

Smart ways to optimize office security

Get the most of your security and create a safe, secure work environment

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Business owners face constant challenges to provide a safe and secure work environment. To help you get the most out of your office security systems, here are some of the most effective security solutions available for small businesses and retail facilities:

1. Install access control equipment

With an electronic access control system, you can easily manage access and egress while improving security and safety. The system incorporates software, electronic access devices and door hardware to improve overall safety and security. In an emergency, exit devices provide a safe way out of all doors, with re-entrance controlled by card access. A security management system helps eliminate the need for everyone to carry mechanical keys, and it can simplify access control management at all the buildings in your system.

2. Implement credential strategies

Credential-based access control systems allow businesses to eliminate mechanical keying. Proximity cards, magnetic stripe cards, smart cards, biometrics and PIN codes give authorized people access when and where they need it. And you can easily remove access for anyone no longer under your employment.

Card credentials capture important information and data about the user on one, easy-to-use plastic card. The credentials store information that allows access to electronically controlled areas, including production floors, office areas and storage rooms, or access to the building itself. Cards can be deactivated quickly if they are lost or stolen, and they can be replaced easily, where as a loss of mechanical keys, could result in a total rekeying of your entire facility.

3. Install or upgrade security cameras

Analog or IP-based video cameras and recorders can tie together video with access control. You can customize the system with pre-determined actions based on specific events to allow controlled access to buildings and surrounding environments.

Digital video surveillance systems transmit digital video feeds to your monitoring control center. These systems provide improved image quality and storage, enhanced search capabilities, ease-of-use, and the potential for integration. The result is that you have a visual record of all activity, enhancing security and reducing your liability in the event of a crime or accident.

4. Upgrade to wireless access solutions

Wireless access solutions provide the benefits of online access control without the wires, which makes the system easier to install. Wireless electronic locks, when combined with access control software, can provide the benefits of a networked system in terms of functionality, flexibility, control and security.

Wireless systems can be applied to doors, elevators, gates and other applications. More important, some wireless devices are 'open architecture' and connect to any of today's access control systems. That means users do not have to replace their existing panel or credentials. Such systems are an attractive alternative to offline, stand-alone locking systems, because they are easy to manage from a central point.

5. Consider biometric security systems

Biometric technology incorporates biometric products that can verify hand geometry, fingerprints or face characteristics to ensure that only persons who actually are authorized can gain access to a particular door. They may be combined with various devices placed around the opening or integrated into the latching and locking mechanism to detect, deter and delay an intruder and signal that a breach has occurred.

Hand geometry readers are a great example of a biometric device that minimizes the risk of people transferring IDs for admittance into facilities, such as production areas and data storage facilities. Instead of verifying a card or code, the readers verify the person who is at the entrance by looking at the three-dimensional size and shape of a user's hand. The result of 90 hand measurements, including lengths, widths, thickness and surface areas, is converted into a nine-byte mathematical representation of the hand, which is stored for later use and verification.

6. Consider offline, stand-alone solutions

Keypad programmable solutions provide the same dependable protection as traditional keyed locks while adding a heightened level of convenience and freedom. These solutions are typically called "offline" or "stand alone" because each lock is programmed individually, instead of being connected to a network. The devices use personalized codes or electronic credentials rather than keys to allow entry. User identification information can be added or deleted at any time without the expense of re-keying locks.

Electronic, stand-alone locks provide a level of security traditionally found in networked solutions but without the associated costs. The programmable, battery-powered locks can provide audit trail capabilities and time-based scheduling for restricting access.

7. Utilize access control devices for entrances/exits

Retrofit kits allow you to convert your mortise and cylindrical door closers and exit device applications to electric latch retraction systems. You can reap significant cost savings because you don't need to replace the entire device, and this simple change can measurably improve the level of security by ensuring a secure latch that requires a unique credential to gain access.

8. Implement a key management system

Key management systems refer to mechanical locks and key systems that are an important part of any security plan and serve as the foundation for the rest of the solution. They can be used to secure doors that do not require electronic security. Patented key systems can provide an extra layer of security for key override of electronic security solutions.

Restricted keyways have strict limitations on use and distribution. The system provides a way to control who can make copies of keys to the premises. Plus, a restricted keyway makes it extremely difficult or impossible for employees to make unauthorized copies of keys.

Key systems may be the most inexpensive means of securing your business, yet provide assurance that your doors are secure. These systems are most effective when you follow a structured key management system that ensures you know who holds all your master keys, as well as which individuals in your organization have keys to which doors.

Learn more about office security

For more information about optimizing security in your office or building, please contact a professional security consultant in your area by calling **888.758.9823** or fill out the **Contact Us** form on our website at allegion.com.

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