

CASE STUDY:

A MULTI-VENUE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER KEEPS VISITORS SAFE WITH SEAMLESS SECURITY SCREENING

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Today, millions of people are vulnerable to attacks as private facilities, the transportation infrastructure and public venues and arenas have become potential targets. These soft targets are more vulnerable to attacks because they are harder to secure, with surging crowds, multiple ingresses and egresses to monitor and often minimally trained staff. Based on physical layout, crowd concentration and location, some venues have become concerned with person-borne explosive threats and others with concealed firearms. Decisions about which security technology should be deployed and what processes to wrap around them are highly dependent on the threats and vulnerabilities of a specific venue.

Balancing safety and security with customer experience can be a challenge. Patrons have a choice and if they perceive that the hassle and intrusiveness of the security process is too great, they may choose not to attend a performance. Rather than a “one-size fits all” solution, a venue-specific risk-based security (RBS) approach that can adapt in this ever-changing threat landscape is more effective. Flexibility and adaptability are key factors in RBS solutions, allowing forward-looking organizations to implement tailored systems designed to adapt to evolving threats and mitigate risk while maximizing customer flow with minimal disruption.

THE CHALLENGE:

A major metropolitan performing arts complex with two main performance halls sought to change their approach to visitor screening. The architectural masterpiece is a mix of indoor and outdoor open areas, restaurants and pre-function space for the performance halls. The main halls have capacities of nearly 1,500 and 3,000 people respectively. Because the venue is iconic, there is a constant flow of traffic around it. For performances there is a surge of patrons arriving at multiple entrances within an hour of ‘curtain.’

For visitor screening, the venue’s security team used hand wands, metal detectors and manual bag checks. These methods were less than ideal—they were guard-intensive and this human-based approach suffered from inconsistencies and fatigue. These methods were really limited to identifying a single threat type. And they were slow and invasive for visitors, critical when many of the events held at the venue are high-end, formal affairs.



The experienced security team knew this had to change, that it wasn't scalable nor keeping up with quickly changing threats. The senior security leader had two objectives: improve the venue's security posture by screening for both explosives and firearms, and improve the visitor's screening experience.

The security team's requirements for a new way of handling security included a system that:

- | Was easy to use for guards/operators
- | Enabled high throughput to support surge arrival patterns
- | Handled multi-threat detection
- | Had flexibility to handle both large and small events across the venue's campus
- | Has the vision of recognizing repeat patrons and base screening on "what we know about you"

THE SOLUTION:

With Evolv Edge™ in place, the venue now has confidence in its improved and dynamic security posture. The flexible system allows the security team to have numerous machines in fixed locations, and built-in wheels enable systems to be moved or popped up in response to changing conditions or threat environment. The systems quickly scan all small- and medium-sized bags and red light/green light automated detection with color-coded threat box overlay on a picture of the visitor makes it easy for security guards to make fast assessments.

The screening process is streamlined—the secondary alarm resolution happens discreetly downstream reducing

the overall guard staff requirement. Each screening lane has a customer service representative at the front, and only one guard to resolve any alarmed issues at the back of the lane, eliminating bottlenecks. Just as important for overall customer experience, the screening process is a single path for a person and his or her bag.

With guards trained and systems deployed, Evolv Edge checked all the security team's requirements, and more. Because the security team was able to streamline and make more efficient its visitor screening process with Evolv Edge, it was able to reduce its overall security expenses and cover the cost of the system within its existing budget.

GOING FORWARD:

For this performing arts center, Evolv Edge has taken the friction out of visitor screening—managing security is as much about customer experience as it is about improving physical security—and has brought consistency and automation to the process. With a small operational footprint and unobtrusive design, repeat patrons have commented on the more efficient screening process. The front of house guest services manager reports happy, smiling patrons who express value in their new-found sense of safety. When adopting a risk-based approach to

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visitor safety, security and operations at this venue will be able to adjust the screening sensitivity based on knowledge of an individual, for example, increasing security for unknown visitors and allowing employees and return guests to walk through even more quickly.

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