



The Complete Guide

To Retail Loss Prevention

— And Security —

Find out how to decrease internal and external theft while safeguarding the retail environment.
Featuring expert advice from industry professionals and real world case studies.

GARDAWORLD

Contents



PART ONE

Internal and external theft prevention tips

1. Former FBI agent shares three ways to cut internal theft
2. The simple rule for deciding to use armored transportation
3. Former major retailer VP of Loss Prevention shares his story: Making the case for armored cash delivery services
4. Case Study: Restaurant chain saves up to \$5M a year in management time using GardaWorld's smart safe service



PART TWO

At the register

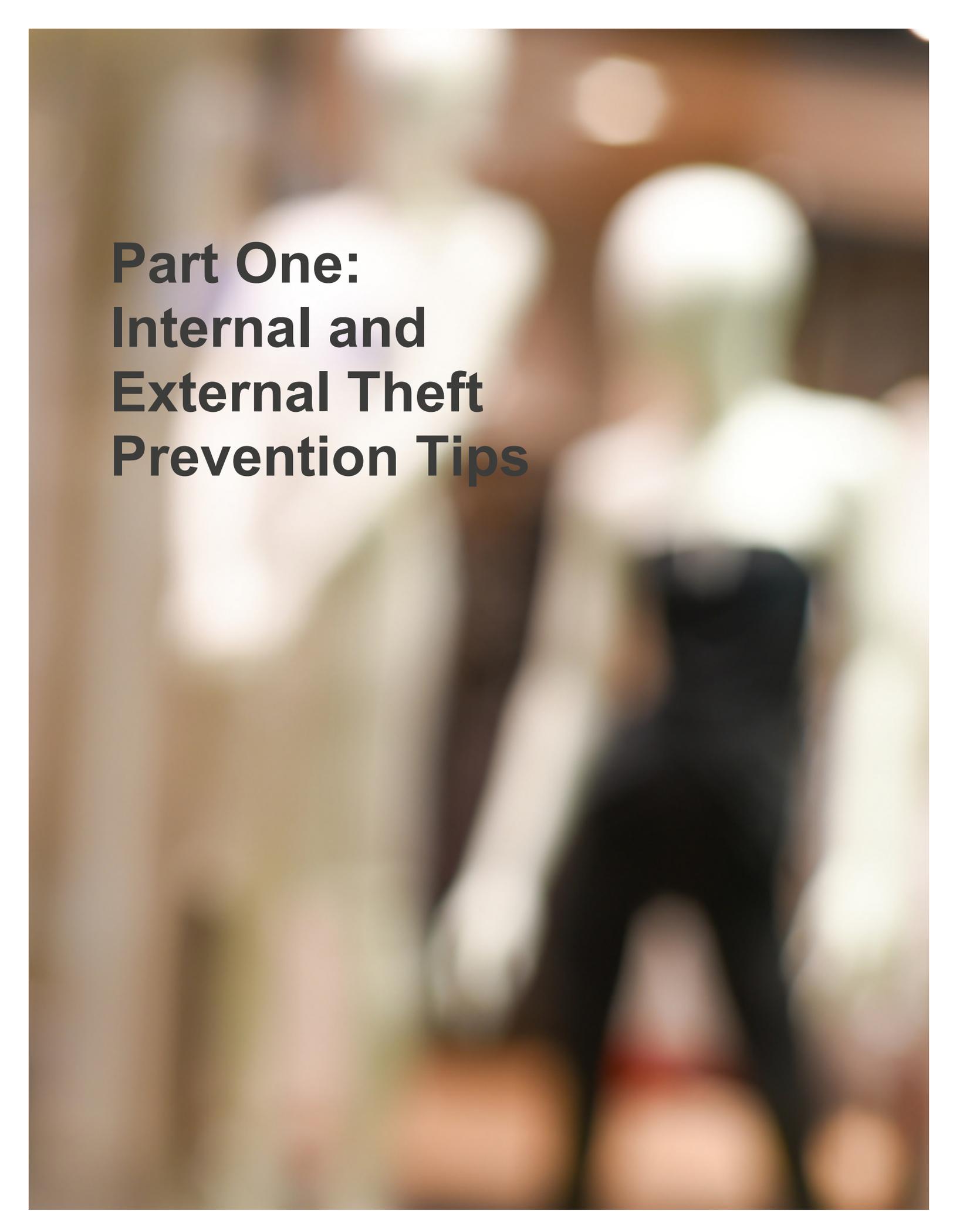
1. How to decrease cashier errors—and boost profits by more than 35%
2. Three Reasons to train seasonal Employees to handle cash properly
3. Tips to minimize the number of “hands” handling your cash



PART THREE

Safeguarding people in the retail environment

1. What's your brand worth? Assessing your risk.
2. Six tips to create safe work environments
3. “Active Shooters” in the workplace — it can happen to you
4. Q&A with a retail loss prevention and security expert: Shopping centers: “Like safeguarding small cities”

A blurred background image of a retail store interior. In the foreground, a white mannequin is visible, wearing a dark, sleeveless top. The background shows other mannequins and store lighting, all out of focus.

Part One: Internal and External Theft Prevention Tips

Former FBI agent shares three ways to cut internal theft

Joe DeSalvo, Vice President, Corporate Security, for GardaWorld Cash Services for many years was responsible for security controls over all of the company's operations and leading the investigations, loss prevention, security systems, and business continuity programs in the US.

