Horse owners from the Kriftel Riding and Driving Club keep watch over their beloved horses via Video Surveillance from D-Link

From the office during the day, in the evening before going to bed or while away on holiday - horse owners at the Kriftel Club in Hessen, Germany can now check on their horses via smartphone, tablet or a computer. In collaboration with the managing committee of the Kriftel Riding and Driving Club, some owners opted to install D-Link network cameras, which connect to the Internet, in the horse stalls. This has enabled them to use a password-protected account to view live images of their animals quickly and securely via the mydlink™ web portal. In everyday use this application intensifies the contact with the animal, while also enabling a rapid response in an emergency. Other owners have already expressed an interest in this new technology, and horse owners from other clubs are also keen to find out more.

Simple remote access via Internet
When club members first suggested the idea, it led to an intensive discussion about data protection and personal rights, particularly the proposal of installing an camera with a view of the riding area. A number of arguments were put forward that convinced even the most sceptical members that:

• The data would not be saved.
• The data would only be accessible via password-protected access
• The camera would be positioned far enough away from the riding area to make it impossible to see individual details.

D-Link products provided a simple solution that is easy to install without in-depth technical know-how: The team from the Riding Club installed mydlink™-enabled DCS-942L Enhanced Day/Night Cloud Cameras in the horse stalls, which were connected remotely to the existing internet connection using a DAP-3310 Wireless Outdoor Access Point. In tests, the Access Point achieved coverage of up to two kilometres: in the Kriftel Riding and Driving Club it spans a distance of around 100 metres. The cameras are fitted with infrared LEDs so that the horse stalls, which measure four-by-four metres, can be monitored even at night. At last the owners have the chance to watch over their horses as they sleep. If they connect an external speaker directly to the camera they can even wish them good night, giving a sense of wellbeing.

The owners can configure the cameras quickly and easily to trigger motion sensors in the night. A passive infrared sensor in the camera reacts to changes in temperature in order to register any suspicious movements. The horse owners then receive an immediate notification message on their smartphone or via an e-mail, depending on the configuration. They can then immediately check to see what’s happening in the horse’s stall and speak directly to the intruder via the speaker. Experience shows that the element of surprise is enough to drive away most strangers.

“I take out my mobile, start the app and already I can see my favourite horse – this makes me happy and reassures me at the same time. I’m convinced that many horse owners will be able to put this to excellent use.”

Gabriele Bentscheck, Director, Kriftel Riding and Driving Club

Safely from stable to cloud
Access to the live images comes via mydlink™, the D-Link cloud server. No data is stored here; it only serves to provide connections to the relevant IP addresses of the cameras. The server automatically connects to the camera in just a few seconds and maintains this connection. Access rights to the video camera are only granted to the authorised user who has secure login credentials. For horse lovers it makes no difference from a technical point of view whether they want to view the images on a computer or via an app on a tablet or smartphone. They can even take snapshots or short films of their animals to send to family or friends. The D-Link DCS-942L cameras also

Always on the trot
The Kriftel Riding and Driving Club has a long tradition behind it. The club was founded in 1932 and now has more than 500 members.

The club has 19 of its own horses of various sizes, all living on the 15,000 square metres of land owned by the club, and the range of activities offered by the club is just as diverse: riding and vaulting classes for all ages and abilities are available as well as hippotherapy and therapeutic riding. The club also offers some horse owners the option of renting horse stalls in indoor or outdoor settings.

This represents a major organisational challenge for the Director as well as for the two permanent grooms and the many riding instructors. And yet there is still a place for new, innovative ideas: As a special offer, members can now take a look in their own horse stall at any time and from any place and watch their animals live over the internet.

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have an integrated microSD slot and a 16 GB microSD card, which can be used without the need for any additional hardware, to record images over a period of up to one week. Overall, the main feature that impressed the team at the Riding Club was how simple it was to install and start operating the D-Link devices.

Feel good factor and early warning system

Gabriele Bentscheck, Director of the Kriftel Riding and Driving Club is hugely enthusiastic about the application. “I can watch one of the horses in my care using one of the cameras and I find that incredibly exciting. As soon as you approach the horse, it senses your presence and alters its behaviour. With the video camera I can get a better understanding of the animal's daily routine and discover new, exciting details.” The expert sees huge benefits for owners. “On the one hand it's comforting to know that all is well with the horse. On the other hand any changes in behaviour may signal some form of illness. The sooner this is noticed, the more suffering you can spare the animal.”

The Director of the Club has a real soft spot for sick animals. The club has a special quarantine stable, which is reserved exclusively for sick or injured horses. Following the good experiences they have already had, club members now want to install a video camera here too.

It has not yet been possible to connect this particular area, as power cables first need to be safely installed. The team is working on a suitable solution for this issue.

Applications that pay for themselves

The cameras can also serve other pragmatic functions: for example, they can be used to check if the lights have been switched off. Instead of making the trip to the riding club you only have to log on. Or perhaps you want to use the indoor school: The club is planning to install a further camera here, which could be used to see if the facility is available or in use.

The system offers many great opportunities and possibilities for the Riding Club and yet the costs are very reasonable. The purchase price for an indoor camera is less than €150, while prices for an outdoor version with speaker start at just €250. Use of the mydlink™ web portal is free. For that you can watch your animal whenever you want, even from the other side of the world, safe in the knowledge that it is being well looked after. Members of the Kriftel Club tested this out on a trip to Africa and were very impressed: “Even though we were so far away we always had the security of knowing that our horse was fine. That's hugely reassuring.”
D-Link products used at the Kriftel Riding and Driving Club

Enhanced Day/Night Indoor Cloud Cameras (DCS-942L)

• Outstanding pictures - even in complete darkness
• Live video stream accessible from anywhere via the app for smartphones or tablet or on the computer via a web browser
• Free mydlink™ app for iPhone/iPad or Android devices
• Ready to use in just three easy steps
• Direct recording possible on integrated microSD card (16GB)
• H.264, MPEG-4 and MJPEG support
• Movements and noises can trigger video recordings and e-mails or push messages via the app
• Built-in microphone transmits sounds
• Connection for external speakers
• Flexible positioning thanks to wireless transmission (Wireless N)

D-Link offers a wide range of cameras for both indoor and outdoor use. The DCS-942L is designed for indoor use but in this case it is not used indoors but in a covered environment. Please consider environment variables according to the use.

Wireless N PoE Access Point for outdoor use (DAP-3310)

• Expansion of existing wireless networks
• Connection of mobile devices such as smartphones and laptops
• Connects neighbouring networks via WDS
• Waterproof for outdoor use, also suitable for challenging environments
• Wireless standard 802.11n/g/b, compatible with 802.11b and 802.11g devices
• Supports wireless data transmission of up to 300 Mbit/s
• 2x 10/100 Ethernet connections
• Power supply for Access Points via network cable (Power over Ethernet) and PoE injector
• PoE pass-through function enables the operation of other PoE-enabled end devices, e.g. cameras, via a second Ethernet connection, regardless of whether there is a socket nearby (Power via network cable)
• Network coverage even in remote places thanks to high performance, integrated sector antenna (10dBi)