

Perimeter Security:

The International Centre for Business Improvement

Is it possible to combine effective perimeter security with an open and welcoming customer ethos? The International Centre for Business Improvement believes it is.

The International Centre for Business Improvement (ICBI), part of the Boxwood Group, is located in a remarkable, purpose built facility on the outskirts of Leeds. A design statement as well as a commercial building, the external and internal design of the Centre evokes many of the corporate values of Boxwood. Light and spacious, the ICBI generates a sense of thoughtfulness and purpose.



The ambience the ICBI has set out to achieve is central to the organisation's purpose which is focused on empowering the country's leading organisations to excel. With particular expertise in retail and construction, the ICBI helps substantial organisations to deliver business critical improvement projects whether that relates to business processes, technology, corporate focus or board level achievement. This is a centre for serious reflection, out of the box thinking and corporate creativity. It's also a place for fun and relaxation as indicated by the wealth of entertainment equipment available to visitors. Since the company was founded in 1998, the ICBI has achieved audited business improvements valued in excess of £1.7 billion and the business itself has grown from two to eighty people. This represents a huge testimonial to the wisdom and creativity of the ICBI's team.

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The Centre opened in October 2003. Throughout the design and build process, the security requirements of the ICBI and site were paramount. Situated on a relatively new business park, the ICBI remains in an open and exposed position with a lengthy history of vandalism and opportunist break-ins, some with violence. Although one option was to introduce very visible and tight physical security this was seen as undesirable. Certainty Security Services, was appointed to design, supply and install the comprehensive range of security systems at the ICBI.

Assisted by Norbain, Certainty recommended a combination of CCTV and PIR to provide perimeter security, VNPR (Vehicle Number Plate Recognition) for vehicular access control and a Cotag solution to manage physical access into and within the building itself. The only 'physical' security is provided by low, steel hoops that surround the building. "Our overall objective", explains Certainty Group Managing Director, Bill Squires, "is to maintain the integrity of the building whilst balancing this with the Centre's focus on providing visitors with an extraordinarily high level of customer service and personalised welcome."

Site security can be divided into three key elements – number plate recognition, CCTV and system monitoring. The number plate recognition system in use is Vista's VNPR solution installed at both the car park entrance and exit. Visitors notify the ICBI in advance of their vehicle number plate and are allotted a personalised parking space on site. On arriving at the barrier, the VNPR camera immediately reads the number plate, reconciles this with the system database, notifies reception of the guest's arrival and allows the vehicle to enter the site. As well as providing very effective vehicular security, the system enables reception staff to offer a personalised greeting to visitors that is much appreciated and sets the tone for the complete customer experience of the ICBI. As Bill Squires commented: "recognising that we needed a barrier we decided we should employ it to maximum customer service advantage."



Perimeter security consists of a combination of twelve judiciously positioned Vista vandal resistant domes (VVRD4V8C-LP), Vista PowerDomes (VPD-2WP-P-C) and Vista static cameras (VPCMX-LV and VVRCCM) around the exterior of the building and the car park, at the barrier intercom and in reception. With minimal blind spots these cameras are guaranteed to capture the image of anyone approaching the building. Alarm activated PIR detectors cover all four lines of sight around the oblong building itself with the domes pre-set to switch position whenever the PIR beam is broken.

Images from all the site's cameras are fed to a Vista Triplex™ Columbus Digital Video Recorder (VC16TE-320) in the Centre's IT hub with the installation completed by a Vista keyboard (NPX/RKBD/J3De) and a 15" Vista monitor (VLFSM15/DW).



Jamie Hacker, the Centre's Facilities Administrator, speaks highly of the Vista equipment for its ease of use. "Intuitive and easy to learn, we've especially noticed how quickly staff with little previous IT experience can get up to speed with the system very quickly."

Networked to the company's Local Area Network, images may be monitored from different points within the building with night staff, for instance, monitoring the system from reception. The Vista Wavereader software that is supplied with the Vista Triplex Columbus DVR provides a visual notification on screen whenever an alarm is activated. Recording is continuous during the day and alarm activated at night with images stored on the Vista Triplex Columbus' 320GB hard disk for approximately 14 days'.

Facilities Manager, Sarah Philips, who is responsible for the site as a whole, echoed Jamie Hacker's earlier comments adding that the security system was the least of her worries. "This is one of the most important systems within the building. It was installed well, on schedule and everything was working correctly before we moved in. Certainty provided ideal training too."



All the security equipment for the site was supplied by Norbain but, as Bill Squires pointed out, the service provided by Norbain far exceeded that of the traditional distributor. "Several members of Norbain's sales and technical staff visited the site and contributed to project meetings and post installation configuration. Our business development team rely extensively on Norbain for providing product, technical and design support. We're also very comfortable with the Vista range and recognise the supreme way in which Norbain combines value for money, logistical excellence and first rate backup and support."

Installer Profile

Based in Bristol, Certainty Security Services (VSS prior to its acquisition by Boxwood) provides 'One Stop Shop' facilities management, security design, installation, service and maintenance services, working with third party suppliers for centralised monitoring.