

Woodbine Entertainment Group

Racing toward better security and evidence management



Name

Woodbine Entertainment Group

Industries

Gaming

Location

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Products

Security Center, Clearance, Omnicast, Plan Manager, Streamvault



WOODBINE™

Woodbine Entertainment Group transforms security operations and evidence sharing with Genetec Security Center and Clearance

Founded in 1881 as the Ontario Jockey Club, Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) is the pioneer and largest operator of professional horse racing in Canada. Today, the company owns and operates Woodbine Racetrack in Toronto, Woodbine Mohawk Park in Campbellville, as the only legal pari-mutuel wagering website in Canada called HPIbet.com, and various off-track-betting locations across Ontario. Every year, Woodbine Entertainment's properties welcome over seven million visitors who come to experience the rush of watching thoroughbred and standardbred horses racing while enjoying best-in-class dining and entertainment.

Setting sights on future growth and innovative technology

Securing over 1,200 acres of property and champion horse racing facilities comes with unique challenges. Not only must the WEG security team ensure that people have a safe and memorable experience, but they're also committed to upholding best practices across their horse racing operations.

To get the job done, the WEG security team often relied on many different physical security technologies. But over time, they began noticing a lag in advancements from their video surveillance supplier. They were also managing video, access

control, and other tasks from different monitors and applications, which slowed response and investigations. Knowing expansion plans were soon underway for a new leasehold casino and entertainment venue, the team was ready for an upgrade.

According to Robin Soobramanie, Director of Security Operations at WEG, "We were trying to get ahead of the curve and be prepared for what was coming. With that, we wanted a technology partner who stayed on the pulse of emerging trends and had a forward-thinking approach to product development. Ultimately, we were looking for a cutting-edge platform that would give our team access to the latest features and integrations as our business and objectives evolved."

The WEG security team began searching for a forward-thinking video management supplier and solution. After narrowing the selection down to three companies, the team, led by Tina Soobramanie, Integrated Network and Security Specialist, made a firm decision on Genetec Security Center.

"Security Center ticked all the boxes when it came to innovation, future growth, and everything we envisioned for our security operations. From more basic features such as tenant partitioning to full-scale cloud services and extensive integration capabilities, we had everything we needed to build a robust and progressive security deployment all within one unified platform," explained Tina.

Streamlining security operations with one unified platform

Today, the WEG security team works around the clock from a new Surveillance Operations Center (SOC) that is powered by Genetec Security Center. They currently manage over 800 cameras across the Woodbine Toronto and Campbellville sites as well as existing access control and intrusion detection systems within the unified security platform. This gives them real-time visibility on all emerging events and alarms from one intuitive solution.

“Before Genetec Security Center, when we would receive alarms, our team would have to jump over to the video system to see what was happening. Now, there’s no more switching between systems. When the alarm pops up, we immediately see the video associated with the event. That takes a lot of burden off the operator. They can quickly see what’s happening and respond,” said Robin.

Other built-in features like the map-based interface, Plan Manager, and custom monitoring tasks are helping the team further boost efficiency. In the past, the team needed to recall camera numbers to retrieve the video they needed. Today, almost all cameras are plotted on a map of the facilities, making it simpler for the team to visualize where the cameras are and pull up footage in seconds.

“Security Center has really helped to streamline our monitoring and alarm management tasks. Our team took the initiative to customize their monitoring tile layouts which help them oversee specific duties. For example, when they are visually escorting cash handling guards through the property, they have all the live views of that route set up on a single monitoring tab,” explained Tina.

Choosing an open-architecture platform allowed WEG to keep existing cameras, which made the transition to Genetec more affordable. They also upgraded their servers with Genetec Streamvault™. These plug-and-play infrastructure appliances not only gave them added redundancy, reliability, and on-demand support from Genetec experts, but they are now comfortably meeting 60-day retention requirements with room to spare.

Speeding up evidence sharing using Clearance

Aside from their physical security duties, the team spends a lot of time fulfilling information and evidence requests from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), lawyers, insurance adjusters, and various law enforcement agencies throughout Toronto and Ontario.

In the past, when a request came in, they’d export and burn the video onto DVDs and hand them over to the intended recipients. But with so many different parties requesting video and data, this manual process became overly time consuming and sapped resources. That’s why the team was quick to add Genetec Clearance™, the digital evidence management system, to their deployment.

Using this digital evidence management system, WEG investigators can now easily retrieve video from Security Center and export it into Clearance in a few mouse clicks. Then, they can simply email external agencies and internal stakeholders a secure link to the files.

“Having Security Center and Clearance has definitely expedited our evidence-sharing process and helped our team become



more productive. When an incident occurs, we compile as much video evidence as possible and then start building that case using Clearance. When that official request comes in from law enforcement, AGCO, or our internal teams, we can quickly send them that case file,” said Sean Wade, Senior Manager of SOC Investigations and Training at WEG.

Clearance supports all types of video codecs and file formats. That means the WEG team can easily upload video footage from other sites that haven’t yet been converted to Genetec. Recipients can also choose to download video in their preferred file format, or quickly view video evidence from a secure web browser. And since Clearance can be used to build cases with all types of evidence, the team can include video alongside PDF incident reports, still images, and other information that’s pertinent to the case.

“With Clearance, we can easily package everything up into one case. And when we do have video of interest, Clearance gives us ample storage so we can keep that evidence for as long as necessary,” explained Tina.

“What’s nice about Clearance is that it’s extremely user-friendly. We had new investigators join our team recently, and they were able to pick everything up quickly. They had no issues navigating and learning the system and became very proficient in a short amount of time,” added Sean.

Enhancing partnerships across the community and business

Since implementing Security Center and Clearance, the team has streamlined partnerships with law enforcement to help them close cases faster. The team has also been able to expedite information requests from the AGCO. This not only allows WEG to uphold best practices and regulatory compliance within their operations, but they’re helping the AGCO maintain the highest levels of integrity across the horseracing business.

“When the AGCO needs to request video from the track, our retention barns, or even our paddocks, we can get them the

information they need right away using Security Center and Clearance. That speeds up their review process, so they can resolve a complaint or incident,” explained Robin.

WEG has found unique business applications using the Security Center Mobile App. They’ve been able to extend access to specific cameras to the racing team who monitor racing cameras and the fleet manager who can view cameras in their garages. They’ve also extended limited video access to the head chef who oversees the kitchen area in the stables. At any point, all these users can access live feeds from their phones to better manage operations and make sure all is well in their departments.

Growing alongside innovative and supportive partners

With a long list of must-haves, the WEG team is excited to keep evolving the platform. Right now, their focus is on bringing a Champions off-track betting location onto Security Center and adding more cameras to the Woodbine Toronto site which will extend coverage to hospitality areas in the new casino. They are also considering adding Genetec Mission Control™, the decision management system. The goal is to empower their security operators even more by enhancing automation across their processes.

No matter what they decide to do in the future, WEG knows they are fully supported. As Genetec Advantage customers, they can reach out to technical experts any time they need assistance. But according to Tina, having that comprehensive support means much more:

“At WEG, we aim to be a best-in-class racetrack and sports facilities across North America. We have a very technology-driven mindset



and are always looking for innovative ways to solve problems. And Genetec is right there with us, coming up with new solutions. So, we’re not only excited about growing our deployment with Security Center, but we’re also glad we have a strong, supportive partnership with the Genetec team,” concluded Tina.

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