

Axis cameras keep watch over Manchester City Council offices.

The flexibility of Axis cameras allows for the delivery of a fully bespoke surveillance solution.



Organization:
Manchester City Council

Location:
Manchester, UK

Industry segment:
Government

Application:
Safety and security

Axis partners:
Grantfen Fire and Security, Ltd., Leyland, Genetec

Mission

Axis partner, Grantfen Fire and Security Ltd (Grantfen), won a competitive tender to implement an efficient IP-based video and access control solution for Manchester City Council following the redevelopment of its central accommodation, which comprises Manchester Town Hall Extension and Manchester Central Library.

The council specified that the project must include cameras that not only delivered excellent picture quality and advanced feature applications, but that were also aesthetically pleasing and did not diminish or detract from the historic buildings. The system must be future-proofed, support multiple third-party integrations, and have a single user interface with centralised control.

Solution

A state-of-the-art solution was developed that combined Axis network cameras and Genetec's Security Centre video management software (VMS). To effectively cover the 680,000 sq ft area of both sites, the surveillance specification for the project included over 200 Axis network cameras.

Result

The integrated solution featured intrusion detection, fire alarms, a building management system, emergency lighting protocols, flood and leak detection, lift alarms and network-enabled intercoms.

Thanks to the unique scalability of the Axis network cameras in combination with Genetec's best of breed software, Manchester City Council has room to grow the system as its requirements develop over time. Further integration is also on the horizon, with the possibility of adding mobile connectivity and automatic number plate recognition systems.

“The new security system has made the buildings feel more secure and the management team confident in the knowledge that Manchester City Council staff, visitors and important archive documentation are all being effectively protected.”

Ian Jackson, sales director at Grantfen Fire and Security Ltd.

Updating an aging system

Manchester Town Hall Extension is Grade II listed and of distinct architectural significance. It was built between 1934 and 1938 to provide additional accommodation for Manchester City Council services. Along with Manchester's Central Library the buildings comprise the main seat of local government in the city. The civic nature of the sites means that they are required for public access – for meetings, enquiries, transactions and admission to other facility services.

Over time, both the Town Hall Extension and Central Library buildings had been fitted with an assortment of mismatched analogue CCTV systems, controlled by various incompatible management software packages. Concerns were raised that, as the current security system aged, its vulnerabilities were becoming pronounced and it was essential that archived video footage is appropriately safeguarded.

Grantfen, led a proof of concept trial at the start of the project in which Axis was chosen as the preferred supplier. The palm-sized AXIS M3005-V Fixed Dome Network Camera tested best in the line-up: it met all of Manchester City Council's requirements, combining outstanding HD-quality video, with a modest, unobtrusive footprint and robust reliability in a wide variety of applications. The camera's broad-spectrum of feature-rich functionality was also crucial.

Adaptability in every environment

Graham Cole, operations director at Grantfen, said: "Thanks to their broad product range, partnering with Axis meant that we could use one manufacturer throughout, with one consistent user interface to achieve a high degree of synergy across the system." Custom integrations between the Axis and Genetec systems meant that alarms would be relayed to the centralised control area in case of emergencies, with detailed procedures added to instruct security operators how to proceed in the event of an exception alarm.

For the Central Library, one of Manchester City Council's specific surveillance requirements was the ability to accurately monitor visitor numbers and 'people count' those entering and exiting the building. To do this, Grantfen specified the use of the AXIS M3005-V IP camera, which has an exceptional range of view and the ability to look straight down onto entrance doorways.

In the case of the main entry way, this proved to be a challenge because of the door's unusually narrow transom, which was too small to accommodate most surveillance cameras. To account for the discrepancy, Grantfen selected Axis' P1214 Miniature HDTV pinhole camera for discreet surveillance, which encompassed the required technology and performance to run the video analytics application.

Effectively safeguarding staff and visitors

Ian Jackson, sales director at Grantfen, said: "This technology is steering Manchester City Council towards greater efficiency and improved customer service. Despite more access being granted to the public, the new security system has made the buildings feel more secure and the management team confident in the knowledge that Manchester City Council staff, visitors and important archive documentation are all being effectively protected." Discussions are now underway to replicate the success of the installation to cover the main Town Hall building.

