

A nighttime photograph of a city skyline, likely New York City, with numerous skyscrapers illuminated and their lights reflecting on the water in the foreground. The sky is dark with some light clouds.

Saflok: setting standards in the hospitality market

At 73 stories, the Detroit Marriott is the tallest all-hotel skyscraper in the western hemisphere. This luxury hotel boasts 1,300 rooms and suites, as well as well-equipped meeting rooms for business travelers and conference participants. Saflok solutions control access to and within the hotel complex.





500,000

Over the past one year, Saflok systems have secured approximately half a million reservations to the 1,300 rooms in the Marriott Renaissance Center.

“The new Saflok system is a real win-win.”

Jeff Coates, Multi Unit Director of Loss Prevention, Detroit Marriott

The security requirements at a luxury hotel are demanding, and even more so in an international metropolis close to the national border. Some time ago, the management of the Detroit Marriott decided to upgrade the electronic access system dating from 1992 and to bring its security solution up to the latest technological standard. Jeff Coates, Multi Unit Director of Loss Prevention, evaluated the market: "We were looking for the newest version of electronic locks with automatic deadbolt." As well as providing a high level of security, the locks also had to be easy to use for guests and staff. Central retrieval of access rights and lock data, multiple-keying plans, and all the Windows-based system applications had to be part of the package. Through his existing contacts with Saflok, a new wireless access system was brought to his attention. The system proposed by Saflok provided "features and functions that went beyond the current conventional electronic lock systems," says Coates.

Compelling advantages

The solution in question was Saflok's online Messenger system. The Marriott team were able to gain a precise picture of what the system offered in another Marriott property, where it was being beta tested. It was quickly recognized that the package was able to do significantly more than had been specified. All lock data from staff keys can be retrieved centrally, and data can be sent to the locks via staff smart keys. This makes time-consuming manual checks unnecessary. Access rights to all doors in the hotel are remotely controlled and can be changed very easily; all the necessary information is stored on a central server and can be reviewed by the system administrator at any time. Another feature of the Messenger when combined with System 6000 is that key cards can be encoded to access multiple areas, if necessary: access to a range of areas can thus be provided on a single badge.

"From a risk management perspective the lock data we receive have been very helpful," explains Coates. This "has streamlined investigations as we can pull this information from a cen-

tral location." This is particularly useful in the insurance claim process. Above all, "our front desk can help in explaining why a guest room key failed to open a door. It would surprise you how many guests in a 1,300-room hotel use their key on the wrong door."

Optimized energy management

Upgrading to the new Windows-based System 6000 began in 2005. The year after, Saflok switched the existing locks to the MT lock. The newly installed systems - Messenger and Windows-based System 6000 - are interfaced with a third party called energy management company. If necessary, the temperature can be set in the individual rooms on a centralized basis. When a guest checks out, the thermostat can be reset automatically. And the temperature can be raised again just as efficiently, ensuring a pleasant environment for new arrivals when they enter their room. This helps to reduce the hotel's operating costs and optimize energy use on a lasting basis.

A smooth transition

The project team's expectations of the new access system have been more than met. As always when new equipment is installed, the staff first had to get used to many additional functions on offer. But feedback was very positive from the onset, according to Coates. He was particularly impressed with the collaboration between the different teams: "From the first sales contact, we had optimum support from our supplier Saflok." The design engineers were always available, and customer satisfaction was checked from start to finish. The flow of information worked outstandingly. Coates has unqualified praise for the Saflok team: "From Sean Case, our sales manager, to Mark Pratt (field operations supervisor), Jeff Starkey (director of customer service), Curtis Gordon (product engineer), Tony Trapp (product and repair supervisor) and Ernie Mitchell (director of engineering), we had a great team to implement the project with." Guests, whose security needs are served by the changes, felt almost nothing of the upgrade work. "All our guests had to do was stop at the front desk to pick up their new key," concludes Coates.



