

Manchester School District (Connecticut)

Can A Security System Be Too Cool for School?



Manchester School District in Central Connecticut

A decade ago, the Manchester School District was one of the first in the nation to install a pure IP video security system.

Overview:

The need for heightened security in our nation's schools has never been more evident. Reports of school shootings that claim our children as casualties have become a tragic yet commonplace reality. Protecting students and staff in educational settings by hardening security now ranks as a priority for Security Directors and school administrators across the country. As one of the earliest adopters of a networked video surveillance system, the Manchester Public School District in Hartford County, Connecticut, proactively put its security system in place back in 2004. They handpicked IPVideo Corporation's SentryVMS to secure their schools and continued to upgrade and expand this scalable video management solution to meet changing needs over the past decade.

Most recently, they upgraded their system to IPVideo's SentryVMS version 5.5. Enhancements include mapping, browser-based client, advanced compression technology and motion-sensor recording to affordably extend archiving from seven to thirty-one days. In addition, the district upgraded to megapixel cameras and implemented more sophisticated archival searching. IPVideo Corp. has passed the school security test for Manchester with high marks. Can a security system be too cool for school? Absolutely not. When it comes to securing our schools, only the very best will do.

Challenges & Objectives:

The Manchester School District is exceptionally large, serving close to 6,000 students total and some 1,600 staff and faculty.

The High School, which houses nearly 1,800 students, is set on a campus that contains the original quadrangle - the school building with three wings, athletic fields and even a heliport. The District also encompasses nine elementary schools, a middle school, an alternative school, and a pre-school. In addition to the huge size and scope of the district, it is in very close proximity to a major, economically-challenged urban area with safety and security concerns of its own. Working with an ever-increasing student population in the lowest per capita income Township in Connecticut, the Manchester Public School District and its security personnel had multiple challenges to overcome to meet their objectives to heighten campus safety and security.

Plenty of Fiber Always Helps:

Despite the many challenges the District faced, and the fact that they were truly pioneers in adopting a networked video surveillance system for school security, fate dealt them a nice hand in that there was already in place a high-speed fiber optic network connecting all the buildings using Alcatel-Lucent 6450 OmniSwitches. It is part of a Wide Area Network (WAN), also known as a Fiber Ring, that had been established by the Town of Manchester and facilitated network connections between Manchester's Fire Department, Police Department, library and schools. This fiber optic network provided an ideal infrastructure for expansion. It's also allowed the district to process and archive the video on an array of six multi-terabyte servers that use the SentryVMS platform to bring all the video in the district into one central location and then on to the WAN.

Case Study:

IPVideo's Sentry VMS is a popular solution for K-12 education and is installed in over 100 school districts in metropolitan New York. It provides an easy to use, reliable and proven security data management solution, which includes software, hardware and storage. School districts that employ SentryVMS benefit from the ability to provide local police and law enforcement easy access to their camera's live video from any standard browser or mobile device, providing a critical view of events in case of emergencies.

IP Video Corporation operates a Global Fuson Center at its Bay Shore, NY, headquarters, from which it offers its customers the option of remote monitoring services, performed by security professionals. Several Long Island school districts currently make use of this service.

Solution & Results:

IPVideo's HD Video Management System, SentryVMS, has delivered to Manchester Schools an effective, affordable and expandable solution that has significantly aided them in identifying and resolving security incidents. The decision to go with the SentryVMS was an easy one, because it's one of the few systems to offer centralized management of cameras and the remote monitoring needed to cost-effectively monitor security.

The initial solution combined strategically located, fixed and pan tilt zoom (PTZ) network video cameras and an intuitive network video recorder (NVR), the SentryVMS enterprise solution from IPVideo that enables authorized users to control cameras remotely as well as view archived footage on the fly. Over the years, the district continued to add cameras to the system and video servers as bandwidth demand has increased. As of 2014, the highly reliable IPVideo Sentry VMS solution now manages some 320 cameras that provide 24/7 surveillance over the public schools and four town facilities. The installed cameras include various models from Sony and Axis.

The IPVideo Sentry VMS gives users the flexibility to organize the viewing mosaic by camera number, name or location. The VMS also timestamps recorded video to speed up archive retrieval for investigations. Administrators can copy video clips to CD for law enforcement, or store them

in their own files, as well as print still images of a particular frame. Another feature that the district has found especially useful includes setting PTZ cameras on tour duty to rotate at specific intervals to cover high-traffic areas, such as school parking lots.

Since the original system was installed a decade ago, it has been instrumental in apprehending perpetrators by visually capturing and documenting events as they happen. The system has also enhanced efforts to deter theft, assault and vandalism, and assist in responding to incidents and resolving investigations. In the high school, the system has also enabled security to recover stolen property, provide irrefutable proof of events for disciplinary action as well as images and video to law enforcement, and quickly verify the whereabouts of students and staff during emergencies.

The Report Card:

IPVideo Corp. has received high marks from both the Manchester School District and Police Department. Marc Montminy, Manchester Chief of Police, notes that "The use of IP video cameras allows us to maximize our resources and reduces the need to have a physical presence in every hallway. The remote viewing capability of the high school system allows police to view internal cameras from the police station." Mark McKenney, Senior Security Officer for Manchester High School, adds "Cameras make great eyewitnesses. They help us determine who, where and when, and cameras don't lie. The

system, for example, allows users to highlight graffiti on a wall and then set the VMS software to search the video to determine when the graffiti appeared and identify exactly who put it there. This is an indispensable investigative tool." The system's expandability has also been a huge financial help to the District over the years. "We have no trouble adding additional cameras," Dr. Bob Pease, K-12 Instructional Technology Supervisor for Manchester Public Schools, reports. "When needed, we add servers so we have enough processing power to prevent the service from slowing down. The system is easy to use and scalable." For more information, please visit www.ipvideocorp.com.

IPVideo Corporation provides proven, comprehensive Sentry VMS product training modules for all users. To receive a live or in-person product training class, contact your IPVideo account executive or sales@ipvideocorp.com. For more information, please visit: www.ipvideocorp.com.

