The 160 m² SPAR mini in Trogen, near St. Gallen, is a village store that offers a select range of products and focuses primarily on fresh and regional products, as well as ready-to-eat snacks. The franchise employs eight people and is the only grocery store in the village. The store is often busy and receives a lot of passing trade thanks to the nearby train station and the local school. It also offers a postal service, and has ATMs and mailboxes on site.

Challenge — Small Store, Lots of Customers

This new SPAR general store is in a very central location. Approximately 500 pupils attend the nearby Kantonsschule Trogen school every day. Many of the students and parents come in to the grocery store in the morning to purchase baked goods, sandwiches and drinks before heading to classes or work.

Being so close to a school generates a lot of custom for the business. However, its popularity has also made it an attractive target for shoplifters, as the large amount of customers in the store meant that they were often able to escape unnoticed. Traceability of stolen goods and preventing the loss of goods were therefore top priorities.

Protecting the SPAR mini against burglary was also important, especially as break-ins had already occurred at two neighboring businesses. Until now, pandemic-related restrictions on the number of customers allowed in the store at any one time had been implemented manually using an analog system.

Solutions & Benefits — Full Overview and Analysis

Two MOBOTIX v26 Indoor Dome cameras and four c26 cameras with a hemispheric 360° all-round view have been installed in the Trogen SPAR mini. The v26 cameras focus specifically on the checkout area. Both of the entrances—the main entrance with a sliding door and the door for deliveries—are also monitored. When the store is closed, the cameras are primarily used to prevent intruders.

The integrated MOBOTIX analysis software makes it possible to count how many people are in the building automatically, which is particularly important during the current pandemic. What’s more, customer statistics and heat maps showing the most frequented areas of the store provide important insights into customer behavior.

The data storage system for the video security network is not located on site. The computers are connected to the dealer network. The installer, KLM IT, set up a separate network to allow the data to bypass the SPAR data stream. It was important to keep the system separate and also ensure that it could still be expanded if necessary. The installation of the hardware was completed within four days. The entire project, including setting up the VPN tunnel, took just four weeks.

Conclusion — Preventing Damage and Improving the Shopping Experience

The MOBOTIX video surveillance system has led to a significantly higher number of perpetrators being caught. The proprietor of the grocery store was shocked by how many thefts were occurring. The support provided by the technical solutions means that a large portion of the losses can now be resolved. Analyzing the camera recordings means many of the incidents and perpetrators can be identified, which had previously not been possible during the everyday running of the store. Furthermore, the ability to automatically count how many customers are in the building saves a lot of time. The heat maps provide important information on how customers move through the store.