



Securing Commercial Buildings

Best practices to provide a safer working environment for your employees and colleagues.

Your properties need a new security plan or an update to an existing one. Where do you begin? The first step is to determine needs and expectations before tailoring a custom security plan.



CUSTOMIZE YOUR SECURITY PLAN

Effort in the early stages can help save time and resources during the run of the project.

Determine Security Needs and Expectations by Assessing Risk

Projects go smoother when there is an early agreement from decision makers.

Discuss with key administrators, department heads, and staff members

Any project will go smoother when there is an early agreement from decision makers. Talk with top administrators and the IT group to determine needs, existing capabilities, and expectations. Remember employees and security personnel too. They'll live with the plan every day and likely offer valuable insight. Consider reaching out to your local first responders. They are another great source of security information.

The support of these groups is critical, so keep them regularly updated as the plan is implemented. You want to get things done right the first time. Effort in the early stages could help save time and money during the run of the project.



Tailor a plan

With input from your top stakeholders, you're ready to start thinking about equipment, budgets, and new policies. But security isn't sold as an off-the-shelf, one-size-fits-all plan. This means you'll likely be working with a security integrator to tailor a plan specifically for your building.

Policies, procedures, and equipment

Best practices are policies, procedures, and equipment that have been proven to work on buildings of any size. A good example of this is securing building entrances.



Written policies help staff understand how visitors are approved for entry; why doors can't be left propped open; and when to shelter-in-place or evacuate during an emergency.

Management should also consider training staff to look for signs of distressed, and potentially-violent employees while providing ways to get help for them.

While others have worked on best practices for mental health screenings, stricter HR policies, and faster law enforcement responses, the security industry has created effective physical security solutions for protecting buildings.

How to Protect Your Building

Businesses rely on various technologies working in tandem to create a reliable security solution. From hardware, like doors and locks, to network solutions, like IP video intercoms, there are multiple components that make up a comprehensive system.

Doors and Locks

Quality doors and locks are meant to effectively delay criminals from getting into buildings. The most effective security comes from the combination of a solid core wood or metal door plus an electromechanical lock.

Challenges and Considerations

Unfortunately, glass doors are widely popular and it is best to replace them. If that's not possible, apply weapon-resistant security film or stainless-steel screens to the glass. This may delay access long enough for the security plan to be implemented and first responders to arrive.



Electronic locks provide a high level of security. They integrate with access control and video intercoms so doors can be opened remotely. Staff members can use card readers and keypads to enter. Electronic locks eliminate the need for keys, which can be easily lost, stolen, or copied.

Access Control

Security experts agree that access control—using cards or PINs—is a vital part of any campus security plan.

3 Elements of Access Control

What you have—an ID/access card

What you know—(PIN) a personal identification number

Who you are—confirmed by biometrics or database reference

Look around a big campus and you'll see thousands of card readers and/or keypads at main entries, parking garage gates, office doors, and more.

Two Trends Changing Access Control

Mobile credentialing is swiftly replacing badges with mobile devices. Security is enhanced as a person must have possession of a smartphone or tablet, a security code or biometric confirmation to open the device, the downloaded credential, and an app. Visitors can quickly be added using email. Mobile credentials save money by eliminating expenses for badges, printers, and ink. New hybrid readers work with both mobile devices and existing badges allowing facilities to make an orderly move to the new technology.

Biometrics such as, fingerprints, iris scans, or facial recognition, have become a new tool to authenticate visitors. There are no cards to lose



or share. Enrollment in the system takes only a minute or two. And just like cards, you can add time, day, and place restrictions on each person.

Combine card readers, key pads, and/or biometric readers for doors requiring absolute identity authentication.

“Access control can be as simple as a single door station with a video intercom and as complex as multiple authentication devices such as a keypad/reader combination deployed on multiple doors with software that allows administrators to manage all aspects of the system.”

Dario Santana
President, Layer 3 Security Services, San Diego

Visitor Management

The days of asking visitors to use pen-and-paper sign-in books are gone. Best practices now favor electronic visitor management systems (VMS). They're accurate, easy to operate, and enhance security.

