CASE
STUDY

Secure
Identification

Event
Management

MATICA
TECHNOLOGIES

Supporting the Porsche European Golf Open with Secure ID cards

Customer

Founded in 2004 by a former member of the Swiss National Ski Team, 4SPORTS and Entertainment AG is one of the world's leading sports marketing agencies and event management companies. Headquartered in Switzerland, 4SPORTS has a respected reputation for managing large-scale, high value sports events including the most prestigious title of the European golf tour, the European Golf Open, sponsored by Porsche. It has a total prize money of €2million and will be hosted by a new location: the notoriously challenging Green Eagle golf course in Hamburg, Germany. www.4sportsworld.com

Matica partner

German-based card manufacturer cards-x operates internationally supplying clients with plastic cards, system components such as card printers, ID software, access control and accessories. cards-x, which was established six years ago by Norman Kämmerling who has worked in the industry for nearly 20 years, specializes in accreditation and access control and supports numerous high profile companies to integrate frictionless and high-level security into their events. After successfully delivering the complete solution for 2016's European Golf Open, 4SPORTS returned to card manufacturer cards-x GmbH for 2017's Open. They are based in Dusseldorf, Germany. www.cards-x.com

Business challenge

In organizing the Golf Porsche European Open 2017, 4SPORTS needed to integrate reliable accreditation technology to produce a VIP photo ID card that would reflect the high calibre brand – and expectations – of the Open's sponsor, Porsche. The cards needed to allow a seamless, frictionless and enjoyable experience for both the VIP guest and the tournament's security staff. The company's security objectives were underpinned by a need to restrict unauthorized access to certain areas or benefits and to constantly monitor the fill level of target areas.

Specifically, 4SPORTS wanted an extra large (XL) format card; high print quality to reflect the prestigious brands; QR code which can be read by mobile readers and controlled online and offline; personalization options; multi-modal functionality. For example, the card needed to grant authorized cardholders access to transport, to hospitality food and beverages, as well as to entrance permissions.

The events company needed to be able to produce ID cards in advance but also on-site at the point of entry.

Solutions

- Matica's XL8300 printer
- Cards-X-ess Online Card Management Software
- Access Control Handheld Scanner
- Accreditation Oversized Cards 124 x 85.60mm
- Oversized cards 128 x 54mm
- VIP Cards 128 x 54 mm

Scale of credentials produced

2,200 credentials and 2,500 VIP badges

Germany

Results

4SPORTS was able to deliver an accreditation solution that printed XL-format cards fit to reflect Porsche's own luxury brand and to easily handle the essential security and authorized access criteria required for the many types of cardholders. Some workers and suppliers also received this ID card and had different access and transport privileges. As there wasn't full wifi coverage at the event, the XL-format cards allowed security staff to quickly identify the cardholders following the first digital scan. This was checked through the physical photo ID and personalised colour-coded accreditation. Where wifi was available, security staff could use the QR code and handheld scanner devices.

Matica's XL8300 is a unique retransfer printer specifically designed to issue oversized cards

Summary

The XL8300 printer provided superior print quality on long PVC cards and the largest printable area of all XL formats on the market. The printer encoded the XL contactless cards for electronic access control through QR code processing and allowed the event's organizers to print their VIP cards in advance as well as at the event itself for guests turning up on the day. The scope for personalization was broad enough to distinguish accreditation and authorization differences between workers and VIP guests. And importantly, the printer was flexible enough to integrate with numerous other non-Matica solutions that cards-x used to deliver accreditation at the event.

Overview

The protection of guests at events is becoming increasingly scrutinized and companies are stepping up their security measures given the proliferation of fatal terrorist attacks that have specifically targeted organized events, most notably in France, UK, Germany, US and Bali.

The responsibility to install the best performing security lies with events management companies who know that the general public are now just as likely to judge this aspect of their event experience as the entertainment itself.

Collecting and encoding personalized data for individual VIP and staff ID cards has the potential to create an administrative nightmare when you consider events are one-offs – the process is short-lived, unlike the ongoing stream of requirements in work or academic environments, for example. The varying types of cardholders prompted other complexities for the card management solution. This group included athletes and team members, guests of honor, tournament officials, security staff, media representatives and committee members. Add in the various sorts of workers and their access rights and it created a logistic challenge for personalization. Plus, there were different privileges for cardholders; some were allowed to access shuttle transport services and VIP hospitality (food and beverages), others (like workers) were not.

