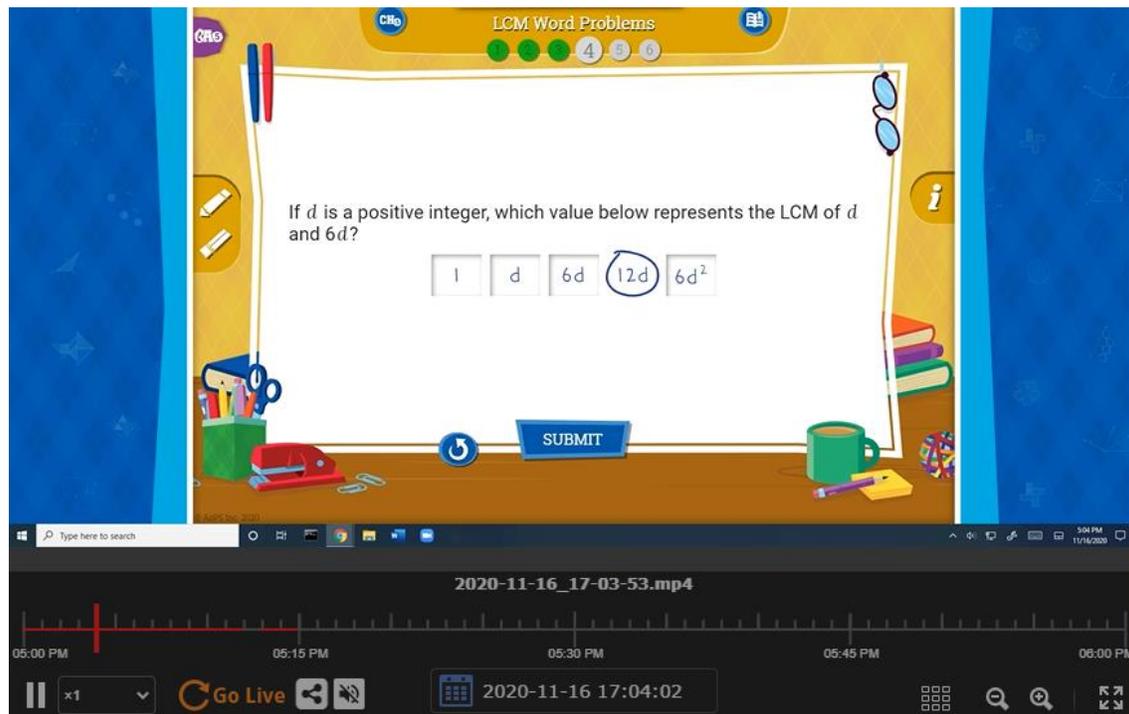# Screen Recording / Computer Monitoring

## With CameraFTP VSS Software



- Monitor Computer Usage.
- Record TV Shows, Games.
- Create Video Instructions.

Contents

# 1. About CameraFTP & VSS Software

CameraFTP is a leading Cloud Recording / Home & Business Monitoring service provider. For detailed info about CameraFTP services, please visit www.cameraftp.com and click Features.

CameraFTP Virtual Security System (VSS) software is a Windows based program that can turn a PC into a powerful cloud-based CCTV and DVR system. The full VSS manual is available at:

https://www.cameraftp.com/file/df.aspx/publish/drivehq/cameraftpSoftware/CameraFTP_VSS_Solution_Manual.pdf

**VSS can also be used for screen recording and computer monitoring. This document only covers VSS's screen recording features and usages.**

## 1.1 Screen Recording Usage Scenarios

VSS can record your PC screens along with speakers and microphones. It can be used to:

### 1.1.1 Monitor Computer Usage by Kids/Employees

VSS can be used for monitoring computer usage continuously. Compared with other screen-recording or computer monitoring programs, VSS has a few major advantages:

- It uses little storage, bandwidth and CPU. Other screen-recording programs often slow down your computer and affect online video calls/meetings.
- It records footage to the cloud. The PC user cannot delete it.
- You can monitor the computer usage in real-time or play back the recorded footage remotely. With other screen-recording programs, you can only play back the footage from the same computer (when the user is not using the computer).
- The software GUI can be locked and hidden. The PC user cannot access VSS or stop recording.

### 1.1.2 Record Online Video Meetings/Classes

Does your kid do well in online classes? You can find it out in real time. Moreover, you can play back the recorded video so that your kid can go over what he learned in the classes. Can you remember everything presented in an online meeting? If not, you can easily record it with VSS and play it back later.

### 1.1.3 Create Video Instructions for Software and Websites.

With VSS, you can create video instructions easily. Just record the screen and audio while you demo how to use a software application or website.

### 1.1.4 Record Computer Games or TV Shows

A screen-recording camera can be used to record TV shows played on your PC. Essentially, you can use your PC as a DVR box for your TV. You can also record computer games or live stream it with the camera publishing feature.

### 1.1.5 Record Server Load and Usage History

If you have a web or application server that you need to monitor its load, or if you need to trouble shoot certain problems (e.g. memory leaks or crashes), you don't have to sit there and watch Task Manager or Performance Monitor forever. VSS can record it 24x7. You can review the footage efficiently and identify the exact time the server experienced high CPU, RAM, disk or network usage.

### 1.1.6 Back up Proprietary IP Cameras such as Nest Cam

If a proprietary IP camera has a viewer app, or if it can be viewed with a web browser, then you can use VSS's screen-recording camera to back it up to the cloud.

