

Pharmacy Security Case Study



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Overview:

Mr. Ernesto Garza-Gongora, owner of Stone Oak Pharmacy, located in San Antonio, Tx. was worried about break-ins at his pharmacy and wasn't confident that his existing system provided enough protection so he started searching for more effective products.

Background:

Pharmacies have long been a target of choice for criminals seeking powerful pain killers, cash and even cough medicine (a recent trend).

This recent news story highlights the frustration, fears and business concerns pharmacy owners have in Fresno, California after repeated break-ins. Mr. Garza-Gongora shared these same feelings and wanted to do something more proactive to protect his business.

<http://www.yourcentralvalley.com/news/kgpe-local-news/fresno-pharmacists-say-theres-no-stopping-break-ins>

The primary challenge faced by these business owners is a very common one. The alarm system can function perfectly after an intrusion, but the criminals know they have a window of opportunity until the authorities arrive. The Wall Street Journal reports that the national average for police response times is 11 minutes (2014 article), but this # can vary widely based on location (remote vs urban), weather and police staffing.

Alarm calls are usually not given a high priority compared to 911 calls that may involve verified emergencies. This means that the real time before the police arrive can be *much longer than 11 minutes* giving the thieves plenty of time to steal as much as they want.

This is not the only loss suffered. Extensive damage to the property and the business down time also contribute to the total loss. This problem has become so pervasive, insurance policies have become more expensive (and sometimes cancelled), with higher deductible limits and rates.

Solution

Based on his research, Mr. Garza-Gongora decided that SmokeCloak made the industry's leading fog security device and contacted SmokeCloak's North American distributor, Smoke Solutions for more information. Based on the store footprint, a VALI 10 was recommended and installed in the pharmacy in December, 2011. It was connected to the pharmacy security system to be activated when a motion sensor near the counter and drug area was "tripped". The system is installed on a wall facing towards the front door, designed to drive the intruder out once the fog is emitted.

20 years of use in security applications has shown that the burglars or robbers quickly flee the protected area (almost always empty handed) because they become disorientated by the fog or even concerned about its content, thereby protecting the location until the police arrive.



Results

The pharmacy was broken into only 5 months (April, 2012) after the SmokeCloak was installed. It was activated during the break in, driving the intruders out with little product to show for their crime. Mr. Garza-Gongora says, "The SmokeCloak performed flawlessly and prevented the thieves from getting any inventory. We have been broken into 3 times since and each time the SmokeCloak went off as planned and drove the burglars out with little or no product loss." In 4 years of operation, the SmokeCloak hasn't been involved with any false alarms.

Conclusion

Mr. Garza-Gongora has been so pleased with the SmokeCloak's effectiveness, he's planning on enhancing his store's security by installing another VALI 10. SmokeCloak is also upgrading his system with a new DNA marker that easily mixes into the glycol solution (food grade safe) and marks criminals with a location specific, forensic identifier. This provides a powerful law enforcement tool to place a criminal and any stolen items at the scene of the crime. This can also provide a deterrent effect once word gets out that a "**Forensic DNA Fog Machine**" is present.



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