

VIAAS

User Guide

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Overview

VIAAS is a cloud-connected, cloud-managed surveillance solution providing professional-grade features through a modern web browser or mobile device. VIAAS maintains your privacy. Everything recorded on the camera is fully encrypted and remains encrypted at all times – on the microSD card, on the Internet, and in cloud storage.

VIAAS cameras capture video when something happens, but do not record hours of nothing. For each video segment, object-based motion tracking captures a key image. You can scan thumbnail images of events to locate an event of interest, then review the video with a single click.

These thumbnail images are effective even over low bandwidth connections. Cameras only send the small images in real time, but store encrypted video locally on the microSD card. When more bandwidth is available, or when you want to watch a video, the video is uploaded to the cloud. You can schedule specific times to upload the video, so it never critically impacts your network bandwidth.

Getting Started

Registering for the First Time, and Adding Cameras

You must have a camera available in order to register an account at viaas.com, which creates a username / password login for administration and viewing of the camera. After you have registered your first camera, you can add additional cameras into the same account. There are no limits on the number of cameras or users allowed in an account, and it is usually best to add every camera to a single account and use Locations and Permissions (see below) to manage access.

Details on installing a camera and a link to the latest Quick Start Guide are available at <https://viaas.com/resources.html#installation>.

The VIAAS service attempts to initially configure the added camera, so that settings like video profiles and event recording are compatible with the system. However, after the camera has been added, all camera configuration is managed by the user, and regularly checked for conformity by the VIAAS service.

Logging In

If somebody has created a user account on your behalf, you can log into the account at <https://viaas.com/view/>, or by clicking on the blue “Camera Login” button from the VIAAS homepage at <https://viaas.com/>. There is an option to reset your password if you happen to forget. In some cases, your administrator may require two-factor authentication, and you may need access to your mobile phone or email to receive a login token.

Mobile Apps / Mobile Access

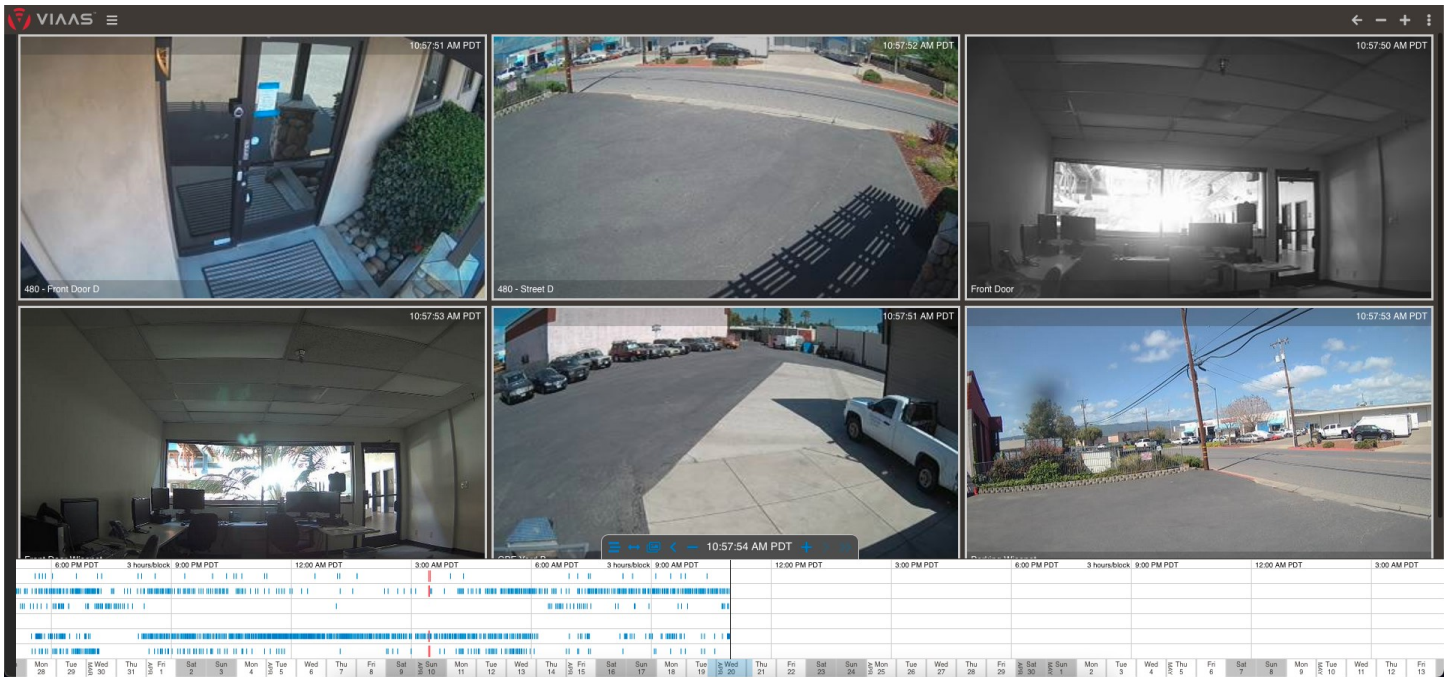
The guide here focuses on using the web browser to view and manage cameras, however the same user interface is packaged into mobile apps for Android and iOS, which can be located by searching for “VIAAS” in the corresponding app stores. You may also use a mobile browser to log in as described above. In both cases, the user interface is optimized for small screens, but most of the general navigation and features remain the same.