## 1.2 Advantages of VSS's Screen Recording Solution

- Very low storage, bandwidth and CPU usage.
- Can be viewed remotely in near real-time.
- Record continuously forever, no manual start/stop (hassle-free).
- Record audio from both speakers and microphones.
- Record multiple screens.
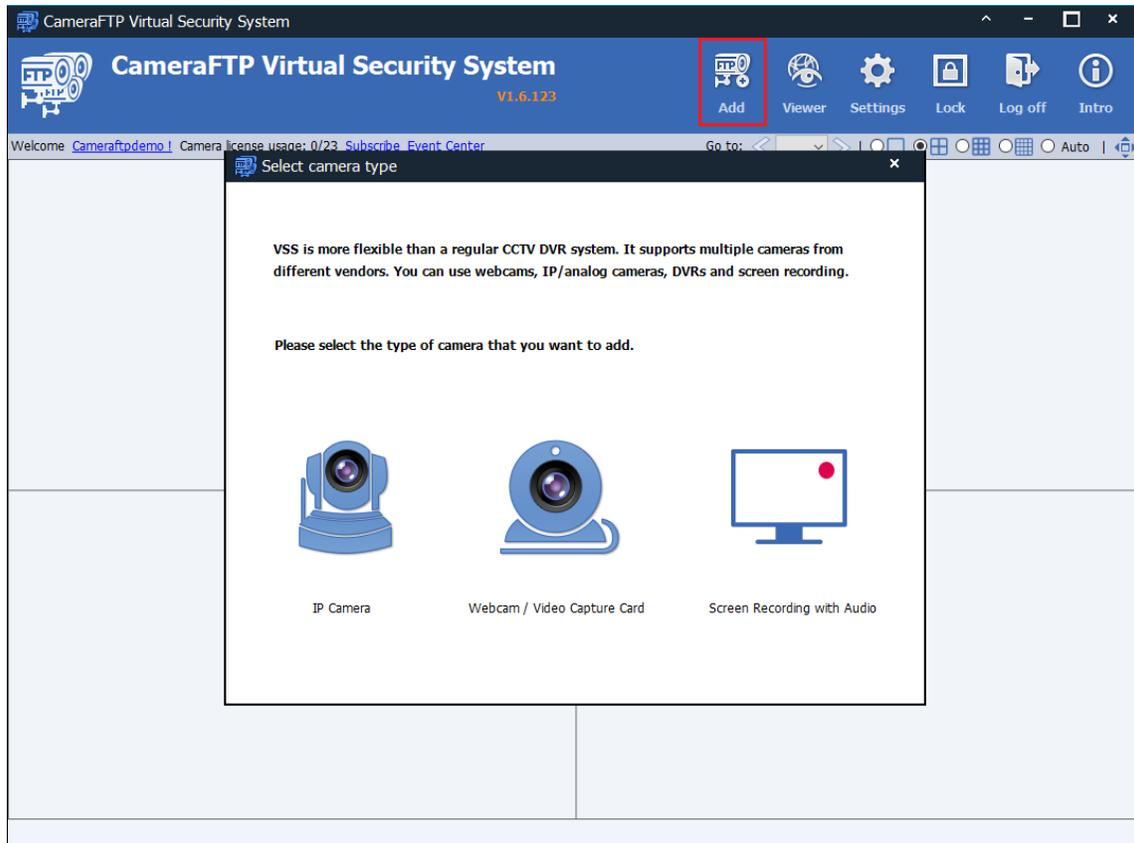- Very flexible recording parameters.

# 2. Setup and Use VSS for Screen Recording

## 2.1 Setup VSS

Installing VSS is very easy and straight-forward. If you have not already installed CameraFTP VSS software on your PC, you can visit www.cameraftp.com and click the Software tab to download CameraFTP VSS. You can then run the software installer and follow the wizard to finish installation.

You also need a CameraFTP account. You can sign up a free (trial) account on www.CameraFTP.com, or with VSS. To sign up with VSS, just launch the program, in the login dialog, click "No account? Sign up free".
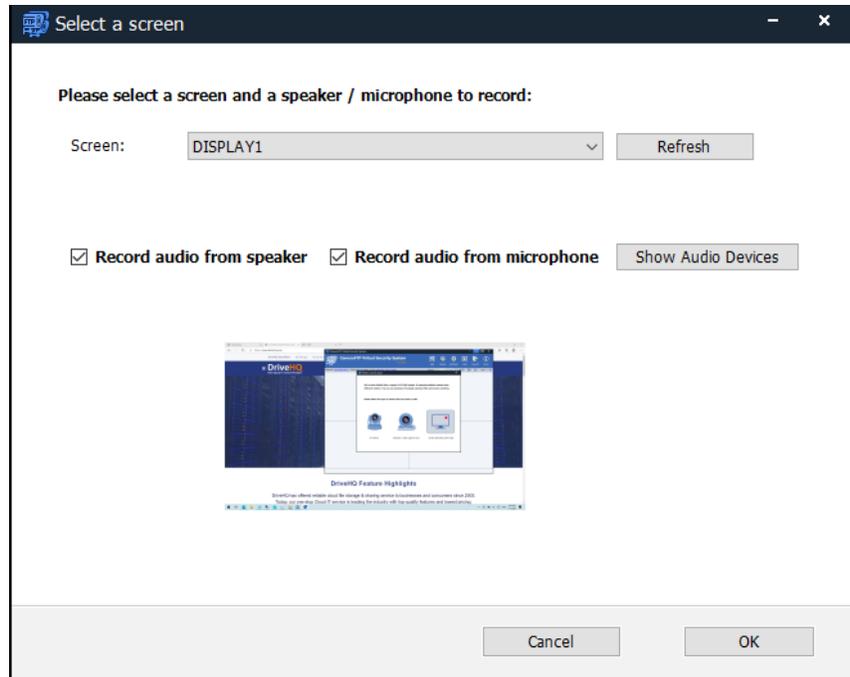
After signup, you can launch VSS and log on with your CameraFTP username and password. The next step is to add a camera. Click the Add button. It will display "Select Camera Type" dialog as shown below:

For screen recording, click "Screen Recording with Audio", it will add a virtual camera that records your computer screen with microphone and speaker audio.
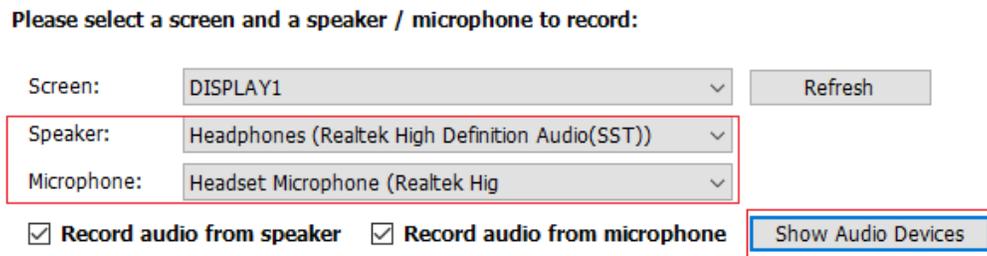
## 2.2 Add a Screen-Recording Camera

After clicking "Screen Recording with Audio" button in the "Select Camera Type" dialog, it will display "select a screen" dialog:

