

# Simple Techniques Shopping Centre Retailers Can Use To Improve Security Without Affecting Customer Service

Modern retailers with physical stores face many challenges, including competing with the internet, dealing with increasingly cost-conscious customers and more.

Another major issue that physical retail stores face is dealing with theft. [Shoplifting costs the UK economy more than 14 billion annually](#), which is then passed onto the cost of products.

Costs are rising right now anyway, which means that many retailers will already be noticing a drop in spending from consumers.

It can be difficult to curtail shoplifters, particularly experienced individuals who regularly steal and have innovative techniques to avoid detection.

While retailers in shopping centres benefit from the added security of being in a space with many other stores and any security measures the centre itself might take, there's still a risk of theft.

As such, stores should consider increasing their security measures to reduce their losses due to shoplifting.

Increasing security can be beneficial, but it also has a downside. It can make genuine customers feel uncomfortable and reduce your ability to provide them with the service they expect.

Thankfully, there are ways around this. If you're a retail

store owner based in a shopping centre, here are some unique ways you can improve security without affecting your ability to provide your customers with the service they expect.

## **Install Security Gates**

Security gates can help deter anyone opportunist criminals and make your store safer. With a security gate, such as a sliding gate, you can ensure that customers don't leave your store with any items they haven't purchased. Specialist providers of [security gates](#) like Barriers Direct offer a wide range of gates and turnstiles, so you can find one that suits your store's design and keeps your staff, customers and stock safe. These solutions can also make it easier for you to reduce customer numbers if required and stop anyone from leaving. Make sure you understand the law regarding this, as stopping customers can create a difficult situation. Mostly, your gates will make an ideal deterrent for anyone who thinks that your store is an easy target.

## **Make The Most Of Centre Security Solutions**

As part of the rent you pay for your shopping centre premises, you'll be allowed to make use of certain services provided, including security personnel. If you only have a small store, then you might be able to use the centre's security guards, rather than hiring any of your own, which will save you money. For larger stores, you might want to consider hiring a security expert to help you protect your space. Whatever size retail space you run, you should talk to your centre manager about the support they can offer businesses like yours when it comes to security, as you may not be aware of everything that you have access to. You'll then be able to make the most of the centre's security policies and solutions, which will allow you to protect your store without spending any extra money.

## **Use Strategically-Placed CCTV**

CCTV can be an ideal deterrent for many opportunistic

shoplifters, and it can also allow you to prosecute anyone who does steal from your store. When placing CCTV around your shop, make sure that the cameras are clearly visible or that you use signage to inform customers that they are on camera. It would help if you also considered your store's layout and where the cameras will get the best angles. CCTV cameras for stores are usually white and large so that they can be used as a deterrent as well as a record. When choosing a CCTV provider, ask how often they maintain their equipment in your store, how long you can keep the footage and other important questions that you might have.

### **Be Aware Of Where Thefts Usually Occur**

Thefts usually occur in areas of your store where there is limited security, or there are high-value items. If you know that an area is prone to theft, then consider what security measures you can take and how you can reduce the chances of thefts going undetected in that area. One major area that might need reviewing is your self-checkout space if you have one. [As many as one-in-three people steal from a self-checkout](#), so you need to make sure that you do everything in your power to reduce thefts in this space. That might mean adding more cameras, putting up signage to make it clear that theft is not tolerated or placing security personnel by the self-checkout area. These measures will allow you to continue to offer the convenience of a self-checkout without worrying about a rise in shoplifting.

### **Reduce Blind Spots With Mirrors**

Once you've identified any areas of your store where thefts are more likely to occur, you can work to reduce the chances of thieves having the opportunity to steal there. At a self-checkout, that might seem easy, but some areas, such as blind spots where cameras can't see, might be harder to deal with. A useful technique is to use strategically-placed mirrors to reduce the blind spots and make it easier for you and your

team to see where people are and what they are doing in your store. These mirrors can be placed on the ceiling or walls, so they're out of the way and aren't obvious or obstructive to customers. They can be used to amplify the reach of cameras and deter criminals who might be thinking of loitering in a corner and sneaking items into a bag or pocket.

## **To Wrap Up**

Overall, there are many techniques and tactics that shopping centre retailers can use to reduce the chances of theft on their premises. It might be tough, and you might have to change how your shop operates, but most of your honest customers will understand, and your work will deter any opportunist thieves. These tips should help you to find ways to improve your store's security and reduce the impact that crime has on your business. You'll then be able to grow and offer even better services to your paying customers.

