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APT Skidata upgrades reporting platform with transactional level data

APT Skidata has launched a series of new modules to its Cloud-based reporting and management information system - INS Reports - to give car park operators even greater levels of data, insight and meaningful intelligence on which to make better-informed decisions.

The enhancements to its proven INS Reports platform now allow for transactional level data to be presented on a real-time dashboard. Granular detail can now be interrogated including the methods of payment used (i.e. the split between cash, credit, tap and go etc), system events, and the behaviours of individual parking customers. It provides operators with total visibility of every pay station, performance and usage.

Pete Brown, Managing Director of APT Skidata, says the new modules add further insight into the ‘Inside Intelligence’ of an operator’s entire portfolio: “We can now deliver transactional level data based on more detailed operational and revenue-based information. It gives operators the granular detail they need to make better-informed decisions, and delivered in a way that is intuitive and easy to use.”

INS Reports is a Cloud-based reporting and management information system that not only helps operators to manage the performance of their car park, but also, ultimately, provide a further improved customer experience. Users can log in anywhere and at any time via a dedicated online interface/portal to see information on all their car parks, from takings and payment types to dwell time and occupancy levels.

“The new modules give operators the detailed information they need at their fingertips,” Pete continues, “so that they can take immediate decisions based on real time data, or review information subsequently to set longer-term strategies to optimise their parking portfolio.”

The new modules are pre-loaded onto the existing platform, allowing operators a seven-day trial prior to purchase.

APT Skidata is a joint-venture of SWARCO AG and SKIDATA AG in Austria.

www.swarco.com

Paula Rogers presents Corporate Receptionist of the Year

Paula Rogers, Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality and founder of City-based Admiral Recruitment, presented the winner of the inaugural Corporate Receptionist of the Year Awards held on 8th May at the leading investment bank, Nomura, in London.

The winner, Kitija Lace, receptionist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, was chosen from ten overall finalists. Highly commended went to Dorota Wisniowska, a receptionist at Channel 4.

Paula Rogers said: “At Admiral Recruitment we care passionately about recognising outstanding talent and creating opportunities for candidates and staff to shine so we were delighted to sponsor this award.

“The highlight for me of being a judge was having the opportunity to spend the day at our HQ with the ten wonderful finalists. It was obvious how much effort, research and training had gone into their preparation which really shows what this award means to each one of them.

“Although all of the finalists were outstanding, when it came to the overall winner, it was about rewarding someone who stood out on all fronts – from how they presented themselves and how they engage with people - to their absolute professionalism and obvious love of their role.”

Admiral Recruitment works in partnership with a select portfolio of high profile clients to provide tailored front of house talent, from senior reception management through to reception, concierge and back office roles.

For over 24 years, this owner-managed, specialist company has built its entire reputation on the relationships it holds with clients and candidates, with placements ranging from senior management to junior in permanent, interim and short-term roles.

“We know first-hand the difference a good receptionist can make to a company’s reputation. There is no doubt whatsoever that the role of a receptionist is a crucial role in any business. They say that the first three seconds of walking into a building determines how one feels about a company. A warm welcome and a smile say it all. In fact, whether you are face-to-face or at the end of a phone, that smile always counts,” said Paula.

“It was an absolute pleasure to present Kitija with this well-deserved award.”

This new awards programme is the brain child of Greg Mace, managing director of Rapport, to showcase brilliant receptionists in the corporate world.
Condair ME helps EDPAC cool at CIX

The Condair ME evaporative humidifier is providing adiabatic cooling in an innovative indirect cooling system from EDPAC at the Cork Internet Exchange (CIX) in Ireland. EDPAC’s indirect air-to-air evaporative cooling system will be maintaining the temperature across CIX’s data halls without using any chillers and with 75% less energy than a traditionally cooled data centre.

The installation of the new low energy cooling system was part of a €6m extension at the family-owned 2,800sqm data centre, partly funded by the Excellence in Energy Efficient Design (EXEED) programme.

The EDPAC air handling system cools without chillers by creating two airstreams; one internal and one external. The internal airstream circulates air to and from the data halls and the external airstream draws in, then vents, ambient outside air. Both airstreams pass through a series of heat exchangers to transfer cool thermal energy from the external to the internal airstream, without either physically mixing.

In order to boost the cooling capacity of the system, and keep the data halls at 24°C all year round, evaporative cooling is used to reduce the temperature of the external airstream below that of the ambient outdoor air. A series of Condair ME evaporative humidifiers are located in the walls around a penthouse ventilation area, created across the top storey of the building. As air is drawn into the building through louvres, it passes through these Condair MEs, before entering the penthouse ventilation area where the EDPAC AHUs are located.

The Condair ME consists of an evaporative matrix section, which sits across a duct, and a hydraulic module that continually pumps water up to the top of the matrix to keep it moist. As air travels through the Condair ME’s wet matrix, it absorbs water and is cooled by several degrees.

Noel Lynch, managing director at EDPAC, comments, “By reducing the temperature of the outside air entering the penthouse ventilation area with the Condair MEs, the air being drawn into the external airstream of the air handling units is significantly cooler than the outside air. This enables the indirect cooling system to maintain the desired data hall temperature of 24°C, even in the hottest months of the year.”

