

Building a successful future

By Jonathan Levine

2009 was an exciting and productive year for everyone at Axis Security – a year when both our clients and our employees began to reap the benefits of the groundwork undertaken by our management team in 2008.

The bare facts tell their own story: in 12 months we have grown by more than 100% – controlled growth that has been achieved not simply by acquisition, but also by the achievements of the existing teams in growing our business organically.

Our officers now receive one of the most comprehensive and competitive benefits packages within our industry, and this has helped us recruit and retain some of the very best, and enjoy one of the lowest attrition rates ever.

Our clients are also receiving a pro-active service from account management teams that are genuinely committed to service excellence, with an innovative structure that ensure both our clients and our employees receive the highest degree of support and attention.

Of course, the acquisition of Temple Security in early 2009 was a significant step in our growth ambitions, and has brought tremendous benefits to what was already a profitable business.

But, more than this, in an economic climate where many companies are happy to consolidate and wait out the recession, we have continued to invest in sales, personnel and infrastructure, while all the time still delivering 'business as usual' to our customers and not allowing the undoubted challenges of integrating two great businesses into one from detracting from our key focus: delivering best-in-class security services.

Our business is very different from how it was 12 months ago. And it's even better. We now have a national operation. It is a mistake that some businesses make in wanting to grow that they lose sight of their raison d'être. We have not done this. Yes we are bigger, but this gives us the chance of extending the service for which we are renowned in London and the South East and taking it to the regions. It is something that many of our customers have wanted us to be able to do for some time.



John Sergeant talks business with Managing Director, Jonathan Levine.

However, as those who have watched our development in recent months will know, we are also now much more than a manned guarding, mobile patrols and emergency response provider. Today we also have a systems division, a specialist CCTV, access control and intruder alarm business headed by Walter Fitzpatrick that uses the most sophisticated technologies available to deliver high-end security solutions.

Today, we have no fewer than nine offices. These have been carefully chosen to ensure our business is clustered around key cities where our services are most required.

Over the next 12 months we will continue to look at other acquisition opportunities where they can further complement our service, and expand into 'new' territories. We shall also continue to invest

“Our intention, going forward, is to offer clients a bespoke service that is fit for purpose. This holistic approach sets us apart from the majority of our competitors.”

Innovation is key, both in our technology and our thinking, and the ability to combine the best of technology with the best manned guarding and response services is a powerful proposition.

Our intention, going forward, is to offer clients a bespoke service that is fit for purpose. This holistic approach, where manned guarding and systems are working together sets us apart from the majority of our competitors, where frequently the two are competing against one another for business rather than proposing what is best for the customer.

Communicating our new strengths is of course essential in growing our business still further. We have therefore dramatically increased the number of commercial managers to promote what we do and deliver the key messages.

further in our existing health and safety, environment, HR and quality systems, ensuring the smooth integration of these systems into one single QMS recognised within our Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) audit.

Today we are one business: Axis Security. It has taken a great deal of hard work to get here, and there is a tremendous amount of hard work still ahead. We are only two years into our journey, and are proud to have achieved so much in so little time.

What we know, however, is that success comes from having the right people in the right places, delivering the best service and building the strongest relationships with our customers both now and in the future.



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Axis Rewards Security Excellence

The hard work and dedication of Axis Security officers across the course of the year was formally recognised at the annual Christmas luncheon, with the presentation of the Security Team of the Year and Security Officer of the Year awards.

Nominees were selected both by their respective customers and the Axis Account Management Teams to reward outstanding service delivery throughout 2009.

Team of the Year

With competition fierce, and the judges split, the coveted prize was jointly awarded to the Peacocks Shopping Centre and Topshop/Topman Oxford Circus teams.

In nominating the Peacocks Centre team, Martin Pooley, Operations Manager for the Centre, noted a number of improvements to security at the Woking centre thanks to Axis, including an increased rate of arrests in relation to theft and increased attendance of incidences requiring first aid by security staff.

