



Significant cost savings, zero compromise on security

CUSTOMER STORY



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How BuzzFeed replaced overnight security patrols with the HiveWatch® GSOC Operating System and saved \$1.5M+ a year doing it.

\$1.5M

Saved annually

100%

Overnight coverage (no guards)

72

Daily virtual patrols

The company

BuzzFeed, Inc. is one of the most recognizable names in digital media, with 500+ employees, a newsroom and operations across Los Angeles and New York, and a brand built on being fast, scrappy, and ahead of the curve.

Their physical security program was trying to keep pace. BuzzFeed was spending more on physical security, not technology, to manage security. In-person guards. Long shifts. Weekend coverage. Manual paper reports.

The model was expensive. It wasn't scalable. And it was overdue for a rethink.

The challenge

When Chandler Bondan, BuzzFeed's Chief People Officer, started evaluating options, the criteria were clear: reduce costs without reducing protection. She needed a partner who could handle 24/7 monitoring remotely, design and build out a camera system that actually covered their footprint, and communicate with BuzzFeed in the way her team actually works, in Slack.

At the time, BuzzFeed's camera coverage was limited and inconsistent: a patchwork of built-for-consumer cameras with significant blind spots across critical buildings, entrances, exits, and parking lots. For a media company operating in an era of heightened public scrutiny,

that wasn't just an inconvenience. It was a duty-of-care issue. People needed to feel safe. Entrances needed to be covered. And the privacy of employees moving through the building had to be respected, not just assumed.

On the operations side, BuzzFeed ran an in-house GSOC staffed by guards — 5 to 7 on at any given time in LA alone — that functioned more like a dispatch center than a true strategic security operation. Guards calling guards. Human patrols covering the floor. On-site personnel physically verifying identities and manually letting people into the building. And through all of it, every alarm, every incident, every access event was being documented by hand.

Most of those alarms were false. But they all got a report anyway. There was no way to identify patterns, flag problem devices, or actually improve the program over time. Just an endless cycle of alerts, paperwork, and noise — and a security team spending its time reacting instead of strategy planning.



“Security used to be a line item. Now it’s a lens. The data HiveWatch gives us about people, how they move through our buildings, which spaces are actually being used... has become part of how we think about our footprint, our real estate decisions, our expansion plans. It’s not just keeping people safe. It’s helping us run a smarter business.”

– Chandler Bondan, Chief People Officer, BuzzFeed

The complexity was real. BuzzFeed’s LA headquarters spans multiple buildings they occupy entirely, along with a variety of parking lots that needed coverage. Their New York office sits on a couple of floors of a shared building. After-hours access, by team members and contractors alike, happens regularly but unpredictably based on production schedules, talent on site and equipment pickup and dropoff. All of it managed by boots on the ground, around the clock.

The solution

HiveWatch started where BuzzFeed needed it most: the infrastructure. Working with BuzzFeed’s LA and NY office managers, the HiveWatch team designed and built out a full camera system from the ground up, replacing the ad hoc camera setup with deliberate, professional coverage. Every entrance, every exit, every parking lot. Blind spots were eliminated, and for the first time BuzzFeed had a camera system that was designed for duty of care.

Then HiveWatch took over 24/7 virtual monitoring across all locations. The in-house GSOC — guards calling guards, reacting to noise — was replaced by the HiveWatch GSOC operating system, powered by AI, that handles the work no human should have to: triaging alarms,

filtering false positives, and reviewing camera footage before an operator ever gets involved. When something real surfaces, a GSOC operator is there to make the call. The result is a security operation that runs autonomously and, in large part, remotely. It handles incidents in real time, verifying identities via technology, and communicates exactly where BuzzFeed's team already is: Slack.

Two dedicated channels were set up from day one: one for daily incident reporting, one for after-hours access requests. The after-hours process got a complete overhaul. Instead of a guard physically verifying someone at the door, access requests are now handled proactively through Slack — submitted before the person even leaves for the building, reviewed against approved SOPs, and resolved before they arrive. No waiting at the door required.

But the shift went beyond operations. Because Chandler's role sits at the intersection of people and security, the data HiveWatch surfaces matters as much as the monitoring itself. The platform gives BuzzFeed a full audit trail and compliance-ready documentation as a baseline. Beyond that, the people insights — how employees move through buildings, which entrances see the most traffic, how office utilization shifts over time — have become a real input into decisions about space, expansion, and how BuzzFeed thinks about its physical footprint going forward. Security went from cost center to business intelligence.

“HiveWatch doesn't just monitor for us, they work with us. Having that expertise in our corner, especially for a team our size, has been invaluable.”

– Maritza Bocks, Director of People Operations & Compliance, BuzzFeed

What it looks like in practice

Every morning, BuzzFeed's team wakes up to a daily incident report in Slack. Virtual patrols conducted. Calls made. Access granted, access denied. Door events flagged, validated, and cleared — all through the HiveWatch Operating System.

But it's not just routine monitoring. HiveWatch has flagged things like usual activity near BuzzFeed's property and a water leak developing in a critical infrastructure room. All during overnight virtual patrols, HiveWatch alerted staff to security and property concerns. All before BuzzFeed's team started their day. In each case, the same playbook: captured in real time, the right people notified according to SOPs, and the situation monitored and documented until it was fully resolved.

No scramble. No discovery after the fact. Vulnerabilities and incidents are caught early, handled according to protocol, and handed off with a full record attached.

After-hours access runs asynchronously as well. An employee heading in late for a production shoot sends a Slack message before they leave. HiveWatch reviews it, approves or denies against SOPs, and the answer is waiting for them before they reach the door. No one needs to be there in person 24/7. No one waits outside.

It's been a game changer for BuzzFeed's team. As Ryan Schonfeld, HiveWatch Co-Founder & CEO, recounts: BuzzFeed's security leader told him unprompted how much her team enjoys the Slack reporting and how well HiveWatch is performing. The quote from BuzzFeed's HQ manager on a recent check-in said it all:



“Nothing to go over. We figured it out, guys.”

— HQ Facilities Manager, BuzzFeed

The Results

- Reduced annual security spend from \$1.9M+ to approximately \$450K, a savings of more than \$1.5M per year
- Enabled AI-powered remote shift work
- Replaced a reactive, guard-staffed in-house GSOC with HiveWatch's remote, technology-forward GSOC
- Designed and deployed a full cloud camera system, replacing ad hoc built-for-consumer cameras and eliminating blind spots
- Replaced paper-based logging with real-time Slack updates and full audit trail documentation
- After-hours access management now handled remotely and proactively, with zero on-site guard requirement
- People movement and office utilization data now informing real estate and expansion decisions

Good security is **good business.**

See what HiveWatch can do for your team.

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