Noel continues, “The complementary technologies of air-to-air heat exchange and humidifier-based evaporative cooling is a considerable improvement to existing indirect data centre cooling systems. The strategy offers very low energy climate control while being easy to manage, as it doesn’t have a wet sprays section with the onerous administrative obligations that this can place on a building operator.”

Four AHU modules, each delivering up to 400kW of cooling, have been installed above the data halls at CIX, alongside four Condair ME evaporative humidifiers. While the outside Cork weather remains below 21°C, air-to-air cooling alone is sufficient to maintain the required data hall condition. When the outdoor temperature rises above this, the Condair MEs operate to provide up to 300kW of cooling to each AHU.

Donal Deering, energy consultant at Smart Power, the Dublin-based energy consultancy that worked on the project, commented, “The expected electrical demand across the year is just 12kW per 400kW AHU module, including the electrical consumption of the Condair ME evaporative humidifiers. Typical PUE values across Irish data centres is 1.5-1.7 but the use of adiabatic cooling at CIX will lower the facility’s overall PUE to less than 1.4. The energy savings are expected to be 75% of that which would otherwise be used in a traditionally cooled data centre.”

Donal concludes, “The CIX evaporative cooling project is an exciting, innovative project and credit must go to Jerry Sweeney, Chief Executive at CIX, and Noel Lynch at EDPAC for their pioneering efforts.”

The Condair Group is the world’s leading specialist in humidity control and evaporative cooling, with energy efficient, hygienic and innovative technologies for commercial, industrial and heritage applications. Condair offers system design, manufacture, supply, installation, commissioning, maintenance and spares.

Government must act as construction apprenticeship starts drop by almost half

The Government must review its approach to apprenticeships following statistics published today which show that construction apprenticeship starts have plummeted by almost half, according to the Federation of Master Builders (FMB).

In March 2019 there were only 694 Construction, Planning and the Built Environment apprenticeship starts compared with 1,247 in March 2018.

Brian Berry, Chief Executive of the Federation of Master Builders, said:

“Construction apprenticeship starts have suffered a serious hit and we now need decisive action from the Government in order to reverse this decline. The Government must accept the recommendation made in the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding, also published today, to make provision for full funding, at all ages, for first qualifications at Level 2 and 3. The Government is uniquely placed to drive the apprenticeship agenda, and if Ministers want to achieve their target of three million apprenticeship starts by the end of next year, they must review apprenticeship policy, including the Apprenticeship Levy.”

Berry concluded:

“Of course the construction industry itself must do more to rally around a shared ambition to promote the industry and all its merits, such as innovation, design and entrepreneurship. The drop in starts by almost half should sound the alarm that we aren’t doing enough to get the message out there. If we don’t address the skills shortage by increasing training and apprenticeships, the construction industry won’t be able to expand and grow. Introducing a mandatory licensing scheme for UK construction could help create the culture change our industry needs by improving our reputation through increased quality and professionalism and thus make us more attractive to new entrants.”
Delta Security wins new maintenance contract with Gateway Housing

Delta Security, a specialist in automated high-security solutions, has won a new contract with Gateway Housing to provide full maintenance and repairs to the CCTV, access control and gate systems installed at Gateway’s portfolio of 3,000 residential properties.

The new three-year contract, which covers the East London boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham, was won in a competitive tender including six other security suppliers. The tender was a part of a wider company drive to rationalise and professionalise all procurement. Criteria included value for money, customer-focused delivery and the ability to provide compliant and comprehensive support to all tenants within a set time period.

As part of the new contract Delta Security has also delivered a programme for planned upgrades and regular maintenance to support the Housing Association’s commitment to ‘pre-prevention maintenance’ (PPM).

John Gilbert, M&E Contracts Manager at Gateway Housing, says ensuring excellent customer service on maintenance projects is key to its continuous improvement goals:

“Dave Mundy, the MD of Delta Security, and I hold a combined vision for how we can further streamline processes to ensure our residents have the most efficient and effective maintenance and repairs service,” he says. “Delta has provided out-of-hours support to ensure this partnership starts in the best position, and so far, we could not ask for any more.”

Dave Mundy, Managing Director at Delta Security, says this is a significant new contract for the company: “We have extensive experience in delivering maintenance repairs and system upgrades with the minimum of disruption to residents, combined with the utmost convenience for the Housing Association,” he says. “We are extremely pleased to add Gateway to our portfolio of Housing Association clients and look forward to delivering on this new partnership.”

“Supporting local SMEs is also extremely important to our organisation,” adds John. “We are therefore very pleased to be working with an East London business, and one that is large enough to manage demand, yet small enough to care!”

