

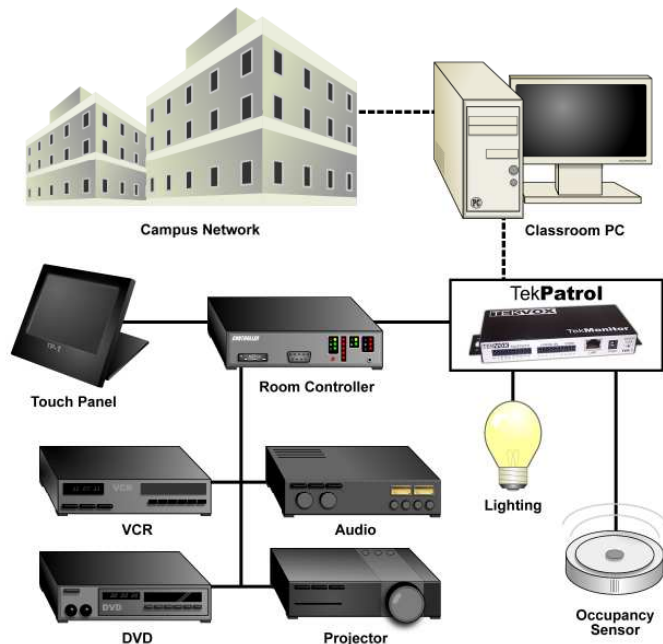
Trinity University Merges Both AMX NetLinx and Access Control Systems into a Network Management System for Multimedia Classrooms

Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas is one of the nation's top private undergraduate institutions. Like many other universities Trinity has a mixture of AMX Access/NetLinx, Extron System 5 and rooms with only video projectors. Driving the requirements for these classrooms is Ronnie Swanner, director of the Center for Learning and Technology at Trinity. One of the features Mr. Swanner was looking for was a way to provide network monitoring, remote support, security, asset management and email reporting from all of their rooms. Since replacing all of their old equipment with NetLinx was not within the budget, Mr. Swanner was looking for another solution.

After researching several products Mr. Swanner selected TekVox, Inc. <http://www.tekvox.com> located in San Antonio, Texas to provide a solution that would update their existing AMX NetLink and Access software to operate with the TekVox TekPatrol™ asset management system.

