

UTAH UNIVERSITIES



Utah Universities Achieve Security Best Practices for Statewide Adoption of Open Platform IP Video

The Challenge

Schools should be safe havens for education. New developments in video surveillance based on IP technology are helping primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities improve security, as well as enhance operations and minimize losses in commercial areas such as bookstores, cafeterias and vending machine halls. Compared to traditional analog video systems, IP-based solutions are much more versatile and cost effective. It is also a cost advantage to be able to leverage previous investments in analog cameras by connecting them through inexpensive video encoders in an IP video surveillance system.

For these reasons, two Utah universities wanted to significantly upgrade their existing surveillance systems. Utah State University (USU) and Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) both had stand-alone analog systems with just a few cameras in different campus buildings with viewing capabilities limited to single locations. Officials wanted more comprehensive campus-wide solutions that

Organization

Utah State University
Salt Lake Community College

Location

United States

Industry Segment

Education

System Integrator(s)

Stone Security

Milestone Partner(s)

Axis

Solution

XProtect Corporate

Number of cameras

435 for USU
235 for SLCC

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could be operated from single command centers for each school. Campus staff had not always kept cameras operable so efficient video playback also became a major issue, especially as it pertained to police investigations.

The Solution

Each school decided on an open platform, IP-based solution centered around Milestone XProtect video management software (VMS) and network cameras from Axis Communications.

USU is the land grant school for Utah, and has campuses in every county in the state. At the end of 2015, USU had nine locations managed with Milestone XProtect Corporate software, with the Milestone Federated Architecture feeding back the video data to the main campus in Logan.

USU has 435 cameras deployed at all of its locations and SLCC has 235 cameras. SLCC has recently standardized on Axis cameras, while USU has purchased Axis cameras almost exclusively for the past several years in addition to using Axis encoders to integrate older analog cameras into the Milestone IP video platform. SLCC currently has 180 cameras deployed through Axis encoders for incorporating their older, analog cameras.

Advantages

With the adoption of the Milestone platform, each campus has been able to centralize their video monitoring and greatly improved coordination with on-campus police, reducing incidence response time and mitigating the theft of student valuables and in the campus bookstores. The easy-to-install Axis cameras give each campus high-resolution images that provide comprehensive coverage through seamless integration with the Milestone VMS.

Large Populations, Multi-site Campuses

Salt Lake Community College is Utah's largest college with the most diverse student body. It serves more than 60,000 students on 10 campuses and hosts online classes. SLCC offers flexible scheduling with an exceptional range of academic and career-oriented options. Salt Lake Community College offers over 200 degree and certificate programs in academic, technical, and vocational fields. It is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

Since its founding in 1888, Utah State University has evolved from a small-town college tucked away in the Northern Utah mountains to a thriving research university respected around the world. Students choose from an array of academic and social opportunities at a university known for its intellectual and technological leadership.

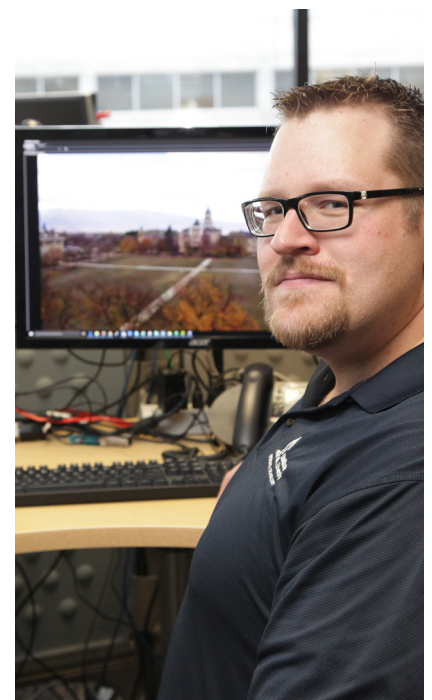
Open Platform Builds in Future Growth and Scalability

When it comes to surveillance for higher education, the Utah universities were



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System Administrator
Utah State University



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looking to invest in a “future-ready” platform that could evolve and scale with the growth of the schools. Both saw enormous benefits in the Milestone open platform, which provides a unified management approach with the flexibility to deploy a wide variety of camera models and third-party integrations.

Eric Allen, systems administrator at USU, said the university maintains servers and storage in a single, centralized location—a primary reason USU migrated to the Milestone platform.

“One of the best things about Milestone is our ability to leverage our existing infrastructure across campus,” said Allen. “We can now plug in a new camera, have it immediately pop up in the Milestone system and monitor it from our desk, instead of running around to different locations to check on and manage cameras.”

Axis Cameras the Best Choice

While Milestone supports numerous camera choices, USU and SLCC now rely almost exclusively on Axis cameras for a variety of reasons.

