

Case Study

Texas A&M University

Commerce

Landscape

As the fifth oldest state university, Texas A&M University-Commerce boasts more than 12,000 students—with approximately 2,000 of those being on-campus residents. The campus—the second largest member of the A&M system—began transitioning to technology-based operations in the early 2000s to create a more cashless environment. In 2004, the university installed the Blackboard Transact™ system, allowing it to leverage multiple campus transactions electronically. These included food service, retail, print and copying, recreation and health center, vending and more.

The ultimate goal, says Auxiliary Services Coordinator Jennifer Perry, was to create a campus where one ID card facilitates almost every campus transaction. Once that system was well established, A&M-Commerce wanted to leverage a final element with the one-card platform: door access. This function would allow the university to be keyless as well as cashless.

Desired outcome

The university desired a platform that would easily integrate with its existing Blackboard system. “We wanted to create an environment where the entry doors to resident halls were secure at all times so only those who lived there could gain access to the building,” explains Perry.

The growing prevalence of technology-driven students also factored into the university’s decision to update its security system. “Students don’t want to keep up with multiple keys and cards,” she explains. “They want convenient, easy access to the things they need.”



The university wanted a security solution that would integrate with the existing Blackboard Transact platform for wireless access control that included keyless entry, online credential management, and the ability—if needed—to lock down a building or multiple buildings within seconds.

Challenges

The university wanted to implement a system that would be cost-effective to install and maintain over time. At the rate students misplace or lose credentials—or just fail to return them from year to year—keycards are much less costly to replace than actual keys and also eliminate the cost of rekeying doors.

Solutions

In 2009, A&M-Commerce chose the AD-400 Wireless electronic lock by Schlage® to integrate with the Blackboard Transact platform. To ensure they leveraged the AD-400 to its fullest, the university piloted it at a science laboratory. As a protected research environment, the lab required restricted and controlled access—achieved through the convenience of a joint platform between Blackboard Transact and AD-400.

“We found the AD-400 wireless solution to be a very reliable and efficient online solution,” says Perry. “We have real-time access and the ability to capture data at any point in time.” Perry says they also found the AD-400 to be cost-effective and easy to maintain— with access easily added, deleted or changed right at the computer. Additionally, it integrated well with the Blackboard Transact software, making the conversion nearly seamless.

With the successful pilot as a foundation, A&M-Commerce installed 135 AD-400 wireless locks in Pride Rock, its newest residential living unit. In 2012, the university added AD-400 wireless locks to 160 classrooms and teaching labs. This year, more than 300 residential suites and 13 data closets will receive AD-400s.

Results

Students and staff alike have responded favorably to using cards for access to resident halls, room suites, classrooms and labs. Additionally, Perry has been impressed with the durability of the locks, all of which are in high-use locations. As a result, A&M-Commerce plans to add more AD-400s throughout campus as part of the university’s master plan. In addition to more resident halls, locks will be added to the library, technology center and education buildings.



About Allegion

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