

## Basics of electronic locks/hardware

Electronic locks can be a cost-effective alternative to traditional EAC solutions, delivering many of the same benefits, including added security, convenience and efficiency. They allow your clients to reduce rekeying costs by issuing electronic credentials such as PIN codes, proximity or smart cards, which can be easily added or deleted.



Electronic locks combine the electrified lock, credential reader, door position and request-to-exit switches in one device for simple installation. To accommodate various project requirements, options include standalone and networked wireless or hardwired locks.

Standalone electronic locks provide added security, convenience and efficiency for openings that do not require real-time updates and monitoring. In general, standalone electronic locks are easy to install because they are battery-powered and do not require wiring to the access control system.

- Manually programmed locks are a good option for openings that do not require frequent updates or audit trails. Updates, such as adding a new user, are made quickly and easily right at the lock.
- Computer-managed locks have numerous enhanced features and require offline access control software. These features are typically managed from a computer and uploaded individually to each lock. Audit trails can be retrieved from the lock to show who requests access and when. You can also save a client time and money by setting automatic lock and unlock schedules for specific time zones and holidays.
- Wi-Fi enabled electronic locks provide the same capabilities as computer-managed electronic locks, plus they have the ability to be managed remotely through a smart phone or tablet using an app. Built-in BLE (Bluetooth) enables the locks to be connected to an existing Wi-Fi network. Changes to the lock as well as audit history are managed with updates. These occur

once per day, typically overnight, when there is lighter network traffic.

Networked electronic locks provide increased monitoring, flexibility and control. Hardwired and battery-powered wireless options are available. Updates are made through the access control software and transmitted over the network to the lock, eliminating the need to visit each opening. Networked locks monitor the status of an opening and send alerts for abnormal conditions such as a door propped open, tampering or low battery. Features and capabilities depend on the access control system, so it is important to consult the provider to verify what is supported.

### Choosing an electronic lock

When choosing a lock, you should consider the following:

- **How does the client want to manage the user base and openings?**

Standalone manually programmed or computer-managed locks are better suited for clients who manage a small number of users and openings, and can visit the lock to make changes and retrieve data. Standalone Wi-Fi enabled locks can be managed remotely using an app and feature automated updates overnight. Networked locks are better suited for clients who want the convenience of making changes and retrieving data from a centralized system, and want to receive status updates and alerts in real time.

- **How important is real-time to the client?**

If the ability to make immediate changes or receive status alerts has high value to your client, then a networked hardwired or wireless lock with real-time capabilities is typically the best option.

- **Does the client want to issue PIN codes, cards or mobile credentials?**

PIN codes are a good cost-effective solution for small user populations. Best practices recommend assigning and tracking a unique PIN code for each user. Codes can be easily changed when needed.

A variety of card technologies are available, including magnetic stripe, proximity and smart cards. Smart cards provide the greatest security and flexibility, and allow for use in multiple applications, including vending and secured printing.

Mobile credentials are an emerging trend that provides users with the convenience of using a compatible smart phone in place of a card or key.

- **How will client needs change over time? How can they maximize their investment?**

Many clients fear their solution will become obsolete over a short period of time due to rapid changes in technology. Some electronic locks, like the Schlage AD Series, provide clients with the ability to adapt to emerging technologies. Since the Schlage AD Series is a modular platform, it allows clients to easily swap credential readers and communication technologies without removing the lock from the door. A modular design makes it possible for clients to start with a standalone system and grow into a fully networked system over time, as budgets permit.

- **Are there applications where electronic locks make more sense, and why?**

Standalone electronic locks are suitable for:

- Storage rooms
- Maintenance closets
- Secondary/employee entrances

Networked electronic locks are suitable for the following applications:

- Residence halls
- Classrooms
- Perimeter doors

View the complete [electronic access control brochure](#).

Learn more about Allegion and our products by calling 877-929-4350 or [contacting an Allegion spec writer](#).

## About Allegion

Allegion (NYSE: ALLE) is a global pioneer in safety and security, with leading brands like CISA®, Interflex®, LCN®, Schlage®, SimonsVoss® and Von Duprin®. Focusing on security around the door and adjacent areas, Allegion produces a range of solutions for homes, businesses, schools and other institutions. Allegion is a \$2 billion company, with products sold in almost 130 countries. For more, visit [www.allegion.com](http://www.allegion.com).