

Case Study: Oregon State University



CUSTOMER

Oregon State University

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Easy to install and use

Customizable to meet user requirements

SMS seamlessly integrates with other enterprise software systems

Automatically integrates data from event management system and resource planning platform

Streamlines access to labs and classrooms

Boosts campus safety and security

The Customer

Designed to be a state-of-the-art facility for students and faculty members at Oregon State University, Austin Hall could also represent one of the most unique systems integration projects within the higher education market in the United States. The 100,000-square-foot building, which opened in the fall of 2014, seamlessly integrates building access control into a single data management solution that not only enables school officials to streamline ingress and egress, but also allows students and staff to reserve one of 21 project rooms in the facility simply by using their existing credential. In addition to the project rooms, the building also features 10 classrooms, 10 faculty conference rooms, IT closets, a four-room research suite, a mailroom and an assortment of event spaces.

The Challenge

To help manage access control at Austin Hall, which includes credentials for approximately 4,500 students each semester, Kirk Wydner, Operating Systems Network Analyst for the College of Business,

and his team chose to deploy Vanderbilt Industries' Security Management System (SMS). However, this would not be an ordinary, run-of-the-mill access control installation.

According to Wydner, the system, which was installed by their security systems integrator, Chown Security, had to not only work with existing HID Global identification cards used by students across campus; it also had to have an easy-to-access user repository. "A key feature of Vanderbilt that really helped us was the ability to add in user-defined fields because we needed to have our own unique key," he said.

Another key part of the SMS integration at Austin Hall, according to Wydner, was the fact that his team could specify a set of areas within the facility and create access rules based on those sections. This would prove to be crucial as the system needed to also clear the most technically demanding challenge presented by the project — integrating with the facility's data management solution.

VANDERBILT SMS

Powerful open platform design easily integrates with other security and business systems.

Intuitive interface minimizes system administration, management and maintenance.

Unlimited reporting structure and detailed reporting options.

Unlimited number of cardholders and readers allows for complete flexibility.

Scalable to meet today's and tomorrow's needs.

For more information on Vanderbilt SMS, please visit us on the Web at www.vanderbiltindustries.com.

The Solution

The SMS system was but one part of a larger solution installed at Austin Hall to accomplish a much more ambitious goal: to have a completely interoperable access and room reservation system. To accomplish this, Wydner and his team installed the Pinwheel Data Management Engine (DME) from SwiftData Technology. Pinwheel would integrate data from SMS, along with several other enterprise software solutions employed at the facility, including an event management system from Dean Evans and an enterprise resource planning platform from Ellucian.

However, there were several significant hurdles that had to be overcome by both the OSU IT group and all of the vendors involved to help make these interoperability goals a reality. An integration of this magnitude had never been done before, so much of the project was uncharted water.

"We didn't know quite where to begin," Wydner said. "We knew that we needed to get all of the user data — our faculty, staff members and students. We needed some way of defining who is taking a college business class and which system we were going to pull that out of, whether that's going to be our central student repository, active directory or if we were going to go off of Salesforce."



Wydner said the university eventually decided the best way to bring this information together was to enter it into Salesforce. He started a separate project focused on integrating the identification numbers from the campus HID cards into their Salesforce database. Aside from that, the team also had to figure out a way to format the data from Salesforce so that it would be recognized by the Vanderbilt SMS and Dean Evans EMS solutions.

using the Pinwheel DME platform, students are now enrolled into SMS automatically based upon the information entered into the Ellucian ERP system. The successful integration of these systems would not have been possible, however, without some of the unique features provided by Vanderbilt SMS. SMS has a unique way of combining the access levels of students and staff members with their respective rights and privileges through a process known as nesting, which enabled the school to use the system in a way that others have not in the past.

Once the system was fully installed, Wydner and his team were provided with in-depth training by Vanderbilt, which made learning to use SMS a breeze. "The Vanderbilt team did a great job covering all of the bases and making sure we had the information down pat before handing the system over to us," explained Wydner.

Wydner said the decision to implement an automated lock system at Austin Hall saved significantly on time and manpower. If not for the automated platform, the organization would be spending several hours a day trying to manually schedule access to project rooms. Also, the school would have a more difficult time trying to account for items that may be lost or stolen as it would have no recourse for tracking who went into and out of a given room. Now, the school can track who had access to a room in the event anything goes missing.

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The Future

While the deployment is still in the infancy stages, there have already been discussions with the school's College of Engineering and the Memorial Union Building about the possibility of expanding the system to their facilities. "It may be at some point in the future that we expand this out to other colleges and organizations within our university, as long as we can get something that is stable and able to expand," added Wydner.

The feedback provided by students and faculty members in the months since the overall solution was put in place at Austin Hall has been overwhelmingly positive.

"The main thing that our faculty and students enjoy about the integration is that they can just walk up to a project room or a meeting room, [and] tap their OSU ID on the Schlage lock. It then opens up, lets them in and it also gives them an automatic one-hour reservation on the room," concluded Wydner.