

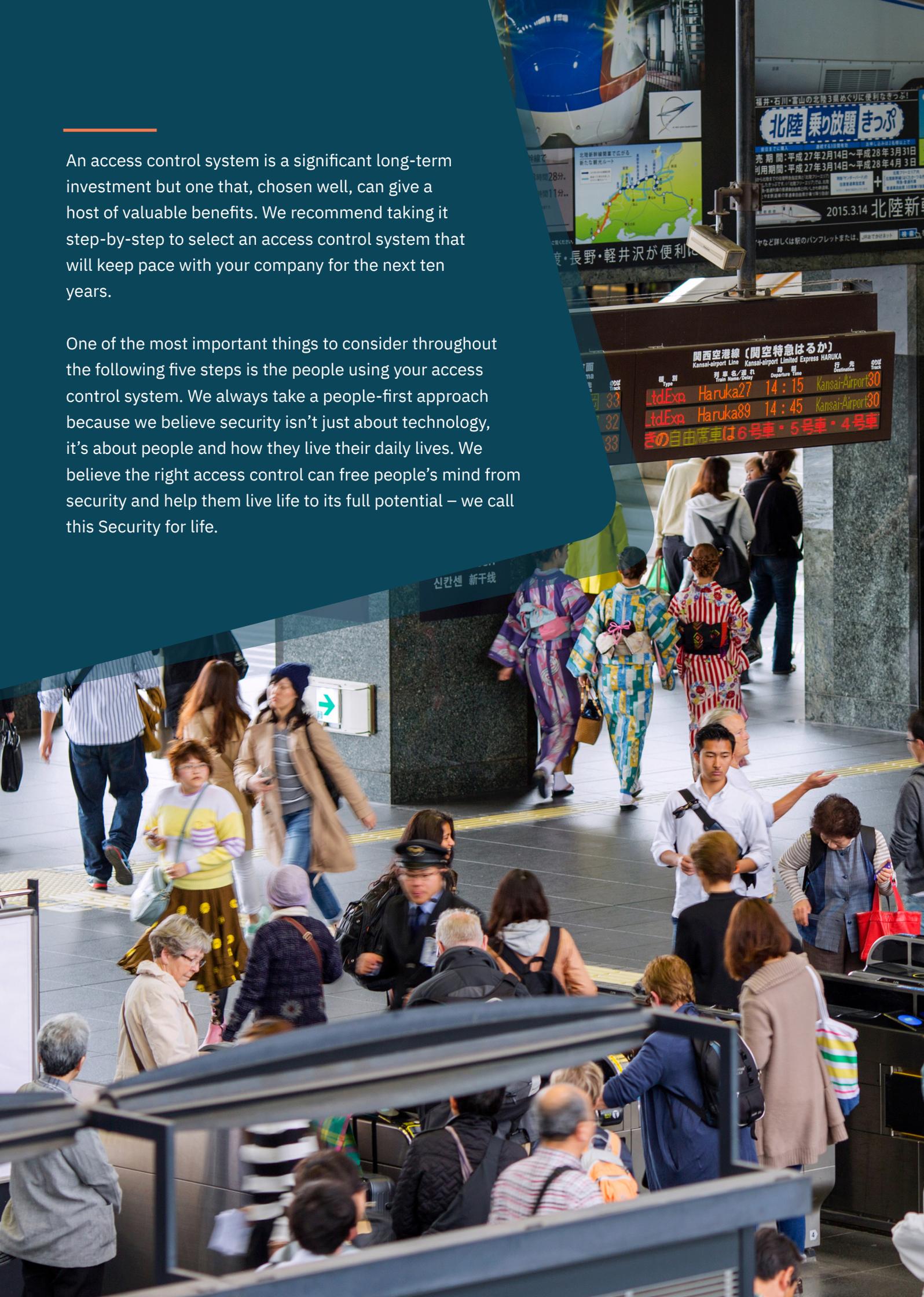
# 5 steps to finding the right access control system for you

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An access control system is a significant long-term investment but one that, chosen well, can give a host of valuable benefits. We recommend taking it step-by-step to select an access control system that will keep pace with your company for the next ten years.

