

ASSA ABLOY

Whitepaper

Is it time to invest in mobile access?

Maximizing returns on mobility
and remote management

Experience a safer
and more open world



Key takeaways

- Modern work is increasingly mobile, with the latest generation of workers being fully digital natives
- Mobile access is a natural evolution of workplace security and makes use of a convenient technology
- Mobile access solutions empower flexible, secure, efficient access for the fast-growing hybrid workforce
- Those with authorized access experience convenience benefits by using a device they are already carrying
- Mobile access makes it more secure and streamlined to manage access remotely in real time
- ASSA ABLOY drives this transformation with a diverse portfolio of mobile-first digital access technologies
- ASSA ABLOY mobile access solutions are already trusted by organizations across multiple sectors



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Entering the mobile-first era

Demand everywhere is growing for flexible, scalable, secure access solutions

Mobile access – the ability to manage and/or use digital credentials via smartphones and other mobile devices – is an obvious choice. Indeed, it is no longer a 'future plan' or a 'nice-to-have'. It is a practical reality for thousands of facilities, from office buildings and hospitals to data centres and logistics hubs. This whitepaper explores how mobile access technologies are transforming the ways in which organizations manage physical security, with evidence-backed insights into trends, use-cases, and strategic considerations.

Mobile-first is becoming the norm across many regions and in several industries. Currently only a fraction of smartphones are used for digital access, but this situation is changing fast: One analyst projects mobile credentials' CAGR at more than 22% over the next 6 years¹. According to 6Wresearch, the global market for mobile credential readers was valued at approximately USD 750 million in 2025, with significant growth expected through 2031 as BLE and NFC technologies become standard in access control integrations².

This represents a forecast of continued market momentum. Regulatory drivers – such as NIS2 and

GDPR – as well as the rapid expansion of wireless and cloud-based access systems, are fuelling a major shift. Strong growth projections across all EMEA regions underscore that mobile access is becoming a strategic component, not a niche add-on. Such rapid growth seems natural. For building access, it can be more secure and more convenient, for both users and managers, when the smartphone also becomes a key.

Firstly, mobile access benefits the organization.

From their perspective, digitalization helps to maximize the productivity of existing assets. The reliability and flexibility of digital access solutions help businesses prepare management of their premises for the challenges to come. By also adopting a mobile ethos, in access and beyond, businesses boost both daily convenience for their staff and the security of their buildings.

Smartphone keys also provide everyday benefits, in terms of security and convenience, for the building user. Mobile, then, is a win-win. The rest of this whitepaper digs deeper into the what, how, and why – and especially the 'why now?' – of mobile digital access.

459 M

active smartphones in Western Europe alone³



¹ www.researchdive.com/9225/mobile-access-control-system-market

² <https://www.6wresearch.com/industry-report/global-mobile-credential-reader-market-2019-2025-forecast-by-communication-type-verticals>

³ <http://www.statista.com/topics/3341/smartphone-market-in-europe>

The case for mobile access today

Choosing a mobile solution streamlines access in two distinct, but complementary, ways

Mobile keys – a digital 'key' stored securely on a mobile phone – can unlock a door or other opening just like a card, fob, badge or any other credential.

Users: mobile working
hybrid work
multiple sites
rapid access
convenient device



Mobile access: double the benefits

Facilities teams work smarter and more flexibly, benefitting both their well-being and the organization's productivity.

Managers: remote control
24/7 operations
instant oversight
flexible workflow
enhanced security



Mobile access management simplifies access control by enabling remote operations: security teams can then monitor, manage, or audit access anytime and from anywhere. They bring the benefits of mobility to facilities management.

Mobile digital access is no longer a novelty. Increasingly, it is an expectation. Adoption has boomed, as forecasted by research for the 2025 edition of [ASSA ABLOY's Wireless Access Control Report](#), as well as many other market research publications.

