

 case study

Providing access control and convenience for drivers at Ashford International Truck Stop



The Ashford International Truck Stop (AIT), situated near the Eurotunnel and the port of Dover on the M20, is Kent's premier Truck Stop and Truck Services for the South-East of England.

Providing facilities and services for truckers as they pass through the South East of England, AIT is one of the largest truck stops in the UK, having recently expanded following investment from management company GSE Group. With over 600 parking spaces in the new park and the capacity for up to 1000 people to be on site every night, AIT provides quality facilities for drivers and a high level of security for their cargo.

As part of the re-development programme, a new building, adjacent to the old site, was constructed to house bedrooms, showering facilities, a large restaurant area, office space and a gym.

AIT needed access control for the new block, which would allow the drivers to pre-book the facilities and provide them with secure overnight accommodation.

Telepen were approached by mtstudios, the systems engineer and software house working with AIT, to provide a solution that would read a scanned QR code to grant entry to the different utilities within the block and authenticate access via a central server.

Commenting on why they chose to work with Telepen, Matt Stanley-Webb, Director at mtstudios explains, "The Ashford International Truck Stop functions in a similar way to an intense version of a hotel, it's a very busy place where people come with specific requirements and need to move on quickly. AIT needed to provide a high level of security for the drivers, combined with the convenience of a centralised access control system. We had experienced challenges with another supplier and were very impressed with the level of flexibility that Telepen were able to offer."



After discussion with Matt on the requirements for AIT, we recommended the RB2 Door Controller would be the ideal solution for use at the site. The RB2 reader would sit alongside the doors in a sleek unit and provide easy to use instructions through an intuitive touchscreen display panel.

As mtstudios were designing the system for the project, we worked closely with Matt's team to ensure they were able to write the software that would communicate with the RB2. We provided them with a loan device, in addition to support and documentation that enabled the team to get the system up and running. "It took us a few months to go through this process and Telepen supported us throughout, which was very much appreciated," Matt explains.

The system was designed to work with the barrier system installed at the gates, which dispenses a ticket to the driver with the QR code printed on it. This can also be downloaded and used via an app on the drivers' phone, for added convenience in accessing a pre-booked room or to use the other on-site facilities. The driver can then scan either their phone or ticket at the RB2 to unlock the door and enable access.



Telepen's hardware fitted perfectly within the system we designed. Having such a good integration and level of automation has really delivered in terms of labour saving. Being able to take a ticket from a parking machine and gain access to a bedroom that has been pre-booked, without having to interact with any staff will significantly lower labour costs over time.

Matt Stanley-Webb, Director, mtstudios

Once mtstudios had developed the software, it was agreed that we would install ten RB2 units at the site, along with three Duali Mifare proximity readers for staff only access areas. The staff offices are situated towards the back of the site, with access controlled through the same centralised system.

Installation was initially planned for spring 2020 but there were site delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdown. As a result, the project start date was moved back to July 2020, and there were other trades on site which we needed to work around. Commenting on the installation Matt says, "The delays were a challenge for the installation, but Telepen were able to be very flexible, and we've been very happy with how it's worked."

The benefits the new system has had for AIT include a saving in terms of labour costs. The new access control system has resulted in efficiencies at this busy site, serving the needs of the AIT customers by allowing drivers to check in and out and use the facilities freely, 24 hours a day.

To talk to us about the solutions we would recommend for your specific requirements, please get in touch by calling +44 (0)1582 769991, or emailing sales@telepen.co.uk