



## Video Security Systems

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For many years I have been asked by clients "How can our POS system help reduce theft?" My answer has always been that a Point of Sale (POS) system will certainly help reduce theft, but to actually catch the people who were stealing would be challenging. This was because a POS system was capturing information. Suspicious activity would have to be investigated by running reports and even then it would be difficult to prove.

One example of a simple problem that our clients wanted to handle was employee's that had fellow employee's clock-in for them when they were going to be late to work. Unless you caught this act red-handed, it was next to impossible to prove. That was until a new technology was introduced a few years back.

The concept of video security systems has been around a long time. All of us have seen them in public areas for years. In fact, big box retailers have been using them for for quite awhile now. Here is another technology that had to go through a significant improvement before our small to medium sized independent retail clients could take advantage of it. You see, the big box retailers have full time "Loss Prevention" staff on payroll to closely monitor the video feed. Even with all of these video security cameras located through out the store, it was like finding a needle in a hay stack.

So, what has happened to this technology that now makes it a must for every independent out there? This is a classic example of older established technology merging with new state of the art technology.

What has occurred is that video security systems have been given some intelligence. The problem that needed to be solved was cameras that simply recorded what took place in front of them, but couldn't tell when something suspicious needed to be investigated. That has changed, and now a small independent can have their own full time "Loss Prevention" expert for less than \$50 per week per store\*. The video security systems that are available today integrate with POS systems. This means that every transaction, key stroke and mouse click is synchronized with the camera responsible for capturing video at that terminal.

Here is how it works. Cameras are positioned in such a way as to clearly capture the events that occur in front of accessible terminals such as POS, Item Look-up Stations, etc. These cameras are connected to the network and are controlled by very sophisticated software that connects the cameras to your POS system. The camera's video feed is recorded on a Digital Video Recorder (DVR) which is also connected to the network. Then on a regular schedule (weekly) the retailer asks the software that controls the cameras to rapidly display all "high risk events". Examples of high risk events are returns, employee discounts, check-in/out, etc. What this does is reduces hundreds of hours of video feed down to a matter of minutes to review.

What is even more incredible is that if a break in policy or illegal action is captured, then the system can simply copy the video and the exact computer actions taken by the employee onto a CD, which is more proof than is needed to prosecute. It has been my experience that when an employee is confronted with this level of proof, they are more than willing to figure out a way to repay you in exchange for not prosecuting.

At this point, an integrated video security system is no longer a luxury, as it is a requirement. I highly recommend you take a look into this new and fantastic technology to help preserve your hard earned profit.

\*Avg. cost of a four camera system amortized over 36 months.