GVB

CASE STUDY

GVB Amsterdam's largest public transport operator relies on IP Command when calamity strikes. Reliability and flexibility future proofs this solution for years to come.

With custom-designed console systems at end of life, and its servers failing, GVB chose IP Command to operate at the heart of its operations. With safety as its number one priority, GVB knows that IP Command delivers rapid response when calamity strikes. High levels of reliability, combined with efficient functionalities and inherent flexibility, empowers GVB to serve its ever-growing network of users, even as it surpasses 1 million trips per annum.

"Safe travelling and working is our first concern, day-and-night. GVB operates in an interdependent environment. We need a reliable, efficient and high quality communications system. IP Command delivers on that promise."

Guus Schoorl
Infrastructure Project Lead
GVB

IP Command™

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THE COMMAND CENTRE

GVB traffic support (CCV) personnel rely on rapid communications and response particularly when calamity strikes. With safety as its number one priority, they required a highly reliable console system that can also expand quickly to meet Amsterdam's future public transport needs. IP Command delivers rapid response through high reliability, and the flexibility to promote the safety of Amsterdam's travelling public for many years to come.

IP TRADE SOLUTIONS

- T3203 / 10 / 30 and T3M Consoles
- Turret Proxy Open Line (TPO) virtualised console system controller
- Turret Support Server (TSS) web-based management and database application
- VR (Voice Recording)
- IP PBX

KEY BENEFITS

- **RAPID RESPONSE** – with one-touch contact
- **RELIABLE** – always available 24 / 7 high performance
- **MULTI-FUNCTIONAL AND CUSTOMISED** – meets current and future workflows and communications methods
- **FLEXIBLE AND SCALABLE** – easily adapts to new procedures and future growth requirements
- **EFFICIENT** – promotes teamwork
- **COST EFFECTIVE** – future-proofed for high ROI

BACKGROUND

GVB is Amsterdam's primary municipal transport operator throughout the greater metropolitan area. Over 3,750 staff is responsible for all rolling stock and infrastructure across bus, tram, ferry and metro networks, serving not only the city but also surrounding towns including Diemen, Amstelveen, and Schiphol International Airport.

To meet Amsterdam's vibrant economy, GVB anticipates passenger volume growth of 30—40 percent per annum, reaching over 1 million trips per year in coming months. To manage that growth, the company's traffic support (CCV) acts as the organization's safety and performance monitor. Almost 100 staff engages in continuous communication with rolling stock operatives and maintenance personnel to ensure timely, efficient services. CCV staff is also responsible for the company's single most important mission: passenger safety.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

In the event of safety-related incidents, instant communication with fire department, police, ambulance, maintenance crews, and related services is crucial. Communications infrastructure must therefore operate efficiently and reliably on a 24/ 7 basis. If it doesn't, first responders could be late to the scene. In a worst-case scenario, lives could be lost.

Unfortunately, GVB CCV staff was hampered by telecommunications equipment including console systems and software that was coming to end-of-life. While the old system had been adequate for most tasks, the custom-made console system could not scale up or out to meet GVB growth forecasts. And when the old system's supporting server finally failed, GVB realized that it needed a new system. Fast.

To meet its urgent needs, GVB Infrastructure Project Lead Guus Schoorl embarked on a comprehensive search for a replacement. Recognizing that any new system must offer high levels of reliability and efficient ease-of-use, he also knew that it had to be characterized by inherent flexibility to meet the accelerating growth of GVB. *"GVB CCV communications forms the backbone of our capabilities because it is critical to the safety of our customers and employees,"* Schoorl explains. *"If the system breaks down we can't communicate with our people in the field. And that means we are deaf and dumb. We require one hundred percent uptime. This is why our careful search was so important."*

THE SOLUTION

Following competitive proposals and demonstrations from three console system providers, GVB chose to replace its aging console system with IP Command. Acting at the heart of its CCV environment, today almost 100 CCV staff share seventeen IP Command consoles for efficient always-on communications.

To do so, GVB worked closely with a local authorized IP Command partner. IP Command T3203 / 10 / 30 and T3M Consoles for IP voice communication were deployed at CCV operations at the company's Amsterdam headquarters. Turret Proxy Open Line (TPO) console system controller together with the Turret Support Server (TSS) web-based management and database application manage the solution with reliable software architecture. IP Command Voice Recording allows GVB to record all inbound and outbound calls to meet compliance and legal requirements.

To ensure high availability and maximize reliability, GVB configured the IP Command solution using dual, fully-replicated servers, switches, and power sources. In the event that one server suffers an outage, the IP Command solution is fully supported by the working server. As part of the deployment, IP Command was also quickly combined with the GVB IP PBX system for a fully integrated solution.

