# Catering to the Mobile Generation

How Educational Facilities can Leverage Mobile Access
Technology to Align with the Needs and Lifestyle
Preferences of Millennial Students



**ASSA ABLOY**

ASSA ABLOY Hospitality

The global leader in
door opening solutions

As facilities designed specifically to cater to the needs of students, it is not surprising that the vast majority of business for the educational market comes from a substantially young demographic; members of which are renowned for their comfort with technology, and indeed, even demand it. Commonly referred to as the millennial generation, such students have become unanimously identified with making the use of smartphone devices a central and often vital aspect of daily life, with more than 85 percent owning smart devices.[1] Even more striking is the fact that 55 percent report experiencing strong negative feelings when separated from their smartphone for more than 24 hours.[2] For campuses and student housing buildings, the near universal trend of mobile usage among today's students has consequently meant a drastic shift in the way that such businesses are able to provide value and retain their competitiveness. In a study completed by EDUCAUSE for instance, students surveyed stressed a strong preference for using mobile apps over web browsers for a wide variety of functions including news, location-based information, education and finance.[3] In yet another study conducted at over 1,000 universities and colleges, researchers found that more than 70 percent of respondents preferred to use personal phones to gain access to rooms, if given the option.[4]

The rise in demand for mobile technology within the educational market has as a result, seen businesses scramble to provide students with a platform that accommodates their overwhelming preference for mobile communication. However, the key to successfully accomplishing this task has always revolved around the ability of supplying a level of functionality that presents increased speed and ease-of-use.[5] More specifically, such success involves creating an application that actually serves an immediate purpose in making student life more convenient and customizable to an individual's particular needs or preferences.

**85%**
own smart devices

**55%**
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1 http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2014/mobile-millennials-over-85-percent-of-generation-y-owns-smartphones.html
2 http://www.slideshare.net/totalyouthresearch/15-mobile-millennial-statistics/15-wwwTotalYouthResearchcom55of_students_reportedstrong_negative_feelingswhen
3 http://www.edtechmagazine.com/higher/article/2013/07/app-impasse-college-students-love-apps-should-colleges-invest
4 http://www.universitybusiness.com/article/losing-nfc1eplace-campus-one-cards-smartphones
5 http://www.edtechmagazine.com/higher/article/2013/07/app-impasse-college-students-love-apps-should-colleges-invest

**73%**
of high school students
showed interest in
universities who offered
campus-specific apps

# Why Mobile Access?

With millennials strongly indicating a desire to use their mobile devices for virtually every aspect of their daily lives, educational industry professionals are undoubtedly becoming aware of the unmatched value in using mobile apps to strengthen relationships with both current and prospective students. In another study focusing on college-bound high school students, research shows that 73 percent indicated an interest in universities that offered campus-specific apps.[6]

These statistics confirm the absolute need to provide mobile platforms and apps in order to satisfy the growing student demand for updated services that reflect the latest evolutions in mainstream technology. However, it is important to carefully consider which specific services and features should be included in such a platform, in order to maximize adoption rates. With consumers demonstrating that they are willing to retry an app only once or twice4, it is becoming even more imperative that educational facilities implement a solution that is seamless, and which provides users with the precise tools they seek to simplify and streamline student life.

By encountering feedback such as the previously mentioned study indicating the student preference to use mobile phones as digital keys, many education professionals are increasingly taking investment in mobile technology much more seriously. Such a development is easily demonstrated through the growing presence of digital key solutions in campuses and student housing accommodations around the world.

When examining today's current trends in student behavior more closely, this shift in investment priority is hardly surprising. From the moment they arrive on campus or at their place of residence, today's generation of students expect to gain the capability to instantly interact with their surroundings on their own terms. This reality has fostered a dramatic increase in self-service and instant-gratification solutions in a multitude of market areas that cater to student needs. Industry professionals can therefore interpret solutions such as Mobile Access technology, as acting as bridges that allow students to build a personalized experience while creating a stronger relationship with their campus or residence from the moment that they first arrive.

By implementing a Mobile Access solution, an education oriented facility can therefore further empower these tech-savvy students by giving them ultimate control over how and when they access secure areas.

6 http://www.higher-education-marketing.com/blog/mobile-apps

# The Ins and Outs of ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access

When comparing solutions, campuses and student housing facilities should always investigate a platform's capability to provide students with a streamlined experience that requires minimal effort on their part. Once they arrive on-campus and after a student initiates a request to use ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access on an educational facility's mobile app, for example, "push" notifications are automatically sent, including the alerting of when they have officially checked in or registered. Other notifications update the mobile app with the room number and mobile key, thereby finally providing today's students the ability to bypass front desk lines or otherwise having to seek assistance.