Of course, with deepening adoption also comes reduced potential for continued growth as market penetration naturally plateaus. Although growth in planned mobile deployments has slowed, according to ASSA ABLOY's 2025 Report (26% in 2025 vs. 39% in 2023), the market is maturing. Fully mobile credential environments now account for 17% of all respondents to the Report survey, more than triple the rate seen in a similar survey in 2023.

What's changed? Many early adopters have already transitioned: mobile digital access is for the now, not just future plans. They are already experiencing the convenience, security, efficiency and sustainability benefits of mobile access. Where the 2023 edition of ASSA ABLOY's Report captured strong momentum towards mobile digital access, in 2025 it finds increasing market maturity.

The mobile + digital workplace: early adopters

-  Office/corporate
-  Finance/banking
-  Healthcare
-  Manufacturing
-  Utilities
-  Student accommodation
-  Hospitality
-  Logistics/supply chain



34%

efficiency gains are possible through employee smartphone use in the workplace⁴

Clearly, challenges in terms of market education remain when considering the advantages and potential drawbacks of mobile access. When asked in the same survey about the obstacles, if any, to mobile adoption in their organization, the two most popular replies were security and cost, both with 24% of respondents. Given that neither of these is necessarily true with a well-specified and -supported mobile access solution, manufacturers and system integrators still have work to do to convince everyone in the market.

To recap, now increasingly recognized by organizations of any size across almost every sector, mobile brings a range of benefits:

- **Streamlined access management:**
fewer physical credentials, instant deactivation of a lost mobile key
- **Convenient user experience:**
faster entry, improved flexibility, using a device they are already carrying
- **Operational agility:**
over-the-air permissions updates and other management tasks are completed from anywhere

User-centric benefits


Mobile access is increasingly essential to the modern workforce, especially among younger generations. A PwC-backed i3forum study found that 67% of millennials and Gen Z employees believe having workplace technology – including secure mobile access – makes them more effective at work⁵. By enabling entry via smartphone, organizations:

- **Eliminate the need for physical badges or keys**, which can be lost, stolen, or require time-consuming management
- Offer **frictionless onboarding** whereby users download credentials and gain access without waiting for physical issuance or site visits
- Provide convenient **self-service entry**, empowering employees and contractors with minimal administrative overhead

These benefits translate into real on-site improvements: fewer lost credentials, faster access for visitors, easier temporary access for contractors, and a more streamlined user experience. Empowering users in this way isn't just convenient; it also positions mobile access as a strategic investment rather than a luxury feature.

⁴ <https://explodingtopics.com/blog/byod-stats> 

⁵ <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/workforce-of-the-future/workforce-of-the-future-the-competing-forces-shaping-2030-pwc.pdf> 



Keys might be passed on, but who would share their phone?

Operational and security enhancements

Supplementing user convenience, mobile access delivers tangible operational and security gains:

- **Stronger credential control:**
mobile keys are encrypted and stored in the device's secure element; unlike plastic badges, they are rarely lost or shared
- **More protection against opportunist use:**
on-device biometrics (face/fingerprint) and PIN security prevent unauthorized access with a stolen credential
- **Instant access changes:**
administrators can add or revoke credentials in real time without needing to visit a site or organize a physical exchange
- **Perceived and peace-of-mind benefits:**
HID Global research found 75% of security leaders believe mobile credentials are more secure than cards or keys⁶

Mobile credentials also reduce the risk associated with lost or duplicated physical keys: every mobile credential carries a unique digital identity. If a device is lost or stolen, access can be immediately revoked centrally, minimizing the risk of a breach. This eliminates the traditional, time-consuming, and often costly rounds of lock changes and card reprogramming.

⁶ <https://www.hidglobal.com/documents/industry-report-2025-state-security-and-identity>



Remote access management: the flexibility and control you already need

In an increasingly hybrid and decentralized working world, the ability to manage access from anywhere is becoming essential. Traditional security and access workflows often require in-person presence to issue or revoke credentials. Mobile access removes that constraint. From a central dashboard – whether on-site or remote – facility teams can issue, amend, or revoke access instantly. A lost key or keycard is no longer a security incident waiting to happen. Contractors and temporary staff no longer need to collect physical keys. Access rights are managed in real time, with full traceability.