As a former FBI special agent in New York City, Joe has more than 20 years of experience in corporate security and in leading federal law enforcement and global risk management programs. Over the years, he's investigated his share of internal theft from simple pilfering at the retail level to more complex thefts in large corporate environments.

We recently caught up with him to get more insight to what drives internal theft and how to deal with it. In the following interview, Joe shares his three core strategies for reducing and, hopefully, eliminating the problem: *prevention, detection* and *response*.



How big a problem is internal theft for retailers, restaurants and other types of GardaWorld customers?

It's a huge problem. According to the National Retail Federation, US retailers lost \$44 billion in so-called shrinkage in 2014 — costing US shoppers about \$300 per household every year. That includes shoplifting, employee theft, administrative errors and vendor fraud.

While shoplifting accounts for 37 percent of that amount, employee theft is close behind at 34.5 percent, or \$15.2 billion. And that's just the retail industry. For example, add in stolen cash and goods in the restaurant industry, including giveaways to customers, and the figure runs much higher.

Why do employees steal from their employers?

There are two primary reasons. One, they do it to spite their employers. For example, they might not feel they're being paid enough or recognized enough for their work, especially if it involves long hours, tough customers or some combination of these factors and possibly others, like having to work holidays. Second, they do it because they can — a crime of opportunity, if you will. These thefts typically occur because controls and supervision are weak or non-existent.



What can business owners and managers do to prevent internal theft?

The three main pillars of defense against internal theft are *prevention, detection* and *response*.

Prevention

Employers should strive for the best working conditions they can. These would include initial and ongoing training, fair pay, professional development and advancement, timely and constructive feedback, and recognition and thanks for work well done.

In addition, they should minimize or eliminate opportunities to steal as much as possible. For both cash and goods, that can be done through good controls and supervision. For cash alone, that can be done by minimizing the various cash touch points that might occur in the course of a working day, especially during transactions as well as non-transactional activities like counting and reconciling cash, or taking deposits to the bank.

Detection

Detection takes many forms, from the physical, like video surveillance and anti-shoplifting tags and alarms, to the procedural, like accounting controls and both periodic and surprise audits.

Response

In all cases, the response to internal theft needs to be prompt and resolute, with zero tolerance for the thief or thieves. Investigations need to be conducted as soon as a theft is discovered and quite visibly, to send a message to employees; the culprit or culprits should be fired; and, if the theft warrants, they should be prosecuted. Any response less than that opens the door to other employees stealing and thinking they can get away with it.

One of the keys to preventing internal theft is not to provide opportunities to steal through poor controls and inadequate supervision. Another one that especially applies to cash involves creating what we call “a single chain of custody” for your cash, to minimize or eliminate points during a shift or workday when employees touch cash, such as when reconciling cash balances or preparing deposits.

GardaWorld’s Cash Services can help in several ways, with each an element in building a single chain of custody for your cash. Because GardaWorld owns that chain of custody, it also owns all the liability for any losses that occur while the cash is in its possession.

For example, one GardaWorld cash service is our CashLINK™ service, which uses so-called smart safe technology. CashLINK puts an on-premise safe with scanning capabilities that can count cash and checks as each is deposited into the safe.

End-to-end cash processing

A single chain of custody protects your assets and provides transparency



Cash in store remains secure from internal and external threats.

Safe wirelessly transmits deposits for immediate provisional credit.

Armored messenger picks up cash and is only individual with access to the safe.

All liability is assumed by GardaWorld, and need for bank runs is eliminated, improving ROI.

Bags are scanned into CashTrak™ providing immediate traceability and accountability.

Armored trucks deliver to vaults for processing.

GardaWorld serves as bank’s bricks and mortar with the most expansive footprint in the US.

GardaWorld vaults—90 across the US—deposit directly into retailer’s bank(s).

Technology tools provide information to retailer, tracking assets and ensuring complete transparency.

With CashLINK, employees and managers just deposit their receipts into the safe without having to count and reconcile them – saving them a lot of time and any temptation to steal. And because the CashLINK smart safe is networked to the customer’s bank, the business gets a provisional bank account credit right away, which helps cash flow.

Another important part of the chain of custody is our secure transportation service, which can help improve workplace safety and let employees know that their employer takes security seriously. Cash transport services can also more than pay for itself in payroll savings, because owners, managers and employees don't have to go to the bank to make deposits or get change.

A third cash service associated with our secure transportation service is our EvenXchange service. This brings the requested amount of currency and coin to any location with just a phone call. Again, this cash delivery service not only saves employees' and managers' time, but also eliminates a cash touch point, where thefts and errors can result in lost cash.

With outsourced secure cash services, businesses can reduce the amount of time employees and managers must handle cash, which in turn reduces the opportunities for cash thefts. What's more, they can save employee time that could be better spent with customers to increase sales.



The simple rule for deciding to use armored transportation

Many aspects of a growing business mark its growth: More customers. More employees. More assets. More (and hopefully positive) cash flow. These are all good things, of course. But what many owners often overlook are growing risks. Simply put, the more you have, the more you can lose.

What are those risks? Typically they're:

- Liabilities for the safety and well-being of your customers and employees as well as for performance failures;
- Competitive risks that can undermine future growth;
- Business continuity risks due to fire, loss of key people, loss of key accounts, sabotage and so-called "acts of God;" and,
- Risks associated with losses due to theft, both internal and external.

Insurance, a partial solution.

While insurance is usually available to protect most of these risks, and thereby protect the business, armored transportation can be a big help to increase your personal safety and that of your employees—not only for cash businesses but many others, too.