For the significant number of students that shun more traditional and slower forms of communication, Mobile Access represents a valuable tool that can allow them to save vital time and ensure their satisfaction. For education-based industry professionals, meanwhile, Mobile Access helps meet the ever-increasing demand for greater personalization and the growing dominance of a mobile world.

Although still a relatively new technology that does, indeed, substantially alter the way campuses and other facilities interact with their student customers, ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access is designed for cost-effectiveness and easy availability. While certain aspects may vary depending on pre-existing hardware and third-party vendors, facilities and campuses can typically implement ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access with little disruption to operations and minimal hardware modification. Many VingCard electronic door locks, for example, may only require the addition of

a small Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) board, while many other VingCard electronic door locks can keep most of the locking hardware intact through simple installation of the BLE board along with an RFID electronic reader. Locations interested in implementing ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access must also have the Visionline lock system equipped so a digital key can be created and assigned to each student or staff member.

Just as students require solutions that meet their specific individual needs, education-based facility managers should also investigate and find a Mobile Access solution compatible with their location's current mobile-app goals and objectives. With ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access, such facilities may choose to integrate the service into their own existing app and back-end systems. Those interested in pursuing this route can streamline the integration process by leveraging the ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access Software Development Kit (SDK), together with dedicated onboarding services. A facility operator may also opt to provide a basic Mobile Access solution, which can be accomplished using ASSA ABLOY Hospitality's standalone solution.

Those who wish to offer a mobile app beyond simple access control but do not have an app of their own might choose to select a solution from a third-party certified partner. By selecting an ASSA ABLOY Hospitality approved mobile application and solutions provider, facility managers can quickly gain the ability to integrate all desired mobile functionality into one solution; leveraging the appeal of a mobile access application, and increasing the potential of students viewing other services and amenities promoted within the same app.

*Notifications update the mobile app with the room number and mobile key, providing today´s students the ability to bypass front desk lines or otherwise having to seek assistance.*
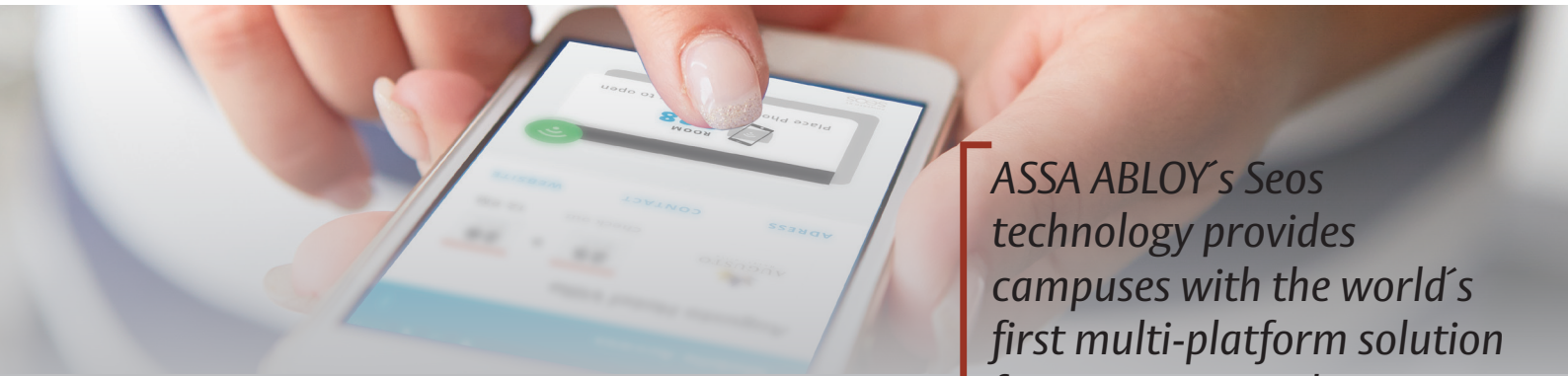
*ASSA ABLOY´s Seos technology provides campuses with the world´s first multi-platform solution for managing and securing digital keys for students.*

# Maintaining Security as a Priority

Whenever student-oriented facilities consider implementing a mobile access solution at any location, the ability to cater to the growing demand for independence and self-service is certainly a significant factor given the strong sentiments voiced by this particular demographic. However, due to the often immense number of students and increased safety risk as a result, it's a factor that should never be considered at the price of compromised security.

