

# MeyersUSA Restaurants



## Improved Security and Operations in Historic Grand Central Terminal

High-profile, Michelin-star awarded Agern restaurant and high-traffic, adjacent Great Northern Food Hall have deployed an integrated IP video security and services network, solving unique installation requirements.

### The Challenge of Historic Sites

The Summer of 2016 saw the opening of the fine-dining restaurant Agern and Great Northern Food Hall, both in the landmark Vanderbilt Hall of Grand Central Terminal, New York. Agern, which means “Acorn” in Danish, is on a mission to share the culinary flavors and ambiance deep-rooted in the culture of the Nordic countries. Great Northern Food Hall consists of eight pavilions presenting casual food styles based on fresh local goods and influences.

Agern's beautifully designed spaces incorporate elements of Scandinavian aesthetics with a mix of organic shapes and natural elements from sleek, mid-century furniture to mosaic tile work and natural wood in warm, earthy colors. In mid-November 2016, Agern received a Michelin star, recognizing the restaurant's quality, mastery of technique, personality and consistency of food and the dining experience.

### Organization

MeyersUSA

### Locations

Grand Central Terminal and  
New York City area

### Industry Segment

Restaurants  
Food Service  
Retail

### System Integrator

CK Technology Group

### Milestone Partner

Axis Communications

### Solution

XProtect Corporate  
Axis Network Cameras  
Ruckus Wireless

### Number of cameras

Mix of about 90 HD and  
panoramic IP cameras

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"Both the restaurant and Great Northern Food Hall have been well received by New Yorkers and tourists alike; there's nothing esoteric in our approach," said Claus Meyer, CEO of MeyersUSA. "We serve great coffee, we bake stunning breads and pastries just behind the walls of Vanderbilt Hall, and we work hard to offer selections that pay respect to the local market."

Meyer points out that this is not just a commercial business to make money. There is also a focus on sharing knowledge, building expertise and innovation, and exploring the depths of local and regional flora and fauna. For example, they grow Nordic heirloom grains and offer baking classes and foraging tours.

## Bustling Historic Building: Installation Demands

More than 750,000 people pass through Grand Central Terminal every day. In addition to operating 24/7, and being one of the most visited tourist attractions in the US, the terminal is a historic landmark with much of its structure over 150 years old. These factors presented challenges for the installation of a new video monitoring and services network.

"The terminal presented unique challenges with all the different security requirements and the historic nature of the landmark," said Chris Kossifos, Managing Member of CK Technology Group, the integrator and installer for the system. "We were not allowed to install wires permanently anywhere. Everything in the hall had to be completely moveable."

The team could not drill any holes or touch the walls. Even more challenging was the stipulation that anything installed had to be able to be removed with one week's notice, leaving the space looking exactly as it has for the last 100 years.

## Top Systems = Healthy Business

"The restaurant serves 4,000 to 5,000 guests a day," said Kossifos. "For the business to stay profitable in a space like this, it has to have very good and very reliable systems in place."

Kossifos explained that when it came to the video surveillance system, the key functional requirements include coverage for liability, theft control, and the ability to monitor daily operations with Point of Sale (POS) system integration. He emphasized the importance of being able to capture and store video data from the many areas in the restaurant and food hall and to have local as well as remote access to viewing the video.

"We wanted the ability to overlay video with the POS system so we can see data in real time as bartenders, servers, and cashiers ring up transactions," said Kossifos. "We can compare system transactions with video of what's being handed to the guests. If there's an issue, managers can use the easy search commands to review the video, narrow it down to a certain area at a certain time, so they don't waste time looking at tons of raw footage."

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## IP Network Runs Cameras, Video Platform and POS

To combine resources and minimize the physical footprint of the installation, Chris Kossifos and the CK Technology team deployed a single IP network to integrate and transport six distinct systems: Milestone XProtect Corporate video surveillance software managing Axis network cameras, MICROS Retail Systems POS terminals and printers, computers that access the internet, WiFi for guests and staff, digital signage and audio. Each service shares the bandwidth of a single network cable to each station, which was important because there was no space to run more.

