

Case Study

Parking & Access Control

Texas A&M University

Managing Growth

Texas A&M University is located in College Station, about 100 miles north of Houston. As one of the state's largest universities with more than 58,000 students and 12,000 faculty and staff, demand for transportation and parking facilities is tested daily. To accommodate on-campus parking for students, faculty and staff, five garages were built, supplementing 10 gate-controlled surface lots, with a combined total of more than 10,000 access-controlled spaces. Access to these new facilities needed to be smooth, prevent choke points, and be easy to manage.

Pioneer: Early Adopter of Technology

With a history as a research-intensive university, it's not surprising that Texas A&M was an early adopter of RFID technology back in the 1990s.

The hands-free system was used primarily by faculty and staff to gain convenient access to gated parking facilities.

By 2003, it was apparent a new RFID technology platform was required, one that was commercially available, provided better performance, and was easier to maintain. TransCore, also a pioneer in RFID technology dating back to its development at Los Alamos National Laboratories in New Mexico, was selected to install automatic vehicle identification (AVI) systems in the new West Campus parking garage, consisting of 3,700 parking spaces.

To meet this need, TransCore installed its SmartPass® readers, which could seamlessly perform in close quarters. This provided Next Gen Parking, LLC, the system integrator, with flexible readers that minimize potential interference.



At A Glance

Goal:

Replace legacy, home-grown RFID system with robust, commercially available technology, maintaining convenience of hands-free operation.

Scope:

Texas A&M University has 58,000 students, supported by more than 12,000 faculty and staff.

Solution:

Implementation of TransCore's RFID-based automatic vehicle identification (AVI) parking and access control system, including Window Sticker Tags.

Results:

Convenience enhanced. Established solid platform for growth and new applications.

"The TransCore system has enabled system growth while maintaining our commitment to enhancing convenience, throughput, and security."

Peter Lange

Executive Director
Transportation Services

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Milestones:

- ▶ **2003** – West Campus Garage
- ▶ **2007** – Initiated RFID expansion plan, starting with the University Center Garage
- ▶ **2008** – Installed AVI at larger surface lots and in the Northside Garage
- ▶ **2010** – Central Campus Garage

Texas A&M has installed 66 TransCore readers, which is one of the largest single campus implementations.

Flexibility:

Interoperability Benefits

One of the deciding factors in selecting TransCore was that its technology is compatible and interoperable with regional toll systems in Houston, Austin, and Dallas. This allows the Texas A&M system to register and utilize personal toll tags for parking access control, thus reducing costs for those parking patrons who already use area toll tags. In fact, more than eight million toll tags are currently used within the state. To date, 3,500 TransCore tags are registered in the system, with 25% sourced from the regional toll systems.

Students and staff may also use their magstripe cards (either Student ID or Parking permit) to access parking facilities on campus. The common control system can handle both Wiegand or ASCII data-formatted tags, and other inputs. The system is flexible and



can easily be expanded to accommodate growth as more people become aware of the benefits of hands-free access:

- ▶ Convenience (no fumbling for ID card)
- ▶ Enhanced security (windows stay up)

Forward Looking: Applications Planned

Texas A&M has implemented a secure street program on campus. University buses and staff vehicles have exclusive RFID gated access to the street where students connect with campus transportation. This minimizes congestion and avoids delays to published shuttle schedules. The program has been expanded to additional sites and now includes 16 gate/reader lanes.

Next Gen Parking, LLC, a TransCore dealer located in Houston, has implemented the RFID technology at Texas A&M. They specialize in high-density reader installations throughout the Southwest.

For more information:
Call 800.923.4824
transcore.com/rfid

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