

EMS Case Study University of Wisconsin - River Falls, University Center



EMS integrates with automated door locking technology

Locking Down Resources

At the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) the University Center acts as an important gathering place for the campus community. When UWRF decided to build its new student center, the staff made a conscious choice to protect its student building managers and its technology with an in-house integration between EMS software and Ingersoll Rand's security management system. This longtime EMS customer's initiative accomplished these goals and saw some significant savings along the way.

"At the time the University Center was being constructed, we had some technology hardware theft on campus. In looking at the amount of new technology in those spaces, and trying to cover all areas with only one University Center building manager, it just made sense to use the technology we had to be more efficient and effective," said Jason Winget, UWRF's infrastructure and security technologies manager.

Each of the 11 meeting and event rooms had somewhat portable audio, visual and technical equipment. It would have been impossible for the one building manager to keep track of all these spaces and technology, which were spread across four levels in the 147,000 square-foot building.

"While a third party solution might have been available, the budget for the new University Center did not have the extra funds needed to outsource the interface development," said Debra Martin, the school's campus reservations coordinator. "The UWRF's EMS Database

Administrator Charles Rickard (Chuck) worked with the talented staff at Dean Evans to write the interface. Because the Dean Evans team planned ahead and developed an open database, Chuck was able to design the interface with EMS quickly and at no additional cost to the university."

Fast Facts

- **4** levels; **11** meeting and event spaces
- **250** events a week; **7,150 visitors** a day
- **147,000** square feet
- **1** building manager

Unlocking Efficiency

The doors to meeting and event spaces can be set to lock and unlock at predetermined times and the University Center's sole manager can unlock and lock the entire building from a computer in mere seconds with this integration.

"Using EMS and Ingersoll Rand software to automatically unlock and lock meeting room doors in the University Center has improved security, safety and efficiency," Martin said. "It has also saved staffing dollars and improved customer satisfaction according to our survey data."

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The rooms will automatically unlock 10 to 15 minutes before events scheduled in EMS and lock five minutes after the meeting is set to end. Modifications can be made for customers who require longer set up or tear down times. The on-duty building manager also has a key card to override the automatic locks if necessary.

“In our old building, we used to have to go around to every meeting room and unlock them prior to a meeting and then lock them afterward,” said Mark Klapatch, a UWRF assistant custodial supervisor, who worked as a University Center building manager when he was a student. “In such a busy building like the student center, things often came up which required the manager’s immediate attention and unlocking rooms was put on the back burner. Often customers would have to come to the main desk to be let into their rooms; we were not able to provide quality and consistent customer service.”

According to university officials, the novelty of automated locks also sparked many positive interactions between the center’s users and staff.

With more than 250 events taking place each week in the University Center, the school estimates it saves at least 14 hours of staff time by scheduling room access through EMS.

“I am a huge fan of the automatic locks. Not only did I feel much safer opening and closing the building, it did save a huge amount of time throughout the day,” Klapatch said.

Unexpected Turns

The flexibility of EMS also let staff plan for unique events and slower times in the center. After the last meeting of

the day on the third floor, the system essentially “locks out” the elevator from going to that top level. If a group is hosting an event for ticket holders, they can specify which doors to keep locked and which entrances should remain unlocked for guest check-ins. The EMS-Ingersoll Rand integration also helped save man hours long before and after events.

“A building of this size would normally need five fulltime custodial/setup staff members. Now we need only one because we can ‘schedule’ that fulltime staff person to pre-set a room and know that the room won’t be reconfigured by random walk-in customers using a space without reserving it,” Martin said.

What started as a project to secure the University Center resulted in increased customer satisfaction, convenience, saved man hours and an overall increase in efficiency that the staff would like to see repeated in some of the campus’ 26 other buildings.

“The role of the UWRF ID Carding Office is to find ways to use the technology we have to save money and human resources,” Winget said. “The interface between Ingersoll Rand and EMS is a model for success here at UWRF and we would love to be able to incorporate this same technology to our other campus buildings to save even more money and resources.”

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