

# Mistakes Buying School Bus Video Cameras

## 1 – Buying a Fragile Hard Drive Based Bus Video system

Typical hard drives are designed for use under office conditions, meaning close to ideal conditions with low temperatures, low humidity, conditioned electrical source and no sudden movements. Now that the VCR has gone the way of the Dodo bird, the DVR hard drive now takes the position of arguably the most fragile device or mechanism in the school bus.

Think to yourself of every time you have heard of a hard drive problem, a hard drive crash from a friend or business colleague. Chances are those hard drives problems or hard drive crashes occurred while they were working on the PCs in a business office environment. Some may have been sitting still on a desktop or sitting safely under a desk and simply wore out or failed due to non-environmental affects.

They are fragile mechanical devices that we trust to defend our school districts when in the worst possible scenarios events occur that require their use as a expert witness, often in court.

When you are purchasing a video system to protect your district from liability and act as an expert witness in the worst case scenarios, it seems a wise idea to make sure the one you invest district budget dollars into will not fail you when you need it most. This is the type of decision that separates those of vision from those who might look back in hindsight after losing the lawsuit due to a failed hard drive system that was damaged in the crash.

Ask your IT department staff how many hard drives they have ever replaced from a fixed location in a controlled stable environment. It has been my experience in a harsh mobile environment like a bus; the incidence of failure and problems will be geometrically higher. I have replaced far more hard drive based DVRs that I care to remember both under and out of warranty and the costs were considerable.

Most of us have several forms of solid state drive devices we use every day, in different locations we travel, in every environment and under conditions that would damage the average hard drive in about a week. That would be our cell phones, our MP3 players or iPods, GPS NAV systems, beepers or our Blackberries. With all the abuse we provide them the recording mechanism has no moving parts to wear out or break, so they are well suited for the mobile environment.

The only digital system I am aware of with any chance of exceeding the life of the average school bus is the solid-state drive based DVR. With children's lives in your care and million dollar lawsuits on the line when something goes wrong, can you really afford to have anything less than 100% solid-state drive?

***Spec 100% Solid State Digital memory to avoid this problem***

## 2- Damaging The US Economy & Contributing To US Unemployment

The worst mistake that can be made while purchasing in the school bus video market could be American schools using American tax payer funds to purchase China or Republic of China (Taiwan) DVRs under the false belief they were buying American made DVRs. Whether this was an oversight, mistake or they were misled intentionally by a reseller, in a time of recession with millions of lost American jobs, either way the damage is done.

### Damaging The US Economy & Contributing To Unemployment

- If American Schools were led to believe they were buying American made DVRs
- If American Schools expected high quality American DVRs, got China made DVRs
- If American Schools expected EPA compliant manufacturing that did not damage the environment.
- If American tax payer funds ended up supporting countries guilty of Religious persecution
- If American tax payer funds supported Chinas abysmal record of Human Rights abuses
- If American tax payer funds supported China workers at the cost of American jobs

***Now is the time to Be Part of The Solution...Buy American Made DVRs***

### 3- Not Getting Sufficient Warranty Coverage

Most of those in this industry are familiar with the service record of the "Jack-in-The-Box" systems employing consumer grade camcorders or the VHS VCR based systems that had up to 34 moving parts to wear out or break most of which were made in China.

How many times do American schools need to be burned by short lived, poor quality or hazardous China made products before we learn to invest in high quality American products?

The warranty coverage period offered is a reasonable measure of their bet that their product will not fall apart until after that period.

So why not buy from the companies that support their products the longest?

The best system warranty we are aware of at the time of this writing is the complete system is 3 Years offered by true American manufacturers selling genuine American Made DVRs. When you purchase American made DVR based systems you have a built in value advantage should you ever have programming or software related issues, you will not have to work around the 12 hour time zone issues or learn Chinese as those who designed, built and programmed the DVRs are actually here in the USA!

