



## NEWS RELEASE

### Thomas Cook focuses on Iris for alarm system savings

One of the UK and Ireland's largest travel agencies and tour operators, Thomas Cook, has switched intruder and personal attack alarm monitoring at its network of 604 High St and retail park stores to Chiron Security Communications' Iris, Europe's fastest growing IP alarm transmission and monitoring system.

Following High St retailer Halfords' decision to upgrade to Iris, Thomas Cook has replaced its Redcare signalling and the associated telephone costs – a service that had been costing the company around £150,000 annually. Steve Nelson, Group Security Manager at Thomas Cook, points out that after recouping the modest capital investment associated with equipment installation, he anticipates substantial monitoring cost savings of some 70% per year compared with Redcare.

Mr Nelson adds that Iris is also as inherently secure, with the option of dual-path signalling in addition to regular polling between the site and Thomas Cook's alarm receiving centre, provided by Romec Electronic Security. Each branch uses a Scantronic alarm panel supplied by Cooper Security and the decision to update Thomas Cook's Wide Area Network (WAN) across all its locations led to evaluation trials to identify the best means of providing the secure communication between each travel agency site and the monitoring station. The suitable product also needed to be compatible with both existing alarm panel types in place at the 600+ sites.

“We trialled Chiron's Iris system alongside comparable equipment from WebWayOne ” Mr Nelson comments, “and Chiron won for a number of reasons. We found Iris was easier to install, presented in a self-contained unit small enough to fit into the alarm panels we have and provided better features including enhanced capabilities such as the ability to accept dynamic as well as fixed IP addresses. On top of that, Iris was the most cost effective system.”

A successful pilot installation programme led to the recent completion of a full rollout across Thomas Cook's branch network.



## Visual verification

Thomas Cook is also examining the potential value of a recent addition to the Iris system range – a software module which allows visual verification of an alarm alert. Using the Visual Verification Suite, pictures from existing cameras can be sent direct to the monitoring centre operator's screen simultaneously with the alarm activation, allowing the operator to scan pre- and post-event images to help verify the cause of an alert.

Mr Nelson notes that this 'future proofing' technology would also allow the company's regional sales managers to remotely dial in to stores to observe customer flows and other management-related issues, adding value to the equipment and helping Thomas Cook to improve its efficiency and ongoing revenue.

Commenting on the overall standard of service provided by Chiron, he adds: "I've been impressed with the company's level of technical support and its liaison with Romec Electronic Security and our internal IT department, which has enabled us to resolve inevitable network difficulties during the installation phase of this project and roll it out smoothly. Chiron's Iris system has also proved its reliability and substantially added value to our network."

Ian Tredinnick, Chiron Security Communications' Group MD, underlines that Thomas Cook's experience demonstrates why the Iris alarm transmission and monitoring system is proving so popular with end users, installers and ARCs alike: "Iris is supported by over 50 monitoring centres across Europe and is applicable to all systems from high security to residential. Many alarm panel manufacturers are now offering Iris technology embedded within their panels and the system is independently certified to EN50131 and 50136 approved to Grade 4 ATS-6.

"That's why an increasing number of insurers are also backing the system, allowing customers to reap the benefits of Iris' alarms-over-IP monitoring cost savings, added value functionality and future-proof technical capabilities."

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