

Fortnum & Mason Chooses Synectics

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Frank Feltham
Facilities Manager at
Fortnum & Mason



Established in 1707 by William Fortnum and Hugh Mason, Fortnum & Mason, the opulent and world-renowned London department store, has, on its 300th anniversary, just completed a major refurbishment. Complementing the £24 million investment is a comprehensive security upgrade, the heart of which is a state-of-the-art CCTV control and digital recording solution from Synectics.

The Challenge

Most famous for its luxury picnic hampers, which the store first distributed to Victorian era high society at events such as the Henley Regatta and the Ascot Races, two of its floors are completely devoted to food and drink. It has however, also developed an international reputation for a wider

variety of lifestyle goods for both men and women, elegantly displayed around the history steeped floors of the store.

Also situated around the store, are five speciality restaurants, serving a range of culinary delights, from seafood banquets to afternoon teas. Complementing the classic ambiance of the store, the restaurants not only provide an opulent experience, but are a popular year round tourist attraction, making Fortnum & Mason a ‘must see’ stop on any international tourist’s visit to London.

System Upgrade

Recognising the need for an upgrade to its existing security, Fortnum & Mason management regarded the comprehensive store refurbishment

programme to be the perfect time to reevaluate their existing surveillance system, and bring together the piecemeal legacy components within an effective, single integrated control solution. Turning to specialist installer IMLAP Ltd, Fortnum & Mason’s management put forward several key objectives they wanted addressed by the system update, as David Knapp, Director of IMLAP explains: “Store management wanted to concentrate the majority of the security budget on the synchronisation of the CCTV system. This meant we needed to supply a total control solution, including recording, that would interface with the mix of third party manufacturers’ equipment already present at the store.



PROJECT DETAILS

Client

Fortnum & Mason

Location

London, UK

Integrator

IMLAP Ltd

The Solution

Directly addressing this issue, we specified a Synectics solution that included their award-winning SynergyPro control software and Modular Digital Recording System.

“The replacement of the existing control and recording system at Fortnum & Mason represented a significant technological investment for the store. So, prior to the purchase, to demonstrate the capabilities of the powerful Synectics system, we arranged several demonstrations of the product. These were conducted at existing installations within some of London’s most prestigious locations, including the famous Ritz Casino.”

Frank Feltham, Facilities Manager at Fortnum & Mason elaborates: “Products can make lots of technical promises but there really is no substitute for experiencing the technology in action. These demonstrations showed us that the Synectics solution delivered all it promised, and gave us great confidence that SynergyPro control software would provide us with a powerful surveillance

tool and the key to maximize the potential of our camera network.”

Diverse Surveillance

Utilising Synectics technology, Frank’s highly experienced security team can now constantly monitor their network of over 80 cameras using SynergyPro’s intuitive touch screen interface, instantly navigating their way around the system via detailed floor-by-floor maps, showing all camera positions. This function allows operators to easily follow a target around the store, by quickly and easily switching to the next available surveillance point. For operators more comfortable with a ‘traditional’ control method, camera switching and PTZ control can also be achieved via the Synectics standalone ‘Navigator’ joystick. This ergonomically designed ambidextrous control device provides Fortnum & Mason operators with the option of using a physical control interface, supporting the SynergyPro touchscreen system.

Backed by a team of six security personnel positioned throughout the store, Fortnum & Mason’s four control

room operators use the Synectics surveillance technology in a number of diverse ways, as Frank Feltham explains: “First and foremost it’s a fantastic security management tool. From our purpose built on-site control room, we can instantly get an overview of the store, or concentrate on the most finite of details. Cameras cover the shop floors, which contain a large amount of high value stock. In addition, we have all entrances and exits, restaurants, lifts, approaches to shop floors, rear of shop areas and whole of the exterior/perimeter of the building covered with Pelco camera domes.

“Because of our reputation for selling high quality, high value goods, and the attention that brings from the criminal fraternity, the new surveillance system is deployed in an invaluable role, to detect crimes ranging from opportunistic theft, to highly organised gangs of habitual criminals, who target our highest value stock, using sophisticated measures. Equally however, we use our powerful surveillance to protect the security of our customers from opportunist pickpockets, who may be attracted by our flow of clientele.

“As a by-product of our comprehensive coverage, we have been able to assist third parties in incidents that have happened off-site, such as a serious road traffic accident that happened outside the store. Through our system, we were able to provide the police with evidential footage on DVD, depicting the whole incident, caught in full on our exterior cameras.

“Our order of priority at any incident is firstly, to evaluate if there had been any witnesses, and then to assess the footage of the incident. This shows how highly we rate, and rely on the highly detailed images we can now access.”

Instant Access

The recording of vital video footage is via Synectics' Modular Digital Recording System (MDRS). Holistic integration means that instant playback is available, presented to Fortnum & Mason operators across two Synergy monitors. Frank Feltham explains; “The instant access to high-resolution recorded footage has greatly improved our operators' efficiency in determining the nature of an on-screen event, or verifying the identification of an individual or item within the store—enabling the true value of the recorded footage to be immediately realised and acted upon. The quality of the recorded footage is paramount to us, and we have been more than impressed with the Synectics system. We can now use

the instant playback facility to identify individuals clearly. These individuals then become known to our security team, and using our powerful technology, we can identify them whenever they enter the store. We can then closely monitor them, and deny them subsequent access to the store if necessary.

“Instant access to recorded footage is also vital to clarify a suspect's actions. The immediate availability of footage is very important to us, as time is of the essence, allowing our security team to quickly mobilize to intercept an individual as they leave the premises.”

Effective Detection

The new CCTV system has been instrumental in the apprehension of a number of highly professional shop lifters, including one individual who had slipped through security at one of the country's most well known auction houses, Frank explains: “We stopped an individual as he was about to leave the store, as he had been captured on camera stealing a package of tea from our food department. We then discovered that he was in the possession of a number of maps, of antique appearance. Arousing our suspicions, I contacted the obvious vendors of this type of item, and soon found that they had been stolen from a well-known auction house. Needless to say, we were able to return these items, to the vendor's great gratitude!”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information on the products, services and systems offered by Synectic Systems, visit synecticsglobal.com.

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As with this, or any incident at the store, the Fortnum & Mason security team are able to provide the police with specific evidential footage downloaded to DVD, either for use in a prosecution, or for further off-site investigation.

Using the powerful Synectics surveillance system as the keystone of a comprehensive security solution has provided Fortnum & Mason with an effective deterrent to the organised gangs of shop-lifters, who often steal products to order, and who target the high-profile central London stores. The system's intuitive, ease of use, has afforded the famous store with an effective tool with which to protect both their staff, and range of high value stock.

Synectics designs integrated end-to-end surveillance control systems for the world's most demanding security environments. We excel at complex projects that require innovative, tailored solutions with high reliability and flexibility, specifically for casinos, oil and gas, marine, public space, banking, transport and critical infrastructure applications. Synectics' Systems division is part of Synectics plc, a global leader in advanced surveillance, security and integration technologies and services.



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