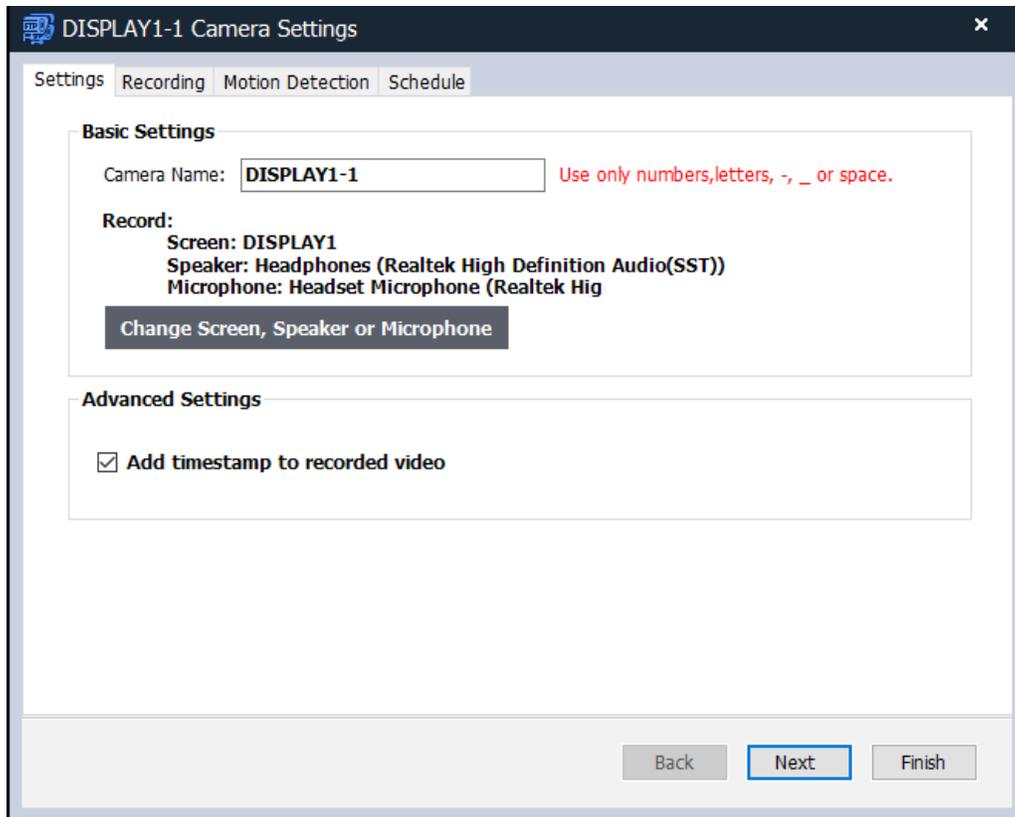If you have multiple screens (monitors), you can select a screen to record, and check/uncheck whether to record audio from speaker and microphone.

In some **rare** cases, you can set it to only record audio from a specific audio device(s). To do so, click "Show Audio Devices". It will display:



You can then select a specific speaker or microphone to record.

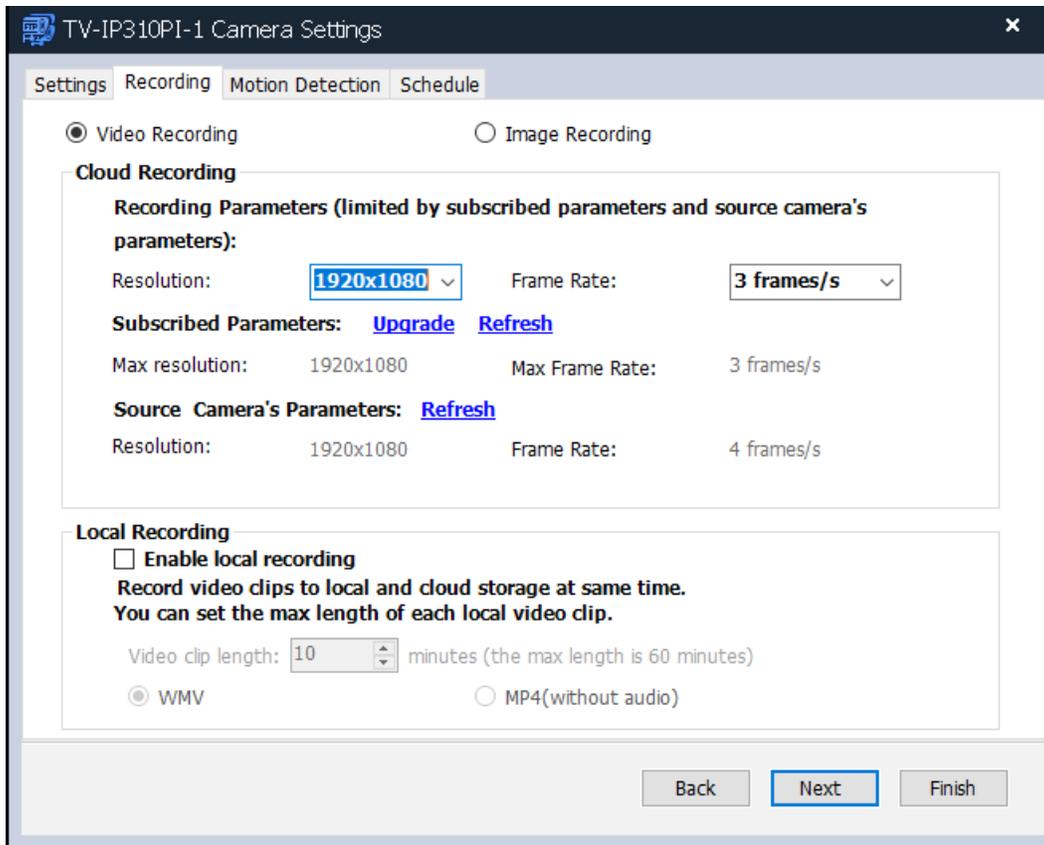Click OK, it will display the Camera Settings dialog:

Here you can change the camera name (the camera folder name on CameraFTP.com), and check whether to add timestamp to recorded video.

If you want to change the selected screen, speaker or microphone, you can click "Change Screen, Speaker or Microphone". It will display the "Select a screen" dialog so that you can change the selected screen and audio device(s).

