

Stratford Shopping Center **SUCCESS STORY**

Stratford Shopping Center Application Story



The Stratford, located in the heart of East London is steeped in history. Traders on its Angel Lane indoor market stalls boast century-long connections with street markets.

Seven years from now it will be transformed as three quarters of a million people descend on the suburb for what Lord Coe has predicted will be the greatest Olympic Games in history.

Stratford is already a massive crossroads for London but new rail links are bringing a further influx of people and the Olympics will energize the area in 2012. The new "Stratford City" development will connect with the historic hub over the existing Stratford Station rail lines and into the re-landscaped Meridian Square. It will be a spectacular 'Living Bridge' across the Great Eastern Road.

Public thoroughfare

The shopping center is still the location of the historic Angel Lane market and it is for this reason that the site remains a public thoroughfare, a pre-condition when Land Securities were given permission to build the mall.

Public safety therefore as well as the elimination of criminal activity is of paramount importance and CCTV has

played a key role ensuring that all shoppers can enjoy visiting the center in a secure and safe environment. Land Securities have invested in the latest CCTV technology and central to the installation is a sophisticated customised digital recording system engineered by Vigilant Technology.

The Vigilant system is operated and maintained by the facilities management division of Securiplan PLC. Securiplan is widely respected for its dedicated Shopping Center management service in which security is a major aspect. But the partnership is wide-ranging and extends to the London Borough of Newham, Metropolitan and Transport Police who are significant players given the proximity of Stratford Station and frequent issue of ASBOs.

Intuitive system that can be grasped in an hour

Securiplan's Facilities Manager at the Stratford Shopping Center is Des Roche who said: **"As we were specifying equipment a consultant presented a rival system but we saw the potential of the Vigilant solution particularly with regard to it's user-friendliness. The fact that you could have an officer on probation with absolutely no experience sit down at a monitor and within an hour and correct guidance from the training provided by Vigilant you would not only see him operating the system but proactively utilising its most sophisticated function was a major attraction."**

The Securiplan team at Stratford has been implementing proactive solutions since July 1994 but the approach went up a gear in July 1996 when Land Securities introduced the first CCTV analog recording system and the crime statistics plummeted, however, it had its evidential limitations.

Land Securities who have never shied away from investing in the latest technology looked at digital solutions and decided it was time to migrate from analog. The client was attracted by Vigilant's enterprise digital recording system, which offered high resolution, half frame rate recording with virtually unlimited storage capacity and with the option of synchronised audio recording.

Des Roche continued: **"Land Securities are very hands-on but they do this in a judicious way. The main reason for going digital was evidential. We wanted to help police by getting evidence to them quickly and avoiding time-consuming playback. The time spent reviewing tapes was horrendous and since converting to a Vigilant digital solution in late 2003, we have cut reviewing time dramatically."**

Rapid search, playback and Shop Alert

User comments repeatedly stress the benefits of the instant playback inherent in the Vigilant system functionality that gives immediate access to the evidence of a crime. Des Roche expanded on this: **"In their verbal reporting on an incident to Security personnel, witnesses often get colour of clothes or even the sex of the suspect wrong. The quality and accessibility of the images via the Vigilant system minimise such errors."**

These comments underline Vigilant's appeal to users who appreciate the ability to absorb and interrogate large volumes of video data and translate it into manageable information that can be responded to efficiently.

The Vigilant system is used in conjunction with the center's Shop Alert retail warning system. When Securiplan Center Security officers at Stratford receive a request from retail staff through ShopAlert, a quick review of recorded video provides security personnel who are responding with the confidence of an accurate description.

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Clinching functionality over competitor

Mr Roche said: "We went to view the Shop Alert system in action at Canary Wharf back in 1999 and were impressed with how retailers can use it to communicate directly for security assistance. The system also provides instant messaging to individuals or groups of shops about security threats, thefts, fraud & deception, lost children and general warnings, evacuation as examples. We realised it could be part of our existing system and could be integrated into the console as a direct communication tool to the stores. The products dovetailed well and both could be used as proactive rather than responsive tools."

Misconceptions

The Securiplan team is at pains to stress that its focus is public safety and Mr Roche expanded on this: "Lots of people have the misconception that Teams are simply patrolling the mall to deter theft and public disorder, anti social behaviour. Of course it's a part of the work but our main role is general security, including, combating crimes against the person and the vigilance against the potential of terrorist activity within the heart of Stratford Town Center. Vigilant is one of the best tools that these guys can have in achieving this aim, interfacing as it does with ShopAlert and the town's digital trunked radio system."

"I'm able to gauge the value of the digitally recorded video evidence by the fact that when we produce it in court we invariably get a change of plea. The quality of image from Vigilant is exceptional but the auditing system is also first-rate and therefore underscores the value of the recording as evidence."

The Securiplan team has provided training for constables on how to use the Vigilant equipment and both the Metropolitan Serious Crime and National Crime Squads have retrieved valuable evidence from the system with positive feedback from many other Police departments. The system has also proved its worth in support of the Safe Child initiative which as a program is designed to minimise distress and hazards when children become separated from their families in busy Shopping Centers. Users at various retail locations report that Vigilant is outstanding at identifying lost children, following their movements and allowing center staff to go to them.

Location, location, location

However advanced the digital recording and playback technology, cameras have got to be well located and of course have got to be high quality: Land Securities opted for JVC TK-C655 internal domes and Forward Vision's MIC1-300 MK2 (Metal Mickey) on the exterior. The Management at Securiplan encourage their operators to use the PTZs rather than rely on pre-sets and tours. Des Roche says: "I like to see the guys using cameras proactively. We call it "having a sniff." and Securiplan at Stratford shy away from having dedicated control room staff, a practice which the company is firmly supportive of. Center Security staff spend one (1)-hour maximum in the control room and are then rotated to another task including patrols so that they continue to relate actively to the system from another perspective of their duty."

Crossroads for the city and East Enders with a difference

Des is excited about what the future holds. The Channel Tunnel International Station is near completion and due north of the Land securities/Securiplan offices within Stratford, work has already started on parkland/rail lands that is to be turned into the Stratford City development and Olympic village while the main athletics arena and the aquatics center are less than a mile to the south. "I'm an East Ender and very proud to see all this happening in my part of London. With our Teams proactive approach to security, customer care and public safety I am confident that we can ensure all the new visitors that come into our Town Center and Shopping Center will totally enjoy the experience".

About Vigilant

Vigilant Technology, a BATM Company, is a global leading provider of intelligent IP surveillance and security solutions. The company offers a turn key solution including video servers, DVR/NVRs, intelligent real-time video content analysis and sophisticated, proactive control center solutions. Vigilant has a worldwide customer base and is globally supporting tens of thousands of cameras in airports, governmental sites, financial institutions, correctional facilities, casinos, city centers, and more.

Visit www.VGLNT.com for more information.