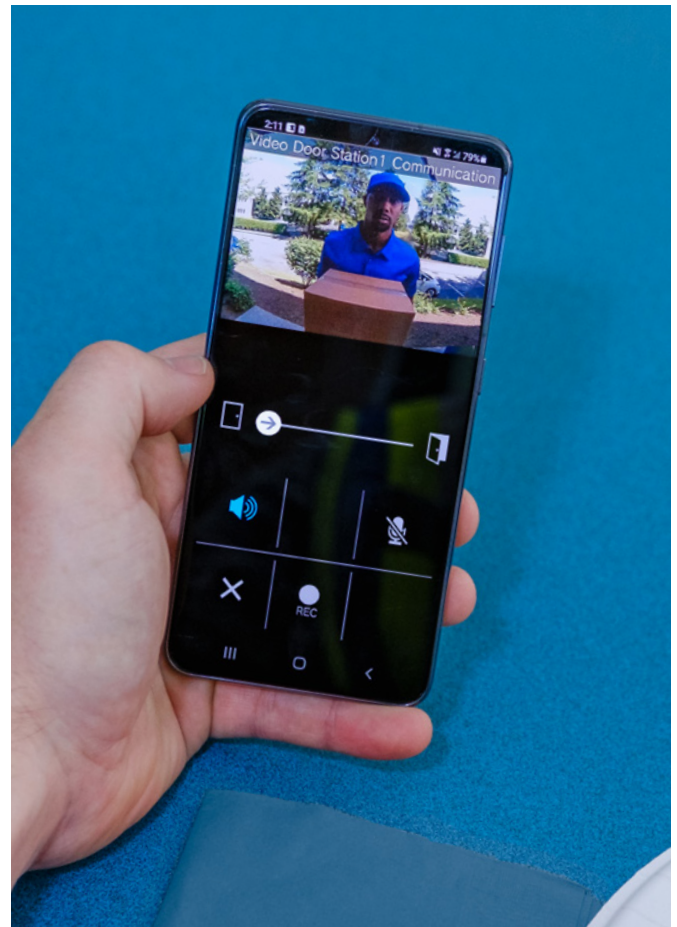
Electronic Lists and Temporary Badges

Visitors are asked to produce a government-issued photo ID which is swiped through a visitor management system. Within seconds, the person's information is checked against federal and state criminal databases.

A commercial campus can also add its own custom watch lists. When properly implemented, watch lists provide protection from abuse orders, criminal issues, and the names of disgruntled former employees.

After the system clears a visitor, a temporary badge is printed with the person's name, picture, date/time, and area they are approved to visit. Some badges automatically fade within a specific time frame to indicate the visitor's authorized time has expired and prevent the badge from being reused.

Visitor information from multiple campus stations is stored in a central database, and is easy to share with first responders during an investigation.



Mobile Apps

Most of us use mobile devices every day. We use them to book travel plans, check the latest sports scores, and share news and photos with our families and friends.

Digital apps can also be a valuable security tool. Some apps stay connected to a network 24/7, allowing officers to remotely patrol the campus while remaining tethered to a security operations center. Security officers can monitor video, receive immediate notifications, open doors to approved visitors using a video intercom, and much more.

Increasingly, companies are utilizing apps providing direct communication links between users and a security officer with the touch of an icon.

Video Monitoring

Numerous studies have shown the presence of cameras is enough to deter many criminals. Simply put, criminals don't want to commit crimes when they know they're being watched.



Security cameras provide round-the-clock, real-time views of buildings and outdoor areas. They help prevent dangerous incidents and can limit the damage when events do occur. Recorded video is useful in reviewing incidents and identifying suspects.

IP cameras are the obvious choice. Their high resolutions provide better image detail than their analog predecessors. Often powered over Ethernet (PoE), they don't need a local AC outlet like analog models.

Wireless IP cameras are ideal for remote installations, such as parking lots, where running cable would be costly or impossible. IP cameras and network video recorders (NVRs) become part of the campus network. Live and recorded video can be viewed remotely on smartphones and easily shared with first responders.

Today's cameras capture incredible detail. That means fewer cameras are needed to capture events. Software analytics can monitor live network-based video and create alarms for any number of user-defined events, such as a strange package left unattended.

Video surveillance should cover building entries, perimeters, hallways and stairwells. Outdoor security cameras should monitor parking lots/garages, main thoroughfares, walking trails, and other remote areas.

Security cameras are ideal for confirming or disproving liability claims and helping with training and compliance issues.

Emergency and Assistance

Providing high-visibility security solutions can help protect those who cross your campus.

Police and security staff need all the input they can get when assessing a threat. This is why security cameras are effective. High performing cameras can provide clear, real-time visibility to remote areas. Infrared cameras can provide good images even in very dim light.

Emergency stations are easy to spot with their bright blue lights. A distressed person can use these to ask for help. Video intercoms provide two-way conversations, while the built-in cameras help dispatchers make decisions about how to respond to an emergency. Dispatchers immediately know the station's precise location when calls for assistance arrive. Camera arms enable a





second IP security camera to be attached to provide a broader view of the area. The stations also have a non-emergency call button for those needing directions or other non-emergency information.

Tower and wall-mount emergency stations are ideal for use on pedestrian pathways, parking facilities, and perimeters around commercial campuses.



Intrusion Alarms

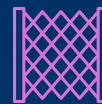
Protect people and valuable assets 24/7 with intrusion systems.

Sensors create audible alarms when doors are forced open or windows are broken. Motion detectors sense people moving through buildings at night, during holidays, and weekends. Sensors protect HVAC and other equipment targeted by thieves.

