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# Initiating an Intelligence-Driven Approach to Retail Security

SECOM breaks new retail security boundaries with an award-winning iCCTV-integrated predictive intelligence service that's delivered outstanding results for Co-op Food stores.

Bell Integration helps SECOM leverage the power of the IBM i2 iBase intelligence system to proactively tackle in-store crime and enable significant operational savings for retailers.

in association with



# Background

## Taking a smart approach to retail crime

A world-class provider of electronic security and monitoring solutions to high street brands, SECOM helps leading retailers keep their stores safe, secure and profitable.

Having embarked on a new collaborative security partnership with the Co-op Group, SECOM was pioneering the development of a new intelligence-led security service to protect the Group's food stores.

The aim of the game was to boost the already impressive capabilities of SECOM's state-of-the-art Control & Command Centre – a world class alarm-receiving and remote video response centre located in Kenley, Surrey – by leveraging SECOM's cloud-powered in-store security and surveillance systems to proactively combat high-frequency retail crimes like shoplifting. Utilising actionable intelligence to make it easier for the Co-op to stay one step ahead of criminals and habitual offenders.

"The vision was to go beyond simply monitoring in-store CCTV cameras and responding ultra-fast to incidents so that staff, customers and local communities felt safer and more supported," explains Clare Ghiradello, Lead Intelligence Officer at SECOM.

"Gathering data from multiple sources to build a single cohesive intelligence picture would allow us to better understand the shape of crime taking place in the store network and identify which stores were potentially most vulnerable, when crimes were most likely to be committed and, most importantly, by whom."

"Armed with this information, retailers would be able to direct their manned guarding resources to where these are most needed. What's more, we'd be able to inform in-store security teams about exactly what or who they needed to be on the lookout for at a specific time and location," continues Clare.

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# The challenge

## Advanced analytics for retail crime prevention

Bringing together multiple data streams– everything from live CCTV images, intelligence on in-store incidents and the observed behaviours of suspicious shoppers – in a streamlined and effective manner would be the key to ensuring SECOM could build a detailed picture of who the criminals are, what they are doing and predicting what their next steps would be.

“We needed to analyse real-time data and intelligence captured from our surveillance systems along with other siloed databases, including crime reports, in ultra-fast time. Seamlessly analysing this data to generate insights that could be used to proactively tackle incidents in-store and bring criminals to justice,” explains Clare.

But facilitating analysis of all these multiple data sources in a secure environment would be no easy task. Especially since the team’s intelligence data was currently being captured and collated in spreadsheets that were difficult for analysts to interrogate to identify patterns or crime hotspots.

“It all added up to a mammoth manual task that made comprehensive intelligence analysis cumbersome and less than straightforward in a timely manner,” says Clare.

Having previously used IBM® i2® iBase® intelligence system in a previous role, Clare knew this software analytics platform would address the challenge of automating the acquisition and management of SECOM’s significant digital data pool for comparative analysis and wade through the mass of data it collects to help them predict, disrupt and prevent retail criminals.

But to reap the benefits of i2 iBase quickly, SECOM would need specialist help to set up, deploy and populate the powerful i2 iBase database platform.

“That’s when IBM recommended we turn to the team at Bell Integration,” says Clare.



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# The solution

## Expert support – at speed

Bell Integration's i2 team of enhanced support experts were on hand to help SECOM configure their new data analysis and intelligence sharing system – populating the database with existing data resources and enabling advanced connectivity to an array of disparate sources – including systems used by the Co-op and its other security partners.

“With their extensive background in the field of security and intelligence analysis, Bell quickly got to grips with our extensive range of requirements – everything from handling complex data queries and cross-referencing data with thousands of records, to using custom-built templates to generate evidence-based reports for retail customers and law enforcement authorities that cut through investigation timeframes,” explains Clare.

Alongside ensuring the i2 platform generates ‘analysis ready’ data for SECOM's analysts to work with, Bell also implemented IBM® i2® Analyst's Notebook® – a powerful visualisation and analysis tool that enables SECOM's analysts to turn data into intelligence.

“With the i2 solution up and running we were able to initiate innovative services like ROGUES (Repeat Offenders Gallery Under Electronic Surveillance), which allows our Control & Command Centre operators to alert manned guards in real-time and send images of unwanted or high-risk individuals spotted in their locations fast.”

But that's not all. The powerful i2 solution also enables SECOM to automate the compilation and submission of crime reports to police, complete with cloud-hosted video evidence, case files and witness statements (MG11s) on behalf of retailers.