Differences in the Mobile Apps include:

- Hover functions are not available on touch devices. In most cases, icons and buttons such as “Go Live” are displayed at all times.
- Timeline is displayed when only a single camera is selected. Clicking on a Camera Viewer will change the selection instead of playing video, when more than one camera is selected.
- The Camera Tree occupies the entire screen, and is only shown when the horizontal bars button is pressed. It is not possible to select multiple items.

Cameras Panel

After logging in, the web interface on a typical computer will look something like the image below.



The screen can be broken up into various sections:

- Camera Viewers, which take up the main part of the screen
- Timeline, on the bottom of the screen
- Camera Tree, on the left (usually hidden)
- Panel Controls, on the top right

Camera Viewers

The main part of the screen consists of boxes which each represent a camera, containing a thumbnail image, camera name and timestamp of the image. Hovering the mouse over the box produces additional controls to start a live stream, configure the camera or request support. If there are issues with the camera connection status or health, icons are displayed on the top left of the Camera Viewer, and the border may be highlighted in red or orange.

Live Streaming

Live video streams can be started by clicking on the “Go Live” button which appears on the bottom right of the Camera Viewer when hovering. Live Streaming is also initiated by clicking on the Camera Viewer when in “Now Mode”.

Live Streaming is not available if the camera is offline, or if an Administrator has disabled Live Streaming in the camera’s configuration.

Camera Status, Configuration and Support

Camera Status issues are displayed as icons in the top right of the Camera Viewer. Hovering over the icon will show a short description of the problem. The plug and gear icons in the top right of the Camera Viewer are displayed when hovering, and will launch configuration dialogs. The “Request Camera Support” icon begins the process of requesting support.

These icons may not be visible if an Administrator has not given you sufficient permissions for that camera.

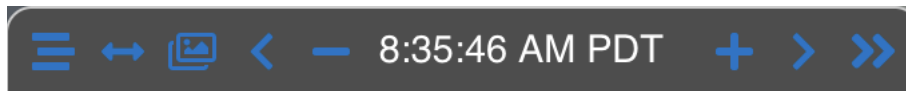
Timeline

The lower part of the screen consists of a timeline navigation feature, with each row of the timeline corresponding to the selected cameras, and the horizontal axis representing time. Blue bars on each row represent recorded video, and clicking on a bar will play the video for that time period. When the page is opened for the first time, the timeline begins in “Now Mode”, but when the timeline playhead is shifted, by dragging the timeline, using the navigation buttons, or clicking on a calendar date, the view changes to “Timeline Mode”. The differences between those modes is shown below.