Examples of Specialized Sensors



Barrier bars protect hard-to-secure windows, air conditioning ducts, or even attic vents



Cable sensors can be woven into fences to alert security of someone attempting to enter a protected or dangerous area



Flood/Freeze sensors monitor conditions in server rooms and labs requiring a consistent climate



Carbon monoxide sensors will warn if there are high levels of this deadly and odorless gas



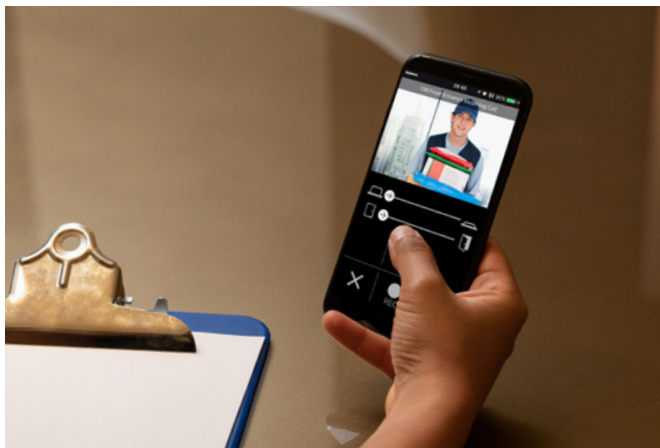
Wireless outdoor sensors can be used to protect building perimeters or campus outbuildings

Video Intercoms

All doors should now be locked. But what about visitors and others needing to get into buildings or offices? This is where a video intercom is an ideal solution.

To properly control access into a building, a door station is needed at the entrance. Depending on the system, you can select either master stations, guard stations, tenant stations, or mobile apps for visitor screening. A master or guard station can be at a receptionist's desk or part of a security guard's workspace. Roaming guards and commercial campus security can use mobile apps in lieu of a physical master or guard station.

A door station can be installed outside any entry. When visitors push the door call button their faces and surrounding area are displayed on the inside station or mobile app. A two-way conversation begins, and if the visitor is approved, the door can be conveniently unlocked with the push of a button or swiping the in-app slider.



Security Benefits of an IP Video Intercom

- ✓ Employees with missing or faulty credentials can quickly be let inside
- ✓ Vendors can request access at loading docks, will calls, or service entrances
- ✓ Built-in high-definition cameras can be used to verify ID cards
- ✓ Visitors can be seen from a broad surveillance camera or the identifying view of a video intercom
- ✓ Piggybacking can be monitored by staff if other people try to sneak in with approved visitors
- ✓ Pictures can be provided to police when investigating an incident
- ✓ Intercoms can be added virtually anywhere communication is needed
- ✓ Emergency call stations are valuable for areas where remote security is required

TECHNOLOGY TIP

Many modern networked video intercoms have a smartphone app that lets patrolling security guards remain in remote control of the system. Download it and increase the efficiency of security staff.

Integration

Having compatible security products from different manufacturers creates a safer working environment. It is now standard for building owners to select different peripherals for addressing the many facets involved to properly secure their buildings.



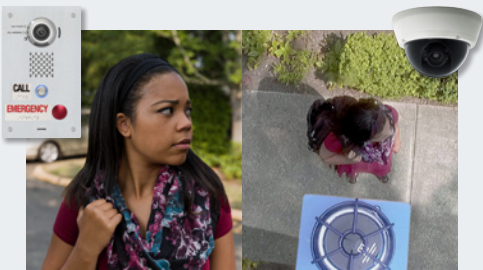
Visitor Screening Technology (aka IP Intercom)

An IP video intercom doubles as an entry security and internal communication system. Choosing a system with mobile app capability offers even more flexibility for buildings that are monitored by one person. Opting for an IP solution not only allows for future expansion, but existing network cable can be used to help save on resources.



Access Control Host

Whether accessing a building from outside, or accessing an interior room within a building, stations with built-in card readers are a convenient option for authorized personnel to quickly gain access. When you have a hosted access control system, more features become available for visitor management and event logging too.



Surveillance Cameras

When you need to discreetly monitor activity throughout your buildings or campus, there are an abundance of network cameras available from many reputable manufacturers. Tying with an existing IP video intercom allows you to toggle between the close-up view of the intercom or the broad view of a surveillance camera.



Paging Systems

By far one of the oldest technologies on this list, the first documented example of a PA system was over 100 years ago. While the concept of public address remains the same, the technology has vastly improved over a century. Having the ability to broadcast pages and alerts can prove to be life saving; paging remains to be a common security component.



Common Platforms (SIP, VoIP, VMS, NVR, and more)

With the combined strength of common security platforms, your system can be equipped to run like an enterprise-level Security Operations Center (SOC). One guard can effectively oversee the activity of multiple buildings, reducing potential labor costs on added security personnel.



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