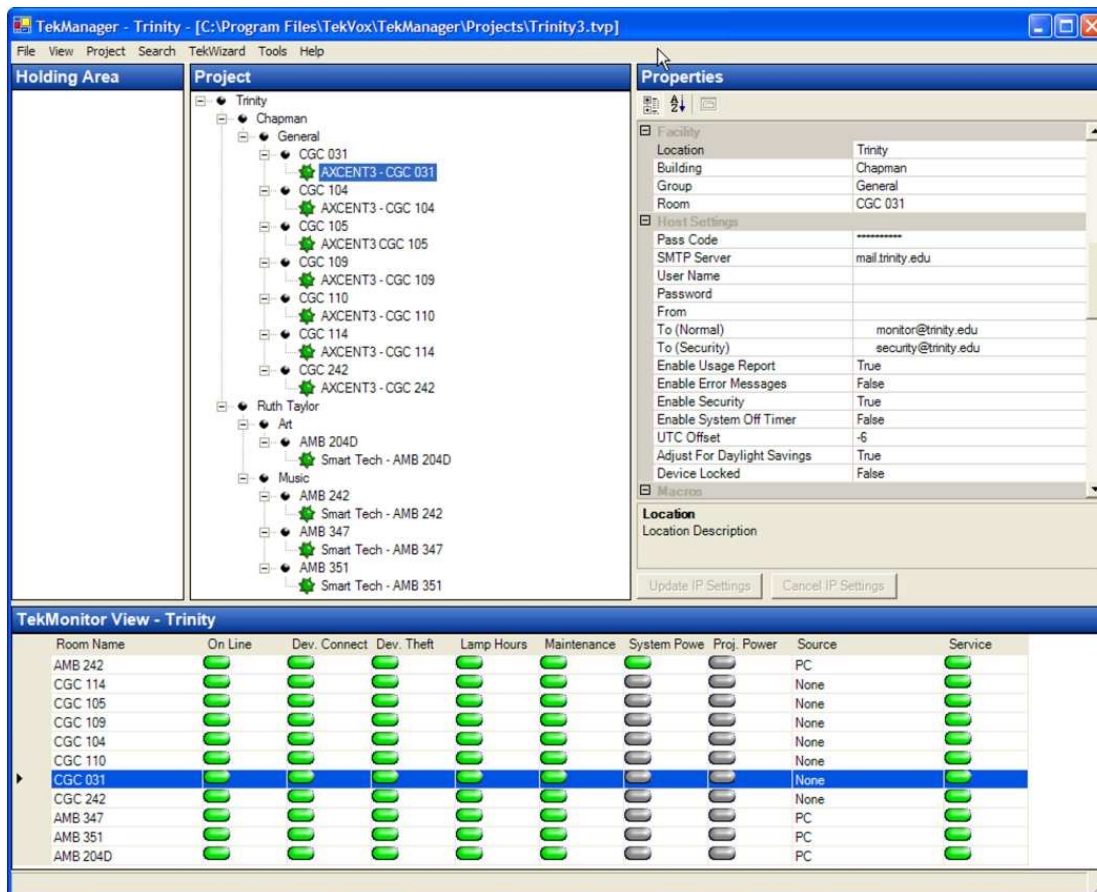
The TekPatrol asset management system consists of both a hardware and software solution to monitor devices. For a hardware solution TekPatrol uses a device called a TEK 1. Basically a TEK 1 is a network mini-controller with a serial port and some input and output logic connections. For a software solution TekPatrol uses a PC application called TekManager. This PC application allows an administrator to monitor and control all TEK 1s on the network. One of the features of the TEK 1 is an operational mode called TekTranslator. When a TEK 1 is operating as a TekTranslator, it has the ability to communicate with control systems from companies like AMX™, Crestron™ and Extron™.

To provide networking of the AMX Access control systems a TEK 1 is configured as a TekTranslator and is connected to a serial port on the control systems, the Access program is modified and a control system driver is loaded into the TEK 1. Once a connection is established between the TEK 1 and the control system, the TEK 1 starts querying for information about the system. This information is stored in the TEK 1 where it is retrieved by TekManager.



TekManager provides all of the management tools necessary to configure, monitor and control the TEK 1s. Retrieved Information from the TEK 1s is displayed in three main panels within TekManager. A Project panel displays a Tree view of the TEK 1s saved into the project. A Properties panel allows for viewing and modifying settings within the TEK 1. A TekMonitor View panel is a grid view display of the project allowing for all the TEK 1s to be viewed on one easy to understand panel. Using Project files allows TekManager to quickly switch between different groups of TEK 1s.

For easy configuration of a TEK 1 the TekManager application utilizes a step-by-step guide called TekWizard. This guide instructs the installer through the configuration and loading of the driver for the TEK 1. Another advanced feature utilized by TekManager is an auto-discovery method allowing TEK 1's to be installed using DCHP. During the install process TekManager locates the TEK 1's and places them into the Holding Area. Once a TEK 1 is configured using TekWizard it is automatically placed into the Project.



TekManager



According to Robert Miller, the Media Tech. Support Coordinator for Trinity, “Using TekManager allows me to view and control all classrooms from anywhere on campus saving valuable time and resources. TekManager even helps in scheduling filter maintenance and lamp replacement along with synchronizing all of the AMX system clocks. In the past I would have to occasionally go around to all of the classrooms and reset the clocks. Now, TekManager does this for me.”

Network management of the classroom also benefits the Instructor by improving maintenance and response time. Other benefits include Email support for Help, Security and Reports. For Email support an instructor only need’s to request Computer or Audio/Visual Help via the AMX Axxess touch panel. Once the TEK 1 receives the Email command, it is sent to Trinity support.

Incorporating different control system platforms and display devices into a network management system improves productivity and increases the life of the equipment.