Business owners and managers usually think about armored transportation for currency, coins and checks, as secured transportation but it's also suitable for the secure transportation of:

- Jewels and precious metals
- Rare artwork and collectibles
- Outdated pharmaceuticals
- Software or highly sensitive information or data

What is the value of your cash?

At GardaWorld, armored transportation is an important part

of a larger cash services business that includes safely moving cash and valuables; providing change; counting and depositing cash; replenishing ATMs; providing custody of critical keys to locked facilities; and providing safety to your employees and customers.

GardaWorld Cash Services are more affordable than most business owners might expect. Depending on the frequency of your armored transportation services—during which armed guards in an armored truck transport your cash or valuables from your place of business to the final destination—the daily cost can represent a small investment in comparison to the value you receive. You remove all risks associated with transporting your valuables and provide safety to your employees and patrons. You also can expect a reduction in your insurance premium because you reduced your own personal risks.

What is the value of your time and safety?

By hiring an armored transportation service, you're not only securing your assets, you're also securing your life and that of your employees by refraining from moving your own cash, unprotected. In addition, you're saving time that can be better spent focused on your business and customers.

For a small business pickup charge of about \$35, you can save much more in time and payroll by having employees concentrate on their daily tasks and serving your customers, instead of having them or yourself go back and forth to your bank twice a week to make deposits and get change. All without protection. Talk about risky business!



Making the case for armored cash delivery services

With more than 35 years in loss prevention for several major specialty retail chains, I've faced many skeptical financial decision-makers who've questioned the value of armored cash delivery services. But when I tell them that our company could save a net of five hours of payroll per store each week — plus provide a safer, more productive work environment — their eyes light up.

Even for single store owners, the financial business case for hiring an armored cash delivery service like GardaWorld can make sense. In fact, as little as 1.65 hours a week of payroll savings can cover the cost of outsourcing cash services for a single store. And change can be brought to any location in

the exact currency and coin denominations and amounts needed.

Even better.

The ROI gets even more attractive if you combine the time savings with GardaWorld's CashLINK smart safe technology. This is an on-premise safe that automatically counts and secures cash and check deposits, so store owners, managers, or employees don't have to do so. It also provides instant credit to the store's bank account, which can boost cash flow.

Retailers, restaurateurs and other users of GardaWorld Cash Services gain these benefits, as well:

- **External robbery exposure eliminated**
- **Vehicle accident exposure reduced**
- **Chances of employee deposit theft reduced**
- **Funds insured**
- **Store personnel spend more time with customers**
- **Potential workers compensation claims reduced**
- **Employee productivity increases**

Count the savings.

Where do the payroll savings come from? My experience in loss prevention with several major retail chains led me to see the following as typical: Our managers used to go the bank every morning. They'd come to work, find a parking space, come in, pick up the deposits from the day before, get back in their car, drive to the bank, find another parking space, stand in line at the bank, make the deposit, get back in their cars, find another parking space near their stores.

We calculated conservatively that this cost us an hour a day every day of the week. With GardaWorld Cash Services, it turns out that for every store, a savings of about five hours of payroll were realized a week just by keeping associates in the store.

More time in the store.

At the same time, we raised store productivity. We got a lot more done now in the mornings and insurance rates went down, because managers were not driving to the bank. We also eliminated thousands of expense reports that our managers used to file for mileage and related reimbursements so the accounting department is happy and more productive.

Without all that running around, they were safer and not subject to any armed robberies either. In the past, we were experiencing numerous armed robberies a year and every couple of months our deposits, which we kept in a locked box in the back room, would go missing and it would be hard to tell who took them because several people in each store had access to those boxes.

Finally, our loss prevention teams loved it as well. Rather than investigating robberies and missing deposits, they had more time to focus on training, coaching and awareness programs.



Restaurant chain saves up to \$5M a year in management time using GardaWorld's smart safe service



A chain of 200+ casual dining restaurants installed GardaWorld CashLINK™ smart safes as a more efficient and secure way of handling cash while protecting employees' safety.



At HQ, controllers have a precise accounting of all cash deposits at any time — visibility and immediacy they simply didn't have before.

At the same time, the chain has sharply reduced, if not eliminated, its potential for internal cash losses, which included a \$40,000 loss and lots of smaller losses. Large amounts of time were consumed to investigate and reconcile, not including the time and trouble of issuing reprimands or firing people responsible.



GardaWorld assumed all risks and threats of loss by eliminating the chain's exposure of more than 200 managers driving to their local banks to make deposits.

Even at just \$2,000 per drop, that's about \$400,000 of company cash moved each day by unarmed, untrained individuals, who are each at risk of an armed robbery.

So what did the retailer save with CashLINK?

