

BUILDING RELATIONSHIP

Forging an alliance with the police will go a long way toward preventing crime in the jewellery industry.
By John Lamont, Director of Crime Prevention, JVC

The recent events of the Boston Marathon bombings and the arrest of two suspect terrorists plotting to blow up a VIA Rail train have demonstrated, better than any words can say, how important working with police is to prevent and apprehend criminals. JVC first partnered with police in 1996 and has since forged strong relationships with many police departments across Canada. This column looks at some of JVC's more recent interactions with police.

Phyllis Richard, Executive Director, JVC

I've heard it said that "in retail, if you stand still you will die." Part of what this means is that you must continually strengthen relationships for them to be successful. This is true in both personal and business relationships.

JVC is always working to build a strong relationship between the jewellery/watch industry and the police to bring a greater focus to crimes committed against our industry.

I recently attended the Jewelers Security Alliance of the USA security seminar in Las Vegas. I arranged to have three Canadian Police Investigators attend with me; Detective Don Cardwell of the York Regional Police, S/Sgt Bruce Walker of Calgary Police Service and Det/Cst Caroline Wigglesworth of the Vancouver Police. Each of the Canadian investigators gave a presentation to seminar attendees on jewellery crime in their areas. They made important contacts with police investigators from the New York City Police as well as the FBI. They also spoke with loss prevention managers from many jewellery chains in the U.S., sharing information on loss prevention techniques and methods of combatting jewellery crime.

The overall consensus from the officers was that networking and sharing information is of the utmost importance. They also agreed that proper security equipment can help prevent losses; if a loss does take place, equipment such as properly installed cameras can greatly assist police in solving a crime and preventing further crime.

SHARING INFORMATION

During the recent events in Boston, cameras captured video of the subjects responsible for the crime; the sharing of these pictures with the public helped to very quickly identify the subjects. There is no doubt that the quick apprehension of the two men prevented further bombings from taking place.

The sharing of information between the FBI and the RCMP also prevented terrorists from blowing up a VIA Rail train. These methods work in preventing and solving all types of crime. JVC has had great success when sharing pictures of subjects responsible for grab and runs, diamond switching and other crimes.

JVC ACTIVITIES

JVC is continually updating security policies for jewellers in order to help combat changes in criminal activity. To assist in this process, Detective Doug Bedford of the York Regional Police has become an

advisor to the JVC Board of Directors. His expertise and knowledge in investigating major jewellery crimes is a great asset to the Board.

JVC continues to be a major sponsor of the Eastern and Western Police robbery conferences. The next conference will be held in Vancouver at the end of May. JVC is working with Vancouver and Calgary police to put together a training seminar in each city so Police can talk to jewellers and travelling salespeople about crime they may face in their daily routines. JVC is also working with Edmonton Police to speak to jewellers at the Edmonton show in August.

JVC has developed a "Police Only" database where police can share information with any police officer in Canada investigating any jewellery crime - information that may be too sensitive to initially release to the public.

APPRECIATION AWARD

To further build the strong industry-police relationship and show our industry's appreciation to police when they have investigated and solved a major jewellery crime, JVC awards the JVC/Jewelers Mutual "Police Appreciation Award" to investigating officers.

In the past, the award has been presented to the following police departments: York Regional Police for a major investigation involving South American gang members targeting travelling salespeople; Vancouver Police for a lengthy investigation and subsequent arrest of a gang committing armed robberies of jewellery stores in the Vancouver area; Peel Regional Police for the arrest of a gang targeting jewellers in Brampton; Waterloo Regional Police for an arrest of a gang committing violent armed robberies in Kitchener and Guelph.

Most recently, Durham Regional Police received the award for the arrest of three individuals for a violent robbery in Oshawa where a jeweller and a staff member were severely beaten.

In any relationship, one must work to make it strong. JVC will continue to work to build a greater information sharing network through future endeavours via Facebook and Twitter. Building a strong relationship with police will greatly help to reduce crime in our industry. CJ