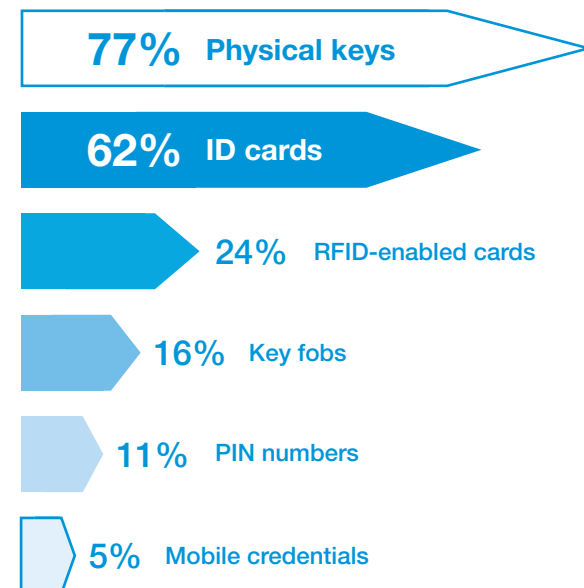# Survey explores access control at campus facilities during COVID-19

University Business partnered with SALTO Systems to develop and deploy a survey of higher education leaders in the UB audience in August 2020. The survey explored issues related to physical access control at campus facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a total of 627 higher education leaders with a variety of job titles and from many sizes and types of institutions participated.

Access control systems

Respondents were asked to identify which types of systems or technologies their institutions use for access control on campus. The leading answers by far were physical keys (77%), followed by magnetic stripe ID cards (62%). Additional answers included RFID-enabled cards (24%), key fobs (16%), PIN numbers (11%) and mobile credentials (5%). Just 4% of respondents selected "None of the above."
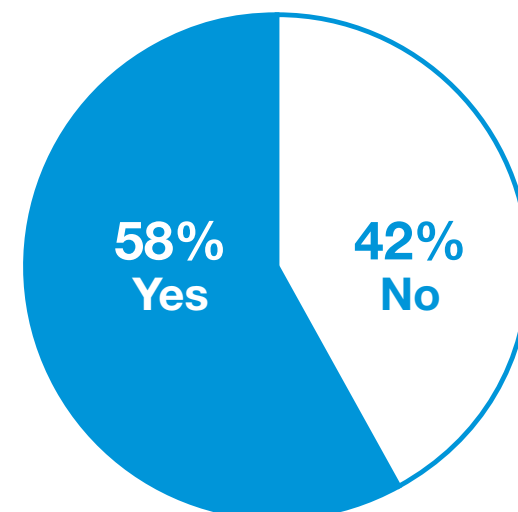
Challenges with access control

All respondents were asked if it was an ongoing challenge for their institution to issue and maintain access control credentials such as traditional brass keys, ID cards and PIN numbers. **Some 58% of respondents said this was challenging, with 11% describing this as "significantly" challenging.** Similarly, more than half of respondents (52%) indicated that replacing lost or stolen keys and ID cards requires a significant amount of time, money and resources for their institution.

Which of these does your institution use for access control on campus?

77% Physical keys

62% ID cards

24% RFID-enabled cards

16% Key fobs

11% PIN numbers

5% Mobile credentials

Is it an ongoing challenge for your institution to issue and maintain access control credentials such as keys, ID cards, PIN numbers, etc.?

58% Yes

42% No

Mobile credentials

75% of respondents said they believe that their staff, faculty and students would find more value and convenience in a touchless or mobile-based facilities access system, with 26% of respondents saying they "definitely" would.

When asked if, in light of COVID-19, their institution was considering touchless/contactless building access systems instead of keys or other tools requiring physical interaction, 24% said this was under consideration at their school, while 5% said they were already in the process of implementation.

While 78% of respondents said they do not currently provide mobile credentials, 40% of them said that they believe their institution will provide mobile credentials in the near future. 47% of all respondents said that if their institution had electronic access control with contactless or mobile credentials, these systems would provide a competitive advantage over other institutions when it came to student recruitment and retention.

Those respondents currently using mobile credentials on campus are using them in a variety of ways, including meal plans (14%), point-of-sale or cashless vending (12%), printing (11%), facilities/building access (8%) and student housing (6%).

75% of respondents said they believe that their staff, faculty and students would find more value and convenience in a touchless or mobile-based facilities access system

24% of respondents said that their institution was considering touchless/contactless building access systems because of COVID-19

When asked if their access control system allowed them to gather the necessary data to manage contact tracing if they needed to respond to COVID-19 infections on campus, **28% said no, while 31% said they didn't know if they had this capability and 11% said they did not have electronic access control systems at all.**

"The survey found that the majority of colleges and universities are still using traditional brass keys for campus access control, which is both costly to maintain and poses additional risks to user safety and security in normal times, and a significantly elevated risk in times like during our current pandemic," says Steve Burk, Director of Marketing at SALTO Systems.

"The survey also showed that college and university leaders understand that contactless mobile-based credentials are the future of campus access control, a trend that may have found its tipping point as a result of the demands for touchless physical environments and contact tracing capabilities in the era of COVID-19."

SALTO Systems provides state-of-the-art access control technologies that can help to create safe, convenient learning environments on any campus. To learn more, visit www.salto.us.

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