Do the math | Loss on bank runs

200 employees x **30** minutes roundtrip for bank runs =

100 hours/day | **36,500** hours/year

36,500 hours/year =

12 full-time managers working **60**-hour work weeks

12 full-time managers at **\$60,000**/year =

\$720,000 in lost time

Loss on cash counting tasks

20 hours/week counting cash, reconciling discrepancies x

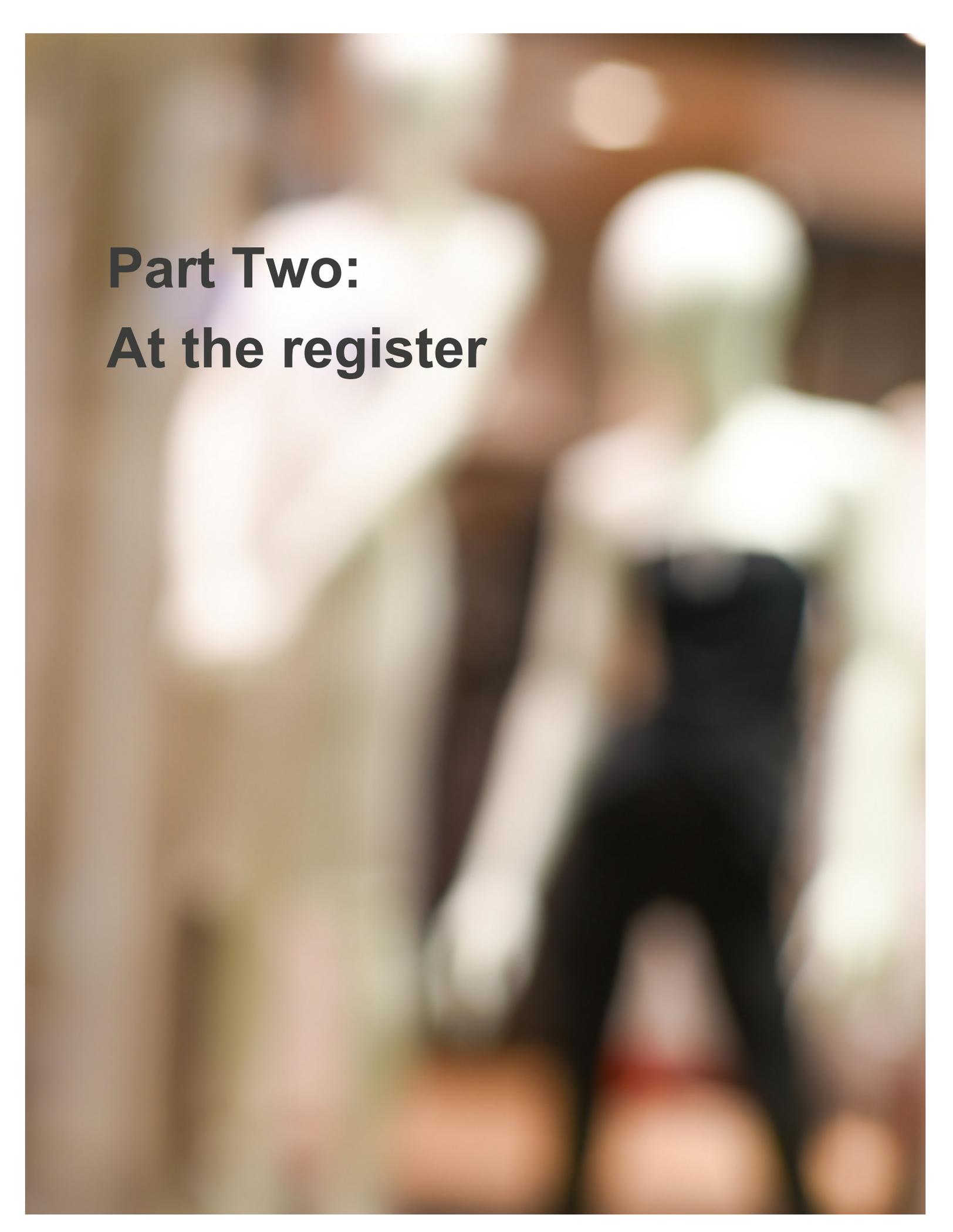
200 sites = **208,000** hours/year

208,000 hours per year = **70** managers =

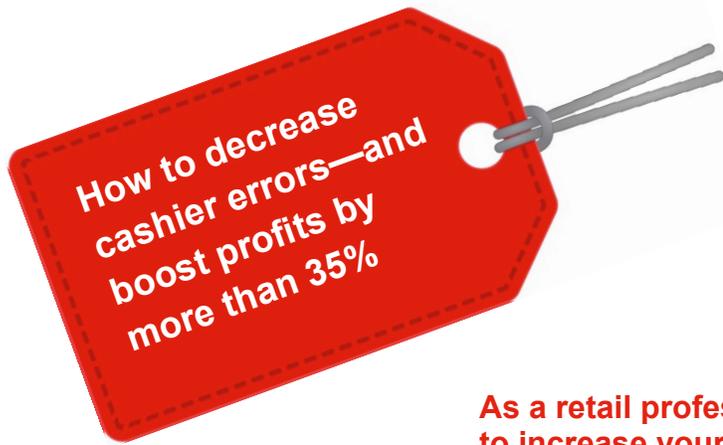
\$4.1 million

TOTAL COST: Nearly **\$5 million**

**What is handling
your own cash
counting and bank
deposit chores
costing you?**



**Part Two:
At the register**



As a retail professional, if you could take a few simple steps to increase your profits by more than 35 percent, would you? Of course you would! Especially if those simple steps involved training your cashiers better, so they make fewer mistakes. Before going into how to decrease cashier errors, let's look at how you can achieve what seems like an incredible increase in profit.

Take, for example, a grocery store with annual sales of \$50 million. With an overall shrinkage level of two percent—and with the industry average of 18 percent of that two percent due to employee errors, mostly at the cash register, cashier mistakes can account for as much as \$180,000 each year. If the store has a one percent net profit, that's 36 percent of \$500,000 profits. Wow.