Because college campuses and student housing facilities are understandably charged with the wellbeing of students that are present at their location, an education-based facility's first and foremost responsibility is to fundamentally ensure a safe and secure environment at all times. Any decision to implement a solution that includes access security must therefore place the utmost priority on student and staff safety. When comparing mobile-access solutions, industry professionals must therefore bear in mind whether a particular platform can provide a level of security that meets the highest standards.

As they were developing Mobile Access, ASSA ABLOY Hospitality engineers worked diligently to ensure that the solution incorporates the latest in security-technology innovation available to the education and student housing industry today. Leveraging ASSA ABLOY's Seos technology to provide campuses and facilities with the world's first multi-platform solution for issuing, delivering and revoking digital keys, Seos meets the most stringent security standards and includes messaging, strong authentication and data confidentiality.

ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access works with a facility's property-management system to generate a digital key that is encrypted and, as a result, is securely delivered to a student's smartphone. The smartphone, in turn, places the key in a secure key vault within the campus or student housing mobile app. When presented to the appropriate lock, the app then transmits the encrypted key via a secure-communication channel via Bluetooth, thus ensuring that only authorized users are able to receive digital key information and gain access.

With data privacy and security becoming an increasingly serious issue in the past several years due to many functions of the industry evolving to embrace digital functionality, industry professionals must always conduct a stringent review as to how vendors use student data, as well as what specific measures are implemented to safeguard the data.

A worthwhile mobile-access solution should maintain an internal log showing when a particular room has been accessed, and which mobile key was used. Such implementations go a long way to further enhance the peace of mind of both students and members of staff.

# Mobile Access as a User-Friendly and Adoptable Solution

Campuses and student housing facilities that implement ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Mobile Access gain a feature that is extremely easy to learn and use. As a new technology and even for members of a generation accustomed to other forms of mobile technology, adoption rates are at their highest when facilities actively inform students about the security and convenience benefits of the system. With that in mind, staff members should be knowledgeable to the extent that they can readily provide answers relating to how mobile access can enhance student convenience and security. To ensure that staff members have access to all relevant information and can adequately pass knowledge along to students, facility management would be wise to select a solution provider that is known for providing first-rate customer support and training.

Facilities or campuses that operate in multiple locations must additionally be sure that the provider they are working with is capable of providing local assistance within each market whenever needed. By taking time to explain the unique advantages to staff members (who can then inform students) on issues such as the ability to gain access to rooms independent of any assistance or obtaining instant entry into shared areas, managers of such facilities are likely to find that the resulting increase in student satisfaction and boost in reputation more than justifies the initial cost and effort.

# Making Sure a Mobile-Access Solution Works for Both Educational Facilities and Students

The introduction of mobile applications into mainstream society has undoubtedly transformed the way communication and loyalty is sought when interacting with a predominantly young student demographic; one that increasingly avoids interpersonal exchanges in favor of greater self-reliance and faster service. Such apps have achieved tremendous success in accomplishing this goal, but only when they first address a basic need of serving some form of use that is of value in daily life. Mobile Access solutions consequently serve as a vital extension of the convenience that millennial-aged students enjoy when searching for a location on their phone or when communicating with others.

As a group known to do virtually everything by smartphone, millennials seek out solutions that fit their mobile lifestyle; platforms that provide them with an opportunity to carry or reference one less item as a result of having absolutely everything they need on a single device. Having grown up in a world where since a young age, the benefits of the internet and instant communication have been present since early memory, these students do not simply look at solutions such as mobile access as a trivial add on service, they consider them to be tools that are central in facilitating the way in which they live their lives and interact with their surroundings; platforms that they are coming to expect are in place when selecting a school or living arrangement, or otherwise attempting to integrate into college life.

Only by working with a reputable security access-solutions provider can student-oriented locations ensure that they are capable of addressing such needs in a cost-effective manner that is compatible with pre-existing systems, and able to guarantee unparalleled security for each student at all times. As the leading provider of Mobile Access solutions, ASSA ABLOY Hospitality is here to ensure that Mobile Access delivers the results expected both by educational facilities and their students.

To schedule an appointment to assess your property's own mobile-access goals and requirements, please visit: www.assaabloyhospitality.com/education-mobile-access.

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