Vista eclipse™ DVR ensures Ebuyer never misses a thing

When Ebuyer wanted to ensure the security of its stock, especially during the packing process, they needed a solution that would allow them to view and record all areas of the packing bay, at all times. This solution came in the form of the Vista eclipse™ and eclipse™ DVR, the pioneering 360 degree camera and digital recorder that has revolutionised the CCTV sector.

Ebuyer.com is one of the largest global Internet resellers of brand name computer technology and consumer electronics products. Founded in 1999, Ebuyer.com is headquartered globally in Sheffield, UK. Their US operation began in 2003 and is based out of Chandler, Arizona. Combined, they have over 300 employees servicing 1.5 million registered customers.

Ebuyer has recently had a warehouse built in Howden, Yorkshire to ensure they keep pace with the rapidly increasing demands of the business. Dealing with a large quantity of high value, small items, it was essential to David Fenner, Head of Security at Ebuyer, to set up a comprehensive security system to prevent shrinkage of stock, especially in the packing areas.

Having previously worked with Fisher Security and been very impressed with their high professional standards, Mr Fenner brought them in to advise on the project and carry out the installation. "You know exactly where you stand with Fisher," says Mr Fenner. "They keep you abreast of all developments, never make promises they can't deliver on and are extremely knowledgeable – I really can't fault them and wouldn't hesitate to use them for future projects."

Following a full analysis of the situation Fisher Security recommended that Ebuyer set up a trial using the Vista eclipse™ camera and DVR. "We needed to provide 360 degree continuous surveillance of key areas in both live and recorded video situations," says Steve Davies, Project Manager of Fisher Security. "The combination of the eclipse camera and DVR is the most comprehensive solution on the market." Mr Fenner agrees, "It is perfect for our requirements and as soon as we saw it we knew it would be the best system for the application," he says.

Because the eclipse DVR records the entire 360 degree image captured by the eclipse camera, the recording contains all the information from the original scene. By using retrospective ePTZ (electronic pan/tilt zoom) the whole recording can be examined in detail ensuring that critical information is not overlooked. A particular event can be reviewed time and time again using different views and screen formats to make certain that the event has been witnessed in its entirety. If required, the event can then be recorded on any conventional CCTV recording device to the analogue output.

"No area is left unmonitored, and with just six cameras we can cover all the relevant areas," says Mr Fenner. "We simply wouldn't have the same assurance that no area or action had been overlooked without the eclipse™ and DVR."

Operation of the eclipse DVR has been designed to be intuitive to minimise any training requirements. "If we want to search the recording for a particular event, we use the zooming, scaling timeline which is very intuitive to use and makes the process surprisingly quick and simple," says Mr Fenner. Additionally, the activity detection feature can be used to automatically search recordings for specific events such as object removal, or video motion detection. Further features include immediate watermarking to prevent any future tampering of the image and configurable recording modes that can be adjusted to meet your exact requirements.

Of course, it's not just loss prevention being targeted by the new system. The important issue of health and safety is also being addressed. In the unfortunate circumstance

that there is an accident on-site, the eclipse™ DVR will record the incident so that the cause can be determined and procedures put into place to prevent such an event occurring again.

The height of the ceilings in the Ebuyer warehouse meant that the cameras couldn't be false ceiling mounted as is typical of many installations. Instead, Fisher had to use pendant mount type brackets to bring the cameras down to a more suitable height, where the activity of employees in the packing bay could be clearly observed. "We consulted with Vista about the best method of mounting the cameras and came up with the pendant solution," says Mr Davies. "We work with Vista a lot and can always rely on them for technical assistance should we need it." As the eclipse DVRs need to be no more than 3 meters from the cameras, a cable was run up the bracket to the ceiling where the DVRs are located.

In addition to the six eclipse cameras and DVRs, there are over 80 further cameras installed on the site. Vista PowerDomes provide general coverage over areas such as dispatch, goods in and the packing bays and 25 Vista VFD3V9CE static colour varifocal domes are used in the office areas for general surveillance. "These were chosen because of their discreet and stylish packaging, which provide peace of mind without undue intrusion," explains Mr Davies. 27 Vista VPC132 Protos[IV] colour cameras have also been installed throughout the warehouse, such as in the packing isles, where fully functional domes weren't required, but a more simple system to monitor activity was still needed.

Minimising any disruption from an installation is always an important part of the process but Ebuyer were particularly keen to prevent any impediments to the smooth flow of the packing process. "Our customers expect an accurate and prompt delivery and we take these requirements very seriously," says Mr Fenner. In order to facilitate this request, Fisher worked in the packing and dispatch areas out of peak hours such as lunchtime and before and after the main shifts. "Fisher completely understood our requirements and went the extra mile to ensure the installation went smoothly for everyone concerned," says Mr Fenner.

As Ebuyer were already utilising a CAT5 computer network cabling system, they wanted all the cameras to be linked in to the same system. Rather than connecting the cameras via conventional coax cables, an NVT twisted pair transmission system was used. This set up carries a number of advantages with it. Not only did it negate the requirement and, therefore, cost of any further cabling, it also significantly reduce installation time. Additionally, the facility for future expansion of the system is in place should it be required.

All information from the electronic security system will be fed back to the control room, which is permanently staffed by security guards contracted in by Ebuyer. "We ensure that there are four guards on duty at all times," explains Mr Fenner. "We find that the combination of electronic and physical security, provided by man guarding, is the most effective solution to our requirements." Six Dedicated Micros BX2 1.2Tb 16 channel digital recorders store the information from the cameras. The information is stored for two weeks and can be accessed remotely at any time by Mr Fenner using the Network Viewer from Dedicated Micros. Should there be an incident that requires the police to receive video footage, Mr Fenner can download the information to his laptop and burn it onto a CD or DVD.

"We are delighted with the system," says Mr Fenner. "The installation was carried out to budget and on time and the equipment ensures that we have full coverage of the packing bays at all times. It's a relief to know that if an incident does occur, we can thoroughly analyse the scene to determine exactly what happened."

About Fisher Security
Fisher Security designs and installs Intruder Alarms, CCTV and Access Control systems, which can be combined as an integrated system using the very latest technology. Their systems are installed and maintained by their own in-house engineers to very high standards.

The company was founded in 1986 by Mr Terry J Fisher and in 1994 gained the NACOSS and ISO 9002 quality assurance certification. This certificate is recognised by both the Police and Insurance Companies.

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