



RFID halts university laptop thefts

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Access International, a provider of dual-active RFID and Real Time Location Systems (RTLS), working with IDZ RFID in Mexico, has announced the implementation of its asset management system at the Mexican academic institution, Universidad Regiomontana, where the system has already prevented numerous laptop and identity thefts.

The University deployed Access' ActiveTag RFID physical computer asset protection solution in January 2006 with the goal of reversing asset theft and enhancing personnel tracking. Prior to implementation the university suffered a rate of 10%-15% in laptop thefts on a regular basis. Following the use of the system, the thefts have been reduced to zero.

Data safety first

Francisco Javier Hernandez of Universidad Regiomontana said: "Since our deployment of Access' Active RFID System we have virtually eliminated the theft of employee laptops on our campus and can say with confidence that our students' and our employees' personal information is safe."

Identity theft is a growing problem for students and young adults domestically as well as abroad. According to the US Federal Trade Commission, reports of identity theft in the US increased 574% in three years, from 31,117 in 2000 to about 210,000 in 2003, with the majority of victims - 28% - between the ages of 18 and 29. The U.S. Department of Education also recognizes that identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States, costing victims over US\$5 billion annually, and an estimated 9.9 million consumers were victims of identity theft in 2003.

According to Allan Griebenow, president and CEO for Access International, "We are pleased that our system has met the University's need to put an end to crime of this nature. Access is busy helping academic and institutions of all kinds protect the personal assets and data of employees and students."

How it works

Access' ActiveTag RFID/RTLS and sensing systems use small, re-usable battery-powered tags (generically called "Dual-Active" tags) that when automatically activated, transmit a wireless message typically 30 to 100 feet to hidden palm size receivers.

The receivers are connected via standard network simultaneously to the enterprise system software, the existing security alarm equipment, and standalone middleware and end-user software provided by Access under the OnlineSupervisor label.

With tags being activated only on-demand and only at control point locations, the system is highly reliable and accurate, with the tags lasting five years or longer depending on the battery being used.

The Access Control Point architecture's activation-based positioning can determine if an asset has left a secured area down to 1 foot in accuracy, and can also determine its direction of travel. The system alerts responsible personnel on an exception basis, freeing up asset management personnel for other tasks.