

Case Study

Dacorum Borough Council

Dacorum takes digital leaps in borough security with Security Center



District in the United Kingdom invests in major security upgrade to improve incident response and better service for residents and businesses

Business challenge

The Borough of Dacorum is a district in the southern county of Hertfordshire in England. The over 200 km² area is comprised of three main towns including Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, and numerous villages. Approximately 150,000 residents call the Dacorum Borough home.

To offer a greater range of services to its community, Dacorum Borough Council invested in a new district-wide wireless network and began plans to rebuild its main civic center. Its control room team was simultaneously given the opportunity to relocate and upgrade its operations.

According to Jim Guiton, CCTV Manager at Dacorum Borough Council, “We were working with many old analog systems that were very limiting, and ran separately on different computers. We wanted a modern system that could integrate new technologies, and that would give our team one easy solution to access and manage everything.”

To help fulfil its vision, Dacorum Borough Council sent out a request for proposal and scored each system according to the outlined criteria. ID Integrated Security Ltd, a highly-proficient and skilled system integrator in the United Kingdom won the bid with Security Center, the unified security platform by Genetec Inc. Security Center offers the ability to combine IP video surveillance, access control, automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) and other key systems within one intuitive solution.

Surveillance reach expands with Security Center

Today, the Dacorum control room team manages over 170 cameras borough-wide through Omnicast™, the IP video surveillance system of Security Center. While half of the cameras are council-owned and spread throughout the towns and villages, the control room team monitors cameras from other independent entities such as a senior’s residence, homeless shelter, recycling depot, caravan carpark, retailers and more—all from the unified platform.

Two remote sites with a small number of cameras and perimeter alarms were outfitted with the Genetec™ SV-16 network security appliance. The compact and affordable solution easily extends video and alarm monitoring to control room operators who keep an eye out for suspicious activities.

“Being able to unify all systems in one solution has been a massive advantage for our team. With Security Center, other departments

Summary

Client name: Dacorum Borough Council

Organization size: over 500 employees

Products: Security Center, Omnicast, AutoVu, Sipelia, Federation, Mobile, Plan Manager

Industry: City-Wide Surveillance

Location: Dacorum Borough, United Kingdom

Partners: ID Integrated Security Ltd, Axis Communications, Bosch, Pivot3, Zenitel Stentofon

can rely on us to manage their systems. As Manager, I can set user privileges to comply with privacy legislation. It’s all centralised from our control room, and our operators can efficiently respond if there is an incident,” said Guiton.

Strengthening ties with local law enforcement

When a call comes into the new state-of-the-art control room, operators quickly pull up video using Plan Manager, the map-based interface. Workers can easily dispatch police officers and prepare them for the scene by describing events or suspects in real-time. Mobile capabilities extend monitoring outside of the control room to a few select staff who can view video or respond to alarms from an iPad or mobile device.

“We are collaborating with local police a lot more effectively, and have seen a 40% increase in requests for footage,” explained Guiton. “Since there are no more time-consuming searches or a need to copy case notes, it’s easier to hand over evidence to the police. In minutes, they walk away with exported video and our digital logs on a single disk.”

If required, the team shares access to the video with the Hertfordshire Constabulary using the Genetec™ Federation™ feature. Having access to the cameras from the police headquarters proved invaluable when the Queen of England visited the borough. Five temporary wireless cameras were added to Her Majesty’s route, and all relevant cameras were federated back to police headquarters to strengthen collaboration.

Improving borough services with automated ingenuity

With its attention keenly squared on improving services, Dacorum Borough Council added more technological ingenuity to the district using AutoVu™, the ANPR system of Security Center for automated gate access control.

For example, licensed merchants can now freely drive into restricted parking areas to easily setup and dismantle booths in a town's centre. An AutoVu ANPR camera reads the number plates of vehicles approaching the gated entry, and grants or denies access based on a whitelist that is managed by the council.

A Zenitel Stentofon IP intercom system connects patrons to control room operators. Once prompted, operators see live video and can begin a conversation without switching applications thanks to Sipelia™, the intercom module of Security Center.

Uncompromised flexibility drives future growth

Dacorum Council continues to take full advantage of the scalability and flexibility offered by Security Center, adding cameras where required, and considering unique applications to improve its district services.

“Our remit as an authority is quite diverse. But whether we need to add more coverage, address staff vulnerabilities, control parking, handle surveillance, add perimeter alarms or access control in the future, it's all possible through this one robust platform. Security Center makes everything easier,” concluded Guiton.

“Being able to unify all systems in one solution has been a massive advantage for our team. With Security Center, other departments can rely on us to manage their systems.[...] It's all centralised from our control room, and our operators can efficiently respond if there is an incident.”



Infrastructure at a glance

Dacorum reduced costs by using Axis Communications IP encoders Q7401 to keep analog cameras. New Axis and Bosch 720p high definition IP cameras, as well as a number of Samsung dome cameras have been added to expand coverage. Two AutoVu Sharp XGA cameras were implemented for gated access control. All video and data is stored on Pivot3 raid 6E servers for a maximum retention of 31 days.