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NFC And The Future Of Access Control

Making our lives a little easier!

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Mobile phones are exploding when it comes to their use in the world of security. Soon another valuable tool could be loaded to your handheld – your keys!

Near field communication (NFC) is a set of standards for smart phones and similar devices to establish radio communication with each other by touching them together or bringing them into close proximity, usually no more than a few inches. Present and anticipated applications include contactless transactions, data exchange and access control.

Contactless credentials already exist in various forms such as fobs and plastic access cards; we are all familiar with those. Mobile contactless credentials loaded onto an NFC capable handset means no more fobs or cards to carry, just your phone, which we all carry anyway!



NFC contains another layer of security known as “NFC specific key agreement”, this means the signal being sent can only be received by the device it was encoded for, like an access pad. This greatly reduces if not completely eliminates the possibility of someone near you scanning your device and stealing your NFC key. NFC devices are also only transmitting when in active mode which is when they are passed over a reader. They then switch to passive mode and no longer transmit a signal.

One clear advantage unique to mobile contactless credentials is the data can be instantly delivered to a person’s handset. No physical hand off is required, you just send the information to their NFC-enabled handset. How much simpler can it get?

Where mobile contactless credentials are poised to have the greatest potential impact is in commercial settings. With these credentials, security managers could manage all users from a central access control system and instantly deliver credentials with the appropriate level of access to employees, outside contractors and visitors. Another benefit of this type of technology is they enable security managers to more precisely track the activities of personnel. If it becomes essential to monitor a particular individual’s credentials they could be configured to support realtime traceability.

All that’s needed now is a system to deliver the contactless credentials from an access control system to an end user. Though the technology already exists, the necessary infrastructure and supporting devices still have some way to go. Sometime soon however we’ll all be using our phones to open access controlled doors, rather than having to carry around key fobs and cards. Won’t that go a long way in making our lives just a little easier! ■

The Setronics Technology Group is an industry-leading team of Engineers whose combined collective security experience exceeds more than 60 years for regional, national and international clients. The Group has designed thousands of integrated access control and video solutions spanning markets that include retail, healthcare, and education among others.

“Our **commitment** to the **security** of your business
does not end with **implementation**. It begins there.”



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