OK, so now that you're onboard, let's discuss how to decrease those mistakes to build your bottom line. Here are several pointers:

1. Register training.

This seems obvious but anecdotal evidence shows that retailers, especially small chains and “mom ‘n pop” stores, simply don't train their cashiers enough. Same goes for employees handling cash and using cash registers (like restaurant servers). That's a big mistake in four ways:

- Confused employees are bound to make mistakes.
- If confused, they'll typically give the customer the benefit of their error. (This becomes a hidden cost and, if the POS is connected to the inventory system, inventory gets skewed and has to be straightened out eventually.)
- Confused employees are less productive and, because no one likes to feel—much less appear—“dumb,” the lack of training undermines their morale.
- Confused but less self-conscious employees may interrupt other employees to teach them what they're doing wrong, undermining the productivity of those other employees. (“Susie, how do you void this?”)

2. Product training.

Product and register training go hand-in-hand. Why? Because cashiers need to know the price difference between a Gala apple and a Fuji apple, between what's on sale and what's not, and between a BOGO and half-off.

Also, if cashiers have to look up product codes and, worse, call for a “price-check, please,” customers are kept waiting, checkout lines get longer, and customer patience—and satisfaction—vanishes.

Even at fine dining restaurants, an otherwise superb experience can be quickly diminished if the server takes forever to bring the check.

3. Go slow.

Speaking of patience, many cashiers are taught (or assume) that fast is good. Problem is, fast produces mis-rings needing voids if caught, mis-counting change, and, in short, mistakes. In your register training, reassure new cashiers that it's not being the fastest but being the most accurate cashier that will win your favor.



While many summer seasonal hires are of high school or college age, most are untrained in handling cash. That's despite the fact that they're required to do so by many service jobs like restaurants, concession stands and seasonal retail.

Hiring owners and managers are well-advised to invest the time and effort in training their summer hires to handle cash properly, even if they've already been on the job a few weeks.

Training these employees provides three key benefits:

- **Fewer mistakes** that reduce customer satisfaction issues and makes reconciliations easier;
- **More efficiency** that shortens customer wait times and helps ensure customer satisfaction;
- **Less theft** because these employees will know consider proper cash handling important enough to provide for their training and, most importantly, that you're watching.

What's more, this training is applicable to all seasonal employees, including ones hired for the year-end holiday shopping season and the "snowbird" season that spans the winter months in warmer climates.

To help, I've provided some suggestions below about training employees in handling cash quickly and effectively.

Before you start...

Instate a no-theft, no-cheating policy. Look the employee in the eye and flatly state, "We don't tolerate theft here, whether it's stealing cash or goods. If you're caught, you'll lose your job, the police will be called and criminal files will be charged." Pause a long moment, to let that sink in. Then add, "We also don't tolerate cheating customers. If you see another employee stealing or cheating customers, I expect you to tell me. In return, I promise to keep your identity confidential." At that point, you should ask them if they understand. Even better, you should get them to sign and date a simple, printed statement because doing so is further acknowledgement on their part of your no-theft, no-cheating policy.

At the register...

Go slow.

For someone who's never used a cash register before, the keyboard can be virgin territory, so keep that in mind when showing a new employee how it works. Explain what the different keys do before walking them through their first transaction.

Keep it simple.

Start with simple transactions, then work toward more complex ones and exceptions like voids.

Show them, repeat.

Walk the new employee through the steps of a transaction slowly. Repeat the steps, again slowly. Ask them if they understand and got it. (Of course, they'll say yes.)

Show you, repeat.

Next have them show you the proper key sequence for that transaction. Then have them repeat.

Products, promotions.

Employees need to know products, especially similar ones that may have slight price differences, and store promotions, if any, so they can process both without having to call for time-consuming "price checks" or looking up codes.

Counterfeit bills.

Seasonal resorts and businesses are perfect places for counterfeiters to pass bogus bills for the very reason they'd prefer owners and managers not to read this post: because seasonal employees are often not trained in proper cash handling nor are they trained to spot fake bills. Identifying counterfeit currency is beyond the scope of this post, but [click here for much more information on the subject](#) that you can share with your employees.

With the customer...

Instead of handing a customer a fistful of cash and coin back in change, employees should tell the customer what the amount of their change is—even if the register displays it for them—and then count it aloud back to the customer. Also, keeping the cash note on the register's sill and not putting it into the drawer until after making change is a good practice to avoid customer disputes over what denomination they gave you.

At shift's end...

Teaching new employees how to count cash may seem like common sense and unnecessary, but that's why so little training occurs—along with errors. Owners and managers who are used to handling cash need to remember that new employees haven't done so before, so some basic training is necessary:

- They should find a relatively quiet, secure place to count their cash and avoid distractions that can cause them to miscount.
- They should use a calculator. While some people are gifted with the ability to add columns of figures in their head, most are not; they need calculators to do their sums.
- They should count their cash by denominations, then stack their bills by denomination, the smallest on top, with increasingly larger denominations following. This makes it easier for anyone having to manually count the bills after them to do so. If their cash counts exceed 100 notes per denomination, they should have currency bands from the bank (with different colors for different denominations) in which to wrap each count of a 100 notes.

Again, these training suggestions can be used for all seasonal employees, not just summer hires. In fact, you can make them part of a documented training program for all

employees, seasonal or not. To improve over time, we suggest keeping track of the frequency and types of cash-handling errors, which will indicate where you need to strengthen the program with additional focus.



Cash-intensive businesses may have many things in common besides their reliance on cash for transactions, but one thing they share for sure is this: theft. Of course, these kinds of businesses always face theft by robbery, but a far greater source of theft is internal.

