

Traverse City Schools Ensure Safety of Students, Staff and Protection of Supplies With Milestone

When looking for a highly customized video surveillance solution to monitor students, teachers, staff, visitors and property over multiple campuses, Traverse City Area Public Schools integrated a fully comprehensive system with Milestone XProtect® Corporate.



“To complete the final phases of the Milestone implementation throughout TCAPS, we helped reach the school’s goals of securing all 26 of its district buildings through the intuitive Milestone interface over the existing IP platform. From training staff and configuring the servers, the 2-month rollout of Phase III was hassle-free and seamless.” – Scott Mueser, ROK Systems

“Since Milestone’s XProtect integration in our school district, we’ve had instances on campus where a reliable security system has easily reinforced our decision to upgrade.” Paul Mahon, TCAPS

The challenge: The Traverse City Area Public School District (TCAPS) covers 300 square miles over three counties in central Michigan, hosting thousands of students, teachers and staff throughout the academic year. With a need to protect those walking through the doors, as well as the valuable public property housed in its 26 buildings, school officials required a custom security system that enabled authorized users to monitor all school activity with one integrated solution.

The solution: Traverse City Schools contracted ROK Systems to implement the final phases of its Video Management Software (VMS) upgrade after a successful Phase I Milestone XProtect deployment. ROK installed more than 200 additional cameras, bringing the total to over 1,000 throughout the district. The school now runs a comprehensive networked solution, leading the way for the multiple levels of security within TCAPS.

The advantages: The Traverse City School District’s comprehensive security hub integrates all security systems in the district’s buildings into one simple yet effective platform. Milestone XProtect Corporate software allows authorized staff to monitor the buildings for safety, security and disciplinary actions at all times.

Traverse City Area Public Schools

Covering 300 square miles over three Michigan counties, the Traverse City Area Public School District (TCAPS) hosts more than 10,000 K-12 students and 1,300 teachers and support staff every day during the school year. The district spans 26 buildings, including 13 elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools, an alternative high school and multiple facility management buildings, with more than two million total square feet of roof cover.



In 2013, the school completed its security system upgrade to connect all 26 buildings together on one network. A full-scale solution was needed since each school previously had a stand-alone system. Phase I was completed in 2012, with the installation of more than 700 cameras. To complete the system, ROK Systems was contracted

to finalize the installation, wrapping up the remaining buildings, ranging from education facilities to utility and maintenance buildings.

“We’ve worked with multiple solutions over the years, each deploying its own stand-alone presence in each building, which had its pros and cons,” stated Paul Mahon, TCAPS. “Installing a district-wide solution that’s easy to use, scalable and supports our multiple levels of security ensures the safety of our students and staff, which was the number-one priority for this project.”

Plans were drawn for a full-scale, district-wide solution, centralized by Milestone Federated Architecture, which included video streaming, alarm management, access control via card access systems, emergency panic lockdown abilities, video synchronization for all the above, and the ability to control each system centrally from one main control unit.

Simplified Monitoring

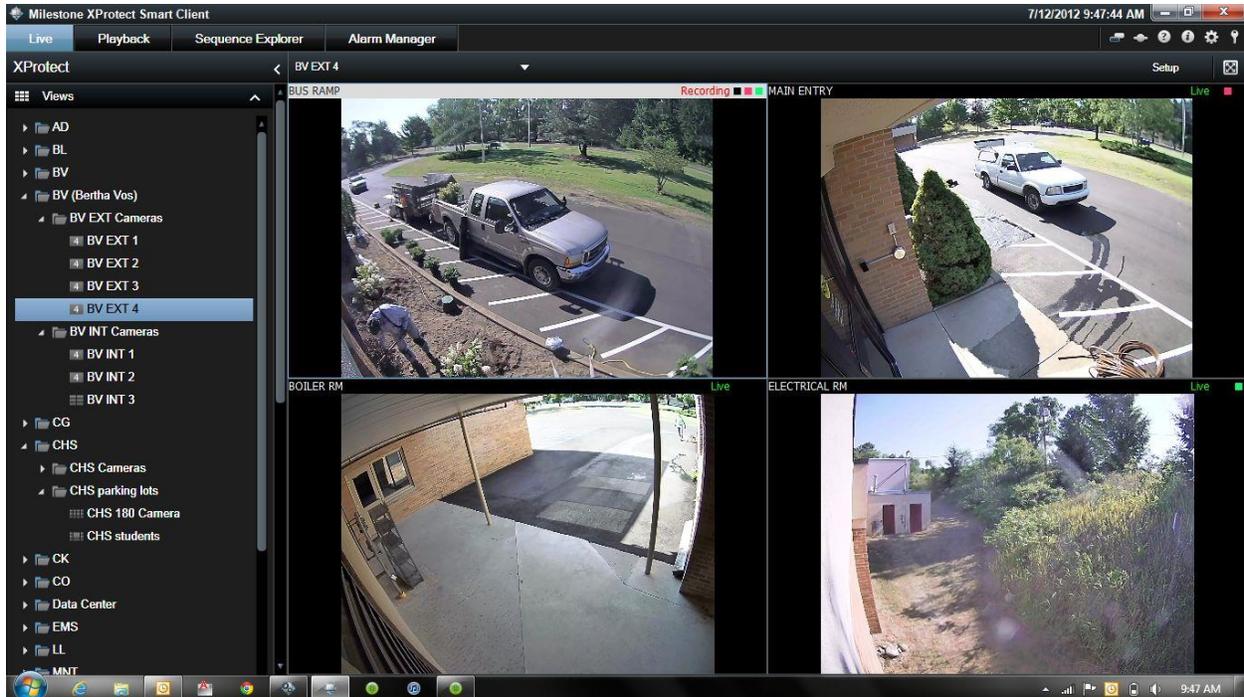
Scott Mueser of ROK Systems finalized the TCAPS installation and provided the additional software, camera programming and additional training required for a completed system. ROK has been a Milestone Platinum Partner for nearly a decade; Milestone XProtect has been the main source of efficient ROK installations throughout that time.

