

Using iPhones and Apple Watches to Access Kiosk Printing at the University of Oklahoma

Wēpa helps OU students go cardless

BACKGROUND

Bringing NFC technology to students

When students walk around campus, what do they nearly always have with them? Their mobile device. While attending class or running errands around campus, they might leave their student card at home or in their car, but the one thing they reliably carry with them is their cell phone.

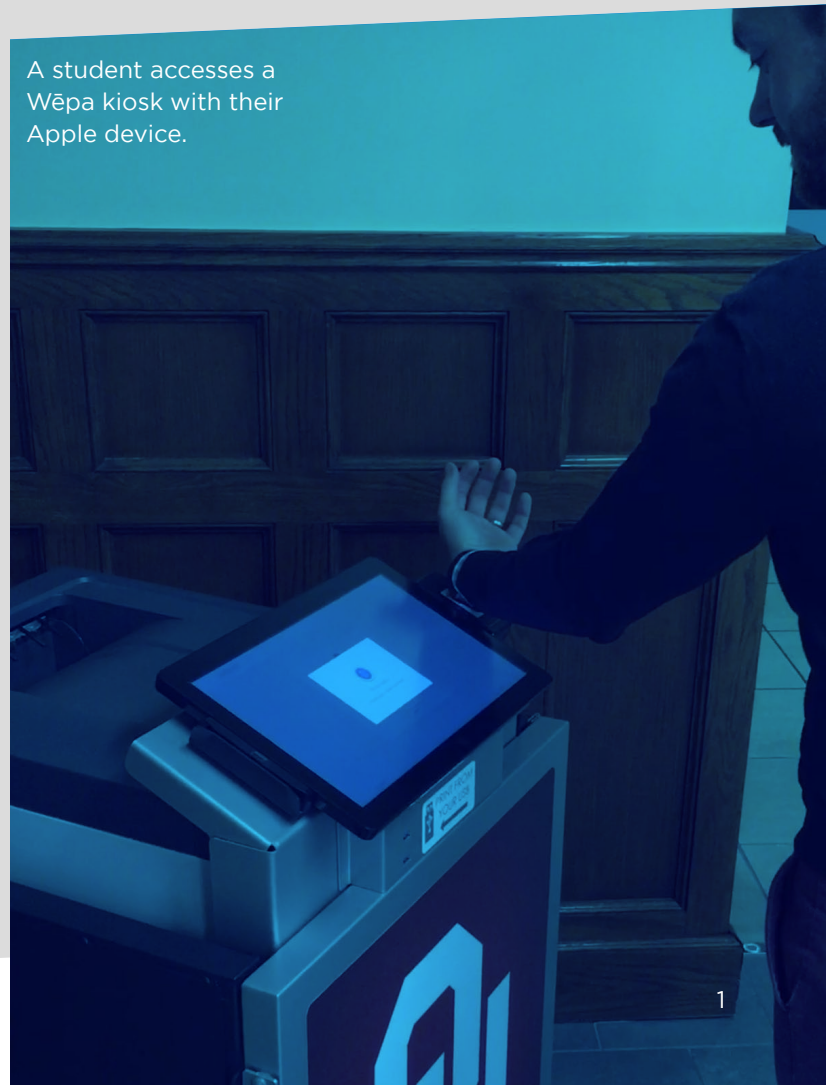
While the University of Oklahoma has long since integrated their student card, the Sooner Card, to important services like Wēpa kiosk printing and cafeteria purchases, the university has also had their eye on going cardless. “Sooner Card has been working toward a contactless environment since 2013,” says Tyler Webb, Director of the university’s Sooner Card. “We knew the future of the Sooner Card would live within the phone as NFC technology has steadily become more widely adopted.”

NFC technology allows for safe two-way interactions between electronic devices for contactless transactions, accessing content or connecting devices. One of the more popular examples of this technology is the Apple Wallet, which lets iPhone and Apple Watch users pay for items at participating retailers with a simple tap on their own personal device.

In bringing this technology to students, Sooner Card wanted to make it easy for students to use their phones just as they would their physical

card. “It was imperative that Sooner Card in Apple Wallet be accepted everywhere the physical card was, says Webb. “So being able to use the mobile Sooner Card at Wēpa kiosks was critical for the success of the launch.”

A student accesses a Wēpa kiosk with their Apple device.



CHALLENGE

Prioritizing security

One of the biggest challenges for the University of Oklahoma in developing a contactless environment was the need to integrate multiple secure systems together. The Sooner Card worked with the Apple Wallet to support their initiative and have a secure foundation for NFC. Apple and Blackboard were also partnered up to connect the contactless Sooner Card to students' Blackboard accounts. For their part, Wēpa already integrates with Blackboard for their cloud printing solution. All organizations needed to come together in their common goal: helping OU lead the way in creating a contactless campus.

"It's always a challenge when introducing a new technological standard on campus," says Webb. "Sooner Card believes that there is a fine line between security and convenience and we make sure to never compromise the former for the latter."

SOLUTION

Secure printing with even greater convenience

Each organization worked together to ensure that they were maintaining their own strict privacy and security requirements in the integration. The Wēpa team supported the initiative with custom integration work that can now be replicated at other schools looking to transition to a contactless, cardless environment in the future.

"Wēpa was able to find the resources to button up the last remaining security concerns for the project. This allowed the joint effort of Sooner



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- Tyler Webb, Director, Sooner Card



Card and IT to push the solution across campus with confidence knowing the students would benefit from a more secure method of printing," says Webb. "In the case of having your Sooner Card in Apple Wallet, you get both a more secure and convenient credential."

RESULT

Pioneering cardless campuses

Students can now pay for cafeteria meals from their student accounts, print materials from Blackboard, Google Drive or email at Wēpa kiosks, and even open doors with their Sooner Card account—all by using their Apple Watches or iPhones, never having to actually use the physical card. “Students have reported overall satisfaction at the convenience of using their mobile Sooner Card everywhere, including Wēpa kiosks,” says Webb.

It’s easy to imagine that campuses across the nation will soon follow suit and begin to develop similar contactless ecosystems for the services and structures regularly used by students. “Wēpa is leading the way in the industry, and cardless authentication is no exception,” says Raj Batchu, CTO of Wēpa.



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wepanow.com
1.800.675.7639
marketing@wepanow.com
P.O. Box 1569
Pelham, AL 35124

