Genetec™

The City of Edinburgh Council

Catalysing the smart city vision with unified security

Name
The City of Edinburgh Council

Industries
Public Safety

Location
Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Products
Genetec Security Center

Partners
North

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THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

The City of Edinburgh Council capitalises on data and takes a smart city strategy to the next level with Genetec Security Center

Edinburgh is Scotland's capital city and home to over a half a million citizens. It's also a worldwide tourist hotspot that attracts more than 4 million visitors each year. The City of Edinburgh Council is responsible for providing all local government services for the city and its immediate surroundings.

Setting a Transformational Smart City Vision

There's no one universal definition of what constitutes a smart city. But ask The City of Edinburgh Council about the aims of its own Digital and Smart City strategy and you'll get one clear answer:

"Our overall vision is to make Edinburgh a better place to live, work and visit. We want to introduce innovative new technologies to help us solve challenges, better manage our resources, and deliver improved public services," said Gareth Barwell, Interim Executive Director of Place at The City of Edinburgh Council.

Only one issue stopped the Council from realising this vision. The existing public security system was no longer fit for purpose and could not seamlessly integrate new applications and technologies. "It really was a barrier that prevented us from moving forward with our Smart City ambitions," added Gavin Brown, Interim Service Director - Operational Services at The City of Edinburgh Council.

After successfully securing funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Council was ready to put plans into action. Following a competitive tender, the council team instructed their trusted channel partner, North, to work on transforming security and monitoring capabilities across the capital. That began with the creation of a purpose-built Smart City Operations Centre

Building the foundation for success with Security Center

The team at North knew that an intelligent centralised security platform would be a critical component of the Smart City Operations Centre. Their proposed solution was built on Genetec™ Security Center, an open and unified physical security platform. This would allow everything from video surveillance, analytics and IoT sensors, to be managed from one intuitive interface.

"All truly connected smart cities start with unified security," explained Ben Durrant, Account Executive at Genetec. "Our platform differs from conventional alternatives because it's an open- architecture software solution that offers the flexibility and functionality needed to evolve and keep pace with new requirements."

With the core platform now in place, North has implemented various measures that have revolutionised security and

surveillance across Scotland's capital. This includes delivering expanded and enhanced CCTV coverage in public spaces. They've also enhanced collaboration between city partners, ensuring data from the CCTV network can be securely shared with Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and Public Transport partners.

The City of Edinburgh Council has also implemented advanced video analytics and AI-based tools to further empower operators. This greatly enhances situational awareness, allowing them to quickly pinpoint and respond to threats. Today, operators are more confident and in control when handling day-to-day operations. They also work more efficiently when managing security at hugely popular events such as the Edinburgh Fringe, the Royal Military Tattoo and the city's Hogmanay celebrations.

"The Genetec Security Center platform delivered by North has proved truly transformational. Being able to manage all our smart city technologies through a single intuitive interface gives us a more comprehensive view of what's happening in our city. It also helps our operators quickly respond to emergencies and resolve incidents, keeping all our residents and visitors safer," added Barwell.

Connecting IoT for greater intelligence and efficiencies

Beyond security, the City of Edinburgh Council has been able to connect various IoT sensors within Security Center. This provides insightful information on how residents and visitors move about and use city infrastructure. With this data, they can make better long-term decisions about how to improve safety, sustainability, and maintenance across Edinburgh.

"We've installed 11,000 smart waste sensors to help track and reduce pollution. We've deployed smart building technology that can predict dampness and pre-empt mould issues to reduce repair costs. Plus, active travel monitoring is providing important data that informs and assesses progress towards the Council's Net Zero 2030 goals," said Andrew Foster, MD – Public Services at North.

Realising tangible results now and in the future

For the City of Edinburgh Council team, the Security Center platform and other control room technology has catalysed their Smart City ambitions. And the Genetec platform is scalable and flexible enough to accommodate new technologies and services based on future needs.

For now, they're happy seeing significant time savings across their operations and being able to provide the police and courts with higher quality footage and evidence. In fact, the Council credits Security Center with saving the Operations Centre team hundreds of man hours that were previously spent manually trawling through surveillance footage. They've also been able to fulfil more than double the number of video requests from Police Scotland.

In turn, Police Scotland acknowledges that the enhanced coverage across Edinburgh City Centre will help them get more offenders successfully identified, charged, and convicted. With improved footage submitted as evidence, they're also expected to increase the number of early guilty pleas. This should help reduce the time that police officers spend in court sharing testimony and evidence.

"The benefits of these technology investments for Edinburgh are massive. These include enhanced public safety, improved services, optimised traffic flow, as well as better infrastructure and city planning. Genetec and North have been instrumental partners in helping the Council actualise our Smart City strategy," concluded Brown.

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