

University of Illinois standardizes with Milestone XProtect® platform.

“If security is decentralized on a major university then police cannot use that system to its maximum capacity. Making the argument for surveillance cameras can be particularly tough in the higher education environment, but the efficacy of the Milestone system helped to make the case to campus administrators.”

- Chief of Police Barbara O'Connor, Executive Director of the University of Illinois Department of Public Safety

By the sheer numbers, the urban campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is impressive: The campus is frequented by roughly 53,000 students, staff and visitors on a daily basis; is home to 11 million books, the largest public university library collection in the country; boasts 14 major sporting facilities, 17 colleges and instructional units; and employs 11 Nobel laureates and 18 Pulitzer Prize winners as part of its faculty.



Nestled within the twin cities of Urbana and Champaign, a joint community of about 180,000, the flagship campus of the University of Illinois system is the size of a small city. As such, it has dealt with everyday community issues like thefts on and around campus, including a string of stolen laptops inside the university's libraries, as well as other stolen items elsewhere on campus. With more than 400 main facilities on campus, the 55-member police department had a lot of ground to cover.

It's no surprise, then, that progressive public safety officials were looking for a way to provide real time, reliable security information to police while saving money, which meant somehow consolidating an unknown number of smaller, autonomous analog systems that dotted the campus. They implemented a gradual, three-to five-year deployment of roughly 4,500 cameras that would be managed in a central location using a single video management platform.

Public safety officials knew that there were scores of small, autonomous video systems throughout the 2.3 square-mile main campus, but not only were police unable to view the video in a central location, there was no main record of the systems that existed.

Cameras able to be remotely accessed from the Police Department's dispatch center were fed to workstations in the department's detective division.

“One detective had so many software programs running on his computer to manage all the different video systems that his computer wouldn't work,” said Detective Tim Hetrick of the University of Illinois Police Department Technical Services division.



The Open Platform Company

Centralized platform for security campus wide

Enter Chief of Police Barbara O'Connor, who joined the University of Illinois Department of Public Safety as its Executive Director and head of the police department in 2009. The former chief of police and director of public safety at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, O'Connor worked with school administrators and community stakeholders to successfully deploy a centralized surveillance network that encompassed UMass' residence halls and other areas of campus.

Upon her arrival at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, it was clear that a similar approach was necessary. Working with the University of Illinois' IT organization, known as the Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services or CITES, O'Connor decided to deploy the Milestone XProtect video management software suite to have actionable security video and information at their fingertips.

"If security is decentralized on a major university then police cannot use that system to its maximum capacity," O'Connor said. "We have developed a policy where anyone on campus purchasing a camera system must have it approved by the chief of police."

O'Connor said making the argument for surveillance cameras can be particularly tough in the higher education environment, but the efficacy of the Milestone system helped to make the case to campus administrators. Cameras were able to record an incident of theft of a piece of Native American artwork located in an area close to the university's fraternity houses and several local bars. University police were able to email a video clip of the student to the university's email community of about 70,000 people asking for public assistance in identifying the thief. Within hours, the perpetrator had returned the artwork.

"That was the success moment I needed to say we needed to deploy these cameras everywhere," O'Connor said.

Like many universities, determining the need and making the decision to install a surveillance system is left to the individual department, whether it's the Housing Administration, college of engineering or a campus research laboratory. And while the department heads have the final word over the purchase, technical specialists led by Det. Hetrick from the university police, along with system integrator Current Technologies Corporation of Downers Grove, Ill., provide assessments and equipment recommendations.



All installations will be managed by Milestone's XProtect® Corporate, an IP-based video management software system that centralizes the surveillance system management into a single, easy-to-use interface. Because the software is capable of integrating with more than 80 different video surveillance vendors, individual departments can select head end equipment that fits their needs and budget, without worrying about integration issues with the Milestone software.

In all, about 10 departments have already completed their surveillance camera installations, including organizations like the Campus Rec Center, which manages the two-year old, \$54 million Activities and Recreation Center, one of the country's largest on-campus indoor recreation centers.



