

Contractor Badge ID Program

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Abstract

In keeping with the country's heightened awareness for improved security measures in public, high-occupancy settings, and coupled with the University's desire to introduce better monitoring and control of contractors providing services on campus, the "Contractor Badge ID Program" was formulated and developed. Three key campus departments have been instrumental in the development, administration, implementation and maintenance of the Program; i.e., Cougar I ID Card Program (Cougar ICard Office), Facilities Planning and Construction (FP&C) and UH Police Department of Public Safety Division. The resultant collaboration has powered the effectiveness of the program and provided a database of information that might otherwise be unavailable.

Introduction of the Organization

The University of Houston is an urban university that serves the diverse educational needs of the Houston metropolitan area. The university was established in 1927, and offers bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional degree programs. The university's demographics consist of over 35,000 students and approximately 4,000 full-time faculty and staff.

The Office of Facilities Planning and Construction (FP&C) unit of Plant Operations is charged with the project management of new construction, renovation, and capital improvement work, and with the selection of contractors associated with the project. Both FP&C and UH administration offices set objectives to move in the direction of establishing a "Contractor Badge ID Program."

Statement of the Problem/Initiative

The safety of the faculty, staff, students, and visitors is always a priority on the university's campus. Construction workers are on our campus during weekdays, holidays, weekends, and sometimes late at night. Before this program started, the UH Police Department of Public Safety had no way of identifying construction workers, and many times would take an individual's word when it came to their affiliation with the campus.

Design

University personnel essential in setting the Program parameters, policy and procedures, execution and administration were specifically, the Manager of the Cougar 1Card Program and an assigned Project Manager from FP&C. The program was later introduced to the UH Police Department to find out if the "Contractor Badge ID

Program” would be of interest, and if the department would assist in identifying campus trespassers. There was a very high level of expressed by this department.

A Contractor’s ID Card Agreement and Contractor’s Card Design were developed. These documents were reviewed, and approved by the University’s administrative and legal department. The Agreement was distributed by FP&C to all existing contractors for review, discussion, and to plan for future implementation. The university was not only interested in the safety of the campus community, but was also interested in making sure that the “Contractor’s Responsible Person” would maintain accurate records, and would be accountable for the actions of their workers.

Additional staff has not been required at this time to administer this program. The Program was initially designed to be a simple process and low maintenance. The entire Program Description and Agreement forms are each only one page. A high level of organization and management, good communications between the officiating departments, and enforcement tactics have kept the maintenance of the program low. The additional cost has included the cardstock and carding supplies only. The contractor is ultimately responsible for these costs.

Implementation

The Contractor Badge ID Program was implemented in spring 2003. Since there were some long-time contractors not receptive to the new program, we made several changes to fit both the university and the contractors during the first three months of the program. New contractors have accepted the ID Badge Program as a part of the process. A photo ID Badge is required for all contractors on site who are on campus consecutively for more than 21 days. The badges are worn and displayed near the front shoulder area at all

times. A non-photo, color-coded badge is required for individuals on site for less than 21 days at any given time to include, but not limited to, equipment setup, delivery person(s), and temporary labor crew(s). Contractors are required to submit a digital photo (jpeg format) on each person requiring a photo ID. Each badge requires a corresponding individual's name in text form as file name. These photos are e-mailed or transferred to electronic disk for delivery to FP&C. After reviewed by FP&C, the photos and/or non-photo requests are e-mailed to the Cougar 1Card Office for production. Upon completion, the Cougar 1Card Office returns all ID Badges to FP&C for distribution. Since this program started, the Cougar 1Card Office and FP&C have issued over 2,000 ID Badges to campus contractors, subcontractors, and their agents.

Benefits

The university has been very pleased with the implementation of the "Contractor ID Badge Program". What started out as a pilot program for the main campus was later expanded to include the other UH System campuses. It provides a tool for identifying non-affiliated individuals, and provides a sense of ease in knowing who is entering or exiting each building. These photos are also stored in the Cougar 1Card Computer System for future reference, if needed.