



# IFSEC Expo Report

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June 18th to June 24th, 2016



*London is a beautiful mix of history within a strikingly modern city.*

## Situation

2016's IFSEC International, Europe's largest security exhibition, welcomed over 33,000 global security professionals to experience the latest technological innovations and to hear from industry leaders within the security industry. The show ran over three days, June 20<sup>th</sup> thru 22<sup>nd</sup>, with daily show hours ranging from 10AM to 5PM. The show venue was the ExCel London. The convention center is located in the eastern part of London and was easily accessible via public transportation.



*IFSEC International*



*View of London*

While the ExCel London is not close to Heathrow Airport, it is adjacent to London City Airport. Regardless, when travelling for an extended time in London, I personally recommend the Oyster Card. With the Oyster Card, you will have access to virtually all of the city's public transportation. For me this included the Underground (aka: The Tube), The DLR (above ground train), MBNA Thames Clipper (ferry up and down the Thames), as well as the Emirates Air Link (cable car across the Thames). Bottom line, you can get anywhere in London, safely and quickly using public transportation. Also, Uber is available, though driving in London can be a real test of patience. It is a big, busy city!

This year we opted to stay in an extended stay apartment in the Limehouse district. See the view above. Great flat, with amenities including a full kitchen and laundry. Train stop right across the street with only a few stops to the ExCel. I found entertaining in London as easy as a quick ride in The Tube, accessing all of greater London in a simple and efficient manner.

# Mission

## My Colleagues on the ground...

- Scott Pearson – Independent Sales Director UK and EMEA, Farpointe Data, Inc.
- Alex Grenda – OEM & International Sales Manager, Rutherford Controls, Intl. (RCI)



## Our mission involved the following...

- Set up booth and work the show during the three (3) day period
- Participate in pre-scheduled meetings with targeted and pre-existing Farpointe Data partners.
- Walk the show in search of new OEMs and other opportunities within the exhibitor community present at the show.

IFSEC Summary: IFSEC is actually only 20% of the overall exhibition. Running simultaneously are five related industry shows. These shows include FIREX International, FACILITIES Show, Safety & Health Expo, and the Service and Management Expo.

At one point, while walking the show floor and staying within the electronic security section of the expo (IFSEC), I realized that IFSEC, on its own, is not a very large show. I would say in comparison with ISC West, IFSEC is perhaps a third the size.

As with many shows, there were times that were busy and other times that were not so busy. Day one was slow, but we did receive steady booth traffic. It would seem to me that many attendees only made it so far on day one. Our booth was further back in the show, while the larger booths were closer to the entry. When walking forward, there was significantly more traffic in the forward section. On day two, booth traffic was solid. This is the day we received the brunt of our contacts and leads. Day three was destined to be a slow. I base this on three key factors. First, the last day of any show is typically slow. Second, this was exacerbated by the fact that a severe thunder storm dropped so much rain the night before that several of the London Tube stations were closed due to flooding. Note, the Tube is a vital transportation element of London's business world. Third, Thursday was voting day for the EU Referendum – "Brexit". This was a powder keg of political vitality, and it seemed as if all good British citizens had an opinion and determination to cast their vote. Unfortunately, all three conspired to contribute to a weaker showing on the final day.

## Mission

With Farpointe's strength in the OEM manufacturing channel, any lack of show traffic was overcome by opportunities to visit our existing partners who were also exhibiting or walking the show. We also looked for new opportunities within the ranks of our fellow exhibitors. This included such partners as RS2, Vanderbilt, RBH, Tyco, MAXXess Systems, Morse-Watchman and Galaxy Control Systems. The new P-620 million-mount reader was well received by all, and our OSDP solution definitely turned some heads.



*The new  
P-620*



It is unfortunate that IFSEC International seems to be shrinking to the size of the ISC East. A once very strong international security expo is struggling to maintain its relevance as an international venue. The truth is, London is AWESOME! However, like NYC, it is expensive. In fact, it is actually more expensive than NYC. With companies spending more resources on their electronic media, I really wonder if such shows can survive.

This in no way should prohibit anyone from pursuing business in the UK or London region. The UK security industry is clearly alive and well. And, if conducting business in the city, The Tube is your best bet for getting around. Impressive in that there are few places you cannot reach quickly and safely utilizing public transportation.

Regarding the access control market, I did notice an outsized number of system manufacturers that offer their own proprietary reader and credential products. It's almost the antithesis of the North American market. In the UK, there are several systems manufacturers who still build their own readers. There are many innovative designs and unique aesthetics. However, I cannot understand how these manufacturers compete with the giants, much less Farpointe. Another difference to the North American market is the significant Chinese influence on the UK security industry. It was suggested to me that close Britain/China commerce developed in Hong Kong and dated back to the tea trade. There were certainly a lot of Chinese and other Asian companies showing at the IFSEC Expo.



*Map of the London Underground  
"The Tube"*

## A Perspective of Brexit by Shep Sheppard

While working the recent IFSEC Show in London, I found myself in the middle of a whirlwind of political debate. Yes, I was in London for the Brexit Vote, or better known in the United Kingdom (UK) as “The Referendum”. As many of you now know, the UK, including England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, held a vote to decide if the country should remain a part of the European Union (EU), or leave the EU.



Today, the EU is an economic and political partnership involving 28 European countries. It had its origin in the ashes of the Second World War with the goal of fostering economic cooperation based upon the idea that countries which trade together are less likely to go to war with each other. It has since grown to become a “single market” allowing goods, services, capital and people to move freely around the member countries.

I can tell you the debate over The Referendum was very spirited. On the days leading up to the vote my colleagues and I, whilst entertaining clients in London, were handed pamphlets from supporters on the street, rallying on both sides of the debate. In my opinion, Americans can sometimes think of themselves as holding the patent on patriotism. Not true. The British Union Jacks were flying as the British citizenry were all fired up. In the end, 72% of the voting population turned out to vote. Compared to our turnouts, that is simply unreal.



*The United Kingdom*

*England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland*

As we know, the Brits voted to leave the EU. Leave won by an approximate margin of 53% to 47%. I was very surprised. In many cases a country’s largest trade partner is in their backyard. I cannot help but think that this decision could alienate the UK from some markets across the Channel. Further, many North American companies have offices or subsidiaries located in the UK that provide coverage for all of Europe. Will this decision compel these companies to consider moving their locations to an EU country, such as Ireland or somewhere on the European Continent?

A good friend of mine, who I might add is a British National, shared with me some commentary. In his mind, a major factor of The Referendum was sovereignty. In his opinion, the UK’s membership in the EU limited the UK’s ability to govern themselves at home. He cited an example. The UK authorities conducted a process to deport a known terrorist who’d been previously deported from a fellow EU member country. However, after the UK ruled to deport him, the EU authority stepped in, and required a process begun again. This, he felt, was a direct challenge to British sovereignty, as well as costing more money and potentially putting citizens in harm’s way.

Regarding the EU, I really don’t know the right answer for the UK. As a business person, I see the risk in the potential loss of markets. However I also understand the will to govern oneself, and that The Referendum was a decision UK citizens indeed made for themselves. Nonetheless I do hope that it does not come at too tough an economic price. Note the day after the vote the British Pound dropped in trading to a 30-year low against the US Dollar.

On a positive note, the UK remains an awesome place! I’d encourage each of you to consider a visit to London! It remains by and far one of the greatest cities in the world and for now, a whole lot more affordable.