.

### Catching the perp in real time

Since crime tends to rise after dark, APD decided to upgrade its cameras to AXIS Q61 Network Cameras with infrared capability. The bigger image sensor delivers better clarity in low light and can even capture color in a scene – a detail that helps officers in their searches for suspects and vehicles.

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Today, Connect Atlanta is one of the largest public-private surveillance networks in the country. More than 15,000 community-owned cameras have integrated into Fusus alongside 1800 Axis cameras owned by APD. Another 16,500 business and homeowner cameras are currently registered in the program. And that number continues to grow.

“People are signing up for the program because they realize that when they share their cameras with APD, we become aware of incidents faster and can respond more quickly,” says Greg McNiff



"Connect Atlanta has become the city's greatest asset," states Marshall Freeman. "It's something we rely on every day to help us combat crime and protect the people and businesses in our community."

For instance, Axis cameras were able to catch vandals defacing the colorful Rainbow Crosswalks in Midtown. Police relied on those same cameras to help them curtail a street racing epidemic that overtook the city during COVID. Even with hundreds of people in the intersection, the police were able to use Fusus to quickly sort through the video, identify the culprits and make arrests.

Sometimes it's video from privately owned cameras that give APD that all-important lead. For instance, key footage from a home security camera linked to Fusus helped investigators identify and apprehend a drive-by shooter in under 48 hours. In another example that occurred a few weeks after a residential complex integrated their cameras into the system, they captured video of a burglar breaking into the property's commercial space. The police were able to easily identify him by the ankle monitor he wore. Some days later, those same cameras caught a kidnapping in progress in one of the cross streets.

One of the more heartfelt examples of tapping into all the resources of Connect Atlanta was that it gave officers the ability to quickly locate a dementia patient who had wandered off and return them safely to their caretaker.

"With the great images we get from the city's Axis cameras and all the video evidence we've collected from community-contributed cameras through Fusus, we've been able to jump on emergencies faster. Since we've deployed Connect Atlanta, we've also seen a significant drop in crime and an increase in conviction rates," says Greg McNiff.

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## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

### Cities



Shaping smarter, safer and more sustainable cities with innovative, scalable camera and IoT solutions.

### AXIS Q60 PTZ Camera Series



Robust cameras for mission-critical applications.

### AXIS Q61 PTZ Camera Series



See above the horizon in resolutions up to 4K.



# About Axis Communications

Axis enables a smarter and safer world by creating solutions for improving security and business performance. As a network technology company and industry leader, Axis offers solutions in video surveillance, access control, intercom, and audio systems. They are enhanced by intelligent analytics applications and supported by high-quality training.

Axis has around 4,000 dedicated employees in over 50 countries and collaborates with technology and system integration partners worldwide to deliver customer solutions. Axis was founded in 1984, and the headquarters are in Lund, Sweden.