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# Building a Bond
### Is the CVS/Aetna deal a game-changer for the entire retail industry?

# Upping Your Inventory Protection Game

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

**By Del Williams**

For retailers of such high-end consumer electronics 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 a product on display in a store, including the ability to interact and fully experience features, such as menus and apps, can be crucial to a customer's purchasing decision.

Yet, retailers cannot let expensive merchandise walk out the door due to shoplifting or employee theft. Electronic loss prevention devices, which typically involve an alarm console, sensors and related accessories, are the ideal way to display this type of merchandise.

As an increasing number of new consumer electronics products hits the market, and retailers face competitive pressure to reduce costs and staffing, a greater array of options is further improving this category's appeal in the industry.

"Customers need to interact with our latest smartphones to see what has changed and how the devices perform," said Bill Jones, an AT&T regional director of asset protection. "But it is a balancing act between customer-product interaction and theft deterrence."

**Any electronic loss prevention device — whether it be an 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.**

According to Jones, who evaluates loss prevention system cost and effectiveness, in today's competitive retail environment, how a product looks and feels when displayed can affect a retailer's bottom line just as much as theft prevention.

"We want the focus to be on the product, rather than on the power and security cords," Jones said.

## Improving Product Presentation

Any electronic loss prevention device — whether it be an 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 offer a variety of loss prevention devices that secure electronic products without the mess and clutter.

A growing number of retailers are turning to such electronic merchandise display security systems as 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.

"One of the things that drew us to our display security system is how nice, clean and modern it looked to have the one cord," said Kevin Lasky, project manager at Austin, Texas-based Arch Telecom, a wireless retailer with 140 locations in 13 states. "There is no separate cable running up the side of the pedestal or coming out of the display to charge the phone. That was important to us."

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 several feet away. When the shopper returns the phone to the pedestal, the cord retracts and a magnet enables ideal product positioning.

AT&T's Jones said he also is impressed with the simplified, cleaner look of the single-cord approach. It also simplifies removal of electronic products to a more secure location each evening to prevent "smash and grab" robbery attempts.

"At the end of each day, we put all our devices in an inventory room, and then each morning we put them back on the display counters," Jones said. "Having just one cord helps us close down and set back up faster." According to Jones, Se-Kure Controls' systems also are very sturdy and durable. He estimates that not having to repair or replace such items as the alarm box or power/security cords often can lead to significant savings annually. "In an organization as big as ours, it can add up to millions of dollars over time," Jones said.

For more info, visit se-kure.com. **dsn**



Del Williams is a technical writer based in Torrance, Calif.