



2026 Retail Loss Prevention Benchmark Report

**Based on 1.6 million monitoring events across
18,258 U.S. retail locations**

How interactive remote video monitoring, live intervention, and
AI-enabled perimeter deterrence are reshaping retail security

OVERVIEW

1.6 million

remote monitoring requests

53,369

high-priority security events

18,258

US retail locations

51

distinct brands

REPORTING PERIOD

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

This report provides retail loss prevention teams with data-driven insights to improve store security and employee safety.

“

Loss prevention teams are under more pressure than ever to protect people, reduce shrink, and justify every dollar spent on security. This report gives them the data and the confidence to make those decisions.



Brent Duncan

CEO, Interface Systems

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Data Source

The findings in this report are drawn from anonymized operational data collected from Interface Systems' retail customers across the United States throughout 2025. The dataset covers January 1 through December 31, 2025, with one exception: the holiday analysis section includes December 31, 2024 solely to capture security incidents on the day before New Year's Day, enabling a consistent before/during/after comparison for that holiday.

The dataset is limited to retail brands operating in the US and captures metadata generated through interactions with Interface's Interactive Security Operations Centers (iSOC). This includes:

- Method of contacting our iSOCs
- Date, time, and location related to events
- Type of event, such as high-priority security incident, business support, equipment malfunction
- Events that result in the dispatch of police or emergency services
- Types of security events or threats

How events are classified

Total event counts are based on resolved events across all categories: Business Support, Criminal Activity, Disruptive Activity, Emergency Response, Security Escort, False Alarm, System Health, and Tour. High-priority event counts are drawn from a subset of three categories that represent genuine security threats: Criminal Activity, Disruptive Activity, and Emergency Response.

A note on scope: All customer data has been anonymized. Brand and location identities are not disclosed anywhere in this report. The dataset is limited to US retail locations only and does not include data from other industries or geographies served by Interface Systems.

DISCLAIMER

The findings in this report are intended for informational purposes only. Retail chains should consider their unique circumstances and conduct their own analyses before implementing any security measures. The effectiveness of interactive remote monitoring and other security practices may vary depending on specific situational factors. Interface Systems will not be liable for any outcomes resulting from the application of these insights and recommends a formal consultation with its security experts before implementing any solution.

Definitions

The following definitions describe the incident types classified by the Interactive Security Operations Center (iSOC) when managing high-priority security events across retail locations.

INCIDENT TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Location Theft/ Loss	Incidents involving the unauthorized removal of merchandise, cash, or property from a retail location. This includes shoplifting, employee theft, and organized retail crime events detected through video monitoring.
Loiterers/ Panhandlers	Individuals lingering on or near store property without a legitimate business purpose, including panhandling or soliciting customers. These events may escalate to trespassing or create safety concerns for patrons.
Disturbance	Disruptive behavior occurring on or near store premises, such as verbal altercations, unruly conduct, or actions that threaten the safety and comfort of customers and employees.
General Criminal Event	Criminal activities not classified under specific categories, including vandalism, trespassing, drug-related offenses, and other illegal behavior observed on store property through remote monitoring.
Battery/ Assault	Physical altercations or violent incidents involving customers, employees, or third parties on retail premises. These events carry a high dispatch rate due to the immediate threat to personal safety.
General Non- Criminal Event	Security-related incidents that do not involve criminal activity, such as customer disputes, policy violations, suspicious but non-threatening behavior, or safety hazard observations.
Request for Assistance	A security-related request for support, observation, or intervention that does not initially involve a confirmed crime or emergency, but requires iSOC awareness or action to help address a developing concern on store property.
Voice-down	A security-related response in which a remote intervention specialist issues a live verbal message through the site's audio system to deter suspicious activity, address unauthorized individuals, or help manage a developing concern on store property.
Burglary	Unauthorized entry or attempted entry into a retail location, typically occurring outside business hours. Burglary carries the highest dispatch rate of all incident types due to the severity of the threat.
Medical Aid	Incidents requiring medical attention for individuals on store property, including customer injuries, employee health emergencies, and other situations requiring emergency medical service dispatch.
Security Escorts	Assistance provided to help ensure safe movement of employees, customers, vendors, or authorized visitors to or from a retail location, parking area, or surrounding property when a security concern or perceived threat is present.

What Retail Loss Prevention Leaders Need to Know

Based on 1.6 million monitoring events across 18,258 U.S. retail locations, the data shows that retail risk is not random, and that proactive, interactive monitoring materially reduces escalation.

What We Found

TOP RETAIL THREATS

Location Theft/Loss, Disturbance & Loitering

combined make up more than 88% of the volume of threats.

Loss prevention tactics should prioritize solutions that can mitigate these threats.

RETAIL RISK IS PREDICTABLE

6–8 PM Peak Window

with Sunday recording the highest number of incidents.

