



Projects in the News...

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Integrator Chooses FST21 SafeRise® Solution to Secure Massive Manhattan Apartment Complex

PULL QUOTE:

"FST21's technology is probably the most exciting that I've ever come into contact with. This is where access is going. This is the future." ~ Brian McLaughlin, Integrator, The SecureCom Group, Ltd.

End User: Vincent Callagy, GM, Knickerbocker Village
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INTRODUCTION:

Knickerbocker Village, a vintage apartment complex nestled between the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges, is steeped in the traditions of New York's Lower East Side. Its twelve 13-story brick buildings and surrounding courtyards sit proudly along several blocks on Monroe Street in Chinatown. Constructed by famed and flamboyant real estate developer Frederick Fillmore French in 1933, Knickerbocker Village was completed in 1934.

After French sold the complex, new management gave Knickerbocker a facelift in the late 80s with extensive renovations and rejuvenation. Millions of dollars were invested on new windows,

new building entrance ways and foyers and waterproofing. A horticulturist maintains the extensive gardens in the center courtyard and around the grounds. The complex now also includes the Hamilton Madison House Knickerbocker Village Senior Service Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) that offers services and activities for the building's increasing elderly population.

With about 1600 units within the 12 buildings, the complex is huge. So is the job of securing it. It's a job that is entrusted to Mr. Vincent Callagy, Knickerbocker Village General Manager of 27 years.

OVERVIEW:

On an average day, over 4000 people enter and exit the complex. Tracking how many people are using the door, how often, and which of those people are known and unknown users was a primary concern and objective for Callagy in selecting a new access control system.

"In an urban setting of this type in a downtown metro area, there are always people coming and going," Callagy notes. "It's hard to know who are invited guests and who are people that should not be here. We were looking for an access control system that can monitor this 24/7 and allow us to track entry and exit."

Integrator Brian McLaughlin of The SecureCom Group, Ltd. has been working with Callagy and Knickerbocker for close to 20 years and when he was introduced to FST21's SafeRise® access control solution, knew it would be a perfect fit for the complex. "SecureCom has been around since 1985, and we're always following new technologies," McLaughlin explains. "Most of our work is in Manhattan. We look out for our clients and always want our services to be on the cutting edge of technology."

"A key concern for me and SecureCom is the assurance that the company we choose will be committed to the project. We need to know that the technology will deliver what it says it will, and is reliable," he adds. "You have to be careful with new technologies, so we are cautious and had to get comfortable with FST21 and know we could count on them. In getting familiar with FST21, we all really liked what we saw and heard. I knew that this technology could be a huge help to a large complex like Knickerbocker and how they handle access control of so many people in multiple areas."

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE SAFERISE SOLUTION?

Utilizing FST21's In Motion Identification™ capabilities, SafeRise can manage and control building entry points, common areas, elevators and parking areas. SafeRise recognizes people simply by the way they look. Combining superior security with ultra-convenience, SafeRise represents a best-in-breed fusion of cutting-edge technologies, including 2nd generation Body Biometrics, Behavior Analysis, Facial Recognition and License Plate Recognition.

Because it can quickly identify anyone who is walking to the door, SafeRise can make an informed decision whether to allow entrance, verify guests or transfer them to a monitoring station representative for assistance. There's no need for a key, card or access code. Features include user friendly, multi-lingual graphical user interface (GUI) screens, and Cantonese has also been added as a new language supported in the Voice User Interface (VUI) options specifically for the convenience of the Knickerbocker residents. The FST21 VUI also includes English, Portuguese, Spanish and Hebrew. French and Mandrin languages are also being added soon. If there are video phones in the apartments/offices, users can actually see and speak to the visitor directly. SafeRise technology delivers a secure, convenient and reliable way to let authorized individuals in - and keep unauthorized ones out.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Callagy was very impressed with what the SafeRise access control solution could do for him, not only the basic access operation of the system, but also what the software could provide him with in terms of tracking, documentation and tenant control. "Once he understood all the capabilities of the SafeRise solution and how it could enhance managing the comings and goings at the complex, we moved ahead with the pilot installation at the entryway of one of the buildings," McLaughlin says.