“People often talk about how IP cameras are great because they have better image clarity, but that’s just one of their strengths,” said Kossifos. “The real strength is in ease of use and ease of installing on an existing network, and most importantly, you can run power, video, and data — everything — over a single cable, through a single switch.”

Utilizing this unified network approach, the system also incorporates wireless Axis cameras with access points through a Ruckus wireless system and their wireless LAN management server, the ZoneDirector. With ZoneDirector, Kossifos was able to set up hidden wireless networks (protected service set identifiers, or SSIDs) exclusively for the wireless cameras.

“The wireless cameras operate like the wired cameras with zero impact on the system performance for guests, staff or other networks. It all runs simultaneously and is an elegant solution,” said Kossifos. “Having 80 or so ultra-high-definition Axis cameras in the system creates a lot of network traffic. Knowing that we had to run five other systems together with the video, it’s important to make sure the systems don’t trample each other.”

Video surveillance is one of the most bandwidth-intensive services on a network. At Great Northern Food Hall, the system uses ultra-high-megapixel, 360-degree cameras, so bandwidth was a big concern. By using various Axis cameras with their Zipstream technology, the data is compressed and efficiently sent over the network.

## Customizable Software Options

Milestone XProtect video management software (VMS) also provides a robust set of options for setting frame rates, video quality, and recording parameters. For example, perhaps managers only need to record three frames per second until an event happens, when the frame rate can be set to increase. This ensures the activity needing to be captured is prioritized with regard to image quality.

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Another critical use of the video system is to monitor the safety of employees. If we see something wrong, managers can coach and train staff before an injury occurs. From lifting heavy objects properly, to cleaning up grease or water on the floor, the preventive action from proactive monitoring is very beneficial.

**Chris Kossifos,  
CK Technology Group**



Great Northern Food Hall



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"There's a lot of flexibility in the Milestone software for bandwidth customization based on activity, motion, and time of day," said Kossifos. "XProtect is by far the easiest software to use and most reliable video management platform we have ever come across in our 20 years of deploying digital surveillance solutions."

The team installed a variety of Axis cameras, including Axis micro cameras in the POS areas and 360-degree cameras hung from overhead trusses constructed to avoid wall installation, also providing space for marketing signage. Each 360-degree camera can cover a lot of area with a small footprint.

"Milestone has an amazing feature to support this technology which is a kind of virtual fisheye lens that breaks down the video data into 12 distinct views, and this brings excellent value. We can use a lot fewer cameras to see more angles, and do less wiring, too," said Kossifos.

## Technology Served to Order

In the food service industry, a lot of events and seasonal business make it necessary for a restaurant to scale staff to meet the need. Logins and permissions can be a struggle when dealing with changing users.

"A majority of tech support calls have to do with passwords," said Kossifos. "So rather than having to laboriously set up individual employees with new credentials all the time, administrators can assign them into pre-existing groups that are managed through the Microsoft Active Directory server, which assigns roles and access without having to modify each user. It's so beneficial that Milestone leverages this."

Since management takes place across the organization, this means that a single directory change updates not only their access to the Milestone VMS, but access to the PBX System, their computer logins, their email, etc.

"Once we set up an Active Directory link, we can add people directly to our domain and then easily go right into Milestone XProtect and select the user who is already part of the domain," explained Kossifos.

