



CASE STUDY

SECURING THE RETAIL FLOOR: THE RISE OF BODY CAMERAS AND REAL-TIME CONNECTIVITY

BODY CAMERAS IN RETAIL

Despite the challenges brick-and-mortar retailers have been confronted with over the last few years, 2023 saw a significant return to in-store shopping with 70% of shoppers¹ visiting physical stores weekly, and 78% of consumers² preferring to shop in-store. This resurgence has highlighted the importance of creating an enjoyable shopping environment, with retailers prioritizing the safety of both employees and shoppers as a core aspect of this experience.

To achieve this, retailers are leveraging IoT video technology, including body cameras. Although initially used in law enforcement, body cameras have found a valuable place in retail by providing better visibility, improving security, and reducing financial losses.

These devices address ongoing challenges such as organized retail crime, shoplifting, internal theft, and increasing violence. As a result, wearable cameras have become a vital tool.





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Reducing Retail Theft

Body cameras provide a multifaceted approach to reducing theft. Would-be thieves are less likely to commit a crime if they know they are being recorded and can be effective at calming aggressive behavior. They also provide an unbiased account of events by offering front-facing visual and audio evidence to complement CCTV footage within stores. This video evidence is key to documenting, identifying and prosecuting shoplifters and helps law enforcement to create a strong case for conviction

The Power of Body Cameras

ADVANTAGES OVER CCTV

Moving with the wearer and worn at chest height, body cameras provide a dynamic perspective, allowing for better situational awareness compared to fixed-positioned CCTV cameras that have limited angles and fields of view. Equipped with built-in microphones, body-worn cameras can be configured to record audio along with video. This results in more detailed recordings of interactions, conversations, and specific actions. These wearable devices can also be fitted with features such as location tracking and 4G LTE connectivity, allowing for real-time live video streaming and alert notifications, enabling workers and supervisors to communicate as events unfold and apply the appropriate measures depending on the nature of the incidents.





BUILDING TRUST AND IMPROVING STAFF RETENTION

Greater safety and security measures help build customer trust and loyalty by giving customers peace of mind, encouraging them to shop comfortably. Additionally, body cameras contribute to improving staff retention and attendance, particularly for lone workers. Ultimately, the goal is to reduce criminal activity, to support a safer work and shopping environment which in turn contributes to a more secure community.



INDUSTRY ADOPTION AND TRENDS

According to the National Retail Federation survey¹, 52% of retailers are investing in technology, equipment, and services to reduce theft and improve employee safety. The same survey showed that 35% of participants were evaluating body-worn cameras for employees or loss prevention staff. With 11% currently testing or piloting body cameras as part of their security strategy. Some notable examples include Tesco² and Coles³, which have adopted body cameras to combat theft and customer violence. By 2024, companies like TJX Maxx⁴ and many California chains will standardize body cameras as part of their security measures.



INTEGRATING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

Incorporating body cameras into a broader security framework enhances their effectiveness. Real-Time Crime Centers (RTCCs) and Security Operations Centers (SOCs) play decisive roles in this integrated approach by leveraging real-time data from various sources to monitor and respond to criminal activities as they occur. These centers facilitate faster decision-making and coordination with law enforcement, improving incident prevention and response times. Together, body cameras and RTCCs/SOCs provide end-to-end security, fostering a safer shopping environment.

CONCLUSION

As the retail climate continues to evolve, the adoption of body cameras represents a significant step forward in enhancing security measures. With the added advantage of real-time connectivity to crime centers, body cameras not only help reduce theft but also pave the way for a more integrated and responsive security approach, setting the stage for long-term safety improvements.



REFERENCES

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² International Council of Shopping Centers. (2023). The Wall Street Journal Advertising: https://www.icsc.com/uploads/press/WSJ_AD.pdf

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³ 9News. (2024, August 24). Coles to equip staff with body-worn cameras to monitor shoplifting. 9News. <https://www.9news.com.au/national/coles-to-equip-staff-with-body-worn-cameras-to-monitor-shoplifting/d94d1fd4-056d-4aca-9e32-20ab1d8194ff>

⁴ CNN. (2024, June 5). TJX Maxx to implement body cameras to curb shoplifting. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/06/05/business/tj-maxx-body-cameras-shoplifting/index.html>



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IONODES provides innovative connected video solutions designed to enhance security, improve operational efficiency and reduce costs. Our PERCEPT Body Camera Solution coupled with the IONODES CitySafe Solution enables retail businesses and municipalities to leverage real-time video and remote monitoring to significantly enhance worker and customer safety, contributing to safer and more enjoyable customer experiences.

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