



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON IP ACCESS CONTROL SOLUTION VOTED BEST IN CLASS

The University of Southampton combines academic excellence with an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to research, supporting a culture that engages and challenges students and staff in their pursuit of learning.

When the university was looking for a company to try to meet their access control needs, they went through a competitive tendering process and subsequently chose the AMAG Symmetry™ Security Management (SMS) system. The relationship began in 2003, with a project that required 20 doors to be managed by an access control system.

The initial part of the project was to remove an old system that was already in place across many of the University of Southampton buildings. Moving forward it was decided to make the installation an IP based system, to use the extensive network that runs throughout the campus and its buildings.

The Symmetry SMS solution put in place has proved so successful that over the past five years, the system has grown from the original 20 doors to controlling and monitoring over 700 doors.

One of the features that impressed staff at the university was the flexibility when managing the database of access rights.

Any Higher Education learning establishment has to enrol thousands of students over a short period of time, managing their data for use with e-mail accounts, library information and in this case, access control rights. The system put in place by AMAG allows the central registry database to be imported directly into the Symmetry SMS solution, saving time and money that would have been required for manual data entry.

With pressure on universities to be flexible learning environments, allowing students to have access to specific buildings, rooms and equipment on a nearly 24 hour basis is of growing importance. This trend can cause many hours of administration to manage the security access database to make sure that students have been allocated the right access clearance. The Symmetry SMS system can make this process easier as it allows the management of the access control rights to be allocated to different members of staff e.g. the chemistry students can be managed by the Head of Administration within the relevant department rather than relying exclusively on the Security team.

At present over 250,000 transactions take place on the system every day, showcasing what a significant task the AMAG team undertook when designing a solution to meet the requirements of the university. "One of the key selling points of the system, in addition to the database and management options, was its



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*Gary Jackson,
Head of Security*

scalability, allowing the access control needs of the university to be met regardless of how much it grows and develops,” said Head of Security, Gary Jackson.

Backwards compatibility also means that the system can utilize Symmetry products, both old and new, as the needs of the security team change. A contract has been successfully completed extending the access control and security system into the new Mountbatten Building, replacing the science facility that was destroyed by a major fire in 2005.

The University of Southampton also has an agreement with AMAG for the service and maintenance of the system, which it has held since the beginning of the partnership in 2003. This includes a rapid response to call outs, making sure that any issues are dealt with in a satisfactory and timely fashion.



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