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# Security Firm Deploys AI as 'Virtual Coach' for Guards

Allied Universal employees feed data into smartphones; system helps them be in the right place at the right time



Allied Universal security employees in a training session. PHOTO: ALLIED UNIVERSAL

By Agam Shah

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Allied Universal, a provider of facility services and security that was founded in the 1950s, is using artificial intelligence to help its guards better patrol buildings and sites.

Guards use devices such as smartphones to feed the system real-time data, which helps assess where security risks merit the most resources, according to Mark Mullison, Allied Universal's chief information officer. For example, a guard may visit a parking garage once an hour and observe people in the area, noting details such as the route they took, how fast they walked and the time of day. Such details are fed into a proprietary AI model.

The goal is to do a better job of getting security guards in the right place at the right time, he said. Allied Universal has more than 200,000 employees, including about 175,000 security guards.

On average, the company saw more than a 20% reduction in incidents at sites using the system, known as Heliaus, according to Mr. Mullison. “We have a platform that acts as a virtual coach,” he said. We’re seeing that reduction in safety and security incidents...things like crimes and accidents.”

The system uses the real-time data to direct security staff to go to certain places and do certain things at certain times a day. The directions are known as a dynamic tour, since they change all the time.

“The AI sees much, much deeper,” Mr. Mullison said. “These algorithms are very sophisticated and cluster together all sorts of different information.”

**Write to Agam Shah at [agam.shah@wsj.com](mailto:agam.shah@wsj.com)**

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