Check who just walked in with Axis.

Village of Westmont steps up building security with
Axis network door controllers and AXIS Entry Manager.

Organization:
Village of Westmont

Location:
Westmont, IL, USA

Industry segment:
Government

Application:
Access control

Mission

The Village of Westmont, on the outskirts of metropolitan Chicago, had been using four separate access control systems to secure the entrances to its municipal buildings. The village's IT department wanted to consolidate systems to streamline operations and more tightly manage user access privileges. They also wanted to ramp up security with access control on key interior doors. When grant money was offered by the State of Illinois, the IT Department began searching for a network-based solution that would be easier to maintain, less complex to deploy and highly programmable to support more credentialing options and improve building security around the clock.

Solution

Westmont chose the AXIS A1001 Network Door Controller, which allowed the village to keep its legacy card readers and keypads, door locks and door position sensors. The network door controllers were installed on exterior and interior doors in five government sites.

The IT Department uses the AXIS Entry Manager solution to quickly configure the hardware and update the user directory from any authorized computer on the network. IT also installed two standalone AXIS A1001 Controllers with their own independent AXIS Entry Manager to further control user access to sensitive areas.

Result

Because the system is less complicated to maintain, the IT Department has been able to install and manage the system in-house, saving Westmont an estimated $15,000 a year in third-party service contracts. Since the network door controllers are highly programmable, IT can not only tightly control of who has access to any given door in any given building but also restrict that access by day of the week and time of the day or night.

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> "Under our old access control systems, anyone authorized to use a door could come in whenever they wanted. Now we can program the user directory with employee schedules and the schedules of service people and other outsiders coming in to use our facilities and lock down their access privileges to a set window of time. It makes our buildings more secure."
>
> Glen Liljeberg, Director of Information Technology for the Village of Westmont.

Juggling multiple access control systems

Known as the home of Beanie Babies (Ty Warner manufacturing), the Village of Westmont lies on the outskirts of Chicago, Ill. With a population of 25,000, the town represents an interesting blend of residential and industrial life. Like many municipalities in recent years, Westmont has been directing resources towards heightening security in its government buildings. When a security grant from the State of Illinois became available, Westmont jumped at the chance to upgrade and expand its door access control technology.

"Up until 2015, we had four separate systems in place for door access control in our government facilities," noted Glen Liljeberg, Director of Information Technology for the Village of Westmont. "Whenever we had to modify user access privileges from one building to another we had to log into each different system to make the changes. Now that we've installed Axis network door controllers and the AXIS Entry Manager, all the buildings are on one system. It makes it a lot easier to manage."

Reusing and reducing existing hardware

The switch to Axis network door controllers was economical because the technology worked with the village's existing door hardware: the HID proximity cards and card readers, keypads, door locks and door position sensors. 16 of the Axis controllers were retrofitted to doors in the Police Department. "Because the Axis controllers use Power over Ethernet (PoE), we were able to save a lot of wiring when we switched over," Liljeberg explained.

In each of the new installations sites, AXIS A1001 Network Door Controllers were ceiling-mounted near the doors to save on cabling as PoE reduces the need for separate power cables. Using all-in-one cables to power the door, the card reader and the door controller saved a lot of installation time as well.

Promoting self-sufficiency

Westmont's IT Department tries to do most things in-house, and the color-coded connectors and configuration wizards that come with AXIS A1001 and AXIS Entry Manager made installation very straightforward.

"The configuration sheets that come with the system are priceless," reasoned Glen Liljeberg, Director of Information Technology for the Village of Westmont. "They show where every wire goes which made the process to convert the system extremely easy."

The configuration wizard also lets Westmont remotely verify that all the door equipment has been correctly connected and that each door is working properly. Whenever a new controller is added to the system, user credentials and schedules are automatically shared with the new location.

Today the IT department runs its Axis controllers in parallel with its Axis network video cameras, using a building's cameras to verify the identity of anyone being denied access to a specific door. "Once we've identified who they are and their access privileges, we can, if need be, change their credentials almost immediately – sometimes even before they have time to notify us," added Liljeberg.

Eliminating physical keys and shared key codes

Liljeberg notes a number of other advantages of the new system, including the elimination of physical keys and shared key codes. "It's a big advantage not having to re-key a door lock every time an employee leaves an organization or loses their key," Liljeberg remarked.

In places like the Fire Department, everyone used to share a common pin code that was rotated periodically. "With the new Axis system, everyone gets their own unique key card so we can track who's coming and going in the two fire stations," said Liljeberg. "The Fire Department likes it better than the old system."

The Axis system also easily accommodates a double layer of protection at doors leading to high-restricted areas. At those entrances, users are required to both swipe their key card and enter a unique keypad pin code.