



Confidently Transforming K-12 Security Environments

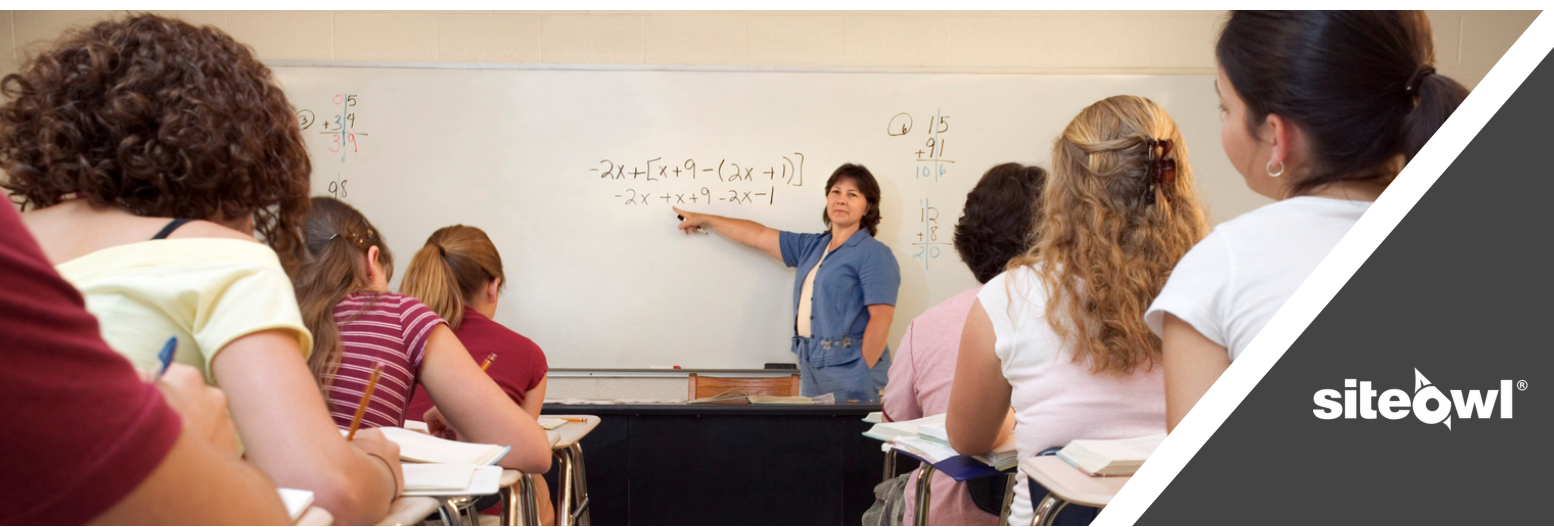
How a large Texas school district used SiteOwl to
implement new security measures and improve their
security effectiveness, in record time.



School leaders across the United States face the challenge of maintaining safe learning environments and rely on physical security systems to protect their students, faculty, and facilities. A recent tragic school incident that shook the nation had many school officials across the country questioning their campus preparedness.

One of the largest school districts in Texas immediately acted and made the determination to prioritize a district-wide access control project that would upgrade campus doors, gates, and fence systems across its 70 campuses. Originally planned as a 24-month deployment, this project was escalated to an ambitious 5-month completion date to publicly boost school security. This district had to ensure the new system was fully operational before the start of the following school year.

This customer success story demonstrates how the district and its security integrator collaborated using SiteOwl for visibility and actionable intelligence to effectively execute on the project scope and ultimately, improve their security posture, in record time.



Prepared to Respond

One year prior, the district's facilities team was exhausted by the ambiguity of their security infrastructure. They couldn't easily verify device operability, requests for service on devices, and status of device repairs. Additionally, they weren't always clear on who was working on what, when repairs were projected to be completed and if faulty devices were within active warranty dates.

Everything was tracked in a segmented manner. Mountains of spreadsheets, ageing, stale and inaccurate floor plans, endless emails and phone calls left them with the same questions, the same frustrations, and the same pains repeatedly.



"As a department, we tried to maintain as much information as we could, but spreadsheets and legacy work order systems are not ideal. Also, with an incredible volume of door hardware parts and pieces with up to 10-year warranties, a better system was needed."

- Security Manager, School District

These pains were also felt throughout the district. Principals, vice principals and campus stakeholders grew impatient with delays in communication and waiting for answers on physical security-related issues. It didn't take long for the district's leadership to recognize the level of vulnerability and risk this introduced, especially in a climate where gun violence in schools was top of mind. If they needed to move quick to modify any aspect of their security infrastructure, they wouldn't be able to do so. They sought a solution.



Their security integrator proposed a service and maintenance contract operated through SiteOwl. Security devices at all 70 campuses were mapped and placed on digital floorplans. Important device information like location, names, IP addresses, warranty dates, makes and models, and device placement photos were logged. Users were trained on how to quickly submit service tickets directly through the platform, and duplicate requests for service calls on the same device were eliminated.



"With the advent of SiteOwl, even if we have multiple users, using SiteOwl to submit service work orders cuts down on duplicates."

- Security Manager, School District

The district benefited from a full inventory of their security infrastructure, visible from a bird's eye view down to a specific device at a specific building. They also had complete visibility into the status of service tickets expediting the resolution of service-related issues.

Service tickets flowed throughout the organization seamlessly with device-level service and warranty information automatically included with each request. Requestors could easily access updates on when service calls were scheduled, who was completing them, and status on potential challenges. A stark contrast to the way service requests were previously handled by the district. Before Site Owl, physical site visits were often required by the security integrator and facilities team to validate the faulty device, its location, and warranty status. This process would cause consistent delays as a decision to proceed with the service call was made only after this information was gathered, verified, and communicated.

