

ProTrans Improves Safety, Security and Productivity with Integrated Video and Access Control Solution

“Because we have more than 250,000 square feet and handle so many valuable pieces and parts, we wanted both high definition cameras and synchronization between the video and the access control. The systems integrator I worked with introduced us to Milestone and ISONAS, and together we deployed a solution with the two technologies integrated that offers us much better information, which we use to operate more efficiently.” Justin Batton, Network Infrastructure Manager, ProTrans.

The Challenge

ProTrans provides transportation and third-party logistics services that meet the shipping needs for manufacturers throughout the U.S., Mexico and Canada. Its recently opened facility in Laredo, Texas, is used to store parts, widgets, pieces, returned products and other accessories that customers rely on ProTrans to package and ship to manufacturing facilities on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. The company wanted a single solution to provide high-resolution video images, as well as the ability to monitor, verify and restrict access to the facility in order to better manage employee time and attendance while also reducing theft and misplacement of inventory.

The Solution

Using its Laredo facility as a prototype for several buildings it plans to equip with similar technology in the future, ProTrans worked with Ascending Technologies IT and ABP Technology to integrate the ISONAS network-based PowerNet™ reader controller with Milestone XProtect® video management software (VMS). The video data comes from MOBOTIX cameras, and is configured and archived via the Milestone VMS in a storage server from App-Techs and two servers to grant or deny access and monitor and record activity in and out of 15 doors.

The Advantages

In just a few short months, ProTrans has realized considerable benefits from integrating the Milestone open platform VMS with “Pure IP” access control technology from ISONAS, the primary one being that, within a single interface, ProTrans now has synchronized data from the access control technology with high-resolution video images. This has enabled the company to dramatically reduce the amount of time required to locate missing items. The solution also provides ProTrans with an easily accessible record of when employees, as well as shipments, arrive and depart the facility, and has been praised for the ease with which it can be learned and used.

Organizational Profile

ProTrans is a transportation and third-party logistics company with distribution and trucking hubs throughout the U.S., Mexico and Canada that range from small facilities for trucks to large warehouses, such as the 250,000-square foot building in Laredo, Texas. At that facility, raw materials are received, stored and then shipped to manufacturing plants in Mexico, a process that requires ProTrans to provide customs brokerage services.

Milestone Open Platform Powers an Easy-to-Use, Integrated Solution

Jim Molencupp is product manager – IP surveillance with ABP Technology, which provides solutions to help customers address specific needs within security and telephony. He sat down with ProTrans to map out the best way to manage both access control and video from one easy-to-use interface.

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Based on our years of testing many solutions, we selected best-of-breed products," he says. "For access control we recommended the easy-to-install access solution from ISONAS combined with best-in-class video from MOBOTIX cameras to be managed on the open platform VMS from Milestone - which has an elegant implementation of access control and video in one easy-to-use interface. Combining these components provides a solution that addressed the needs of ProTrans."

Andy Segovia is IT administrator with Ascending Technologies. His role in the ProTrans deployment was to provide a turnkey IP solution that integrates both video and access control functionality. He says the project is a great example of Ascending Technologies' commitment to its customers.

"Here at Ascending Technologies, we pride ourselves on providing new and innovative technologies that endure the test of time and facilitate the use of technology to users and, at the same time, provide security that protects their greatest assets," he says.

ISONAS and Milestone: A Winning Combo

Rob Mossman is the CEO of ISONAS, a provider of network-based, "pure IP" access control technology. He believes that the ease with which the ISONAS reader controller can be integrated into the Milestone VMS has the potential to revolutionize access control.

A big part of that revolutionizing, according to Mossman, is the Milestone XProtect® open platform that enables the integration. The video also provides live visual verification of alarms and archived documentation for resolution of incidences.

"We believe technological innovation is enabling access control to become scalable on a global basis," Mossman says. "We are very proud of the deployment done on behalf of ProTrans at the Laredo facility. The way it was delivered through the expertise of both ABP and Ascending Technologies IT, each of which are fully committed to developing the best solution possible, is a perfect example of what we mean by excellence throughout the value chain. I'm particularly proud that we were able to deliver an integrated solution with Milestone, a world leader. Our expertise and Milestone's expertise combined makes a fantastic solution."

A Clear View

The biggest benefit of the solution, according to Batton, is that he now has the ability to synchronize managing who is in the facility with very clear, high-definition images.

"I can obviously see a card swipe, but it used to be hard to see if someone came in behind them or if someone left the door open," he says. "But because the two systems are synchronized, I can go to any point within the access system, see who came in and view it with the synchronized video at any given time. The door system tells me who it was, but I can also use the video from the same zone to verify that the person who used his access card was in fact the only one to come through the door."

Better Inventory Management

In addition to providing a way to monitor and control people's access to the facility, the solution is a powerful inventory management tool.

On its own, the access control technology enforces ProTrans' rules governing who can enter which parts of the facility. Working together, however, the synchronized video solution goes a lot further and begins delivering benefits the moment a truck arrives. Having high-resolution video showing the inventory entering the building with clear images of those who brought it in, synchronized with data from the access control technology, automatically creates a record that can be used if inventory is lost or stolen.

The availability of high-resolution video along with a stringent access control system also helps ProTrans reduce theft - not so much of freight, Batton says, but of company property such as laptops and wireless scanners, which he says were often popular items to steal when doors were left open.

"Before we deployed our synchronized VMS and access control solution, it was difficult to stay on top of who was going in and out of the building," Batton says. "That meant we had to try to resolve things like damaged freight, injuries, damage to equipment and theft (which is a major issue in the border region) with fragmented, usually incomplete information. But today we're able to resolve incidents much more quickly and accurately thanks to having our access control synchronized with high-resolution video."

Tracking Employee Time and Attendance

Finally, by integrating the access control and VMS technologies that generate high-resolution video images, ProTrans has an indisputable record of who is in the facility and at what time.

"Thanks to this solution we are able to better track employee time: we not only know when the employee punches in but we can also visually verify that it is actually that employee punching in," Batton says. "That means it's no longer possible to have someone scan in for you, or enter the facility using someone else's credentials."

Ready for Expansion

Batton says the deployment of the Milestone and ISONAS solution at the Laredo facility is only the beginning for ProTrans. While there is no official timeline, Batton says the solution will definitely be expanded to other locations.

"In just a few short months since installing this solution, we've seen a tremendous amount of benefits," he says. "We currently have 13 to 16 facilities throughout the United States that we plan to integrate with the solution so we can manage all access control and video surveillance from one centralized location and realize the benefits we've experienced here in Laredo on a much broader scale."

About ISONAS Inc.

ISONAS Inc. has been leading the security industry by changing the game in access control technology. ISONAS has raised the bar by being the first access control company to design and manufacture a cutting-edge, IP-to-the-door solution that eliminates needless complexity—including inconvenient control panels, separate power supply, and dedicated hard-wiring. Our network-based PowerNet™ reader-controllers offer a patented technology that easily integrates with Windows-based software to deliver more simplicity, greater value, and total flexibility to go places you never thought possible. With 25,000 readers installed worldwide across a broad range of vertical markets, ISONAS provides a proven IP solution that is revolutionizing the industry. For more information, visit www.isonas.com