STid French market leader is revolutionising digital identification

We interview the CEO of STid, the secure identification and access control product company, Vincent Dupart, pictured. We begin by asking: what are the main advantages your technologies offer compared to traditional systems?

Vincent Dupart: Instinctive and user-friendly technologies, and user-focused design. STid invented the concept of instinctive security in 1996, redefining how organisations can protect their people, property and data with the most intuitive RFID-based access control readers on the market. Since 1996, our mission has been to help security directors overcome their managerial and usage barriers that limited their efficiency. As adoption by end users is key, we invented the smoothest, simplest and most instinctive identification modes available worldwide. We base the development of our solutions on standardised open technology and public encryption algorithms. This gives the freedom to choose what suits best. We rely on the quality of our products and their excellent security to win client loyalty rather than any proprietary technology. STid is the first manufacturer to be certified by a governmental organisation and GDPR compliant. We are well-known for our products' high level of security which are OSDP and SSCP compliant.

Question: A lot of manufacturers use the world 'open' to describe their products; how does your company differentiate itself from the competition?
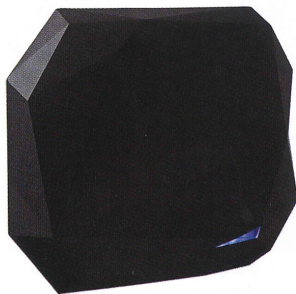
Vincent Dupart: Corporate security depends upon comprehensive, autonomous management of access control parameters. Unlike other manufacturers, we believe you should have the means of swiftly adapting to any security update. Our exclusive SECard software and biometric kits empower clients to make many changes on their own. We also deliver ergonomic management tools, services, training and consulting to help our clients choose and adopt the most appropriate solution smoothly and efficiently. Our non-proprietary technologies are based on international standards. Storage of your data is on your premises or on STid's secure servers. Products are based on inter-operable technologies and RFID standards, that work with all access control systems on the market.

Q: What of your company's plans?
Vincent Dupart: Our investment plan is to become the European leader in four years. We are strenghtening our UK team and USA branch (STid North America), and recruiting in Germany and Scandinavia; and in technical support, R&D and production. We plan to double our employees.

Q: In products, what's new?
Vincent Dupart: SPECTRE (pictured above) offers fast-track security through vehicle access gates. It's scalable up to four antennas and works over 13m. STid Mobile ID offers mobile access control with smartphones. Web APIs (application programming interfaces) are the software to drive the STid Mobile ID Cloud service and are used to manage virutal access cards (to create, edit, revoke, delete and list cards). Data storage is on STid secure GDPR-compliant servers or on-premises, depending on customer needs. For any customisation, we offer an iOS or Android library available under a dedicated software licence; for third party developers looking to bring STid virtual cards management into their own Mobile App. This offers audited and proven security for a complete access control ecosystem.

Q: Let's stay with STid Mobile ID. What are the biggest challenges for an organisation that wants to migrate to a mobile access control solution?
Vincent Dupart: People can be a barrier to change; access control can be perceived as a constraint. You have to manage the change, the migration to parking by mixed smartphone and badges. You have to have training and customised support. As for security: it's not just a question of trust, we provide proof that the storage of data on a connected media is fully secure

Q: Building Internet of Things (BIoT) is a strong growth market. What role can mobile access technology play?
Vincent Dupart: Indeed; the BIoT market is growing significantly, rising from $34.8 billion at the end of 2017 to $84.2 billion by 2022, representing a CAGR of 19.4 per cent. The Mobile Access technology such as STid Mobile ID could be a cornerstone in that ecosystem. The access control system owns crucial data such as real-time occupancy of a site or a given area; can track assets (people or objects); can determine if someone is still at his office if a fire alarm is triggered; and use Mobile Access Control to spread messages. So imagine, if we connect access control system to lighting systems, electrical management, HVAC, alarm, computers, digital signage … the list goes on. You are going to find big opportunities in reducing utility spending and equipment costs, and there's also a productivity or behavioural benefit, by being greener.

Q: What's next? Where do you see opportunities in the access control market in coming years?
Vincent Dupart: I see an increase of mobile credentials; the forecasters IHS Markit say that 44 million mobile credentials will be downloaded by 2021, up from just one million in 2016. I see also IP, and cloud-based, access control; Access Control as a Service; and facial recognition.