

Web-based Access Control for Smaller Facilities



HID Global's web-based, turnkey access control solution meets today's security challenges for small and medium-sized businesses

Summary

A rising number of robberies and crimes are impacting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in different regions of the world, with data from specialized entities confirming this trend.

Unfortunately, this is a situation that not only impacts security but also affects the economies of emerging countries, given that SMEs are key to the development of these nations. The impact on these organizations is so large that such companies are restricting their own growth simply to avoid becoming a target for criminals.

Given this situation, small and medium sized companies worldwide — especially those in high-risk regions — must implement adequate security measures to protect their employees and limit loss prevention to ultimately avoid closing down as a result of crime.

One such measure is the implementation of access control solutions. There are a broad range of solutions available in the marketplace, and although economic factors do play a part in the selection of this type of security, it is essential to understand the level of protection they offer.

Luckily, in the current market, there are entry-level options that are easy to install at a cost that can be managed by SMEs. These innovative solutions are also supported online, so this allows the user to control them from any internet-connected device.

This document will not only discuss the expansion needed in protection for small companies, but it will also highlight a new premium, yet economical, access control option that is now available to them.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Security Situation in Latin America

The security situation in emerging countries is unquestionably alarming, and more so if we consider evaluations like the first World International Security and Police Index. Published in November 2016 by the International Police Science Association and the Institute for Economics and Peace, this Index includes an analysis of 127 countries worldwide.

The index shows Venezuela, ranked 119, as the least secure Latin American nation. And while the Index shows more favorable rankings for other Latin American countries, the trend in the region, in terms of security, is still troublesome: Mexico (118), Honduras (116), Bolivia (114), Paraguay (113), Guatemala (107), Peru (105) and Colombia (96).

The security environment in Latin America described by the Index stands in



contrast with the environment of nations such as Singapore, Finland, Denmark, Austria, Germany and Australia, which are considered top performers.

With respect to small and medium companies and organizations, the Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development (FUSADES) conducted a study and announced in regional media that most SMEs are affected by crime, although not necessarily directly. More than half of the study respondents from companies in El Salvador that have not been victims of a crime say that crime is a serious problem for their companies; one in four confirmed that this situation has influenced their investment decisions and the operations of their organizations. The situation for the SMEs in this Central American country is so complicated that they said that they prefer to curb the growth of their organizations to avoid being detected by criminals.

[The FUSADES study](#) also showed that 63% of the companies analyzed must operate in an environment where there is a prevalence of gang activity, which makes it much more likely that they will be victims of a crime.

In Mexico, the outlook is not encouraging. Earlier this year, Juan Pablo Castañón, President of the Business Coordinating Council (CCE), said that the insecure environment strongly affects Mexican SMEs, which suffer from a variety of crime, such as robberies and kidnappings. Castañón pointed out that the most vulnerable businesses are the smallest; for instance, those where the owner opens and closes his warehouse day after day.

Recently, the National Survey of Business Victimization of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) showed that in 2015, the cost generated by crime and lack of security in businesses amounted to approximately 6.8 billion dollars, which is equivalent to 0.73% of GDP.

Among smaller companies, 43.9% were impacted; for medium companies, it was 11.2%; and for micro-companies, it was 3.9%. The impact includes their investment in security and the losses that result from being victims of any type of crime.

The Security Situation in Africa

Latin America is not the only area affected by situations of insecurity. For regions such as Africa, specialized media have found that the high rate of unemployment, lack of opportunities and poverty have created a very complex panorama of insecurity. In addition, it is indisputable that small and medium businesses in the region are affected by different types of crime.

For example, the [Victims of Crime Survey \(VOCS\) 2016/17 report](#) showed that 31.5% of South Africans are afraid to start new businesses due to their fear of being victims of some type of crime.

In this same vein, PWC's [Global Economic Crime and Fraud Survey 2018](#) reported that economic crimes in South Africa have reached the highest levels of the last decade. To be more precise, 77% of South African organizations have experienced some form of economic crime, producing a dire economic environment for the region.

Crimes such as the misappropriation of property — in which third parties or employees abuse their position to rob the organization through fraudulent activities — continues to be the most relevant form of economic crime, with 45% of respondents globally, and 49% of South African respondents, reporting to have experienced this situation.

Another criminal category that is gaining strength is fraud committed by customers; this is the second most-reported type of economic crime in South Africa (42%) and the third worldwide (29%). Supply fraud ranks as the next most-common economic crime, reaching 32% in South Africa and 22% globally. With this in mind, experts say that the entire supply chain in the South African region is subject to being victimized by some form of economic crime.



The combination of economic crime and the pervasive corruption in the region has had a severe impact on the region's Gross Domestic Product.

2. TECHNOLOGICAL UNFAMILIARITY

It has become increasingly important for managers of SMEs to be trained in all aspects concerning technology issues. Because of this, entities like Google started an IT training program. The initiative provided one million Africans IT training and knowledge.

