



Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum Receives a 360-Degree Security Makeover

CLIENT

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is one of Scotland's most popular free attractions and features 22 themed, state-of-the-art galleries displaying an astonishing 8000 objects.

CHALLENGE

The biggest challenge for this museum that opened in 1901, is to install new security equipment into an aging building without ripping it apart.

SOLUTION

Oncam worked with Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum to cover the museum's south and north entrances with narrow passageways and gift shop with discreet and unobtrusive 360-degree security cameras.

RESULTS

The implementation of Oncam cameras has upgraded the museum's security surveillance, achieving total situational awareness. The security team has now clear view of the galleries and movement between rooms.

Museums are complicated for security professionals. They must be open and welcoming to the public, but they often have quiet nooks and crannies where patrons sit and ponder the extraordinary art and human endeavor on display. Museums acquire, conserve and exhibit extraordinarily rare pieces of art and antiquities, sometimes jewels, and all of them are worth more than a king's ransom.

"Museums, depending on their age and the types of artifacts they have, will use cameras as a deterrent as well as for the concealed viewing of patrons by security," says Simon Reed, VP Sales EMEA and Asia at London-based Oncam, a leading manufacturer of 360-degree surveillance solutions. "Many times, older pan-tilt-zoom cameras don't provide images that hold up in court."

Plus, older and fixed cameras can only see one thing at a time, and they require a multitude of cables, recording boxes, storage for video, and more.

So, when it came time to upgrade the security capabilities of a stellar institution such as Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, its head of security wanted state-of-the-art technology.

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objects, from Dutch masters to Van Gogh to collections of armor and even Salvador Dali's "Christ of St. John of the Cross." However, it opened in 1901 and is more than 100 years old so the biggest challenge was being able to apply new equipment into an aging building without ripping the building apart.

Enter Oncam's innovative technology. "With 360-degree technology, security personnel can see everything from one camera inside one room," says Reed. "Installation becomes simpler, and cheaper, because it is quite difficult to run new cables in old buildings without moving walls." The technology also runs constantly and there is no need for 24-hour batteries.

More than a camera upgrade was needed. "If an incident occurred, we wanted the ability to review what happened, up to the moment, in detail," says Tom Gallacher, the head of security. "This helps with the management of the museum's security service, and makes everything we do more efficient."

Kelvingrove, like many museums, has its nooks and trouble spots. The south entrance has a long, narrow passageway, followed by two stairways on either side. The north entrance has the same layout but with the addition of a statue that is the occasional target of graffiti. There is also a gift shop.

Keeping an eye on the past

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Kelvingrove Art Gallery and
Museum

Prior to upgrading, at least three or four cameras and their connecting cables were needed to see all this territory. Now, one 360-degree camera utilizing dewarping software is placed at both the south and the north entrances, revealing everything with clarity.

Each camera is discreet and replaces the ugliness and expense of having 3-4 cameras to cover the same zones. The museum’s third camera covers the entire gift shop protecting it from shoplifters.

Oncam’s Reed says that total situational awareness is achieved with 360-degree technology: security can follow anyone across one camera instead of linking the view together with several of them. “We can see, for example, partners of a would-be criminal, and can identify any behavior that happened before an incident,” he says. A 360-degree view also sees movement between rooms.

Plus, for cash-strapped museums, the cost of ownership goes way down. Before 360-degree technology came along, there would commonly be one camera placed before each really expensive item. Now, only one camera is needed and it sees all pieces of art simultaneously, making installation much simpler and less expensive. Sometimes, even alarms systems are not necessary because the new technology’s analytics replace that extra system.

“Being unobtrusive is key in a museum,” says Reed, “with 360 a security operator can look at all the different paintings at the same time, making it much easier

to monitor and track people, and with its security analytics, any untoward activity is immediately spotted.” It also gives a real-time notification if something is stolen via instant messages or live, streaming video, which can be zoomed in on with one’s fingertips and viewed on an iPhone or an android device. Being that the system is tied into all the other layers of protection, any alarm in a museum, such as a fire alarm or a sprinkler system malfunction can trigger a video event.

There is also a marketing use, and museums are showing a great interest in the intelligence and analytics a 360-degree system can provide. “A complete solution can deliver total occupancy, how many people are in which areas and how long they stayed. It also allows for the management and safe movement of people, providing marketing info to discover which exhibits are most important to people.”

Still, and even with this technology, basic background checks of personnel and bag checks of visitors remains critical. “The easiest way to steal a precious artifact is through an inside job,” says Reed, “so security personnel must be thoroughly vetted.” They are the first line of defense and they have to be aware of the entire layout, from the fire escapes to the valuable object d’art residing on the walls.

When a professionally trained and alert staff is combined with powerful technology, thieves have a lot of reasons to go elsewhere.