One of the most important things to consider throughout the following five steps is the people using your access control system. We always take a people-first approach because we believe security isn't just about technology, it's about people and how they live their daily lives. We believe the right access control can free people's mind from security and help them live life to its full potential – we call this Security for life.





# Step 1: Draw up a risk analysis

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When preparing a risk analysis, companies often only consider legal obligations relating to safety – but security is just as important. A good security policy will protect your critical business processes and your company’s environment as well as your assets and, most importantly, your people.

It’s important to clearly define the risks that pose the biggest threats to you. When doing this, don’t just think about the technology available to protect against them, think about what you’d like in an ideal world.

**When compiling your risk analysis, make sure you answer the following questions:**

- What needs to be secured? Do you need to protect sensitive information or equipment as well as people and buildings?
- Which processes will affect turnover if they break down? For example production or logistics.
- What do you want to avoid and where? For example fire, flood, overheating, burglary or inappropriate access.
- What needs to be done to limit damage if something like this does occur?

# Step 2: Think about your long-term vision

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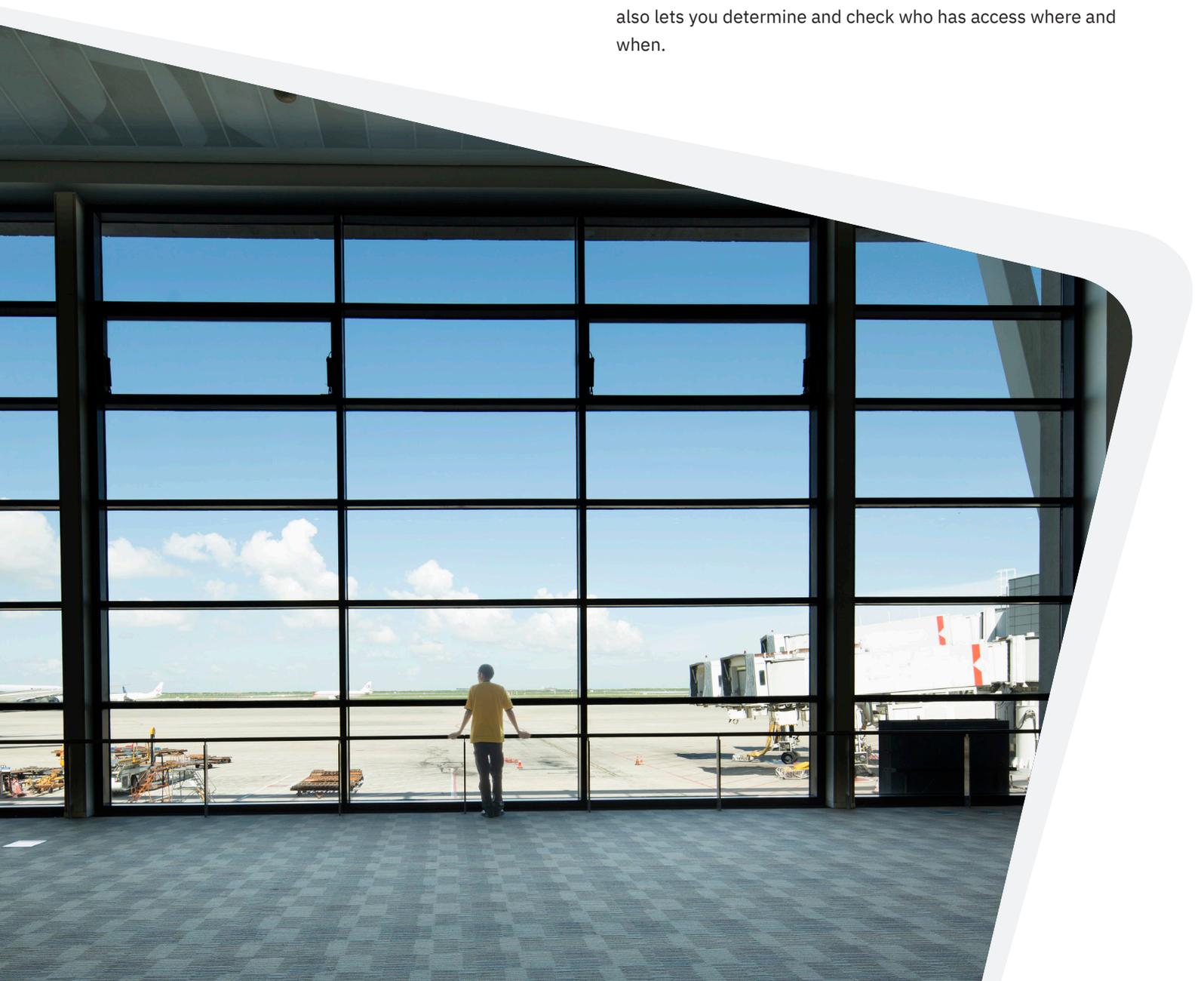
A lot can change in the many years a good access control system lasts. So consider not only what you need from an access control system now, but also what you might need in the future.

