Case Study

Manchester City Council

Manchester City Council goes state-of-the-art with Genetec Security Center unified platform

Manchester equips two major city council buildings with Security Center to help streamline customer interactions while safeguarding historical documents and office staff.

Business challenge

Manchester City Council (MCC) is the local government authority for the city and one of ten local authorities in Greater Manchester, the United Kingdom's second most populous urban area. MCC offers a varied list of public services to residents from three major long-standing buildings including the Town Hall, the Town Hall Extension and the Central Library.

Due to the need for frequent public access to the buildings for meetings, enquiries, transactions or other facility services, MCC decided to undergo a major transformation of the Town Hall Extension and Central Library buildings. A full remodel along with the implementation of state-of-the-art technologies were carried out to improve day-to-day operations and expand public access to buildings while maintaining appropriate restrictions to sensitive areas.

Since its original mid- 19th century construction, both the Town Hall Extension and the Library building had since seen a varied assortment of disparate analog CCTV systems which were in need of renewal.

Upon drafting a list of detailed requirements, MCC sent the bid out in a public tender seeking IP-based video surveillance and access control solutions. Genetec Certified Integrator, Granften Fire and Security, responded with the winning solution: Genetec Security Center unified platform.

According to Ian Jackson, Sales Director at Granften Fire and Security, "MCC was looking for a very modern system, with many deep third-party integrations where alarms could be managed from one user interface. Security Center's ability to unify many systems under one platform, its innate flexibility and its robust software development kit (SDK) allowed us to design a solution that met all their specifications."

Unifying nine systems for better operations and security

Today, MCC is running Security Center 5.2, with Omnicast video surveillance and Synergis access control.

MCC's facility management team watches over the access control side of the operations, using Synergis to control main entrances, several doors and more critical archive rooms. With Synergis' open architecture, MCC was able to incorporate different access control

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devices; they added 205 smart card readers to general areas, 22 wireless readers in areas that required cabling flexibility, and 23 keypad readers where 3 are additionally equipped with biometric readers for tighter security in more vulnerable locations.

On the video side of the operations, a security team pro-actively monitors over 170 cameras spread throughout both buildings from a single control room located in the town hall extension. With approximately 135 TB of storage onsite, MCC is able to keep video recordings for approximately 30 days.

Although Omnicast and Synergis are innately synched within the platform, MCC's requirements took unification a step further by merging several other major systems into Security Center. These systems included: intrusion detection, fire alarm, building management, emergency lighting, flood and leak detection, lift alarms and SIP-enabled IP intercoms.

With the help of Granften and their development expertise using the Genetec SDK, custom integrations were made with all systems so that alarms would be relayed to Security Center for such emergencies as a water leakage detected inside archive rooms, or high temperature within server rooms.

With so many systems in place, MCC operators use Genetec Plan Manager, the map-based interface that provides easy 2D or 3D navigation through the buildings' 680,000 sq ft area. Plan Manager helps the team pinpoint devices, pull up cameras, unlock doors, manage intercom, and even respond directly to alarms from all third-party systems directly from the map.

Detailed procedures on how to handle every type of alarm were also added within Security Center to ensure regulatory

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compliance. Therefore, when a security guard acknowledges an event, an automatic pop-up box would provide clear instructions on what steps need to be taken.

Achieving operational efficiencies with custom applications

Although MCC staff and operators are still uncovering the benefits of Security Center for daily operations, some major efficiencies are underway. MCC wanted to transform their operations to create a more customer-centric service model and modernise the way they work. Security Center is supporting MCC in their move from having various staffed reception desks to having one visitor management reception and a number of self-serve visitor kiosk strategically located in the building.

The impressive visitor management application was further described by Jackson: "We developed an application where MCC staff would be able to send out a meeting request to an individual via email, after which instructions would automatically be delivered to the invited party and access control information would be sent to Security Center. Then, when they arrive at the Town Hall Extension, they would approach the visitor management kiosk, enter their unique ID, and a card with assigned access privileges would be dispensed. It's a complete self-serve visitor management, no human interaction required."

Continuing expansion thanks to remarkable system flexibility

On track to complete the construction, MCC has big plans for the future. With unparalleled scalability, Security Center will help MCC eventually expand the new system into the Town Hall building, adding cameras and doors over time. They also intend to deploy Security Center Mobile, offering security guards and facility managers the ability to pull up system information from tablets or mobile phones.

Finally, more system integrations are being discussed such as adding the third component within Security Center, an automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) system named AutoVu. The ANPR solution will be used specifically to manage parking, allowing VIP guests white list entry to facilities as well as counting vehicle entry and exit for better lot management.

Genetec Inc.
genetec.com/locations
info@genetec.com
@genetec