

Building safer campuses, stronger communities: Black Hills State University



BLACK HILLS
STATE UNIVERSITY



milestone

A commitment beyond security

At Convergent, protecting people isn't just a service, it's a responsibility. Each year on **Convergent Social Responsibility Day (CSR)**, colleagues and partners around the world come together to strengthen communities, improve safety, and create meaningful impact.

That same purpose-driven mindset guided a long-term partnership with **Black Hills State University (BHSU)**—transforming campus security into a connected, future-ready system that supports not only safety, but collaboration and community wellbeing.

The challenge: Fragmented systems, growing expectations

As BHSU expanded across its Spearfish main campus and Rapid City location, the university faced a growing challenge:

- Lack of a centralized security system
- Limited visibility across 20+ buildings and outdoor areas
- Siloed access between departments
- Increasing need for scalable, future-ready infrastructure

For a university serving approximately 3,500 students, creating a secure, connected environment was essential—not just for protection, but for enabling a thriving campus experience.

BHSU: at a glance

- Located: Spearfish, South Dakota, United States
- Type: Public, 4-year regional university
- Established: 1883
- Enrollment: 3,300–4,000 students
- Academic offerings: 70+ programs / 80+ majors
- Governance: South Dakota Board of Regents



Convergent is proud that Black Hills State University chose our innovative security solutions to safeguard their campus. By selecting a system that is meticulously future-proofed, the university demonstrates their commitment to staying ahead in ensuring the safety and security of their community.

Bob Peplinski, General Manager, Convergent



The solution: A unified, open-platform foundation

Converjint partnered with **Milestone Systems** and **Axis Communications** to design and implement a centralized video security ecosystem built for both performance and purpose.

Key elements included:

- Open-platform video management powered by Milestone XProtect
- Around 80 Axis network cameras across academic buildings, common areas, and parking facilities
- Unified monitoring across both campus locations
- Secure, role-based access for Public Safety, IT, and Facilities teams
- Scalable architecture for future expansion and integrations [converjint.com], [milestonesys.com]

This wasn't just a system upgrade; it was a shift toward **connected campus intelligence**.

The impact: Security that serves the whole campus

The new solution enabled BHSU to move from reactive security to proactive, operational visibility:

- 1. Safer environments for students and staff**
Strategically placed cameras deliver full campus awareness—helping deter incidents and respond faster when needed.
- 2. Cross-department collaboration**
Video data now supports multiple teams:
 - Public Safety for investigations
 - IT for diagnostics
 - Facilities for environmental and operational monitoring.
- 3. Operational efficiency at scale**
A centralized system reduced complexity and improved response times across departments.
- 4. A future-ready foundation**
With open architecture, BHSU is positioned to adopt:
 - Advanced analytics
 - License plate recognition
 - Expanded camera coverage
 - Emerging smart campus technologies



Why this matters for STEP Up



Result: Streamlined and scalable campus safety

The new video management system gives BHSU a streamlined, multi-department approach to campus safety. Public Safety, IT, and Facilities now share efficient access to video for investigations, maintenance, and monitoring. The flexible platform also supports future expansion, including advanced analytics and license plate recognition.

Future plans: Expanding coverage and capabilities

BHSU plans to expand camera coverage, upgrade to high-definition and 360-degree cameras, and enable mobile access for real-time monitoring across campus.

Conclusion: Built for today and ready for tomorrow

In partnership with Convergent and Milestone Systems, BHSU has built a scalable and resilient security infrastructure that supports current needs while preparing for future advancements.

CSRD focuses on creating safer, more inclusive communities through meaningful action, from volunteering to deploying security technologies where they are needed most. STEP Up is Convergent's flagship community program that provides security technology, expertise, and labor to help make underserved schools safer at no cost.

Together, **CSRD** and **STEP Up** work hand in hand to turn Convergent's social responsibility commitments into tangible, real-world impact.

The BHSU project reflects this same mission in a long-term, scalable way:

- Protecting learning environments where students can thrive
- Empowering institutions with tools that support safety and wellbeing
- Extending impact beyond security into everyday campus life

It serves as a reminder that **when technology is guided by purpose, it becomes a powerful force for good.**



Effective security and safety is a multi-layered approach involving people, processes, and technologies. Convergent-provided products and services are only one part of this multi-layered approach, will not detect or prevent all threats or solve every risk, and should not be your sole method of security or safety. Please see the "IMPORTANT PRODUCT SAFETY AND SERVICE INFORMATION" documentation, available at [convergent.com/terms](https://www.convergent.com/terms), prior to using a Convergent-installed system

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