The installation of the system and software set up went smoothly and the data and video imaging of each of the tenants in the building was enrolled into the system. (The building has about 140 apartment units in it, so approximately 400 people were enrolled during the pilot portion.)

"It's working extremely well," Callagy reports. "We have a large Chinese speaking population here, and FST21 added Cantonese to the prompts so the system can welcome users in their native language. I haven't heard a single complaint about the system. I've been the General Manager here for 27 years and you get used to residents approaching you with comments on everything. I've not had one single negative comment about this system, which is absolutely unheard of!" With the pilot installation successfully completed, SecureCom and FST21 are now moving ahead on the installations at the remaining 11 entranceway doors.

CONFIGURATION OF THE SYSTEM:

Richard Holt, SecureCom's lead technician overseeing the SafeRise project at Knickerbocker Village, worked closely with McLaughlin to configure the SafeRise access system for the entire complex.

SafeRise software

A key components at entry door is the AXIS 3367-V network camera. This vandal-proof, dome, face recognition camera offers superior video performance and delivers outstanding light-sensitivity at 5 megapixel resolution. At the entranceway, it provides a digital image of anyone requesting entry. Lighting is key to making sure it provides the clearest image possible, and the camera has to be installed and mounted at the proper height and angle where people are coming in. McLaughlin strategically selected a height of about 75" off the ground, so it can recognize

someone who is exceptionally tall as well as someone sitting in a wheelchair. Additionally, if someone is shorter than the camera height, they would look up and turn their face toward the camera, which casts more light on their face and enhances recognition.

The Intercom System can contact residents and the security desk and serves as the communication aspect of the system. It's in place, McLaughlin explains, to basically serve as a back up to the facial recognition. Un-enrolled visitors and deliveries will not be granted access through the system, so the Intercom System helps to verify those people.

McLaughlin explains that the Server will run multiple entrances and that the SafeRise software, which he terms the heart of the system, operates it from the server which is connected to the building network. "We're putting in PoE switches to tie their network into the system. The local server connects to a network switch that connects all the cameras and intercoms so we can monitor the doorways."

In addition, a visitor can use, through the Intercom System, the Dial pad to call a tenant's home phone or cell and they can either allow or deny access. It keeps a digital log in the system and shows that a tenant living in Apt 101, for example, let a visitor in on Tuesday at 9:30 p.m. Tenants can also be granted access to parking areas through License Plate Recognition (LPR), matching the tenant driving the car to the car's license plate.

HAPPY ENDINGS:

A happy customer is the best kind of customer, and Mr. Callagy couldn't be more pleased with how the SafeRise solution is meeting his needs. "Without question, this was the way to go. I am thrilled with the level of security and tracking it is providing to us here at Knickerbocker Village."

As an integrator who is always looking for the most advanced and reliable solutions for his clients, Brian McLaughlin says he is very excited about going forward with this product. "FST21's technology is probably the most exciting that I've ever come into contact with," he states matter-of-factly. "This is where access is going. This is the future. As far as key fobs and hand scans, I believe in five years from now those types of technologies are going to be viewed as old and antiquated. This is the technology of the future and where the industry and the world is going."

"We're very excited to be on the ground floor. This is the cart to hitch your horse to and we want to go forward and grow with FST21 like we never have before with any other product out there. The Manhattan market is huge, and the outer boroughs, as well," he adds. "We think big complexes are perfect for SafeRise, but also see applications in smaller buildings, as well." SecureCom also provides security for fire and water districts to manage who has access to pump stations and wells. "This is critical to counter terrorism," McLaughlin points out. "There is government funding available to increase security at these facilities and I believe the FST21 product will take the security of these facilities to the extremely high level they need to be at."

For more information, visit www.fst21.com.