The best memory warranty we are aware of at the time of this writing is the Limited Lifetime Warranty. All of our flash memory cards include a limited lifetime warranty provided. We provide this extended warranty to you at no charge. Your memory cards are warranted for life to be free from defects, and will be replaced if returned in good condition, without signs of; damage, tampering, abuse, if found defective for as long as the memory manufacturer continues to provide this product and were actively selling them in this market. Insist on 3 Year System Warranty & Limited Lifetime Memory Warranty

### 3- Choosing Old GPS Technology Versus On Screen Mapping

In the past GPS was employed in bus video systems as a way to document the bus speed on the playback as several bus manufacturers had changed their wiring to multiplexed wiring or simply made it bothersome to tap into the speed signal.

Currently there are two methods to offer an improved GPS feature we call On Screen Mapping. Like the "Introduction to Business 101" example of IBM versus Bill Gates, one manufacturer has chosen to go the way of IBM who pursued the hardware based solutions, while Bill Gates blazed the software solutions. That reseller of Republic of China DVRs was the first to offer On Screen Mapping, as I know it, a new technology application that deserves mention. Unfortunately like IBM this new feature was hardware driven through the incorporation of a large expensive mechanical solution that consumed one of the DVRs video channels, crippling the 4-channel DVRs ability to offer the 4<sup>th</sup> camera. This meant the 4-channel DVR was only capable of recording 3 cameras when it had this mapping feature.

It was the American DVR manufacturer who deserves recognition for taking notes in business school and learning the genius of Bill Gates software provided solutions providing this On Screen Mapping free of charge to all customers of their GPS equipped DVR systems.

As their path to the same goal was via software not hardware like the most successful PC Software maker in history, not only can they deliver this to their GPS customers free of cost, they also do not require a large and expensive mechanical device that can consume a valuable video channel with mapping, so their 4 channel DVRs actually record 4 cameras full time even with mapping.

Now a parent claims that;

- \* The bus was too early and my child missed it.
- \* The bus was too late, and my child missed it.
- \* The bus did not stop at our stop,
- \* My child got on the bus at school, but never got off."

\* The bus was speeding past our house.



These parent claims can now be verified or proven false with On Screen Mapping and its GPS virtual mapping on screen display.

This system can also document driver actions & performance such as:

- Did the driver stop at the 4 way stop signs,
- Did the driver stay on route or wander all over the place?
- Did the driver make personal trips in the bus?
- Does the driver speed on certain roads?
- Does the driver stop at a railroad crossing?
- Was the bus used on weekends for unauthorized trips?
- Where the bus is parked during the day and nights.

These driver concerns can now be verified or proven false with On Screen Mapping.

This system option requires no service connection or monthly fees from GPS satellite or cellular service provider. All that is required is a GPS equipped Safety Vision or Eagleye DVR to be played back on a PC that has access to high speed internet. It then connects to the Internet and provides the On Screen Mapping synchronized to the video footage from the cameras as the Meta data is attached to the video record.

***Make sure Your On Screen Mapping is Google Driven, not hardware driven.***

### 3- Believing What Salesmen Tell You

It is expected that when we walk onto a used car or RV lot, we need to be alert, focused and aware that those we may be working with do not necessarily have our best interested in mind. We expect the unexpected and when the deal sounds too good to be true we look harder for the reason why. It is your personal responsibility to be a careful and educated consumer, or you will suffer the costs of trusting in those who may end up deceiving you with false claims, features of questionable value or simply not providing you what it is you tell them you need. When the cost is high for your mistakes, sometime we learn not to be so trusting and naïve and we write it off as a life lesson.

However when the school district who employs you entrusts your judgment and business savvy to choose what bus video system best suits their needs that is an entirely different matter. As costly as it may be to be taken by a smooth sales pitch, from a skilled manipulator, this time it is different as it is your employer requesting the assistance on their behalf and with school budgets strapped a bad decision could cost the district valuable budget dollars and reflect very poorly on the person who did the groundwork and recommended a product that failed to provide the best value for the district.

If it were not for the constant and highlighted occurrences of impropriety, deceit, and corruption exhibited on a daily basis by our elected politicians, salesmen would be at the bottom of the list of "those whom you can trust".

While the used car salesmen stereotype does hold some relevance, and we all know better that to trust a used car or RV salesmen, unfortunately those in that field do not always stay in that market and often cause havoc when they start promoting other products they know very little about. I have been witness to some of the most fabulous acts of ignorance, arrogance, incompetence and oversight, causing confusion, calamity and expense as in some cases guys like me were quickly dispatched to clean up their mess and manage damage control after the fact.

