



University of the Year 2008/9

Maintaining its keys are better managed with Traka

The University of Leicester, recently celebrating its 50th Anniversary, is steeped in tradition; from the medical pioneering of DNA through to its present involvement in UK space research. With more than 20,000 students studying worldwide, over 10,000 are at the main campus sites, along with 3,000 staff. The University comprises over 220 buildings, the oldest being the Fielding Johnson Building, dated 1837.

Graham Middleton is Head of Security, responsible for managing keys throughout the University – keys used by Estates; including Maintenance, Facilities, Porters, Domestic Service and Security staff.

"Before we installed Traka, Porters and Cleaners would pick up keys from the Security Lodge in the morning; hopefully they would be brought back at night ... often they were left in inadequate storage. Inevitably there was some loss of keys. Lost keys would often necessitate replacing the locks in a building. In one instance, for just one small building alone, it cost £16,000 to replace the locks."

What benefits does Traka offer?

- Know instantly who has a set of keys out at any point in time
- Know who has had keys historically if there is an issue – and when they were returned
- Remove the element of human error
- Protect the Security Lodge from breaches of Data Protection
- Through the software, turn someone's access to keys on or off, at the click of an ICON, from a central point.



Graham comments, *"When you are dealing with lots of keys, people need to know where to put them ... Traka immediately improved the security of the University ... at any instant, we can identify who has a key out and when it was taken. Risk is greatly reduced."*

How was Traka integrated?

Integration and User access to a key management cabinet is achieved by the University Staff ID card. Asked for their first reaction, staff replied, *"We like this – we know we are responsible for keys – now we can identify exactly who is responsible if a key does go missing."*

14 Traka Key Management cabinets are located across the campus sites and are used for controlling access to the main building keys, vehicle keys and specific key sets for allowing contractors to gain temporary access to selected sites for maintenance or construction work. Thus for any one key, there could be up to 3 cuts, one for Porters, one for Maintenance and one for Security staff.

What were you trying to achieve and how is it managed?

"We wanted to get away from keys in pockets, from inadequate storage on walls and, above all, to reduce the total number of keys in circulation. There are over 286 staff in the Estates - be they Cleaners, Maintenance, Porters or Security staff, they each have their own roles to perform and need keys to do so. Traka has enabled us to tighten up the entire key management issue."



All 14 Traka cabinets are networked and assigned into 3 regions, each with its own administrator to add and delete users and to grant the various permissions to access keys. Whilst each region can't 'see across' into the other regions, the entire system is visible to Security who manage it via a central SQL database.

Keys or key bunches are registered against an iFob and secured to it using an identified 'security seal'. In order to minimise risk further, staff are restricted to the number of keys that they can take at any one time. Keys are held in a 'fixed location' so it is easy to see if a key is missing by a quick visual audit.

"We can run a quick Traka report if there is a problem that we need to investigate further – but usually it is enough to see from the cabinet display who has a key out and when it was taken. Traka can even be used to display the Radio or Phone number of the person holding the key so they can be easily contacted – it just makes life so much easier for everyone!"



Why choose Traka?

"Having looked at 3 competitive systems, we were highly impressed by Traka – it is a UK company that provides a 'local service'. Firstly, the software is adaptable to meet customer requirements. Secondly, the training provided by Alan was 'spot-on' and, if I do have an issue, then I simply pick up the phone to the Help Desk. I immediately get help, there is no queue, and I get to speak to someone who is knowledgeable!"

In conclusion...

Graham Middleton, Head of Security says... *"Traka is a neat, robust, easy to use and reliable piece of equipment. It eliminates the element of human error from key management. It provides users with a strong visible representation of who has a set of keys at any point in time. Through the software it provides an audit trail of iFob/key usage, or any other type of asset - such as vehicles - used. Traka also met my strategic intention of improving the security at The University of Leicester."*

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