

Internationally important railway archive protected by ESPlus

Thousands of priceless books, artefacts and documents at the National Railway Museum (NRM) in York are being protected by a powerful new tagging system from ESPlus.

The Museum's new £4 million library and archive centre, Search Engine, was opened to the public in January 2008. The innovative project was funded by almost £1 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and also received support from many other funding bodies.

As one of the most important railway libraries in the world it needed a robust but discrete security system to protect it, explains NMSI Head of Security Malcolm Fewtrell.

"At Search Engine we have unique publications, so we had to find the best possible way to keep them safe, while at the same time giving access to the public.

"The Museum strongly believes that people should have access to its full archive and that there is little point keeping a reserve collection locked away from view. However this has to be balanced against our responsibility to protect the collection for future generations."

In their search for the best solution Malcolm's team looked at what other internationally important archives, such as the British Library were doing, and concluded that an EAS tagging system would allow the right balance between security and open access.

Following an evaluation of a number of different systems, ESPlus, the specialist tagging, Access Control and CCTV solutions provider, was chosen to supply and install its market-leading tagging system.

"The tags are very discrete and ideal for protecting items such as books and rare artefacts," explains David Abberley, Director of ESPlus.

"Any attempt to remove a tagged item from the reading rooms without authorisation will result in an alarm. Combined with other security measures, such as CCTV, the system will ensure that potential thieves or vandals are deterred from targeting this important archive."