Incidents follow predictable rhythms, not random patterns.

AI-ENABLED PERIMETER DETERRENCE

96.1%

of perimeter threats resolved automatically.

Automation handles first-line deterrence. Specialists handle the rest.

What Works

REMOTE INTERVENTION PREVENTS ESCALATION TO POLICE DISPATCH

62.4%

of high-priority events resolved without police dispatch.

Interactive monitoring stops incidents before dispatch is needed.

VOICE-DOWN WORKS AT SCALE

99.7%

of voice-down interventions resolved employee requests for assistance without police dispatch.

Real-time audio intervention is the most effective de-escalation tool.

VIDEO VERIFICATION PREVENTS FALSE ALARMS

95%

of alarm events resolved as false alarms by video verification.

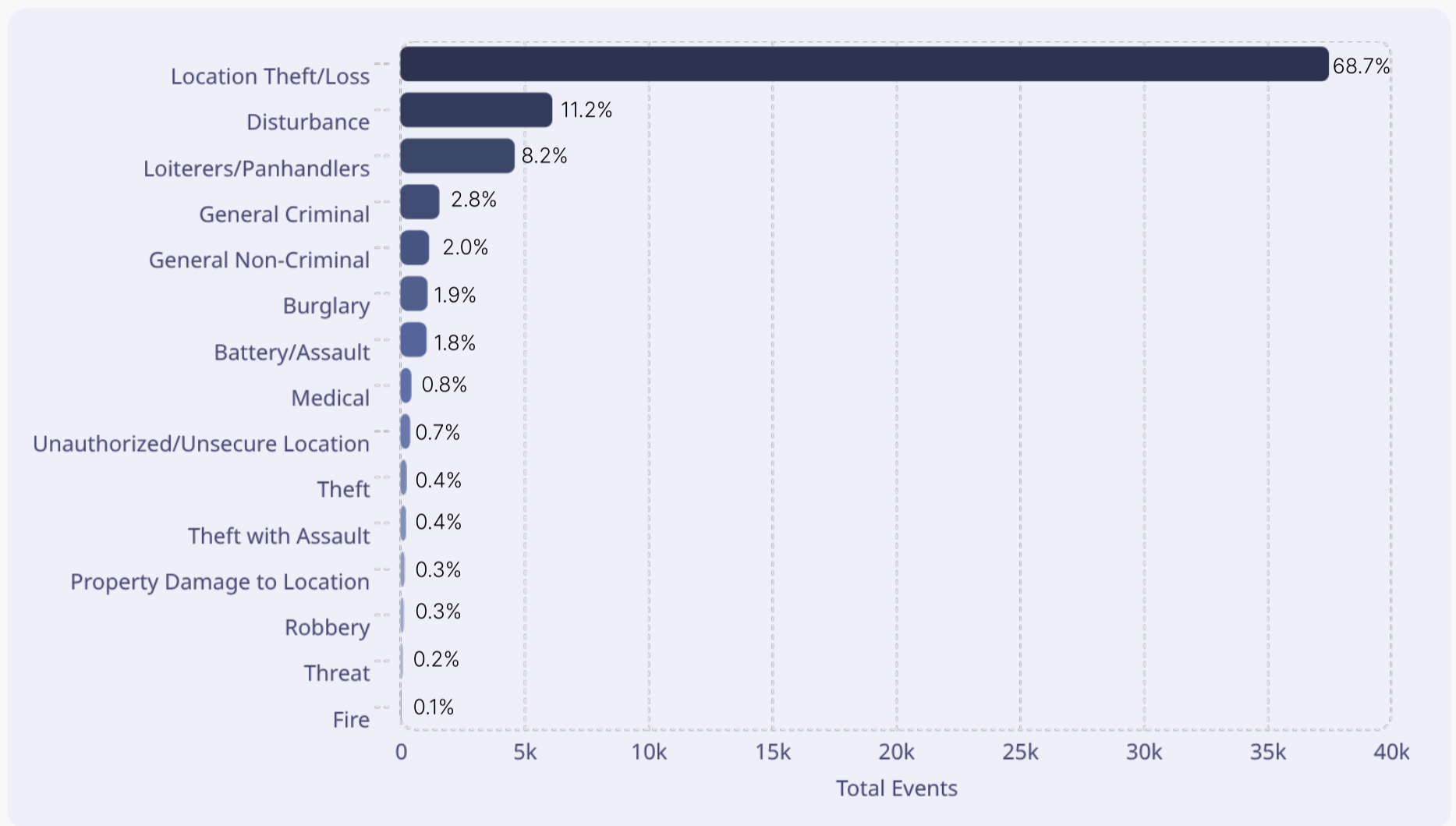
Lower escalation rates when human verification is involved.