UK cities outside of London gaining the most office space investment

Savoy Stewart

- Manchester experienced the greatest take-up of office space at 1,750,562 square feet in 2018 – a 44% increase from the previous year
- Manchester also benefited from the highest office investment volume at £989 million – an 8% rise from the year before
- Thereafter, Glasgow saw a take-up of 962,921 square feet in office space and gained an investment level of £468 million
- Notably, Leeds experienced an astonishing 185% year-on-year increase in office investment – from £127 million in 2017 to £362 million in 2018
- ‘Location’ (84%) is the primary consideration in the search criteria for most businesses seeking a new office premises in 2019

Despite the economic and political turbulence caused by Brexit - aspects such as the UK’s talented labour pool, strong financial markets, transparent laws/regulations and advanced technology infrastructure - still makes the UK an attractive proposition for businesses/investors seeking to set-up or expand their operations.

Interested in office investment, commercial property specialists SavoyStewart.co.uk analysed the latest findings from several regional city reports compiled by Knight Frank, to discover the total ‘investment volume’ and ‘take-up’ of office space in 10 major cities across the UK in 2018.

The 10 cities included within the research are as follows: Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield.

Office Take-Up (SQ. FT)

Savoy Stewart found that Manchester experienced the greatest take-up of office space at 1,750,562 square feet (sq. ft) in 2018. In comparison to the previous year (2017) – where office take-up was 1,218,892 sq. ft – marking a significant 44% increase.

Thereafter, Glasgow saw a take-up of 962,921 sq. ft. in office space - equating to a 52% rise from 2017, when office take-up was 633,710 sq. ft. Birmingham followed, with an office space take-up of 755,137 sq. ft.

Out of all the considered cities, Newcastle had the lowest take-up of offices at 236,928 sq. ft. Despite this, the city still had a 33% surge from the year before (2017) – where office take-up was 177,870 sq. ft. Slight above, was Sheffield, who had an office take-up of 363,584 sq. ft in 2018.
Centiel Nominated for Major Industry Awards

Leading UPS manufacturer, Centiel, has been shortlisted for three major industry awards. The Electrical Review excellence awards recognise outstanding achievements within the industry over the past year and Centiel has been nominated in three categories: Power Project of the Year, Power Product of the Year and Energy Saving Project of the Year.

Mike Elms, managing director Centiel UK comments: “It is really exciting that both our innovative introduction of ‘top cable entry’ for our CumulusPowerTM 4th Generation true modular UPS, plus two unique client installations have been highlighted in relation to these prestigious awards.”

Elms explains: “Until now, most UPS units’ final power connections have been at low level within the UPS frame. This made the bending radius of larger cables problematic if cables were installed at floor level, or worse, at a high level and then either had to be run down a tray/ladder to then be worked into the bottom of the UPS frame, or a separate top cable entry enclosure had to be installed which obviously had both a financial and footprint penalty.

“Last year we introduced a new solution for ‘top cable entry’ directly into our Modular frame, meaning additional cost and space are saved. The modular configuration of CumulusPowerTM allows the option of having UPS input terminals at either low or high level within the frame, to accept cables from below or above depending on customers’ requirements. This offers total flexibility when integrating into existing or new electrical infrastructure.

“In addition to the product innovation nomination, Centiel has also been selected for excellence in two client projects: one in central London and another for two large datacentres in the Channel Islands. For the datacentre installation, the end user confirmed a significant reduction in air cooling requirements following the installation of CumulusPowerTM as a result of its industry-leading highest operating efficiency of 97% while in full on-line operating mode.

“As a company, Centiel is continually focused on reducing the environmental impact of its UPS solutions and so recognition in the Energy Saving Project of the Year is particularly important to us. Our focus on right-sizing while maintaining maximum efficiency means the air conditioning required is significantly less using our solutions and we hope bringing this to the attention of the industry in this way will ultimately provide widespread benefits in relation to environmental impact of UPS application.”

The overall winners for the Electrical Review Excellence Awards were announced at a gala dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel on London’s Park Lane on 30 May 2019.

For further information please see: www.centiel.co.uk

World Green Building Council to shine a light on building lifecycle as campaign focus for World Green Building Week 2019

New report on embodied carbon to be issued as a ‘call to action’ for the building and construction industry

The World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) will use the 10th annual World Green Building Week (23-29 September 2019) to focus on end-to-end carbon emissions created across the building and construction industry, highlighting the need for the sustainable production, design, build, use, deconstruction and reuse of buildings and their materials.

Today, buildings and construction together account for 36% of global final energy use and 39% of energy-related carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions when upstream power generation is included.

Operational emissions from buildings account for 28% overall, while the remaining 11% are attributed to embodied carbon emissions, which refers to carbon that is released during material manufacturing and the construction and demolition process.

The issue of addressing embodied carbon emissions is becoming increasingly important to the building and construction industry as major organisations look to collectively achieve net zero carbon along the entire lifecycle of a building.

A detailed report put together by WorldGBC will outline the pressing issues around embodied carbon in the industry, presenting a vision for a net zero carbon construction future and a call to action to radically transform processes right along the planning and construction supply chain.

The report will help to raise awareness of this vital issue and will highlight examples of leadership and best practice from across the sector. In the report, WorldGBC will call for urgent action, recommending specific steps that business, government and civil society can take to help shape a net zero carbon future for the whole lifecycle of all buildings.

The report will be released during World Green Building Week in September 2019.

