



CUSTOMER STORY – INDUSTRIAL/MANUFACTURING

Breaking the cycle of repeat thefts.

American Iron & Metal, a global recycling and manufacturing company, built enterprise-level security with Axis cameras, body worn cameras, and horn speakers, to deter theft, improve site safety, and facilitate logistics. 2N intercoms are also used for access control at two sites.

ORGANIZATION
AMERICAN IRON & METAL

LOCATION
MONTREAL, CANADA

CUSTOMER NEEDS
**PERIMETER AND AREA
SECURITY, PROPERTY AND
ASSET PROTECTION**

From scrap metal recycling to electronics manufacturing

Since its founding in 1936, American Iron & Metal has grown from a single metal recycling plant to more than 90 AIM Recycling centers across the globe. Over the years, the company has added other related businesses including Delsan AIM to provide environmental services needed for the decommissioning and demolition of properties at four locations in Canada, Kenny U-Pull for selling used auto parts in four provinces of Canada and the state of Maine, AIM Solder for manufacturing solder assembling materials for the electronics industry operating out of 12 countries including the US and Canada, and AIM Éco-Centre for recycling construction site waste in Quebec.

"We're in an industry most people would view as trash," says Guy Ouellet, Director of Corporate Security for American Iron & Metal. "But scrap metal and other materials are worth a lot of money. And that attracts all kinds of criminal elements."

When Ouellet joined AIM, the company had less structure when it came to their security. Every site deployed whatever security equipment they wanted and monitored their own systems. Ouellet felt the multi-national corporation needed a better strategy for preventing loss. "I wanted to centralize video monitoring of all AIM assets around the world," explains Ouellet. "For that I needed to standardize the equipment and software to ensure image quality and our ability to scale the solution as our companies grow."



Ouellet justified the expense by pointing out that if the company didn't catch a petty thief the first time they robbed a yard, they'd likely keep coming back and bring accomplices to steal even more. So, losses could quickly jump from a few dollars to several thousand dollars or more in a single night.

Forensic-quality video curtails repeat thefts

Ouellet brought in Securmax, a Canadian-based security systems integrator, to help build an enterprise-level security solution that could easily adapt to the individual challenges facing each site.

“We’re always pushing our Axis system to the limit. But it’s the onboard analytics, that make it possible for my corporate security staff to successfully manage our globally integrated security solution.”

Guy Ouellet, Director of Corporate Security for American Iron & Metal

“I recommended Axis cameras because, for me, they’re the best cameras on the market,” says Yan Bujold, Vice President, Sales for Securmax. “Axis is always at the forefront of the market. They have great tools for integrators and a great website that’s not only helpful for integrators, but end users, too.”

“Before we install equipment at a site, we look at crime statistics and other data to help with our risk assessment,” shares Ouellet. “Estimating the likelihood of problems coming from outside our walls or from our own employees impacts how we adapt our security solution to that location.”

Securmax has deployed over 1000 Axis high-speed pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ), multi-directional and panoramic cameras, as well as Axis horn speakers to AIM’s facilities worldwide. The devices are integrated into a Genetec Security Center video management system, enabling the corporate security team to centrally monitor activity at all company sites, collect forensic evidence of events, and broadcast live messages as needed. Securmax also equipped guards at the Montreal headquarters with Axis body worn cameras to document their random search of employees for pilfered materials. To minimize wait times for truckers delivering scrap metal, the integrator installed 2N intercoms at the yard gates in Montreal and Laval.

When Ouellet joined the company, his team of investigators handled about 50 cases a year. Today, thanks to Axis technology uncovering criminal activity that had previously gone undetected, his security department handles about 1000 cases annually. “I’m not telling you that we catch every incident,” admits Ouellet. “But currently we’ve been able to recoup about \$3.5 million a year thanks to our more advanced security system.”

The importance of deploying analytics

While Ouellet applauds the clarity of the cameras, having smart edge-based analytics are what make the centralized security solution feasible to manage. “It would be impossible for our small security department to monitor all these cameras without analytics,” acknowledges Ouellet.

AIM currently relies on two edge-based analytics: AXIS Motion Guard and AXIS Fence Guard. The company uses motion guard to detect suspicious activity in specific areas, especially after hours. Because the analytic can be configured to ignore ordinary background motion like headlights, swaying foliage and small objects, it greatly reduces false alarms. Ouellet’s team can program the cameras to automatically play a warning message from the Axis horn speakers or turn on flood lights to scare off intruders while sending emails and live video streams to corporate security so they can take action.

With the addition of fence guard, the camera can send an alert to security as a suspicious person or vehicle approaches a predefined virtual line such as a fenced-in area. The perspective setting allows the camera to focus on farther away activity while ignoring foreground things like foliage and animals.

Outsmarting thieves and enforcing safety standards

Ouellet always looks for ways to use technology to outsmart potential thieves. For instance, he installed ultra-quiet, multi-directional Axis Q-line cameras with black shadow lenses so that suspects can’t see which way the lens is pointing. “If the thief knows when the lens is pointing away from him, he can tell his partners when it’s safe to jump the fence,” says Ouellet. “Why make it easy for them?”



The Axis cameras and horn speakers have become standard tools for enforcing health and safety protocols throughout the corporation as well: everything from curtailing employees from smoking in no smoking zones to enabling site managers to see whether employees are following correct procedures when operating front loaders. Because some recycling facilities accumulate big piles of flammable material, AIM installed Axis thermal temperature alarm cameras to remotely monitor temperatures and alert staff to intercede and prevent fires in the case of rising temperatures.

AIM plans to institute a network of Axis horn speakers at its Montreal site as part of its mass communications system. “If we have a fire alarm, we will be able to broadcast an evacuation message to the employees in a specific building or all the buildings on the entire site, if necessary,” shares Ouellet.



Always looking for new ways to use Axis technology

When it comes to using Axis technology, Ouellet is always looking to push the envelope. His next goal is to mount Axis cameras onto drones to expand surveillance at massive properties like the 139-acre site that AIM operates in the Arizona desert. "Because these are large areas with no fence line, we tend to get people motorbiking or riding four wheelers onto the property who have no idea they are on private land," explains Ouellet. He plans to take advantage of the audio capabilities that are built into some of the Axis cameras to swoop down on trespassers and warn them off.

"I think the future is technology," asserts Ouellet. "But we need to work a lot with our partners, like Axis, to influence that the new systems they embed on their cameras and other devices will be what we need in our industry to detect intruders and improve business operations."

"I'm not telling you that we catch every incident. But currently we're recouping our investment thanks to our more advanced Axis security system."

Guy Ouellet, Director of Corporate Security for American Iron & Metal

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Axis has around 4,000 dedicated employees in over 50 countries and collaborates with technology and system integration partners worldwide to deliver customer solutions. Axis was founded in 1984, and the headquarters are in Lund, Sweden.

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