

Who Can You Trust

During the recent holiday period there were a few encounters and conversations with people that prompted us to revisit the security issue this month.

Towards the end of last year one of the Uniwell dealers installed a security system in a fruit and vegetable store in a shopping center. He found that the flow through menu system of the new Uniwell DX touch screen terminals he had been installing into restaurants was ideal for fruit and vegetable stores where the operators want to quickly find items within a couple of screen touches. The Uniwell system he had installed included a linked security camera. The day after he had set up the camera he was doing some training and showing the store owner how to read back through the overnight recordings. To the amazement of the store owner, the first night's recording showed four incidents of pilfering by people who were trusted staff in the shopping center. It started with the cleaner checking out the POS system and surrounding area for surplus cash, then helping themselves to a few fruit bars before moving on. It was at a time when the price of bananas had skyrocketed and the next two visitors were a couple of people who came into the center early to start work, ventured into the fruit store and headed straight to the bananas. These were nice friendly people who regularly called into the store during trading to buy a few items, have a nice friendly chat and who up front came across as very decent people who you can trust.

One day in a busy beach side suburb at a busy café/restaurant we asked the happy cheerful staff about their POS system and were told they don't use it because it never works properly and that they are always busy from morning to night and can run the place better by doing everything manually. When asked if the owner was around we were told he's not there very often and leaves everything up to them anyway so he wouldn't be interested in talking to us about his POS system. No wonder the staff are so happy.

As part of my relaxation regime during the holiday period I make myself take the time to sit and read a few books. While looking round the book store I came across a few volumes of Charles Dickens and thought it would be nice to catch up on his classic writings and bought a copy of his book "Our Mutual Friend". One paragraph part way through the book is very interesting in regards to this article. It is where he discusses how someone who has been taken from unfortunate circumstances and given well paid employment and a trusting position will start to begrudge the fortune of his benefactor and use his position of trust for self benefit. "A common truth the world over" Dickens says. True in 1865, true in 2007. These days it maybe that the employee sees the owner driving a nice new European car and thinks it's time he got a bit more of the action.

Since starting this article the February edition of Eatdrink has arrived and there is a very interesting article about the influence of drugs in the workplace. One employer says that they reckon they have lost about \$50,000 in stock in the last 12 months. This is obviously a large organization but as we say above, pilfering happens everywhere from the small store to the largest resort.

Over a period of time we have written numerous articles about implementing security, but when you see figures like this you wonder how it was allowed to go this far in a technological age where a few minutes spent daily with the most basic electronic cash register system will show something is amiss; there's no need for a sophisticated

computer program or computer whiz who knows how to run a full blown stock accounting package. Mogens Hansen from Uniwell POS Australia says "we can give a restaurant a system that will give full financial and stock accountability for a tax deductible leasing cost of less than 2 cups of coffee a day". When you look at the sort of financial losses people are talking about in February Eatdrink the financial outlay for the technology to take control is "a drop in the ocean". What to do once the disappearances are found out is another story.