The focus for this year’s World Green Building Week campaign dovetails with the issue of air pollution, which is the theme of this year’s World Environment Day taking place this Wednesday, 5 June. Green building is one key solution to improve air quality in the built environment. The energy used in material manufacture, construction and operation of buildings must come from clean, renewable sources of energy and not from burning carbon-emitting fossil fuels, which exacerbate global warming, pollute the air and damage human health.

On Wednesday 5 June, WorldGBC Chair, Lisa Bate, will speak at the UN Environment's World Environment Day event in New York on a panel about innovative solutions to reduce air pollution in the building sector. She will use the UN Environment platform to formally launch this year’s campaign, Building Life.

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New technology detects early warning signs of tinnitus

Up to 75% of workers in construction develop tinnitus or permanent hearing loss

New technology developed by UK-based engineering and design consultancy, Plextek, could provide early diagnosis and treatment of debilitating hearing conditions, such as tinnitus, for people working in high-risk environments, such as construction sites. Tinnitus, a condition in which a person can hear sounds that come from within their body, including buzzing, humming and whistling, currently affects one in ten people within the UK, according to official NHS statistics.

Dr Ross Dineen, an Australian audiologist, has found that “over 75 per cent of construction workers were experiencing hearing and communication problems.” The study suggested that workers who are regularly exposed to high noise levels can develop permanent tinnitus.

Plextek’s technology can be integrated into both standard commercial headphones and industry standard noise prevention headsets to reliably detect the early signs of tinnitus, well before symptoms become apparent. By syncing with a smartphone app the technology could also be used to alert the wearer to potential problems and encourage early medical help or preventative action.

According to the World Health Organisation, 50% of all hearing issues would be preventable with some form of primary intervention, but existing technologies to detect conditions like tinnitus are currently restricted to clinical and hospital environments.

The integration of Plextek’s solution into normal headpieces would remove this clinical barrier and could have a major impact for those working in high-risk, loud-noise environments in the construction industry. The technology works by accurately monitoring subtle changes to ‘Auditory Evoked Potentials’ (AEP) – a signal sent from the brain by an acoustical stimulus that measures an individual’s auditory ability level.

“Daily we are besieged by a cacophony of sounds: background noise from bars, roadworks, gyms, personal music players, shops, public transport. All of these sounds can contribute to hearing loss and related disorders such as tinnitus” says Dr Nigel Whittle, Head of Medical & Healthcare at Plextek.

“Studies have suggested that up to one in four adults may suffer from hearing damage, so it is no wonder that the WHO has described background noise as ‘an underestimated threat’. Hearing loss is both irreparable and preventable, and has a huge impact on both personal health and economic activity. Not only does it cost the UK an estimated £18 billion in lost productivity, but also the UK insurance industry pays out over £70 million a year in hearing related claims. Early detection of hearing disorders, and measures to limit workers’ exposure to loud noises, will reduce the personal and economic impact of these conditions”.

Plextek is continuing to develop the technology and looking to partner with other developers and manufacturers to integrate the system into standard products.

2. UK Hearing Conservation Association http://hearingconservation.org.uk/
4. World Health Organisation

Robertson wins big at leading industry awards

Two of Robertson’s most significant projects have received coveted accolades at the prestigious Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Awards.

Premium spirits giant Edrington’s £140m Macallan Distillery and visitor experience in Speyside picked up the ‘Design through Innovation’ award at the Scotland ceremony, with judges commending the project team’s careful management of the environment, sustainability and local resources, particularly water, and the building’s innovative design.

There was also success in the North East, with Whitley Bay’s iconic Spanish City regeneration project, which Robertson delivered for North Tyneside Council, awarded the ‘Tourism and Leisure’ title, with judges commending the project team’s careful management of the environment, sustainability and local resources, particularly water, and the building’s innovative design.

Derek Shewan, chief executive officer of Robertson said: “The awards celebrate the diverse range of skills and expertise that we have within the business – from the painstaking restoration and refurbishment of iconic buildings to delivering state of the art, innovative projects.

“We’re incredibly proud to have played a key role in the delivery of two hugely significant buildings that will go on to bring lasting benefits for the local community and economies for decades to come.”

“The teams behind these winning projects should be very proud of their exceptional achievements and contribution to the region.”

Both projects will go on to compete against other regional winners at the national RICS Awards Grand Final in October in London for the chance to be crowned the overall UK winner in their respective category.

The titles adds to a string of high profile accolades for both projects.

e-mail your news to shirley@qubeonline.co.uk
Cloud-based Access Control: Improving Security in More Ways Than One

Access control has always been at the forefront of building security. Traditionally, access control systems have come in the form of conventional lock and key methods, electronic systems or a combination of the two. Today, cloud-based systems are changing the market landscape, providing secondary security benefits to users across the UK.

Trevor Ball, business development manager UK & Ireland at Allegion UK, provides insight into the physical security and cybersecurity benefits associated with the cloud.

All buildings need to regulate their building security, from government-owned educational and healthcare facilities right through to small commercial properties.

With this in mind, balancing security features with other factors has always been a challenge. Facility managers and decision makers alike have to account for accessibility and usability alongside safety and security – not to mention budgets and building capabilities. With this, and the fact that many traditional security systems can sometimes be demanding to manage, it’s clear as to why facilities are beginning to implement cloud-based systems into their security strategies.

