

CASE STUDY

Industry	Retail
Solution	Short-Term Assignments
Focus	Burglary Prevention



TITLE

HOW ONE LARGE RETAILER SUCCESSFULLY FIGHTS BACK AGAINST PROFESSIONAL BURGLARY RINGS

INTRODUCTION

Across several major cities, a big-box chain was being hit nearly nightly by overnight retail thieves who would pull in behind stores near loading bays and use industrial cutting tools to carve a hole in a store’s back door — escaping minutes later with up to \$20,000 worth of merchandise. Gangs were in and out too fast for intrusion detection and alarms to matter, delivery requirements made fencing off the areas impossible, and video surveillance was ineffective as thieves easily concealed their identities with hoods and masks.

OPPORTUNITY

The financial toll was mounting, as were indirect losses, from the loss of employee hours to managing restoration and filing police reports to staff resigning or calling in sick due to safety concerns. The retailer knew that preventing burglaries would mean a sizeable financial gain — but it needed to find an affordable and flexible solution, one that could be deployed to specific locations to disrupt criminal activity when and where hotspots were starting to emerge.

SOLUTION / APPROACH

The retail giant turned to its security services firm (a member of the International Security Ligue). The firm used its extensive partnerships with off-duty police to arrange burglary suppression details in a variety of configurations during overnight hours.

- Decisions about when and where to place officers were informed by the firm’s crime trend analysis and occasionally through intelligence from store managers and reports of seeing suspicious individuals that suggested a particular location was being watched by a burglary ring.
- One the security firm identified an at-risk location, it tapped into its large personnel resources, arranged the burglary prevention details, and managed all administrative issues surrounding deployment.
- About every other day, the security firm positioned off-duty officers for burglary protection details outside select at-risk stores, usually as a visible deterrence in marked patrol cars but occasionally covertly. On one occasion, they caught three burglars in the act and apprehended them—and it became obvious that news of the apprehensions spread.

RESULTS / BENEFITS

The results were dramatic. For more than a month, the retailer saw one of its stores within the metropolitan area victimized every 2 or 3 nights. After the security firm’s intervention, burglaries dropped to zero. Because burglary ebbs and flows, often following local crime patterns, investing heavily to fortify locations or hiring extra staff would have meant hardening targets at last year’s vulnerable locations. Utilizing the firm’s personnel resources on a temporary, emergency basis was far more cost-effective and allows it to nimbly respond to spikes in crime.