KENWOOD

DMR Digital Case Study

Lincoln City FC.
Managing stadium safety and operating efficiently with Kenwood DMR.

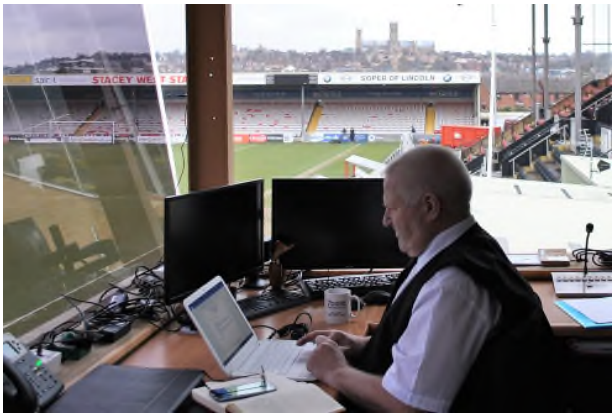
For Lincoln City Football Club, 2017 proved to be a remarkable season.
Not only was the club promoted to League Two, but 'the Imps' also made FA Cup history, by becoming the first non-League side to reach the last eight in 103 years.

Steve Cairns, Managing Director or RF Lincs has long-established ties to Lincoln City FC. His daughter played for their ladies' team and one of his sons is a coach at the club's Youth Academy, so when the opportunity arose to upgrade the club's two-way radio communications, he was quick to respond.

Steve recalls: "I was at a home match at the Sincil Bank stadium when I ran into Dave Smith, an old friend who is one of the club's security team. He suggested that the current fleet of PMR446 radios acquired over the course of many years were causing frustration to users as full site coverage was proving to be a problem".

He continued: "The next day, I called Darren Curtis, the club's Operations Manager and Safety Officer.
We arranged to meet and he told me that the site had grown to become more difficult in terms of radio coverage and that a new radio system was definitely on the agenda for discussion with the Board of Directors at the end of the season."

Steve took the time to explain to Darren the differences between their existing license-free and current licensed radio formats and the inherent coverage limitations of PMR 446 in their application. Together, they concluded that only a licensed radio system would meet the club's needs today and into the future; the key question was which radio format.



The decision to select digital technology over analogue was relatively simple while choosing between the different digital protocols took more consideration.

Steve has a wealth of experience in the flexibility, scalability and performance of NXDN as he operates a London wide PAMR network based on Kenwood NEXEDGE equipment and infrastructure. However, he felt that for what the club needed, NEXEDGE might prove to be a little over-specified. He's a fan of Kenwood equipment citing that the "bullet-proof build, noise-cancelling algorithms and exceptional sound quality is streaks ahead of anything else available".

After weighing up the options with the help of Airsys, a Kenwood Distributor, he made the decision, to offer six Kenwood TK-D340 DMR radios for evaluation on a match day to establish their performance in support of various functional teams - including car parking, stewarding, security and medical - in a live situation.

The radios performed exceptionally as Darren Curtis reports: "We were able to put the Kenwood DMR radios to the test on what transpired to be a very busy match day to get a true idea of their performance and suitability.

We tested coverage to the limit – from the most remote parts of the site to the inside of buildings and apart from the ability to communicate to areas which were dead spots in the past, what really impressed us was the ease of use of the radios, the lone-worker features and exceptional clarity of audio, even in the extremely noisy environment of the stadium."

Following the successful trial and Board approval, Steve has supplied Lincoln City FC with 50 Kenwood TK-D340 DMR hand-portable radios along with a selection of lightweight headsets and covert kits for use by the different user groups.

The radios are used for voice communication with some units programmed to listen only and teams communicating with each other on different channels.
Darren adds: "What we wanted was a simple, fast and effective upgrade to our existing on-site radio communication, but also to ensure that we were buying into a technology and protocol which can grow in line with the club's ambitions."

With its 2-slot/1-carrier digital air interface, the Kenwood DMR system is ideal for single site applications and can be upgraded economically with the addition of TKR-D710/D810 repeaters to improve coverage outside of the main stadium.

Steve concludes: I'm only happy when my customer is happy and in this case in particular, with my family's involvement with the club, it was personal too. I'm really pleased that the club now has the basis of a communication system that will see them all the way through to the Premier League!