

Campus card industry forecast

December 10, 2009



Robert C. Huber

BY ROBERT C. HUBER, CAMPUS CARD INDUSTRY

BUSINESS CONSULTANT

Prediction #1—Contactless Becomes Preferred Campus Card Technology

After magnetic stripes have dominated campus card systems for 40 years, contactless smart chip technology—high frequency 13.56 MHz—rapidly ascends as the preferred identity and reader technology due to its high-data security, read/write storage capability, non-mechanical reader design, expansion scalability, extended reader life,

increased communications security, and rapid customer appeal with “Tap & Go” functionality via a variety of credentials, for example cards, badges, keyfobs and tags.

Prediction #2—Wireless & Contactless Propel Door Access Expansion

Parallel contactless and wireless innovations surpass early low-frequency prox technology with advanced data security, faster installations, reduced wiring and maintenance costs, twice the reader life because of non-mechanical design, emergence of multiple host shared readers, Power over Ethernet, phase out of building controllers and costly home run wiring, and increased Web-assisted facility and perimeter security.

Prediction #3—Merchant Programs Achieve Core Application Status

Increased consumer mobility, student proclivity for endless variety and convenience, incremental revenue-sharing opportunities and outsourced merchant management services, will escalate merchant applications as an expected element of all diversified and contemporary campus card programs.

Prediction #4—Virtual, Virtual, Virtual

Except for initial security verification, most campus card patron management services will increasingly be customer managed via 24/7, on-line and imaginative kiosk devices.

Prediction #5—Social Sizzle ... Instead Of Substance?

The failure to preserve and promote brand continuity, obscured by the excessive use of on line graphics, without an applied correlation to a structured, academic and strategic marketing plan, may result in many tactic-based campus card

CR80News

Campus Cards, College and University Identification and Security

marketing programs that fail to achieve enduring and affirmative results expected by administrators.

Prediction #6—Which Credential Would You Like Today?

One of the benefits of contactless technology is the convenience of several simultaneous credentials per patron—cards, badges, keyfobs, tags—and already built-in to most campus card systems.

Prediction #7—Biometric Access Applications Go To Graduate School

A pronounced increase of contactless memory-enabled patron credentials and concurrent development of third-party biometric readers, fused with government research site requirements, health care privacy, costly laboratory equipment, sensitive animal research labs and protection of vital data centers will see a rapid increase in biometric facilitated multi-factor authentication for facility access.

Prediction #8—Community Colleges Become Major League Market

Potential new off-campus merchant revenues, increased campus safety and identification issues with a highly-fluctuating population, and verified access to buildings, doors, labs, restricted areas, and parking facilities in a more traditional open public campus environment will drive accelerated interest and corresponding government funding assistance for campus card systems at community colleges throughout the U.S.

Prediction #9—Shared, Leased & Hosted Systems Gain Prominence

The increase of national server farms and state contracted data centers for management of many administrative database and enterprise resource planning systems will encourage CIOs at institutions to recommend use of increased vendor hosted services for labor, economies of scale, and harbored resources strategies.

Prediction #10—Vendor Shuffling In The Cards

The retirement of long-term industry professionals, increased financial scrutiny by corporate boards, and the ever increasing charisma of the campus card industry will inevitably shift market share and vendor ownership of campus card industry vendors on a continual and evolutionary basis.

Robert C. Huber, CMC is President of [Robert Huber Associates](#), Scottsdale, Ariz.