SiteOwl also provided crucial insights the district used to plan security changes, upgrades, and budgets. As a result, they were able to better analyze the financial impact of their security system's capabilities along with device replacement and maintenance costs.

Most importantly, the district's leadership felt more confident about the integrity of their security infrastructure. They were equipped to make data driven decisions that would not only allow them to adjust quickly based on priorities but also be better prepared for the future.

The Future has Arrived

Having already managed the schools' service and maintenance agreement via SiteOwl, the district's security integrator had a strong baseline of information to move swiftly on the project. The scope at hand required the upgrade of the district's access control system, to include building doors, gates, and fence systems across all campuses.

However, as each school had differing security needs based on their surroundings, grade levels and building designs, school principals were required to collaborate with the security integrator to identify the access control priorities and needs for their respective campuses. It was clear that tight coordination, process simplification and strong documentation were going to be key for this school district with thousands of access control devices.



Virtual Design Collaboration

District security stakeholders knew time was of the essence. Their requirement called for interviews with school principals, upgrade designs and a comprehensive installation schedule to be produced within a two-week timespan. With 70 school campuses to visit, without accurate and accessible infrastructure data already in SiteOwl, this would have been an impossible feat.

Having a firm knowledge of SiteOwl's integrated design and project capabilities, the district's security integrator presented a unique but effective course of action - conducting all principal interviews, and upgrade design approvals remotely. The district agreed.



"70 principals all with different schedules and different demands. Honestly, I don't see how that could have been done without a platform that enabled centralized collaboration."

- School Project Manager

SiteOwl access was given to all school stakeholders involved, and the security integrator coordinated back-to-back 45-minute Zoom calls to interview school principals. Over a shared screen, SiteOwl's Living Floor Plans gave principals visibility on the current state of their systems, a layout of their security devices across buildings, and potential risks/gaps in coverage.

This sparked accurate and informed feedback from the principals, and while on the same call, the integrator designed the upgrades live. Devices were placed on the Living Floor Plans, and in real-time principals were able to visualize how their systems would change.

Following this method, all principal interviews, and upgrade designs were successfully performed in an astounding four days. Decisions were approved quickly and efficiently on SiteOwl along with clear scopes and digital floor plans for each school's respective upgrade.

Project

With the district's community on edge after the Parkland school shooting, school security officials emphasized the importance of adhering to the installation schedule and meeting the completion deadline. They needed total transparency on project progress and device installations.

The security integrator used SiteOwl's Projects module to equip their installation technicians with access to the platform. Directly from the field, technicians logged devices as they were installed and captured key corresponding information - device name, location IP address, warranty dates, make and model, and date installed.

For accountability purposes, the name of the technician who installed the device was also captured along with the company name of the system integrator. Technicians used their mobile phones to capture photos immediately after each device installation and uploaded those pictures to SiteOwl for real-time installation reporting.

School officials were not only able to see as devices were installed, but at a click of a button, they were able to access each device's important information and verify installations with images taken onsite. Additionally, the installation photos were used by the integrator's project installation supervisor to verify placement and ensure excellent quality control.



Project Progress

SiteOwl's project dashboard was the single source of data for the project's progress and delivery. School security officials had round-the-clock access to real-time installation reporting where they accessed true project completion percentages, percentage of devices installed, and percentage of pending devices to be installed.



"School officials were literally able to pull up a school and say - look, 20 of these devices are installed, 10 are pending, and these are the schools that haven't begun yet. The devices were also easy to see on the living floor plans, they changed colors according to install status. SiteOwl tracked and showed percentages complete down to percentages of devices installed."

- School Maintenance

Automatic job reports were also created and emailed to the appropriate stakeholders on a weekly basis for consistent updates. Project progress was meticulously tracked and measured in SiteOwl and aligned everyone from the head of the school district down to the individual technician doing the work.

If anything was off course, it was apparent and proactively resolved. SiteOwl gave transparency into the 'what, when and where' of problems encountered so no party had to wait until the final walkthrough to discover a long punch list of items to be fixed. In a project deployed without SiteOwl, punch list items would have typically added a couple of weeks to the close out process of each of the 70 schools included in the scope.

Lifecycle Management

The district embraced SiteOwl's lifecycle management approach of seamlessly connecting devices and their corresponding information through the design, installation, and service phases on one central repository with access from anywhere, anytime. They were used to an industry where handoffs were typically disconnected, difficult and awkward between groups, and where system information either wasn't captured at all or was captured incorrectly.

Having everyone, both internally and externally, work off the same data as it moved through the lifecycle provided the district with significant efficiencies and greater quality control.

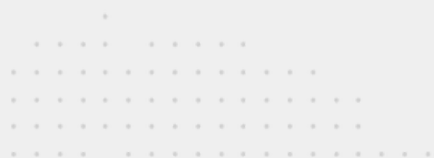


"Our security systems are in a lot better shape with SiteOwl's lifecycle management, and the fact that we use SiteOwl, gives our administrators peace of mind."
– School Maintenance

Results with SiteOwl

SiteOwl has digitally transformed the district's critical security processes moving the district from a stressful and reactive security stance to a proactive state of confidence. The successful deployment of the access control upgrade project on such an aggressive timeline validated the district's initial decision to map out their entire district, the year prior in SiteOwl, as part of their service efforts. This foundational step was a key building block to the development of a security posture that was not only intelligent but also efficient and capable of responding quickly to changing requirements.

As a result, district leadership and school security stakeholders have an increased confidence in their security infrastructure while school staff, students and the surrounding community have an elevated sense of trust in their district.



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