This is especially valuable for organizations with multiple sites, hybrid working patterns, or remote and/or unmanned facilities. Permissions can be standardized across locations and adapted dynamically in response to changes – such as shift rotations, emergency maintenance, temporary desk rentals, or changing

occupancy rules. Research from the International Facility Management Association (IFMA) reveals that teams using digital access tools save time on admin tasks, including issuing and managing keys. These savings free up resources for strategic priorities and boost business agility.

Cloud-native platforms underpin this flexibility. They offer unified oversight across buildings and geographies – with live audit trails, occupancy data, and granular user-level controls. For compliance-focused teams, this kind of visibility supports both internal policies and external regulation.

With the right mobile access solution, organizations can manage the day-to-day from anywhere while getting their access ready for what's ahead.

The (near) future: mobile access as a digital business enabler

Adoption of mobile access is growing across sectors – including corporate offices, education, healthcare, hospitality, logistics and manufacturing – driven by several converging factors:

- Hybrid working and the demand for flexible, location-independent access management
- Cyber-physical security regulations and the need for traceable, secure credentials
- Sustainability targets favouring wireless and battery-efficient or battery-free solutions
- Operational demands for scalable, cost-efficient, user-friendly credential management


Yet this may just be the beginning of rapid and wholesale workplace change, according to PwC's 'Workforce of the future' report⁷. At the heart of the transformation is the digitally enabled workplace, where technology is not just a support tool but a central actor in how work is structured, delivered, and secured. As automation handles repetitive tasks, human workers are freed to focus on creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration. Yet with this shift comes greater emphasis on real-time, mobile-first infrastructure, including systems for secure access, communication, and data sharing.



In 44% *of jobs across the EU in roles which can be fulfilled remotely, hybrid working is already the most prevalent model.*

This is followed by the workplace-only model (41%) and fully remote working (14%). In five EU countries, more than two-thirds of employees in feasible roles work from home at least part of the time: Germany, Belgium, Finland, Ireland and The Netherlands (leading the way with 77.5% of workers)⁸.



⁷ <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/workforce-of-the-future/workforce-of-the-future-the-competing-forces-shaping-2030-pwc.pdf> 

⁸ <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/02/18/hybrid-work-these-are-europes-most-and-least-flexible-countries> 

The PwC report stresses that physical and digital security must evolve together. As the workforce becomes more fluid – working from multiple locations, on flexible schedules or as contractors – access to buildings, information, and systems must adapt accordingly. This includes implementing smart, flexible access control technologies which can respond to a person’s role, location, and real-time context. Hybrid work has become especially entrenched in the knowledge economy, where flexibility and autonomy are often more valued than physical presence. According to McKinsey, more than 90% of organizations with knowledge-based roles have now adopted hybrid models as standard practice⁹.

Trust, transparency, and accountability are also predicted to become core values of this new workplace. Workers are expected to demand more control over their data and more clarity on how digital tools impact their roles. Secure, compliant systems, including digital access management, will be key in maintaining that trust and building reputation in the markets for both employee recruitment and new business.

In terms of logistics and values, mobile will be central to workplace transformation. This technology supports more efficient use of space, via hotdesking or shared units. It simplifies and streamlines visitor

management with contactless, flexible check-in and -out. Managing contractors and mobile workforces becomes less time-consuming and therefore more cost-efficient. From the perspective of values, mobile can also be one element in a joined-up sustainability strategy. Digital devices unlocked by mobile credentials consume less plastic or metal than traditional keys and credentials, and because installation is cable-free and non-invasive, they consume less energy during fitting and require fewer journeys by installers and maintenance teams.

Mobile digital access will underpin this new environment, supporting hybrid work, agile operations, and robust cyber-physical protection in an increasingly connected world.