Some of the more common problems customers might experience from salesmen:

- Product ignorance- commonly used to conceal product weaknesses  
When you ask them if the fragile hard drive is protected from shock and bumps, and they reply "I'm sure it is".
- Plausible deniability- failsafe tactic to defer blame if customer finds out truth. Those who point to specs on the product PDF like they are absolute truths usually exhibit this, when some cited specs only apply on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of February and then only in fantasyland.
- Omission of truth- one does not need to advertise their products weaknesses, but when directly asked and known, it is deceitful to embrace ignorance and deny the school district that information.
- Deflection and misdirection- in politics this would be labeled "spin". A good example is when you ask how many hard drives have failed and in what time period so you can evaluate the future cost of the fragile hard drives, and the salesmen asked tells you "We have some hard drives that are still working after 7 years". Not only did they refuse to provide factual information when asked directly they deflected the question to an irrelevant fact.

In the past I have found that those selling and promoting the products know much less than those who must work with the systems and assist customers in the use of said systems. Those who install, setup, train and work with customers in support of sales often know so much more about the product and actual features and applications than those who sell them. This is why it is important to deal only with a professional bus video vender. I refer to those reputable companies with a serious track record of 10+ years service the school bus market.

Impressive esthetical features or specifications that salesmen insist are "must have items" are sometimes either of questionable value, misrepresentations or simply false.

So many games are being played with product specifications regarding; "G" ratings, temperature rating, resolution and shock or vibration buffering that it might be possible those selling those products may be unaware they are misrepresenting their own products to your district.

Search for one claim in their literature (PDF) or on their web site you believe to be false or misleading such as:

- Standard hard drive rated at over 3 "Gs",
- Hard drive operating temperature less than freezing without a heater,
- Their cameras are waterproof,
- Their cameras are vandal proof,
- Vandal proof lock box

The above claims are my first clue, that I may not be getting accurate or factual information on the product. When I believe I am being deceived about those aspects of the products, I can only imagine other areas that I may not be getting full disclosure or at least being provided accurate information in good faith. Should you suspect or realize that you are not being provided accurate and factual information in good faith, you might be better served moving on to the next product vender in the hope of an honest description of the product capabilities.

**Please Note:**

Do not expect an impartial and non-biased opinion in any of the above, as I sincerely believe school districts; deserve the best systems available for their tax dollars and those who push them to purchase short lived products should at least be honest enough to let them know before those school districts are burdened with considerable future expenses when those fragile hard drives wear out or crash.



The opinions expressed in the above documentation is based on decades of hands-on personal experience of the author in the mobile digital industry, problems seen firsthand, worked on with customers or manufacturers to remedy, based on customer complaints made to FMI, and extraneous influences.

These opinions are provided for relevant contextual perspective purposes only as opinion based reasons why we advocate the use of solid state drives to save school districts budget dollars and why we encourage those considering purchase of these systems to exercise jurisprudent and be aware those offering these systems to your district may not have your districts best interest in mind.

I strongly encourage all who sell these products to learn something about the application, installation and use of them before making claims about their function.

Just because something is written on your product PDFs or posted on a company web site, it is not always accurate or true. School districts deserve to be treated in good faith and phony claims knowingly sold to school districts and other government municipalities may constitute fraud.

This document was developed and transmitted with recycled electricity and all colors used are animal safe using dehydrated H2O molecules in a contained ionized neutral vacuum in order to conserve precious water resources and prevent tertiary cross contamination of ecological aqua venues while maintaining complete accordance to the Kyoto Treaty. All efforts have been made to gleefully embrace all forms of terra forma and respect each species and phylum of vegetation in order to sustain the oneness with nature that is now expected of all business entities. No animals were harmed in the creation or transmission of this document. Those of you with an overwhelming fear of the unknown will be gratified to learn that there is no hidden message revealed by reading this warning backwards. Should I not hear mention of the above "Please Note" lunacy, it will simply confirm my belief that no one reads the "Please Note" sections.

	Spec. American Made DVRs	
	Bid American Made DVRs	

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