

ROAR



A Safer Welcome for All at the Independence Visitor Center



The ROAR team is always proud to roll out our panic button solutions to new establishments in any industry where our customers feel they can be useful. However, our latest exciting project has proved a unique challenge that has shown the scope and capabilities of our panic button solutions.

With approximately 3 million people coming through the doors each year and a local community that has come to depend on its public services such as free WiFi, public restrooms, and the Independence Café, the scale of the challenges at the Independence Visitor Center was not lost on the ROAR team.

However, working closely with Joann Wszolek, Director of Security, Safety, & Compliance at the Independence Visitor Center, ROAR was able to seamlessly integrate 15 wearable panic buttons that have ultimately improved the peace of mind of employees and reduced response times in the event of an incident.

Read on to learn more about how ROAR has made an impact at the Independence Visitor Center for staff, partners, and visitors alike.

About the Independence Visitors Center

Set within downtown Philadelphia (or simply Historic Philadelphia, as Philly residents call it), and within close proximity to the Liberty Bell, the President's House, the Benjamin Franklin Museum, and the National Constitution Center, the Independence Visitors Center is the beating heart of a vibrant historical district, attracting tourists from around the world to learn about the birthplace of the United States of America.



Its core objectives are to provide information and guidance to visitors who wish to explore the city while also selling tickets to events, attractions, and museums, as well as mementos from the gift shop. In addition to this, the conference room, ballroom, and three terraces provide ample space for private events, attracting corporate interest as well as citizens who want to host weddings and other personal events.

The building itself is large, set across some 50,000 plus sq ft. Since it is free to enter, visitor foot traffic is high, with thousands of visitors coming and going each day.

The Independence Visitors Center offers visitors:



Information and guidance to thousands of visitors who wish to explore Philadelphia.



The ability to purchase tickets to events, attractions, and museums as well as mementos from the gift shop.



Private meeting and party spaces rentals including a conference room, ballroom, and three terraces.

Objectives

The Independence Visitor Center is a Federal Building on Federal property therefore all their security systems are connected with the Independence National Historic Park Service dispatch center.

Always looking to improve and increase security layers for the facility and staff, Joann Wszolek decided to introduce a walk-talkie solution that could quickly and accurately communicate emergencies within the building itself.

While walkie-talkies had their place, improving the well-being and safety of employees within the facility remained a priority to expedite response time was needed.

Per Joann's statement:

“We had two safety incidents in August 2023 that prompted me to get security staff on a permanent basis and which gave the staff great comfort. The ROAR panic buttons just gave the staff a crucial layer of protection. That’s the most important thing, that our employees feel safe.”



Challenges

Clearly, for a building with such high levels of foot traffic and broad demographics, the potential for aggressive behavior and violent incidents is always possible. Having said this, many of the tourists to the visitor center are only present for a short period of time, often simply to ask for guidance, use the public restrooms, or purchase tickets. This means that problems are kept to a minimum often or easily navigated.

As Joann succinctly put it:

“This facility is for visitors from around the world, but this is a public building, and everybody is welcome. I work hard with people experiencing homelessness, and those with mental health and addiction issues in the area, with my Security Ambassador.”

In addition to accommodating numerous tourists, local residents, and event participants, the Independence Visitor Center is open to all members of the downtown Philadelphia community. This level of visitor volume can prove to be challenging for any team, regardless of training.



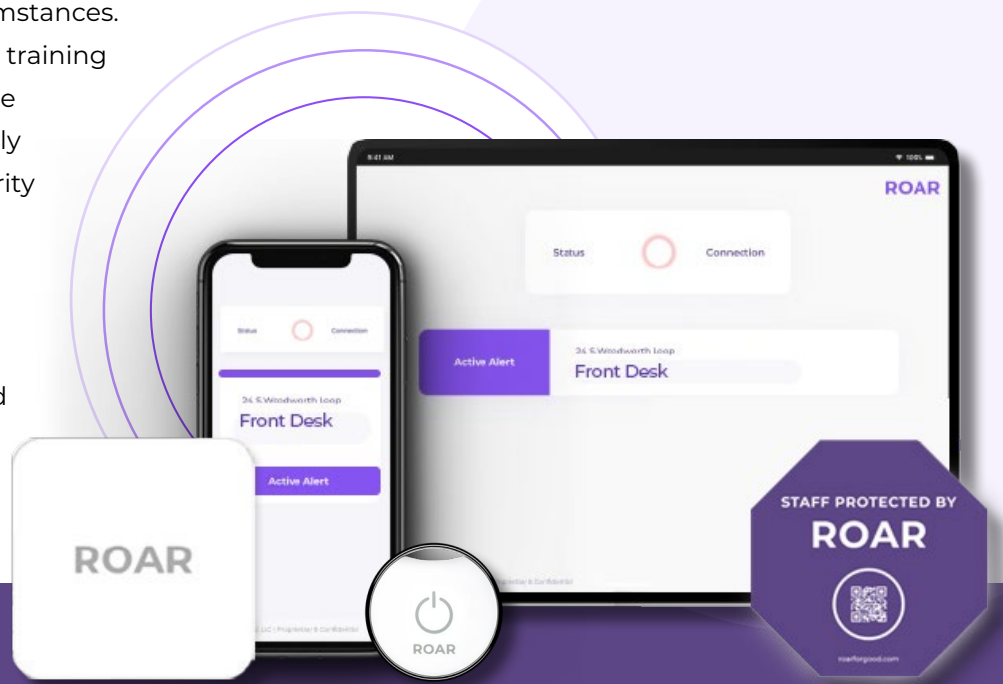
✓ The Solution

ROAR conducted an on-site demo on March 15, 2023, and after a successful test the Independence Visitor Center signed the contract to roll out our panic button solution throughout the building. Within two months, 15 wearable panic buttons were distributed to staff members, and beacons were placed throughout the building, covering public spaces such as the gift shop, large open spaces such as the café, and the exhibition areas, as well as the restrooms and event space.

After testing and in consultation with ROAR Support, the beacons were calibrated to provide pinpoint locations throughout the building whenever a panic button was used. This gave Joann and her security team peace of mind in the event of an alert, ensuring that support could be dispatched quickly and efficiently.

Interestingly, staff had previously expressed a certain trepidation about using the static, counter-based panic buttons, feeling that they should only be used in extreme circumstances. However, with comprehensive training and a little trial and error where panic buttons were accidentally activated, Joann and the security team made sure everyone knew that there were no repercussions for sending an alert, with the mantra that if a staff member felt threatened in any way, they should

“JUST PRESS IT!”



Let's Talk

ROAR

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