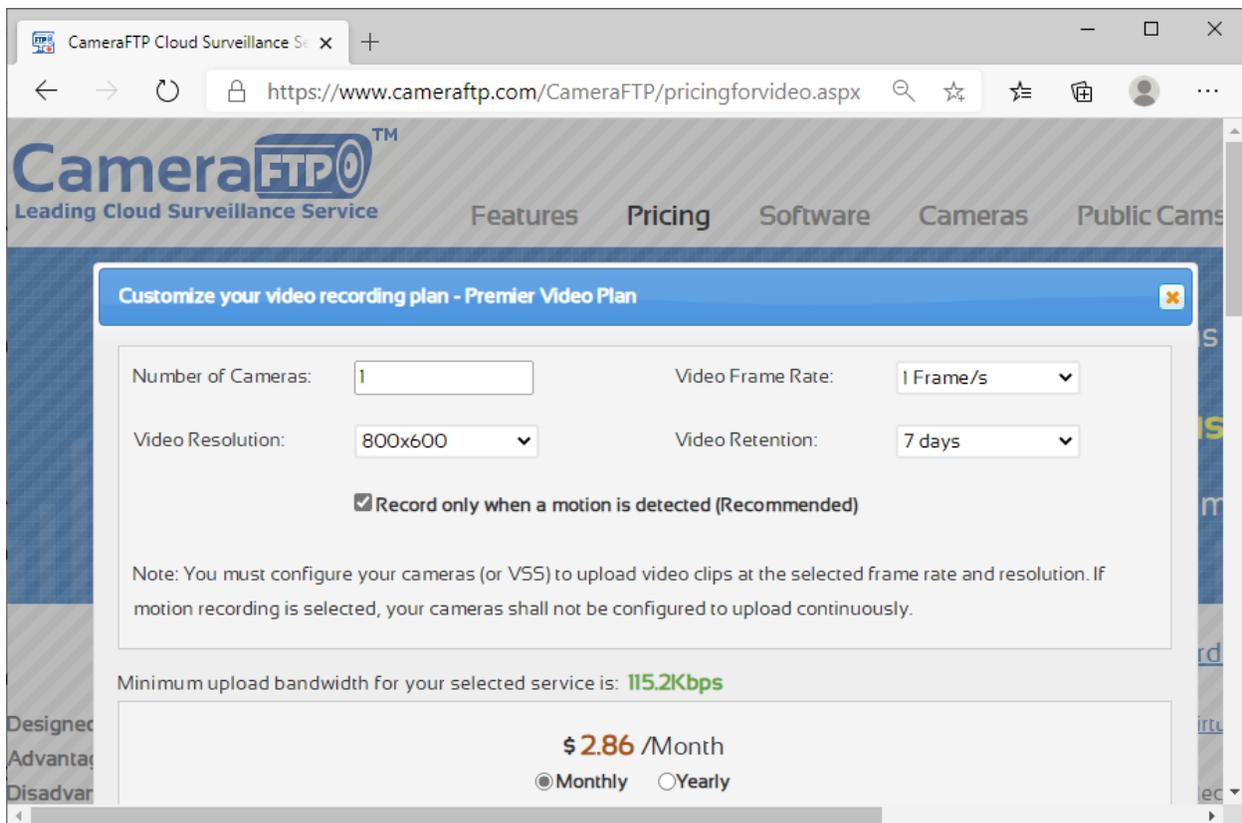Click Next, it will go to the Recording Settings dialog.

## 2.3 Settings, Schedules & Pricing

After you added a screen-recording camera, in the Camera Settings screen, click Next, it will display the Record Settings screen as shown below. (If you have already added a camera, you can edit the camera settings by moving your mouse on top of the camera live view, then click the edit icon).

In this dialog, you can configure whether to record video or images, and the video/image parameters. **The recording parameters must be within the subscribed plan parameters. Your service price is dependent on your recording parameters.**

You can find the service price by visiting www.cameraftp.com, click Pricing, then click Video Recording Plans (or Image Recording Plans). For screen recording service, you can click Customize to customize a plan based on your requirements and budget, e.g., below is the pricing info for: "Video recording at 800x600 resolution, 1 fps, motion recording, 7-day retention". If you pay annually, you can save 2 months/year.
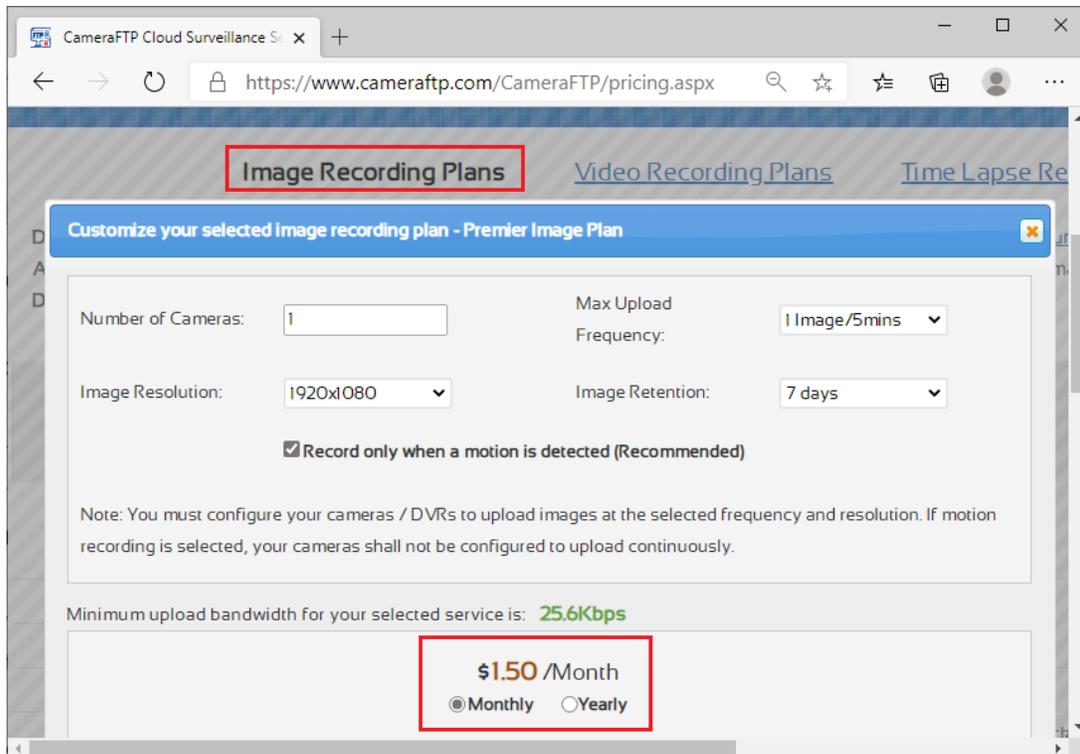
### 2.3.1 Settings and Pricing for Monitoring PC Usage by Kids/Employees

If you want to record the detailed activities on the PC, please select video recording, set the frame rate to 1 fps, resolution to 1920x1080 or the same as your screen resolution.
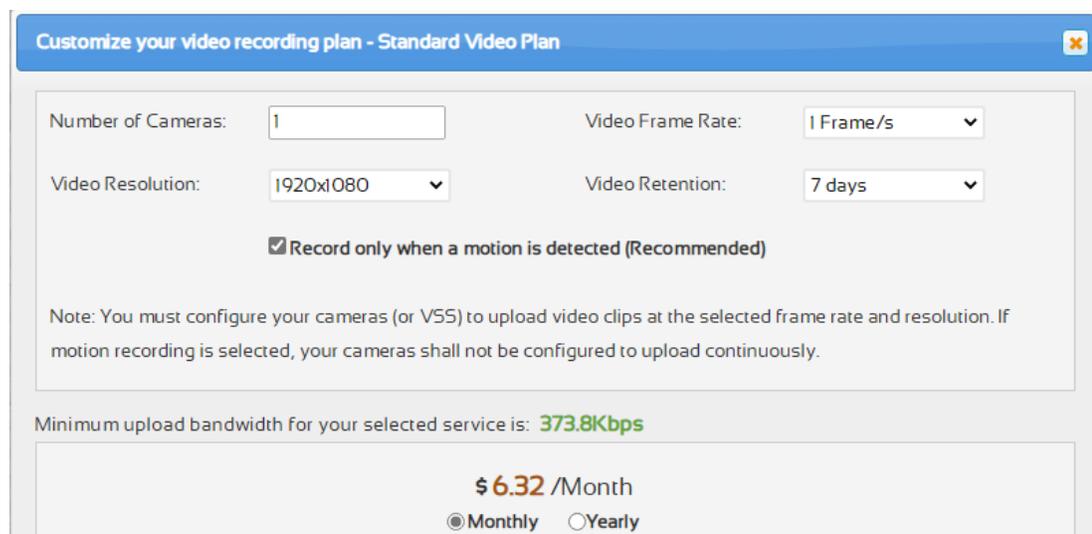
If you only want to keep an eye on the computer activities, or if you want to minimize the cost, you can lower the resolution to 640x480. The cost will be only $2.50/month or $25/year at 640x480, 1 fps, motion recording with 7-day retention.