The latest market report confirms what many organizations already recognize: mobile access is gaining traction across industries of every size – and for good reason. It delivers measurable benefits in security, convenience, and operational efficiency.

⁹ <https://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/our-research/empty-spaces-and-hybrid-places-chapter-1>

Ranking scores

Advantages in order of their importance when implementing mobile credentials

1	Security (unable to clone)	6.34
2	Cost	6.22
3	Convenience	6.16
4	Security (less likely to share with unauthorized persons or colleagues)	5.75
5	“Greener” – or more sustainable	3.67
6	Easy updating/blocking	3.64
7	Modern image	2.46
8	Contact-free solution	1.77

Source: *ASSA ABLOY’s Wireless Access Control Report*

A man in a dark suit and glasses is walking from left to right, looking down at his smartphone. He is wearing earbuds and has a black bag slung over his shoulder. The background is a large, modern building with a curved, metallic facade that reflects the warm, golden light of the setting or rising sun. The overall mood is professional and mobile.

The mobile workplace: summary

- Mobile access helps future-ready organizations to scale securely and flexibly, incorporating hybrid work
- With mobile access, organizations make a commitment to trust, transparency and accountability to building users
- ASSA ABLOY's mobile access use-cases span enterprise, residential, education, utilities, and small business
- Road-tested, real-world experience proves the business case:
convenience + control = improved performance

ASSA ABLOY mobile access solutions

As future-focused organizations across EMEA embrace more flexible, hybrid working models, seamless digital access is no longer optional – it's essential. You need mobile access solutions that move with you, adapt to your environment, and deliver value from Day One.

ASSA ABLOY has a comprehensive portfolio of digital access management systems and devices that support mobile keys and enable remote access control. These solutions are fast to deploy and immediately effective, helping businesses streamline workflows, enhance cost-efficiency, and strengthen security – all while improving convenience. Trusted by a wide range of customers, ASSA ABLOY's digital access solutions deliver tailored benefits that meet the unique needs of each organization.



CLIQ®

Straightforward key-based system which transforms mechanical to high-security digital access management

Mobile keys

BLE keys and app to update permissions from the cloud

Remote management

Yes



SMARTair®

Modern out-of-the-box digital access solution which maximizes flexibility and ease of use

Mobile keys

Yes

Remote management

Yes



Primo

Intelligent digital access solution that seamlessly integrates devices into a unified, scalable system

Mobile keys

Yes

Remote management

Yes



Impro Access Portal

Trusted access control technology - enhancing security and efficiency for modern enterprises

Mobile keys

Yes

Remote management

Yes



ABLOY® CUMULUS

Cloud platform with easy integration of digital access devices and mobile access

Mobile keys

Yes

Remote management

Via the EAC system



Aperio® Wireless Locks

The easy way to extend the reach of your access control system without wires or cables

Mobile keys

Yes

Remote management

Via the EAC system



Watch
the video

How it works: a real use case that delivers

Becorp, Barcelona, Spain

Build-to-rent housing relies on mobile access

Becorp, a build-to-rent housing provider in Barcelona, replaced physical keys with resident mobile credentials in the SMARTair Openow® app. This connected mobile solution was deployed at a development with around 3,000 doors.

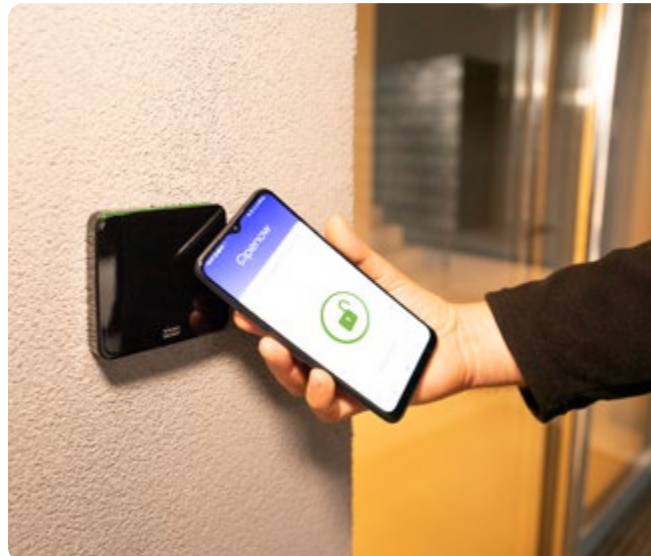
Result:

