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Industry insights

Extending access control beyond the main building

As more businesses adopt electronic access control, there is a greater appreciation for the value it provides—namely, enhanced security, more efficient management and greater convenience. In fact, now businesses are not only adding access control to their main facilities, but they're asking security integrators how they can extend it to parking garages, warehouses, storage units and other buildings not connected to the main facility.

Successfully extending the security perimeter to remote locations requires careful evaluation.

"In recent years, we've seen clients wanting centralized security solutions," says Keith Frazier, Chief Executive Officer of [Pathway Technologies, Inc.](#), a Raleigh-based systems integrator. "They want extended security beyond the main building that protects remote locations—essentially their entire campus—and they want efficient monitoring in one interface. We see this a lot in the healthcare environment."

"In a building, there are just walls and doors," Frazier says. "But as you move outside to a parking deck or garage, you also need to look at the structure itself, its design, traffic flow, the ways in and out of it, its openness and more. We assess the need for both electronic devices and new physical barriers."

Limitations to extending access control

Limitations to extending access control include data transmission and potential costs. For starters, an extended access control security plan must address how information will be transmitted from the new security points back to the main server or controller.





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“First you must determine if there is a pathway to connect the building to the outside area that you are trying to monitor,” says Frazier. “Then you need to decide if you can do it wirelessly or need to use physical media, such as fiber or copper.”

Pathway Technologies works with clients to provide network infrastructure that can include both cabling and wireless solutions.

Cost concerns can also be a factor. Frazier suggests the solution is to work with a systems integrator that can cost-effectively integrate legacy systems with new technology.

“Extending the security perimeter is not economically feasible for all clients,” Frazier says, “but we work closely with clients to offer new technologies and create technology migration plans that are mindful of the budget.”

Getting started

If you have a client that wants to extend access control beyond the main building, Frazier recommends talking with the client about the following:

- Use of the structure and overall intent
- Policies and procedures for access control
- How the extension of access control fits into their overall security plan
- Barriers and limitations

Planning ahead

“Creating a security plan that is forward-thinking is critical,” says Frazier. “Any proposed new security solution should be fully scalable to account for future growth.”

Oftentimes, extending access control becomes a phase 2 or 3 initiative for a client. A client may know what they want, but the fiscal planning may occur over a period of time. In those cases, Frazier advises that making a scalable plan ensures the IT infrastructure and associated products are “future-proof.”

One example of this is choosing electronic locks, like the Schlage AD-400 Series, that are wireless and offer a modular design.

“Wireless is certainly the ideal option in difficult environments where it is not convenient—or cost-effective—to run a physical cable to every reader,” he explains. “Likewise, a modular design that allows different capabilities and credentials is always a benefit because it gives you flexibility.”

Frazier recommends that whatever solutions you choose, make sure they are backed by a reputable manufacturer who can provide support and service after installation. It’s the reason Pathway Technologies has chosen to work with Allegion for the past five years.

[Click here](#) if you want an Allegion integrator sales rep to assist your client or call 888-758-9823.

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