

CLIENT CASE STUDY

WILLIS TOWER IMPLEMENTS NEW ACCESS TECHNOLOGIES FOR AN ENHANCED TENANT & VISITOR EXPERIENCE

SUMMARY

End user

Willis Tower / Gary Michon, GM & Keith Kambic, Security Director

Integrator

JCI & Mark Eggerding, Consultant

Location

Chicago, IL, USA

Challenge

- Change the flow of lobby traffic for the Tower's 15,000 tenants
- Change the placement and number of turnstiles for visitor management security
- Transition aesthetics from an industrial lobby atmosphere to a welcoming retail/dining/shopping space

Solution

- Remove the existing turnstile lanes and replace with Automatic Systems SlimLane turnstiles to meet varying access requirements for tenants and visitors

Project overview

As part of the 300,000 square foot expansion to its iconic Willis Tower, real estate investment company EQ Office had a new vision for the 1,450-foot skyscraper's lobby. They sought to change the existing visitor entrance to the observation deck from the South side and make multiple entrances through the main lobby on the East and West sides. The new entry points would make for a quicker, more convenient flow of visitors while also increasing visitorship to the newly added retail, restaurant and fitness establishments in the lobby. With visitor management and security a top priority, new turnstiles to control access were required. The new expansion, aptly named "Catalog" in tribute to Sears Roebuck Company, the original tenant and former namesake of the Tower, represents a newly developed destination for Willis Tower's 15,000 tenants and two million visitors each year. The Willis Tower is currently the second-tallest building in the United States and the Western hemisphere – and the 16th-tallest in the world. It was determined that during the lobby's revitalization, 38 of the existing turnstile lanes would be removed, and 35 new Automatic Systems SlimLane optical barrier turnstiles would be installed in different areas. 29 are the SlimLane EPX model for tenants and six are the standard SlimLane model for business visitors.

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The tenants gain access using proximity card or an optional Idemia Morpho biometric reader. Having a trusted, durable and aesthetically beautiful access solution were all critical requirements for Willis Tower, as it's one of the country's few U.S. Department of Homeland Security SAFETY ACT certified buildings, while also being subject to millions of tourists and visitors each year. Automatic Systems was the vendor of choice, given its highly secure, durable and aesthetically pleasing access solutions.

Challenges

Although Automatic Systems already had an established relationship with the Willis Tower, there was no urgency to replace the older turnstiles until EQ Office bought the building in 2016 and sought to add new turnstiles as part of their lobby and retail renovation. Automatic Systems needed to once again earn its place and trust with new ownership. Not only were new access technologies needed, but an entirely different design focusing on the tenant and guest experience.

SlimLane

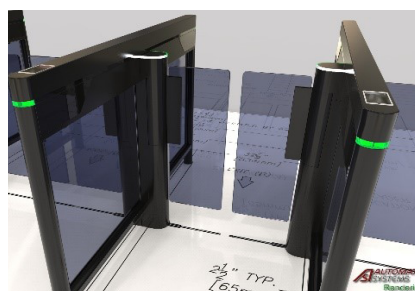
The SlimLane security entrance lane offers a high bidirectional throughput and unsurpassed security. With its transparent, elegant design and minimal footprint, SlimLane turnstiles integrate perfectly into any architectural style and are aesthetically beautiful.

They are equipped with high processing capacity and an exclusive DIRAS detection system, guaranteeing accurate user tracking and ensuring no unauthorized persons can enter the premises. Complete with card readers and elevator dispatch display capabilities, SlimLane security optical turnstiles can be managed and monitored from one integrated, server-based system.

Solution

During the vetting process, Automatic Systems worked closely with the integrator, and created physical templates, wiring diagrams and all the tools needed to help support the project. In order to transition from the industrial looking lobby to the aesthetically pleasing lobbies and restaurant space, all the stainless steel turnstiles that were currently in use had to be replaced with a dark sleeker looking unit, prompting Automatic Systems to design an entirely new black model complete with smoky glass obstacles.

In addition, EQ Office required that the technology be future-proof and expandable. The new Automatic Systems EPX turnstile cabinets can accept new technologies and allow for Morpho hand readers and biometric cameras. The Willis Tower team determined that Automatic Systems was the most willing and able vendor to do that. Collaboration was the key, and the willingness, flexibility, and capabilities that Automatic Systems demonstrated during the whole vetting process proved the best solution for Willis Tower.



Standard SlimLane model with Qscan readers for visitors



SlimLane EPX model with Idemia Morpho for tenants



SlimLane EPX with Idemia Morpho for tenants



The 29 SlimLane EPX model turnstiles for tenants and six standard SlimLane model for business visitors are meeting the visitor management needs of Willis Tower. They are helping to enhance the flow of pedestrian traffic and accessibility to the newly revitalized lobbies while also enabling tenants a quick, convenient and secure access to their locations within the Willis Tower.

Results

As the second tallest skyscraper in the U.S, effectively managing visitor and tenant access and security for Willis Tower's 15,000 tenants and 250K business visitors each year was a huge undertaking. This urban destination in the heart of downtown Chicago delivers the best experiences of life and work to residents and visitors of Chicago each day. The access and aesthetic solutions needed were met without compromise by Automatic Systems, in collaboration with Willis Towers' security systems integrators and management teams. Both tenants and visitors alike are now enjoying a convenient yet highly secure means of entry. The newly revitalized lobby, with its retail, restaurant and fitness boutique offerings, is thriving. "In today's competitive multi-tenant corporate real estate environment, the focus

is on the tenant and guest experience," notes Guidepost Solutions Regional Director Ed Batchelor. "Security planning is key in providing a five-star experience that provides the flexibility and scalability for not only the guests, but also for security operations."

End user satisfaction

Gary Michon, General Manager of Willis Tower, reports that Automatic Systems was able to work with them to add the technology features that were needed and

customize the products they wanted to meet their access control and architectural needs. "We looked at every manufacturer out there and some had sleek, cool looking turnstiles but not the durability we required. With the amount of people we have coming into the Tower every day, we were concerned about equipment breakdowns and reliability. Both Keith Kambic, our Security Director, and I knew we were the ones who'd have to be onsite, maintain the equipment and deal with any possible customer complaints, so we put our well-founded trust in Automatic Systems and their exceptional offerings and customer service.

"I can't emphasize enough how much Willis Tower trusts in the partnership that we've formed with Automatic Systems. They were definitely the right choice for us and delivered everything we needed, from both a security and aesthetics standpoint." ~ Gary Michon, General Manager, Willis Tower

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