UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
PROXIMITY ACCESS CONTROL PROJECT

Utah Valley University currently utilizes electronic access control for hundreds of doors across campus, with additional doors being converted from physical keyed doors each month. Electronic access control provides both secure and controlled entry while also allowing for auditing and modification on demand.

UVU Facilities and UVU Police are responsible for the monitoring, design, implementation, maintenance and operation of the campus wide access control and security system.

Challenges

In November 2016, the Utah Office of the Legislative Auditor General requested audit work at Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institutions to determine whether institutions were "…adequately designed to safeguard assets." The request also asked us to "…determine if buildings are adequately secured and controlled."

The Legislature also requested that this audit look at the related issue of physical access to campus buildings. In response, they reviewed the number of keys issued, the incidence of lost keys and corresponding rekeying, and the security of buildings after hours. The review of building access included both hard keys and electronic key cards.

Legislative audit staff was able to clandestinely access multiple facilities at each of Utah's institutions of higher education. They found valuable assets left unsecured within the rooms of these facilities. These vulnerabilities in building access, in conjunction with findings in burglary reports, demonstrate that institutions need to train their personnel on basic security procedures. It also demonstrates the need for institutions to conduct risk assessments of facilities' security weaknesses and base their decisions on these assessments.

While testing building security at Utah's institutions, audit staff successfully entered facilities at each institution after nightly lockup procedures had been performed. Between all eight institutions, audit staff gained access to 42 percent of buildings they attempted to enter, accessing 31 major institutional buildings. Each audit team accessed multiple buildings on each campus they visited, spending on average about 1.5 hours on site at each institution. The attempts to enter buildings were merely opportunistic—simply walking around building perimeters and trying to open doors that may be unlocked or not completely closed. Staff did not try to bypass any doors that were latched and locked with any kind of tools or excessive force, nor did they have any extensive knowledge of building floorplans. This is concerning given that building exteriors are the first line of defense in protecting school assets in the building. These tests were conducted between 12AM and 5AM after the nightly lockup of buildings and did not involve any type of forceful entry.

Security Decisions Should Be Based on Assessed Risks. Government and professional guidelines advise documenting and acting on methodical assessments of risks posed to institution's property and assets. The NFPA code on security recommends doing a vulnerability assessment as a basis of security planning, which includes a methodical process of analyzing security risks. The NFPA states that such an assessment is central to their recommended security planning.

Additionally, federal security guidelines state that risks to a facility must be identified and assessed in order to determine the type of security countermeasures to address those risks. This is important as the characteristics of a building can create unique risks that require customized security measures. Further, they state "it is extremely important to completely document the rationale for accepting risk, including alternate strategies considered or implemented, and opportunities in the future to implement the necessary level of protection."

Solution

UVU is committed to the ongoing use and management of advanced technology, including solutions that optimize security and convenience for students, faculty and staff. Based on the findings and recommendations from the State Legislative Audit, UVU Facilities decided to re-examine the university's campus security policies and procedures and to identify a product that would provide state of the art access control technology. Also as part of this project, UVU Policy Number 402 - Keys and Proximity Cards policy will be revised to better meet the recommendations of the State Legislative Audit.

UVU Facilities is keenly aware of the role cell phones play in students, faculty, and staff lives and has chosen to use HID Mobile Access, which now makes it possible for credential holders to use their smartphone, tablet or wearable device to unlock doors. You hold up your device to the card reader, just as you would a card, and it sends that credential to the reader and unlocks the door, giving you access. Another feature from HID Global called Twist and Go allows users to enter the door from further away by making a twist motion with their device—like twisting a doorknob.

HID Mobile Access makes issuing credentials to new users simple. Users receive an email on their phone with a link to the HID Mobile Access app. As soon as they've accepted that invitation and clicked on the link in the email, the credential gets pushed to their handset.

Electronic Access Control Project Plan

The Electronic Access Control Project is currently in the process of preparing the data migration from the old software system to the new system. It is expected that the door hardware replacement will begin in October 2020 and the new system will be brought online in each building using a phased approach.

Phase 1 will be carried out by UVU Facilities where they will be replacing all existing card readers with the new mobile access reader. This phase is anticipated to take up to 1 year to complete.

For phase 2, UVU Facilities is engaged with the State of Utah Department of Facilities and Construction Management (DFCM) to add additional door access systems and mobile access readers to exterior doors campus-wide. The goal is to have all campus facilities exterior doors connected to the UVU access software which allows us to electronically monitor and control those doors. This phase is anticipated to take 3-4 years to complete.

Both phases will be conducted as efficiently as possible in order to minimize any interruptions to campus and we appreciate your patience while the project progresses. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the project or this communication, please contact UVU Facilities at 801-863-8130

Project FAQ

WHEN WILL THE PROJECT START?

Hardware installation began in October 2020.

WHEN WILL THE PROJECT CONCLUDE?

Phase 1 is anticipated to be completed by October 2021. Phase 2 is anticipated to take up to 3 – 4 years. UVU Facilities will keep everyone informed as to the project timeline and updates for each building.

WHEN WILL MY BUILDING BE SCHEDULED?

The majority of buildings are scheduled to have our new mobile access reader installed during 2020 Thanksgiving Break and the following week. All remaining buildings will be scheduled for install during the summer of 2021.

Building Schedule

Mobile Access Reader Replacement and New Additional Readers on Exterior Doors

November 23, 2020: BA, PS, FL, EC

Mobile Access Reader (replacing existing card readers only)

November 23, 2020: EN, RL/PE, CB, LA, LC, SA, GT, CS, EE, Wasatch Campus

June 2021: SL, ME, NB, WS
July 2021: HP, NG, AX
August 2021: NC, WE, BRC
September 2020: SB, Building L, ES

The Sorensen Center and Woodbury Business buildings will be completed along with the construction of their new buildings.

ARE THE CARD READERS CHANGING?

Yes, they are changing to a mobile reader and users that are authorized to have mobile credentials will be able to use their smartphone, tablet, or wearable technology.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A SMARTPHONE?

If you do not have a smartphone, you can get a separate key fob from UVU Facilities. Your existing ID card will no longer work in buildings that have the new mobile access reader so you will need to use either the mobile app or new key fob.

WILL I NEED TO DOWNLOAD AN APP?

Yes, all users who receive electronic access approval will need to download an app. Once users receive approval, they will then receive an email with detailed instructions on downloading the app and how to use it.

WILL I NEED TO REQUEST PROXIMITY ACCESS IF I ALREADY HAVE IT?

Yes, those employee who require electronic access must submit a request for proximity access. Authorizations will be given based on the UVU Keys and Access policy.

WILL THERE BE A COST TO MY DEPARTMENT FOR THIS PROJECT?

No; all new hardware will be paid for by Utah DFCM and UVU Facilities. HOWEVER, departments will have to pay $6 per year for each person within their respective department that receives a mobile access credential. This is for internal doors ONLY that belong to individual departments and have electronic access. We are continually working with vendors to bring this cost down.