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# 8 Ways to Deter, Detect & Stop Organized Retail Crime

Ideas for Loss Prevention Professionals

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# INTRODUCTION:

Shoplifting has always been one of the biggest battles facing retailers large and small. Customers pocketing items without paying for them dramatically affects a retailer's bottom line. And it takes on a whole new dimension when it becomes an organized effort to steal large amounts of merchandise to later be sold to other retailers, at flea markets or online. According to the National Retail Federation, organized retail crime (ORC) costs the retail industry \$30 billion every year and the problem continues to grow.

Not only is ORC on the rise, but retail theft rings are becoming bolder and more aggressive making it increasingly dangerous for shoppers and employees. It has become not only a financial risk, but also a health and safety threat. That makes it more important than ever for retailers to look at ways to discourage theft. Fortunately there are a number of things retailers can do to make their stores less attractive to organized gangs<sup>1</sup>.



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1. "Organized Retail Crime on the Rise" National Retail Federation 2017, Nov. 17  
<https://nrf.com/media/press-releases/organized-retail-crime-the-rise> .



# PRODUCT PLACEMENT

First, retailers need to know the products in their stores that are most often targeted. ORC rings are looking for very specific items – products that are easy to steal and even more importantly, easy to resell. These easy-steal, easy-sell items differ for each type of retailer and many times they're not the same from region to region. What's hot for supermarkets might be laundry detergent, health and beauty supplies or baby formula. For electronics and discount stores it could be cell phones, watches and jewelry. Handbags are a top item for clothing and accessory stores<sup>2</sup>.



Retailers need to identify these products with the goal of making them harder to steal. That can mean keeping them in displays away from the front door where they can be easily taken, or keeping more expensive items in locked cases or displays. Some retail theft experts suggest limiting the number of each item on a shelf<sup>3</sup>.

2. "What Is Organized Retail Crime?" LPM Insider The Loss Prevention Foundation 2017, Sept. 13 <http://losspreventionmedia.com/insider/shoplifting-organized-retail-crime/lp-101-organized-retail-crime/>

3. Martinez, Liz "Taking the Bite Out of Organized Retail Crime" SecurityInfoWatch SouthComm Media 2014, Aug. 22 <http://www.securityinfowatch.com/article/11659045/organized-retail-crime-has-the-attention-of-loss-prevention-management>

# LOCKS & KEYS



Good security starts with locked doors. Many retail gangs slip in through unlocked back or side doors or often through the unsecured front door. And in some cases they get inside help from employees who leave doors open and lend or duplicate keys. That makes it really important for retailers to have high security locks as well as a good **key control** and management system. Keeping track of which keys open each door and who has each key is essential.

The best way to do this is to work with a lock and key company that makes this detailed task easier and error free. InstaKey provides retailers with high quality locks and keys. Each key has an individualized serial number and **cannot be duplicated** by anyone with the exception of InstaKey or a qualified security company. That combined with a customized software program that maintains all key control data is the most effective way to manage keys. The InstaKey **SecurityRecords.com®** software provides authorized employees a 24/7/365 real-time view of key and lock information on the web. It takes only seconds to see which employee has what key to open which doors.

If a key is lost or unreturned when an employee leaves the store or facility, the lock can quickly be rekeyed without the cost of a locksmith. All of this makes it harder for retail gangs to gain access to a retail facility while costs are kept in check.



# ELECTRONIC ARTICLE SURVEILLANCE

Electronic article surveillance, or EAS, helps with all types of shoplifting. Merchandise that is expensive or often targeted by shoplifters is tagged with an electronic device and EAS pedestals are placed at store exits. The device is deactivated when a customer pays for it at the cash register. If the shopper tries to leave without paying, the active tag will alert the pedestals to sound an alarm.

There are many types and sizes of EAS tags made to fit almost any product. Many manufacturers source tag merchandise as a value-added service for retailers. That means they place tags on the product or in the packaging at the time of manufacture. Items arrive at the retail store tagged and ready for display. This saves the retailer the time and expense that goes into manually tagging merchandise.

ORC gangs often use electronic jammers to overwhelm the EAS system or aluminum-lined booster bags. But, there is anti-jamming technology available and quality EAS platforms can't be fooled by the bags.



# VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

Video surveillance has come a long way since retailers first started using it. Cameras today are smaller and provide higher quality images than they did as little as five years ago. High-definition cameras with their own IP addresses have made video surveillance systems more flexible and scalable. Retailers with older cameras don't have to rip out and replace all of their cameras with newer technology as many manufacturers offer hybrid systems that can run both analog and digital cameras on one system. Cameras can be upgraded individually as older cameras breakdown or fail.



Video systems provide retailers with an effective way of monitoring their stores in real time and can record video to be reviewed later. Video can also be sent over the Internet to law enforcement, providing information on gang members and their tactics.

Many retailers use video for more than just security and crime prevention. It can also be used to study store traffic patterns, identify safety hazards and measure the effectiveness of displays and marketing programs. It can be invaluable from a legal standpoint. If a customer claims to have been hurt in a fall recorded video can help determine the cause of the accident. This can save retailers thousands of dollars in false claims and litigation.



