



AVAYA

SECURING A FUTURE FOR TECHNICAL INNOVATION

Avaya's passion for innovation manifested itself in a complete overhaul of its access control security systems, encompassing 190 facilities throughout the United States and an additional 80 sites scattered across the globe. The goal was to create a secure, centralized global access control network that would be able to grant partial or universal access to any authorized cardholder. Not only did Avaya achieve its goal, but saved tens of thousands of dollars in the process.

As part of its separation from Lucent in 2000, Avaya inherited hundreds of facilities, and the electronic access control systems installed within them. Avaya's newly formed Global Security and Real Estate departments decided the time was right to explore improvements to security at these facilities.

Bill Parkin, manager of Business Threat Assessment and Physical Security for Avaya, believed that the essential element in creating a centralized access control system was synchronization between the Avaya SAP® enterprise resource planning (ERP) database and the access control system's card holder database. This synchronization would enable Avaya to centralize access badge production while ensuring the automatic activation – and deactivation – of cards, substantially reducing data entry and production costs.

Avaya's security team joined forces with veteran security consultant, Randy Nason, vice president of C. H. Guemsey & Company. Their first step was to inventory the various access control systems the company inherited from its predecessor. The process identified a variety of access control brands that included systems from G4S Technology. The team decided the most efficient means to arriving at a single, centralized system was to build on top of one of the already installed systems.

"We looked at the reliability issue, what was working and what was not," recalls Parkin. "We concluded that the G4S Technology systems were working and were extremely reliable."

Since the new access control system would be required to tie together all Avaya facilities throughout the world, Parkin set a high value on G4S Technology's global footprint. "We had some concerns about the ability of other access control manufacturers to meet our global needs," explained Parkin. "We felt comfortable with G4S Technology's global reach."

"We estimated that we would achieve return on our investments within five to ten installs." Parkin recalled.

Parkin attributes a substantial percentage of the economic advantage of going with G4S Technology relates to G4S Technology's value-pricing structure. "When we looked at comparable pricing for competitive systems, we would have had to buy functionality modules, like badge design and visitor management for an additional cost. With G4S Technology, all of that was already included in the standard price. Overall, the G4S Technology price break was substantial."

With the decision made regarding the selection of brand for standardizing the Avaya access control system, Nason and his team at Guemsey began developing the blueprint that would outline the framework of the global access control network. "We started by establishing a series of categories based on different levels of risk," explained Nason. "Next, we came up with a standard for security system implementation for each of these categories. We then published standards documents that Avaya could provide to the integrators who would be installing these systems at its various facilities."



"We concluded G4S Technology systems we extremely reliable"

The initial plan called for the establishment of a central server at an Avaya location in Texas, with regional servers in New Jersey, Colorado, the UK, and Australia. G4S Technology's Symmetry Global access control software was installed on the central server and then partitioned the network so that each regional server would manage the Avaya facilities in its region. Badge production and distribution would be centralized in New Jersey and Colorado. Eventually, however, the system was consolidated into two regions located in New Jersey and Colorado.

Before centralization could take place, the Symmetry Global card holder database had to be linked to the company's ERP database. To facilitate the process, Parkin introduced the Avaya corporate IT team to G4S Technology. "Our corporate IT team was a great partner," said Parkin. "They were extremely helpful in working with G4S Technology to create the connection between the two databases. The G4S Technology card holder database receives daily updates directly from the ERP database through a SQL interface G4S Technology created for this application."

With the Symmetry cardholder database continuously populated with the identity of every Avaya employee across the globe, Parkin could establish a centralized badge production process. "When a new employee is hired, his manager adds him to the ERP database," explained Parkin. "We get the new record, insert a digital picture, assign the appropriate access privileges, print a badge, and mail the inactivated badge to the new employee with instructions about how to activate the badge." In the event an employee needs special access privileges, Avaya has designated individuals in various facilities who are authorized to request these changes from Parkin's team.

Synchronizing the Symmetry Global access control database to the company's ERP database also improved security for a simple reason – cards associated with retired and terminated employees are automatically deactivated. "Prior to the synchronization, we relied on a manual process performed by several individuals," said Parkin. "Often there were severe delays due to sheer volume of records to be altered." With the ERP database synchronization in place, that process is now performed immediately upon an employee's termination effectively eliminating the potential security breach.

Today, Parkin and his team spend their time expanding and optimizing the Symmetry Global access control network. Avaya has built out the system to include locations in India, South Korea, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Australia, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and France.

While the extent of the enterprise access control network has grown, Parkin has further streamlined the central and regional server arrangement while building redundancy into the system. "Our central server is configured in a RAID 5 with the operating system on mirrored drives with a fail-over server right next to it," Parkin explains. "The whole system runs through uninterruptible power supply on a generated circuit that will allow us to recover from any outages extremely quickly."

With close to 85 facilities across the world running on a single, secure global access control system powered by an ERP-synchronized database, Avaya proudly bears the mantle of technological innovation passed on by its ancestors.

About G4S Technology

G4S Technology is part of G4S plc, the world's leading international security solutions group.

G4S Technology provides fully integrated building security systems throughout the world, protecting everything from small offices and schools to large multi-national organisations and high security Government facilities. G4S Technology has been providing unified security solutions for over 30 years, delivering 30,000 systems across 80 countries, to mitigate risk and protect staff, premises and assets.



G4S Technology

www.g4stechnology.com