Connect ONE®

Case Studies

Connect ONE - Protecting Student Safety & Precious Artifacts

Connect ONE®

Connect ONE - Protecting Student Safety & Precious Artifacts

Web-based Connect ONE® platform simplifies security management

Description: Perched on a hilltop overlooking the bay waters in Green Bay, Wis., Holy Cross Parish desired security, safety and simple data management for its K-8 school and other buildings on the Grace Catholic educational campus.

Challenges: The 130-student campus consists of a church, rectory with administrative offices and private school all on one large campus in a rural area of Green Bay. Each building had a unique set of different needs – accessibility, accountability, security and the ability to initiate lockdown remotely. The Parish priest and school administration wanted to implement a system that would be easy to use and provide for better identification and access control management without an on-site server – so they turned to the Connect ONE® cloud-based solution to meet those needs.

In addition, Holy Cross Parish wanted to protect rare artwork, paintings and other artifacts dating back to the 1800s that reside in the church building. They originally kept the building open 24/7, but a rash of break-ins and vandalism at nearby area churches necessitated the decision to close the facility after hours.

Solution: Holy Cross and security dealer Michael Martin, President of Martin Systems Inc. in Green Bay, opted for the Connect ONE hosted cloud service from Connected Technologies, Crystal Lake, Ill. Martin knew Connect ONE would give the Holy Cross Parish the flexibility to easily manage its access control solution on site and remotely, and yield the operational data and business intelligence it required to retain an open campus and church while keeping students safe and facilities secured.

"The administration was nervous about unauthorized entry to the church when it was open around the clock, but their goal was to be able to let parishioners access the church at any time," Martin says. The new installation designed by Martin Systems, the preferred security provider of the Green Bay Packers, took four days with two technicians. Technicians installed a point-to-point wireless network for connectivity throughout the campus, narrow-stile numerical, touch keypads at the church and rectory and proximity (touchless) readers with key fobs at the school – all controlled and managed by Connect ONE and accessible by computer, tablet or smartphone.

 "Initially, we toyed with the idea of developing our own cloud-based system," Martin continues. "But we sent a technician to look 'behind the curtains' at the Connected Technologies solution and I was excited about the possibilities for my customers, especially the many school districts we serve in Wisconsin north of Milwaukee," he says. He adds that it's the perfect solution for educational facilities, because it's flexible and can be easily tailored to meet varying levels of access or security.
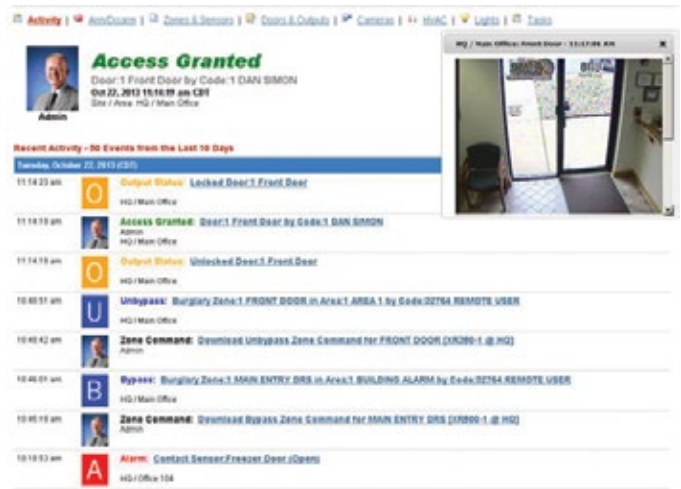
Holy Cross uses the blended approach to their managed access control solution, controlling much of the programming while using Martin Systems on an as-needed basis. Martin Systems provides an ongoing service and maintenance agreement to the Holy Cross campus and is available to assist with programming or other changes if necessary, a nice fail-safe plan for the school and church.

The user accomplishes many of the day-to-day tasks of gathering business intelligence from the system and managing the personal identification numbers disseminated to parishioners and tracked by the Connect ONE platform. "The basic idea was to be able to get a sense of when parishioners were coming after-hours so the church can be accessed and a priest made available, and they are able to accomplish that simply with Connect ONE. They can collect info from the intuitive dashboard and put together a plan based on past visits to make the priest available when parishioners would most likely require his services," Martin says.

Martin Systems also developed and deployed a unique central station reporting peripheral for the Holy Cross campus called the ONit Alert System. ONit Alert™ informs key personnel with the vital information needed during an alarm, allowing designated responders to react more quickly and effectively and bring a faster recovery after an alarm situation. ONit Alert integrates two-way communication between key personnel and the central station with 'Who's ONit' and the action options being taken. This capability alerts via text (SMS) and gives users the ability to respond appropriately.

Results: The Connect ONE platform disseminates an event log to Holy Cross Parish that easily displays usage and allows users to run activity reports quickly and simply. It can also generate customized reports, for example, collecting data on who comes to visit the church between specific hours, and email that report directly to the priest so they can plan their schedules according to parishioner's needs.

Connect ONE

Now, parishioners who come to visit the church after hours call the office and get a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access the facility. From there, the PIN is tracked via Connect ONE for additional business intelligence for the church. For example, they know who the PIN has been disseminated to and when they are using it to gain access. The keypad is connected wirelessly to the rectory/parish office and managed fully over the robust network, making for a cost-effective solution. Holy Cross used two funding mechanisms to allocate monies for the project: the business development budget from the church and the school's maintenance budget.

Martin Systems also donated and installed a four-camera analog surveillance system at the K-8 school.

The school uses Connect ONE primarily for access control and user accountability. In addition, they have been able to create a lockdown feature that initiates via the control, wireless panic button, by the administrator through Connect ONE at the computer, or smartphone. That feature alone, Martin says, helped him sell six other schools in the district on Connect ONE.

"The four cameras in the school have been fantastic in monitoring different areas," says Matt VanEffen, Principal of Holy Cross Catholic School. "Also, having the ability to see when employees are coming in for work really adds value. But the best feature by far is the ability to lock down all the doors from my computer or phone in the event of a lock-down drill. The key fobs which control the proximity readers have also cut down greatly on the number of people who have access to the 'master' key for the school. It's just so much easier to track who has the key fobs," he says.

Martin says that if the Connect ONE solution had not been available, the installation would have been more complicated to install and difficult for the end user to manage. "It became clear to us several years ago that users need a simple to use and manage security management program they can access from multiple devices, including smartphones. It's critical to customers. They want to manage system parameters remotely but not have to deal with a server on site. Connect ONE is always current and continuously updated. It doesn't get any simpler than that."

Equipment:

- Connected Technologies Connect ONE web-hosted security management platform
- EnGenius Technologies Wireless Network
- Digital Monitoring Products (DMP) wireless control
- Essex Electronics Inc. wireless keypads
- HID Global proximity readers with key fobs
- ONit Alert System

Connect ONE