Sology Solutions - Government Case Story

XProtect on AWS facilitates election process transparency, delivered by Sology Solutions

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When a county in Texas needed to comply with new election legislation, they faced a fundamental challenge: how to provide citizens with easy access to real-time video of ballot handling while also storing nearly two years of recorded video — all without breaking the budget?

Milestone System's commitment to Responsible Technology made XProtect VMS on AWS the ideal solution for the county's election transparency challenge. Systems integrator Sology Solutions provided an approach that ensured secure and cost-effective, real-time video access to ballot handling, fostering public trust in the electoral process.

Sology designed and installed a video surveillance system that was built to comply with legal requirements for live streaming and long-term storage of election processes. The county's initial approach — where constituents had to submit formal requests to view video in person — created barriers rather than transparency and proved cost-prohibitive. Ultimately, the county partnered with Sology Solutions to deploy a cloud-based video system that would make the election process visible to citizens while cutting costs substantially.

Customer
County polling site

Milestone technology
XProtect® video management software (VMS)

Integrations
Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud infrastructure, YouTube online info

Location
Dallas, Texas

Cameras
AXIS IP network video devices

Partner
Sology Solutions

Challenge:
making election monitoring accessible and affordable

A county in Texas needed to provide a way for citizens to easily see their election process in real-time. At first, county officials resisted cloud adoption: the team cited bandwidth concerns and questioned the reliability of what they viewed as an unproven approach.

With the 2024 presidential election approaching, Sology Solutions had only a few days between receiving the purchase order and the required implementation date, to win over skeptics, design the system, and make it operational before voting began.

Solution:
harnessing the flexibility and ease of AWS cloud

To help the county comply with the new streaming and video storage requirements, Sology Solutions built a system using Amazon Web Services (AWS) as the infrastructure, with Milestone's XProtect video management software (VMS) handling the video operations. The team installed numerous IP cameras from Axis Communications, with half of the devices streaming video of ballot-handling areas directly to the county's YouTube channel.

For long-term data archiving, the solution leverages AWS's S3 cost-effective storage for the required 22-month retention period, while SD cards in the cameras provide backup during network disruptions.

The project timeline particularly impressed county officials. Traditional video security installations can take weeks to complete, largely due to delays in hardware delivery and setup. The cloud-based approach eliminated such delays, allowing Sology to deliver a complete solution in just over a single weekend.

Results:
exceeding expectations in performance and savings

Citizens gained access to their election process through familiar platforms like YouTube, while the county saved significantly on technology costs. The cloud-based system also delivered peace of mind through AWS's resilient and reliable infrastructure. An additional benefit is that election officials can now activate the entire system in seconds when new voting cycles begin.

"Even though we were starting this project with zero infrastructure, everything came together very quickly. At Sology, we are a focused, agile team that can execute swiftly to be highly responsive to our clients' needs.

Additionally, the collaboration between Milestone, AWS, and Axis made the impossible timeline possible. We received the purchase order on a Thursday and had the system operational by Monday morning. And in our industry, that's practically unheard of."

Jason Rice, Sales Engineer and AWS Alliance Lead, Sology Solutions

Positive impacts on operations and trust

For citizens, the difference was immediate. Instead of filing formal requests and visiting county offices, anyone could now watch ballot handling in real-time on YouTube. This level of transparency helped build confidence in the election process without requiring effort from either the public or county staff.

Behind the scenes, Sology installed multiple AXIS cameras with direct streaming capability to YouTube without requiring additional hardware. With no on-premise servers to maintain, the IT team could focus on other priorities while the cloud system ran reliably in the background. Video is set to automatically move to cost-effective long-term storage, eliminating manual archiving tasks.

"It feels like it's too good to be true, honestly. The flexibility and resiliency we get with AWS is remarkable. The AWS platform is so reliable, we are confident the election managers will always have access to that video."

Jason Rice, Sales Engineer and AWS Alliance Lead, Sology Solutions

Building on cloud-based success

The success of this deployment has opened new possibilities for the county. While the current system effectively meets their needs, Sology is exploring ways to further optimize performance, as well as the ability to stream directly from the Milestone server in AWS. This could reduce bandwidth usage and expand compatibility with a broader range of camera types.

“By leveraging XProtect on AWS, Sology delivered a solution that not only cut costs but also simplified the county's operations."

Ed Christmas, Founder and Managing Principal at Sology Solutions.

The system's flexible design supports easy expansion. Additional cameras can join the network without significant infrastructure changes, and the AWS environment scales effortlessly to handle increased storage or processing demands as requirements evolve.

The project has also shifted opinions within the traditionally cloud-resistant county government. Seeing the practical benefits of cloud technology in a sensitive application (elections), has made officials more receptive to similar approaches in other departments.

The Power of Collaboration

By moving from on-premise infrastructure to the cloud, the county cut installation costs significantly while gaining greater reliability and simplifying operations. The flexibility of XProtect on AWS means officials can now activate comprehensive election monitoring with a single click and expand coverage easily as needs evolve.

The collaboration between Sology Solutions, Milestone Systems, and AWS demonstrated that even organizations with tight budgets and strict security needs can leverage cloud technology to deliver faster, more reliable public services.

"This is a perfect example of how flexible, cloud-based security can solve real-world challenges without requiring massive infrastructure investments or complex maintenance. This is also what Responsible Technology is about - using innovation to create safety and transparency."

Matt Fishback, Global Alliances Manager for Milestone Systems

milestone

Recognize the challenges?

Do you also need to see what is happening on your premises, so you can respond in time?

Get in touch with us at milestonesys.com/book-a-demo/ and let's talk about what type of solution is right for you.

About Milestone Systems

Milestone Systems is a leading provider of data-driven video technology software in and beyond security that helps the world see how to ensure safety, protect assets, and increase business efficiency. Milestone enables an open platform community that drives collaboration and innovation in the development and use of network video technology, with reliable and scalable solutions that are proven in more than 500,000 customer sites worldwide. Founded in 1998, Milestone is a stand-alone company in the Canon Group.

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