By doing this, you can ensure your access control will continue to meet the security levels you need and offer what your people want to operate at their best. So that, ultimately, it gives the maximum return on your investment in the long-term.

When thinking about your vision, take into account the following.

## Access cards

Does your company work flexibly or in shifts? Do your colleagues often work in multiple locations? If so, access cards can be a great option for access control. It gives people convenient access to several sites with just one card – so no more time-consuming key management. Using access cards also lets you determine and check who has access where and when.



## New and emerging technological opportunities

Increasingly, access control is being linked to building management systems to create smart buildings that are self-managing and energy efficient. For these systems to work together efficiently, however, they need to be based on open industry standards so it's important to bear this in mind.

Examples of open industry standards include:

- Java for user interfaces
- SQL for databases
- BAC-net for building management
- TCP/IP for network communication

Biometric identification, such as fingerprint recognition, is also growing in use for access control. Even if you don't need it now, it's worth taking into account when you choose your access control system.

## New regulations in your organisation

Are your internal rules likely to change? In three years' time, for example, will visitors still only be able to gain entry with an access card? Will you be using paper attendance registers for much longer? Take things like this into account to ensure you can easily and cost-effectively make changes to reflect new rules in the future.

## Changing legislation that affects your organisation

Central and local government legislation changes constantly, which means you'll need to make regular changes to your access control system. You can prevent this being costly and time consuming by choosing a system that's highly scalable.

For scalability, pay attention to aspects such as the following:

- How modular is the access control system?
- Can you easily add components such as an extra camera or card reader?
- Can you choose which brands of hardware you can integrate?
- What are the costs of adding extra components to your system now compared to later?

## Collaboration with various stakeholders in your organisation

As well as the directors, many other stakeholders in your organisation will have great ideas for your security policy, which may also affect your budget.

It's well worth talking to colleagues in a range of departments, including:

- **Building or facility management**

This department tends to monitor budgets and will often be involved in the daily operation of your access control system.

- **Security**

Your security team is crucial to consult and will know a lot about the risks, laws and regulations your company must address.

- **IT**

Your IT department will support the network your access control system runs on. Ask for their ideas about the encryption of access cards and the security of equipment on the network such as IP cameras and controllers. Also talk to them about logical security – for example one access card that allows entry to the building and also unlocks your PC.

- **HR**

Your colleagues in HR know how employee data is recorded or adjusted. Discuss with them how employee data systems can be used to create access cards and manage access rights more efficiently.

- **Purchasing/procurement**

This department often makes the final decision about buying an access control system. They'll check whether the system manufacturer and supplier can deliver in terms of scale and sustainable service.

- **Communication**

Creating awareness and understanding about a new access control system is crucial for its successful implementation. The department handling internal communications can help you with this.

# Step 3: See what opportunities an access control system provides



To get the most out of your investment in a new access control system, it's wise to review the opportunities it provides.

