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Security and aesthetics: Why both are important

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New options prevent theft of high-end electronic devices while allowing for maximum customer interactivity — without the mess and clutter

By John Mangiameli

For retailers of high-end consumer electronics such as smartphones, tablets, e-readers, drones, digital cameras, and fitness watches, the customer's retail experience can be just as important as loss prevention. Often the look, feel, and performance of the product on display in-store, including the ability to interact and fully experience features such as menus and apps, can be crucial in a customer's purchasing decision.

Yet retailers cannot let expensive merchandise "walk out the door" due to shoplifting or employee theft. According to the 2016 National Retail Security Survey (NRSS), retailer inventory shrinkage accounted for 1.38% of sales — up \$1.2 billion from the previous year. In addition, 47% of retailers surveyed reported increases in overall inventory shrinkage.

Electronic loss prevention devices, which typically involve an alarm console, sensors, and related accessories, are the ideal way to display this type of merchandise. Now as a proliferation of new consumer electronics products hits the market and retailers face competitive pressure to reduce costs and staffing, a greater array of standard and custom options is further improving this category's appeal in the industry.

Improving product presentation

Any electronic loss prevention device — whether alarm console, sensor, pedestal stand, grippers, tethering or charging cable — should not overshadow the product itself or be cumbersome or difficult to maintain by employees. To meet this need, innovators in the industry offer a variety of loss prevention devices that secure electronic products without the mess and clutter.

A growing number of retailers, for instance, are turning to electronic merchandise display security systems like the Vantage II by **Se-Kure Controls**, a Franklin Park, Ill.-based manufacturer of retail product security devices. While most systems require separate wires for security and charging the electronic device it protects, this system utilizes a single wire to provide both security and power.

The system also offers an option for dual sensors to prevent theft of the device, as well as detachable accessories of value such as lithium batteries or a removable camera lens for digital cameras.

To facilitate customer-product interaction in stores, retailers can pair each smartphone with a retractable cord so it can be pulled off its pedestal and easily viewed at a distance several feet away. When the shopper returns the phone to the pedestal, the cord retracts and a magnet enables ideal product positioning.

The industry has also managed to further reduce clutter in retail showrooms by streamlining how electronic devices are powered.

Some alarm consoles, such as those from Se-Kure Controls, have been designed to provide continuous power and security to multiple 5V devices such as tablets, smartphones, and e-readers through a single cable via a series of USB ports. Up to twelve devices can be charged from one alarm console. This eliminates the need to plug in a bulky power adapter for each device into a power strip mounted below the display.

Because retail settings vary widely in their display requirements, loss prevention devices frequently need to be customized. Some manufacturers of loss prevention devices have the capability and resources to make critical adjustments. This can include accommodating devices to the number and size of items requiring protection, along with features such as pedestal height, security cord length, size, color, and retractability, as well as alarm, power, and sensor options.

With in-house metal fabrication and plastic injection molding capabilities, as well as electronic manufacturing expertise, Se-Kure Controls is also able to adapt to inevitable changes in the types and styles of consumer electronics on the market.

With the global market for wearable electronics projected to surpass \$30 billion by 2020, the need to adapt loss prevention devices to protect new products while allowing for continued customer interaction will only increase.

*John Mangiameli is EVP at **Se-Kure Controls**, a Franklin Park, Ill.-based manufacturer of retail product security devices, including retractable cords and streamlined dual-function security-charging devices that allow customers to examine electronics up close. In addition to his 20 years of retail security expertise, Mangiameli also has previous experience as a State Farm Insurance agent, Johnson & Johnson regional manager, and president of Medline Healthcare Co.*



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