

Albert Heijn Zaltbommel manages shop floor with Axis cameras. Smart implementation increases flexibility for management and security.



Organization:
Albert Heijn Zaltbommel

Location:
Zaltbommel,
Netherlands

Industry segment: Retail

Application:
Loss prevention, safety
and security, merchandising
and operations

Axis partners:
Bovli Solutions,
Videotronic Infosystems,
CamIQ

Mission

Albert Heijn is the Netherlands' oldest supermarket chain. The store in Zaltbommel was established in 1989 and started out as a smaller store in the city center. In 2007, it was moved to a store sized approximately 2400m². Albert Heijn Zaltbommel wished to deploy cameras as a tool to manage their various activities better and to control their processes such as checkout flow more effectively. The system needed to be affordable, easy to use and flexible in its application to changes in the store. The Albert Heijn branch also has its own paid parking lot, access to which is safeguarded by a barrier arm. The cameras are needed to monitor both the shop floor and the parking lot and to limit theft and vandalism. Axis partners, Bovli Solutions and Videotronic Infosystems, were hired to realize not only a smart camera surveillance solution, but also process improvements through monitoring.

Solution

The solution uses a total of 21 Axis network cameras. This makes it possible to monitor the entire shop floor, the parking lot, office spaces and rear entrances. CamIQ software enables intelligent video content analysis, such as situation recognition and fast searches through stored images. Albert Heijn chose various camera types, including two outdoor AXIS 211 Network Cameras with DC-iris, an AXIS 216MFD megapixel Network Camera at the information desk, three wide viewing angle AXIS M1054 megapixel Network Cameras for overview images, an AXIS M1114 for face recognition at the entrance and two AXIS M3014 for direction detection.

Result

The camera installation provides store management with a handy monitoring solution to run the shop floor better. When numbers at the checkouts increase, managers can proactively respond to the situation by opening extra checkouts before the lines become too long.

"In retail, it's all about the Euros. A camera application simply has to work, be practical and provide an added advantage at an affordable cost."

Ernst van der Vlist, Bovli Solutions.

Thanks to Axis cameras' high quality images and smart installation design, Albert Heijn only needed to invest a minimal amount. They can now monitor the entire store and its surrounding area using a minimal number of cameras. This means that, on the one hand, the store can react quickly to emergencies and on the other hand, that it nearly always has video images as evidence. Sharing these with other staff means repeat offenders are recognized, with a decline in theft as a result.

Proactive management

Large numbers of people near the cash registers in a store quickly lead to long queues. Quickly opening two or more checkouts will solve this problem. Because management can keep an eye on the entire shop floor from their offices, they can respond proactively to a busy store. Opening one checkout is often enough. This saves on the use of staff and hence on wages.

The combination of Axis cameras and CamIQ software results in an intelligent monitoring solution. Images are retrieved quickly and easily. Moreover, the cameras count each visitor at the entrance and take a photo of everyone who walks outside via the entrance. Thanks to this count, management has a good idea of how many people are in the store at any given time. Experiments are currently being done with an automatic signal when in-store numbers increase.

Direction detection

Generally speaking, people are not supposed to walk outside via the entrance. Sometimes a visitor has a change of heart, but more often than not it is someone who wants to leave the store without paying. The monitoring cameras record this and take a clear photo of the perpetrator. If the person cannot be detained immediately, the photo is handed out to personnel, who often recognize the person. Perpetrators regularly return and can be recognized by one of the 170 staff at that point in time.

The system is more intelligent than alternatives like uni-directional doors and are a good deal cheaper. Thanks to the digital images and intelligent software, retrieving a specific incident takes a matter of seconds. This is the huge advantage of a digital camera in comparison to analog solutions.

Employee protection

Albert Heijn Zaltbommel, with Bovli Solutions, has made smart use of the possibilities that Axis high resolution cameras have to offer. By mounting these cameras in strategic locations, management can monitor nine checkouts with just three cameras. Ernst van der Vlist from Bovli Solutions says, "Many stores have mounted a camera above every cash register. They often have overlapping images, which is naturally a waste. By using the cameras more efficiently, you can really save on hardware acquisition.

In the meantime, the cameras have proved their ability to protect staff. Unfortunately, customers may try to pay with counterfeit money or pull money-changing tricks. By recording things in detail, such situations can often be reversed. If a staff member suspects something, the manager can retrieve the images immediately and find out what happened.

Affordable and reliable

Albert Heijn Zaltbommel chose Axis network cameras because they are affordable, reliable and provide high quality images. Van der Vlist: "In retail, it's all about the Euros. A camera -application simply has to work, be practical and provide an added advantage at an affordable cost. The current solution with IP-based Axis cameras and CamIQ software by Videotronic Infosystems facilitates this. In fact, the branch manager's father has a local grocery store and he chose the same application based on our experiences."

