



Challenge

Safeguard a city of 85,000 people, control crimes and theft in high-traffic tourist areas, and possess an efficient and advanced surveillance system with a limited operating budget.

Solution

Authorized police officers in Mechelen, Belgium are able to monitor the system from their desktops using Avigilon Control Center (ACC) with High-Definition Stream Management™ (HDSM). To complement the city's existing CCTV system, the Mechelen Police Department installed nine Avigilon HD cameras ranging from 2 MP PTZ to 29 MP fixed cameras to oversee the outdoor shopping areas within the City Center as well as the exterior and parking lot of the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance. With the ability to store continuous HD surveillance footage up to 30 days, the Avigilon system has been instrumental in accurately assessing different situations and effectively solving police investigations.

Benefits

Adding a sophisticated HD surveillance system has enabled police officers in Mechelen to monitor some of the city's highest traffic areas in an organized and efficient manner. With Avigilon 29 MP cameras covering the periphery and all access points of the shopping district, the police are able to get a clear image of every person who enters and exits the City Center. In the past, grainy CCTV camera footage with inadequate zoom features cost the police force countless opportunities to identify criminals or accurately evaluate incidents. Using the user-friendly ACC and the Avigilon Network Video Recorders, the police staff has been able to drastically reduce investigation time and present indisputable evidence against suspects.

- Create a safe environment for residents and tourists
- Significantly reduce investigation time
- Accurately identify and prosecute shoplifters and vandals

Market: City Surveillance

Location: Belgium

Partner: Sait Zenitel

Featured Products



ACC Software



29 MP HD Pro Camera



2 MP HD PTZ Camera



Network Video Recorder

Cutting Edge City in Belgium Protects Citizens and Visitors Using the Avigilon High-Definition Surveillance System

Nestled in northern Belgium and just 25 kilometers from Brussels, the nation's capital, Mechelen is a historic city known for its 16th century architecture highlighted by breathtaking wood carvings. Although known for its historic beauty, the city of 85,000 people strives to be one of the more technologically advanced cities in Europe. In order to do that, city officials knew that they had to upgrade from the classic CCTV system they had been using since 2001. "One of the primary problems we had with the classic CCTV cameras was when the camera was zoomed out, it wasn't possible to identify people in question," said Daniël Dumoulin, police commissioner and IT manager of the city of Mechelen. "Now that we have been using Avigilon, you can get a perfect image of the suspect whether you are zoomed in or zoomed out and still cover a large area." With cameras like the 29 MP HD Pro, the officers in the control room can survey a greater field and make sure Mechelen's busiest areas are secure at all time. The recorded images are also very useful for detectives during investigation activities. "Our primary goal has always been to be a safer and better city for all our citizens and tourists," Dumoulin said.



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Cost-Effective Strategy to Fight Crime

Store theft and pickpocketing have long been a problem for the city of Mechelen. In the past, CCTV cameras were only effective when Mechelen security personnel were alerted of an incident in real time because they were able to adjust the analog PTZ camera and zoom in to try to identify what was happening. But in the cases when the call of the crime came afterwards, the recorded footage was unusable. "A lot of the times, the camera was positioned in a different direction from where the crime occurred, so we were missing a lot," said Dumoulin. Finding a solution to that problem had the potential to be costly for a city with limited financial resources. "Mechelen has only 85,000 people and we don't have the same budget as an Amsterdam or cities with millions of people," Dumoulin said. "You can't afford to put three or four people around the clock surveying your camera system."

Instead, the local police used Avigilon HD Pro cameras to clearly capture the primary problem zones with a small number of cameras covering all exits and entrances. "If something occurs like a pickpocket or shoplifter, he has to pass a camera with high-definition," said Dumoulin. "Even afterwards, if we receive a call from the shop owner, we can look in the images and using digital zoom, we can still get a good usable image of the criminal." Avigilon HD cameras have been able to provide evidence that led to an arrest. "We had a recent incident when we saw a burglar leaving a cellar window which was located at the street level," said Dumoulin. "We were not only able to clearly see him on camera as he climbed out the window, but we were also able to identify him when he drove out onto the street."



Countering Vandalism

The Memorial, Museum and Documentation Centre on Holocaust and Human Rights is located in Mechelen and was previously the site used during the German occupation of Belgium as a collection camp for Jewish people prior to their deportation to concentration camps during World War II. The city of Mechelen uses Avigilon 2 MP fixed cameras to guard an original outdoor train used to transport Jewish people to concentration camps in Germany and Poland. The exterior and parking lot of the memorial is guarded by Avigilon 29 MP and 16 MP Pro cameras to protect cars from theft or vandalism.

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Superior Image Quality

Out of all the benefits of the Avigilon HD system, one key feature stood out to Dumoulin. “I’ve seen a lot of HD cameras and none have impressed me as much as Avigilon, in terms of image quality,” Dumoulin said. “The quality of the picture is exactly what colleagues in my field were asking for.” Dumoulin has already recommended Avigilon products to several of his colleagues in the local police force in Belgium, as well in Mechelen’s security community. “I tell them, this is what you need,” he said. “You need a system which allows you to monitor your entire station continuously and clearly. If there’s a problem, you can always go back zoom in and search an area in high-definition. And that’s a tremendous benefit.”

