HID®

Towering Achievement: Trusted NFC tags streamline security and management systems for iconic office building

London, England UK

HID Global and MyTAG.io team to help CityPoint reach new heights in security and efficiency

CityPoint is one of London's most iconic structures. The arched roof with cantilevered buttresses reaches 417 feet (127 meters) skyward, flanked by low-rise extensions creating two 12-story galleria and a ground floor winter garden with sloping, glazed roofs. CityPoint's 35 stories of structural steel, glass and aluminum includes over 706,000 sq. feet (65,600 sq. m) of office space, ground-level shops and restaurants, a fitness center, multi-level underground parking and basement level storage.

The tallest in London when it was first built in 1967, the CityPoint building has evolved along with the historic city, adapting to changing demands by implementing advanced technology to keep pace with today's requirements.

"Technology and tenant needs have changed dramatically since this building first opened 50 years ago," said Lee Murray, CityPoint building manager. "CityPoint thrives today by adapting quickly to change, and striving to operate our facilities at the forefront of technology."

Challenges

Operated by CityPoint's Estate Management Team, CityPoint's mission is to ensure an optimal environment for businesses to conduct enterprise activities, while maintaining high security standards that protect tenants, their guests, their assets, as well as CityPoint staff and contractors.

Thousands of people pour into and out of the building with each day's cycle, while CityPoint staff and contractors maintain 24-hour watch over the operations. Among their daily functions, three potential areas of improvement had been identified for the facility:

1. Automated key management. Over 220 physical keys unlock distinct areas within the facility. CityPoint staff is assigned varying levels of authorization, designating which keys they are allowed to use to access secure areas as needed. A manual, paper-based system for tracking the distribution and collection of keys had proven time consuming, ineffective and inaccurate, resulting in lost and stolen keys on a regular basis.

2. Improved security patrol. Security officers and contractors patrol 280 designated points within the building and an additional 15 points on the surrounding grounds every day. A handheld wand was used to collect a digital timestamp at each numbered checkpoint, with the data downloaded to computers only after the completion of each individual patrol. Incident reports were handwritten, meaning they were largely un-actionable until each patrol was finished. Even then, the written reports had to be cross-referenced with the numerical checkpoint data for verification.

3. Better contractor management. Dozens of mechanical and security contractors on site daily help keep CityPoint running smoothly. A significant operational expense, CityPoint lacked a means for accurately auditing billable time for contracted services.

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Lee Murray
Building Manager
CityPoint

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Solutions

MyTAG.io and HID Global partnered to create a system for CityPoint that integrates data key management, security patrol and contractor services into a single interface to deliver more accurate information in real time. Near field communication (NFC) technology enabled seamless deployment of the solution throughout the facility, with minimal investment in infrastructure.

Cloud-based solutions, including MyTAG's security management software and HID Trusted Tag® Services, allowed CityPoint to deploy this comprehensive solution using their existing computer infrastructure, standard NFC-enabled smartphones and tablets, and NFC readers that connected to computers via USB.

The cloud-based system further enabled CityPoint's estate management team to customize the interface with their commercial property information, employee information, contractor details and other data to provide complete control and visibility into facility operations.

"The CityPoint solution required placement of unique identifiers at hundreds of points within the building and the surrounding grounds outside, in addition to equipping the staff and contractors," said Mark Robinton, Direcor of Business Development and Strategic Innovation with HID Global. "HID Global offers the industry's broadest, most flexible line of NFC transponders to meet different environmental and security needs, which made it possible to fulfill the exceptional and diverse requirements at CityPoint."

Several hundred HID Global NFC tags were deployed to identify assets, checkpoints and people throughout the facility.

- HID Epoxy Tag Keyfob transponders, designed to provide unique identities to keys, were ideal for CityPoint's key management application.
- HID Inlays & Labels were used to designate numerous patrol checkpoints throughout the building. NFC Stickers custom-printed with a CityPoint illustration fit seamlessly with the building's interior design standards, while clearly marking each point for guards to tap on their daily tours.
- To designate outdoor checkpoints, HID Poly Tag transponders were chosen for their ability to withstand exposure to seasonal elements.
- Familiar ISO Card badges enable contractors to check in and out easily at NFC terminals.

A simple tap is all the training most personnel needed to ensure effective system deployment, while HID Trusted Tag® Services – in contrast to traditional NFC tags - ensured each tap with an NFC device is secure, unique and impossible to clone.

Key management: To use a physical key, a user can now just tap a tablet computer with the keyfob and enter an authorized identity. The user is then notified of when the key is due to be returned. When returned, the user taps the tablet again to check the key back in. MyTAG.io generates a main dashboard screen showing all keys that are checked out, who has them, and when they are due back.

Security patrol: On patrol, security guards can now simply tap each checkpoint on his/her designated tour with their NFC-enabled smartphone. MyTAG.io identifies each checkpoint by name, and automatically uploads timestamp information and updates databases in real time.

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Mike George
Managing Director
MyTAG

The MyTAG.io system records a guard's progress automatically and can trigger an alert should too much time pass between checkpoints. If a guard encounters an incident, they can use their smartphone to generate a detailed report – including photo or video evidence if necessary – and immediately escalates activity as needed according to preset protocols.

Contractor management: Contractors are now issued pre-printed NFC ISO cards upon arrival at CityPoint. They tap a tablet computer to check in and confirm their identities. Another tap records the completion of their assignment, and the card is returned to facility management for re-use.

Benefits

"HID Trusted Tag Services enables proof of presence, with frictionless authentication - which is the ideal match for commercial and private real estate properties," said Mike George, managing director of MyTAG. "With full integration into MyTAG.io, the opportunities are limitless to deploy secure proof of presence and other trusted NFC capabilities throughout CityPoint as their business needs continue to evolve."

CityPoint has significantly reduced staff time previously spent manually logging and tracking keys, not to mention time and resources spent replacing lost or stolen keys. Not only can the team account for each key instantaneously, they now have access to historical issuance and return activities to better understand which keys are in greatest demand and by whom.

The improved security patrols deliver greater peace of mind for tenants and staff, through more timely, accurate and detailed reporting. Even when an individual security guard is on patrol, the guard is constantly connected to facilities management, creating proven interactions at every checkpoint.

MyTAG.io can track the time lapse between checkpoints, and in the event that a guard does not reach a consecutive point in the prescribed amount of time, the system can trigger an appropriate alarm – from a reminder message to the guard, to an alert for facilities staff to investigate further. This provides added assurance to guards that they have constant communication with facility staff, even when walking tours alone.

Results

CityPoint reports that the NFC and cloud-based solution has reduced the time it takes for individual security patrols, due to the increased efficiency of digital tracking versus the previously cumbersome manual recording of checkpoints and incidents. Eliminating the paperwork also enables each guard to more effectively observe surroundings.

CityPoint has also recognized improvement in the management of their contract employee partners. More accurate, auditable time and attendance ensures CityPoint is paying only for services rendered, and contractors are ensured fair compensation for work completed. Reports detail site visits and activities, providing management insight and substantiation for contractor invoices.