Customer Success Story

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Mark Whitaker, Safety and Training Director
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ABOUT BRIDGFORD FOODS:

In the early 1930s, Hugh H. Bridgford founded Bridgford Foods Corporation by launching a series of retail meat markets in San Diego, CA. The business flourished and eventually the corporation would expand its operations to include meat wholesaling, frozen food distribution, meat processing and frozen food manufacturing. Today, Bridgford Foods has food processing plants in Anaheim, CA, Dallas, TX, Chicago, IL, and Statesville, NC. Its principal product lines include frozen bread dough for the food service and retail trade, shelf-stable dry and semi-dry sausage products, beef jerky, and long-life shelf stable sandwiches.

Bridgford Foods Extends Access Control Capabilities with Simple Wireless Upgrade

SITUATION:

The Statesville, NC facility is the smallest of Bridgford's frozen bread plants, employing approximately 30 people. "Most people are not aware of this, but Bridgford Foods pioneered the manufacture and sale of frozen bread dough," states Mark Whitaker, safety and training director at Bridgford's Statesville facility. "At our plant, we have a bakery and produce bread such as pita for our shelf-stable customers. Because we are a food manufacturer, we have a stringent food security program. And, it includes everything from how we receive in products to how employees handle ingredients."

As part of the company's food defense strategy, Bridgford controls the access of everyone who enters the building, including visitors, suppliers, employees, and service personnel. "After 911 Americans changed their perspective on the nation's security," says Whitaker. "Terrorism and bioterrorism became real threats. We (Bridgford) need to have measures in place that would remove any opportunity for terrorists to intentionally contaminate our food supply – and keeping a tight control of who enters our building is one way to protect ourselves."

SOLUTION:

Installed with standalone, Kaba E-Plex 5700 Locks, two perimeter doors enable access into the main building. Only authorized individuals can enter through these doors; guests, visitors, contractors. . . can only speak to personnel through an intercom system. The other doors in the facility require keys and only three or four people have a key to unlock the doors.

Although the E-Plex Locks are robust and deliver ample access control, the company wanted to extend its access control capabilities. For an advanced solution, they consulted Ace Locksmithing, a local locksmith and certified Kaba wireless dealer. After conducting a site survey, John Campbell, owner of Ace Locksmithing, recommended that Bridgford Foods upgrade their existing E-Plex 5700 Locks to E-Plex Enterprise with Wireless Option. This three-part upgrade adds Enterprise Software to a central workstation, wireless antennas to existing locks, and Gateway/Router (s) to communicate from the computer server to locks. This approach allows Bridgford to preserve their original lock investment while gaining additional features and functions. With the addition of Enterprise Software, Whitaker can add an employee (including a photo), assign access schedules, manage guests/visitors, create access groups, create reports, and pull an audit trail from a central workstation. "Once we experienced the system's features/functions, we knew that we could streamline our access control processes and enhance our access control intelligence," says Whitaker. "Similar to our original Kaba system, we provide each employee with a unique access code, but now with Enterprise Software we can schedule the times the employees can access a door and on what days. So, if we want to grant the office staff access on weekends, we have that ability."

"What else can I say, other than it just does its job; it just works." – Mark Whitaker

BENEFITS:

"One feature that we constantly rely on is the audit trail," says Whitaker. "On the weekends, drivers enter the building. As part of our standard operating procedures, a driver is supposed to enter their access code then disarm the alarm; however, many drivers forget about the alarm." After a false alarm occurs, Whitaker can pull an audit trail to see if a Bridgford employee was in the facility when the alarm was set off.

With the wireless capability, Whitaker has real-time functionality. The main Dashboard provides a visual representation of the system's performance and events such as door status, signal strength, audit records, and emergency lockdown/unlock commands. On a single screen, Whitaker can access data and reports. Whitaker has also eliminated visiting doors when he needs to add/delete a user or change the locks' attributes. "With the standalone locks, if you needed to make a change, you had to take a PDA to the lock and program directly at the lock. While the process worked, it was very time consuming. With the new system, I make all changes from my workstation. Now, I can enroll a new employee in less than one minute. The new Enterprise System has not only helped us provide better control, it has simplified our process. What else can I say, other than it just does its job; it just works."