	Now Mode	Timeline Mode
Playhead Time (at top of timeline)	Current time shown, auto advances	Historical time shown
Camera Image Shown	Thumbnail with blue border, when motion detected, Preview when no motion detected Image replaced periodically	Thumbnail with a timestamp closest to the playhead time Image replaced when playhead time is closer to a different thumbnail
Click on Camera Image	Launches Live Streaming	Launches recorded video based on the playhead time if the video has finished recording, else launches Live Streaming
Click on Blue Bars	Launches recorded video for that time, if video has finished recording	Launches recorded video for that time, if video has finished recording
Camera Health	Camera Viewer shows current issues, such as offline status, using colors and icons Timeline shows red bars indicating offline periods	Camera Viewer does not show current or historical issues Timeline shows red bars indicating offline periods

Timeline Navigation

The following image shows the Timeline Navigation controls. Hovering over the icons shows help tooltips.



These control the following, in order from left to right:

1. Hide Timelines. This can be used to temporarily hide the timeline bars when they take up too much space.
2. Toggle Time Span. This is used to select and play back more than one recorded video at a time.
3. Show Images. This shows adjacent thumbnail images for a single camera, and allows you to navigate based only on that camera, regardless of how many cameras are currently selected. This can be useful when you have many selected cameras and want to browse based on a bottleneck scene like a doorway or driveway.
4. Move Playhead to Previous Image. This shifts the timeline to the time of the previous image. Holding the button for a moment continues to advance, clicking it again will cancel advancement.
5. Zoom Out. This increases the time represented in each block, which might be helpful to speed up navigation.
6. Playhead Time. Hovering will show the full time and date.
7. Zoom In. This decreases the time represented in each block, which might be helpful to locate a specific recorded event.

8. Move Playhead to Following Image. The opposite of Move Playhead to Previous Image.
9. Move Playhead to Now. This resets the playhead to the current time and restores Now Mode.

Note that the Timeline will not appear if your Administrator has not given you sufficient permissions for all selected cameras, or when there are more than 16 cameras selected. A helpful tool for the latter is to click on the blue horizontal bar icon which shows when hovering in the Camera Viewer, which will change selection to only that camera and thus display the Timeline.

Locating Incidents

When there is an incident that should be reviewed, such as a robbery, accident or altercation, you should use the Timeline Navigation tools to find a recording of the incident and relevant nearby events. Some tips to finding this include:

- Use the Camera Tree selection to focus only on cameras that help to locate the incident or people involved. Viewing only two or three cameras allows for much quicker navigation than viewing dozens of cameras, especially using some of the “Previous” and “Next” Timeline Navigation buttons. You can always expand the Camera Tree selection after locating the incident.
- If you know the location of the incident, but not necessarily the time (e.g. an overnight break-in), you may select a single camera which likely shows somebody entering the scene, and use the “Hold to keep moving” feature of the Timeline Navigation to quickly scan through all Thumbnails. You may also find it easier to locate the incident with the “Show Images” feature.
- If you know the rough time of the incident, you may find it helpful to use the Zoom In and Zoom Out buttons in Timeline Navigation, plus the Calendar display at the bottom of the Timeline.
- Use the “Time Span” feature to select a group of videos around the incident. You can then save the event as described in “Saved Events”.

Camera Tree

The Camera Tree is primarily used to change the camera selection in the Cameras Panel. The Camera Tree is positioned on the left side of the web interface, but by default is hidden, and appears only when you hover over the left edge of the screen. If you prefer to display the tree without hovering, click on the three horizontal bars on the top left of the screen (beside the VIAAS logo).

You can expand or collapse branches in the tree to display camera and organizational names, and change the camera selection by clicking on entries at all levels within the tree. Multiple selection is permitted by clicking on another item within the same category (e.g. if you have a single Location selected, you can select another Location to expand the camera selection). The filter field at the top of the Camera Tree can help to find cameras, Locations and Groups. Folder Actions may be available at the bottom of the Camera Tree, depending on context and the user's permissions.

Panel Controls

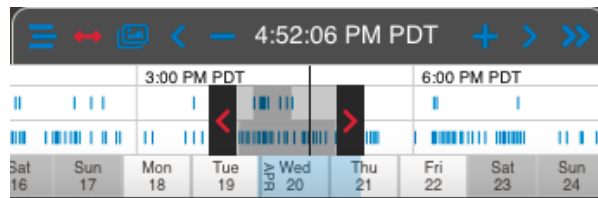
Panel Controls at the top right of the screen, from left to right, allow the user to:

- Navigate backwards to the previous view
- Change the number of cameras shown on each row of the Cameras Panel
 - When other panels are displayed, a camera icon appears which will return you to the Cameras Panel
- Return from Timeline Mode to Now Mode (if in Timeline Mode)
- Change the view to a different panel, display a system dialog, or log out, by clicking on the vertical dots and selecting a menu item. Some views may not be available, depending on your permissions and camera service. The list includes:
 - Settings Summary, to configure Cameras and Locations
 - Saved Events, to save important events
 - Service Summary, to review Service Plans and expirations for Cameras
 - User Administration, to manage Users and Permissions
 - Preferences, to launch a dialog with personal settings
 - About this Service, to launch a dialog with information about the User Interface and Support options
 - Logout, to log out of the account

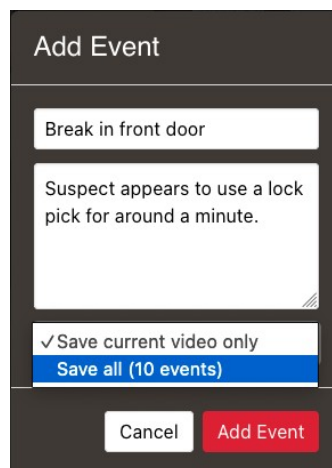
Saved Events

You can use Saved Events if you discover an incident and need to refer back to it. Saving an event stores it in the Saved Events list, adds a title and description, allows for playback and download at a later time, and stores the event indefinitely (regardless of the video retention period specified in the camera's Service Plan). Here is an example of how you might use the feature:

1. You arrive at the office and discover a break-in has occurred overnight.
2. Using the suggestions in "Locating Incidents", you find a series of videos showing the break-in. The videos cover a 12 minute period recorded by two cameras.
3. You create a Saved Event for each of the two cameras using the following technique:
 1. Use the "Toggle time span" button to create a Time Span for the relevant time period. You may need to use the Timeline Zoom feature to fine tune the start and end times.



2. Click on the grey bars inside the Time Span to play back video for the camera. The video selected for playback has a red border around the span. A Video Player dialog will launch, playing back the videos from the beginning.
3. Click on the Menu (3 horizontal bars) on the bottom right of the Video Player, then on "+ Add event" to launch the Add Event dialog. Fill in the Title and Description, and select if you want to save all events or only the one that is currently being played. Click the "Add Event" button to save the event and close the dialog.



4. You notify the police and insurance company, indicating that you have evidence showing the break-in.
5. Some time passes and the insurance company requests a copy of the video. You log into your VIAAS account, and go to the "Saved Events" panel by clicking on the 3 vertical dots on the top right of the screen. You click on the image on the left of the "Break in" Saved Events, then the Menu button in the Video Player, and click the "Download" link to save the "Entire Playlist" in zip file format for one of the cameras. You email that zip file to the insurance company.
6. Some weeks pass and you receive the insurance payout. The incident is closed, and you delete the Saved Event by clicking on the Trash Can icon in the Saved Events panel.

Saved Events may not be available depending upon your camera's Service Plan and your user permissions. If the Saved Event is very long, it may not be possible to download the Entire Playlist (only individual video events).

Administrative Panels

There are a variety of views available to users with sufficient privileges, to manage Cameras, Locations, Users and Permissions.

Settings Summary

The Settings Summary panel shows all cameras the user is assigned with Admin access, grouped by Location, with the option to change basic information on the camera such as name, timezone and motion alert settings. If the user also has Admin access to the Location, they also have the ability to modify the Location settings, which includes bandwidth and monitoring settings. The information is displayed in a table with the option to sort and filter. The Settings Summary panel is not visible if the user has no cameras with Administrative access.

Service Summary

The Service Summary panel is available to users with Superuser permission. It displays the Service Plan name and expiration for every camera in the account, grouped by Location. The Location entry shows the earliest expiration for cameras within the Location, and for shows the available video for cameras with SD storage plans.

User Administration

The User Administration panel is available to users with Superuser permission. It displays all Users in the account with the option to add, edit and delete Users.

Permissions

There are 3 types of permissions, which can be applied to individual cameras or to entire Locations:

- “Admin”: This includes “User” permissions plus the ability to change camera or Location settings.
- “User”: This allows the user to browse and view historical video and thumbnails, and launch Live Streaming.
- “Live”: This allows the user only to launch Live Streaming, but not browse or view historical video.

