

S2 NetBox Success Stories: Volume 7

Hot Brands International Protects Its Premises, People and Assets

Industry:

Food/Hospitality

Summary:

Based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Hot Brands International (HBI) markets a unique range of ethnic food restaurants. As the company's brand footprint has grown, so have concerns about security.

Working with system integrator Ocean Computers, LLC, HBI implemented the S2 NetBox IP-based Security System from S2 Security Corporation to provide a seamlessly integrated solution that would protect the company's premises, people and assets.

Challenges:

- Protect employees, premises and intellectual property
- Upgrade employee and visitor management system

Key Results:

- IP-based system allows security manager access from any location at any time
- Integrated logs help to track employee and visitor movement on site
- Reduced cost of ownership over lifespan of system
- System design supports continued expansion

System Integrator:

- Ocean Computers, LLC

Solution:

- S2 NetBox IP-Based Security System

Managing Rapid Growth

Hot Brands International (HBI) provides franchise and joint venture partnerships in the quick service and casual dining industries throughout the Middle East and India. HBI's growth has been exponential, and the company's numerous brands now serve more than 4 million meals per year in UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, India and Saudi Arabia.

As HBI transitioned from a small to a medium-sized business, the company embarked on a proactive security initiative to stay ahead of potential threats before they became real problems. With a focus on protecting the premises, people and assets, HBI began a search for a new security system that would provide a seamlessly integrated solution for several security issues. First, HBI needed to protect the company's main facility, which, in addition to serving as corporate headquarters, is also a central warehouse for multiple food retail outlets within the UAE region and serves as the company's center for R&D and evaluation of new brands. As a result, it is the hub of the company's valuable intellectual property.

Second, HBI wanted to improve its visitor management capabilities. Not only was the existing manual process of having employees and visitors sign in and out using a book both outdated and ineffective, but HBI employees also had reported several incidents of merchants walking in off the street and into employees' offices to sell their goods. That, coupled with a few high-profile crimes in this otherwise safe area, had added to employee feelings of unease.

Third, a new security solution was needed to help the company manage

employee whereabouts, both for their own protection and to ensure that the company was running at top levels of efficiency. HBI was primarily concerned about being able to locate employees throughout the facility should an emergency occur, but also wanted to ensure the accuracy of its time-and-attendance and payroll systems, and take preemptive measures to avert insider threats.



Integrating for Added Value

With the help of system integrator Ocean Computers, HBI implemented the S2 NetBox IP-based Security System. Reports Marek Maitland-Walker of HBI, "What impressed us about the S2 NetBox was the fact that it was Web enabled and browser delivered. To us, this meant we could access the system from any PC running a browser and from any where and were not restricted to using expensive dedicated PCs running proprietary applications. We could see that this would drastically reduce the overall cost of ownership of the system over its lifespan."

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The combination of S2 Security Corporation and Ocean Computers was the foundation of this deployment's success. Maitland-Walker comments: "We were looking for an integrator that we could work closely with in order to tailor the system to meet our immediate needs and develop the system to meet our evolving requirements to match our growth. Once we had selected the system that matched our requirements and an integrator that we felt we could work with, we liaised closely with Ocean Computers in order determine the design criteria."

In addition to providing the access control and management capabilities HBI required, the openness of the S2 NetBox and its freely available software development kit (SDK) allowed Ocean Computers to easily integrate into existing databases. This included the time-and-attendance system, also from Ocean Computers, making it easy for the company to quickly provide the solution HBI wanted.

Planning for the Future

Today, the new HBI security system consists of a number of doors protected from unauthorized access by card readers connected to IP-enabled S2 NetBox Nodes. The nodes sit on HBI's existing network, eliminating the need to run proprietary cable throughout the facility. Employee and visitor logs have been integrated into the system, making it easier to manage the flow of people throughout the facility.

The design of the S2 NetBox fully IP-enabled solution means that system devices such as card access readers and cameras can be mounted by plugging them into a network point. And, because the system is browser based, it can be managed, monitored, configured and maintained remotely. "This will enable us to meet future demands," says Maitland-Walker. "We are already considering managing the security of our retail outlets from our HQ system. Also, in order to meet local moral codes of conduct, we are in the process of rolling the system out to our employee villas. Under local laws, separate dwellings need to be provided for ladies and gentlemen. Additionally, within their employment contracts ladies have an enforced curfew to enhance their own safety. The S2 NetBox system allows us to easily install the necessary equipment and manage and monitor the movement of employees with these villas."

HBI is extremely pleased with their selection of the S2 NetBox and how easy it is to install, use and expand upon. "We not only met but exceeded our goal," says Maitland-Walker. "There is great added benefit in being able to expand the system to remotely monitor our outlets and villas. Before learning about the S2 NetBox, we did not think it would be possible or cost effective to build beyond our original plan. We now know that systems such as the S2 NetBox, designed to work on a network, offer considerable benefits that will allow us to expand the system as we continue to grow."

"The S2 NetBox will allow us to expand the system as we continue to grow."

—Marek Maitland-Walker,
Hot Brands International

Integrated Security for an IP-Connected World®.

About S2 Security Corporation

S2 Security Corporation, headquartered in Framingham, Mass., provides Integrated Security for an IP-Connected World®. S2 is an innovator in the development of network-based integrated physical security systems supporting access control, alarm monitoring, temperature monitoring, video and intercom. S2's flagship product is the S2 NetBox™, a network appliance that enables facilities of all types to manage their physical security needs from anywhere over IP networks.



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