Case Study

Mount Holyoke College

Forward-thinking school strives to keep students safe

touchnet®

Working with Allegion™ and TouchNet® allows
Mount Holyoke to implement advanced security solutions.

A progressive adopter of security technologies, Mount Holyoke prepares for a contactless—and soon mobile— experience on campus.

Mount Holyoke College is a private women's liberal arts college, sprawling 800 acres in South Hadley, Mass. The college has come a long way since it was founded in 1837, changing the landscape for women in higher education.

The grounds were designed in 1896, but being an older campus hasn't kept the school from staying at the forefront of security innovations. To ensure the college delivers on its mission of providing an intellectually adventurous education, its dedicated staff has implemented advanced security measures across campus. In fact, Doug Vanderpoel, manager of auxiliary technology, has made it his goal to stay at the leading edge of security technologies to ensure a safe experience for all. With 80 buildings on campus, totaling nearly 10,000 doors, that's no small feat.

While being an all-women's campus hasn't changed the way they secure the campus, it has made staff more sensitive and aware of security measures. More than 2,000 female students are enrolled at

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Mount Holyoke, with a majority residing on campus in one of the 18 residence halls. Vanderpoel describes the campus as a small school with big school problems.

Achieving the goal

Working with Allegion™ and TouchNet® allows Mount Holyoke to implement advanced security solutions like wireless locks with an integrated one-card system—which in turn improves the holistic campus experience.

"We're trying to keep ahead of the bad guys," Vanderpoel says. "We moved to wireless solutions around 2007, and we've been adding ever since. We were one of the first to do the wireless locksets. We saw the benefit of that from an infrastructure standpoint and a master key coordination piece. We have 800 connected openings now."

Today, all but two of the buildings on campus have total perimeter electronic access control. Two of the residence halls have complete electronic access control utilizing Schlage® AD-400 wireless locks on the interior openings, including suite doors, bedroom doors, and other spaces within the hall. These residence halls don't issue any mechanical keys; everything is accessed through student ID cards—a preview of what a majority of the campus might look like in the future.

The Schlage AD Series locks were designed to be adaptable, allowing upgrades to be made to new technologies without taking the lock off the door. On the Mount Holyoke campus, they integrate Touchnet's leading OneCard Access and Security system to deliver a comprehensive solution for the school. According to Vanderpoel, the facilities team at Mount Holyoke was quick to jump on board with wireless solutions as the hardware eliminates the hassles of traditional wired locks. To simplify installation, the AD Series combines all the hardware components required at the door for a complete access control system. Choosing wireless solutions also removes the need to drill, making them a great fit for older buildings.

At Mount Holyoke, Allegion solutions are complemented with more than 1,500 TouchNet devices, including card

Schlage® AD-400 wireless locks

readers, point-of-sale devices, master security monitors and point controllers. TouchNet's OneCard platform enables students to access nearly everything on campus with their credentials, from access control to financial transactions.

The OneCard solution is built on an extensible vertically integrated platform and communicates seamlessly with other systems to ensure accuracy and promote student security. OneCard, which began as an on-premise solution, has expanded and evolved to offer both an onsite or cloud-based platform that is hosted in a fully PCI-compliant data center.

"Mount Holyoke has always been a forward-thinking school," says Adam McDonald, president of TouchNet. "They have been ahead of other schools with technology for a long time. The school uses almost everything we have to offer through our OneCard system, beyond access control."

Vanderpoel's vision for the campus stretches beyond advanced security technologies; it's enhanced the entire campus experience by improving functionality and control.

Improved capabilities

"We're pretty well established with the campus card," says Vanderpoel. "The first thing students do is get their card because they cannot do anything else. We've taken away a lot of the cash options; places only accept cards."

The goal is to increase functionality to improve convenience and ease-of-use for students. According to Vanderpoel, the key to successful implementation is a wide variety of uses. Nearly the entire campus ecosystem is integrated into the Touchnet system. With the swipe of their credentials, students on campus can access their residential halls, do their laundry, print their essays, purchase school supplies and so much more. Some classes even use the card to take attendance.

Students rely on the card, so it creates a hardship if they misplace it. By design, making the card more convenient to use makes it easier for students to keep track of their identification, which helps keep access secured.

Greater control

While providing an easy-to-use solution is essential to student life, keeping the campus secure is of the utmost importance. That includes controlling access to facilities and protecting the students on campus. Using the TouchNet system and Schlage electronic locks, Vanderpoel's office centrally controls all of the access for everyone at the college.