“This saves store personnel and local law enforcement officers valuable time and effort – so much so that local police forces are now piloting an information-sharing agreement with us to help make the fight against low-impact high-frequency retail crime more streamlined and effective,” confirms Clare.

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# The outcomes

The new intelligence-led integrated security solution has garnered a number of prestigious industry awards – and generated impressive results for the Co-op.

“Repeat offenders are now being identified and taken off the streets on the strength of SECOM’s evidence and collaboration with multiple police forces,” confirms Clare.

Within nine-months of the solution going live in a selection of 600 Co-op stores nationwide, SECOM successfully identified and profiled a number of prolific and repeat offenders. As a direct result of intelligence gathered by SECOM, police were able to charge numerous individuals who had committed multiple offences in stores.

“We’re also providing retail customers like the Co-op with data that enables them to reduce their manned guarding presence at certain locations and deploy these resources where they are needed most. For some retailers this represents a significant cost saving, while others have been able to extend their guarding budgets to cover a larger number of stores,” continues Clare.

What’s more, the SECOM intelligence team is able to help its retail customers to work more collaboratively with police and local communities to nip crime behaviours in the bud.

“We’ve had great success tackling issues like petty pilfering or bad behaviour perpetrated by juveniles in stores after school, using their uniforms to identify which head teachers to approach to stage interventions – like a talk in school – to prevent future issues and help get young people back on the straight and narrow,” explains Clare.

## Smarter use of resources at Co-op stores

In less than 12 months, SECOM’s integrated end-to-end service has generated some impressive outcomes for Co-op food stores:

- Notable reduction in thefts at monitored sites
- Positive community response to interventions that help young people reassess their social interactions and behaviours
- Improved deployment and utilisation of security personnel supporting local stores
- Eliminated the need for Co-op employees to generate time consuming crime and incident reports/witness statements

# Why Bell Integration

An IBM platinum partner, Bell Integration is a leading UK i2 systems specialist with expert knowledge in the field of intelligence and data analysis. Having worked extensively with police and law enforcement agencies, Bell’s i2 team excels at enabling customers achieve outstanding ROI from their i2 investments.

“We had a highly productive initial briefing session, during which we outlined the role the i2 platform would play in the envisioned integrated IP CCTV-based intelligence service – and Bell just got it,” says Clare.

Implementation of the i2 solution was hassle free and fast, enabling SECOM to start building an offender information catalogue on behalf of the Co-op and identify stores at the greatest crime risk – and when. Producing the intelligence needed to inform a more flexible guarding strategy in line with current patterns of criminal behaviour.

Since then, Clare and her team have called on the Bell support team for ad hoc help with specific queries related to the launch of new intelligence services.

“The great thing about Bell is that, whatever you throw at them, they always have an answer. From their perspective, when it comes to i2 – anything is possible.”

## Contact

### LONDON

2nd Floor  
107 Cheapside  
London  
EC2V 6DN

T: +44 (0) 239 2825 925

### PORTSMOUTH

New Hampshire Court  
St Pauls Road  
Portsmouth  
PO5 4AQ

T: +44 (0) 239 2825 925

### SINGAPORE

Bell Group Asia Pte Ltd  
30 Cecil Street  
#19-08 Prudential Tower  
Singapore, 049712

T: +44 (0) 239 2825 925

### WOKINGHAM

Saxon House  
Oaklands Business Centre  
Oaklands Park  
Wokingham  
RG41 2FD

T: +44 (0) 134 4386 000

### STEVENAGE

Suite 203  
Kings Court Business Centre  
London Road  
Stevenage  
SG1 2NG

T: +44 (0) 143 8740 657

### HYDERABAD

Bell Integration T/A  
Choose Portal Pvt Ltd  
1st Floor, Krishe Sapphire  
Madhapur Hyderabad  
Telangana, 500081

T: +44 (0) 239 2825 925

### GLASGOW

Suite 11, Sky Hub  
Skypark Management Suite  
Skypark 1, 8 Elliot Place  
Glasgow  
Lanarkshire  
G3 8EP

T: +44 (0) 2392 825 925

### EDINBURGH

Regus Offices  
83 Princes Street  
Edinburgh  
Midlothian  
EH2 2ER

T: +44 (0) 2392 825 925

**See how Bell Integration can help your business succeed.  
Please contact us on [enquiries@bell-integration.com](mailto:enquiries@bell-integration.com) or  
visit [www.bell-integration.com](http://www.bell-integration.com)**

