

DISPLAY CASE SECURITY

It has long been said by security experts that you are only as secure as your weakest point. You may have heavy class three safes, expensive locks, and high security alarms and yet during the day you display all your high end merchandise in showcase that have no more than plate glass or at the best tempered glass protecting them. A showcase filled with loose diamonds, diamond solitaires or high end watches can easily be valued at a quarter to half a million dollars.

If that showcase does not have any special security features criminals can access the case in a matter of seconds and be out of the store in minutes with all the merchandise. The most recent event happened in Saskatoon when four men entered the store and within 3 minutes had destroyed 5 showcase and removed over \$500,000 in merchandise.

Almost on a monthly basis JVC receives reports of daytime robberies where criminals rush in with hammers and smash the showcases stealing high end watch and diamonds and are out in minutes. Some jewellers have reduced the amount of the loss by applying a security film to the tempered glass. In a robbery in Guelph it took a masked bandit 12 hits with a small sledge hammer to make a hole in the glass big enough for his hand to fit in and when he reached in and was pulling out merchandise he cut his hand giving police his DNA. If the jeweller had applied a higher millimeter film he would not have got in at all. Companies such as Titan Window Films in Vancouver who are a distributor for 3M film or Faubion Associates in Dallas can provide showcases that cannot be penetrated with a hammer. In the past some jewellers were concerned that the film would yellow over time. That is no longer a problem. Visit the web sites of the companies and view the online video for yourself.

I have even seem some stores that do not pull the merchandise at night and simply cover the case with a blanket so the bandits do not know what is in the case. Surely, they don't believe that. By simply watching the store closing procedures they would know what merchandise is in the case and the fact it is not removed.

Going back to my original point of the weakest point, simply putting security film on the glass may not provide the best protection. One jeweller had security film on the glass in their showcases but the doors for the showcases were made out of particle board which could be easily pried off or split in two to gain access to the case.

Another weak point can be the type of sealant that is used to join the glass top of the showcase to the front and side glass. In many cases only a plain clear silicone is applied to connect the glass.

Criminals with a box cutter can cut the silicone and while staff are distracted they lift the glass and remove the merchandise. There are silicones on the market that once dried cannot be penetrated with a knife. These types of sealants are used in prisons around windows and toilets to prevent prisons from cutting and removing them.

And then there are the showcases that have total security built in. Security Film on the glass that even a full size sledge hammer would not penetrate, showcase doors that cannot be pried out or smashed during the day and then at night with a simple push of a button the entire bed of the showcase lowers into a steel cabinet and a steel sliding door which raise over the bed and is

locked with a high security locks. It appears at night from the outside that all the merchandise has been removed and the store is empty. If criminals did break in it would take them too long to penetrate even one locked case. A special warning. These steel cabinets are not considered to be a safe and a jeweller should consult with their insurance company before leaving high end product in them. Your insurance may require the high end product to be stored in a burglar safe.

These types of security features do not add any significant cost to a showcase compared to what your loss could amount to. When merchandise is on display during the day its great appeal to your customers is not diminished in any way and to the bandit he will look for a much easier target.

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