

Home Office Scientific Development Branch

The Home Office Scientific Development Branch (HOSDB) uses advances in science and technology to support the United Kingdom's Home Office in protecting the public from threats related to immigration, passports, drugs and terrorism.

To do this, HOSDB provides advice, support, innovative technology and operational capability to help the Home Office achieve its key objectives of protecting the public, reducing crime and managing immigration.



The Challenge

Previously, HOSDB relied on traditional methods such as email, message boards, meetings and the intranet to communicate with staff at its offices in Sandridge, St Albans and Horsham, West Sussex.

HOSDB required a flexible, easy to manage and versatile medium for distributing TV and messages, and it was decided that streaming this content to meeting areas would be the best option. This way, message scripts with occasional segments of streamed TV could be seen by staff. In addition to internal communications, the organisation also hoped to display content in the reception area, welcoming guests and providing information about the Home Office. As TV and informational content had never been streamed across the site before, HOSDB faced identifying and deploying a completely new solution.

Finding the appropriate solution posed a challenge as HOSDB site is spread over two sites and a variety of buildings. It quickly became evident that traditional TV solutions would not be suitable. It would be impossible to adequately transmit TV via coaxial cables or standard copper Ethernet wires due to signal degradation across long runs.

The Solution

HOSDB had already installed a fibre optic infrastructure for its IP network. The same network it used for email, internet and other network applications. IPTV was identified as an ideal solution as it could harness this existing network and unused bandwidth to deliver TV and information throughout the HOSDB headquarters.

This approach would provide a cost-effective solution for HOSDB. Not only would it be unnecessary to perform the costly and disruptive rewiring required for traditional TV distribution methods, but installing a centralised solution on the IP network would remove the need for separate TV systems in each building. These systems would have been required to counter signal degradation across long runs.

When evaluating potential solutions, systems integrator Beaver Solutions proposed Exterity's network IPTV which would enable streaming of any media across the site. Exterity was chosen as it could directly address the challenges faced, such as site size, and came with a long track record of proven installations. Robin Critchley, Marketing Manager at Beaver Solutions comments: "We knew that Exterity's IPTV system would offer excellent reliability and could easily provide the quality of signal required for this site."

"Exterity provided a quality product which exactly fitted the solution required. After using Exterity at the Home Office, we went on to use the same system at an installation for Ericsson in Dublin."

*Robin Critchley,
Marketing Manager,
Beaver Solutions*

The Result

Exterity system allows HOSDB to transmit message videos and live TV, such as critical news channels, across the site to an infinite number of end points. Messages and TV can be viewed on wall mounted screens in meeting areas as well as in the reception area.

“Internal communications form a vital part of creating a cohesive and efficient workplace,” says Colin Farquhar, CEO of Exterity. “The flexible nature of the solution means that should demand for the IPTV service increase, the organisation can easily add an unlimited number of display points by simply connecting another Exterity receiver to the network, or downloading the PC viewing client for use on staff computers.”

This gives HOSDB the ability to adapt and expand its service without the stress of another infrastructure project.



“Digital signage helps businesses to communicate better internally with staff, promoting messages relevant to the viewing audience. IPTV provides the ideal means to do just this, as it is cost-effective and the best option for transmitting broadcast quality signal across a large site.”

Colin Farquhar

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Leading IPTV Delivery

