



FAST FACTS

Customer

Patriots Point Naval &
Maritime Museum

Technology Partners

Open Options Access Control
Mercury Security
HID

Industry

Government- State Agency

Geography

South Carolina

Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

CUSTOMER

In 1975, one of the most revered Naval aircraft carriers — the USS Yorktown — was relocated to Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, to star as the centerpiece attraction of the newly developed Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum operated by the Patriots Point Development Authority.

Over the last four decades, Patriots Point has become South Carolina's number one heritage attraction with nearly 300,000 visitors each year. In addition, the USS Yorktown offers one of the largest education and overnight camping programs in the United States with more than 40,000 school-aged children participating in these programs each year. With 28 aircraft on display from conflicts ranging from World War II to present day, Patriots Point is one of the top sites in the country for Naval aviation enthusiasts. In fact, Patriots Point is the only aircraft carrier museum in the nation to have all of the top 10 most significant aircraft in U.S. carrier aviation history.

The museum complex, which spans 40 waterfront acres, also serves as headquarters for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and their official Medal of Honor Museum; is home to a Cold War Submarine Memorial; is home to the 2.5 acre Vietnam Experience exhibit that recreates a Brown Water Navy base and Marine Corps firebase; home to the naval destroyer the USS Laffey and the Cold War submarine the USS Clamagore; and operates the only National Flight Academy aboard an aircraft carrier. The Flight Academy offers education programs in the sciences and aviation for students in grades 7-12 as well as team-building exercises for corporations and businesses.

It's clear to see what the attraction is for the hundreds of thousands that flock to Patriots Point. United States Naval carriers are among the most impressive of all structures with a long history of carrying thousands of officers, sailors, and aircraft to and from wars all over the globe. Protected by more than 40,000 tons of steel on a ship that is 888 feet long, those who served aboard the famous USS Yorktown Essex-class aircraft carrier — the subject of the 1944 Academy Award-winning military documentary *The Fighting Lady* — saw battle in World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam and later recovered the Apollo 8 capsule and its astronauts.

CHALLENGES

Just as the USS Yorktown and the other ships at the museum have undergone adjustments to improve performance throughout their history, Patriots Point Director of Operations Bob Howard recently sought to enrich security of the complex. As an institution that operates 24-hours a day — 364 days a year — they provide around-the-clock security guards supplemented by video surveillance and an alarm system. But their access control — consisting of keyed locks — was antiquated and becoming increasingly unreliable. Howard sought the ability to electronically control and record door access to certain areas containing high-value equipment and artifacts, which meant an upgrade to access control software management was in order.

Patriots Point has approximately 140 full- and part-time employees, as well as more than 100 volunteers, which presented the need for varying levels of access throughout the complex. Howard stated that the keyed locks had become totally ineffective as people were able to make copies of keys and there was no ability to record who had access to what areas and when.

Patriots Point also began having issues with individuals altering the programming on the flight simulators located in the Flight Academy — unwelcome adjustments which take a great deal of time to reset. Because the Flight Academy is located along the general tour of the facility, it made the simulators vulnerable not to just employees and volunteers, but also to the curiosity of the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors.

SOLUTION

When Howard began investigating access control solutions, Vernon Daniels, a security consultant with Quintech Engineering who is familiar with Open Options' access control products, arranged a presentation from Southeast Regional Sales Manager Charles Johnson. Johnson demonstrated the features and capabilities of DNA Fusion, Open Options' flagship access control software. DNA Fusion provides a complete access control solution including door control, visitor management, and photo ID management in an open platform that interfaces seamlessly with other systems such as video, biometrics, and intercoms.

“We were most impressed with the capabilities of the DNA Fusion access control software and the simplicity of its use,” said Howard. “We were also able to quickly procure the access control system because Open Options has a statewide contract for agencies in South Carolina and as a state agency, Patriots Point can choose any approved vendor.”

Howard has initially installed DNA Fusion access control software to control the doors in the Flight Academy spaces and in a datacenter. The hardware used includes SSP-D2 native IP-ready intelligent door controllers; RSC-2 dual-reader interface boards; and HID Global iCLASS cards and readers. iCLASS products help make access control solutions more powerful, more versatile, and offer enhanced security through encryption and mutual authentication. At the same time, iCLASS — like DNA Fusion — is user-friendly, delivering the convenience, affordability, and reliability of proximity technology.





Patriots Point is now in the process of expanding access control coverage to the Leadership Training Facility, additional cargo rooms, and the onboard film studio — where living history videos are filmed and events are live streamed to schools throughout the state and on social media. The next phase will include installation in the education classrooms, museum collections workrooms, storerooms, and integration with the video surveillance management software system.



Howard and his team recently took advantage of a three-day sales training course in Charlotte, North Carolina, with regional Open Options customers Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Open Options routinely offers training in geographically convenient locations throughout the United States to provide end users, administrators, and operators with extensive hands-on instruction in how to competently manage, program, configure, and operate DNA Fusion access control software.



Howard and his team at the Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum have discovered that the latest in security technology allows for teaching old ships new methods in providing a safe and secure historic environment in the twenty-first century — and it can all be done with smooth sailing.



“The Open Options access control product has been absolutely awesome,” said Howard. “It is so user friendly that the user’s manual is rarely needed. DNA Fusion has everything you need — I can’t imagine anything that this system won’t do.”