

Case Study: Austin ISD

Austin ISD deploys Video Insight VMS to provide centralized management system for over 3,000 cameras

CHALLENGE

Texas' Capital School District Sought Better Video Management System for 3,000+ Camera System

Known for its music scene and for being proud to be "weird," Austin is more than just the capital city of Texas. It's also home to the 38th largest school system in the United States. Encompassing 230-square miles, Austin Independent School District has 86,000 students and more than 11,000 employees across 124 campuses.

An organization this large requires a dependable video management software system (VMS) to aid in providing video monitoring of facilities and students, as well as the ability to review incidents in an easy and rapid fashion. School districts this large move employees from campus to campus. Which means the VMS administrators spend a considerable amount of time with user maintenance. With this number of users a reliable web client is more economical than installing (and uninstalling) thick VMS clients on each PC, which also overburdens the already taxed VMS administrators.

Austin ISD found, however, that their 3,000+ camera, 50-server system came up short in these all-too-important-and many other areas.

"We were unhappy with the platform that we had and we needed a more practical solution – something that is easy to use," said Austin ISD Police Department Representative, Wayne Russell. "We needed something that didn't require an incredible amount of CPU processor power and that could also serve as a fully functioning web client."

After an exhaustive bid process, Russell said Video Insight was the only choice Video Insight was the only software solution that worked seamlessly with the district's existing cameras from their previous software provider, DVTel. Video Insight also offered what Austin ISD most sought: ease-of-use and a dependable web client.

SOLUTION

Video Insight Software With Strong Performing Web Client and LDAP Integration Provides Austin ISD Better Performance, Storage and Image Quality

Video Insight Chief Technical Officer, James Whitcomb, said that Video Insight's open architecture, ease-of-use and features that were developed specifically for large systems with multi-campus and facilities is what made it best-suited for a project like Austin ISD. "Austin ISD was unhappy with their previous provider and had specific expectations that we were more than able to meet," said Whitcomb.

How did Video Insight improve the Austin ISD's existing system?

Training – Austin ISD VMS users made the transition to Video Insight with a simple guide showing the login instructions and how to navigate. Because Video Insight is so easy to use, the video management team did not require any training sessions, although they have access to numerous technical training videos on the Video Insight Support webpage if they desire to undergo end user training or seek instruction on a specific topic.



SOLUTION

- Centralized System
- Video Insight Enterprise VMS

BENEFITS

- Ease of use - Minimal training needed
- Wide camera support
- Unlimited scalability
- LDAP Integration

HARDWARE

- Over 3000 IP Cameras
- Video Insight VMS

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Web Client – Austin ISD users can now access live and recorded video via the Web Client. With the previous system they only used a Thick Client that had to be physically installed on each PC. With the number of users in this size of a district this was an almost full-time job for the VMS administrators.

LDAP Integration – With Video Insight's LDAP user and group integration, Austin ISD created a security group for each campus and assigned camera permissions to these groups. As users move from campus to campus, the video management team only has to move the users from one group to another. Even if a single server supports multiple campuses, the users get permission to only the cameras assigned to the group. Under the previous system, VMS administrators had to create user names for each video user and assign camera permission – a time consuming and unnecessary task.

Image Quality – With Video Insight, Austin ISD is able to run all of their cameras at maximum resolution even while using the same hardware. Previously, the cameras had been set at half resolution to improve system performance.

Storage – With Video Insight's efficient storage system, recorded history has doubled across all the servers even considering the image is running at full resolution.

System Performance – With Video Insight's distributed architecture, users login to servers with their cameras and are not routed to a single login server. This has dramatically improved the user experience since previously users had to wait up to 5 minutes to view video after login.

Wide Camera Support – With Video Insight's support for 3,000 different camera models from over 100 manufacturers, Austin ISD is able to add new cameras from any manufacturer, which Russell said he is eager to explore.

Russell said they are very satisfied with the Video Insight system. Instead of struggling with problems in their VMS, they can now dependably access cameras and recorded video. The Austin ISD police department dispatch has the ability to monitor cameras 24-hours a day, seven days a week, but the campus administrators are the primary monitors – routinely watching cameras during peak times: bus drop off and pick up, in cafeterias during breakfast and lunch time, on the playgrounds and in the hallways during class changes.

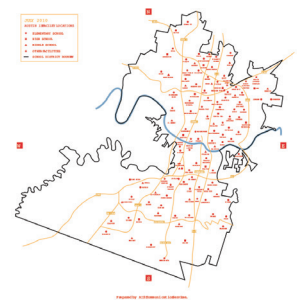
If there is an event, school administrators do not export video – they alert their assigned police officer of the incident and the officer exports the clip and assigns it a case number. Limiting who can export a clip provides an extra layer of security for video that contains images of school children, said Russell.

“While we wouldn't expect an employee to export clips for any reason other than to share an incident with the authorities, it's always comforting to have absolute control over video images of the children in our school system.”

Whitcomb said the challenging Austin ISD project is a perfect indication of how Video Insight can improve video management – no matter the size. “As a result of our work together Austin ISD has better system management, better use of storage, no need for in-depth training,” said Whitcomb. “The best news is that they have reliable video surveillance that adds to – and does not detract from – a district-wide safety program.”

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Wayne Russell - Austin ISD Police Department Representative



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