Until recently, businesses relied on people to recognize individuals by their looks. As companies grew, security administrators turned to personal identification numbers (PINs) and identification cards for proper identification. But identification badges, keys and other credentials could be lost, stolen or given to friends. Today, business managers recognize that the complexities of retail environments have rendered those old ways of verifying people’s identities insecure and unreliable.

The right security for your retail facility in today’s world includes a mix of locks, merchandise sensors, key systems, exit devices, door controls, electronic access controls, doors and frames, and video surveillance systems. You may also need a professional who can help you determine what you need and help you get set up and ready to go. Look for a complete bundle of services that include store design, equipment installation, ongoing maintenance service programs, security and safety solutions, facilities monitoring and optimization services, as well as audit programs.

Consider working with a security professional who can help you determine the right level of security for your needs. From mechanical access products like deadbolts and keys to facility integration, including a sophisticated networked access management system, these experts can customize a security program to suit your business.

Another growing trend in security systems today relies on advanced biometric technologies to provide failsafe ways to grant access to hundreds – even thousands – of authorized users while maintaining the highest level of security and control. Biometric technology offers a secure alternative to easily lost or compromised ID cards and PINs. In less than one second, biometric technology uses biological characteristics, such as hand geometry and fingerprints, to verify and recognize a person’s identity.

Typically, biometric ID technologies use physiological characteristics, which are unique to each individual. Examples include fingerprints, face recognition, DNA, hand geometry, iris recognition, and odor or scent. A system assigns each person a unique ID number, based on biological data, then compares the biometric data associated with this ID number with the scan or reading each time the individual requests access. Depending on the credential, this
information can be stored either on the smart card or in the system. Since no two persons carry the same biological data, biometrics offer the highest level of security available today.

Hand geometry systems simultaneously analyze thousands of points and instantaneously record measurements of an individual’s hand, including length, width, thickness and surface area. From the calculations, the system creates a person’s ID number. Readers correlate the person’s biometric data and PIN information to verify the identity and allow access to facilities.

Because a person’s hand becomes an ID card, the biometric reader allows access only to authorized people without the hassles of a card or key. Eliminating ID cards also reduces administrative costs, yet increases security levels. For a higher level of security, hand readers can also require a card for access, resulting in double authentication before permitting access.

Biometric security systems are appropriate solutions for retail applications of any size or for areas that require varying levels of access permission. Since data can be changed easily, these systems are ideal for environments with frequent user changes and turnover. These systems provide streamlined solutions for access points that require real-time updates to openings, and access rights or advanced credential options. Biometric readers can be used for time and attendance applications, eliminating “buddy punching” and other fraudulent activities. This can save companies thousands of dollars each year, by ensuring accurate payroll records for every single employee.

Consider the right system for your business environment. By using technology to increase the amount and quality of information, you can improve your ability to manage employees and your store’s overall safety and security.

Learn more about increasing your security

For more information about how security could improve your business, 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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