Consequently, high profile event management companies, which are experts at producing high value events like the Golf Porsche European Open, need to buy in that security expertise. Without managing this efficiently their reputation, and insurance premiums, are at risk.

For 4SPORTS, they wanted to produce good looking but hard working and sturdy VIP and accreditation cards that would impress its recipients and the event sponsor, Porsche. Ultimately, they wanted the card to deliver world-class security, which allowed staff to monitor the fill levels of certain areas and to identify who can, or can't, access certain areas or benefits. This was done by either scanning the encoded authorization data on the card's QR code or by physical contact in those areas where wifi was unobtainable and there was no connection to a central database. The authorization data was duplicated on the physical card through color coding. Data included name, role, access zones, and photo.

Imagine the experience of both the VIP guest and the security staff during a busy, fast-moving event with some of the best hospitality in the world. Both parties want this experience to be easy, frictionless and fast.

The XL-format cards, which are hung around cardholders' necks on elastic lanyards, allow security staff to easily identify the cardholder and to quickly gauge their accreditation and access rights to, for instance, the golf course or VIP hospitality. The large size of the ID card makes the physical reading of it much easier for security staff. For the VIP guest, ID that's worn rather than held allows a more enjoyable hands-free, frictionless experience and a nice take-home souvenir.
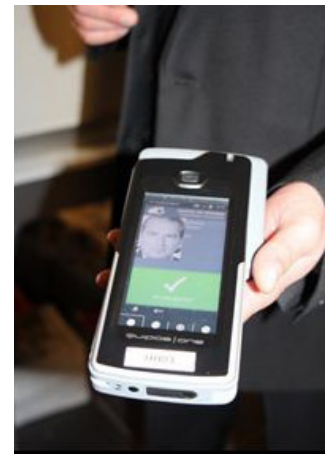
Security staff use hand-held computers for authentication as mobile access control points

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Dr. Lars Zimmermann
Events director
4SPORTS and Entertainment AG

Closer look at the technology

There are very few XL-format desktop printers on the market but of those alternatives, the XL8300 prints the largest printable area optimizing the space available for easy assessment of credentials.

For the Porsche Golf European Open 2017, the cards were printed in color on a single side, and in 300dpi on extra long 124 x 85.60mm PVC cards manufactured by cards-x.

Its exceptional print quality is guaranteed thanks to the technology's engineers who have successfully transplanted Matica's world-renowned XID Series 8 retransfer technology. Also, because it's desktop the XL8300 is easily transportable so it can be taken on-site without the need to struggle.

The printer allows for multi-modal security features and in this instance, encodes cardholders' data in an easy-to-scan QR code but duplicates it in traditional formats for physical access requirements when wifi is unavailable.

For this event, the company chose to print on PVC to help deliver a rugged product, which was able to withstand substantial use. It also prints on ABS and PET.

Owing to the XL8300's exceptional modularity it integrated seamlessly with card-x's data management platform, Microsoft Dynamics CRM – one of the world's best performing and popular platforms. Thanks to the platform's underlying mechanisms it was easy to integrate data from different sources into one central database.

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"Without Matica's high quality print proposition, it would have been challenging to find another solution that fitted so well with our client's objectives," said Norman Kämmerling, Chief Executive, cards-x GmbH.
"If you are producing a branded asset that's high vision because everyone is wearing one and looking at them, it has to be exceptional. Then add into that mix a global luxury brand like Porsche and you know the print quality has to match that. And this is what we found in the XL8300."

"Naturally, we felt privileged that we were selected for a second year running to support our partner, cards-x, at this prestigious European golf tournament, which is sponsored by Porsche," said Yves Barba, Sales Director Europe, Matica Technologies. *"It's immensely satisfying to know that it's our technology that will help to protect the VIP cardholders, the staff and suppliers and keep them safe during their time at this high profile event. Equally, it is a great complement to know that the quality of Matica's print persuaded cards-x to select the XL8300 so they could match the quality of an internationally recognised and admired brand like Porsche."*