

Vancouver Community College

Vancouver, Canada

24,000 Students

1,500 Academic and Support Staff

A large University offering a unique bus pass solution for students and staff

“Students love it and in most cases are stunned at how quick they can get their U-Pass without lining up. We implemented five machines throughout the campus and there has never been a line-up on any of the machines.”

Ben Guanzon, Director of IT



Vancouver Community College (VCC) is a public post-secondary institution in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Founded in 1965, it is the largest and oldest community college in British Columbia, with over 140 certificate and diploma programs. VCC has two campuses, Broadway and Downtown, all located in the city of Vancouver.

The U-Pass is a universal transit pass program for students offered in partnership by Vancouver Community College, the SUVCC, TransLink, and the Province of British Columbia.

The Challenge

- Create a bus pass solution that allows students at VCC to use their student ID card to access U-Passes, a universal transit pass program for students in British Columbia.
- Monitor had to think 'outside the square' for a unit that will dispense the bus passes as required.
- Ensuring that each student only gets one pass per person and that duplicates are not created.
- Reduction of cash handling and administration costs.
- Ensure that students had a fast, efficient system to avoid time wasted with manual purchasing of the U-Pass.

The Solution

With many meetings between Monitor's development team and eCard ID Products Ltd, Monitor's partner in Canada, it was decided that the best option was to use an autoloader to dispense the U-Passes to students. This was the most efficient and cost effective solution and has very little ongoing maintenance, an outcome that VCC were very happy with.

The Result

Using the AL4000 series of autoloaders, the development team at Monitor created a unit that reads student's ID card when swiped at the terminal. Once swiped the card information gets sent back to Supervisor Net where the users account is authorised to proceed (providing there are sufficient funds in the users account). A U-Pass is then dispensed to the student for use of various forms of public transport throughout Metro Vancouver.

Five dispensing units were installed on campus at VCC and the feedback from students has only been positive. The students are elated in the speed of which their bus pass is dispensed from the machines.

The installation of these machines has also meant that VCC have not had to hire more administration staff to cater for the high demands through manual distribution of the bus passes. Because of this process it has also reduced the financial risk with the existing transit provider.

The Future

The solution has been a huge success for VCC and Monitor. The entire package of the hardware and software for the solution to run seamlessly has been touted as a market leader amongst higher education institutions in British Columbia. Monitor have installed the solution in the following higher education institutions:

- The University of British Columbia
- Simon Fraser University
- British Columbia Institute of Technology
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Capilano University
- Langara College
- Douglas College.