

You use your video surveillance software to monitor camera feeds, but who monitors your VMS?

By Linda Richardson

Investing thousands of dollars in a video management system only to have it fail when you need it most won't happen with a program such as Video Insight's Customer Assurance Plan (CAP).

It's 2 a.m. There's a disturbance at your high school campus. Windows are broken, computers are stolen, and by the time the authorities arrive there's no sign of the intruders. That's okay. You'll have video of the criminals. In fact, it'll be crystal clear and irrefutable because you invested thousands of dollars in a high-tech IP video surveillance system. You have your system configured for weeks of storage and with cameras placed at every angle near the incident, you know you'll have great images.

Except...when you go to retrieve the video you discover that there is none. The server that all of your cameras link to in that section of the building shut down for a system update and never restarted. It's not the VMS's fault – it was working properly. It's not the cameras' fault – they worked, as well. To avoid this costly – and frustrating – scenario, invest in the ultimate in technical support with a Customer Assurance Plan (CAP) like the one pioneered by Video Insight.

"Implementing a video surveillance system is an integral step in your overall security program," said Video Insight Director of Technical Services Tom Nell. "But if you don't proactively monitor the performance of your system then you can't be sure that it is operating at full capacity."

Video Insight developed a Customer Assurance Plan (CAP) that proactively monitors the status of your VMS – servers, cameras, connections – to ensure that you know when something isn't working properly and you don't find yourself in the high school scenario above. Of course a product like Video Insight comes with technical support for issues that arise that you are aware of and that are linked to the performance of the software. But, as an added feature, CAP provides a dedicated specialist whose priority it is to monitor the operation of your system to ensure it's always working properly, and, if not, to diagnose the problem – when the system went down, whether it's an issue such as a switch, power, etc.

"A program like CAP is essential because number one it maintains the integrity of your system, but it also provides a level of support not available to many overtaxed or understaffed IT departments, particularly in industries such as school districts and colleges that continue to face serious budget issues," said Nell.

How CAP Works

At Video Insight, the key factor behind the success of CAP is having a dedicated technology specialist personally review a customer's system status daily in conjunction with three important elements within the Video Insight software:

HEALTH MONITOR—The Health Monitor runs as a service in the background and monitors the receipt of messages from other Video Insight servers to ensure server uptime and reporting of any issues affecting the servers or cameras. The Health Monitor can be configured to send email alerts to the appropriate individual if messages from the servers are not received within the pre-determined time frame. Video Insight's servers also send messages to the Health Monitor on camera operation and disk storage usage.

CAP

PROACTIVE MONITORING of the
OPERATIONAL STATUS of
CAMERAS & SERVERS

THE HEALTH MONITOR SHOWS THE SERVER, STATUS, LAST STATUS, IP ADDRESS AND CAMERAS THAT ARE UP/DOWN

Server	Status	Last Status	Ip Address	Up/Down
VS02 .32 -- DPS-DES-DMS	OK	4 Min	10.225.187.32	144/0
VS05 .35 -- NWES-RES-ROES-WVMS	OK	4 Min	10.225.187.35	164/9
VS01 .31 -- PCMS-PMS	OK	4 Min	10.225.187.31	153/0
VS10 .40 -- BES-CWES-OC	OK	2 Min	10.225.187.40	117/0
VS03 .33 -- CES-PES-WLES	OK	0 Min	10.225.187.33	150/0
VS06 .36 -- HHS	OK	5 Min	10.225.187.36	132/3
VS07 .38 -- PHS	OK	1 Min	10.225.187.38	116/4
VS 11 .41 -- CHS-PLES	OK	0 Min	10.225.187.41	153/0
VS13 .43 -- PHS	OK	3 Min	10.225.187.43	94/0
VS12 .42 -- HHS	OK	1 Min	10.225.187.42	130/0
VS04 .34 -- CHS	OK	2 Min	10.225.187.34	112/0
VS14 .46 - RBES	OK	4 Min	10.225.187.46	39/1
VS07 .37 -- HPES-KLMS-MES-RLES	OK	0 Min	10.225.187.37	190/0
VS09 .39 -- SHES-TES-WES-WPS	OK	1 Min	10.225.187.39	159/0

Figure 1– Video Insight Health Monitor

The Health Monitor (Figure 1) shows the Server, Status, Last Status, IP Address and cameras that are Up/Down.

