

CONSTRUCTION SITE SECURITY:

11 ARRESTS - 12 SITES - ZERO THEFTS



The construction industry is plagued with site security related problems of vandalism, theft and unlawful entry to sites. Increasing copper prices are only adding fuel to the problems encountered due to the abundance of copper electrical and communications cabling readily available for the picking of thieves. Theft of air conditioner units, water heaters, solar panels, tools, fuel and anything else that is not nailed down are problems commonly faced by construction companies. Theft of copper cabling, materials and vandalism to sites not only adds costs to construction, but most importantly delays the progress of the construction project. OH&S risk management issues are also a consideration with the presence of unlawful intruders, whereby an onus of responsibility is placed on the construction site managers to mitigate such risks. All in all a quick, flexible and cost effective solution is generally not available, and often a guard is stationed to man these sites when workers are not present. The permanent guard option is clearly a very expensive one.

Thompson Bros Video Alarms, who specialise in electronic security for construction sites, was approached by the construction site manager of a site in western Sydney who was experiencing continual break-ins and vandalisms at the site. Copper theft was the key target of the offenders taking the copper electrical wiring and also stealing tools and computers from the site office.



The client was apprehensive to install an electronic security system because in the past police were unable to respond because intrusions to the site office could not be verified. This is in keeping with the NSW Police Force Alarm Response Policy whereby an alarm must first be visually or video verified prior to deploying a priority response. Instances where there were detected intrusions on these construction sites using the standard alarm systems needed to be responded to by mobile guard responses, as there was no means to video verify the alarm activation. Guard patrols were also being used, but both the guard response and the guard patrols proved ineffective in curbing the thefts and



vandalism. In short the client was paying for security but was not getting any return in their investment.

The construction company faced a number of challenges, along with a small budget to resolve them. An evolving site and changing security needs, a lack of power available around the site and lack of phone line to communicate alarms were flagged, and the obvious solution to Thompson Bros Video Alarms was the Videofied Solution. Using the power at the security site office, a surveillance camera system recording to a hard drive was also offered, but the client was not interested in merely having footage of offenders' onsite without the ability to catch the offenders in the act. Once they are caught by police onsite red handed then the objective would be achieved.

Thompson Bros Video Alarms introduced the Videofied solution, proposing that four wireless battery operated MotionViewers (motion detectors with built in night vision cameras) be positioned around the site and a wireless self powered GPRS central control unit be installed at a central location. MotionViewers were positioned around the site to protect likely entrance points, protect equipment and the site office. It was explained to the client that the MotionViewers were mounted in a temporary fashion and could be flexibly moved around the site to as the site evolved and the security needs changed. It was explained to the construction site manager that the Videofied alarm system differed from the traditional burglar alarm by providing a 10 second video clip of an intruder that would be immediately sent to the monitoring control room so that, with video verification of an intrusion, police can be deployed with priority to the site. Based on the previous experiences with police and alarm response, the client was skeptical to say the least.

Installation of the Videofied system took roughly an hour and a half, including making the checks with the security control room to check the correct operation of the system.

Five days later, in the early hours of the morning, an intruder was detected by Videofied MotionViewers on site. The monitoring control room staff received the alarms and immediately saw video of the

intruder in the doorway of the site office. Police were called and a short time later the police arrived and searched the site, where the offender was located onsite and apprehending. The offender was then charged by police.

The results of detecting, verifying, urgent police



response and the arrest of an offender is now becoming the norm with the use of Videofied on these sites.

Of the 12 construction sites that Thompson Bros Video Alarms have installed Videofied in the last 7 months there have been 11 offenders arrested onsite. Further to these extraordinary results, there have been no reported or known thefts on ANY of these 12 sites, which adds even further worth to the Videofied security solution. The Videofied systems are a fraction of the cost of static guards and have proven to be more effective in preventing thefts and catching offenders in the act. The cost of the Videofied solution is made even more affordable with the offerings of short term rentals with fixed price installation and management.



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