

The show must go on – redefining security at Belfast’s premier entertainment venue The Odyssey Complex.

New IP camera technology ensures a safe and secure environment in low-light conditions during events.



Organization:

The Odyssey Complex

Location:

Belfast, Northern Ireland

Industry segment:

Stadiums/Venues

Application:

Safety and security

Axis partner:

Diamond Electronic Systems, Ltd.

Mission

The Odyssey Complex, a premier entertainment venue in Belfast that plays host to many of the city’s concerts, exhibitions and sporting events, had been operating a legacy CCTV system installed at the venue’s inception in 2000. The quality of images produced often created problems for security teams when investigating crimes or seeking to identify individuals. In line with The Odyssey Complex’s commitment to providing leading entertainment within a safe and secure environment, its management team decided that a futureproof solution would be pivotal to the venue’s ongoing success. Simultaneously, the organisation sought to lower its total cost of ownership (TCO) by decreasing the storage challenges presented by its incumbent solution.

Solution

Diamond Systems, an Axis partner and market leader in electronic fire and security solutions, closely reviewed the challenging requirements and proposed 140 new Axis IP cameras. This included AXIS P3367-V Network Camera, a day and night fixed dome camera with 5 megapixels for improved image quality; this would allow the Complex to identify incidents in real-time.

All cameras utilise Axis innovative Lightfinder technology with extreme light sensitivity to give more life-like colours in low-light conditions, vital within the arena and during evening events. Axis Zipstream technology also helps reduce the complex’s TCO by decreasing storage and bandwidth requirements. In addition, AXIS A1001 Network Door Controller and AXIS A8004 Network Video Door Station have been installed to restrict public access to certain areas of the complex.

Result

The Odyssey Complex team has been extremely impressed with the quality and robustness of the solution. The cameras’ superior image quality means the complex can now rapidly investigate suspicious activity. Since the system went live, it has already assisted with the prosecution of those committing offences, including an incident where vandals sought to compromise a bike rack in the vicinity of the site. The installation met all of The Odyssey Complex’s operational requirements, with significant cost savings achieved through Axis Zipstream and Lightfinder technology, optimising storage capacity and improving low-light scenario image capture.

“Our analogue system was no longer as innovative as it once was; upgrading to HD IP camera technology made complete sense to us as we strive to maintain our status as the leading event facility in Northern Ireland.”

Brian Hughes, Group Head of Facilities at The Odyssey Complex.

The Odyssey Complex is Northern Ireland's premier entertainment venue. The 23-acre site hosts concerts by international musicians, exhibitions and sporting events, as well as being home to the Belfast Giants ice hockey team. The impressive site, which comprises the SSE Arena, a Pavilion including restaurants, shops and a cinema, the W5 Science and Discovery Centre and a 1,500-space car park, attracted over 1,000,000 visitors in 2016. Ensuring the public's security and safety is therefore of paramount importance, as well ensuring compliance with best practice procedures for crowded places.

Almost two decades on from the implementation of an analogue CCTV security system, Diamond Systems were re-engaged by The Odyssey Complex to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of its guests. This included a complete overhaul of its legacy CCTV system, including a six-month upgrade to full HD IP. The installation ran smoothly from start to finish, with no reported downtime.

Moving with the times – new technology for a connected world

This installation featured over 140 new cameras throughout the entire complex, creating coverage for entrance and exit points, as well as bar and VIP areas. After testing various technologies from a variety of vendors, Axis was chosen for its consistently high performance, fantastic customer support and the vast range of devices available to support the complex's diverse camera requirements.

Steve Snoddon, Managing Director at Diamond Systems, states, “We installed the original CCTV system 17 years ago when the complex was first developed. While providing value at the time, technology has progressed at such a rapid pace since that it was time for us to re-evaluate the technology available to support its requirements.”

As hackers seek new ways to access companies' confidential data, ensuring the cybersecurity of IP technology is vitally important. The installation at The Odyssey Complex was therefore subject to Axis' cybersecurity policies and guidelines. Steve Snoddon continues, “We wanted something that would not only incorporate today's leading technology and maintain a high level of

cybersecurity, but also prepare us for the complex's security needs of the future. As the leading entertainment venue of its kind in Northern Ireland, the Odyssey's security requirements are continuously evolving. Our commitment to really understand the business, and partnering with leading technology organisations such as Axis, ensured we could deliver a solution that was tailored to its needs.”

Security excellence in line with entertainment venue needs

The Odyssey Complex's new system is one of the most modern within Northern Ireland; an installation of this size required a bespoke solution to suit the needs of the entertainment industry. One of the tools employed to facilitate this was Axis Lightfinder technology, providing the lighting sensitivity needed to give life-like colours in low-light conditions. Its noise reduction feature, outperforming many other platforms on the market, supports the cameras' fantastic image quality. This is critical during concerts, when the arena is typically dark and individuals can prove difficult to identify.

Many of the outdoor cameras installed also use an innovative speed dry function to shake off water residue from the lens. This is useful in outdoor locations as often bad weather meant the complex experienced droplets which restricted visibility.

Brian Hughes, Group Head of Facilities at The Odyssey Complex, explains, “Through the use of intelligent applications such as Lightfinder and Zipstream, we can be confident we have the technology to support our unique security needs. Working closely with Diamond Systems and Axis, we were also keen to ensure the system has capacity to include analytics in the future. This could include customer footfall and queue management, bringing benefits in terms of operational effectiveness, guest satisfaction and of course, visitor safety.”

Beyond safety and security, the installed IP technology has also been used during Belfast Giants hockey matches. The large screens within the SSE Arena often display members of the public for features such as 'Kiss Cam', keeping the audience entertained during half time.



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