Experts say that SMEs must promote innovation, pivot their businesses towards the digital era, accept electronic payments and update their technological capabilities to compete in a global environment.

Unquestionably, technology is becoming increasingly important for companies, which is why it is necessary that SMEs, and even large organizations, understand that the dependence on advanced software and hardware is increasing. Despite this, it is very common for small companies to feel inadequate or overwhelmed when faced with the wide range of options available and even to be reluctant to make the appropriate technology decisions.

The report titled Technology Vision of SMEs 2017 showed that 61% of the respondents in Colombia confirmed that, at least on one occasion, they have felt overwhelmed by the wide range of alternatives for their businesses. Also, it found that 74% of the participants reported to have pretended, at least once, to have had greater knowledge about the technology of their company than they really had.

3. ACCESS CONTROL TECHNOLOGY: A FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCE TO ADDRESS SECURITY ISSUES

The market currently offers a wide variety of access control alternatives, ranging from simple to more advanced options. Of course, each system has its specifications, advantages and disadvantages, so it is necessary to know the situation of each user and be clear about which solution would best suit their needs. It is important to remember that one of the fundamentals of access control is the replacement of the management of physical keys, which becomes more relevant as the size of business gets bigger, or when the number of doors to be protected increases.

Effective access control technologies for SMEs include solutions that are autonomous (for a single door), distributed (for several points of entry) or centralized (several entrances, with a connection between them).

It is important to note that in the case of SMEs, the purpose of access control solutions is to provide a tool that allows them to keep their doors closed, so that unauthorized individuals cannot enter their facilities.

Basic solutions

The current market offers many different solutions for SMEs, even for those companies that are not knowledgeable about the subject of access control.

Many times, if companies or end users have some experience with toggle switches, the first step toward access control would be to find devices that can be added to the toggle switch; therefore, it can be operated as a locks release system, with the touch of a button. The use of this mechanism is very common among SMEs because it is economical; all that is required for it to be completely operational is to add a door release module to the switch.

It should also be noted that common problems exist with these switches. For example, the user may not be able to hear the chime of the intercom or the voice of the person who wants to enter the building. The intercom may also sound continuously. In any case, this would require a specialist to repair the equipment, which could take a long time and leave the building unprotected



during the repair period.

Unfortunately, these kinds of tools just end up controlling the flow of people with the use of a button that can be physical or wireless. This system, consequently, lacks security, because whoever presses the button will have the possibility of entering. Clearly, this is the lowest level of access control in the market.

More sophisticated models, known as video door entry systems, include elements such as surveillance at the entrance to observe the person who is requesting entry.

More advanced solutions can be acquired from large suppliers

At the next level, the offering is equipment that can be purchased from retail stores or large suppliers, where the user is simply looking for an option that allows them to open and close the door. This option is a solution based on their needs that can be purchased and installed by their trusted locksmith.

Obviously, these solutions do not provide high levels of security but simply operates the doors automatically. Whether or not this 'kit' is from a recognized brand, it does not offer much security. An example of these solutions are the automatic doors found in many houses which are operated with motors activated by remote control.

It should be noted that in these cases there is no software, platform or report generation. It's simply about finding a way to block the door with an electromechanical device.

Moving from solutions to access control systems

SMEs move to the next level when they start looking for something more sophisticated and include the word 'system,' which implies software and other technological elements. The user searches on-line to find packaged solutions, with specific characteristics. In this case, the purchase decision is based on the price point.

With Internet purchases, the problem lies with the expansion or scaling of the solution because the options that are offered are module based. Since the products are mainly 'kits' for small solutions, this means that two units would need to be purchased if the user needs to automate two doors. In short, this alternative is not scalable.

An additional issue is that these 'kits' are supported by software that can be downloaded from the Internet or included in a disk. This generates a dependence on the operating system of the computer, which must be adequate for the operation of the system.

Additionally, most SMEs do not have a dedicated function for managing access control, so the person in charge of operating the system would be an administrative official. This is not appropriate for three reasons. First, this would not be the employee's main job; second, the turnover of administrative staff is high; and third, this would require constant investment in training each person who is in charge of the system.

Of course, price is one of the main reasons for acquiring access control solutions through web portals. There are even websites that recommend the sites where you can find the cheapest options.

As the SMEs look for more professional options, a scenario emerges in which the SMEs come to a specialized company — which may have already installed an alarm system — to ask for an extension that allows them to have access control or to install a solution from scratch. This assumes that because the company has already installed a system, then it can install a different one. However, it should be noted that this is not necessarily true because a technician that specializes in alarms is totally different from one that focuses on access control.



Additionally, if the person in charge of the project is an installer who has at least a minimum knowledge of access control, they may be able to offer a relatively efficient solution. But if a company that does not know anything about the subject is being used, the company will probably purchase and install a prepackaged solution through a virtual store. The store will provide them with some technical knowledge about access control technology, but that will not necessarily be communicated to the final customer.

