



## Tamworth Town Centre - A Case Study



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### Quick Facts:

- Tamworth required a staged upgrade of its 77-camera, analogue CCTV system.
- The ability to instantaneously view video of an event that just occurred helped to sway decision makers into choosing a Vicon system.
- SurveyorVFT PTZ domes use wireless transmission to send IP video directly to the control room.
- Live and recorded video may be viewed from anywhere on the network — not just from the control room.
- The system can be easily expanded over time.

## Historic Town Centre Employs Modern Surveillance Technology

### The Client

Tamworth is located 23 kilometres northeast of Birmingham. It has a resident population of approximately 80,000 but also attracts a large number of visitors wishing to enjoy the Town's restaurants, shops and tourist attractions including Tamworth Castle. The Council considers the security of its residents to be of paramount importance and has also looked to provide a safe environment for people who visit the Town Centre. There is therefore a zero tolerance attitude to anti-social behaviour, vandalism and theft. With this in mind, the Council invested in a CCTV system some years ago which could monitor activity 24/7 within the Town Centre. The existing CCTV system comprised 77 cameras which were all wired directly to the Town's control room where they were recorded for twelve hours a day on analogue VCRs.

### The Challenge

"Our old analogue based CCTV system had done a good job over the years but it was

clear that we were missing out on the advantages that the latest advances in digital and IP network based CCTV technology could deliver," said Larry Phillips, Tamworth Borough Council's CCTV Control Manager. "The challenge for us was how to upgrade the system within the confines of a limited capital budget. Whilst we would naturally have preferred to have everything in place from day one, the sensible approach was to look to work with a manufacturer that had a system architecture which would allow us to take a phased approach to the introduction of new technology."

The expertise of Larry Phillips and his colleagues in the implementation and management of CCTV had already been recognised by the CCTV Users Group with the presentation of the 2009 CCTV Team of the Year Award and the CCTV Management and Innovation Award.

One of the Council's objectives was to look at utilising rapid deployment cameras rather than just add more fixed

cameras and an IP based system offered the option to do this cost effectively. "We certainly needed to move away from the process which involved recording onto tapes and having to change them on a regular basis. More importantly, we wanted to increase the effectiveness of our CCTV system by improving image quality and have additional flexibility as to where live or recorded images could be viewed," added Larry Phillips.

### The Evaluation Process

Working closely with Paul Smith and David Bromley, ADT's Technical Support Engineers, and Account Manager Chris Neville, Larry Phillips





and his colleagues took a long hard look at ten different manufacturers to see who could provide a complete solution. “We got down to a short list of three manufacturers who on paper seemed to provide the best options and then asked each to provide samples of their digital video recorders so that we could evaluate which combination would best match our requirements,” said Larry Phillips.

Each of the three manufacturers’ proposed solutions were evaluated for the quality of the images that could be recorded in different environments and lighting conditions at varying frame rates. Additionally, the ease with which recorded incidents could be retrieved and backed up was part of the test criteria, as was overall operator friendliness. Recording tests were conducted at 4, 8 and 16 frames per second, as well as in real time.

“The tests clearly showed that Vicon could provide the best solution and was able to meet all of our specifications - and in some respects exceed them. The ability to almost instantaneously view footage of an

incident that has just happened, for example, is something that some other manufacturers could not offer and yet we could see would be an extremely valuable feature in helping our operators make quick and effective decisions. The time we put into the test process was worthwhile allowing us to be confident that we had made the right decision as to which manufacturer we should work with. In this respect we have to have to express our gratitude to Paul Smith and Paul Bromley as well as the Vicon team for their help in this process, as well as for the help in the planning and design of the upgrade solution,” said Larry Phillips.

### The Solution

With only limited funds immediately available, Tamworth Borough Council decided on a phased approach that would eventually lead to the Town Centre having a comprehensive CCTV system which capitalised on the very latest technology. The priority was to provide control room operators with an easy to use system that delivered high quality images at the required frame rates for any given situation.

Phase 1 started the process of upgrading from analogue to a network-based video management CCTV solution. It involved the installation of a Vicon Kollector recording platform with an external RAID5 array to record and store images being observed on the control room’s four spot monitors. As well as recording and storing high quality video at frame rates to meet the client’s demanding specification, the Kollector is also able to provide functionality which could not be achieved by the previously installed analogue recording equipment. The Kollector can be used as a workstation allowing authorised users from anywhere on the network to view live images or retrieve recorded video. In addition to the instant ten second playback of an incident, the Kollector Pro also has a Smart Search function allowing hours of video to be scanned in minutes in search of specific events.

Phase 2 saw the installation of two further Kollector recorders to further add to the recording capacity of the system.

Phase 3, which has just been completed, involves the provision of a Vicon ViconNet workstation designed to make it much easier for control room operators to monitor and control the Tamworth’s 59 analogue cameras and 18 IP cameras. In addition, Vicon SVFT fully functional domes with integral IP cards have been installed at various locations surrounding the town.

Images from these dome cameras are transmitted via a wireless link to the control room.

Phase 4, to be completed during 2010, will see the provision of additional Vicon vandal resistant domes which can, if required, be rapidly deployed at identified crime hotspots throughout the Town Centre. ‘Duct feet’ allow the domes to be put in place quickly or moved to another location and in order to keep costs to a minimum, images from the dome will be transmitted to the control room over a wireless link system to be installed by ADT.

### The Benefits

“Vicon and ADT have worked very well with us as a team to ensure that this phased approach has been affordable. By the end of 2010 it will provide us with a CCTV system which gives our operators an essential tool to make quick and effective decisions should an incident or emergency occur,” concluded Larry Phillips.

“Most importantly the design of the system provides us with the ability to expand the system as and when the need arises.”

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*Larry Phillips  
CCTV Control Manager  
Tamworth Borough Council*