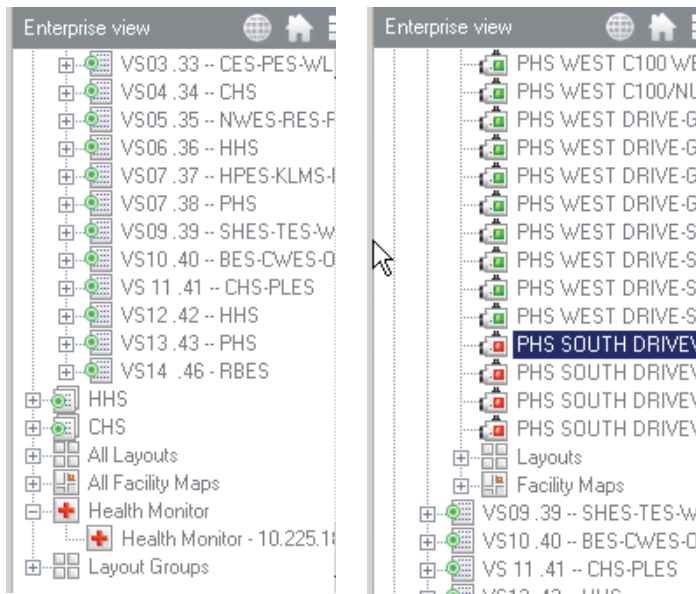


Figure 2 – Video Insight Monitor Station

MONITOR STATION—The Monitor Station is the primary user interface in the Video Insight product suite. From an enduser perspective, it provides centralized viewing of live and recorded images from any server. System and security administrators use the Monitor Station to setup and configure all servers and cameras from a central location.

With CAP, the Monitor Station also shows the status of servers that are active—indicated by a green dot (Figure 2). Inactive servers are reflected by a red dot. In the same figure, notice you can also view and access the Health Monitor indicated by a red cross.

SERVER STATISTICS—The dedicated CAP specialist can also evaluate system status by viewing Server Statistics. Server Statistics provide vital information regarding the Server Status, Camera Status, Storage, Licensing and a list of current Online Users. For example, the Server Statistics can tell you when data from the camera was last written, giving a true picture of how the cameras are working and what data has been saved (Figure 3, next page). An important element of Server Statistics is that it can be accessed from any machine that has the Video Insight Monitor Station installed.

CAP-PLUS (OPTIONAL)—A proactive monitoring program such as CAP is a welcome service for those who – due to budget constraints or thinly spread IT professionals – don’t have the capability to ensure that the full functionality of their video management system is being properly monitored and delivered. But what happens when there is an issue that can’t be fixed remotely by your CAP specialist? In addition to CAP, Video Insight offers CAP-Plus, a service whereby Video Insight will deploy a technician – oftentimes consisting of a trusted partner systems integrator in the vicinity of the enduser – to make the necessary repair. Of course prior to a technician deployment, the Video Insight CAP specialist will make every effort to quickly resolve issues remotely first. If the issue is due to failed hardware, the

