



Southampton FC boosts safety, security, and efficiency with Motorola Solutions' intelligent, connected ecosystem

Southampton Football Club

Southampton FC is a professional football club based in Southampton, Hampshire, England. Home to more than 32,000 supporters on match days, St Mary's Stadium is a landmark venue at the heart of Southampton FC's identity. Since the stadium opened in 2001, it has played host not just to football but to a growing calendar of events across sport, entertainment, and community activity. The club is now embarking on an ambitious redevelopment to elevate the visitor experience and create a modern, multi-purpose destination.



OFFICIAL VENUE SECURITY
TECHNOLOGY SUPPLIER

Customer

Southampton Football Club (FC)

Partner

2CL Communications

Industry

- Sport and leisure
- Stadiums
- Hospitality

Challenge

Southampton FC's previous radio and video security systems had become outdated and could not deliver the performance needed to meet the club's strict safety and security standards. The radio batteries were draining quickly, no longer able to last during match days, coverage was sometimes intermittent, and the system lacked functionality.

The video system, meanwhile, comprised cameras from various manufacturers and offered no analytical capabilities, clear image quality or 360° coverage of the stadium. This made it very difficult and time-consuming for control centre teams to pinpoint or respond to incidents. Moreover, there was no resilience or redundancy.

Therefore, to ensure the security teams could operate efficiently and effectively, Southampton FC decided to explore updated systems for dependable video and radio coverage throughout the entire stadium, the Staplewood training ground, and in the new hospitality areas the club is developing.

2CL, a provider of Motorola Solutions' communications and security systems, initially won the tender to replace Southampton FC's radio system. However, being a provider of Motorola Solutions' wider ecosystem, it then went on to refresh the stadium's video systems and introduce body cameras. 2CL also provides ongoing 24/7 service, support and a comprehensive training programme which is continually reviewed to ensure staff know how to maximise system usage.

Jack Wilkinson, Director of Business Development at 2CL, comments: "As a Motorola Solutions Ecosystem Solutions partner, we are in a position to provide the best possible range of technologies to our customers. I believe that this is the first stadium in the UK to deploy the ecosystem. More are bound to follow suit." Before deployment, 2CL and Southampton FC held numerous meetings, and 2CL organised a series of demonstrations and trials, including on match days, as proof of concept. 2CL and Southampton FC also visited Motorola Solutions' London Innovation Centre to further learn about how the ecosystem can work together to deliver effective outcomes.

Solutions

A MOTOTRBO™ radio system:

- MOTOTRBO SLR 5500 repeaters
- Over 250 MOTOTRBO R7 two-way portable radios
- Accessories, including IMPRES™ batteries, multi-unit chargers, and surveillance kit earpieces
- MOTOTRBO DM4600e digital mobile radios
- TRBOnet Enterprise
- Lone Worker safety feature
- Radio Alert

An Avigilon Unity fixed video security system:

- A range of cameras, including the 40-megapixel Avigilon Pro cameras, outdoor and indoor IR domes, multisensor cameras and pan-tilt-zoom pendants
- Avigilon Unity AI network video recorders
- Avigilon Unity 43" LED 4K UHD monitors 16.9 widescreen aspect
- Avigilon Unity video software
- AI Analytics such as Focus of Attention (FoA), Crowd Analytics, Unusual Activity Detection (UAD), Unusual Motion Detection (UMD), Licence Plate Recognition (LPR), and Appearance Search™

Body camera solution:

- VB400 body cameras, with mounts and docking stations
- VideoManager software for body camera user and footage management





Solution

Over 350 stewards and security staff can be present at the stadium on match days or at large-scale events, such as concerts. These security teams, as well as catering staff, utilise the new MOTOTRBO radio system for effective coordination to deliver a positive and safe experience for the 30,000-plus fans. The club also uses the system for day-to-day operations, both in and around St Mary's Stadium and at its Staplewood training ground. There are nine channels, and teams predominantly use the MOTOTRBO R7 radios for voice calls and text messaging. The radios are perfectly suited to the environment, with their noise suppression and feedback cancellation technology, integrated GPS, rugged design, and long battery life. Moreover devices are equipped with emergency buttons and lone worker apps for worker safety during incidents.

Operators in the central control room use DM4600e mobile radios and TRBOnet Enterprise to coordinate the teams at events and on match days. Andy Darbyshire, Head of Event Safety and Security at Southampton FC, explains how they use the platform: "TRBOnet acts as the control hub for our radio network at matches and events, giving our team a live overview of staff movements, incidents, and communications. It also provides me with the ability to review transmissions for organisational learning, ensuring our team can continually improve how we operate. In the event of an external enquiry, every transmission is recorded, time- and date-stamped, and available for review, giving us a clear evidential record to support accountability and decision-making."

Following the radio communications upgrade, cameras were installed in a progressive, phased deployment, starting with the stadium bowl, then the external areas,

including the training ground, and finally the internal, hospitality and concourse areas. Southampton FC collaborated with the 2CL video engineers to strategically place cameras for comprehensive coverage of all key areas, both inside and outside the stadium. The deployed cameras include outdoor and indoor IR domes, multisensor cameras, pan-tilt-zoom pendants, and 40-megapixel Avigilon Pro cameras; the latter have been installed within the bowl and allow operators to zoom from one end of the stadium to the other, while retaining pinpoint precision and crystal-clear imagery.

