

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Retail stores in Jersey do suffer from theft and this has been felt to have increased by many of the retail members of The Jersey Chamber of Commerce. There are a number of reasons for this increase but it is mainly down to the financial challenges that now come with living in Jersey. There are a number of types of thief and what deters them is different. Retailers need to use as many ways as possible to reduce the impact of theft on their business, the main defence being staff on the sales floor but CCTV is an important backup for them together with other methods, mainly security tagging systems and loss protection detectives.

The benefit of CCTV to retailers outstrips the expensive costs of installing the equipment for a number of reasons

- **Increased deterrent** - CCTV systems offer a great deterrent to potential thieves. Once a thief realises that a store is protected by a closed circuit television system they invariably will chose to go somewhere else.
- **Reduced retail theft** – Regular shop lifters will look for the easiest target to achieve the largest gain. A Store with CCTV increases the possibility of the individual being caught so they are more likely not to do it or, again, go elsewhere.
- **Identifying a potential thief** - If a suspicious person is noticed by the store staff it is then possible to track their movements around the store and identify if they are planning to steal. CCTV is sometimes reviewed while they are still on the premises. This can help to insure that the facts are clearly evident and this reduces the possibility of mistakes.
- **Increased detection** - In Jersey most CCTV in stores is not continually watched over and so many thefts are not instantly detected. If however an item is found to be missing, it is then possible to review footage and see if the offence has been caught on camera. The Police can then be called.
- **Police** - Once the Police have been given images many of the persons are identified by them as many of them are already known to them. This then gives the Police clear evidence to assist with any prosecution.
- **Staff protection** - Although less of an issue in Jersey, CCTV helps us to protect staff. There is a potential for violent or abusive behaviour to situations, such as the withholding of a credit card if asked to do so by the credit card company after a decline.
- **Other benefits** - Some of a store's loses can come from their employees and this can be more difficult to detect unless you have CCTV. Till loses are reduced when cameras are placed above till points. Till's covered by CCTV also assists in any potential customer fraud situation i.e. stolen cheques.

There is a concern as to how effectively the cameras are used to ensure smooth traffic flows in St Helier and to deal with the inconsiderate and dangerous parking perpetrated by the few to the detriment of the many.

In conclusion Chamber would welcome the use of CCTV on the grounds that such equipment must surely help, as stated in the Scrutiny Panel's press release, to protect people and property, investigate incidents and bring criminals to justice. However there needs to be the right balance as regards personal privacy and the appropriate keeping of data. Thus we must surely concur with the intention of the Panel to ensure that "the review will include an assessment of the scope and impact of the Code of Practice and Guidance on the Use of CCTV published by the Island's Data Protection Commissioner and consider how any queries and complaints related to the intrusion of privacy are addressed through the Code".

Regards

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