“The dedication and professionalism they display is a credit to them.”

“The team has a professional ‘can do/will do’ attitude,” he says, “and thoroughly deserve the recognition for all their hard work.”

A similarly professional attitude has also been demonstrated at the Arcadia Group’s Flagship store Topshop/Topman Oxford Circus. The team of 40 officers plays a vital role in creating a safe working and shopping environment for both staff and customers according to Graeme Sharp, Regional Loss Prevention Manager for the Arcadia



Michael Bond was praised for his hard work and commitment

Group: “The success of the team has seen the store arrests statistics grow by a staggering 34% over the past 12 months,” he says. “The dedication and professionalism they display is a credit to them and I am proud to work alongside such passionate and committed individuals”.

Officer of the Year

Meanwhile, the Security Officer of the Year Award was presented to Michael Bond, Security Manager for Stockley Business Park in Uxbridge. Michael

heads up a team of 16 officers, looking after the 500-acre area that includes a golf course and over 1.5 million square feet of office accommodation.

Steve Kennedy Park Director for Stockley Park Estate Management Limited praised Michael’s hard work and commitment: “Michael and the team make a huge contribution to the park,” he says. “Their constant vigilance has significantly reduced the number of incursions by local youths intent on causing criminal damage”.



Axis Security Going the Extra Mile

Axis Security Systems Division went the extra distance for one of its biggest customers, Boots the Chemist, joining it in its challenge to cycle and walk the length of Britain.

Starting in September 2009 and finishing in mid-December, the Boots Profit Protection Team made their way from John O’Groats to Lands End in relay, each regional team covering the leg within its area. Raising funds for Children in Need, the teams carried the charity’s mascot, Pudsey Bear, throughout the journey, handing the bear on to the next team like a baton at the end of each leg.

Members of Axis Security Systems Division’s Bristol office joined in the South West leg of the route to show their support, cycling from Stroud to Bridgwater in mid-November. The team covered over 80 miles across the course of three days, stopping in at Boots stores along the way to raise extra funds, and to get Pudsey’s passport stamped at each store visited.



Walter Fitzpatrick presents the team with their cheque

The Boots Profit Protection team hoped to raise a total of £10,000 and Axis Security contributed over £1,500.

Officer of the Month awards

Alongside the annual Officer and Team of the Year Awards, Axis Security also offers monthly awards to those officers who go the extra mile on behalf of the customer.

Each month the prize is hotly contested, but there can only be one winner. And here they are:

July: **The team at the Peacocks Shopping Centre, Woking**

August: **Lazlo Kallo, B&H Management**

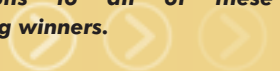
September: **Aamer Raja, Wigmore Street**

October: **Michael Bond, Stockley Park**

November: **Aamer Raja, Wigmore Street**

December: **Hanson Frempong Manso, Savills**

Congratulations to all of these well-deserving winners.



By Royal Appointment

Alison Bell talks to Mark Foster

London's Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, comprising the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery. The 21-acre site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain as Alison Bell discovered when she met Senior Security Manager, Mark Foster, on a recent visit.

AB: How did you get to where you are now?

MF: I've been at the centre for nearly four years now, having joined in April 2006 during the main refurbishment of the Royal Festival Hall (it reopened in June 2007). I started my career in security as a contractor for G4S for what was then known as Citibank (now CitiGroup), working at various locations across the Capital before moving across to the bank's Canary Wharf offices where I was a Security Manager for five years.

AB: What does the role entail?

MF: I'm responsible for all aspects of security at the Centre, including manned guarding, access control, CCTV, and I share responsibility for other areas such as fire, event security and disaster recovery and contingency. With such a varied programme at the Centre, security requirements vary enormously from day to day and event to event.

