

# El Paso Gets Pope Visit Crowds



## Video Installations Helped El Paso Manage Papal Visit

When the Pope comes to town, it's always a big event. And that was certainly the case when Pope Francis visited the US/Mexico border town Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, in 2016. Large crowds of Catholics and the curious alike — estimated to be as many as 200,000 — made the pilgrimage to the region for a once-in-a-lifetime chance for many to see the leader of the Catholic Church in person.

The papal visit to the northern Mexican city was a huge draw in neighboring El Paso as well, where school districts, city government offices and businesses prepared for the event. City managers, local law enforcement and US immigration officials were concerned that sizable crowds would choke roadways, cause congestion, and present security risks as observers lined the roads and crossed the four bridges between the cities.

On an average weekday, 30,000 vehicles and 20,000 pedestrians transverse the El Paso ports of entry, according to US Customs and Border Protection. Extra border patrol agents and security measures were put in place to keep up with checks in El Paso, other parts of the border and all along the Pope's motorcade route to the Mass at "El Punto," a large field near Benito Juarez Stadium.

### Organization

City of El Paso

### Location

El Paso, Texas  
Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

### Industry Segment

Event Monitoring

### System Integrator(s)

Integrated Technology & Design

### Milestone Partner(s)

Axis  
TrueVision  
Avigilon

### Solution

XProtext Corporate

### Number of cameras

100+

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The congestion was expected to reach such a point that officials with US Customs and Border Protection announced they would work to keep traffic lanes open, but also asked drivers to be prepared for long waits and to have food, water and any necessary medications available.

Milestone integration partner, Integrated Technology and Design (ITD), based in El Paso, Texas, is a fire and security contractor who has deployed a large number of video surveillance and security systems within the El Paso region.

ITD owner and operator Marcia Wever has helped many local organizations deploy video surveillance and security systems, including the El Paso Police and Health Departments, City Hall and Municipal Service Centers and the El Paso Independent School District, among others.

“As can be imagined, the Pope visit was huge, we’ve never seen anything like it. The crowds were crazy, and the focus for officials was all about security,” said Marcia Wever, President, ITD. “From the International Boundary and Water Commission, to Homeland Security, to other federal and local agencies, it seems everybody was here and they all wanted access to local video systems for their independent and joint efforts.”

Wever explained that because the Milestone XProtect Corporate video management software (VMS) is used across many of the local sub systems, officials were able to gain camera access from different users.

XProtect Corporate is specifically designed for large, high-security installations that are distributed across multiple locations. With support for an unlimited number of cameras, users and sites, XProtect is ideal for helping improve public safety by reducing response times and providing agencies with situational awareness and the ability to handle emergencies in a more effective way.

“The City of El Paso and the School District are all Milestone-based, and they each have their own 10 gigabit fiber WAN, which I’m sure was helpful in accessing the systems,” said Wever. “Across the two systems, there were about 100 cameras in use helping monitor the situation, including a mix of environmental fixed and PTZ cameras from Axis and TruVision, and multi-sensor cameras from Avigilon.”



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**Marcia Wever,  
President, ITD**





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While ITD was not directly involved with the security operations on the day of the event, Marcia Wever is very proud that the flexibility and reliability of the installed Milestone video surveillance systems they've deployed around the city of El Paso were able to be accessed to maintain safety and security in such a unique situation.

"I've been told that all the players involved in the event were very happy with the video quality and accessibility of the systems," said Wever. "Events like this take on their own life as the various agencies take over, but there were no major incidents, and all feedback I have gained is that the system was quite effective."



Milestone Systems is a leading provider of open platform video management software; technology 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 150,000 sites worldwide. Founded in 1998, Milestone is a stand-alone company in the Canon Group.

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