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THE IMMIGRATION CONTROL SYSTEM PANAMA

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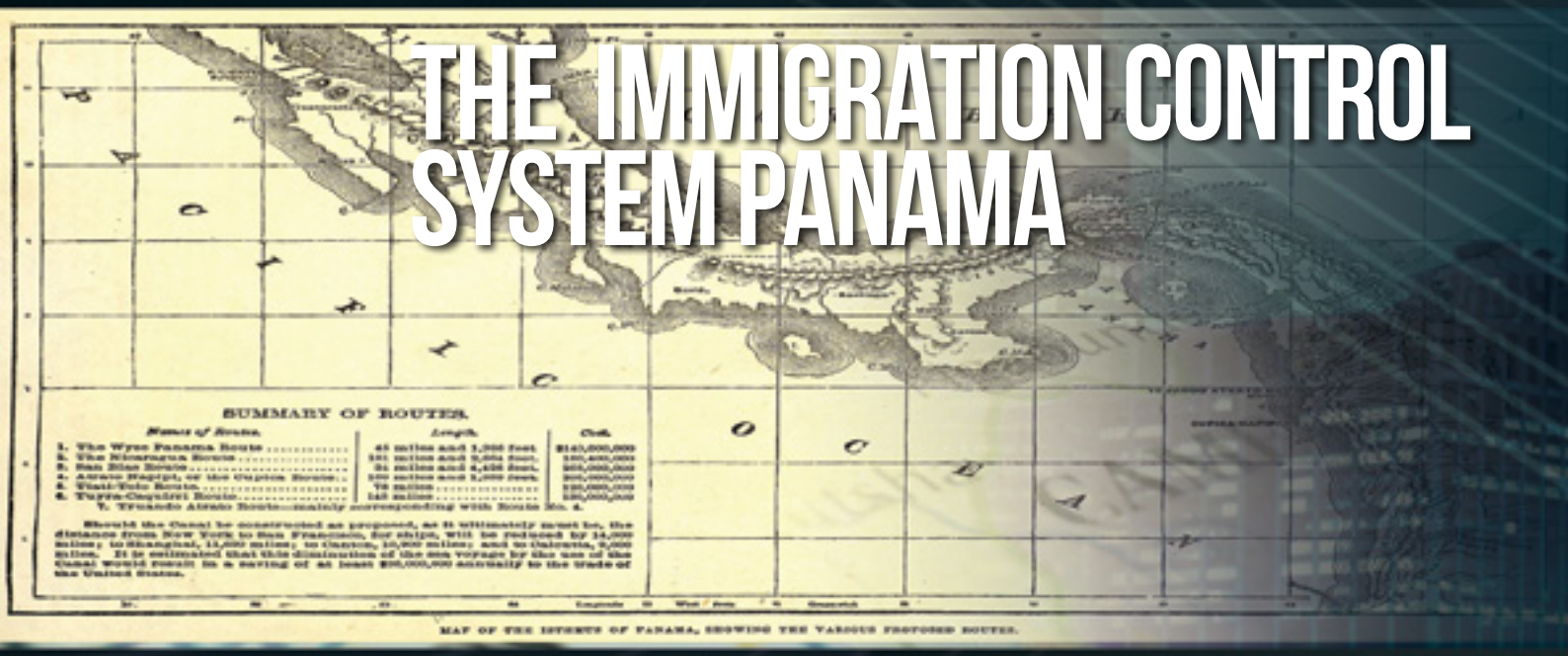

MAP OF THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA, SHOWING THE VARIOUS PROPOSED ROUTES.

ABSTRACT

As the barriers to global travel and relocation have continued to drop, it has become increasingly important for countries to upgrade existing systems and implement/adapt stronger immigration controls. And many have done so leveraging international standards and technologies. Panama's aging immigration control system was no longer sufficient to efficiently or effectively handle immigration control.

The challenge was to deploy a biometric-based system that was compatible with the previous system and yet provided Panama a more efficient method of controlling population movement across their borders. Innovatrics partnered with OTI to supply this solution, which included design, installation, and integration.

THE SITUATION

Panama's existing immigration control system was non-biometric, based upon visual inspection of a passport photo. As a manual process, it was both prone to human error and potentially easily compromised.

Panama recognized the country-wide economic impact of illegal immigration and knew that they needed to upgrade their immigration control system.

CASE STUDY

THE CRITICAL ISSUES

Border security and Immigration control is a complex operation. It entails document verification, analysis and a direct question and answer procedure.

Furthermore, this process must be rigorous and quick to prevent frustration and delays for the people in transit.

There are three primary critical issues

INTEROPERABILITY – the solution must be compatible with international biometric identification standards including ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) and NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) standards.

SATISFACTION – the solution needs to ensure high user satisfaction by consistently and efficiently processing biometric documentation quickly and efficiently.

SPEED – the solution needs to be accurate and fast for identity verification and enrollment of individuals.

THE SOLUTION

The solution developed and implemented by Innovatrics and OTI provided a number of improvements over Panama's existing immigration control system:

SPEED - the system employed industry-leading and proven technologies to enable rapid and accurate recognition of biometric documents.

COMPLIANCE - the system ensured that Panama complied with the ICAO-requirements and NIST standards.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION - the system significantly reduced the wait time associated with population identification utilizing a modular architecture employing biometric methods.

IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION

The solution integrates Innovatrics ExpressID AFIS (Automatic Fingerprint Identification System) allowing for better control at border points and increased efficiencies.

The platform enables short implementation time frames, seamless integration with Panama's existing border control system and provides external interfaces to a digital Certificate Authority for signature verification.

Finally, Innovatrics and its partner OTI trained Panama's Immigration authorities how to utilize the system enabling them to deploy personnel with the requisite knowledge to operate and troubleshoot on-site.

THE RESULTS

Panama's immigration control is a modern system, adhering to international standards around biometric identification and therefore compatible with biometric documentation from a variety of global countries.

This enables Panama to more effectively control both its own population's travel as well as people entering the country. But the new system also produced other benefits such as reducing paperwork, operating costs, and even the number of people required to control immigration.

The Innovatrics/OTI solution not only made Panama's borders more secure, it streamlined and sped up the immigration process, greatly improving end-user satisfaction of all visitors.

ABOUT INNOVATRICS

Innovatrics is focused on providing fast, accurate, interoperable and sensor independent fingerprint recognition software for incorporation into final biometric applications. Innovatrics components offer exceptional performance perfectly suitable for both, high-end and low-cost biometric applications.
More information about Innovatrics products and technologies can be found at **www.innovatrics.com**.

ABOUT ON TRACK INNOVATIONS LTD. (WWW.OTIGLOBAL.COM)

On Track Innovations Ltd. ("OTI") designs, develops and markets secure identification, payment and transaction processing technologies and solutions for use in secure ID, payment and loyalty applications based on its extensive patent and IP portfolio. OTI combines state-of-the-art, contactless microprocessor-based technologies and enabling hardware with proprietary software applications to deliver high performance, end-to-end solutions that are secure, robust and scalable. OTI solutions have been deployed around the world to address homeland security, national ID, medical ID, contactless payment and NFC (Near Field Communication) with loyalty applications, petroleum payment, parking and mass transit ticketing. OTI markets and supports its solutions through a global network of regional offices and alliances.

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