

Hilton Worldwide Deploys iView Systems iTrak® Incident Reporting

Achieves complete visibility and communication
across hotel chain's security & hospitality operations

The historic Palmer House in downtown Chicago, Illinois, served as Hilton Worldwide's proving ground for the iTrak® Visitor Management System



Hilton Worldwide, a leader in global hospitality, was seeking a unified and scalable solution that would provide consistent security reporting across its properties and deliver integration to their existing third-party systems. Upon completion of its research, Hilton deployed iView Systems iTrak® Incident Reporting and Risk Management platform for 37 properties in the United States to address their needs and improve transparency using data to effectively help protect people and property.

Hilton is currently working with iView Systems to expand the iTrak® platform to an additional 148 properties in the United States with future plans for their international properties. The goal was to streamline many existing processes for security, life safety, and risk management, including the creation of daily logs, incident reports, and security metrics. Efficiencies are achieved by creating a single platform where the highly interdependent functions can collaborate with greater ease and transparency.

Chicago Leads the Way

Hilton Worldwide selected the 1,641 room Palmer House, a Hilton Hotel in Chicago dating back to 1873, as the first property for the deployment of iTrak®. With the property's recent \$170 million renovation, 90%+-year round occupancy rate, and complex security environment, this was an ideal test for the iTrak® platform.

The intent of this beta test was to find a solution that would accommodate property challenges throughout the Hilton portfolio. The Palmer House, a Hilton Hotel would be a true test in the heart of the Loop in downtown Chicago.

Joe Doa, director of safety and security for the Palmer House, a Hilton Hotel indicated that one of the specific challenges was to balance the needs of security and the hospitality environment. "We



Sergey Aghajanyan, director of safety and security at Chicago's Palmer House Hilton

spend a tremendous amount of time training staff and we work very hard to ensure guests feel both welcome and secure."

Doa believes that the hospitality aspect of the job has always come naturally in this sector because of its core mission. Over the past 10 to 15 years, Doa has worked for different companies and has noticed that the security function has moved up the rank of priorities. "Hilton is very diligent of the safety and security of all guests and employees. I

really feel that their openness is why we bring on systems like iTrak® and why we are adding new IP HD cameras in all our properties. These are technologies first seen in casinos and federal buildings, but the hospitality industry once lagged behind. That's not the case any more in the industry in general and certainly not at Hilton."

Transparency & Communication

Daily incident logs and briefings have been a core aspect of security for generations—how one shift informs the next about current areas of concerns and how the information is collected for reports to upper management. The practice of reporting includes day-to-day functions such as noting environmental hazards to be reported to housekeeping, noise complaints, and lost items. Additionally, determining how incidents are escalated from a dispatcher to security personnel, investigators, claims adjusters, and law enforcement is critical.

Traditionally, reports have been paper based and stored by different departments within an organization. A key benefit of the iTrak® platform is the centralized data and workflow, which is accessible

and visible to all departments. Most slip hazards are quickly resolved with a simple notification to housekeeping without ever gaining visibility with management.

In the event that a slip and fall accident occurs to a guest, collected data can be seamlessly sent to the appropriate person or department for action. The iTrak® Incident File includes the date/time, incident type, location, photos/media, narrative, and participants, and it can integrate with Windows-based DVR/NVR systems to easily import still images or video clips from a surveillance system. In the event that the incident escalates, this information can be utilized by adjusters and lawyers.

Since all information exists in the iTrak® database, management can identify trends and patterns to increase security and life safety. With a simple search, security personnel can determine if similar events have common factors that can be corrected.

More Reliable, Flexible, and Efficient

Sergey Aghajanyan, director of safety and security at the Arizona Biltmore Waldorf Astoria Resort in Phoenix, identified a recent incident where he found the iTrak platform very beneficial. "Just today we had a guest injury that required us to assist the fire department to collect information that will be provided to the insurance company."

Aghajanyan was working at the Palmer House when iView Systems first deployed iTrak® in 2010. He was eager to incorporate the system when he transferred to the Arizona Biltmore and quickly integrated the solution into its workflow.

"We do all of our security reporting through the iTrak® system. The primary reports we run are mostly dispatch logs. Every single thing that we do—whether it's a patrol, unlocking a guest-room door, unlocking a door for an employee or providing escort, every single incoming call that relates to safety or security—is entered into the iTrak® system in the dispatch log."

"If I want to see who is my most productive security officer I can create a report to find out. If I want to see what is our average time from getting a call from dispatch to completing the task—this system makes that much easier."

Protect People and Property

iTrak® allows Aghajanyan and his team to identify trends in the data collected. "I can look at our critical times when it is really busy and



Sergey Aghajanyan, director of safety and security at the Arizona Biltmore Waldorf Astoria Resort

can determine when additional officers are needed as well as quickly identify if specific guest rooms or meeting rooms are having particular issues.”

“The reporting is quick and powerful. I can pull up all the valet incidents and look for patterns and identify any team members who may have more than one case of damaging vehicles. Previously I had to go through four or five different systems to get an idea of what was happening. Now all the information I need is together in iTrak®.”