The importance of Cybersecurity

The construction industry has not always been first to implement ‘cutting edge’ technologies. From an external viewpoint, many forget the extensive standards that decision makers must abide by – with these considerations sometimes slowing the process for technology adaptation. For those that have combined traditional security methods with electronic systems, new security demands must still be considered.

One of those new demands is cybersecurity, which in its simplest of terms, is the protection of internet-connected systems, whether this be in the form of software, data or hardware. As with most internet-connected systems, today’s access control systems are also at risk to cyber attacks – with potentially detrimental consequences to building security. With this being a new area for some (consider schools or small commercial facilities), questions are now being raised on how to effectively secure a building from two angles both physically and electronically.

Take a school entrance for example. With various access points across the building, schools can be known to use fobs or keycards as a way of granting access and monitoring movement. However, with many of these access control systems being operated from a local internal server, they can become vulnerable to cyber attacks. These access control systems require internal maintenance, updates and data back-ups. If a slight mistake is made with the data that’s being handled on-site, it could lead to a less secure digital infrastructure. One cyber attack later and, suddenly, the physical security of the school is compromised. So what’s the answer to this growing issue?

The rise of the cloud

Today, cloud-based systems can offer a wide range of UK facilities enhanced security with full integration into their access control systems. In fact, worldwide spending on cloud computing is expected to grow by 23.8% this year, with spend expected to reach $210 billion USD in 2019. In an increasingly digital age the growing need to protect a facility physically and electronically paired with the benefits that cloud-based solutions offer, is why these numbers for worldwide expenditure on cloud computing are rising.

Cloud systems essentially store and access data online, taking it away from an on-premise computer or server. When integrated into an access control system, cloud solutions offer
facilities a number of operational choices. Users can set how visitors are granted access into the building, with a number of situations possible, such as registration in a reception area paired with visitor passes. Of course, other factors need to be taken into account, such as the required movement of the visitor; but this is left in the hands of the decision maker. With the cloud, these decisions are designed to be made quickly and effortlessly – all via the internet and all while providing extra digital security.

Yet, there is a common misconception that on-site closed network security solutions are more secure. With plenty of evidence against this, cloud-based systems are progressively being seen as the best equipped systems for cyber attacks (providing the correct procedures are put in place, i.e. two-factor authentication). For an internally managed system, facilities may need a large amount of resources, time and even budget to keep it running smoothly. Updates, in particular, can be a timely and precise process, and when done manually on-site, there’s the chance that a lax approach or a common mistake could cause huge security repercussions.

Looking back to the example of a school entrance and those that operate access control from an on-site server: It is possible for users to implement multiple layers of security to their on-site infrastructures by themselves. Yet, in reality, many lack the expertise and experience to enforce this. With schools, in particular, stretched IT teams and budget issues can sometimes result to a more lenient or less meticulous operation. This increases the possibility that their access control systems become vulnerable to cyber attacks, highlighting the weaknesses of these systems compared to those that are handled by third-party organisations.

With cloud-based systems, the maintenance is taken away from internal teams, saving time and resources and giving peace of mind that updates are being handled by expert teams. This extra layer of security is why schools, among other facilities, across the UK are beginning to make the switch.

**Traditional benefits**

Aside from being the best protection for cyber attacks, cloud-based systems are offering decision makers a number of other benefits.

Doors and physical locations aren’t the only areas where these cloud-based systems can improve security. The nature of these cloud-based systems allow for additional use in some unusual but highly beneficial scenarios. Forklift operators, parking gate users and those that require access to drug cabinets (whether based in hospitals or on-duty ambulances) can all do so with integrated cloud solutions.

Accessibility isn’t the only benefit to facilities either. Cloud-based systems offer decision makers full flexibility in terms of how they can adapt to a building. This flexibility allows for huge scalability options, enabling a building to grow with its access control system – without presenting any additional security issues.

**Effortless access control**

The importance of building security has always been paramount to those involved with access control. Now, with physical security and cybersecurity both needing to be considered, it’s imperative for facilities to keep up with the IoT movement by using access control systems that can protect their facilities from multiple security threats.

The effortless nature of cloud-based systems is simplifying (but progressing) access control processes for facilities across the UK. For many, the cloud is much more than an industry trend, it’s a revolutionary stance on access control.

**Sources**

https://www.isonas.com/why-isonas/use-cases/
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**Openview invests in new technical training facility**

OpenView Security Solutions, the UK’S largest privately owned independent security company and a leading national supplier of fire, electrical and mechanical services, has opened a new, purpose-built technical Training Academy at its Romford-based head office. This new facility will be used by OpenView to cross train engineers and extend its existing apprenticeship programme. It will also enable the company to retrain ex police and services personnel, giving them the required industry skills.

According to Mark Ingleson, Group Managing Director at OpenView Group: “The industry is experiencing a major shortage in the number of engineers with the skills to deliver high quality engineering and compliance testing services. With over 300 field operatives, OpenView has made a significant investment in this new technical training facility which will enable us to gear up to handle the largest contracts whilst demonstrating our commitment to building the industry.”

