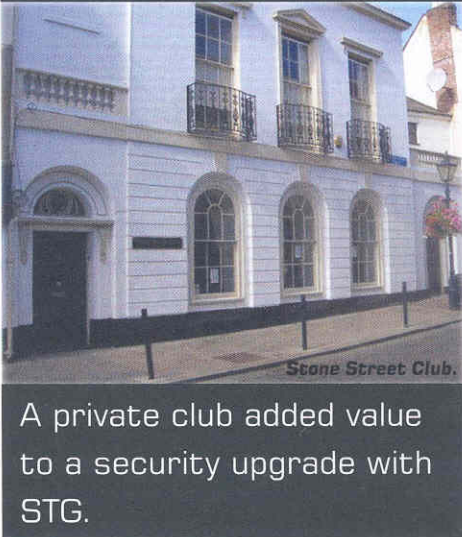


UPGRADING ACCESS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS



A private club added value to a security upgrade with STG.

Stone Street Club was founded in 1887. Being a private members club, it is owned by those who pay their subscriptions. This successful club has also been dubbed "Maidstone's best-kept secret", as many people have often wondered what lay behind the black door.

Nearly 600 members know exactly what goes on; snooker, entertainment, fine foods, and most important of all, a relaxing atmosphere in good company. The business people of Maidstone have looked upon the Stone Street Club as a haven through two world wars, and are still using the club's spacious premises for business lunches, meetings and drinks after work on the way home.

The previous security system used by the club was antiquated and was no longer supported by its supplier. It had a problem with the data input terminal, making it impossible to add, remove or edit cards without the charged attendance of an engineer to carry out programming works.

As the club relied on the subscriptions from its members to augment their revenue requirements, it was imperative that these subscriptions were collected on time. Previously subscriptions were managed via a manual card index system with members' subscription details recorded on the index card and a receipt being issued to the member by the club's administrative staff that entitled them to 12 months access to the club and its facilities. Each member was additionally given a 2 month grace period, thus if a subscription had not been renewed, access to the club should have been denied after 14 months. The previous system, even when working, could not automatically revoke access rights to the facility based upon this 14 month criterion.

There was no way of automatically knowing whose subscription was due for renewal. This meant that on a weekly basis, someone would need to go through 600 paper membership records to ascertain who had and who had not renewed their subscription. Having done this the club would then have to write to the relapsed member requesting their dues. This manual process not only adsorbed considerable administrative time and effort but also meant that as there was no real incentive to renew subscriptions some renewals slipped through the net meaning a loss of revenue.

Consequently the club was looking for a system to close this loop hole and protect

its income and so the club's committee decided to tender for a suitable solution. An additional prerequisite was to utilise the existing door furniture, CCTV cameras, intruder alarm detectors and wiring and utilise within the new system.

The solution

Seven companies were invited to tender for the required works and Security Technologies Groups' systems integrator, Vision Security Services, was selected as the quality of their bid submission was significantly better than the other six responders. They outlined the problems together with their proposed solutions and provided a detailed offer which also included schematic floor plans. To cap it off they formally offered to work in partnership with the club to resolve the outlined issues.

... Vision Security Services had the foresight to incorporate membership management into their offer which no other tender invitees had considered. Merging the functions of the subscription management operation with an access control system would reduce administrative overhead, improve efficiency, and reduce the overall costs to the club," stated Mike Loft, club Secretary.

Vision offered to source and deploy a solution including the following specific requirements:

- Automatic expiration of members access rights after 14 months of payment if not renewed.
- Customisable database with multiple, user defined, search fields which would assist the management team to run reports based upon multiple criteria.
- The ability to import over 600 members details into the new system without manual entry.
- Assistance with the deployment of the system with a high degree of hand holding during the going live period.

Security Technologies Group, the EMEA distributor of access control systems and peripherals, worked closely with Vision to select systems that would solve the problems identified. For the access control system the Keyscan System VII was selected due to its flexibility, ease of use and cost effectiveness. "With over 40 000 systems installed worldwide it was a tried and tested solution, which was an important consideration for

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us," noted Chris Bedding, GM for Vision. To augment the clubs security initiatives, proximity readers from Farpointe data were selected. These readers, when utilised in MAXSecure mode, ensure that each card is unique and cannot be duplicated and utilised unlike others on the market.

The result

With the Keyscan/Farpointe solution the decision to allow or deny access is carried out at the entrance doors automatically and without human intervention and so this proactive approach solved this issue of staff having to challenge the credentials of a person before it became a problem.

It is now extremely easy to search the system via any number of fields to find a members details. Once these details are displayed on the system screen it is possible to view all other information held on that member and so the administrative duties of the club have been considerably streamlined. "Vision Security Services and Security Technologies Group worked very closely with us to develop and define these custom fields so that we could make maximum benefit of the system," added Loft.

Due to its location in the centre of Maidstone some people would become members and use the club's parking facilities without entering the club thus depriving attending members of parking facilities. It is now possible to search via the car number plate to ascertain the owner's name. From the search screen it is instantly possible to see if that person has used the access control system that day and is therefore in the club. If that person is not in the club or the car number plate is not registered, the club can ask their parking contractors to deal with the matter.

Loft went on to say, "The system is highly graphical, so an added bonus that we were not expecting was the ability to lock and unlock doors from a graphical representation of our building on the monitor. There are occasions, such as family days, where we would like to open the doors for several hours to allow family members to enter the building. This can be easily achieved via two clicks of a mouse button.

"We find the system very intuitive and easy to use. This was an essential requirement for us as we have multiple part time operators of the system and so each had to learn very quickly. The main screen is arranged with the most frequently used areas of the system set as icons around a dial. Rather than navigating through a hierarchical series of menus to get to screen, it is merely a case of clicking on an icon.

"I was impressed with the speed of the installation of the system. In just one day the system was commissioned and operational. STG sent a person to site to manipulate member records to produce a file which could be imported into the new system. They also designed and loaded a floor plan which could be imported into the system and used as a map, detailing the location and status of doors within the building. To date the system has not only met but exceeded all of the objectives we set out for it," concluded Loft.

Security Technologies Group is represented in southern Africa by G2 Security.

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