

Keeping Crime off the Streets



“It is a testimony that there are now more than 250 MIC series cameras deployed in Bristol”

Ray Murphy, Select Electric’s Managing Director

Project: Bristol City Council
Sector: Local Authority
Product: MIC Series

Bristol is no different from any other major city in the UK in that it has to put up with its fair share of challenges, from inner-city crime through to congestion on its roads. In both cases, however, there is one product that is helping the City Council’s teams to stay one step ahead of the game, a product noted for its reliability and flexibility even in the most demanding environments: the MIC or “Metal Mickey” Series of cameras from Bosch.

Bristol City Council first started using MIC cameras in 2000, after the technology was recommended by a local installer, Select Electrics. Select had installed the fibre network infrastructure across the city and was the Council’s principal contractor for the installation and maintenance of CCTV: “At the time, MIC cameras were seen as quite a radical design,” explains Select Electric’s Managing Director Ray Murphy, “and the Council needed to be convinced that it would give them the level of performance and reliability they needed.

“It is a testimony that there are now more than 250 MIC Series cameras deployed in Bristol, not only for security but also in a traffic management capacity.”

Images from the cameras are transmitted to the City Council’s award-winning control room in the Council offices. The facility is both CCTV User Group Gold accredited as well as having a national accreditation for social alarm monitoring – one of the few councils in the UK to be so recognised.

In charge of the control room is manager Gordon McLanaghan: “Since trialling the cameras we have never looked back,” he explains. “They give us the level of flexibility and reliability that we need, and are robust enough to operate in a number of challenging environments. They are also ‘plug and play’ which is excellent from an installation and maintenance perspective, and if parts need to be replaced they can be changed with minimum downtime.”



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The success of the cameras in a security surveillance capacity led the Council to look at MIC cameras for use in traffic management, managed through a dedicated urban traffic control room. “The cameras used across the city – for traffic management or city centre surveillance – can be viewed in either control room,” Gordon McLanaghan says.

“Recently, my colleagues in traffic secured funding to increase the number of cameras deployed, and because they could access the cameras we have already installed, they were able to extend their scheme quite dramatically. I recommended they use MIC cameras and after a trial against a range of competitor technology, they agreed that the MIC’s offered greater performance, and better value for money.”

“The quality of images and the effectiveness of the zoom from each of the cameras is second to none,” Gordon McLanaghan adds, “but there are also other advantages. It is easy to configure Automatic Number Plate Recognition functionality, which gives us tremendous flexibility, and their design makes them unobtrusive and aesthetically better looking. We are replacing the old ‘shoebox’ cameras with MIC cameras wherever we can as budgets become available.

“The ‘Metal Mickey’ is in essence everything you could possibly want from a CCTV camera,” said Gordon.

A further advantage is the use of brushless motor technology to deliver smooth, whisper quiet operation as Select Electrics’ Ray Murphy concludes: “The use of brushless motors further improves what is already a brilliant performance. The ‘Metal Mickey’ has effectively become the benchmark that every other manufacturer aspires to, and with further investment now as part of the Bosch brand, the quality is likely to get better still.”

The latest MIC cameras to be installed in Bristol are the MIC400 and MIC400 infrared versions. Both are rated to IP68 for the ultimate in environmental protection, come with a choice of 18x or 36x true day/night camera modules and offer extremely flexible mounting options. The MIC1-400 infrared range benefits from built in infrared illuminators providing over 55 metres of IR-enabled night vision.



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