Since Axis Security came on board in October, and thanks to the excellent support of Axis' Janet De Luca as Contract Manager, I've been moving into a more strategic role. Knowing that the everyday responsibilities are covered by Janet, I'm able to focus my attention on the long-term plans for the Centre and working with the local community, the Southbank Employers Group and the Police on a number of projects.

AB: How did the contract with Axis Security come about?

MF: Since the refurbishment, the Centre has gone from strength to strength. With footfall increasing by 40%, the Centre now welcomes some 27 million visitors each year. As a world-leading arts venue, we have a responsibility to ensure that security at the Centre meets this standard, and we are pleased to be working with Axis Security to meet these goals.

Axis Security was appointed after a lengthy tender process, lasting almost 12 months; since the Centre

is funded by the Arts Council, we needed to be certain that we were spending the budget wisely. Axis stood out for its approach, its solutions and its staff benefits package, all of which are in keeping with the ethos of the Centre. The idea of having a dedicated project manager for example, was something that we had not seen before but proved successful in ensuring the smooth handover of the contract.

AB: What other solutions did they suggest?

MF: Axis also instigated a change in physical security to keep the security function up-to-date. Despite the changes to the usage of the Centre following the refurbishment, security had largely remained static. Axis altered some of the shift patterns to reflect the Centre's changing needs, and also strengthened the team at contract management level. The fact that some of the officers who had been serving at the Centre for 18 years responded positively to the changes is testament to the quality of the Axis Management team.

The officers fulfil more than just the security function; being customer-facing they are the first point of contact for visitors to the Centre, and so need to have good communication skills and a sound knowledge of the site and the events that are taking place across each of the venues.

AB: What are the biggest security challenges at the Centre?

MF: With its prime location and high profile, terrorism is obviously an ongoing major threat, and the Centre works closely with organisations such as NaCTSO (National Counter Terrorism Security Office) and the local CTSA (Counter Terrorism Security Advisers) to mitigate the risk.

With the Centre being an open building, on a day-to-day basis the biggest challenge is in finding the balance between providing a welcoming environment for visitors, yet one that is also secure. With no barriers it can be difficult to restrict access,



which is why the Axis Security officers have such an important role to play.

The security challenge is heightened by the sheer variety of the Centre's functions. In one instant an officer might be working with a local school on a learning development project, in another he might be responding to a public disorder incident in the outside area, and in yet another ensuring the safety of stars on the red carpet of the National Movie Awards or the BAFTAs, both of which have been held at the Centre. Obviously each event or show has its own security needs and the officers must respond accordingly.

AB: So what have been your highlights in your time at the Centre?

MF: One of the biggest perks of the job is the wide array of people I get to meet. One of my proudest moments was meeting the Queen during the official reopening of the Centre in 2007 and getting to show her around the site.

Another highlight has to be the day that Tom Jones came to the Centre to busk on Queen's Walk! It was very impromptu and so we had to react fast to ensure that he'd be safe from all the female fans! Given the quirky nature of the gig, the next day photos were in papers across the world and I had a call from relatives in Australia who'd spotted me in the background.

I do enjoy getting to see some of the shows or exhibits, and bringing my family along when I can, the only problem is I find it difficult not to find myself watching the security rather than the performers!

AB: What do you do to relax outside of work then?

MF: With two young children there isn't much time for relaxing! Jokes aside though, I'm a keen football fan and I manage the local youth football team, the Iwade Herons, in the Kentish village where I live.



Pedal Power!

The 20 Axis officers at Stockley Park are going green, carrying out patrols by bicycle rather than by car to save approximately 2,000 miles vehicle usage per month.

Constant patrols of the park are a necessary part of the service provided by Axis, but keen to reduce its environmental impact, the park's management looked into more viable and greener alternatives to vehicle patrols.

"We didn't want to compromise security cover," says Steve Kennedy, Park Director, "so instead we decided to build on the existing patrols carried out by bike, making cycling the first mode of

transport around the park, with the ultimate goal of releasing one of the 4x4 vehicles".