You can lower the price further to only $1.50/month or $15/year if you only want to record a screenshot every few minutes. You will need to click "Image Recording Plans" in the pricing page. Note image recording does not include audio.

## 2.3.2 Settings and Pricing for Recording Online Classes/Meetings

We recommend video recording with audio from both speaker and microphone. Set the resolution to 1920x1080 or the same as your screen resolution, and set the frame rate to 1 fps. Note: You can set the frame rate higher (e.g. 5 fps). The video will be smoother. However, the cost will be higher, and it will use more storage, bandwidth and CPU.

### 2.3.3 Settings and Pricing for Recording TV Shows/Games, Creating Video Instructions
We recommend a local recording plan with the highest recording parameters.

**Note:** If you have a free trial account, the video resolution is limited to only 1280x720, and the frame rate is limited to 10 frame/s. If you have just ordered a new subscription or upgraded your subscription, you need to click the "Refresh" link next to the "Upgrade" link.

### 2.3.4 Local Recording Plan
VSS can record footage to the cloud storage and local drive at the same time.

For monitoring computer usage by kids/employees, cloud recording has the following advantages:
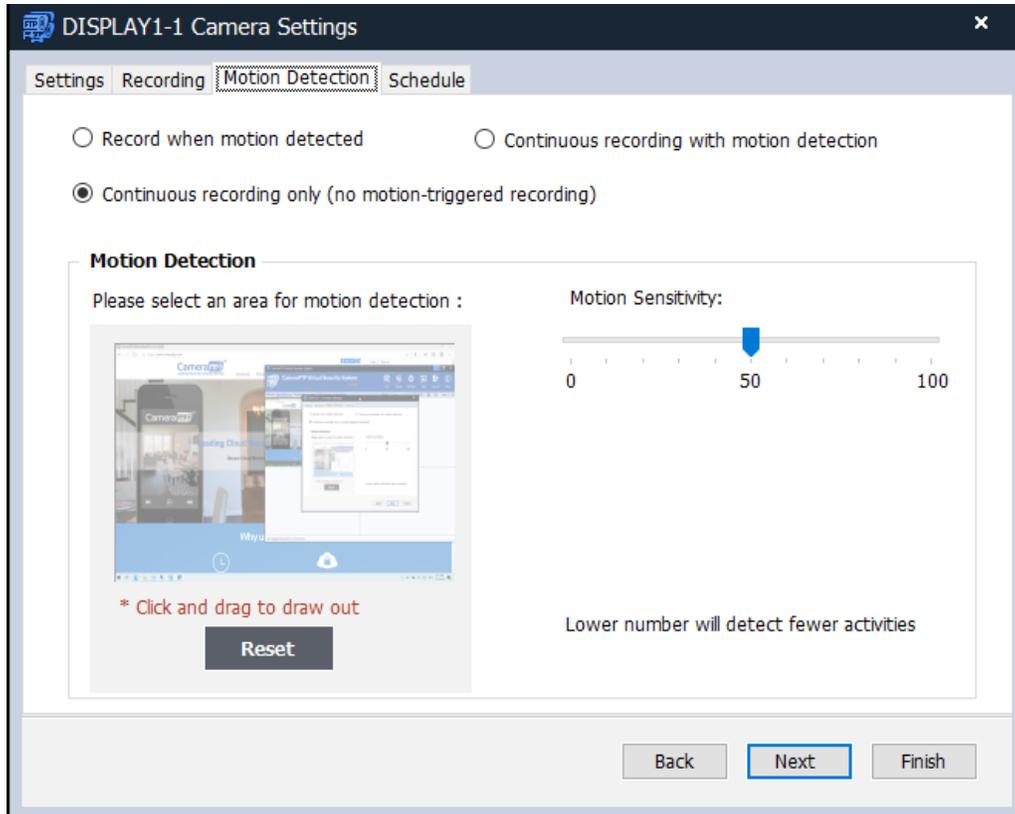
- You can use CameraFTP Viewer apps to view the footage from anywhere in near real-time.

With local recording, you can only view the footage on the same computer (when the current user is not using the PC).

For recording TV shows/games or creating video instructions, you don't need to view the footage remotely. Thus a local recording plan is better.

### 2.3.5 Motion Detection and Schedule Settings
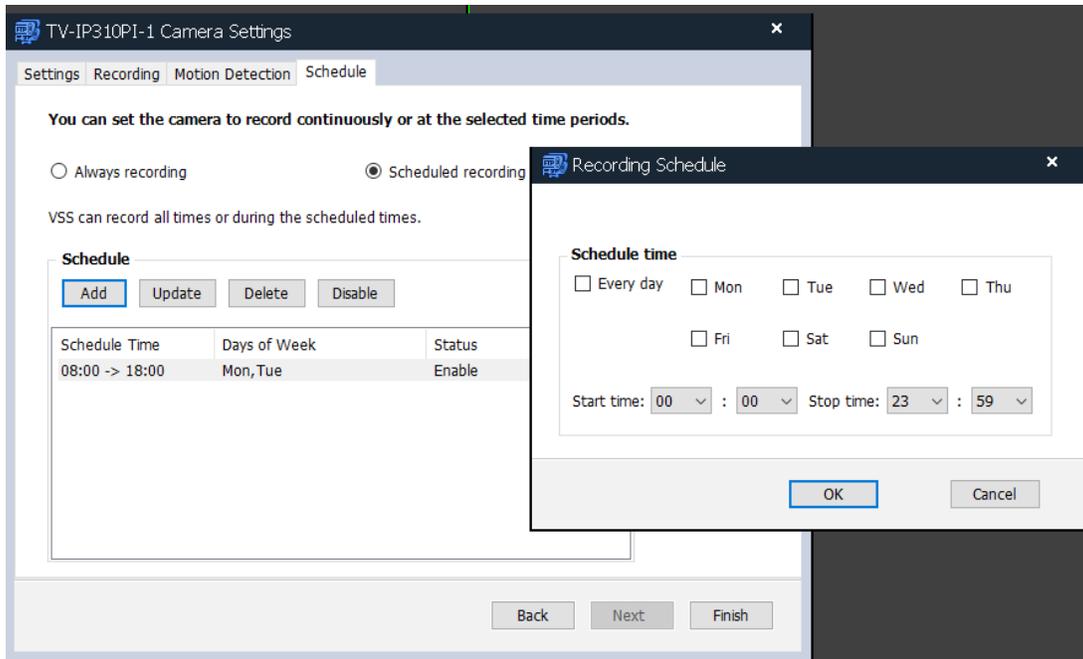Click Next, it will display the Motion Detection settings screen:

For screen-recording, you can order a motion recording plan, and set VSS to "Record when Motion or Audio Detected"; or "Continuous Recording only" (if VSS will not be uploading for over 8 hours/day)

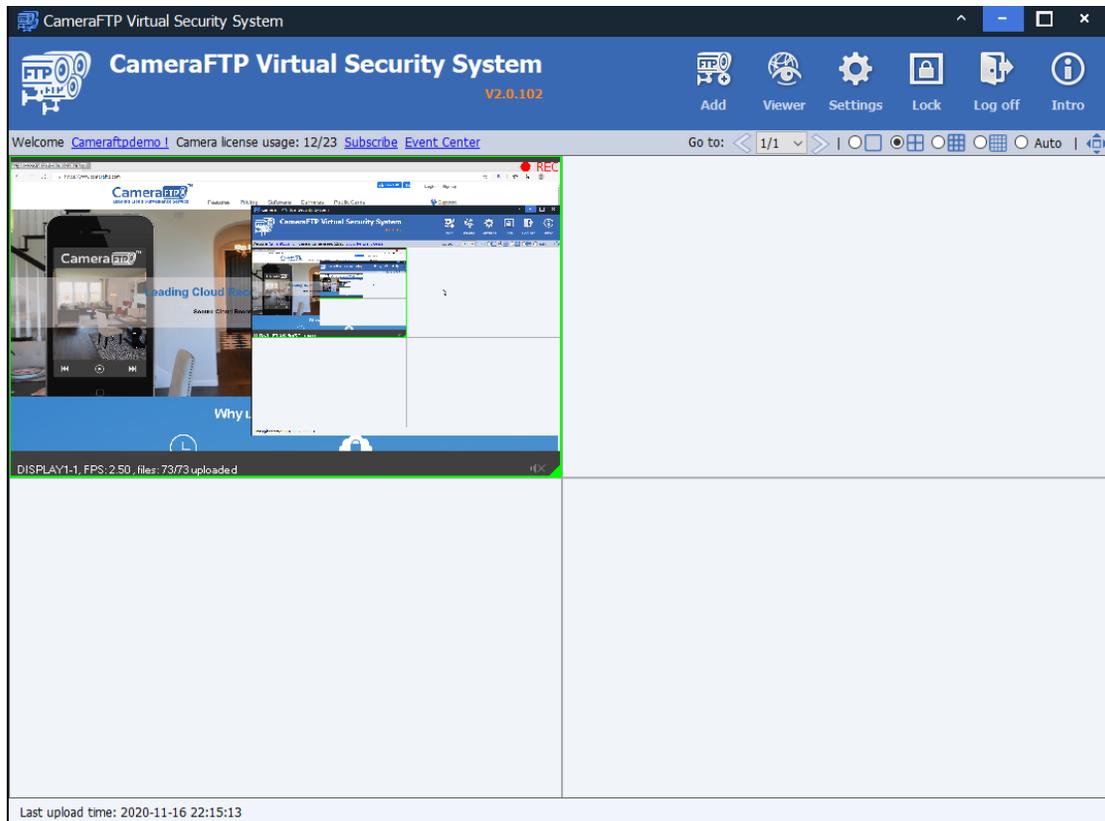Click Next, it will display the Schedule tab:

**Most users can simply click Finish so that the screen-recording camera can upload at any time.**

If you don't want it to record during certain time periods, you can configure Scheduled Recording. In this screen, you can click Add to add a new schedule:



As you can see VSS has very powerful scheduling feature. You can schedule it to record during normal business hours, night time, weekdays, weekends or any specific weekdays. You can even add multiple schedules.
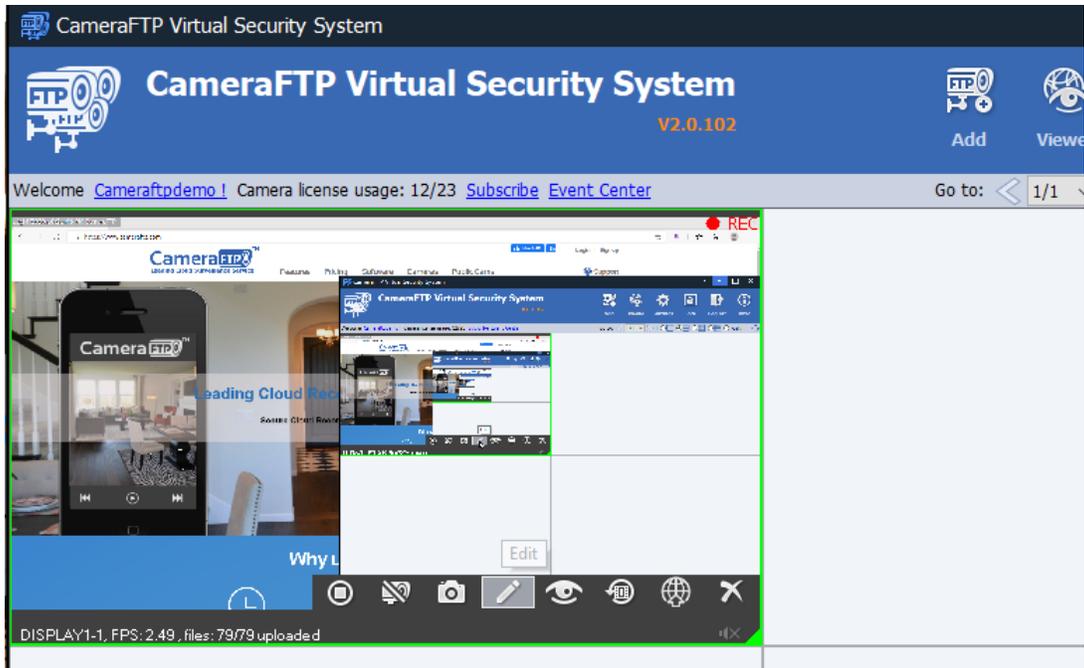
Click Finished, your camera will be added and displayed in VSS as follows.

