



Athletic club leverages biometrics for 20 years

Landscape

In 1995, Sandpoint West Athletic Club in Idaho was remodeling its check-in area. As part of that process, club management decided to re-evaluate the check-in software being used. Lost and forgotten cards were a regular issue, taxing employee time and increasing operational costs with cards having to be reprinted and distributed. Additionally, there were growing concerns about members “sharing” cards with non-members for admittance.

Desired outcome

Don Helander, owner/manager of the Sandpoint West Athletic Club, wanted a solution that was convenient for employees and members alike, while helping the club manage costs and effort. He chose the ID3D HandKey from Schlage, a biometric hand geometry reader that analyzes over 90 separate measurements in the hand to verify users.

Challenges

Initially, some members had privacy and sanitary concerns about the HandKey, causing some hesitation or resistance.

Solutions

With the adoption of the biometric reader, Sandpoint West Athletic Club completely eliminated cards. Instead, every member was assigned a PIN number and enrolled in the hand geometry reader. When entering the club, all members have to do is simply enter the PIN and place their hand on the reader's platen.

Hand geometry technology—which verifies users by their hand length, width, thickness and surface area—provides a fail-safe method to ensure the person who enters the club isn't using someone else's access card or PIN. HandKeys guarantee that the person requesting access is actually the member.



Sandpoint West Athletic Club proactively addressed member concerns to help members make the transition.

- **Privacy:** Club management invested time in educating members about the biometric tool's one-to-one authentication process. A match is confirmed by comparing the live biometric presented during check-in to a stored sample given during enrollment.
- **Sanitary concerns:** For those concerned with sanitary issues, management reassured members that the platen itself is infused with an antimicrobial coating that inhibits the growth of bacteria. Additionally, the club provided hand wipes for use after presenting one's hand.

Result

Members quickly adapted to the new check-in process, embracing the idea of not having to remember to carry their card. Even more, the Sandpoint West Athletic Club gained back personnel time. Without having to check ID cards, employees could attend to other member services—a win for the club and members alike.

“It frees up our front desk and eliminates the costs of printing and managing cards,” says Helander, “adding member service and extra dollars to our bottom line each and every year.”

Recent upgrades

Recently, the Sandpoint West Athletic Club replaced the ID3D HandKey—which had checked in over two million members—with the Schlage HandKey II, a faster and more advanced biometric. With tech support from Schlage, the club was able to transfer over 2,000 hand templates and avoid the hassle of re-enrolling members in the system.

The HandKey II provides easy tracking by membership type. Helander says the club has been able to realize many benefits of the HandKey II, including:

- **Automatic hand template management** that allows template distribution from the HandKey used for enrollment to other HandKey devices
- **Independent door control capability** that eliminates the need for an access control panel
- **Remote monitoring and control** right from an Internet-enabled device
- **Remote enrollment** allows new users to be enrolled without physically going to the HandKey
- **Temporary and restricted access** to specify a member's start and stop days and times
- **Archival history** that maintains activity reports
- **Management of alarms** for additional security



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