

Most banking establishments utilize surveillance cameras to deter potential robberies, catch bank robbers, and avert internal loss. Multiple cameras usually are deployed near the ceiling to provide a broad panoramic view of all public spaces; some banks also put cameras behind the tellers to better acquire an image of the face of the bank robber. All of these camera locations are appropriate for various reasons. If Red Hat analytic techniques were employed during the development of surveillance strategies, however, many banks would discover that another, more optimal, camera placement for capturing the face of a bank robber merits serious consideration.

By putting themselves “in the shoes” of the robber, banks can gain a better understanding of what behaviors they are most likely to encounter. For instance, most bank robbers know that banks have surveillance cameras. For this reason they often wear baseball caps with visors, look down at their feet, and partially cover their faces when entering the bank to hide or obscure their image. Often when they confront the teller, they continue to look down to avoid showing their face. After they have collected their money, they turn around and look up to assess whether someone might impede their exit route.

By using Red Hat Analysis, security consultants would be more likely to conclude that the most effective location for a bank surveillance camera (for robbery suspect identification) is adjacent to the exit door at shoulder level. When the camera is placed at that location, it will catch the back of a robber entering the bank, but increase the chances of capturing an unobstructed image of the robber’s face when the robber departs. Once bank robbers have their money, they only care about how quickly they can exit the bank, and they stop looking down.

*Source:* Eric Hess, Senior Biometric Product Manager, MorphoTrak, Inc. From an unpublished paper, “Facial Recognition for Criminal Investigations,” delivered at the International Association of Law Enforcements Intelligence Analysts, Las Vegas, 2009. Reproduced with permission.