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CASE STUDY | BLACKSTONE/EQUITY OFFICE PROPERTIES | USA

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KIOSKS DELIVER SECURITY IN HIGH RISES

Increased security levels in the post-9/11 world have mandated that high-rise and large structure building owners and managers address the future growth of their security systems, making sure they can be upgraded, as future needs warrant and as new technologies become available.

The installation of high-end electronic turnstiles that offer web accessed integration of the visitor management system, access control and elevator control have increased over 400%. Rapid technological advancements and design ingenuity now allow for the full integration of all aspects of the security management system. These types of advanced security technologies attract chief executives who want to move their law firms and insurance companies into these highly secured buildings.

Blackstone/Equity Office Properties (EOP), a premier national property management company with buildings throughout greater Boston, recently standardized on AMAG Technology's Symmetry integrated security management system that allows for tenants themselves to pre-enroll expected visitors and set the locations and times that they should be allowed access. This technology results in decreased cost of security personnel and for an automated visitor process.

Any tenant in the building can pre-enroll a visitor via the web. When the visitor enters the lobby they are prompted to use unmanned visitor kiosks which features a Navigo touch screen display. The touch screen from Buildings Engines and ITS, comes complete with a license scanner and card printer which is integrated in either a free standing or wall-mounted unit. AMAG Technology's Symmetry Security Management System integrates with Building Engine's visitor management system by using Microsoft SQL™ via AMAG's Data Connect import utility.

"AMAG's Symmetry SMS delivered the features Blackstone/EOP needed without having to be customized," said installing integrator Spectrum Integrated Technologies Director, Steven Feldman. "Symmetry was selected for its ease of use and flexibility."

At the kiosk the visitor runs their driver's license through the scanner and their information is automatically checked against the tenant information. If the data matches, a barcode enabled visitor pass is printed and presented to the visitor. This entry card is enabled for the building's electronic turnstiles as well as integrated elevator cabs and standard access controlled doors. If the visitor has not been pre-enrolled by the tenant, the visitor could also go to the reception desk and have the pass created by the attendant.

"The Symmetry Security Management System is a very user friendly system," said Blackstone/EOP Senior Property Manager, Deb Garside. "In the lobby, visitors walk in and print a badge; it's self explanatory for visitors and works well."

A proximity reader is also built into each turnstile located in the lobby. Building employees carry proximity credentials and present them to the proximity reader. The reader reads the card and the turnstile grants access.

Many tenants manage their own access control systems and databases. Spectrum Integrated Technologies installed a reader router to direct transaction information from the lobby turnstiles to the tenant systems so they have the ability to see only the activity of their employees in the lobby. The reader router hardware allows the tenants to have greater control over their security management systems, providing another attractive amenity to the security system.

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Employee credentials control who passes through the turnstiles and in addition manage elevator floor access. Every tenant, employee and visitor has to use this system, including all vendors and contractors. Everyone carries either a tenant or visitor credential. The Symmetry Solution provides a complete system from end to end.

Symmetry Video
Security officers monitor Symmetry Video and alarm activity in the Security Office. A secure rack is installed inside equipped with a rack mount SMS server, flat panel LCD display/KVM switch, UPS and Integral digital video recorders from Pelco.

Cameras monitor all entries and exits and each turnstile location. They are also installed inside every freight elevator and in the freight and passenger elevator lobbies.

"These are high rise buildings in a major metropolitan city and as such remain major targets for terrorism, theft, and assault," said Feldman. "Symmetry Video assists security personnel in monitoring the facility perimeter and protecting the building's tenants."

Security officers view camera activity on Symmetry Video's virtual matrix. The Symmetry virtual matrix allows the officers to view up to 72 cameras at one time. The officers can assign viewing preferences according to their needs, and can choose how to monitor their building by assigning priority levels to the cameras. If the front lobby displays a disturbance, security officers can enlarge that camera image for better viewing.

The fully-integrated lobby system has been successfully employed in eight Boston high rises and has become the standard for all of Blackstone/EOP buildings in their Boston portfolio. It provides greater tenant control over their guests, a very high tech appeal to the process, and of course to the elevators and stairwells.

"We have much more control over who is getting into the building," said Garside. "The tenants are the gatekeepers, and

that's part of the reason we installed it. As long as the tenants use it, we have outstanding security."

Why Spectrum Integrated Technologies
Spectrum Integrated Technologies is New England's foremost designer and installer of security applications. Spectrum IT understands the complexities of line voltage and low voltage types of applications, and has experience with complex mechanical aspects of an installation as well as real world concerns of functionality in heavily trafficked buildings.

Due to Spectrum IT's experience in working with AMAG's Symmetry SMS and Symmetry Video, training security officers was straightforward. The same system is installed in eight buildings making it easy for security officers to go from building to building without requiring additional training.

As building managers and tenants quickly adjust to the system, they immediately realize the benefits and request additional readers and cameras. The system has not only reduced the number of officers needed, but has provided a tool to help security staff do more with less.

"Integrating the Symmetry security technology into the custom design of the kiosks is something other property management companies should consider," said CBT Architect, Project Manager Mark Bourassa. "The solution is a good model for property management companies."

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