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BC Empresarial business center, Colombia

Security Technology and Sustainability Combine for Award-Winning, LEED-Certified Building in Colombia

The BC Empresarial business center has deployed efficient, integrated building management, access control and video security system.

The Challenge
To implement an open-platform, IP video surveillance system for building security and monitoring sustainability levels for attaining LEED recognition.

The Solution:
VMS XProtect® de Milestone Systems y software Andover Continuum.

The Advantages
Maximum system scalability, ease of operation, reliability, synchronized and simultaneous video display and searching of all the camera outputs, and an alarm manager are some of the advantages that provide a significant contribution to the secure operation of the building.

Organization
BC Empresarial business center

Location
Barranquilla, Colombia

Industry Segment
Office Building

System Integrator(s)
AP Ingeniería

Milestone Partner(s)
AXIS

Solution
VMS XProtect® de Milestone Systems y software Andover Continuum.

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Tasked with attracting both large local and global corporations to the BC Empresarial business center in Barraquilla, Colombia, facility owners also had another objective: maintaining the high standards of sustainability to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certification. For this, integrators and engineers opted for the installation of a building management system, managed by the Andover Continuum BMS solution.

The building's 19 floors offer approximately 130,000 square feet of office space and serve 1,500 tenants and visitors per day. Because the building was designed exclusively as a business center, the plan was to select vendor partners capable of providing and supporting proven, scalable and easy-to-operate solutions.

"We wanted IP video surveillance technology built with open architecture, and a building automation system capable of integrating the video system control with all the basic environmental and security services in the building," said Naisir Abdala, representative for AP Ingeniería, the integrator in charge of the project. "We selected the Milestone XProtect VMS platform and Axis IP cameras which together work seamlessly with the Andover Continuum building automation platform."

BC Empresarial spokesperson Eric Domínguez added that because the Andover Continuum platform can also control the building's HVAC and lighting systems — which was of paramount importance in the project — the combination was a perfect solution.

The Sustainability Challenge

According to Abdala, a big challenge for this project was the customer's focus on energy savings, operating efficiency and sustainability that would achieve LEED certification. But the company did not want to sacrifice on security.

"This was why the Milestone open platform VMS is such an advantage," said Abdala. "It's robust, yet offers an integration-friendly interface that works perfectly with the Andover Continuum BMS platform that also maximizes our energy efficiency."

Training was another consideration, according to Abdala. Thanks to the intuitive nature of Milestone's VMS and Andover's BMS, operators were able to master the systems during the implementation process, providing a shorter learning curve than the other security and automation software that was considered.

"Because of their ability to work together, the two integrated systems have become the best building operation partner we could ask for," said Abdala. "The systems register and audit every situation, and are great tools for the facility's administration."

"With the Milestone Systems software, you can perform synchronized and simultaneous video searches between cameras, leaving everything properly registered and audited".

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XProtect's Sequence Explorer video search capabilities and integrated alarm management greatly contribute to security operation of the building. Andover Continuum's automatic generation of alerts and events in different subsystems, including fire detection, have proven beneficial.

Together, the systems have helped provide BC Empresarial with everything it needed to become the first building in the Colombian Caribbean coast to obtain the distinction of achieving LEED certification Gold Level status without sacrificing building security in any way.

Demonstrating Effectiveness, From the Beginning

The effectiveness of the video surveillance system was proven early on, when the system was still in its installation and testing phase. According to BC Empresarial's Eric Domínguez, two cameras were stolen by members of the construction crew.

"The person in charge came to us and said that there was bad news – and good news," said Domínguez. "The bad news was that some equipment had been stolen. The good news, however, was that cameras stolen actually recorded the theft! We quickly identified the culprits and recovered the equipment."

Despite the newness of the system, building operators quickly realized a positive return on investment, according to Abdala, because the operational and administrative features of the platform require only one operator at a time to manage the building.

Milestone software has the capacity for easy expansion over time. The additional investment will be minimal due to the open design of the platform and the ability to integrate new components as more technology innovations come to market.

"The value and effectiveness of the Milestone video platform and Axis cameras have not gone unnoticed," said Abdala. "Two of the buildings' feature tenants from Transelca, the country's energy infrastructure managers, and Cable & Wireless, one of Columbia's optical fiber infrastructure providers, have also installed their own Milestone/Axis systems after experiencing the benefits of our solution."

What is LEED Certification?

LEED is an acronym for Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, a US Green Building Council (USGBC) certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices.

"With features like an alarm manager, management systems become the best ally of a building's security operation".
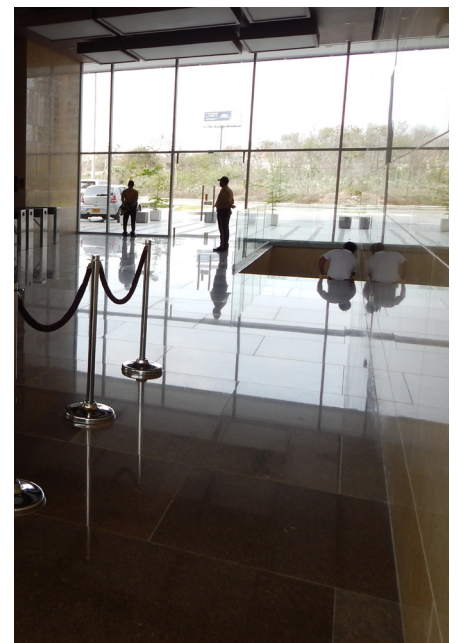
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The certification takes into consideration a multitude of sustainability factors including the use of alternative energy and water consumption efficiency, just to name two. There are four certification levels: LEED, LEED Silver, LEED Gold and LEED Platinum.

LEED is recognized around the world for its influence in reducing environmental impact, and it is especially popular throughout Latin America, as Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Panama, Uruguay, Virgin Islands and Colombia all have buildings that are already LEED certified, and many others are on the road to achieve it.

"BC Empresarial is the first building with LEED Gold certification on the caribbean region of Colombia".

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