OpenView’s new Training Academy provides a classroom environment where compliance testing, installation and support skills can be taught via and practical, hands-on sessions for a comprehensive range of electrical, fire and CCTV products. It will also be used to further enhance ‘soft’ skills such as customer communications.
Lindapter extend range with the AMD Decking Fixing

The Type AMD fixing has been developed to allow building services to be suspended from AMD60 and AMD80 decking profiles manufactured by Anglian Metal Deck Ltd.

Lindapter highlights that the new fixing creates genuine efficiencies for the contractor as it is installed within seconds and is adjustable onsite without the requirement of specialist labour, expensive tools or power.

The Lindapter concept delivers an economical connection method suitable for the installation of a variety of HVAC systems, fire protection, pipe work, electrical equipment and lowered ceilings. The AMD wedge is designed to fit inside the dovetail re-entrant channel of the composite decking profile and held in place by a locking plate and locknut. In contrast to shot firing methods, this zero-impact fixing preserves the strength of the decking profile and avoids delamination (separating the steel from the concrete) and damage to the deck.

As with all Lindapter products, safe working loads are independently approved and rigorous quality procedures ensure a secure connection with a capacity of 1.00kN per fixing, calculated at a safety factor of 3:1.

Quick and easy to install - saving time on site.

Adjustable onsite - providing flexibility during installation.

Specialist labour not required - controlling costs.

Zero-impact installation - avoids delamination and damage to the deck.

No expensive tools or power required to install – saving money.

“The AMD decking fixing is the latest development in our range that confirms we are committed to providing high quality, cost effective building services connections compatible with all major decking manufacturers including Composite Metal Flooring (CMF®), Kingspan® Structural Products, Structural Metal Decks (SMD), Hare Decking and Tata Steel® Europe.” said Lindapter's Marketing Specialist Damian Haigh.

The Type AMD is available in sizes M6, M8 and M10 through our UK distributors. For full specification and installation information download our new technical datasheet from www.lindapter.com
Design with tech businesses in mind

By Atul Bansal, co-founder, Sheila Bird Group

Estimated to be worth nearly £184 billion to the UK market, the tech sector is growing 2.6 times faster than the overall economy. The tech start-up scene is thriving, while scale-up numbers are accelerating at pace.

Gone are the days where these IT companies are confined to dull, corporate offices. Today, they are leading the way when it comes to innovative ways of using a space. And that’s not just reserved for tech giants like Facebook and Google - start-ups and scale-ups are doing it too. Here, Atul Bansal, co-founder of Sheila Bird Group, shares his top tips for designing for a tech company.

1. Design with millennials in mind

When new and growing tech companies approach workplace design, they must be designing with millennials in mind. That is where they will find the skills they need to make their business a success in the long-run, because, after all, millennials are the workforce of tomorrow.

What do millennials want from a working environment? Two things; first, they are looking for a home from home - more of an experience. It should be a place that people want to enjoy for the social aspects and networking as much as the work itself. A space where the blend between work and home is
Design for Tech

blurred and teams can work collaboratively, eat and meet with other people.

There is little distinction between work and life anymore, which means buildings need more public-like amenities – think coffee shops, clubs and classes. Without these, tech companies, and any other business or sector for that matter, will struggle in the war for talent. It's a necessity, not an exception.

The second thing millennials look for is a workplace community and by that I don't just mean one that works in a business - we are now also talking about the community that works with the business. It's something that comes up time and time again in design meetings with young tech companies. Just as businesses want to link into communities, communities now want to link into businesses, too.

Working with landlords to create co-occupied retail spaces on the ground floor of a building, for example, will animate how the building interacts with the things and people around it. Encouraging thought inspiration, these areas don't belong to one business but rather the community in which the building sits in.

2. Design with innovation in mind

The main differentiator of young tech businesses from other sectors is their innovative nature, and interaction is key to that.

There are many opinions on the role of the office in a more flexible working world – some see the physical space as a place for meeting and dialogue, as the foundation on which we build trust. Others will vouch for a more productive workforce means one that isn't tied to one location or one desk. And I'd agree, but for tech companies with growth aspirations, an office must absolutely bring people together. Whether that is physically or virtually – it must work as a space that inspires and motivates people to innovate, come up with their most ingenious ideas and do their very best work.

It's also important to remember that the people in your company are individuals. They have cultures and they have rituals that are generally overlooked. In order to design an environment that breeds innovation, we need to understand these cultures and rituals. I like to use the Sunday lunch example of a ritual that unites people today. If we think of that in a work context, tech companies should be thinking about how they capitalise on and make the most of these things to build trust and community.

3. Design with productivity in mind

There are many studies out there today, which conclude that we have to work less to be more productive. Of course, it's a luxury in today's working world to have the technology at our fingertips to be able to work remotely or on the go. I'd say that small tech teams have the advantage, thanks to the advanced technology that we have today – they have the intellectual freedom of a start-up, with the resources of the mature enterprise.

4. Design with growth in mind

Tech start-ups are notoriously fast moving – they need to be that way in order to keep up with competition, the pace of emerging technologies and succeed in today's market. So, having a space that will grow with them is a must.