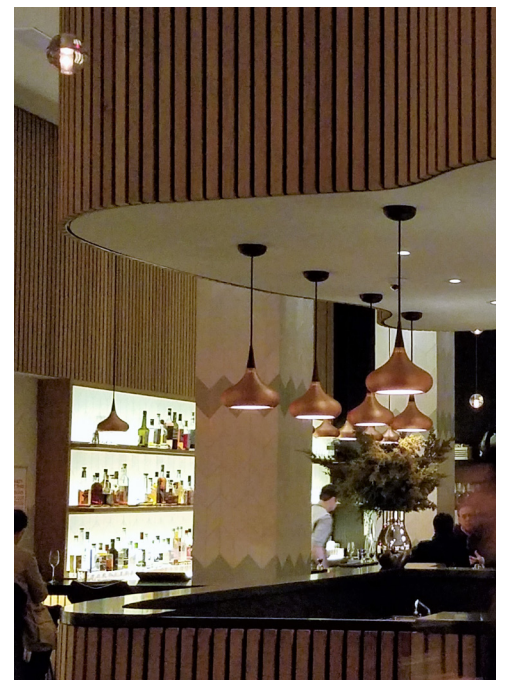
With the historic nature of the facility, the high-bandwidth multi-system requirements, and large user-base demands, this has been a challenging installation for many reasons. With the proper tools in place, they look forward to expanding the system to other facilities within the Claus Meyer enterprise.

"As we add new retail locations, bakeries, and commissaries, we'll be able to add cameras without having to build a larger VMS. We'll just add cameras and have them record over our private network, back to our main server storage

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When it comes to managing a large client base with hundreds of different users, this is worth its weight in gold. It's one of the most important features — ease of setup, ease of management. Milestone meets all these needs.”

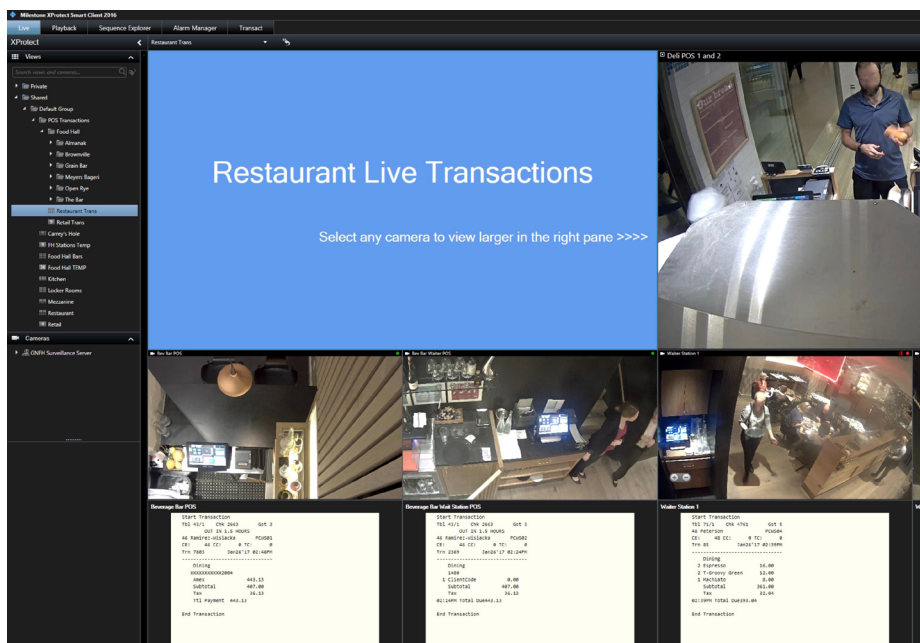
**Chris Kossifos,  
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in New Jersey,” said Kossifos. “Milestone has been a fantastic partner in this project: their service and support have been great, and as far as the product is concerned, the Milestone VMS is the best choice for our business.”

In April of 2017, MeyersUSA opened its newest venture, Restaurant Norman. Located in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, Norman is a contemporary restaurant and café, with an in-house bakery and bar. Norman has started with seven IP video security cameras installed, all managed with the Milestone VMS, and connected to the MeyersUSA shared IP network through a secure VPN.



Milestone XProtect Transact integrated with POS data



Axis cameras monitor safety

Milestone Systems is a global industry leader in open platform IP video management software, founded in 1998 and now operating as a stand-alone company in the Canon Group. Milestone technology is easy to manage, reliable and proven in thousands of customer installations, providing flexible choices in network hardware and integrations with other systems. Sold through partners in more than 100 countries, Milestone solutions help organizations to manage risks, protect people and assets, optimize processes and reduce costs.