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Security risks facing your business are greater than ever. Yet, your budget may not reflect the rising challenges before you.

By most accounts, funding will always be a problem for small businesses, so you need to be vigilant in looking for creative ways to find solutions – and funds. Here are some ways to help ensure the safety of your staff and assets, yet stay within your budget constraints:

Building considerations

Sightlines: Evaluate whether or not your offices have a clear line of sight to the approach to the building, entrance and hallways. Consider relocating offices to improve the view. This will help you spot right away people who don’t belong or who pose a potential threat.

Technology centers: Move offices with considerable equipment, technology and other valuable property to spaces in the center of the facility, away from windows and openings. This can help reduce the risk of break-ins and theft. These rooms are also great places to implement electronic access control (EAC) because it provides a higher level of security than a mechanical lock, while providing you with an audit trail of who has used the lock and when.

Entrances/ exits: Consider retrofitting locks on entrance and exit doors with electronic access control systems. Electronic locks provide a higher level of security than mechanical and the credentials are easier to manage. What’s more, if a credential is lost or stolen there is no need to re-key the lock and replace keys.

Ensure the entrances and exits are well marked and well lighted, from inside and out to deter crime and increase the peace of mind of your employees and visitors when walking to and from the building.
Mechanical locks and key systems form the foundation for your security management solution. Use them to secure doors that do not require electronic security. Patented key systems also work well with electronic security solutions and eliminate the risk of duplicated keys.

**Exterior facility lighting:** Install uplighting around the exterior of the building to improve quick surveillance and safety.

**Technology upgrades**  
**Electronic systems:** Consider installing door monitoring sensors that notify you when the door is opened. Video surveillance systems with time/date recording are affordable options for monitoring interior and exterior spaces. Card-based access control systems also offer a higher level of security than you get from mechanical locks.

If you are working with a tight budget, access control systems that operate without the need for a network are a great place to start. These may be referred to as either “stand alone” or “offline” systems. These locks rely on personal identification (PIN) codes and other credentials that offer a heightened level of protection and control, and yet they are convenient for the user. Since the locks are not connected to a network they are programmed using the lock’s keypad or a handheld device.

If you have more to invest in your security system, a software-managed electronic access control system allows you to manage doors from a single point. These systems are referred to as “online” or “networked” systems because they are operated using your network. With a networked EAC system you can add and delete users, track usage, and manage data from a single point instead of on a door-by-door basis. Since this type of system is easy to update and change settings, they offer enhanced security and more convenience for less money.

Networked EAC systems also provide control of a large number of users and entrances in real-time. Advanced network access control devices may include biometric, proximity and smart card readers, and both wired and wireless integrated locking solutions.

In some applications, it is not feasible to connect every access point in a facility to a central network. This is especially true in existing and older buildings where it would be difficult and time-consuming to cut into walls and run wire. Wireless networked solutions eliminate costly installation of wires and cables thereby reducing disruption to the workplace caused by the installation process, but still provide all the benefits of a hardwired system. Because wireless systems require much less labor to install they may also be less expensive than traditional hardwired systems.

**Integrated solutions**

When you are looking for top-of-the-line security, an integrated solution will deliver the highest degree of security, allowing easy management of people and openings throughout the entire facility. These systems seamlessly combine access control, video surveillance, time and attendance, monitoring and more into a single interface that improves awareness of situations and enables faster response times.

**Site Considerations**  
**Planting design:** Minimize hiding places around your building or store. Avoid planting groups of trees and shrubs around entrances and corners that would allow people to hide. Instead, create large, open areas surrounding planting clusters.

**Keeping the distance:** Extend the distance from buildings to parking lots to increase visibility. Place barriers such as raised planting walls and trees between parking areas and building entrances. While these obstacles may not stop a criminal, they do prevent a barrier to his progress into or away from your building.
Securing your business no matter what your budget

**Safe site clear zones:** Keep plantings trimmed less than three feet tall to provide a clear line of sight for staff inside the facility, as well as pedestrians and drivers outside the facility.

**Lighting (landscape and parking):** Provide appropriate lighting for parking lots and planting clusters, and furnish well-lighted paths to entrances.

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Learn more about securing your business

For more information about securing your building within a budget, 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**.