If you're paying for an office space, especially as a small or start-up tech business, it can and should serve multiple functions. There's no reason why your 'office' can't be public facing, providing value to the community in which it sits. There's no reason why it can't be a learning and mentoring centre, a coffee shop, a partnership with likeminded businesses.

It should also give you space to grow. The trick is to be clever with how you use a space – can you build on it, for example, adding new levels to be shaped to suit the company at any given period in time?

The office, like the smartphone, is ripe for disruption. The phone you use in 2019 may look much cooler, sleeker and have better apps and cameras than the one you had in 2008, but it is still essentially the same. That's what we have been doing with office space for the past 25 years. It's easy to add more biophilic elements, or bring in soft furnishings and more windows, but it's still an office. Ultimately what we have been trying to do is make the office look more like the third place, but what we should be doing is creating a third place that can perform office functions when needed.

In the future, we will see more spaces that are not only unique places to go and work in, but also to hang out in. It's not just about the physical environment anymore – it's about what is created in them that gives them character, the mood, the identity and, ultimately, what attracts and retains the best people.
It’s no surprise to hear the retail sector is in a state of transformation. Headline-hitting news about the demise of the high-street and the disappearance of so many well-known brand names in recent years tells us all we need to know about how important change is to this industry. To not evolve and to ignore customer sentiment is having devastating consequences and, critically, this is why the role of facilities management is so important.

Customer experience as we know it today is a relatively new concept in retail; as is omni-channel – the ability to create a unique experience across all of a brand’s available channels. This is important because it is now customers, not senior executives, who are dictating what’s important in retail. Customers want more than just a transactional interaction, whether they are browsing online or purchasing instore, and it is this desire that is revolutionising the shopping experience.

Ben Tiffany from Sigma, a business that specialises in retail space transformation and consolidation, reflects, “In this new realm of retailing, the hygiene factors matter within your physical store portfolio. From ambient lighting and state of the art sound systems, to ease of access, layout and even the temperature of your store, it all matters to savvy shoppers and can be the deciding factor between one brand and its competitor.”

Facilities Managers in retail have a broader role than ever before, taking in everything from traditional services such as heating, electrics and the physical build of a store, right through to security, cleaning and even the continuous availability and in-store wi-fi! But in reality, it’s even more complex than this, as any Facilities Manager will tell you.

With the powerful combination of new technology and a shift towards more sustainable practices, now more than ever is the time for Facilities Manager’s to show that their role is as strategic as it is tactical.

Paramount, of course is the need to keep each and every

Why the role of FM is so important in the survival of bricks and mortar retail
store within a brand's portfolio up and running and this is no more essential than in the food sector. Systems and processes must be implemented and adhered to so that stock quality is maintained and in supermarkets and other food retailers, the reliability of basics such as refrigerators that work, power that is always on and back-up that kicks in when it should do are all absolute essentials. Where there is an issue, today's Facilities Manager must have technology in place to help identify the source of the problem and have access to the resources needed to fix it before it becomes a detriment to customer experience.

It cannot be ignored, however, that cost is an ongoing issue and barrier to truly effective facilities management. In retail, many brands are dealing with ageing infrastructure and legacy systems that haven't been upgraded or replaced in too long. Coupled with the relentless challenges of rising energy and service costs, it is up to Facilities Managers to show how they can make a difference to help combat shrinking margins.

Sigma's Ben adds, “Energy is a great example as there are some sophisticated solutions to help forecast and predict energy requirements. Armed with such rich data and with the array of solutions now available, Facilities Managers are able to deliver much more bespoke and cost-effective energy contracts into their store portfolio, meaning greater cost-efficiencies.”

Also high on the business agenda is sustainability which is another non-traditional area where facilities management can add to the results. From reducing energy and water usage through to influencing the materials used and waste processes implemented for new build or refurbished stores, there are many areas where the knowledge and expertise of the facilities management professional can add to not just the bottom line, but also brand reputation which in turn, enhances the overall customer experience.

Technology has a significant role to plan in the management of a physical store portfolio. There are some amazing technologies coming into the market that shifts the focus from reactive management into a space that is much more planned and proactive. Building energy Management Systems (BeMS) are now all encompassing and can make the integration of new lighting, heating and security systems seamless, whether in a new build or retrofitting into older store stock.

These systems also come loaded with Business Intelligence reporting capability, meaning that Facilities Managers have more data than ever before at their fingertips to not only retrospectively report on performance but also to get ahead of it, predicting where investment is needed and able to articulate based on evidence the business case for doing so. This supports the more strategic capability that the profession can bring, complimenting work in procurement and finance as well as customer experience – far more than the outdated notion of the person responsible for leaking toilets and keeping the photocopier working.

“As experts at transforming commercial space, we understand the pivotal role of the Facilities Manager. These professionals are key to making sure that we are proposing solutions that are not only fit for purpose, but also fit for the future whether a brand has large flagship stores or smaller, local operations. It's the facilities manager who will be left making sure these systems and solutions drive the benefits expected into the future, so it's right that they're factored into consideration from the very beginning”, adds Sigma's Ben.

