

Physical and Logical Access in Unison: The Future for Access Control

Contributed by IMS Research

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The transition to contactless smart cards is beginning to make large strides forward in the Americas access control market, according to a new report from IMS Research. The US government's decision to deploy an integrated, agency-wide, common smart card platform will continue to raise the awareness of smart card technology and hence increase the demand for contactless smart card (13.56 MHz) proximity readers in the public and private sectors alike. IMS Research predicts the Americas market for electronic physical access control equipment will reach \$766.7 million in 2009, with a forecast compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.1%.

Analyst Paul Everett from IMS Research says, "One of the emerging trends within the access control industry is the convergence of physical and logical access control. In terms of logical access, most organisations are still securing their IT infrastructure with passwords which in recent times have been called into question in terms of the level of security they provide. In an attempt to increase security IT departments are now realising the potential of utilising existing physical access control infrastructure, in particular card access readers".

Everett continues, "One of the fundamental benefits of deploying smart cards in the commercial space is the ability to bring physical door access and IT user identification onto a single token. Contactless physical access control credentials can also carry secure IT applications such as secure logons to networks and digital signatures. This is significantly streamlining the costs and potential security concerns associated with credentialing employees. As a result smart cards are emerging as the de facto choice for securing not only physical access to buildings but at the same time IT infrastructures".

Whilst still in the early stages, the trend to smart cards and subsequent increased convergence between physical and logical access control is set to gain momentum. Initially driven by US government pilot projects, smart cards are becoming much more widely used in the access control industry. IMS Research predicts that by 2009, 22.3% of readers shipped will be contactless smart card (13.56 MHz) proximity readers.

About IMS Research

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