- Streamlined key management
- More efficient tenant turnover
- Reduced operating costs and time-burden on staff
- Eased staff time-burden



“Physical key management for any large development puts severe pressure on operational costs. Choosing SMARTair wireless locks and mobile management via Openow helps us to minimize them.”

Xavier Casals,
Project Engineer





Watch
the video

How it works: a real use case that delivers

Jakkuvärkki Dog Forest, Finland

Streamlined access via booking system and virtual keys

Jakkuvärkki Dog Forest, in Finland, chose the ABLOY CUMULUS mobile key solution to enable easy, round-the-clock use of their facility. ABLOY CUMULUS software integrates with their booking system to give dog owners a convenient, keyless experience.

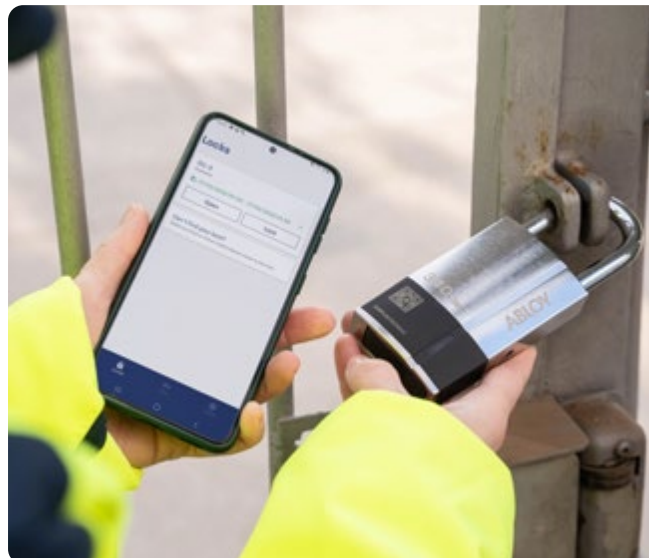
Result:

- No more physical keys or access cards
- Streamlined booking and access experience
- Reliable site security with time-limited credentials



“When the user has booked a time on our website, they receive a virtual key in the ABLOY CUMULUS mobile app, with which they can open the CUMULUS padlock at the main gate during the reserved time.”

Katri Laaja,
Jakkuvärkki Dog Forest owner



Industry voices and market signals align: mobile access is on the rise

We have learned that as user expectations shift and remote work becomes the norm, organizations which prioritize mobile accessibility gain a competitive edge in agility, engagement, and operational efficiency.

The question is no longer whether you should invest, but how fast you can move.



SECURITY

Dr. Claudia Mrozek
Editor in Chief,
EURO Security Magazine

“The pace of change in the workplace, the growing role of the mobile at the centre of the workplace ecosystem which is increasingly end-to-end digitalized, ‘it’s only natural’ that a mobile phone also be used for access (i.e. convenience), the additional security and peace of mind that mobile access gives staff and visitors in an era where new people come and go through workplaces like never before. It’s time to make the change now, as so many organizations already have.”



ISJ INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY JOURNAL

James Thorpe
Editor in Chief,
International Security
Journal

“The benefits of remote management for security and facilities managers are clear, especially as they adapt to changing work patterns across many sectors. Mobile management offers the flexibility needed, along with the advantage of ‘being in many places at once’ – something remote mobile access enables.”



Make your access ready for what's ahead

Digital with confidence

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