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# ISS

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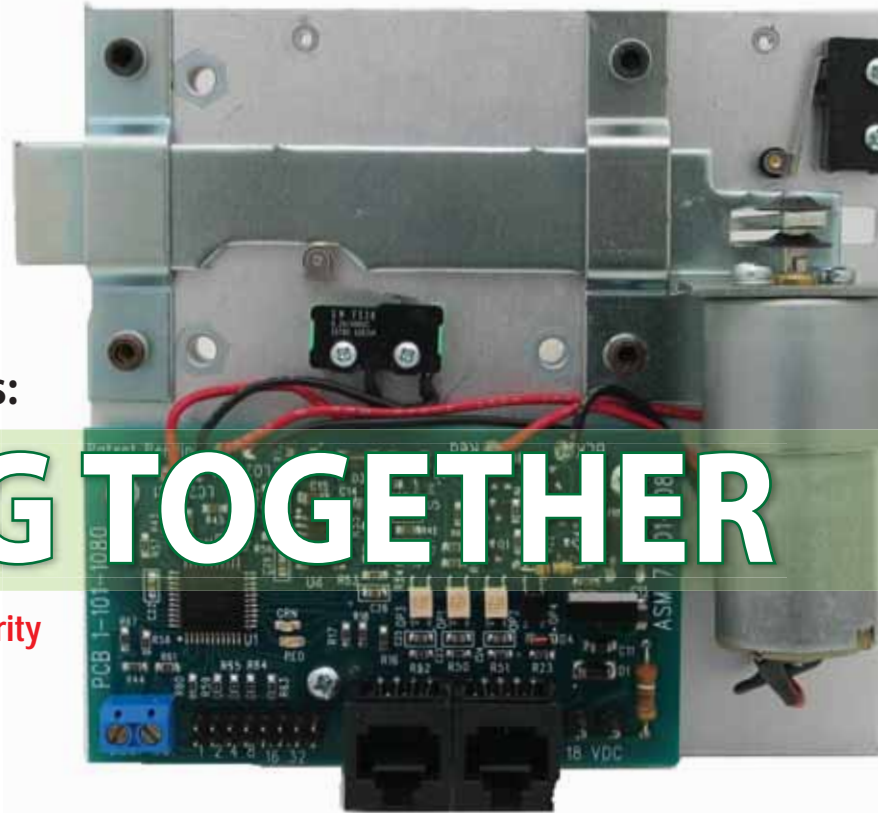
For details, see pages 27-30.

Electronic and Cylinder Locks:

# WORKING TOGETHER

Automated convenience, maximum security

By Rich Morahan



*An electronic door-lock system can be installed at construction or retrofitted to an existing rental unit.*

**“Electronic door locks? They allow me to go fishing.”** That’s what Page Rush, owner of Cornville Country Storage in Arizona, has to say about electronic door locks. His 185-unit rural facility is automated with a self-storage kiosk, keypad-controlled gate, surveillance cameras and an electronic overlocking/alarm system.

Of course, you don’t open a self-storage facility so you can go fishing. You open a facility to make money. Aside from giving Rush more freedom and getting him to the fishing hole, his electronic lock system allows him to save money by eliminating the cost of an onsite manager and residence as well as an office. It helps him make money by allowing him to develop his site and devote time to his other business enterprises.

## Benefits to Owner and Tenant

With remote video surveillance and property-management software that accepts new rentals, collects and tracks payments, and monitors onsite traffic, Rush’s facility comes close to running itself. Of course, he still has to handle certain tasks—conduct periodic equipment and landscape maintenance, conduct auctions and occasionally meet with a renter—but there’s very little owner presence required.

The keypad-controlled gate access and battery-backed door-lock system keeps every unit secure until a renter enters an authorized gate code to open his individual door. With electronic locks, every empty unit is locked until rented, and every occupied unit is automatically overlocked when the property-management system indicates delinquency. There’s no need for manual overlocks, lock checks or trips to the site when rent goes unpaid.



Faced with a high-security padlock, a thief can still cut around the latch of a standard self-storage slide bolt.

So, electronic locks provide business efficiency and security for the self-storage operator. What about renters? According to Page, “They love the idea.” In addition to maximum security, the electronic door-lock and alarm system provides them with convenient access to the site for whatever time frame the operator specifies. Accessibility for new renters is as easy as a trip to the 24-hour kiosk.

#### Why Conventional Locks Too?

If the electronic lock is so powerful, so automatic, why bother with a conventional door lock? For two reasons: First, by continuing to use a standard lock, the renter still maintains “care, custody and control” of his unit, avoiding the bailment issue. The electronic lock is opened by the authorized gate code, but the renter still controls the unit with his lock.

Second, while the electronic system has a battery backup, in a long-term emergency, the default will become “open.” In some areas, lightening storms can occasionally disable a security system. To provide “fail safe” security in every contingency, a physical lock is the final barrier.

It’s similar to when you check into a hotel—you generally use the deadbolt when you’re in your room. In addition, no electronically stored password is completely safe from hackers

**With electronic locks, every empty unit is locked until rented, and every occupied unit is automatically overlocked when the property-management system indicates delinquency.**

or anyone with access to private information. A physical hardware barrier will always provide the final protection for a rental unit.

#### The ‘Fail Safe’ Barrier: Cylinder Locks

A padlock provides a physical backup to an electronic lock system. Storage Solutions, a management company based in Mesa, Ariz., goes a step further. The company, which manages nearly 2 million square feet of rentable storage space, uses electronic locks at nearly a dozen sites, but still requires renters to use cylinder locks.

Why? Because a padlock can be compromised with a bolt cutter; a bolt cutter can be used to slice the latch around a disk lock or padlock; and a disk lock with a standard key can be picked. A cylinder lock, on the other hand, inserts directly into a door. There’s no vulnerable shackle or slide bolt to cut. From the Storage Solutions point of view, the cylinder lock provides the additional level of security that translates to “no break-ins.”

The combination of electronic and cylinder lock systems also translates into premium rents, according to Ray McRae, the company’s vice president of operations. His area manager, David Jones, adds that renters recognize the way electronic and cylinder locks complement each other and are willing to pay for the additional security.

Alone, the electronic lock provides an automated locking and lock-out system. With the addition of a cut-proof, shackle-free cylinder lock, a facility provides uniform security for every unit, with or without power, when lightening strikes or under a clear sky.

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A high-security cylinder lock provides a final barrier that complements an electronic door lock.