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Axis system reduces incidents of crime by half

The UK's fifth biggest grocery retailer, The Co-operative Food, has reported a 50 per cent reduction in reported incidents of crime after upgrading its incumbent analogue video surveillance to a modern, digital IP system.

Axis Communications products were used in the installation – Atul Rajput, the company's regional director, northern Europe said: "It's clear the CCTV plays a major part in reducing theft. We continually survey many UK retailers and frequently find that more than 85 per cent of them say CCTV has led to a direct reduction in theft.

"However, the quality of the footage is vital for a successful prosecution. We've found that nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of UK retailers plan to adopt IP surveillance. These systems not only bring HD-quality images that drastically increase the likelihood of a prosecution, they also open the door to the use of business intelligence analytics that significantly increase the return on investment."

Explaining The Co-operative Food's drivers for the project, Atul continued: "We were approached by our partner, Kings Security, and by The Co-operative Food to help transition the retailer away from a range of diverse analogue surveillance systems, inherited mainly through a substantial acquisition programme, to a cohesive, future-proof solution that would unify the retail estate onto one centralised control platform, and implement a substantial asset renewal programme.

"A key priority for The Co-operative Food, was that the new surveillance system must measurably increase the wellbeing of staff and reduce shrinkage in high-risk stores. The solution also needed to be effective, but unobtrusive."

Graham Watt, loss prevention manager at The Co-operative Food, added: "Our stores trade from 6am to 11pm across very mixed-demographic locations. Some sites are higher risk than others. We needed a system that would cope with disparities in each location, could be easily scaled up or down as necessary, and that would connect the estate on one integrated platform."

The final installation incorporated Axis' compact fixed dome cameras and high performance video encoders, controlled by a Milestone Professional operating system, operating on a Razberi server.

Live surveillance footage from each store is streamed to a central control room and monitored by a dedicated operator at Kings Security. With the AXIS P8221 Network I/O Audio Module, staff can communicate directly with the control room via an incident button and operators can both listen to and broadcast messages in-store. Each external camera was fitted with Axis' unique 'Lightfinder' technology, allowing them to deliver clear and precise picture quality – even in the

dead of night.

Steve Evans, commercial director at Kings Security, said: “We have a 24-hour manned control room, with a dedicated operator monitoring up to 20 stores. If an incident occurs or a staff member anticipates that a situation may escalate, they can alert the operator. When locking-up, colleagues can request that operators survey the area, using the cameras to scan and identify any potential threats.”

Axis’ camera’s wide angle view allows fewer units to be used to deliver full coverage of the shop floor and sensitive areas, and assist store layout changes – for example, during special promotion periods or sales seasons. Axis cameras have also helped fulfil the retailer’s central aim of improving the welfare of its staff and shoppers, thanks to the camera’s discreet and compact design.

“Security should never be obtrusive,” said Graham. “The system Kings Security and Axis have delivered provides an effective deterrent for thieves, yet is subtle and effective enough to ensure that customers and colleagues feel protected, not scrutinised.”

Following the installation, The Co-operative Food reported a 50 per cent reduction in reported incidents of crime and a significant reduction in unrecorded loss from attractive commodities. Following a staff engagement survey, an average 34 per cent increase in the ‘perception of safety in the workplace’ was reported, as measured against the previous year. The system has been so successful that it has already been used to support criminal prosecutions across the estate.

With almost 2,800 local, convenience and medium-sized stores, The Co-operative Food’s stores range from between 1,000 and 24,000 sq ft. It has food stores in every UK postal area, with over 75,000 employees, serving a total of 14.5 million customers every week.

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About Axis

Axis offers intelligent security solutions that enable a smarter, safer world. As the global market leader in network video, Axis is driving the industry by continually launching innovative network products based on an open platform - delivering high value to customers through a global partner network. Axis has long-term relationships with partners and provides them with knowledge and ground-breaking network products in existing and new markets.

Axis has more than 1,600 dedicated employees in more than 40 countries around the world, supported by a network of over 60,000 partners across 179 countries. Founded in 1984, Axis is a Sweden-based company listed on NASDAQ OMX Stockholm under the ticker AXIS. For more information about Axis, please visit our website www.axis.com.

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