Interview with Jeff Coates

Jeff Coates, you are responsible for loss prevention at the Detroit Marriott. What has been your experience of the new access system?

The new Saflok system is a real win-win. Our staff have a better overview and can work more efficiently. We now know when a guest enters and exits a room. We can track a door ajar that did not close properly and respond. We can track any master key used throughout the building. And we have become a lot more flexible in assigning access rights. They are easier and quicker to handle, especially in exceptional situations.

Do staff and guests share your satisfaction?

Absolutely. I don't recall any adverse reaction, not even during the transition period from the old to the new system, beyond what is typical in a project of this type. The installation crew was very professional, so all our guests had to do was stop at the front desk to pick up their new key.

What difficulties were encountered during the implementation behind the scenes?

We had issues with our Ethernet infrastructure: this required us to rework the wiring and install a parallel Ethernet. Saflok was a great partner in this as well, as they offered solutions in the process while it was really our Ethernet network at the time that could not handle the system.

Detroit - music to many ears

The roaring engines and legendary car designs of Detroit fascinate fans all over the world. This great pioneering city of the car industry has also brought the world some great music: big names of rhythm 'n' blues, soul and pop, such as the Supremes, Stevie Wonder and Marvin Gaye, were signed up to the trend-setting Motown label. They inspired artists in the generations to follow and remain a popular draw for audiences. Sporting heroes of this great Michigan metropolis are the Detroit Red Wings (ice hockey), the Pistons (basketball) and the Tigers (baseball).

But the biggest historical milestone originating in Detroit was set by the work of Henry Ford in 1909. The Ford Model T was the first car to be produced on a conveyor belt. A revolution in industrial history from which Detroit benefited for decades.

Since the 1990s, this birthplace of cross-Atlantic aviator Charles Lindbergh has been on the up. A very visible sign of this are the seven impressive high-rise buildings of the Renaissance Center, or "RenCen" for short. This is the world headquarters of General Motors Corporation (GM). The tallest tower in this development on the Detroit River, at 73 stories, is the Marriott.

“We jointly want to take advantage of the global building boom.”

Eddy Rosenberg, General Manager Kaba Lodging Systems

More is being invested in lodging capacity around the world than ever before. The Kaba Group is at the forefront with access solutions for the hotel industry.

Kaba Lodging Systems, with the product brands Ilco and Saflok, is one of the world's leading providers of access systems for the hotel industry. Whilst Saflok focuses with great success on mid- and upscale hotels, Ilco enjoys a strong position in the mid-tier and economy market. In the latter market, strong growth is expected for the industry, while at the higher end the market is already booming. At the end of the first quarter of this year, what may be a record number of construction projects was registered globally. In Europe 1,000 new developments or renovations of existing hotels

(173,000 guest rooms) are planned; the equivalent numbers in the Asia-Pacific region are 1,500 (367,000 rooms) and in North America 5,800 projects (780,000 rooms). In the US and Canada, the growth against last year is almost 10%.

The Kaba Group aims to make best use of the positive trends in the lodging industry. Ilco and Saflok are continually developing their systems - systems which are already technological leaders - and bringing new and sophisticated products to the market. For example, the recently launched 790 RFID lock (Ilco) and the Messenger ZigBee Prostack (Saflok). The latter is an access control system which enables wireless bidirectional communication between all room locks of a hotel and a central server.

Hoteliers around the world want to be able to improve their guests' overall experience of their stay while controlling costs. This includes ensuring that the guests feel secure at all times. Kaba systems provide this assurance without hampering movement with unnecessary technical barriers. And proprietors appreciate the time-saving features. In an industry with high staff costs, these systems help achieve significant cost savings while also maintaining the same level of convenience for guests.

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Access rights for the doors in the hotel are centrally controlled and can be changed quickly and easily at any time.



The Detroit Marriott is fitted with MT locks (multi-technology locking system).