

Debbie Bellaby Artworking

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Virgin Trains Case Study

Virgin Trains - a clear view of customer safety

As one of Europe's main arterial rail links, the UK's West Coast Main Line facilitates nearly 20 million passenger journeys each year on Virgin Trains throughout the length and breadth of its 401 mile route from London Euston to Glasgow Central.

As part of its ongoing commitment to improving infrastructure and in line with its franchise agreement, Virgin Trains embarked upon an improvement programme to enhance both the quantity and quality of CCTV across the West Coast Main Line stations. The project adopted the Government guidelines and the British Transport Police Working Code of Practice, with the aim of enabling Virgin Trains to achieve the Secure Stations and Car Parks accreditation upon completion.

A clear objective

Virgin Trains had clear and concise operational objectives for the scheme ensuring that they achieved a precise and high quality image, ease of image reference, sufficient storage and an easy system to operate for their staff. All of these key component factors ensured that the images are admissible to prosecution levels.

Richard Hands, Senior Project Manager at Virgin Trains, was tasked with the project and responsible for the selection of a suitable company with all experience. After broadcasting the project in the European Journal, Midlands based Thompson AIC were nominated to implement the CCTV fit out. "Thompson AIC really understood what we were trying to achieve and clearly understood the project's aims and objectives," he says.

The right tools for the job

The majority of the cameras installed across the stations are Pelco Spectra 60 domes, complemented by Vista WSD domes and Bosch Dicon box cameras. "We selected the most appropriate technology to fit the operational requirement of each camera," says Michael Collins, Business Development Manager at Thompson AIC. "For example, those areas that had contrasting light levels, such as domes, we used Wide Dynamic Range cameras like the Bosch Dicon, ensuring that we achieved the level of detail required. Our structured and methodical approach has ensured that we have delivered a very complete project on time but, more importantly, it clearly meets our client's long term aims and objectives."

Put to the test

The system has successfully met its objectives, providing the stations with an easy-to-use solution that gives extremely sharp, clear images. "The cameras are fantastic, even in full zoom," says Mr Hands. "Some of the stations are very large, but we can track people and zoom in and out of situations as required."

Mr Hands is very pleased with the work that Thompson AIC has undertaken. "They co-ordinated the installation with the station team and managed to keep disruption to a minimum by taking a flexible approach to the project."

The benefits of the new system are not simply internal, although the upgrading from analogue to digital offers a wide range of significant maintenance savings in the future. "The system is an ever-improving platform and staff find we are taking measures to ensure their safety on the stations," says Mr Hands. "It's about meeting customer expectations on a day-to-day basis and providing them with a great service."

About Thompson AIC

Thompson AIC provides a holistic approach to security and fire solutions by handling all the design, installation and support aspects of a project, no matter what the client's requirements. With a range of business sectors such as commercial, retail, education, health and care environments, and maintain a constant investment in new technology and equipment. With a clear focus on the future, they deliver the most appropriate installations for their client base underpinned by excellent service.

thompsonaic.co.uk

Software skills:

- Quark 7
- Adobe CS4
- Microsoft Office
- Freehand, Flash and Painter

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