“The setup and ease of use with the Axis cameras is fantastic,” Allen said. “They’re just great little cameras that you can put up anywhere and never have to worry about.”

Nathan Howard is an IT project manager at SLCC who highlights the Axis ease-of-use. “You can configure all your camera settings at one time in the Milestone software, from frame rates to your password, which is an incredible time saver,” said Howard.



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Salt Lake Community College



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Milestone Makes Campuses More Secure

Travis Dunn, a sergeant with the USU Police Department, said that the Milestone-Axis solution has allowed him and his deputies to initiate proactive safety protocols.

"When it snows in our higher elevations, we can see it in the camera system and call out snow removal staff to clean sidewalks faster," said Dunn. "So we're not waiting for someone to slip and fall."

Dunn also cites the reliability of Milestone and Axis technology in facilitating the police department investigations.

"We use it to get statements from people in our interview rooms," said Dunn. "It's important that the video works the first time, because we don't often get a second chance with criminals."

Nathan Howard added that a huge advantage in the switch to IP video was the clarity of the images and the ability to share them with the police for investigatory purposes.

"With the old analog system, we had a lot of blurry images," said Howard. "It made it very difficult on our police to conduct investigations. When there is an incident now, we have crystal-clear Axis image quality as well as the ability to zoom in on the views as we need to with the Milestone software. The image quality has made our investigations more efficient and more effective."



Stone Security has been a great partner in this process. They're available at a moment's notice, they take the time to troubleshoot problems and they are always calling us with the latest and greatest product rollouts from Milestone and Axis. It's been a great and fruitful relationship from the outset."

David Tidwell
IT Manager
Utah State University



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Milestone Mapping Features Offer Big Benefits

The Milestone mapping features have proven particularly useful for the universities. Nathan Howard of SLCC works in concert with the Utah Highway Patrol (UHP), the state police for the state of Utah. He created default camera views for UHP, to ensure officers are only looking at the necessary cameras.

"I can go into the UHP group on the Milestone platform and easily modify their views if they need eyes on a new area," said Howard. "In addition to all the buildings they have access to view, I have set something up for them called a 'blank view.' It's a 2x2 or a 2x6 blank grid. If they have evidence they need to submit to court, they can scroll down to a camera and pull in only the pertinent feeds. It's a fantastic feature."

Stone Security Helps Establish System Uniformity, Open Communication and Best Practices

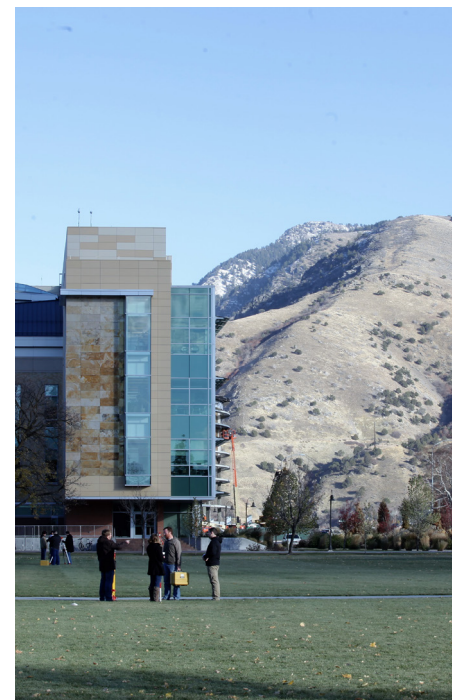
In 2008, USU partnered with Utah-based Stone Security to help choose a security system that best met its specifications. Stone Security was named the Milestone Systems Installation Partner of the Year in 2010. In 2013, in addition to being named Regional Partner of the Year, it also became the world's first Milestone Diamond Reseller. Stone Security relies exclusively on Milestone and Axis in its deployments and installations.

As a Utah-based company, Stone Security also had the advantage of being intimately familiar with the various universities' structure and requirements. This allowed Stone to sell the significant benefits of the non-proprietary, open platform architecture that Milestone offers clients who need to protect their investment over the long term. As USU moved forward standardizing on both Milestone and Axis, other educational institutions saw the success of the solution and followed suit.

David Tidwell, IT manager at USU, commended Stone Security for its extensive knowledge of Milestone and Axis products, as well as exemplary customer support.

"Stone Security has been a great partner in this process," said Tidwell. "They're available at a moment's notice, they take the time to troubleshoot problems and they are always calling us with the latest and greatest product rollouts from Milestone and Axis. It's been a great and fruitful relationship from the outset."

Five of the seven major universities in Utah are now using a security solution featuring Milestone software and Axis cameras. Since 2011, Stone Security has organized the annual Campus Security Conference, which provides a forum for the universities to hear about new offerings from Milestone and Axis and to discuss challenges, solutions and best practices with each other.