Some ORC gangs use jammers or aluminum-lined bags to overcome protective devices. While both methods can block the device from reporting, quality and high-performing trackers record and store location data, then communicate it once the jammer is shut off or the device is removed from the bag.



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# ANALYTICS

Adding software analytics to a video system makes it an even more powerful loss prevention tool. Analytics monitor live video to alert a retailer if someone is spending an unusually long time in a store aisle or moving through a doorway in the wrong direction. It can also detect people running or falling in the store. And as with a regular video system it can be used for more than security. Analytics can give retailers insights into traffic flow, line management and conversion rates.



# CUSTOMER SERVICE

Most experts agree that the most effective tool retailers have to combat ORC is quality customer service. Fully staffed stores where salespeople interact with customers on the store floor is a big deterrent to any shoplifting attempt. Thieves don't want to be recognized. Retail theft gangs want to get in and out of stores quickly without being noticed. Stores with quality customer service don't make good targets and gangs are more likely to pass them by for an easier mark down the road.





# LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COMPETITOR PARTNERSHIP

ORC gangs usually travel from city to city targeting retailers along the way. As they go patterns emerge about what they steal, how they steal it and at what time of the day. That makes it important for retailers to work with local law enforcement and other retailers. Sharing information can make it easier for law enforcement to stop or shut down an ORC ring. It can also help retailers in the area to be aware of gangs and put deterrents in place.

These are just some of the basic ways to help prevent losses from ORC. Loss prevention tools are constantly evolving. It's important to stay on top of new technology tools. Costs can be an issue, but prices drop as the technology matures.

What's next? Today, big data rules, so you can expect more technologies that will provide retailers with additional details about shoppers and how they experience the retail environment. Artificial intelligence will play a bigger role in every part of the retail chain. Tech companies are also working on analytics that will not only tell retailers how a shopper behaves, but will use data to predict how shoppers and ORC gangs will behave.



# WHAT'S NEXT?

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Large and small retailers alike need to justify spending on loss prevention tactics and technology. That is what makes InstaKey a great partner! We'll help you identify what you save and how to save even more by tightening your control on locks and keys.

What if you could save 80% on locksmith services when it's time to change the locks?

If your goal is to keep costs down while keeping loss at a minimum, there is a alternative to the ever expensive locksmith or core swap program. InstaKey can help you save money through:



## RESTRICTED, SERIALIZED KEYS

Keep your keys from being duplicated and out of the wrong hands. This also helps to save money because you don't have to change the locks every time an employee leaves and returns thier key.



## USER-REKEYABLE LOCKS

Rekey locks immediately without having to call a locksmith or remove any hardware. Locks are changed with the turn of a key and next set of keys is ready to be distributed.



## CLOUD-BASED KEY MANAGEMENT

Ditch the spreadsheets and logbooks and keep track of keys, locks, and keyholders in the cloud. You can also track costs and run exception reporting in a snap!



## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

We won't leave you out to dry after your key system is installed. InstaKey can help you manage your system from top to bottom or just offer a little help here an there. We'll be there when you need us!

**FIND OUT HOW MUCH  
YOU COULD SAVE**

**GET A FREE ASSESSMENT**



## SECURITY WHERE CRIMINALS LEAST EXPECT IT

For over 45 years, 3SI Security Systems has partnered with customers in all types of markets to protect cash and assets. Our systems use high-tech tracking technology to detect a crime. Our devices alert police who use our proprietary tracking website to track and apprehend the criminals and recover the stolen property. Retailers minimize losses, and taking dangerous criminals off the streets helps prevent future crimes. Just doing our part to help create a #SaferWorld.



### ADAPTABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

Criminals target all kinds of inventory...cash, jewelry, smartphones, tobacco products, high-end apparel, pharmaceuticals...3SI's solutions, which cost less than a cup of coffee a day, can protect virtually any item that criminals can steal.



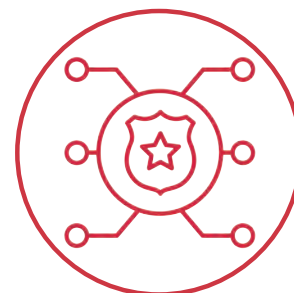
### HIGH SUCCESS RATE

With a 70%+ success rate in recovering stolen goods AND apprehending criminals, retailers using 3SI solutions minimize the impact of crime on stores, employees and customers.



### 24/7 U.S.-BASED SUPPORT

Both retailers and police have access to our 24/7 Tracking Support Center, located just outside Philadelphia, PA. Support professionals are always available to answer questions, troubleshoot issues and assist with live tracking events.



### LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

When a crime occurs, 3SI's technology immediately notifies local dispatchers, who relay the information to officers in the field. Over 7,000 law enforcement agencies are already trained and using our technology and we are adding more agencies every day.

[READ CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES](#)

[GET A FREE PRODUCT DEMO](#)