When a permission is applied to a Location, all cameras in that Location receive that permission, including cameras that are added later. If a Location permission is set to Admin, this also allows the user to configure most of the Location settings.

In addition, there is the built-in “Superuser” Role, which provides access to all features for all cameras in the account.

Roles

Rather than maintain a Custom permission set for every User, it may be beneficial to create Roles that represent permissions which can be shared by multiple Users. For example, a Role named “Chicago Security” might assign User permissions to the Chicago Location, but not to other Locations in the account. Roles are created by clicking on the “Roles” button from the User Administration panel, and can be selected when editing Users.

Multi Factor Authentication

You can require a second authentication token, delivered by email or SMS, for each User. If Email is selected, the User’s email address is used to deliver the token. If SMS is selected, a Mobile Phone Number field is displayed to enter a number capable of accepting SMS messages (currently supported only in North America). The token will be delivered as part of the login process and periodically required to access the account.

Other Features and Best Practices

Understanding Locations and Groups

You must assign a Location to each camera you add to the VIAAS system. Using the Location, administrators can control permissions, notifications, and Bandwidth Shaping across multiple cameras at once.

Locations serve four primary functions:

- Add identifying information to the camera based on physical locations. For example, the Location name might be “New York”, which contains cameras named “First Floor Lobby” and “Second Floor Break Room”. Naming the Location appropriately avoids redundancy in the name.
- Simplify permissions management by grouping cameras. It is quite common for a user to have access to all cameras in a single Location, but not require access to any other cameras in the account. You can assign permissions for that Location and know that regardless of how many cameras are added or removed, the user should retain appropriate access.
- Coordinate Bandwidth Shaping. Rather than allocate 5Mbps to one camera and 3Mbps to another, you can assign 8Mbps to the Location, and the Bandwidth Shaping algorithms determine which order to upload videos between the two cameras.
- Monitoring. Emails are sent out if there are problems with the cameras within the location, and each Location requires at least one email address to send these notifications.

You should configure and maintain your Locations based on these factors.

Groups, on the other hand, are free-form, and only serve to assist with navigation and camera selection. This might be helpful if you want to categorize cameras in some way other than simply location, for example, “PTZ Cameras”, “Entrances” or “Favorites”. Superusers can manage the “Shared Groups” folder, which is available to every user in the account, while individual user accounts manage their own “My Groups” folder. Groups are managed using the gear icon at the bottom of the Camera Tree.

Monitoring and Emails

Cameras running on the VIAAS service are constantly monitored for health and proper functionality. The main mechanism that problems are communicated is via automated emails whenever a camera problem is detected. The email addresses are configured in the Location configuration. It is strongly recommended that multiple recipients receive these emails (either by entering multiple email addresses in the Location configuration, or by using an email group address). There are two types of emails:

- Notification emails, which are sent when a problem is detected or resolved, for example, if the camera goes offline or comes back online. These are typically for the most severe camera issues.
- Health Reports, which are delivered regularly to report on ongoing issues within that Location. This can include both severe issues like an offline camera (acting as a kind of fail-safe, in case the first email was missed), plus less urgent problems such as service that will soon expire. These can be configured to be sent monthly, weekly, daily, or disabled entirely. For convenience, Health Reports combine multiple Locations as appropriate for the recipient.

In addition to emails, health issues with the cameras are identified in the User Interface when logging in, for users with Admin access to cameras. They are displayed via icons and borders on the Cameras Panel, but are most easily recognized in the Settings Summary panel, where the most severe problems are highlighted for each Location. Hovering over the health icon (or clicking on it in the mobile app) will reveal text about the issue.

It is strongly recommended that any problem is addressed promptly, to prevent missed video events.

Support

We're here to help you! And we've been doing this for a long time. Often we can quickly and accurately identify problems and provide guidance. Please reach out to us at support@viaas.com with any questions, or better yet, use the “Request Support” feature on the User Interface: click on the red laptop/health icon next to a camera or Location so that it is added to the queue, and then click on the green laptop/health icon on the top right of the screen to fill out information about the issue. Our team is known for quick responses and excellent customer service.

Thank you for choosing VIAAS!