

# MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES OFFER SAFE, TOUCHLESS SOLUTION

Expand access control offerings and promote healthier work environments

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Employee safety has always been a priority for organizations, but it has taken on heightened significance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies are now evaluating every aspect of the workplace to ensure that they are providing a healthy environment for their employees. As a result, customers are considering advanced security solutions to help meet additional health, wellness, and security needs.

One area of concern is high-touch surfaces, such as door handles and entry keypads, because they have the potential to spread infection. Mobile-based products that offer touchless access features are a great option for organizations trying to minimize cross contamination.

The following article highlights the advantages of implementing Bluetooth-based access control readers and credentials. Bluetooth technology can help lessen risk in a wide range of business, residential, and hospitality environments.

## Increase safety with hands-free access control

Adopting the right access control technologies can help keep workers safer and eliminate areas prone to contact contamination. It hasn't always been the case, but today's access control systems now integrate state-of-the-art technologies, such as biometrics, near-field communication (NFC), cloud computing, and Bluetooth.

An ideal solution for hands-free entry already exists in Bluetooth readers and mobile credentials. Mobile-based access control is an excellent solution for securing credentials and enhancing security, especially when implemented with smartphones.

Bluetooth and NFC offer hands-free methods of accessing multiple points of entry from a familiar device. Bluetooth applications are also more convenient and help to create a healthier environment through touchless solutions in high-traffic areas.

## Touchless and targeted access control

Touchless Bluetooth products can also be used to limit and control access in multiple scenarios. For instance, a worker who has tested positive for COVID-19 can only gain access after receiving authorized clearance. Facility managers also have the option to set a limit on the number of people within a select area or within the entire building at a given time.

## Expanded market opportunities for dealers

The security and health benefits that Bluetooth access control readers offer is one of the reasons why analysts at ABI Research are anticipating significant growth over the next five years.

MarketsandMarkets analysts agree, estimating that hardware for the access control market will grow from \$4.4 billion (USD) in 2019 to \$6.5 billion by 2025, at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 8.2%.

## Smartphones are key

Another basis for the rising popularity of mobile-based access control is the increased use of smartphones. Roughly 85% of Americans now own a smartphone, and a growing group of users regularly rely on their devices for everyday tasks. Users are also becoming more comfortable with contact-less transactions.

Smartphones' integrated biometric authentication features make contactless Bluetooth readers and credentials even more convenient and attractive for users. Bluetooth technology is very familiar to anyone using a notebook computer or even headphones. Plus, using smartphones for touchless access eliminates the hassle of remembering cards or fobs.

## Key technologies promote healthier environments

The Bluetooth technology used in access control is called Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE).

Bluetooth readers using a smartphone app and mobile credentials utilizing Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology streamline access control for secure and convenient touchless entry and exit.

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It is very power efficient, high performance, and straightforward to set up.

Installers use a direct connection between the Bluetooth-enabled device and the internet, which is only required during the initial set up and download of the BLE credential. Once the credential is downloaded on the user's phone, access is seamless via their mobile credential.

### **BLE credentials offer increased security**

Dealers will appreciate that BLE credentials are highly secure and easy to purchase, deploy, and use. New software or additional programming is not required. Moreover, the best Bluetooth-based readers are panel agnostic, which means they can be used on any existing Wiegand-compatible access control panel.

User security will be enhanced if the supplier's Bluetooth app uses credentials that are stored on the phone or mobile device versus a separate server. Security is further boosted by a phone's built-in fingerprint scanner or face unlock.

These features maximize the security provided when mobile credentials are used. Smart (13.56 MHz) card data that is transmitted to a

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reader is secured with 128-bit AES encryption. Compare that with legacy prox (125 kHz) cards that transmit data in plain text, which is not protected by encryption.

Because Bluetooth and 13.56 MHz credentials are encrypted, they are much harder to clone and are not vulnerable to hackers. Another advantage is that Bluetooth provides a varying read range option enabling installers to select the read range that best suits the application.

To find the right touchless Bluetooth reader supplier, dealers should look for companies offering a complete mobile access control solution that includes hardware, associated credentials, and a mobile app. Doing so ensures higher performance operation and proven interoperability.

Maintaining public health is of the highest importance right now, and Bluetooth readers offer a user-friendly and highly secure touchless

solution. These products will go a long way in minimizing health risks in high-traffic areas.

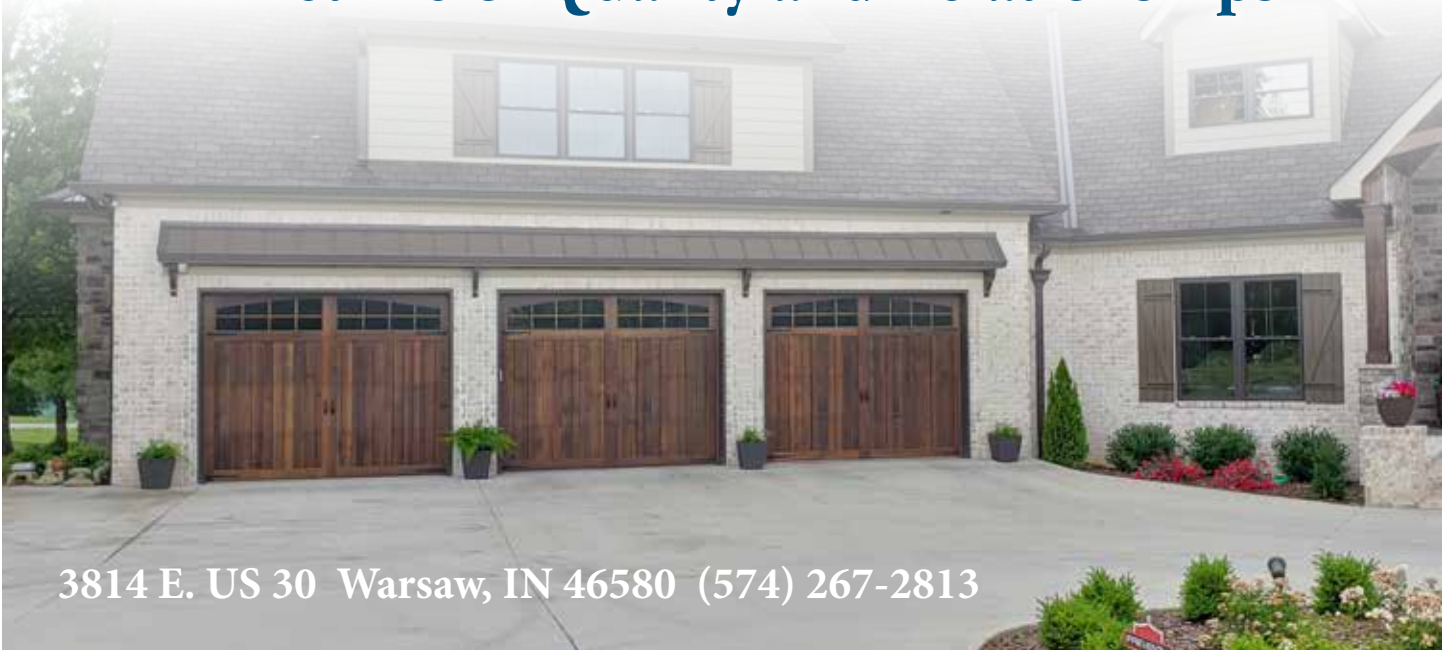
If access control dealers aren't currently selling and installing these products, now is the time to start. ■



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