Joe Doa of the Palmer House, a Hilton Hotel in Chicago appreciates the capability to respond to the always changing environment in downtown Chicago. The traffic on the property’s perimeter is largely restaurant patrons and public tours that take large groups around the city. On a week-by-week or even a shift-by-shift basis, Doa is able to identify incident trends connected to the timing of tour groups in the hotel area. When making these connections between the tours and complaints, Doa is able to identify and justify the need for increasing patrols at certain times to make sure guests feel more secure. “The ability to run reports daily and respond to emerging situations much faster is one of the things that I really appreciate about the iTrak® system. To be able to respond that quickly to the dynamic security changes on a daily basis is very significant in any security environment, but especially to be able to understand and respond so quickly in a major city like Chicago has been a tremendous asset to this facility in particular.”

Lost and Found

The module most commonly deployed for Hilton and iView’s hospitality clients is the Lost and Found module. “An automated lost and found system is huge advantage in the hospitality industry and the difference before and after implementing the iTrak® system is really day and night,” says Aghajanyan. “We had a paper system before—you had to personally flip from page to page.”

“Typically a guest will not realize they have left or lost an item at a Hilton property for weeks or even months. The lost and found inquiries typically come in by telephone. In most instances the caller doesn’t remember the specific date of their visit, making the search for an item more difficult. Now I can do a custom search and look for guests’ eyeglasses, for example. With the guest still on the phone he can describe the eyeglasses to me as I look through the photos in the system grouped as ‘eyeglasses.’ This type of customer service is what people expect from a company like Hilton.”

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Palmer House Hilton



The Arizona Biltmore Waldorf Astoria Resort in Phoenix, Arizona, has made extensive customizations to building and response codes in the software that guide staff through the collection of incident information at the scene.

“We’re looking at adding a bar code scanner that you can load onto a mobile tablet, so we can readily return lost items and remove it from the system inventory all in one transaction, eliminating the back-and-forth between systems,” says Aghajanyan.

Integration with Insurance Claims System

Hilton partners with Sedgwick Claims Management Services to manage claims including workers’ compensation, disability, professional liability, property loss adjusting, fraud, and investigation.

iView Systems has integrated with Sedgwick, creating a single-user environment for seamless incident reporting to the claims department. “This eliminates an additional step, boosts efficiencies, and

empowers better and quicker decisions. Security officers and supervisors are responsible for the reporting portion, so iTrak® ensures that incident reports have all the necessary collateral information and documentation such as copies of the report, the photos taken, service recovery issues to the guest, or any additional information they have, such as phone conversation logs as to what happened, in one place. There are no gaps, which means both the adjuster and I have access to everything without my having to go back to the supervisor or to the officer even if something was not included,” says Aghajanyan.

Smooth Implementation

In both Chicago and Arizona, the Hilton security staff have adapted the system for their specific locations—another key capability that

Hilton required of the solution to fit with the company's diverse properties.

Before bringing iTrak® to a new Hilton property, Hilton staff worked directly with an iView Systems technical account manager. "We documented all of our meeting space, our guestrooms, and all our public areas," says Aghajanyan. "The security codes that we use are all unique to our property—based on what the local law enforcement agencies used—it includes all of team member names; the system is completely tailored to our property."

Aghajanyan also created custom checklists that are required for every incident. Every officer is trained to review the list for each event. "Every property has its specific needs as far as what it wants the system to show and report. Some people may not care to give a specific location in a room, and just putting down 'main building' may suffice for their process. For my part, with 12 years of experience in security, I want to get as specific as I can, as close to the incident time as I can so that I don't have unanswerable questions at a later date."

The deployment and configuration process for iTrak® takes roughly two to four weeks, depending on the degree of customization and the size of the facility. Permissions are also granular and customizable so Aghajanyan can give his director access to everything without allowing write/edit privileges so files cannot be inadvertently changed.

Joe Doa of the Palmer House in Chicago particularly appreciated the ongoing collaborative approach that iView demonstrates long after the initial installation. "I can just pick up the phone and give

"I have a couple of employees who've been here for 17 years that have been using Excel spreadsheets, and my fear was that adopting a new system would not go well. To my surprise they were the first to be excited about the system and found it very simple to use. The application walks them through the process so they know they're doing everything correctly."

**- Sergey Aghajanyan,
Director of Safety and Security
Arizona Biltmore Waldorf Astoria**

them a call when I have an idea about how the application can be improved to better serve what we are encountering at the Palmer House. iView is focused on exploring the capabilities of its product and is very quick to implement suggestions."

Simplify the User Experience

After the system is up and running iView Systems provided Hilton staff real-time training via web video instruction that supplemented training manuals and other documentation. Aghajanyan's previous experience with the system at the Palmer House meant he was well prepared to answer questions from the staff. Still, he appreciated the opportunity to offer the video training and took advantage of the sessions. iView Systems trainers even made themselves available to accommodate late-night training of the third shift.

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Hilton Worldwide now has greater visibility into its security operations, resources, and staffing, and security directors are continually finding new ways to use data-driven insights to look for ways to enhance current capabilities, improve detection, lower the cost of response, and determine where additional solutions or outside help is warranted. ■



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