Finally, in the case of an efficient solution implemented by a specialist in access control, the SMEs in question need to analyze the required investment, because, in many cases, it can be significant. This analysis will determine the approach the end user will choose with regard to the installation of a professional access control system. Access control systems are especially important as they provide users with the capabilities to perform basic audits to verify who entered and when.

The other solutions on the market are web-based. These novel tools appear to be ideal for small and medium businesses and they will be covered in the next section.

4. WEB-BASED ACCESS CONTROL: YOUR TRUSTED ALLY

As described earlier, smaller facilities such as SMEs and other types of commercial enterprises are four times more likely to be attacked, so the solutions mentioned above are insufficient. Also, it is important to keep in mind that 75% of employees have stolen from their companies at least once.

Now, there is a new access control solution designed specifically for smaller facilities that can also be managed from a browser: the HID Global® AC Series solution is simple, easy and secure. This application provides a turnkey access control solution to meet the specific needs of SMEs, saving them time and money.

In addition to being simple, easy to set up and secure, web-based access control systems offer SMEs the features that they really need, different from what occurs with large-scale access control systems which come equipped with features and characteristics that aren't used by the majority of the market.

This innovative tool is supported by an ideal combination of iCLASS SE® readers and Seos® credentials. It provides maximum authentication security and is impossible to clone thanks to its unique cryptography system. As a result, it offers enormous protection benefits that surpass those offered by other tools created in the 1990s.

Additionally, the implementation of new web-based technologies means that owners of entrepreneurial businesses can have greater levels of access control in their facilities, simply by clicking a button on the intuitive online portal.

And because this option is an embedded solution (without the need for dedicated software), it can be operated simply from a tablet, smartphone or computer, thus becoming a multiplatform device that does not depend on computer updates to work.

This type of application also allows the user to make changes easily and quickly, managing and revoking access easily online.

The AC Series is also equipped with quick access buttons that allow the immediate opening of the doors, in the event of an emergency.

Some of the other benefits offered by this access control solution are:

Longer warranty:

In a market that normally offers a one- or two-year warranty, and typically requires additional payments to extend it, HID offers a five-year warranty for its AC Series. This is an additional benefit for SMEs, given that they will spend less



on this solution than on any other that is available to them.

Such longer quality is an attestation to the reliability of the system, its enterprise level quality and a cost effective price.

Simple installation:

The pre-wired control box with built-in software is simple to install and can be up and running in minutes.

The installation consists of a simple procedure that includes only three steps. The user will receive a guide for the registration process, for the door assembly and for access creation. This will ensure the safety of the SME quickly and effectively.

Also, as a web-based tool, the user can study online tutorials to give them the training they need in just 30 minutes.

After completing this, any employee can become a specialist in the operation of the system. This can prove very convenient for companies experiencing high staff turnover.

Growing with the SMEs:

The HID Global AC Series is a scalable system, which can be expanded without any difficulty, along with the growth of the company.

The basic version of this access control solution has the capacity to serve two doors. However, it is possible to extend this operation to handle up to eight points of entry through additional plug-and-play expansion hardware and door readers. The system has the added benefit of automatically recognizing these additional devices.

Built-in installation wizards will guide the user during the configuration process; thanks to this, small and medium-sized companies will benefit from a significant reduction in service fees and minimal interruptions to their business operations.

So, if an SME acquires this solution to manage the main door, it can then add the parking deck and the warehouse with the peace of mind that comes from knowing that there will be no interruptions or cost overruns because they have previously acquired the brain and the base of the tool.

This means that a smaller facility can actually buy a premium platform, at a fraction of the cost.

The general benefits of AC Series are:

- Offers extremely user-friendly platform, accessible from anywhere
- Provides trusted security, supported by iCLASS SE® and Seos® technology to prevent ID cards from being cloned
- Delivers customized access; control who has access, as well as when and where such access should occur
- Provides a record of employees work hours
- Records all transactions (audit trail)
- Protects equipment, documents and merchandise
- Aids in emergency evacuation procedures through provided clarity about who is in the building
- Protects facilities 24 hours a day, seven days a week

The HID Global access control solution has been designed to meet the requirements of small facilities that are looking to improve their security and reduce their business risk.



This is a tool that offers quick and convenient access. Additionally, it is connected securely online and is capable of managing, with greater efficiency, any risk of unauthorized entry.

Offices, shops, small hotels and other types of SMEs can benefit from this access control solution that has all the characteristics of a first-level alternative, at a reasonable price.

5. CONCLUSION

Small and medium companies are fundamental for the economy, not only in Latin America but also in all emerging markets. Therefore, these types of organizations must be protected against theft or intrusions.

For this purpose, they must acquire access control solutions that meet their needs. Although they may think that a simple 'electronic door entry' and security camera are sufficient, the reality is that they are not — it's often necessary to implement a more advanced system that can generate security reports and be managed easily.

This kind of first-level solution does not require big changes or a large investment. In addition, by analyzing the market offerings, it is possible to determine that features such as multi-device quality, ease of implementation and browser support — all of which HID Global solutions offer — can benefit SMEs and completely justify the investment costs for these access control solutions.



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