Given that fact, the first line of defense against employee cash theft is to minimize the number of employees with access to it. Here are some tips to help you do just that:

1. Direct all cash transactions to the least number of people, one if possible.

Large restaurants, bars and other concessionaire services can operate with numerous servers who may seem to need to ring out their customers themselves and therefore have their access to the cash register. Instead, owners and managers should consider having a single staff person on each shift who does nothing but ring up customers' checks and make change for each server.

It might appear at first that this approach might create a bottleneck and add to payroll, but done correctly it allows servers to focus more on customers, helps reduce errors and, to be sure, contains the opportunity for cash theft to one person: the cashier. Plus, the added payroll will be more than offset by the greater control of cash shrinkage that may occur via errors or theft.

2. All cash businesses, if possible, should split the duties of receiving cash and accounting for cash between two different people.

Each person should have a clean background check and a clear understanding of their responsibilities and consequences related to loss and misappropriation of cash. This way one person can serve as a check on the other person. Management should keep a written log of who has access to cash drawers and deposit safes. This log should coincide with an accounting log of cash receipts, disbursements and reconciliations.

3. Use a bonded third-party cash services professional to handle cash deliveries and deposits.

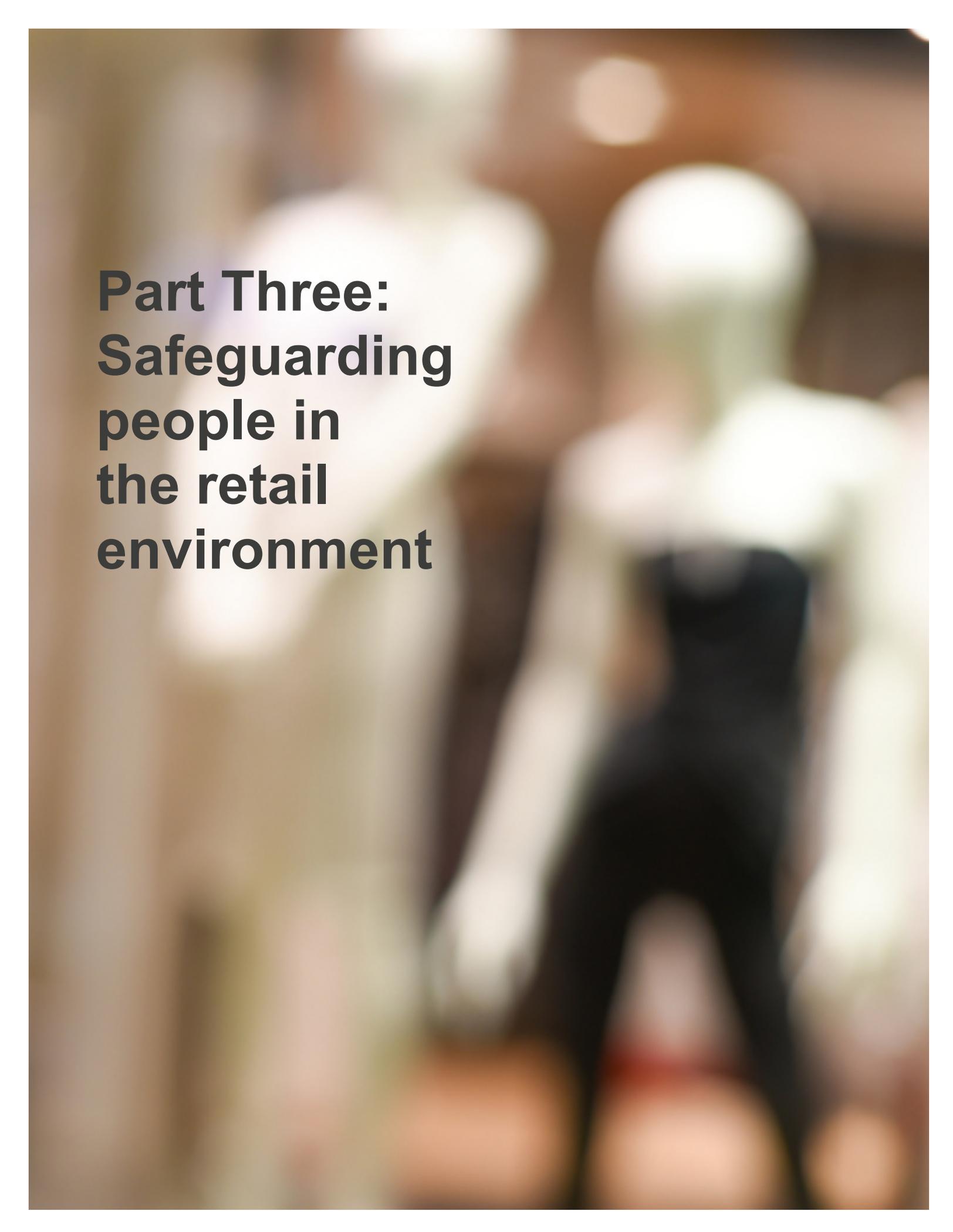
GardaWorld has two services that can help here:

CashLINK

This closed-loop system controls cash from point-of-sale to bank deposit. Authorized cash handlers deposit bills into “smart safes,” which read the denomination deposited and tracks deposits by user. GardaWorld then collects the data each day and transmits it to the client’s headquarters for sales auditing and banking reconciliation. Our trained cash messengers then pick up the cash and take it to the bank for deposit.

EvenXchange

With this service, you can get the exact amount of change you need brought to you instead of having someone go to the bank. You simply call GardaWorld’s toll-free number with the denominations you need. A GardaWorld armored truck and cash delivery messenger will bring those amounts to your door. Just seal the amount you’re exchanging in a bag and sign your name. Since you’re exchanging an equal amount of currency for an equal amount of change, your change fund is always in balance. And it’s never mixed with your deposits.

