Żabka's Culture of Innovation Drives Adoption of Mobile Access at Retail Chain's Headquarters

Innovation is in the company DNA at Żabka, a convenience store chain with 7000 locations across Poland and the Czech Republic. When developing plans for a new headquarters in Poznań, Poland, the organization wanted to go beyond a traditional building access control system.

THE SITUATION

The Żabka convenience store chain is known for its open approach to innovation and early adoption of unique technological solutions. When it came to planning the security system for its new headquarters building, which is managed by the SKANSKA company, the organization decided it wanted a modern, intelligent, and automated office for their employees enabled by one integrated solution. The system would need to utilize mobile identities and a custom application to simplify use of office functionalities, accelerate and automate administrative processes, and optimize the management of access control and building-wide security.

The creation of such a large ecosystem would need to combine many different functionalities and Żabka turned to a group of like-minded providers to create and implement their vision. HID Global provided a smooth transition from managing traditional plastic cards to HID Mobile Access®. Zonifero created the Żabway mobile interface for data management and applications for employees, and Cnergy installed and integrated the physical security components underpinning the system.

HID

Together, HID Global, Zonifero and Cnergy collaborated to create a comprehensive ecosystem by digitizing access control processes and integrating surveillance tools such as closed-circuit television and access management with an anti-burglary system. The heart of the system is a server with a security management platform, enabling Żabka to add new users quickly and issue mobile IDs permanently or QR code based, one-time passes for guests.

Today, a smartphone application is all employees need to move around the HQ office and use its various amenities. Mobile identities, contactless employee onboarding, touchless visitor management, time and attendance, and integration with the security system of the entire building are all facilitated within the app that launched in 2020.

"Mobile identities, which we have implemented at the client's premises in Poznań, are a modern alternative to traditional plastic cards. In the future, it will be one of the most popular solutions, and Żabka is ahead of the trend having implemented them on such a large scale," explained Kamil Targalski, HID Global area sales manager for Eastern Europe & Baltics. He added, "What does the use of Mobile Access look like in practice? The employee installs the Żabway application on his smartphone and after logging in, receives a mobile ID – supported by Seos® technology – assigned by the administrator. To open the door, they bring the device closer to the reader that authorizes credentials using NFC or Bluetooth technology, even if the application is running in the background [sleep mode]."

Mobile identities in the Żabka office can be used in several places, including entrances to the building, elevators, turnstiles and to retrieve securely printed documents by authenticating at enabled printers with their mobile ID. HID Global's portfolio is one of the few on the market that offers wall readers, as well as desktop and embedded module versions. This means that the device can be successfully integrated into the elevator panel or a locker opening system, thus increasing safety, convenience and establishing a modern look. Most importantly, user data is secured through encryption and authentication with appropriate access keys, and the introduction of new users is completely under Żabka's control.

As Łukasz Taterka, director of the business services center at Żabka said, "Thanks to the solution provided by HID Global, we were able to completely abandon the use of physical cards and replace them with mobile IDs. Such a change allowed us to aggregate everything that an employee needs to move around the office on a business phone via the Żabway application." He added, "This is a great help for end users, but the benefits are also felt by our administration department that can now manage the pool of allocated cards and individual access remotely, including an automated process of assigning cards to new employees for time and attendance."

The application also performs other tasks that assist users and create a better work experience. For example, users can communicate with colleagues, navigate inside the office, and book meeting space, control room temperature and humidity, and interact with employee engagement initiatives. The Żabway application also offers tips about what is near the building, such as information on public transport and ride sharing.

"The Seos solution allowed us to completely abandon the use of physical cards and replace them with virtual cards. Such a change allowed us to aggregate everything that an employee needs to move around the office on a business phone."

-Łukasz Taterka,
Director of the Business Services Center at Żabka.

HID

THE OUTCOME

The solution implemented in 2020 not only simplifies the use of office functionalities, but also accelerates and automates administrative processes and optimizes the management of access control and security for the entire building. The Żabway interface was so intuitive that only a short training was required for Żabka to manages it on its own. Currently, mobile IDs are used by about 800 headquarters employees and select employees working in other locations. Based on user feedback, the project was successful and the system meets the needs of the organization and its employees.

The headquarter employees are the first group to benefit from the implementation prepared by HID Global, Cnergy and Zonifero. In many organisations, there are still employees who carry several plastic cards for various access requirements, such as individual doors and devices. For the users in Żabka's Poznań offices, they only need their mobile device. Temporary employees and visitors do not have to waste time registering at reception. Temporary mobile IDs with QR code arrives to the registered device via notification. The user then presents the QR code from the device as a credential. Depending on the rights granted by the organizer, it can open selected doors or allow the use of elevators.

Increasing the comfort and pace of work also applies to administrative and HR employees. Mobile access eliminates the need to organise physical stations for issuing traditional plastic cards. Onboarding new employees, deactivating the card in the event of a lost or stolen phone to a user's new device is now a fully remote, simplified and simultaneously safe process.

The ability to manage the access control system from anywhere with no physical contact was especially valuable. Many similar technologies are based on in-person authorization requiring an employee to be present to activate a credential at the selected reader. Launched amid the pandemic, Żabka employees were able to maintain social distance and limit contact, while maintaining full efficiency of the access control system. Automatic and remote activation of access is of particular importance in large organizations with several hundred employees, such as the Żabka. Mobile access solves the problem of storing physical cards, facilitating credential transfers, or issuing new credentials in the case of lost or damaged ones.

Combining the access control system with surveillance tools also increases the security of the entire building. Physical security personnel can quickly identify potentially dangerous situations, and the ability limit guest access means restricted areas remain off limits.

"The client wanted the Żabway application and the surrounding ecosystem to be a functional tool for a modern, intelligent office. After employee use of the solution, we can see that it meets this concept. By covering the entire building with the system, we as Zonifero were able to use a full range of capabilities, including the ability to add new functionalities to the application. We also appreciate the creative ideas of the client, such as the integration of the application with air temperature and humidity sensors and the use of our survey module to organize competitions among employees," comments Jacek Ratajczak, CEO of Zonifero.

HID

Żabka plans to implement further mobile identity functionalities, such as opening parking lot gates, making cafeteria purchases or seamlessly logging in to computers.

Collection and analysis of data is used as the basis for innovation and adoption of new technologies. An ecosystem covering the entire building and integrated with the application used by employees is an excellent source. Żabka is already using the Żabway app to streamline time tracking and automate the collection of time and attendance information.

The implementation of the Żabway app is unique in several ways, from the use of HID Global mobile credentials on such a large scale to the number of authentication points and extended capabilities with secure printing. The success of the project was possible thanks to Żabka's commitment to embracing state-of-the-art solutions and the close cooperation of trusted business partners.

Discover more about HID Mobile Access at
www.hidglobal.com/solutions/access-control/hid-mobile-access-solutions