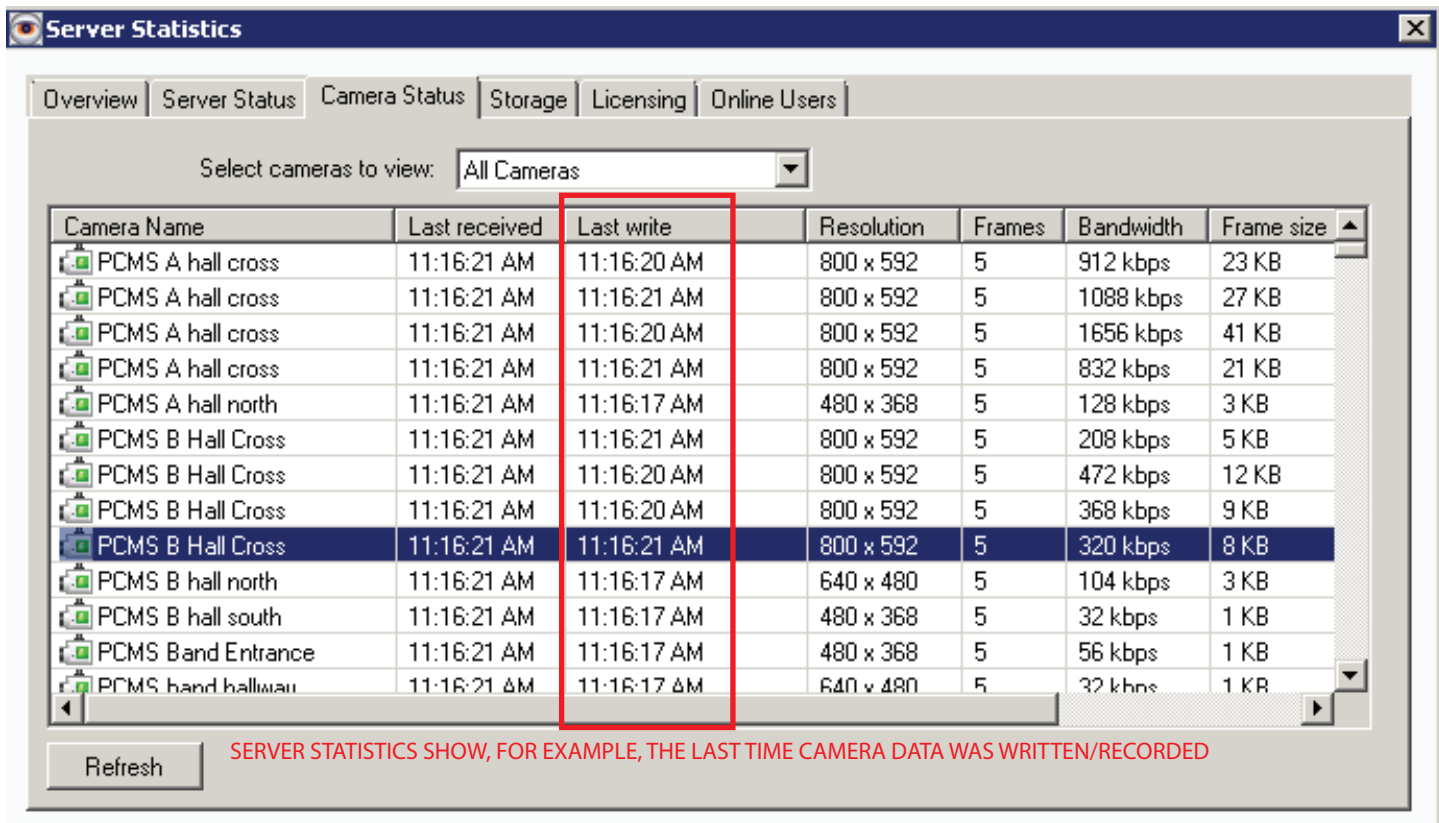


Figure 3 – Video Insight Server Statistics

technician will replace the hardware with a functioning unit provided the hardware was purchased from Video Insight and is under warranty during the time of the service call.

Don't Wait Until Your VMS Fails to Invest in a Failsafe Program Like CAP

“With CAP, Video Insight will know of any problem before the customer knows. We will diagnose and repair the issue if we can remotely or, if not, we will give the customer the option of having a technician visit via the CAP-Plus plan option,” said Nell. “CAP is the optimal solution to ensuring the service you invested a great

deal of money into is functioning properly when you need it most.”



Tom Nell

Director of Technical Services—Video insight

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About Video Insight

Video Insight is a powerful, yet affordable, video management software system that includes the following features:

- Ease of use
- Powerful web client
- Facility maps
- iPad/iPhone Apps
- Integrated Active Directory, LDAP and Novell eDirectory
- Support for 1,500 different IP cameras from 85 manufacturers
- Integrated failover
- U.S.-based Tech Support with a 1-hour Callback Guarantee
- 2012 Security Products Magazine Govies Winner for VMS & Mobile App
- Arecont Vision VMS of the Year - Education
- 25,000 installed customer base (includes 4,500 school and college campuses)

To download a free trial or to request more information, visit www.video-insight.com, or call 713.621.9779.