He says, "We've had some situations where we needed to lock people out. Before, we had such a vast array of locks and rules it was very difficult to lock a student out of one dorm or one door. Now we have an anti-access rule that says students cannot get into locations."

Utilizing special features of the TouchNet system makes lockdown more efficient as well. With so many locksets installed, a traditional campuswide lockdown would've taken quite a bit of time. The flexibility of the Touchnet system allows Mount Holyoke to develop unique programming to put their 800 access-controlled doors in lockdown quickly and effectively.

The collaboration with TouchNet has allowed Vanderpoel and his team to expand on the initial capabilities of the system and Schlage electronic locks. The college has worked with programmers to create new functions that allow them to do nearly anything that needs done from an access standpoint.

Beyond access control, the TouchNet solution offers many advantages for student safety. Every access point can be remotely monitored in real-time, which is key. This enables the college to monitor student activity, which can be helpful if Vanderpoel's team needs to find students quickly.

"Real-time communication with your wireless locks is a must on a university campus," says Jeff Koziol, Allegion

higher education specialist. "Legacy solutions in the marketplace used to operate in an offline environment or advanced-offline environment where they required touring of the doors or only intermittent reporting. Campus administrators often don't recognize the limitations of non-real-time solutions until that need arises. And that need continues to arise as campuses are asked to do more wellness or at-risk student checks. Quick access to information is expected."

Another outside-the-box way the school keeps students safe is by integrating their emergency panic buttons with the online master security system. In science buildings, Vanderpoel's team monitors flow switches. If someone sets off one, campus police know there's an eyewash or emergency shower going off. Vanderpoel is notified before the student or faculty can even call for help.

Looking ahead

Mount Holyoke is a progressive adopter of security technologies. So what's next for the college? To keep up with the evolving market—and ever-changing student needs—the school is looking for ways to expand and prepare for the next generation of security technology.

"Now we're upgrading our readers with the latest technology that offers us a contactless experience, and eventually a mobile experience," says Vanderpoel. "The volume of doors throughout the campus will take some time to upgrade, so this has been a phased approach."

To prepare the school for the transition, Allegion provided dual readers, which the college used to switch out external locks. These readers are capable of reading both mag stripe and contactless cards. The school has been re-carding students for about three years with a credential that has a mag-stripe on the back of a contactless card. They're also working with TouchNet on the next step, which includes moving to Allegion's MIFARE® DESFire® to take advantage of mobile technology. MIFARE® DESFire® EV1 offers the highest in security from Schlage and delivers the perfect balance of security, speed and performance. Its open protocol design also allows future seamless integration of other applications.

"The move to contactless readers and credentials sets the stage for the campus to move to a mobile-friendly environment," says Koziol. "Using a phone as a credential is huge. Colleges and universities are looking to enhance the student experience, while ensuring their students are safe and secure. What Mount Holyoke College has done has prepared them for the Near Field Communication (NFC) mobile credential wave that is coming."

Beyond setting the stage for mobile, this change presents operational benefits for the school and students. According to Fredrick Emery, director of sales, OneCard, "The standard benefit is the durability of the card moving forward. Mag-stripes wear out, but the readers themselves will have less wear and tear. It's less overhead in terms of time spent repairing them. Contactless will have encryption, which makes them more secure as well. And students won't need to come into the office to replace cards as often."

Summary

Other schools can benefit from Mount Holyoke's triumphs and pitfalls, says Vanderpoel. "These are the types of developments that we didn't have 20 years ago. But working with both Allegion and TouchNet allows a new user to take advantage of these fairly quickly."

The TouchNet solution offers a wide array of solutions that make innovative approaches to security possible for schools of all ages and sizes. And wireless solutions like Schlage electronic locks allow them to expand these capabilities deeper into their campus.

To learn more about Allegion's solutions, visit us.allegion. com or call 877-671-7011. For more information on TouchNet's commerce and credential platforms, visit touchnet.com/u-commerce or call 800-869-8329.

TouchNet is the leading provider of integrated, comprehensive and secure commerce and credentials solutions for colleges and universities. Institutions of higher education rely on TouchNet to unify and secure payments, permissions and other related business transactions campuswide. TouchNet's unmatched integration, transparency and security gives institutions greater control over transactions, costs and compliance while providing greater operational efficiencies and self-service access to real-time information.

About Allegion

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