



Case Study: Greater Birmingham & Solihull Institute of Technology

The **Greater Birmingham & Solihull Institute of Technology (GBSIoT)**, is part of a collaboration between further education (FE) providers, universities, and employers across the Greater Birmingham & Solihull locality.

A successful application submitted by the collaborative partners led towards the recent development of a brand new IoT facility, GBSIoT, based in central Birmingham, specialises in delivering higher technical education (at Levels 4 and 5) with a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subjects.



GREATER
BIRMINGHAM
& SOLIHULL

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Requirement

The latest security systems are a fundamental part of the infrastructure within any new educational establishment. At GBSIoT, a large amount of the footfall will come from visitors, students, and contractors, so managing the flow of people was identified as potentially challenging, particularly when it came to safeguarding students, assets and buildings. As such, GBSIoT turned to security specialists TouchStar ATC to specify a new Access Control, CCTV and Intruder system, managing the full process, from specifying and planning, through to installation, training, handover, and ongoing support of the final solution.

The system needed to manage authorised entry to the Institute itself, complying with all the strict health and safety legislation to facilitate a safe and secure learning environment. Alongside this, a new CCTV system was required to provide additional safeguarding of people in addition to securing the high value assets held on site.

Furthermore, GBSIoT also had to look at how they could scale up the security to ensure the new Institute was sufficiently protected out of hours. Safeguarding against instances of theft, criminal damage, and anti-social behaviour was identified as potential threats, so the latest CCTV monitoring and Intruder systems were required to ensure 24/7 security of the facility.

Michael Burke, Head of GBSIoT worked alongside TouchStar ATC to manage the project commenting,

“It was fundamentally important to us that the security systems were to the same high standards of those required by the educational sector. TouchStar ATC were highly recommended by several educational providers in the area, so we started talking to them about our current and future system requirements. TouchStar provided us with a full end to end solution, from system specification, planning and installation through to training, handover, and ongoing support. The system they recommended was both scalable and futureproof, a perfect fit for us”.

Implementation

TouchStar worked alongside GBSIoT throughout the project, assigning a dedicated Project Manager and Installations Engineer to oversee all the works. Once the initial recommendations had been approved and signed off, a period of testing and risk assessments were conducted within the Institute prior to the installation.

TouchStar worked hand in hand with GBSIoT to develop the infrastructure for an effective deployment that successfully minimised disruption within the premises.



Solution

Access Control

The new installation saw GBSIoT deploy a new brand-new access control system. The system, which comprises of Access Control Hardware and Software was to provide a means of authorised entry for students, staff and permitted visitors. The networked system manages access through multiple doors, the inclusion of one electronically break glass-controlled door also provides safe exit in the case of an emergency.

The newly installed solution offers GBSIoT a cost effective, robust and reliable solution. Designed around an IP addressable controller, the specified proximity card system integrated directly into the Institutes network. The addition of an eight-blade door controller had the additional benefit that all mag lock doors could be managed by one controller.

As part of the installation, TouchStar installed RX4 Proximity readers. The ELITE series reader provided a robust and durable solution that was proven as both quick and easy to install. The reader made for efficient handling of traffic, this was particularly beneficial to the Institute as footfall could fluctuate rapidly in and out of term time. In addition to the readers, TouchStar installed a Video Intercom system to authorise visitor entry plus additional exit buttons for safe and secure exiting of the building.



CCTV/Intruder

The new CCTV system was specified to provide state of the art, monitored, CCTV coverage across the perimeter of the Institute and within the main lobby and entrance to the building. TouchStar specified Avigilon's state of the art camera system which offered GBSIoT the most advanced technology, powerful cameras, and reliable recording devices to keep their facilities safe.

The external high-resolution IP multi sensor cameras were installed to provide a full wraparound of the site perimeter. Fixed ceiling mounted dome cameras were installed to view the entrance door and lobby. Both camera types offered superior picture quality, even in low light levels. A networked intruder detection system was also installed to facilitate the monitoring of doors when the building is out of use.

The solution was enhanced further by the CCTV system monitoring that was commissioned as part of the installation. CCTV monitoring would ensure the Institute would be fully safeguarded and protected, 24/7, with footage captured and stored in line with operational hours. The monitoring can now be fully managed and controlled remotely by security who would have full visibility of the operation and triggered alerts of any incidents.



Results and Benefits

With TouchStar engineers on hand to test, commission and provide training on the final installation, the system has now been fully rolled out across the site.

With the system now fully operational, it offers the scalability to add more cameras and doors should the need arise.

TouchStar's systems also continue to evolve, with further growth and development of both the hardware and the portfolio of solutions. This will ensure that the GBSIoT will continue to invest in a solution that will meet their needs both now and into the future.



Michael continues,

“We did experience a few challenges and delays in the installation that was beyond our control, however, TouchStar were exceptional in their project management, ensuring clear communication with respect to planning and maintaining relationships with all third-party suppliers. TouchStar supported us to overcome any obstacles that came our way to ensure the seamless rollout of the end solution”.



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