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Integration is Key for St Botolphs Security

Committed to providing the best possible security for their tenants, the landlords of the prestigious new St Botolphs Building in the City of London specified an integrated security installation that would combine CCTV and access control. Appointed by Skanska to provide this installation, independent electronic security specialist Quantum (UK) Ltd selected the SiPass integrated access control system from Security Products from Siemens as the basis of its design.

The SiPass integrated system was chosen for this prestigious project not only because of the tight integration it provides with CCTV installations, but also because it offers almost unlimited flexibility to cope with changes in end user requirements, and because it combines high end performance and features with very competitive pricing.

The St Botolphs Building is one the largest new developments in the City, providing more than 500,000 sq ft of highly specified and flexible office accommodation. Of significant architectural merit – it was designed by leading international architect Grimshaw – and located just a short walk from The Lloyd’s Building and Liverpool Street transport interchange, it is already proving attractive to blue-chip tenants.

Such tenants, however, expect and require that buildings they occupy have in place electronic security systems that are effective and versatile yet unobtrusive, requirements that are most readily met with an integrated solution. Having been asked to tender for the landlord’s security installation at the St Botolphs Building, Quantum (UK) Ltd explored a number of ways in which these requirements could be met, but ultimately decided that by far the best option would be to use the SiPass integrated system from Siemens.

“Although we have extensive experience in access control and we’ve used Siemens products on many projects, we had never previously used SiPass integrated,” said Lee Brockman of Quantum

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(UK) Ltd. "It would be easy to think, therefore, that it was a risky decision to use it for the first time on such an important project."

"However, we'd looked at SiPass integrated very carefully and we'd already discovered how easy it was to configure and use. In addition, we knew from past experience that, if we needed it, Siemens would be ready and willing to provide expert support. Bearing in mind also that, in terms of features and performance, it was the best choice for the job by a wide margin, we had absolutely no hesitation in putting it forward."

Having been awarded the contract, Quantum (UK) Ltd devised and implemented an access control system that includes more than 70 door readers in the landlord's area of the St Botolphs Building as well as speed lanes in the foyer to facilitate rapid and convenient entry and exit for staff. The system also works in conjunction with card readers in the building's lifts, so that staff access can easily be restricted to the floors that they are authorized to visit.

The SiPass integrated installation works in conjunction with a CCTV installation, also provided by Quantum (UK) Ltd, which is based on Siemens Sistrore digital video recorders and unobtrusive Solaris dome cameras. The close integration between the access control and CCTV systems is used to enhance overall effectiveness of the security installation by, for example, arranging for the frame rate of video capture to be increased automatically in an area where an unauthorized access attempt is being made.

The capability also exists for the CCTV system to automatically direct PTZ (pan-tilt-zoom) cameras toward specific areas identified by the access control system as being worthy of closer inspection. This option has, however, not yet been implemented, although enhancements are at present regularly being made to the security installation as the detailed requirements of the building's new tenants become known.

Currently, the landlord's security installation includes multiple controllers for the access control system – one for each area of the building – each with its own database, and two Sistrore AX digital video recorders. The major components of the system, including the CCTV cameras, are linked via a dedicated Ethernet network. Provision is made for the connection of up to eight PCs to this network to act as monitoring and control stations for the whole installation.

The landlord's installation is now complemented by another SiPass integrated system that has been provided by Quantum (UK) Ltd for one of the building's first commercial tenants. This covers another 50 doors on the first and second floors of the building, and has three monitoring and

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control stations. At the request of the tenant, this system uses a separate network and is not linked to the landlord's installation, although such a link would be easy to establish, should it ever be required.

“On the basis of our experience with the two projects in the St Botolphs Building, I can confirm that the SiPass integrated system has lived up to all of our expectations and surpassed most of them,” said Lee Brockman. “It's a very impressive system, and I say that as someone who has worked in access control for many years. SiPass integrated is a top-end system that's flexible, easy to work with and excellent value for money.”

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