**Note:** You can add multiple screen-recording cameras if the PC has multiple screens. In the above screenshot, VSS's GUI is displayed on the screen, so it is recorded by itself. You can minimize the GUI so that it does not record itself.
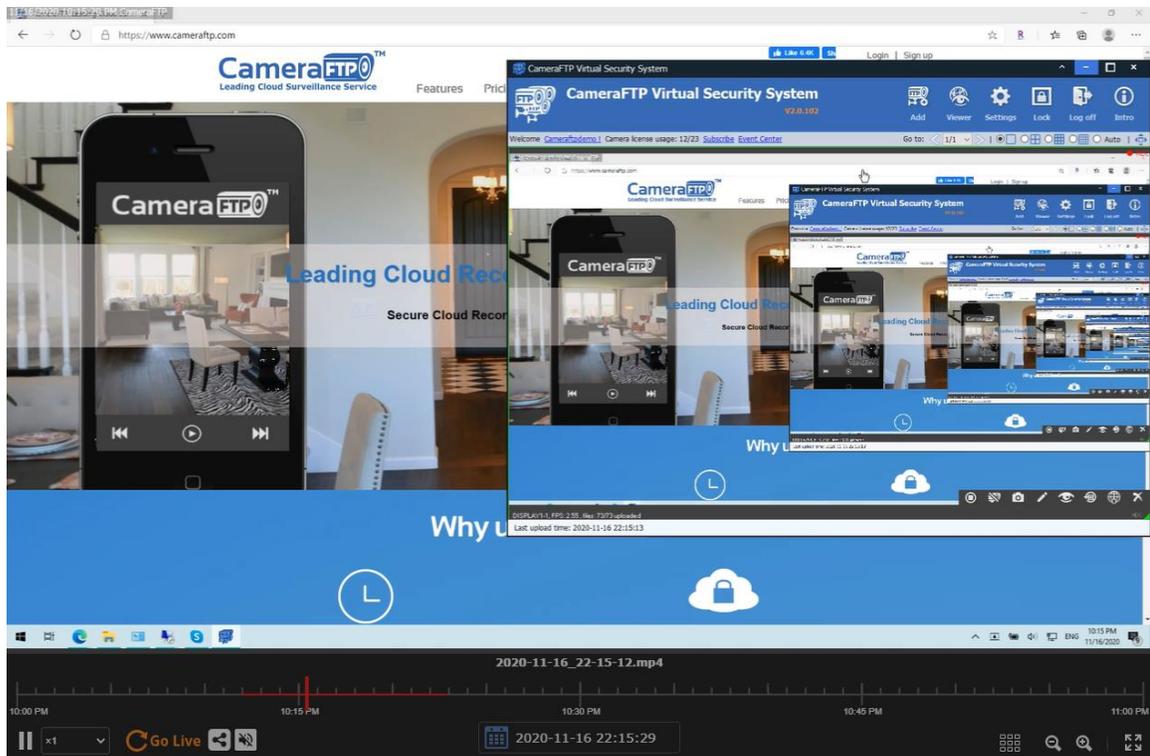
## 2.4 Manage Cameras and View Recorded Footage

If you want to change camera settings, just hover your mouse over the camera's live view. A toolbar will be displayed. You can stop, edit or delete a camera, disable recording, take a snapshot image, view locally recorded footage, or view the camera from the cloud (using a browser). Please see the screenshot below:
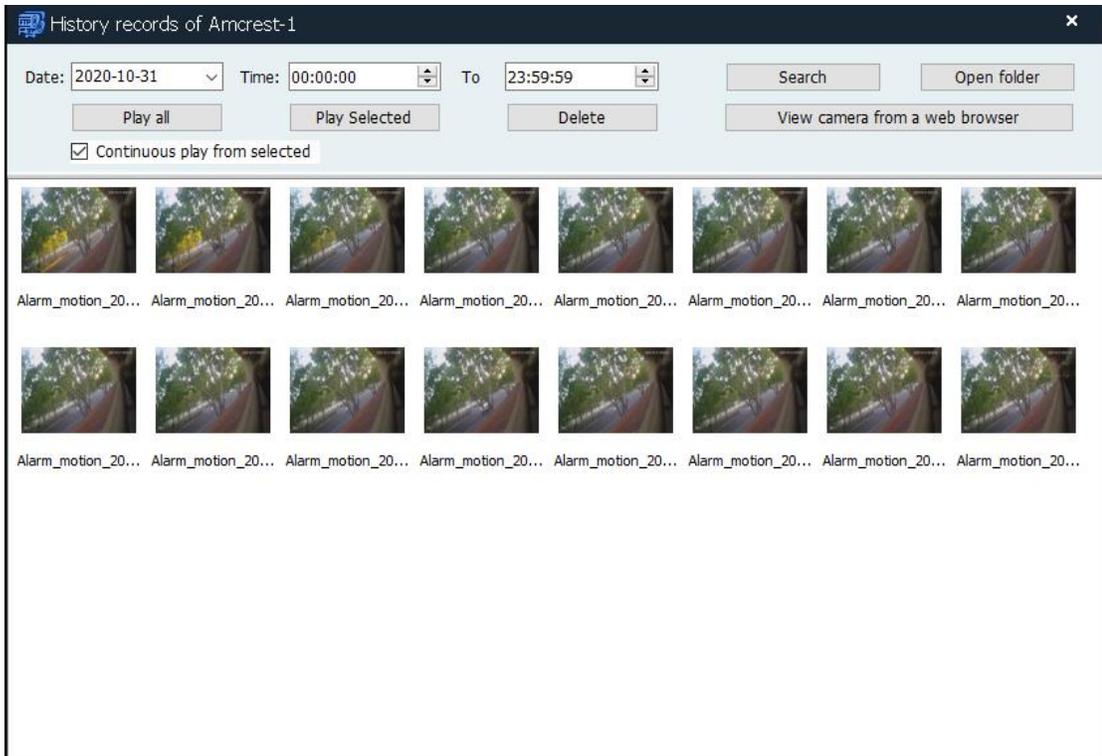
As shown in the above screenshot, there are 8 buttons in the toolbar, they are:

(1) **"Stop Camera"**: It will stop recording the screen, and the camera live view will be off. After you click it, the button will toggle to "**Start Camera**".

(2) "**Disable Recording**": It will stop recording the screen. The live view will still be displayed. After you click it, the button will toggle to "**Enable Recording**".

(3) "**Take Photo**": It will take a snapshot picture of the screen and save it to a local folder. It will then open File Explorer with the image file. By default, the image is saved to:

C:\CameraFTP\CameraFTP Cache\Cameraftpdemo\video\CAMERANAME\grabs

(4) "**Edit**": You can change camera info and recording parameters.

