



## Spencer Community School District Stop Arm Violations

### **The Client:**

Spencer Community School District is located in northwestern Iowa and serves more than 2,400 students. Spencer Community's school buses travel on both urban and rural roads to transport children between home and school each day.

### **The Situation:**

School buses are the safest vehicles on the road – 70 times safer than cars, light trucks and vans. Yet an average of 33 school-aged children are killed each year in bus-related accidents in the United States; the majority of those deaths occur in the “danger zone,” the 10-foot area surrounding the bus, because of passing motorists who disregard a bus' stop arm.

Spencer Community's bus drivers complained of passing motorists, but Dan Schultz, Transportation Supervisor, didn't know how to prove these violations were occurring. Schultz was especially concerned about stop-arm violations occurring around the bus that carried Spencer's 3- and 4-year-old vulnerable pre-schoolers. He began researching video technology that would record stop-arm violations – irrefutable evidence of breaking the law.

## The Solution:

With the blessing of the Iowa Pupil Transportation Association (IPTA), the Iowa Department of Education purchased one VHS-based analog video recording system for Schultz to use on the pre-school bus, and eventually purchased the Digital Chaperone DDR recording system from Honeywell. Cameras were mounted on the inside of the bus facing outward, and recorded drivers who passed illegally.

In a six-month trial period with one camera installed on the pre-school bus, 40 drivers were caught and all but three pleaded guilty after viewing the tape. The local newspaper and radio station reported on Spencer's new recording system, and drivers took notice. In the second six-month recording period, only four drivers were caught passing school buses.

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## The Benefits:

The digital system provides several additional benefits over the VHS-based analog system. Schultz can access the video cameras at any time from his laptop computer. Instead of scanning through hours of videotape, Schultz and his drivers can pinpoint the incident. Images are recorded with the vehicle identification, date, time, camera name, and various status inputs, which allows for more accurate investigations.



Honeywell's system also comes with BusView™ software that allows Schultz to find, print, distribute and archive video and audio files. Schultz has found the ability to e-mail images to police and school administration among the most useful features of the digital

system because it speeds up the investigation process.

Schultz also uses the system for bus driver evaluations, and credits it for saving valuable time. He's able to make sure bus drivers are following protocol at railroads and intersections, information he may not be able to gather during a supervised ride-along.

These days, things are quieter – less hurried – in Spencer. Schultz is proud to say that the district has never had a two-time violator, and because of this, he knows the system is working.

## The Product:

- HTRD400 Series Digital Data Recorder
- HTD50/52 Series Digital Cameras
- Busview™ Player



## More Information:

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