

F&M Bank gets clear robbery images for police and newscasters from IP video using Milestone Systems.

"When the robbery occurred at our Modesto location, our network administrator was out of town and he was the only one well trained on how to use the newly-installed software. But it's so easy to run the system that management, with very little hands-on exposure, was able to use the web interface, find the images, create AVI files, and e-mail them to the police within minutes of the robbery."



- Deborah Hodkin, Executive VP/Chief Administrative Officer, F&M Bank

◆ The Challenge

F&M Bank wanted to provide a cost effective, highly reliable digital video surveillance system at all branch locations that could be managed centrally, accessed remotely, and provide proactive notification of camera system failures.

◆ The Solution

Milestone Systems XProtect operates Vivotek IP2111 and IQinVision IQ301 cameras. Each remote location has a Milestone server, the video traffic is carried over the LAN at each location, and the WAN is utilized for remote viewing and AVI creation via the browser interface. The bank's LANs are switched 100 MBps, thereby isolating the video traffic from their core business network traffic.

◆ The Advantages

The system runs on Microsoft Windows XP, an industry standard for banking. The hardware platform is open which allows them to utilize inexpensive, very large serial ATA drives for longer-term video storage. The software is easily updated when new enhancements or technologies become available. The browser interface for remote viewing allows access to viewing video images without the need for proprietary software applications. The software's support of many manufacturers' equipment gives the bank a wide range of camera options.

Farmers & Merchants Bank of Central California has provided financial services to individuals and businesses in Central California since 1916. As a full service bank, they are managing 70,000 customers with 320 employees and 18 locations. In addition to their dedication to community development, F&M Bank is recognized as one of the nation's safest banks. In 2003, F&M Bank upgraded their surveillance system from analog to digital IP video using Milestone Systems surveillance software - with many positive results.

Clear evidence on a robbery

On May 20, 2004, the Modesto F&M Bank location had a robbery. But thanks to their new IP video surveillance solution using Milestone Systems software, the video was viewed by police on the scene within 20 minutes of the robbery, e-mailed to the local police department within one hour, and was on the air at a local TV news station that same evening.

The newscaster reporting the occurrence remarked before showing the images: "As you will see here, these photos are incredibly clear."

The Modesto Police Department also issued a bulletin that stated "The bank's surveillance system took several good quality photos of the suspect...", and included a full description of the perpetrator with details of the events as seen in action.

This fast response would not have been possible with the security system F&M Bank used previously.



"Our old systems were all analog black and white, low resolution cameras connected to VCRs that required branch operations personnel to check and change tapes," explains Peter Ducato, Assistant VP of Management Information Systems at F&M Bank. "The video images were low quality and often provided little assistance in identifying suspects."

Thorough investigations

"In a long process, we reviewed many, and thoroughly investigated three solutions," says Ducato. "All three systems were installed at our "test" branch for a head-to-head comparison. Milestone was finally selected for several reasons: its' open architecture allowed a mix of hardware that provided great cost savings. It was the only solution that allowed us to scale the storage high enough to allow 90+ days of archived video. It fit our current needs and will also scale nicely for future expansion."

In addition to this flexibility, cost effectiveness adds to the software's benefits for F&M Bank.

Another selection factor was annual maintenance: Milestone provides software maintenance (called a PMA, or Product Maintenance Agreement) at a very reasonable price, and hardware maintenance is done in-house, rather than via a costly annual maintenance contract with the other vendors.

The installation partner for F&M Bank was BrightNoise Inc. based out of Arizona. "BrightNoise was very responsive to our early selection and setup questions," reports Ducato. "They provided demo units which we installed at our "test" location, advice on camera and other hardware selections, and great pricing. Their expertise resulted in a demo system that beat the competition head-to-head."



Full coverage and remote access, too

"We have one camera for every two tellers, every ATM (internal and external), and every entrance and exit. We are using Vivotek IP2111 cameras almost exclusively because of the low cost and good resolution. In areas where extremely high resolution is required for "best in class" image quality, we are using the IQeye301 megapixel camera from IQinVision" states Peter Ducato. "Each remote location has a Milestone server, the video traffic is carried over our LANs at each location, and the WAN is utilized for remote viewing and AVI creation via the browser interface. Our LANs are switched 100 MBps, and as such, isolate the video traffic from our core business network traffic."



Remote access to the Milestone video occurs via Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser and the Milestone Surveillance Realtime server/Surveillance HTTP server.

"These tools allow easy access to all Milestone video from anywhere within our corporate network. Remote access is restricted and only used to research ATM fraud or to create AVI files of particular events," continues Ducato.

A long list of benefits

F&M Bank summarizes all the advantages they experience with the Milestone solution:

"The system runs on Microsoft Windows XP, an industry standard for banking. The independent hardware platform allowed us to utilize inexpensive, very large serial ATA drives for video storage. Milestone software is easily updated when new enhancements and technologies become available. The browser interface for remote viewing and incident review allows any of our internal workstations to access video images without the need for proprietary software application installation, and the open standards make sharing/e-mailing of video with outside agencies effortless."

Handling both present and future needs

F&M Bank is also able to scale their surveillance system to handle increasing needs or take advantage of new technology. Peter Ducato confirms: "High quality cameras are being added to the list of compatible devices on a regular basis. Milestone software gives us a wide range of camera options."

For more information, go to www.fmbonline.com, www.iqeye.com, www.vivotek.com, www.brightnoise.com or www.milestonesys.com.