Three bikes were purchased from a local bike specialist; an electric mountain bike and two hybrid bikes. Each officer has also been provided with personal safety equipment, including helmet, gloves and hi-vis jackets.

"We were unsure how the officers would react to the changes, but the uptake has been great," continues Steve. "The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with the officers noticing an improvement in general fitness and there has certainly been some friendly competitiveness between them!"

Name to a Face: Kennedy MacKenzie

As National Operations Director, Kennedy MacKenzie has responsibility for all operational aspects across Axis' regional contracts.

Kennedy joined the security industry over 20 years ago. "I was selling fire extinguishers when I happened across an ad for a management training scheme with Securicor on the paper my chips were wrapped in!", he explains. "It was sheer chance, but the opportunity looked interesting and I had the relevant entry qualifications, so I signed up.

"I did this for a year before working up to become General Manager for Securicor's retail division prior joining Temple. I enjoy the variety of the role and the opportunity to work closely with customers".

Born and raised in the Scottish Highlands, job opportunities brought him South of the border. "Though I'm based in the Hounslow office, the role entails lots of travelling around the country," continues Kennedy. "I take an active role in looking after the regional offices, working with the commercial managers to win new business and becoming heavily involved in customer contracts. I like to go and see as many customers as I can, and Jonathan Levine always jokes that it's like the Royal Tour!"

Driving such distances wouldn't be for everyone, but Kennedy doesn't mind: "My car is like my second office," he says. "I'm a big music fan and I go to gigs and festivals wherever I can, so when I get in the car I make sure I've got plenty of music with me to keep me entertained".

When Axisdirect catches up with Kennedy, it is no surprise that he's in the car. "I'm just outside Birmingham, where we recently opened a new



office," he continues. "It has been a busy few months, and there is much change happening. Alongside the new Birmingham office, we're also to open new offices in Belfast. These will be near the docks, the equivalent of London's Docklands, so a great location to develop the business in this region from.

"The acquisition by Axis has brought about great positive change to help move the company forward. The investment in and development of the company has been great, and it is a very exciting time to be involved," he concludes.

Outside of work, Kennedy is a keen golfer, and with an 18 handicap is one to watch out for at the annual charity golf day!

Axis Achieves ACS Status in Northern Ireland

SIA regulation in Northern Ireland was introduced on the 1st December 2009 to ensure that training and professionalism in the private security industry are of the same high standard across the whole of the United Kingdom.

Our office in Belfast is pleased to announce that, following the rigorous application process, Axis Security now holds Approved Contractor Status for Security Guarding, Key Holding, Public Space Surveillance (CCTV) and Door Supervision.

Additionally, our mainland re-accreditation took place in November 2009 and improvements were evidenced in all areas of the business. This resulted in our ACS score increasing from a reasonable 45 up to a fantastic 126 which is estimated to position Axis Security in the top 5% of approved contractors.

Safety at Work

Across the course of 2009 there was significant improvement in health and safety, with a clear reduction in the number of lost time accidents across the group.

"In 2008, there were a total of 8 lost time accidents," explains Gordon Pape, Group HR Director. "These accidents broadly fell into three categories; road traffic accidents, public conflict (particularly in the retail security business) and slips, trips and falls. The majority of accidents fell into the latter categories. In 2009, I'm pleased to say there were no such accidents".

Health and Safety is now an important consideration for any business, with a tightening of British standards and pressure from insurers to improve procedures. The forthcoming Axis quality audit contains many Health and Safety arrangements. The monthly welfare visit, for example is now an intrinsic part of Axis' Health and Safety practice, in line with the latest British standards.

STOP PRESS: Thank you to you all for your hard work during the recent extreme weather conditions.

Results from issue 3 Environmental Quiz:

- A) Atmosphere B) 5 billion years
C) Carbon Dioxide D) Toilet

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