A good access control system can help you to:

## **Increase convenience for employees**

Life's so much easier when you have one single card that gives access to doors, turnstiles, gates and lockers. Not to mention logging you into your PC, enabling printing and paying for lunch at the canteen. If you choose the right card technology, this is possible – a manufacturer, installer or integrator can help you make the right choice.

## **Make more efficient use of your spaces**

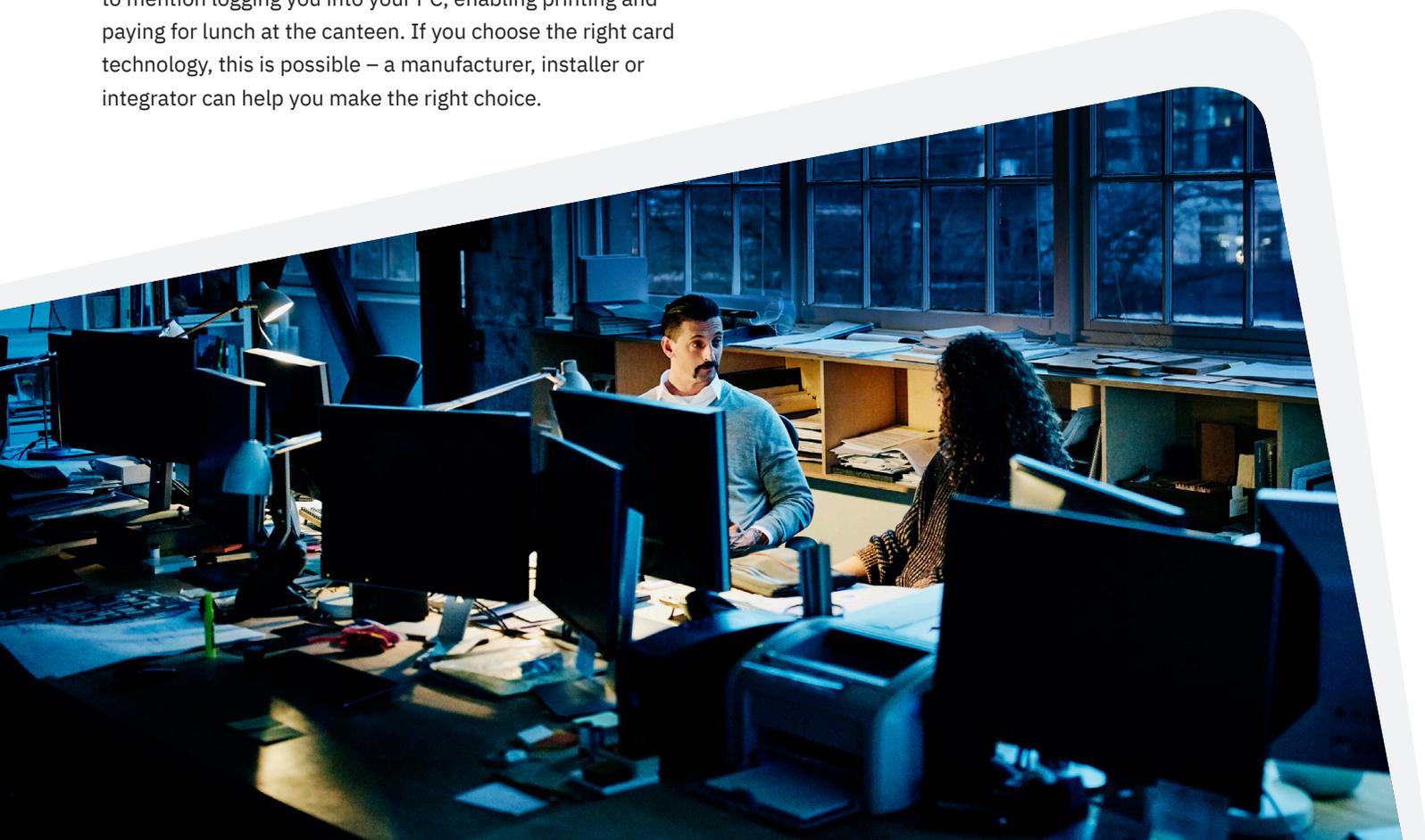
An access control system can provide valuable insight into how your space is used. If, for example, your six floors are only half-occupied every Friday, you may only need to open three floors on those days. Your access control system can even guide people to the areas where there's available desk space. You might also want the lights and air conditioning to switch off automatically in some zones to save on power consumption. This can all be achieved if your access control system links with your building management system.