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Mike Hussey, who was recently named the chief information officer (CIO) of the state of Utah, was the keynote speaker in 2015. He was responsible for the recent installation of Milestone and Axis at the state capitol and said that the conference is a great way for him to continue the learning process.

"We are in the middle of our Milestone/Axis security installation," said Hussey. "So many of my colleagues and I at the Capitol are new to the software and the cameras. Attending this conference is a great way for me to learn more about the companies whose products the state has invested in, and hear from Utah's higher learning institutions about exactly how they are using these products to not only keep their campuses safe, but create smarter, more efficient communities."

As a newer Milestone user, Nathan Howard of SLCC also appreciates the ability to reach out to sister universities for guidance.

"To have this network of individuals with years under their belt using Milestone and Axis is invaluable," said Howard. "When I didn't know what frame rate to set up my live views versus my recording views, all it took was one phone call."

A Video System That's Easy to Use

USU's Milestone user base is diverse, including the IT departments monitoring data centers and network equipment, USU police responding to on-campus incidents, researchers supervising labs and department managers handling the flow of building traffic and watching out for thefts. In light of this, Allen was thrilled how easy Milestone XProtect was to teach.

"Training sessions were really easy," said Allen. "We only have to sit down with them for five to 10 minutes, show them the system and they run with it."

Howard used the numerous Milestone online tutorials to generate a reference guide for himself. When it came to the point of installation, he already had a good working knowledge of the system.

"The user interface is so intuitive," said Howard. "And it couldn't be easier to add a camera or click over one on a map and pull it up on my screen."

Allen said there are only two administrators running the entire Milestone system at USU, and that's never been a problem. "The ease of use means we can get in, do what we need to do and never worry about system glitches," said Allen.



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Milestone and Axis Provide Unexpected Benefits

USU has leveraged Axis and Milestone beyond traditional campus security. The college has a farm on campus where animal science professors and their students conduct research with cows and goats. David Tidwell said that in the past when a cow was far along in her pregnancy, researchers were forced to sleep at the farm to ensure they didn't miss the birth.

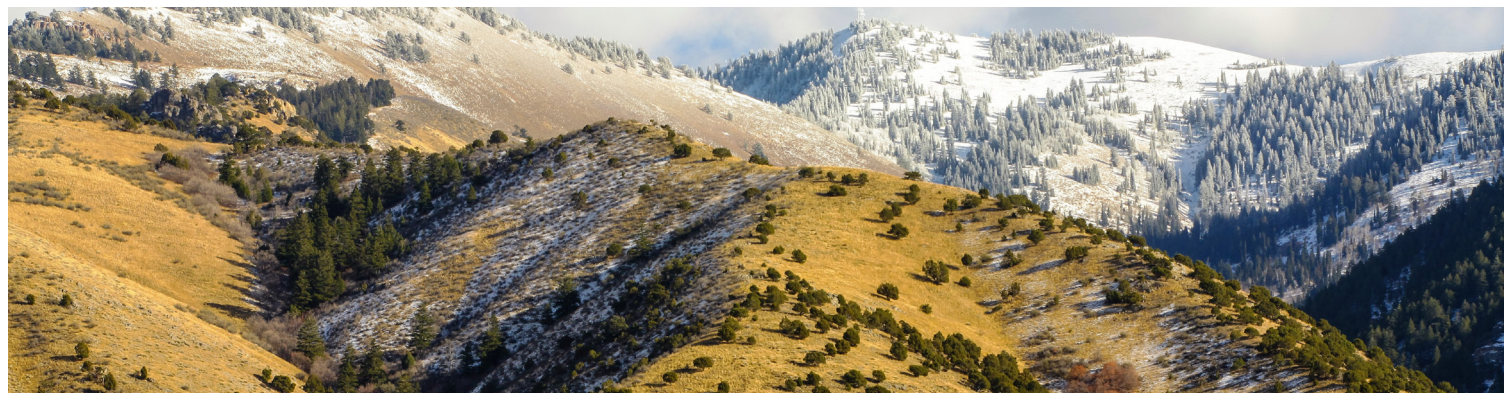
"We have a couple of Axis cameras monitoring the pens," said Tidwell. "Now, the researchers can watch the cows on Milestone from the comfort of their homes. If they see an animal start to go into labor, they can make sure someone gets there. Milestone and Axis have changed everything."

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Milestone Systems is a global industry leader in open platform IP video management software, founded in 1998 and now operating as a stand-alone company in the Canon Group. Milestone technology is easy to manage, reliable and proven in thousands of customer installations, providing flexible choices in network hardware and integrations with other systems. Sold through partners in more than 100 countries, Milestone solutions help organizations to manage risks, protect people and assets, optimize processes and reduce costs.

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