

SECURITY DIRECTOR NEWS

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Georgia-Pacific goes global with access

Company launches open platform access control system to integrate with employee badges

BY ANDREA GURAL

ATLANTA—Paper products and wallboard maker Georgia-Pacific has embarked on a web-based access control program that not only frees the company from proprietary software but is projected to shave nearly 75 percent off the cost of an enterprise access control project using traditional technology.

The project, which is being implemented in tandem with an enterprise-wide employee badging initiative, will bring standardization across GP's 400 locations around the globe for the first time through the implementation of a common access control platform and a single corporate ID card, according to Jeff Floreno, deputy director, corporate security for GP.

Because of GP's growth by acquisition, "everything is decentralized, but from a security perspective, we were looking for a common platform," Floreno said. That task was made more difficult by the disparate needs and limitations of GP locations — small chemical plants, large paper mills, gypsum research laboratories and corporate office locations with existing access

control systems — as well as Floreno's goal of retaining usable legacy equipment.

Using a low-cost, Internet enabled access control panel and a non-proprietary software platform, GP's security and IT department designed a system that, from a single server in Green Bay, Wisc., can provide a seamless transition for an employee traveling from corporate headquarters in Atlanta to a large paper manufacturing plant in Bridgen, Wales. Eventually, managers of a location or business unit will be able to extend or revoke access control privileges for employees at their location on a regional, self-service basis, without having a member of the security team facilitate the transaction.

"We see savings associated with this approach as well, not only in licensing but in the telephone call," Floreno said.

While that functionality is not yet available in GP's system, the open platform software allows for that capability, said Steve Mobley, senior systems analyst for GP.

Part of a pilot project put together by Minneapolis-based consulting firm Secure Environments, the program



brings together HID Corp.'s VertX™ access control panel, software from Minneapolis-based AMT and design help from Electronic Security Design Group. The combination of these elements allow the access control project to meet GP's needs for locations that couldn't normally shoulder the cost of a two-door access control system — now under \$2,400 — up to interfacing with the legacy access control system at the Georgia Pacific Center here.

To date, 22 U.S locations and one in the United Kingdom are already up and running with the new system, with another 10 locations in Europe and the United States in line for upgrades.

The company also found during the pilot project that it had the capability of installing the panels themselves, which turned out to be "a by-product of having that open platform," Floreno said. SDN

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