



Anthony

Breaking *and Entering*

Story by Scott Anthony
Photo by Rick Daugherty

You are a victim; your business has been violated. After a barrage of emotions, your determination is to not let your shop get broken into and ransacked again. Let's take a look at some of the steps you should be taking to protect your pizzeria.

Police officers recommend that a business establish redundant layers of defense to protect from loss and/or damage of property. Start outside; check the lighting around the perimeter of your store and parking lot. Is it inviting with blind spots or well lit, therefore deterring criminal activity? Are your windows and doors secure and armed with a security device? Each step towards your safe needs to deter potential invaders.

Security devices come in a wide array of products and prices. Is it better to hire a security company or DIY? Joe Wadlow, president of Monte Cello's Pizzeria, has tried both since his company's inception in 1980. Monte Cello's eight units have operated in western Pennsylvania since 1980 with little loss. Wadlow comments that "advancing technology has made it possible for us to do most of the alarm installation and security monitoring ourselves. Of course we are tied in to the local police department, too, if an alarm is tripped."

Monte Cello's, like most pizzerias, employs a combination of security cameras and alarm systems. These layers of protection have led to exposing areas of weakness.

"Cameras have prevented litigation in a slip and fall episode and have alerted us to safely store empty kegs so no one would come along and take them for the deposit," says Wadlow.



Police officers stress that while cameras are an asset to loss prevention, being able to pull a high-quality still photo from the footage is key to an investigation, so invest in a system that will aid law enforcement. As for an alarm system, law enforcement suggests installing a system that notifies police within 2 minutes. That is to say that from the time the door / window is opened, the alarm sounds, the alarm company calls to verify illegal entry and then notifies local authorities, no more than two minutes has elapsed.

Do we have additional defenses in place while awaiting the arrival of police or in case of a system failure? Telephone lines can be cut or power may be turned off to your system. If phone lines are cut, what can alert authorities of the intrusion? Security advisors say that a 105- to 120-decibel alarm will usually scare off criminals and alert neighbors who in turn will phone police. Audible alarms can be placed inside or outside your establishment for more effectiveness. Having unusual lighting, such as a

colored strobe, tied in to your alarm will catch someone's eye, telling them something is amiss. Additionally, can a passerby easily see in your business or do you have signage, poor nightlights or displays that block the view of activity inside your operation? Any unusual activity needs to be detected easily and immediately. In the case of power being cut, it is recommended that you have a battery back-up to keep systems operational.

Lastly, if one does gain entry to your business and begins their search for cash, have you protected the obvious? Leave your cash drawer open with money (minimal amount needed to operate securely) in a safe. This will improve your chances that valuable equipment is not destroyed during a break-in.

Today, most cash drawers are integrated with a POS system. Regularly back up and secure storage of the data contained on your POS. According to measurement firm IDC, 44 percent of companies that lose their operating data close their doors forever. POS providers recommend that information be backed up at least weekly to a flash drive that is stored in a different location.

As for your safe, keep it concealed, closed and locked when not in use. Place your safe with the hinge away from the wall and the door opening next to the wall. This makes it harder to pry the door open. You may bolt your safe to the floor or wall to further prevent loss.

No one wants to be a victim. Do more than lock your door. ❖

Scott Anthony is a Fox's Pizza Den franchisee in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. He is guest-writing this month's column.