(5) "**View footage on cloud**": it will launch the web browser-based viewer. See the screenshot below:

You can view the camera in full screen mode; select a time, or click/drag on the timeline; zoom in/zoom out the camera; play it at 8x or 1/8 speed.
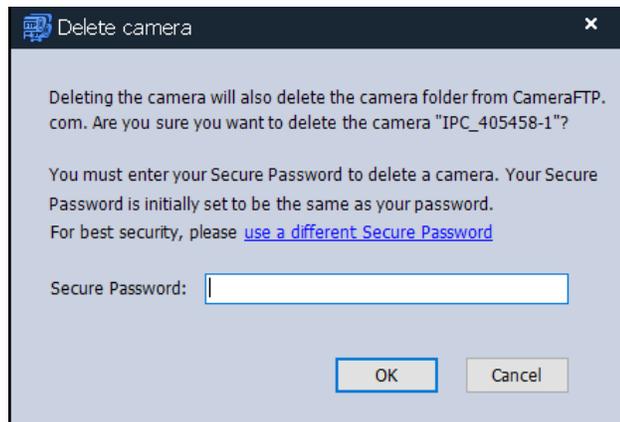
(6) "**View footage on local drive**": It will display the recorded footage in the local cache folder. You can select the video clips to view. See the screenshot below:

You can select multiple video clips and play them continuously. You can also delete the selected video clips files.

If you need to directly access the local video storage folder, click the "Open Folder" button, which will open a Windows Explorer window showing the recorded files. You can use Windows Explorer to copy, delete or move files to an external drive. A secure password is not needed to delete the recorded files in your local drive (because an intruder can destroy your local storage anyway).
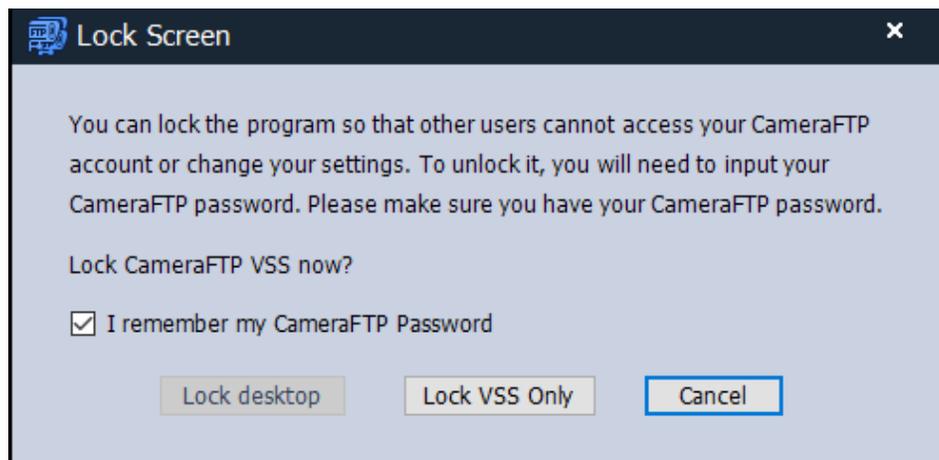
(7) "**Publish Camera**": You can publish your camera so that anybody can view it without a CameraFTP account. Please read VSS full manual for more info.

(8) "**Delete**": You can delete a camera. If you click it, it will ask you to input your secure (camera admin) password.

When you delete a camera from VSS, it will also delete the camera folder on www.CameraFTP.com and all files in it. For security, you must enter your Camera Admin/Secure password. By default, it is the same as your (initial) account password. But you can change your account password and secure password later. We recommend using different account password and secure password.

## 2.5 Lock VSS and Hide the GUI

When VSS is used for monitoring computer usage by kids/employees, you don't want the user to access VSS. You can lock VSS and hide the GUI. To do so, just click the Lock button, it will display:
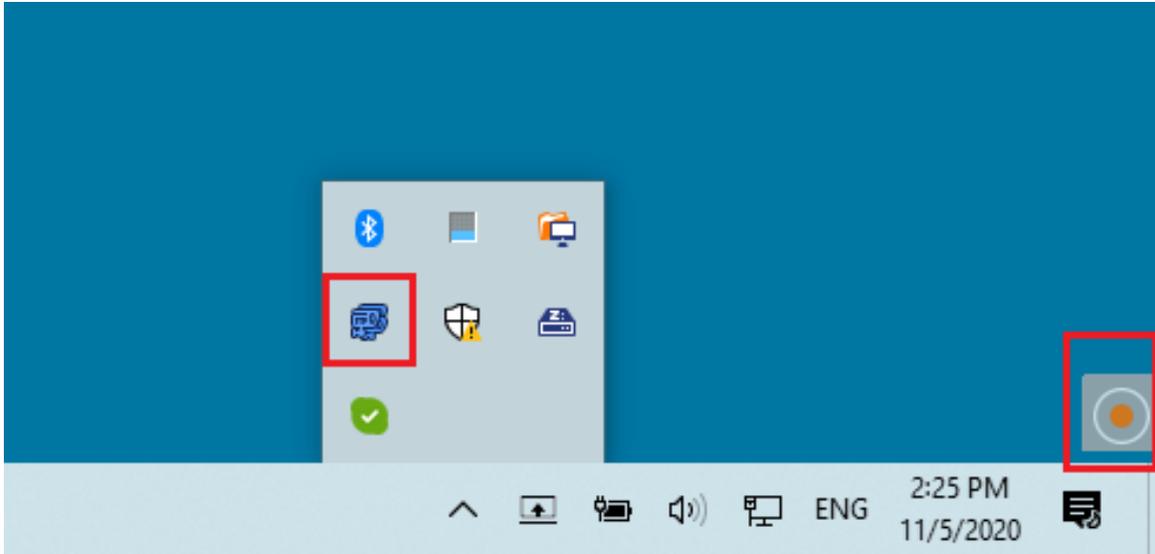


**Lock VSS:** It will only lock the VSS program. You can then minimize VSS to hide it. Other users can use this PC normally, but they cannot access VSS, stop/start recording or access your CameraFTP account. To access VSS again, you must enter your CameraFTP password in the "Unlock" dialog.

**Lock Desktop**: VSS will lock the desktop and display camera live views in full-screen mode. This feature is for security cameras. It is not compatible with screen recording. So it is disabled.

## 2.6 Start/Stop Recording without VSS GUI

A screen-recording camera appears like an IP camera in VSS. However, if VSS GUI is displayed on the screen, it will be recorded in the video. To avoid VSS GUI from interfering with screen recording, you can minimize VSS. It will be hidden from Windows Taskbar. However, it will display a notification icon in the system notification area (bottom-right corner). Clicking the icon will open the VSS GUI.

When VSS is minimized (but not locked), it displays a small Start/Stop button at the bottom-right corner. You can start/stop screen recording without opening the VSS GUI. See the screenshot below:

# 3. CameraFTP Viewer

After you added your screen recording camera to VSS, you can view the camera footage locally or remotely. It works just like other camera types.

To view the camera on your mobile device, please download CameraFTP Viewer app from App Store or Google Play Store. To view it on Windows, please download CameraFTP Viewer from the Microsoft Store. You can also log on to [www.cameraftp.com](www.cameraftp.com) website from any web browser to view the camera.

For more detailed info, please read the VSS Full Manual.