



Southern Connecticut State University

Customer case study

TECHNOLOGY/PRODUCTS

- Fargo DTC550-LC Direct-to-Card Printer/Encoder

"First and foremost, the Hoot Loot card is a mandatory ID card for everybody on campus. It is important that we be able to identify who actually belongs here and who doesn't."

*Mark Waters
Director of Financial Business Applications,
Southern Connecticut State University*



TOP REASONS WHY SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY CHOSE FARGO PRINTERS FOR THIS PROJECT:

- Built-in encoder for magnetic stripes to accommodate university's legacy systems
- Two-sided printing to hold all of the necessary images and information
- Standalone device and a network printer
- Speed of the printer in order to cut card production time
- Lamination capability to improve durability of the cards
- Ease of use, including installation of new ribbons, cards and laminate

Hoot Loot Cards Help Secure Southern Connecticut State University Thanks to Fargo Printers

The Challenge

Can an owl help keep a 12,000-student university safe? It can when it's designed into the identity card program at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), whose mascot is the Fighting Owl. SCSU, spanning 168 acres in New Haven, Conn., is in the midst of a \$230 million campus renovation that includes the introduction of a Hoot Loot card for identification.

With a student population of 12,000 in 115 graduate and undergraduate programs, the university believes campus security is a critical component of the renovation. It needed to replace its paper ID cards and laminated photos with a more modern, more durable multi-purpose identification card for all university students, staff and faculty.

Enter the Hoot Loot card.

Solution Found

In 2006, Mark Waters, Director of Financial Business Applications, was hired as the Card Office Coordinator to set up the new ID card system, upgrading the paper ID cards with a plastic ID card system. When it came time for the upgrade, Jordan Jones, Card Office Assistant, knew where to go. "I've worked with ID Wholesaler for some time," Jones said. "They directed us to Fargo because they knew our needs. We were impressed that Fargo received good reviews, especially in higher education applications."

"Mark and Jordan are advanced users," said Amy Sanders, Account Manager, ID Wholesaler (www.IDWholesaler.com), the Fargo Value-Added Retailer. "When I first spoke with Jordan in April 2006, the university's outdated card printing system was no longer filling the school's needs. Jordan was beginning to research more reliable solutions, and the Fargo DTC550-LC was a perfect fit. It provided a reliable, cost-effective solution."

Jones and Waters chose this printer for several reasons. "We knew we wanted to print on two sides of the card," said Waters, "and we also wanted a built-in encoder for magnetic stripes because the campus has many legacy devices that use magnetic stripe technology. We also wanted the printer to be a network printer. It was important that it be a standalone device and not tied to a desktop computer or server." The Fargo printer is kept in a secure office in a secure building to prevent tampering.

Jones, who manages the day-to-day operation of the Card Office, which includes customer support, also wanted a printer that could handle the pace of output he needed. "We were impressed with the speed of the DTC," he said. "It cut our card production time in half or better." Likewise, its ease of use was important. "There are no cumbersome parts," Jones added. "I like the WYSIWYG version of installing new ribbons, card media and laminate."

"The lamination capability was important in providing durability for our students," Jones continued. "We issue one card for the entire length of a student's education here, which might be as long as five or six years. We want it to last." A \$10 replacement fee is assessed for the first card that is lost or stolen. After that, the cost increases to \$20.



Results

Today, the Southern Connecticut State University system has grown to include seven part-time student employees who are trained to verify identity and produce ID cards. To obtain a card, students must present an official photo ID, such as a driver's license, as well as their academic schedule or proof of enrollment. Faculty, staff and others must present a photo ID and a letter of authorization to verify affiliation with the university and entitlement to an ID card.

The cards serve a myriad of purposes. "First and foremost, the Hoot Loot card is a mandatory ID card for everybody on campus," said Waters. "It is important that we be able to identify who actually belongs here and who doesn't." Currently, there are several different versions of the ID card, identifying undergraduate, graduate, full-time and part-time students; administration; faculty; staff; faculty emeritus and contractors.

After the Virginia Tech shooting incident in April 2007, a change was made in the orientation of the SCSU cards. Student cards are printed horizontally because they are carried in purses and wallets. Faculty and staff cards are printed vertically, in a badge format, and expected to be worn at all times. "We want our faculty and staff to be easily identifiable as authority figures on campus," said Jones.

The SCSU Hoot Loot ID card can be used both on and off campus. For the 2,600 students living on campus, a magnetic stripe on the card provides access to their residence hall, where users need to enter a pre-programmed PIN after swiping their card in the card reader. For all students, the card can be used for access to the university's computer labs as well as for health services, laundry machines, the bookstore, fitness center and vending machines. A bar code on the card enables users to check out library books at the Hilton C. Buley Library, while the magnetic stripe enables them to pay library fines or use self-service copiers and color printers there. Hoot Loot card holders can also access SCSU's online Web service, called BannerWeb, thanks to the individual's unique eight-digit identification number printed on the card.

Off campus, students can use Hoot Loot cards at a wide variety of locations, from Greek restaurants to gas stations and UPS stores. Not surprisingly, a large number of local pizza restaurants accept the Hoot Loot card for payment. Hoot Loot cardholders can also receive discounts nationwide through a Student Advantage® Discount Card membership, which can be incorporated into the card itself.

Not only does use of the Hoot Loot card lessen the need to carry cash, adding to a student's personal safety, but it also helps students avoid credit card interest fees and the possibility of overdrawing a bank account. The debit account carries over from year to year and is protected if reported lost or stolen.

Students, faculty and staff can add money to a Hoot Loot card at five locations on campus or through a secure online center, called MyCard Online, where they can also check their card balance, print out their card history or change their PIN.

Resident students who sign up for a meal plan are required to participate in Food Loot, a declining balance plan for use at on-campus dining facilities, including the main dining hall, Student Center café and on-campus convenience stores. Food Loot requires that students living in kitchen-equipped rooms have \$300 in Food Loot per semester. Others must have at least \$50 per semester, in addition to their traditional board meal plan. The Food Loot information is stored on the Hoot Loot card to simplify the process.

"Card-based security has become more of an issue with the increase in multi-function, campus-wide ID cards," Sanders added. "The cards at SCSU are used for so much more than just a photo ID that lamination has become a necessity, not only for security purposes, but also for enhanced durability."





Waters knew even back in 2000 that schools looking at ID card programs should view their primary purpose as providing a service to the students faculty and staff. "If they always keep that in mind," he said, "everything they do will at least stay even with the curve."

About ID Wholesaler:

ID Wholesaler is the largest online reseller of photo identification products. ID Wholesaler offers their customers advice from factory trained ID Specialists, a complete line of identification products from the top brands, and exceptional value with a low price guarantee. For more information visit www.IDWholesaler.com.

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