



THE FIRST STEP IN SECURITY – ACCESS CONTROL

We typically think of our doors and locking solutions as our first line of defense. They are meant to keep individuals that we either do not want or shouldn't be in the premises we are trying to protect. While they do provide varying levels of security, depending on the locking solution being used, they are limited in their ability to do more than that.

Think about how a lock and key functions, if you have the key, you can unlock the door. The key doesn't consider who is using it, when or for what purposes. It doesn't stop functioning just because it is in the wrong person's hands or if it's not the authorized time the key holder is allowed access. Obviously, a key has no intelligence; it is a strictly mechanical tool. So with standard locking solutions, any kind of 'access control' is really limited by how well you control the keys that are used to open any single lock. In large facilities, including apartment buildings, that means keeping track of a lot of keys. Depending on how many doors or access points there are, in addition to how many different people have keys or need access, that could be a daunting, time consuming and not entirely efficient task.

If we think in terms of apartment buildings, the general status quo has been that whenever someone needed access to a particular area, the building manager or superintendent would need to physically escort that person and unlock the door, or a key would have to be

given to them. That could include building and maintenance workers, utility agents, owners, renters, and visitors — you name it. If you add up all of the man-hours spent on manual access and key control, you begin to realize how much time and resources are spent on this single activity. It's this inefficiency, both in terms of resources and operationally and the need for increased levels of security that have been the driving forces behind developing access control solutions that meet the needs of small to mid sized environments such as apartment buildings.

While a lock and key solution helps define access to a secured space, access control goes far beyond that singular task. With access control, you can deny access to anyone, even when they have a credential. A credential can be a key, but it can also be a card, tags, disposable bracelets or silicon wristbands. Moreover, you can schedule specific times during the day where the credential will work and change them in real time, as needed. An effective access control solution will also provide a detailed audit trail that provides accurate information about who accessed which location, when and for how long. This gives management insight as to what people are doing, and automatically instills accountability from employees or contractors, as management knows who has been where and at what time.

Designed For Convenience And Flexibility

SMARTair is an access control solution that does all of the above and more. It was designed for convenience and flexibility, two very important qualities for apartment building management. Understanding that building aesthetics are important, SMARTair has a sleek modern design, that fits any environment without distracting from its interior. In addition, SMARTair is extremely easy to install. As a wire-free, battery-operated solution, SMARTair doesn't require special installation or wiring. In fact, you don't even have to change your existing mechanical locks. SMARTair gets mounted directly on to the locks you currently have in place. This is particularly beneficial for environments that are always populated and have people coming and going, such as an apartment building or hotel. Most recently, SMARTair was selected by several hotels – which have to abide by very strict policies about not disturbing guests – for its ability to be installed without disruption to normal day-to-day activities, among other things.

What also makes SMARTair convenient is that it can be used on almost every type of access point. It fits almost any lock, including glass doors, interior doors, emergency exits with panic bars, lockers, cabinets and more.



How Does It Work?



Let's first talk about what SMARTair can do. Depending on the specific environment, you select the credential that is most fitting. As mentioned above, the selection includes cards, tags, disposable bracelets, or silicon wristbands. Credentials are then programmed with each individual's access rights. But that's just the start. Access rights can be defined down to the day and time. For example, a resident would have access to his apartment at all times. But let's say there is a pool or gym in the building and it is only open from 09:00 to 18:00. The credential would automatically be pre-programmed to only allow access to those spaces during opening hours.

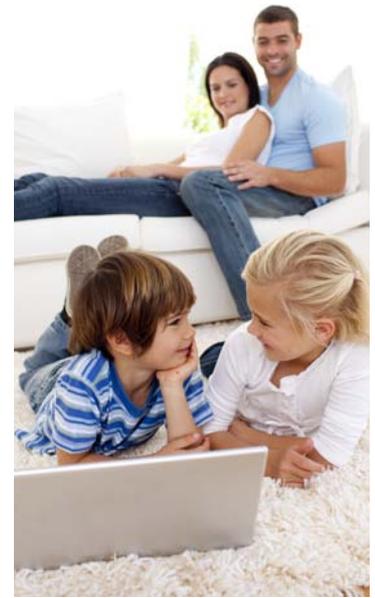
Now let's say you have a contractor coming to do some repair work in a vacant apartment that is expected to have a tenant move in shortly. You will be able to provide the contractor a credential – let's say a card in this case – and program it to allow authorized access between 08:00 and 18:00, but only for the next two days. Once the two days have passed, the card is no longer effective. Now, regardless if the card is returned or not, it is useless. This gives both management and the new tenant real peace of mind. Which brings about another consideration.