“When we first began selling Milestone, we were looking for an open solution with stability for our clients as they upgraded and scaled,” stated Scott Kohsel, Vice President, ROK. “Milestone has proven time and again to be a stable platform with little additional maintenance necessary. It’s very ‘install and forget.’ With TCAPS’ large-scale design, it was important all 26 buildings were seamlessly connected for the safety of the occupants of the facilities, especially the students.”

The Setup

Before the Milestone software was installed, TCAPS completed Phase I of the security overhaul with an older, less effective technology. The resulting video solution did not meet the requirements of the designed system.

Phase II brought in Milestone's engineering staff and XProtect VMS, which was successfully installed around the district. The software was implemented quickly and efficiently in the school settings, minimizing interruption or confusion with the installation team and administrators tasked with monitoring the hundreds of cameras.



A total of 685 cameras were set up in TCAPS in Phase I and II. Panasonic's IP WV-Sw355, WV-SW395 and WV-SF366 cameras were installed throughout the entire district, in addition to two Arecont AV8185 IP cameras. XProtect's open platform abilities allow end users to have a freedom of choice in choosing hardware devices. More than 1,500 models of network cameras, encoders and DVRs from nearly 100 different manufacturers are supported by Milestone.

Throughout the school district, 19 monitoring stations were established, each with an HP Z210/220 CMT Workstation, with Nvidia Quadro 600, 1GB graphics card, Intel i7-3770 Quad Core and 8 GB memory, synchronized with Milestone XProtect Corporate. Four HP ProLiant BL460c G7 CTO blade, Intel Xeon, Six-Core video servers with 48GB memory and an HP StorageWorks MDS600 with 70TB of space round off the system's storage capabilities. This powerful capacity is important for so much video data: Milestone XProtect Corporate supports an unlimited number of cameras, users and sites, making it the perfect match for TCAPS. Phase III was completed and easily assimilated into the TCAPS network without any challenges.

"Since Milestone's XProtect integration into our school district, we've had instances on campus where a reliable security system has easily reinforced our decision to upgrade. Our 1,000 cameras have been workhorses to keep our students and staff secure," stated Mahon. "Our plans to expand the system, the server and software were a very important aspect. From the

beginning, our servers had the ability to tack on additional cameras. Phase III was a seamless upgrade and using XProtect helps us maintain the work and educational environment if we continue to upgrade. It's simple, fast and effective."

Milestone solutions are future-proof, with a licensing model that offers upgrades with the freedom to add or integrate new technologies as they are developed.

Champions in Training

Specially selected administration and staff, known as "Champions" around the school district, are continuously being trained in waves by ROK. Groups of administrators on the system were brought up to speed, as their building installations were complete. A multi-phase training session will be implemented semi-annually as new software releases and upgrades are installed.

Champions learn the features of Milestone and the corresponding systems. Training classes are provided on three levels: Basic User Level, Supervisor Level and Administrative Level.

Technical training includes a slide show that focuses on the technical abilities of the cameras, from customizing views, zooming in and out and changing the focus to another area. Training in recording and archiving the video from the easy-to-use VMS system will ensure that staff are completely capable of dealing with any security-related occurrence.

"The software is amazing," stated Mueser. "For the most part, the administrators in the technical champion sessions quickly learn and understand the Milestone software. Within the schools we've trained, there are rarely any post-training questions. It is by far one of the most user-friendly interfaces available."

The Benefits

Since the security upgrade, there have been instances where school property was reported missing, and those trained to use the system monitored, reviewed and recorded the event. The digital evidence was quickly and easily exported from the Milestone system and provided to the local police department with a built-in viewer.

"At times, we have dealt with instances of theft or other security issues, regarding publicly owned property outside of the school environment or vandalism. We can easily show the footage to the accused and police to quickly turn around the situation," continued Mahon. "We are extremely confident in our system and trust that we are keeping the school and all of those in attendance safe."

Milestone XProtect Corporate is the strong backbone to the comprehensive security solution installed in Traverse City Area Public Schools. With its ability to support an unlimited number of cameras, its ease of use and the reliability of the servers, Milestone continues to help keep students, staff and teachers safe on a daily basis.

"XProtect is really well built, powerful software," continued Mahon. "It meets our complex needs and we have been very happy with the outcome."

www.milestonesys.com