Facilities Management in retail is a complex role due to the breadth and multi-faceted nature of the work involved. However, when retail leaders are educated to fully understand the contribution that this profession can bring, the true power of the bricks and mortar shopping experience can really be brought to life. After all, who else is going to keep the wi-fi switched on?

With over 20 years' experience of transforming commercial space, Sigma provide a true end-to-end service; from fixtures and GNFR consolidation, to construction, projects and M&E. www.sigmagrp.co.uk
Landsec and Spartan Bioscience trial the world’s first on-site Legionella DNA test in the UK

Landsec and Spartan Bioscience today announced they will trial the world’s first on-site Legionella DNA test in the UK.

In May, Landsec undertook trials using Spartan’s innovative Legionella test. Spartan’s test provides highly accurate qPCR Legionella results in 45 minutes, enabling operators to take corrective action within hours instead of weeks. This test, if approved, could replace the need to send samples to laboratories and ensure enhanced levels of water safety.

Spartan’s Legionella test is widely used by North America’s leading real estate companies, data facilities, and healthcare organizations. In addition, it is validated according to ISO/Technical Specification 12869:2012. Landsec is the first company to trial Spartan’s technology in the UK.

Legionella is a common bacterium that can infect the water systems of large buildings. When infected water systems release aerosolized water droplets contaminated with Legionella, building occupants can breathe in the contaminated air and contract Legionnaires’ disease, a potentially fatal pneumonia. There are dozens of high-profile Legionnaires’ disease outbreaks in the UK each year.(1) For example, in August 2017, a woman died from a Legionella outbreak that was traced back to a contaminated water system in a Ludlow hotel.(2)

The traditional Legionella testing method, bacterial culture, takes 10-14 days to provide results. But this turnaround time can be too slow because Legionella can grow to outbreak levels in as few as 7 days.(3) In comparison, Spartan’s test provides results in 45 minutes. Additionally, Spartan’s Legionella test uses a Nobel-Prize
On-Site Legionella Testing

winning chemistry called quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction (qPCR). qPCR is commonly used for medical diagnostics because of its highly-improved accuracy compared to traditional testing methods.

“Landsec is always looking for innovative solutions that can make our buildings and their occupants safer,” said Tim Peacock, Innovation Director at Landsec. “We look forward to working with Spartan to bring this technology to the UK and investigating methods to further reduce the risk of Legionnaires’ outbreaks in our buildings.”

“Landsec is one of the leading property management companies in the UK and we are excited to have them onboard with this trial. With support from businesses like Landsec, we hope to eventually eradicate Legionnaires’ outbreaks around the world,” said Paul Lem, M.D., CEO of Spartan Bioscience.
Nowhere off limits for the off-road jet vac monster

A go-anywhere jet vac tanker designed for use by the military and United Nations relief teams is proving its worth helping keep sewers running smoothly across central and southern England.

The JHL recycling jet vac tanker is being used by Lanes Group plc to access remote sewers and culverts across the most difficult terrain on behalf of Thames Water.

Lanes, Thames Water’s wastewater network services maintenance partner, is using the specialist vehicle for more productive planned cleaning of main sewers and to respond rapidly to off-road blockages.

Michael Hall, Head of Operations for Lanes Utilities, said: “Our 8x8 jet vac tanker is the only vehicle of its kind operating in the UK, and it’s all-terrain capability is proving its worth time and again.

“We can quickly reach wastewater assets that are far from a road or firm ground. The vehicle is also ready to be deployed if there is a flood to maintain critical assets such as pumping stations.”

The vehicle has enhanced ground clearance plus eight-wheel drive and steering. It was originally designed to support wastewater management in remote military bases and humanitarian aid camps.

Two Lanes drainage engineers have now undergone specialist off-road training in the vehicle to support their work in some of the most remote and hard-to-reach locations across the Thames Water region.

The training has taught them how to make the best use of the jet vac tanker’s ability to cope with boggy and unstable ground and risk assess conditions to ensure all off-road hazards are fully considered.

In Long Hanborough, in Oxfordshire, the vehicle has been used to travel 1,000 metres across farm and construction land that had been churned up by excavators to carry out a large sewer clean.

Without the JHL 8x8, the project could only have been completed with a recycler jet vac tanker, two tracked portable jetting reels and the deployment of a confined space entry team.

Jet vac operative Chris Wood, who is the vehicle’s main driver, said: “This is an extraordinary piece of kit. It makes our off-road work much more productive and allows us to react more quickly to potential pollution incidents.

“Importantly, because I can drive right up to a manhole, wherever it is, and vacuum blockage material from the sewer, we don’t have to send in a confined space team which is a major safety boost.

“There hasn’t been a project yet where we haven’t felt confident that we can reach an off-road sewer. Even when we’ve been axle-deep in mud, it has kept on going.”

Off-road Training Specialist Mark Stopps, of Explore the Country, near Milton Keynes, who led the training, said: “The 8x8 jet vac is a very impressive piece of machinery.

“It has better off-road capabilities than many similar-sized military vehicles. Hats off, also, to Lanes for giving its drivers off-road training, it’s not something that many users of all-terrain vehicles think of doing.”
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