Southampton FC is using a wide range of the system's AI analytics, including Focus of Attention (FoA), Unusual Activity Detection (UAD), Unusual Motion Detection (UMD), Licence Plate Recognition (LPR), Crowd Analytics, and Appearance Search. These intelligent analytics help controllers focus on and quickly make sense of incidents, or track or flag persons of interest on match days (for example, missing children, or individuals who have been banned from the stadium).

Out of hours, meanwhile, the UMD and UAD technology, which continuously learns what is typical activity, detects and flags issues without the need for predefined rules or setup, and Southampton FC has configured various alarms, which are flagged to the mobile phones and desktops of the heads of security for a 24/7 response. On match days or at events, Radio Alert has been configured on specified devices, so that security personnel receive direct messages on their radios for fast investigation when the video system recognises unauthorised or unusual behaviour. The club is also introducing Crowd Analytics for occupancy monitoring to ensure no spaces within the stadium or the wider entertainment areas become overcrowded.



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Motorola Solutions' radio and video safety and security systems, which 2CL has provided and installed at St Mary's Stadium, have hugely enhanced our security operations. The improved camera coverage provides us with clearer visibility throughout the stadium and, along with the advanced analytics, enables quicker identification and response to issues. At the same time, the updated radio system has strengthened communications between teams on the ground, ensuring that incidents are managed swiftly and effectively. Together, these tools have made our operations safer and more efficient, ensuring we are better equipped to provide an enjoyable experience for fans.

This was a complex project, and throughout the various installation phases, 2CL's support, professionalism, attention to detail and commitment have been outstanding. From the very first design stages, through to deployment, maintenance, and after-sales support, any queries have been quickly addressed. 2CL has continually worked with us to make sure that we develop the best possible solution for safety and security at St Mary's Stadium.

– **Andy Derbyshire MSyl Head of Event Safety and Security, Southampton FC**

Alongside the fixed video system, Southampton FC has also equipped some security guards with VB400 body cameras linked to the Avigilon Unity software, enabling control room operators to livestream or review first-hand footage alongside fixed video streams. This gives additional insights and perspectives when dealing with troublemakers or incidents. The cameras have also been proven to act as a successful deterrent to anti-social behaviour. The VB400's pre-recording and peer-assisted features ensure the cameras capture the moments that matter. The cameras are paired with the users' radios, so recording commences automatically if radios enter emergency mode. This further enhances safety and security.

In line with GDPR regulations for video systems, authorised personnel only within Southampton FC can download, view, and share video footage for both training and potential prosecution purposes. Indeed, in case of incidents requiring investigation, footage can be shared with the local police, who are present in the control room on match days and at events. The fact that the camera system could deliver high-quality, evidence-grade footage, in the case of the fixed video even when operators zoomed from one end of the stadium bowl to the other, was a key factor in Southampton FC's system selection.



Outcome

The flexibility of the solution means that the core security team can use the same system, which has 20% less infrastructure, to efficiently monitor daily operations, for example, when visitors are playing on golf simulators or pool tables in LEVEL1 on a weekday, as on match days, when they are helping to manage and coordinate a significantly larger team of stewards and event staff. Due to the performance and connectivity of the technology, Southampton FC estimates it has seen a 20% increase in staff productivity and efficiency, and, moving forward, further functionality such as dedicated talk groups may be configured. Feedback has been positive. Users appreciate the advanced capabilities of the system and find it more user-friendly, effective, and easy to manage.

Andy Darbyshire summarises the positive impact of the video system: "It has been a game-changer for our operations, saving us up to 80% time when we search and review post-match incidents. However, we can also watch live incidents, with the ability to zoom in and capture clear evidential footage. This not only allows us to provide stakeholders with the necessary material for prosecution when required, but also supports organisational learning by helping us identify and prevent future issues." The system is already proving its worth: one recent incident during a game involved a person throwing an item onto the pitch, followed by a pitch incursion. Footage was reviewed during the match, and the person was successfully identified and detained at the scene.

Indeed, having a connected ecosystem that works seamlessly together to deliver the fastest, best possible outcomes for improved safety, security, and efficiency at the stadium has made this deployment a huge success. The resilience, redundancy, and ongoing support, meanwhile, ensure Southampton FC has a reliable system for business-critical operations, both now and into the future, ultimately creating a safe and enjoyable experience for fans.



Benefits

- The intelligent, connected, high-performance system is boosting safety and security across the stadium site and beyond, providing evidence-grade footage, acting as a deterrent and enabling a swift, coordinated incident response
- The integrated technology and advanced AI analytics are saving a huge amount of time (estimated up to 80% in time savings) and resources for the security teams, who can now usually review and pinpoint the evidence they need in a matter of minutes
- Southampton FC is seeing efficiency and staff productivity gains of circa 20% on match days
- The flexibility and scalability of the solution enable ease of expansion and adaptable usage, in line with Southampton FC's development plans
- The high performance of the new technology has allowed for about a 20% reduction in infrastructure. (The control centre has much improved visibility with fewer cameras)
- The technology's resilience and redundancy ensure Southampton FC can always rely on the system for match-day and day-to-day operations
- The solution has been installed in line with GDPR requirements and allows versatile cooperation with local law enforcement agencies
- User feedback has been excellent, with praise for ease of use, reliability, functionality, and performance



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