A blurred photograph of a retail store interior. In the foreground, a mannequin is visible, wearing a dark, sleeveless top and dark pants. The background shows other mannequins and the warm, ambient lighting of a clothing store. The overall image is out of focus, creating a bokeh effect with soft, circular light spots.

**Part Three:
Safeguarding
people in
the retail
environment**



Your worst nightmare: a shooting, or worse, a preventable death. It happens every day in the news as a result of placing liability in the hands of managers and other employees.

[Assistant manager shot. Manager bound, beaten and murdered. Store owner fatally shot.](#) These types of headlines appear far too frequently. What are *you* doing to protect yourself, your employees, your customers, and ultimately, your brand?

Assess your liability

Do you know where you are open to risk? Start by assessing your weak spots and asking yourself the following questions.

- What is the crime rate in your retail location?
- Have there been any incidents of violence in the past at your retail location?
- Are employees or managers ever alone in the retail location?
- How and where are you displaying valuable merchandise?
- Where are your cash registers located?
- Do you have panic alarms?
- Do you have visible cameras in your store or restaurant?
- Do you have signage indicating a locked safe and security cameras are in use?
- Are your managers making bank runs with daily cash deposits? Do they make runs at the same predictable times? Are they alone?
- Do you have a procedure in place for employees who are confronted? And are your employees fully trained on this procedure?

Six tips to create safe work environments

When each of us goes to work each day, we all assume that we will come home safe and sound. Unfortunately too many of us do not, due to lapses in workplace safety.

At GardaWorld, we believe that providing an accident-free workplace for our employees is as important as providing quality services to our clients.

Workplace safety is a critical, even vital, topic that needs to be a priority for employers everywhere. In Canada alone, nearly 700 workers a day are injured on the job with many injuries going unreported. Worse, almost three workers die each day. And all this costs almost \$20 billion in annual healthcare costs and lost productivity.

What can be done to improve workplace safety? These six tips for business managers and owners can help to build safety awareness into their operations and ensure it's always a priority:



1

Make safety a priority commitment.

It's easy to give workplace safety occasional lip service and put up required flyers and motivational posters, but those won't ensure accidents won't happen. Ultimately, management is in charge of developing a safety culture within an organization.

- Put safety on the agenda as a regular topic to cover, so other managers and employees know that you take it seriously — and they should also.
- Conduct periodic safety audits that are intentionally highly visible, so work teams get the message that safety matters.



2

Conduct regular workplace inspections and correct unsafe practices.

- Look for obvious and not-so-obvious hazardous situations like improperly stored chemicals, over-stacking of goods, overused electrical outlets, and other dangerous conditions.
- Also identify potential situations that could lead to criminal harm to employees, whether robbery, assault, or worse. Employees don't intentionally make their workplaces unsafe but their own ignorance and inattentiveness can harm them.



3

Train employees and managers.

Ignorance shouldn't be an excuse for any unsafe situation or consequence but too often it's a root cause of them. Safety training should be part of an employee's day-one, new-hire orientation; the part of all employees' ongoing training.



4

Provide well-maintained tools and equipment.

In kitchens, a dull knife is more dangerous than a sharp one because a dull one can slip off what it's supposed to slice and cut its user. This axiom also applies to all work tools and equipment. Also, too often, workers will take short cuts and use the wrong tools or equipment just to get work done faster. Proper training again comes into play here: they must be taught how to properly use and maintain tools and equipment, along with periodic reinforcement training.



5

Report, investigate and document all accidents.

If an incident occurs — no matter whether it's big or small or whether it's an accident, a health problem, or a physical crime— respond appropriately and call the proper authorities immediately. All incidents should be investigated, to identify and correct their causes. And all incidents should be carefully documented for purposes of mitigation, insurance, if applicable, and possible liability litigation.



6

Recognize and reward good behaviors.

When employees report unsafe situations, recognize and reward them appropriately. It can be a simple thank you that doesn't cost anything or something minimal like two movie tickets. The "thank you" should be done in a visible way, either in a team meeting or by a companywide memo. You want all employees to realize that safety is valued and will be rewarded.

* * *

Workplace safety is also good business. Studies have shown that companies taking safety seriously via formal safety programs tend to perform better — in terms of quality, delivery and financially — than those that don't. That's why many large companies seeking vendor proposals will ask about workplace safety practices and safety certifications.

Workplace safety includes protecting employees and visitors against criminal harm and providing for onsite emergency response capabilities.



It can happen to you.

In recent years, a new term has emerged in law enforcement's lexicon: "active shooter." It's typically used to describe someone engaged in killing or attempting to kill people, most often with firearms. Active-shooter incidents make headlines, which can lead to copy-cat behaviors by other unbalanced individuals. Given this, organizations should include an active-shooter scenario in their emergency response plans.

No warning.

Like most emergency situations, active-shooter incidents happen without warning. Although perpetrators are usually aggrieved in some way, real or imagined, their grievances can have many sources: loss of a job or loved one, financial issues, extremist ideologies, mental breakdowns, criminal intentions, etc.

In many cases, the active shooter is — setting himself up to be killed by police, but taking as many innocent lives as possible before being killed.

Businesses beware.

While active-shooter incidents can happen outside the workplace, business owners and managers need to be ready should one take place on their premises. You never know when layoffs could push some employees over the edge. Disgruntled employees, or even customers, can also seek deadly amends in the workplace to settle scores for perceived wrongs they have suffered.