The turnover of tenants in apartments is generally substantial. Depending on the size and type of housing, it can happen very frequently. With standard mechanical lock and keys, each time a new tenant moves in one of two things happens. The cylinder has to be re-keyed, to protect the tenant from anyone who was given keys by a previous tenant or the tenant is given the same keys used by all of the tenants in the past. Not re-keying the lock is easier, but can open up the tenant and building to risk and liability from unauthorized, criminal access. Re-keying the lock is time consuming and costs, in addition, it may be necessary to also make changes to the master key. Neither of these are ideal solutions. SMARTair eliminates all of that. With the press of several buttons, the new tenant has a credential that is totally unique to them, no one else has it or has had it in the past – giving them the comfort of knowing they are protected from any old keys that may be in existence.

Another thing that SMARTair provides is an audit trail. This can be extremely important for several uses. Firstly, it allows building management to know exactly who and when anyone has accessed a space. For liability purposes, this can be very valuable. Let's say, it was discovered that building supplies were stolen from the maintenance room. SMARTair would be able to provide a detailed and accurate list of when and for how long the maintenance room was accessed and by which credential. This immediately gives management or when applicable, law enforcement, either an answer as to who is responsible for the theft, or it will narrow down the list of suspects. The fact is, with SMARTair, the risk of incidents like this occurring is greatly diminished. With SMARTair's ability to capture, record and create audit trails of all activity, it serves as a real deterrent. With staff and external workers now aware of this, accountability and responsibility are greatly increased on all levels. When the cleaning crew says they spent five hours cleaning a particular space, SMARTair can serve as another method to verify that.

Smart, Remote Access Control Management

Earlier it was briefly mentioned how time consuming manual key management can be. Letting people in and out, managing keys, replacing them when lost, re-keying and other associated tasks are time consuming and often considered a big time waster. Imagine being able to unlock a door, change authorization rights for a new employee, get a complete audit trail of activity from every access point or delete an old tenant's access rights without ever moving from your desk. SMARTair's web application allows you to conveniently control access to your entire building or facility from anywhere. Think of all the time that is saved, by everyone. No more waiting, it's all done when needed.



There are also several other management options for SMARTair. Again, it was designed for operational convenience, so you can decide what works best for your needs. In addition to the web application, other management options include SMARTair Update-on-Card, which eliminates the need for time-consuming manual processes. The Updater quickly updates user cards, which then automatically transfers the new information to each door as the card is presented to it. Information from the doors to the manager is similarly transferred, just in the opposite direction. The SMARTair Offline solution provides complete functionality and is easily mounted on existing mechanical door locks. In this option, the solution is controlled with portable programmer embedded with user-friendly software. There is also SMARTair Standalone. It requires no software or encoder, programming is performed at the door itself with a designated programming card.

Take Security and Building Operations to the Next Level

When you consider the convenience, flexibility and power of SMARTair, it becomes clear that it not only boosts security, it provides substantial business benefits. The time and resources spent on manual key control are mostly eliminated. That means staff has more time to focus on more important tasks. The increased sense of security tenants feel by knowing that there aren't keys to their apartment floating around and that the building itself is more secure as a result of SMARTair, is a valuable differentiator.



Audit trails give you transparency into staffs' and contractors' activities, in addition to boosting accountability. The list of quantifiable benefits goes on and on. If you just consider some of the things mentioned above, you can begin to count the cost, hours and resources you'll save. Not only that, you'll be making your building more attractive to existing and new tenants, a consideration that may just help reduce turnover and increase interest in your building.

There's a reason it's called SMARTair™!



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