## **Optimise business processes**

Just like SAP or ERP systems, an access control system can help you optimise business processes. If it links with your HR system, employee data will only need to be entered once. Also, if an employee leaves or their role changes, their access rights will automatically change or be withdrawn when the HR database is updated. This saves a lot of administration and increases security. To be able to set up such a link, you need to choose an access control system based on open standards.

## **Provide a welcoming reception for guests**

An access control system that takes over the creation of visitors' cards from your reception by means of automatic workflows reduces the administrative pressure and the queues at reception. And ensures your visitors get a warm, efficient welcome.



# Step 4: Create a plan of requirements



Are your needs and wishes from steps one, two and three set out clearly? If so, you can compile them into a plan of requirements for your new access control system.

To make your plan of requirements as specific as possible:

- Explain why you want to replace your existing system.
- Describe the advantages and good experiences you want to keep from your old system.
- Clarify what you expect from your new access control system and the problems you want to avoid.
- Specify how you want your system to improve your performance, efficiency, flexibility and scalability. If your plan of requirements is as measurable as possible, you can assess later whether the system meets your needs.
- Explain how you want various groups of people to use the system. Which actions should and shouldn't receptionists perform? How will the building manager use the system? Who'll monitor the alarms?
- Say which physical measures you need to protect your people, assets and business processes against the risks you've identified.



## Examples of physical security measures

- A fence, green areas or water to protect your business premises.
- A barrier with a card reader at the car park entrance to avoid misuse.
- Wired card readers at your external doors that are operated with an access card and pin code to prevent against burglary and improper access.
- Turnstiles between reception and the office areas so people without a valid card can't enter.
- Lockers where employees can store their valuables. Or where visitors can store their mobile devices to ensure they can't take pictures or make recordings of your critical business processes.
- Wireless locks that can be operated with an access card on stock rooms or cabinets.
- Biometric readers or cameras that provide additional security in critical areas.
- Controllers that sound an alarm when there's a temperature change.

# Step 5: Find a suitable supplier



Once you have a concrete plan of requirements, you're ready to share it with manufacturers, installers and integrators. Each can offer something different.

- A manufacturer will advise on the technological trends and options relevant to you. They can also contribute ideas on the access control system and security solutions suitable for you.
- An installer or integrator will ensure your new access control system and related systems are properly implemented, integrated and maintained.
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Think about what you want to get out of your partnership with the manufacturer or supplier. When selecting the installer or integrator, consider how they'll keep your system up-to-date and improve it over the years to come. And decide together (using your measurable objectives from step 4) how you'll measure the success of your system so you can continue to refine and optimise it over the years.

## A quick summary

An access control system is a significant investment that you want to be able to rely on ten years from now. So it's important to plan for and consider the purchase carefully.

At each stage, make sure you carefully consider the people who'll be using the access control system and what it will mean to them and their daily lives.

To begin with, complete a risk analysis to determine the risks you want to protect against. Don't base this solely on the available technology and legal obligations, but also on your own wishes (step 1).

Next, prepare a long-term vision (step 2), taking into account:

- The use of access cards.
- New and emerging technological options.
- Potential new rules in your organisation.
- Changing legislation that affects your organisation.
- Other departments in your organisation that have an interest in your new access control system, or can add value to the process of choosing and implementing it.

Next, look at the opportunities an access control system can offer your organisation (step 3). On the basis of all this, prepare a detailed plan of requirements (step 4), which will help you to approach a suitable supplier (step 5).

By doing all of this, you'll ensure you choose an access control system that meets your needs and ambitions now and in future, and offers significant value.

## Want to know more?

Just get in touch with us.

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