Horrendous and unthinkable as an active shooter scenario might be for your business, you need to consider it in a layered approach to securing the safety of your people and assets. You also need to make an appropriate response as part of a formal emergency plan.

Security basics. Businesses large and small must consider their various defenses to protect against crime and workplace violence, including shootings. Here are six basics every business should have:

- **Effective access control** – Only authorized employees and invited, escorted visitors, including customers and vendors, should be allowed on premises. Badging systems are common, but employees and managers should watch out for "tailgating" by strangers to slip into an entrance just opened by an employee. When employees are terminated, voluntarily or not, their access to premises must be removed immediately afterwards. They should also be escorted out.

- **Comprehensive video surveillance** – Video cameras can deter many rational criminals but not unstable individuals who are bent on destroying others' lives and their own. Nonetheless, advanced video technologies – especially facial and license number recognition as well as video analytics – can help alert responders, possibly before a grave incident can begin.
- **Trained security guards** – Highly important are the critical judgment and skilled vigilance of professional security guards, who are trained in a company's policies and procedures, including proper response and escalation of emergency situations to the appropriate public safety resources.
- **Staff screening, development, and recognition** – Hiring qualified people with collaborative instincts, good references, and clear background checks is the foundation for building a workforce and culture that respects both individual and team contributions. Post-hire, businesses should provide regular and fair performance reviews, opportunities for professional development and advancement, and recognition and rewards for work well-done.
- **Policies, procedures, and emergency plan** – Businesses should have a written set of security policies and procedures that define and describe which security measures are in place and how to respond to emergency situations, including an active shooter scenario. In effect, these should also provide an emergency plan that outlines specific measures and escalation paths for various emergencies related to health, environment, and safety.
- **Good communications** – Woven through most of the preceding protections should be good communications among all workplace stakeholders. These can include building or facility owners and their managers; tenant key contacts, if a lease arrangement exists; employees; and last but not least, local public safety authorities. Responsible individuals onsite should be identified and their response roles clearly defined and understood in case an emergency situation arise.

While much more could be written about these basic safeguards against workplace violence, including an active shooter scenario, they can serve as a checklist for a conversation business owners and managers should have periodically.



Q&A with a retail loss prevention and security expert: Shopping centers: “Like safeguarding small cities”

During a decades-long career in retail loss prevention and shopping center security, Brian Evans has seen every deceit possible, but he is still shocked by the will of thieves, criminals, and malcontents to steal goods, harm innocent people, and disrupt shopping for the general public.

He started as a store detective in his 20s working, then was a police officer for many years. After that, he got into loss prevention, eventually heading that function at the Hudson Bay Company and other notable retailers. Today he's Regional Manager, Consulting & Investigations, Western Canada for GardaWorld Protective Services.

We caught up with Brian in Toronto to tap into his experience and expertise for some insights on loss prevention and safeguarding shopping centers.

What are some of the biggest security challenges specific to the retail stores and shopping centers?

The biggest challenge is the vast area that a shopping center or mall can cover, plus the number of people. It can be like protecting a small city. Take the Heartland Town Centre in Mississauga, Ontario, for example. It's one of Canada's largest shopping centers, with 164 stores, lots of them big box stores, and restaurants. In all, its retail space covers more than two million square feet and that doesn't count the parking lots, where you could probably land a small plane on Christmas morning, if you had to. Providing security to that size of facility, especially during peak periods when literally tens of thousands of shoppers are flowing through the various stores and common areas, is a huge undertaking. Almost inevitably in a population that big, you have gang members, shoplifters, and purse snatchers, along with people with health problems, both physical and mental. You have to stay alert and response-ready.

That's certainly a big challenge. Any others?

In contrast, shopping center security is not contracted to protect the retailers, but to safeguard the common areas, like the food courts, walkways, and parking facilities. Where the challenge comes is that often the shopping center security doesn't communicate fully and regularly with the store owners and often not with the shopping center's own operations people. These gaps can allow shoplifting or other criminal trends to go unnoticed, simply because the right people are not sharing information.

How can stores reduce shoplifting theft?

There are five steps that every retail employee should be taught to combat shoplifting, but unfortunately most aren't:

- First is the "10x10 Rule." That is, an employee should greet every new customer who walks in the store within 10 feet and 10 seconds of entry.
- Second, employees should greet the person by looking into both their eyes. If the person avoids eye contact, then they might be hiding a bad intent.
- Third, even if employees are helping another customer, they should approach the individual, taking a few steps toward them. (They can apologize to the other customer and tell them that they'll be right back.)
- Fourth, if the person acts suspicious, employees should then offer them help with whatever the person is looking at, keeping in mind that they may have already shoplifted an item and are hiding it.
- Fifth, if none of these actions work, employees should pick up the phone, punch a few buttons, as if speed-dialing, and loudly say, "Yes, security. Please come to Fred's Dry Goods immediately." They don't have to actually talk to anyone.

In most cases, a potential shoplifter will exit the store on their own without stealing anything. And this approach is much more effective than anti-shoplifting technology, which experienced thieves know how to bypass and, too often, employees ignore when the alarms go off.

GardaWorld offers secure transportation and smart safes in a consultative partnership with retail loss prevention professionals in the US and Canada. As security experts, we additionally provide physical security guards to mitigate retail loss prevention and promote safety in retail environments in Canada.

To learn more about our services, please call 855 GO GARDA or visit garda.com today.