The Open Platform Company

Three other indoor recreational facilities and a host of outdoor sports fields, also part of Campus Rec, have been completed with the assistance of Hetrick and Current Technologies. Another 30 or so additional departments are in the process of deploying IP cameras and other head end equipment. The vast majority of cameras are provided by Axis Communications. The projects underway now range anywhere from 6 cameras to about 70 cameras in size and feature a mixture of fixed, megapixel and pan, tilt, zoom cameras, depending on the application.

“We should be able to cut a huge amount of time from our investigations now that the video is available to be used,” Hetrick said.

Each department also retains the ability to monitor its own video, although O’Connor’s policy is that video is also fed directly back to the police dispatch center over the campus’ fiber backbone, where on-duty dispatchers can view live video or access archived events. Administration rights are also centralized at the dispatch center, handled by a dedicated police department staffer tasked with Milestone system management, including software updates, access rights and other associated tasks. All police officers as well as the university’s telecommunications/IT staff will also be trained on the software.

Protecting people and assets

Ongoing projects include the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University’s Main Library, which houses a large rare book collection that will be protected by more than 20 cameras, to be installed prior to the beginning of a significant renovation project at the facility. The collection includes approximately 1,100 books printed prior to the year 1501, such as a significant fragment (24 leaves) of the *Bible* printed by Johannes Gutenberg; and compilations of original papers by such notables as Mark Twain and Marcel Proust. Other areas of the Main Library are also considering proposals for camera installations.



A key arrangement with the university’s housing administration will result in camera coverage at building entrance and exit points for the school’s on-campus residential halls. Ikenberry Commons, a new six-building complex to be completed in 2015, will boast about 60 cameras when finished, while an already completed dining hall in the commons is in the process of putting in 35 cameras to monitor retail applications there.

One key aspect of the centralized security plan is still being deployed. About 80 percent of the departments on campus are using their own individually maintained servers for video storage. That arrangement will change once public safety officials and CITES finalize options for centralized recording storage for archived video. For now, video is stored both locally and at the management server level at the police department. Retention times range by departments from 30 days up to 120 days depending on insurance or regulatory requirements for archived video.



Sharing resources with transportation authority

The university's use of the Milestone system has already spawned a resource-sharing agreement between the Public Safety department and the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District, a public-private transportation authority that provides bus service within the cities of Champaign and Urbana and to locations throughout the University of Illinois campus. After security officials from the transit district contacted the university's police department about their use of the Milestone system, CITES and public safety officials agreed to manage the video from the transit district.

With funding from a U.S. Department of Transportation grant, transit district buses are in the process of being outfitted with 300 new or upgraded cameras that will eventually provide video of incidents and conditions on the buses, as well as at bus stops and traffic intersections. The video would be accessible to university police, as well as to local law enforcement in Urbana and Champaign.

Open Platform allows integration with Access Control

Because of the Milestone Systems open platform, police are moving forward with testing the integration of camera systems with door access control. As of August 2010, the integration, using Andover Controls software and integration services through Schneider Electric, is up and running at a test site at the police department.

About Current Technologies Corporation

Formed in 1997 from the strategic merger of two independent companies with combined experience of over fifty years in information systems and technologies, CTC works closely with clients to provide strategic guidance and deliver solutions tailored to the needs of each that result in superior integration of IT systems, information, surveillance, security and safety, with special expertise in wireless installations. Headquartered in Downers Grove, Illinois, Current Technologies is a Milestone Certified Partner, Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, HP Authorized Agent, Dell Registered Partner, and VMware Enterprise Partner, among others. Learn more at www.currenttech.net.

About Milestone Systems

Founded in 1998, Milestone Systems is the global industry leader in open platform IP video management software. The XProtect platform delivers powerful surveillance that is easy to manage, reliable and proven in thousands of customer installations around the world. With support for the widest choice in network hardware and integration with other systems, XProtect provides best-of-breed solutions to video enable organizations – managing risks, protecting people and assets, optimizing processes and reducing costs. Milestone software is sold through authorized and certified partners. For more information, visit: www.milestonesys.com



The Open Platform Company