The IP Command authorized partner also expedited wide-ranging training for all CCV personnel including in-house IT staff who would be responsible for maintaining the new solution.
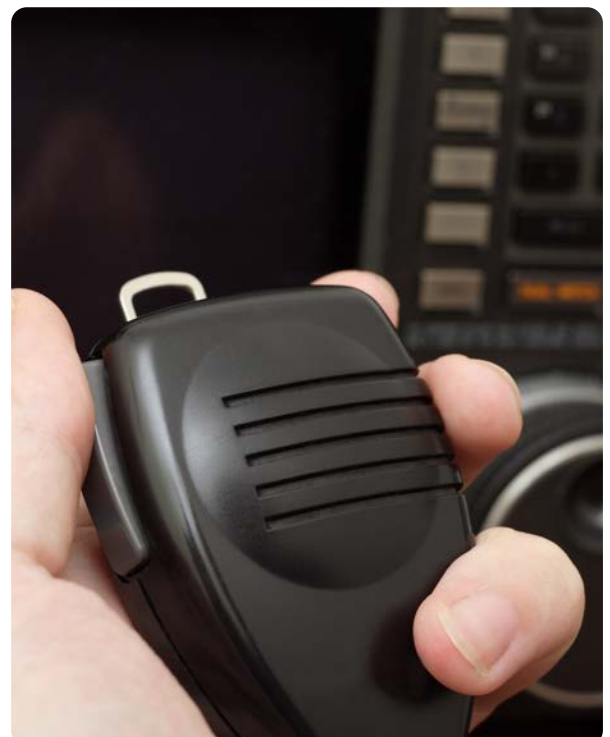
"We chose IP Command because of its cost-effectiveness, efficient functionalities, reliability, and ease-of-use," Schoorl says. *"Importantly, IP Command can also be easily scaled to meet our growing and constantly changing needs."*

EFFICIENT FUNCTIONALITY SAVES LIVES

IP Command console systems have been designed to minimize response times. Simple to use touch screens enable CCV staff to quickly locate and connect to first responders with a single touch. Flexible software design also enables CCV to easily change touch screen configurations and create user shortcuts to meet new and ever-growing requirements.

Additional functionalities including call forwarding and conference calling enable staff to work efficiently as teams to complete tasks quickly. Schoorl points out that IP Command is already at work saving lives. *"Recently, we had a calamity. A small team within CCV were responsible for handling this. Using IP Command, they efficiently contacted the relevant police and fire departments. The system reinforces teamwork because by glancing at the monitor, they know who is already on a call and who is not."*

"Our staff must carry out critical communications very, very fast, getting people moving to do their jobs. IP Command does this by offering instant response. It enables us to quickly help people when they most need it."

INHERENT FLEXIBILITY MEETS FUTURE NEEDS

Due to the inherent flexibility of IP Command, the recent investment by GVB will enable the organization to meet its critical communications needs for years to come. Schoorl explains that IP Command console systems and supporting software have been designed to be quickly modified should the need arise. *"For instance, when the next version of Windows comes along, the existing IP Command system can be quickly upgraded to meet that need,"* Schoorl says. *"In the past, with our old custom-designed system, that sort of flexibility was impossible."*

Flexibility, together with an array of functionalities, will also enable GVB to quickly grow its number of consoles if required, and critically, to achieve additional efficiencies. Schoorl points out that CCV must adapt to the ever-growing transportation activity operated by GVB. In the event that additional CCV employees are hired or if the present system comes under pressure due to high call volumes, new IP Command console systems can be instantly deployed to meet those challenges.

Additionally, Schoorl explains that the future will possibly see the integration of other CCV systems into IP Command console systems. *"Currently, we are using IP Command only for IP voice. Yet each of our workstations also contain up to 10 additional monitors, keyboards and mice that enable staff to monitor news and related data."*

"IP Command has the capability to integrate streaming data, satellite and video. Eventually, we hope to integrate many existing communications systems into our IP Command consoles. This will help us to significantly increase efficiency."
He also notes that because GVB has already incurred the capital investment in IP Command, expanding the solution will be highly cost-effective which will also provide the organization with an attractive long-term ROI. *"IP Command is cost-efficient",* states Schoorl. *"We are pleased not only with its operating performance but also with its attractive cost base."*

A FUTURE OF SUCCESS

Schoorl emphasises that IP Command has become a critical component of CCV capabilities. As he points out, *"Safe travelling and working is our first concern, day-and-night. GVB operates in an interdependend environment. We need a reliable, efficient and high quality communications system. IP Command delivers on that promise."*
Schoorl is also happy to recommend IP Command to other organizations. *"The people at IP Command are right there when we need them. Like us, they respond to our requirements when we need them most."*

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