Why this matters: LP leaders can now align staffing, intervention, and perimeter defense strategy to real operational risk patterns, not assumptions.

Top Retail Security Threats

Across 53,369 high-priority events recorded in 2025, Location Theft/Loss, Disturbances, and Loitering/Panhandling are the highest by volume and medical aid, loitering and burglary carry the highest police dispatch rates.

Top Security Incidents by Volume



Top Incidents by Dispatch Rate

Medical Aid

77.6%
of 406 total events

Loitering/Panhandling


75.5%
of 4,376 total events

Burglary

71.8%
of 1,015 total events

Retail Risk Follows Predictable Operating Windows


Retail risk is not random. It follows predictable operating rhythms. Across 18,258 U.S. retail locations, incidents spike at opening, peak between 6–8 PM, and incidents are highest on Sundays and Mondays.



INCIDENT SPIKE

363%


Incident spike at store opening



PEAK WINDOW

6-8 PM

Peak escalation window during evenings



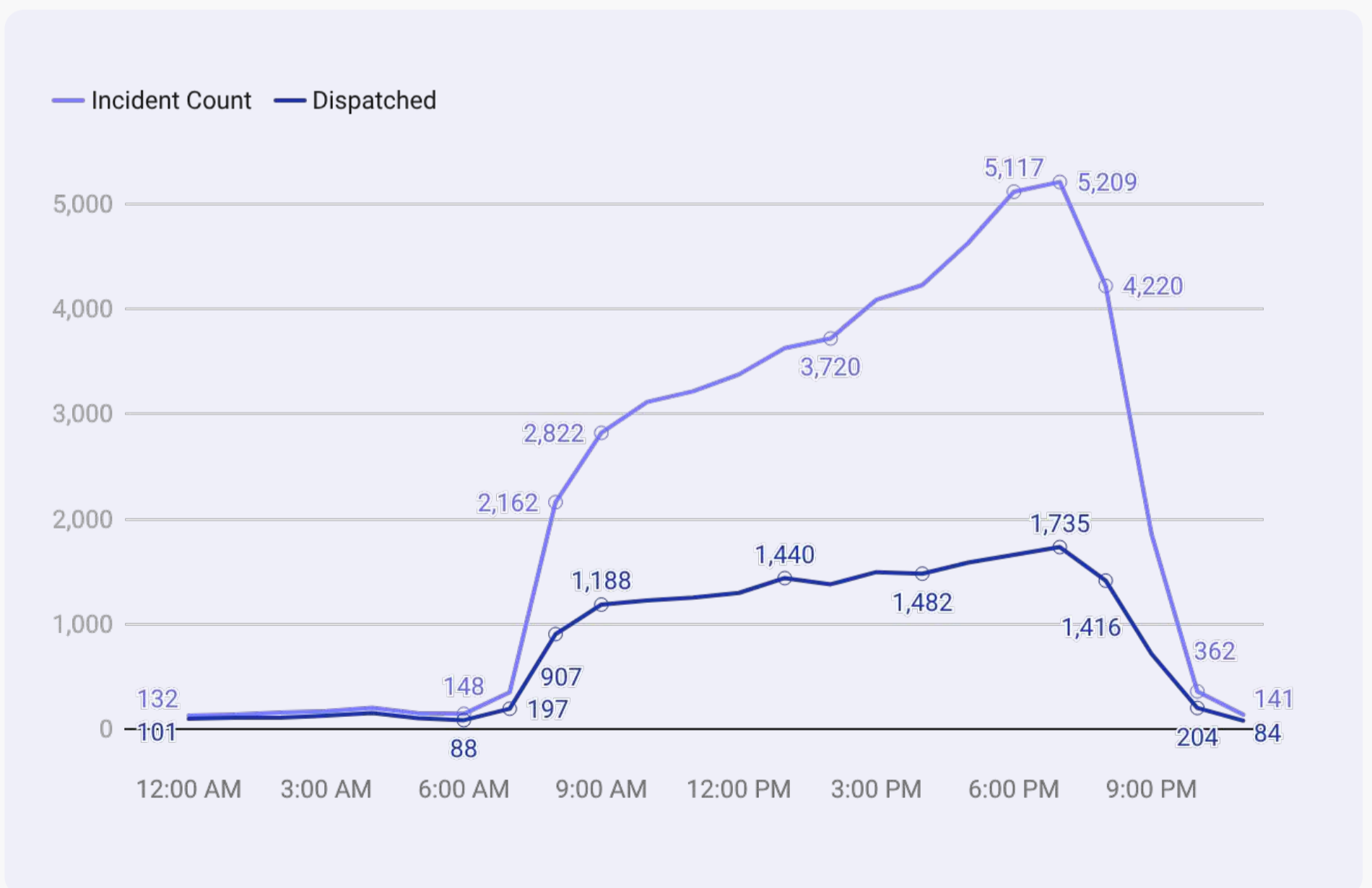
INCIDENT VOLUME

30%

Volume of incidents on Sundays and Mondays

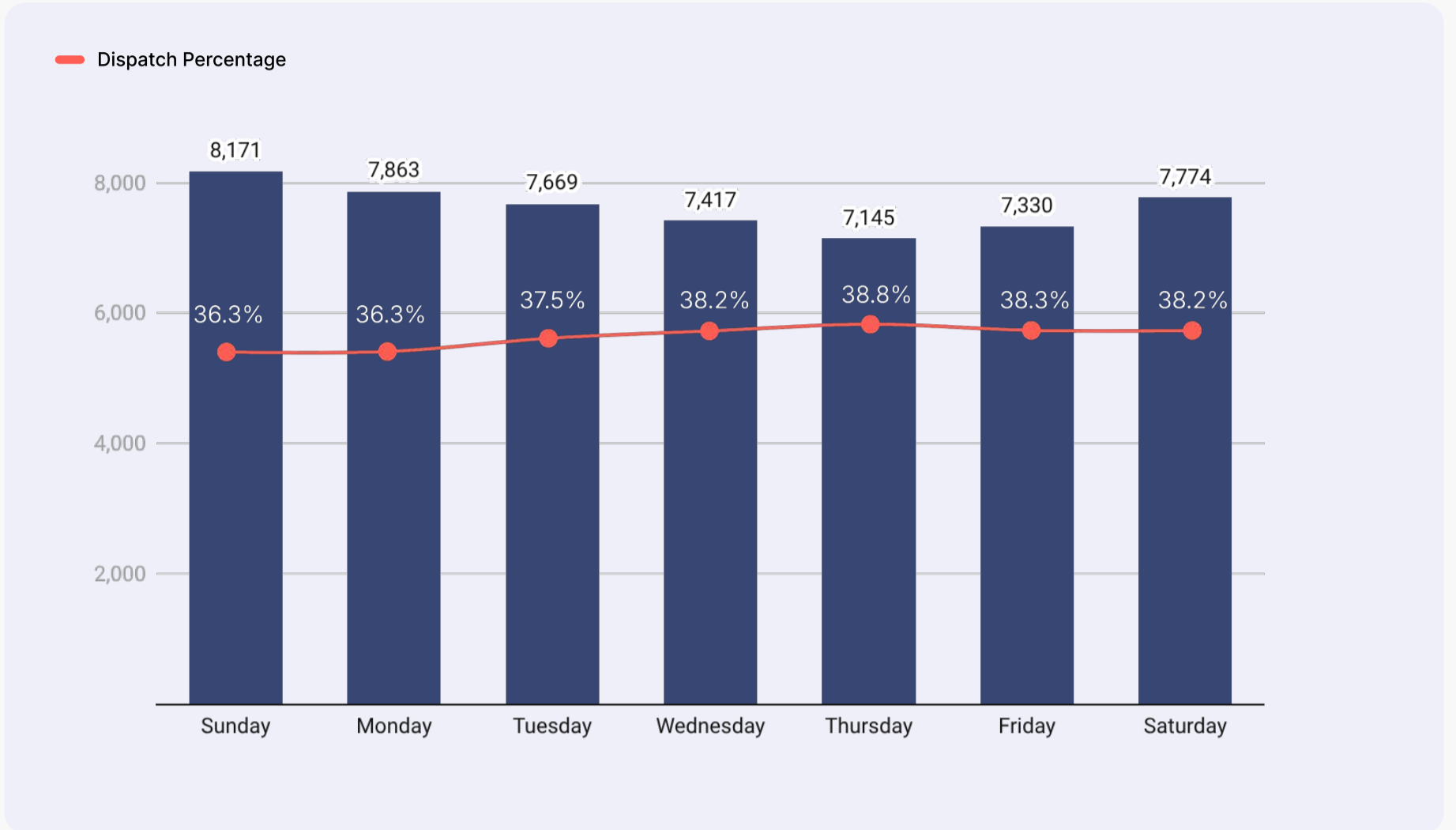
Daily Risk Arc

Incidents rise at 8 AM, sustain through the afternoon, and peak sharply at 7 PM.



Weekly Pattern

Sunday and Monday drive the highest number of incidents, while Thursday drives the highest dispatch rate.





What LP Leaders Should Do


- Staff or schedule intervention specialist coverage to overlap with store opening and the final hour before close.
- Flag Sundays and Mondays for elevated monitoring.
- Request day-of-the-week incident reporting from your monitoring provider.

Loitering and Disturbances Are Early Warning Signals, Not Minor Events

Loitering and disturbances often precede higher-risk escalation. They require fast intervention, not passive observation.

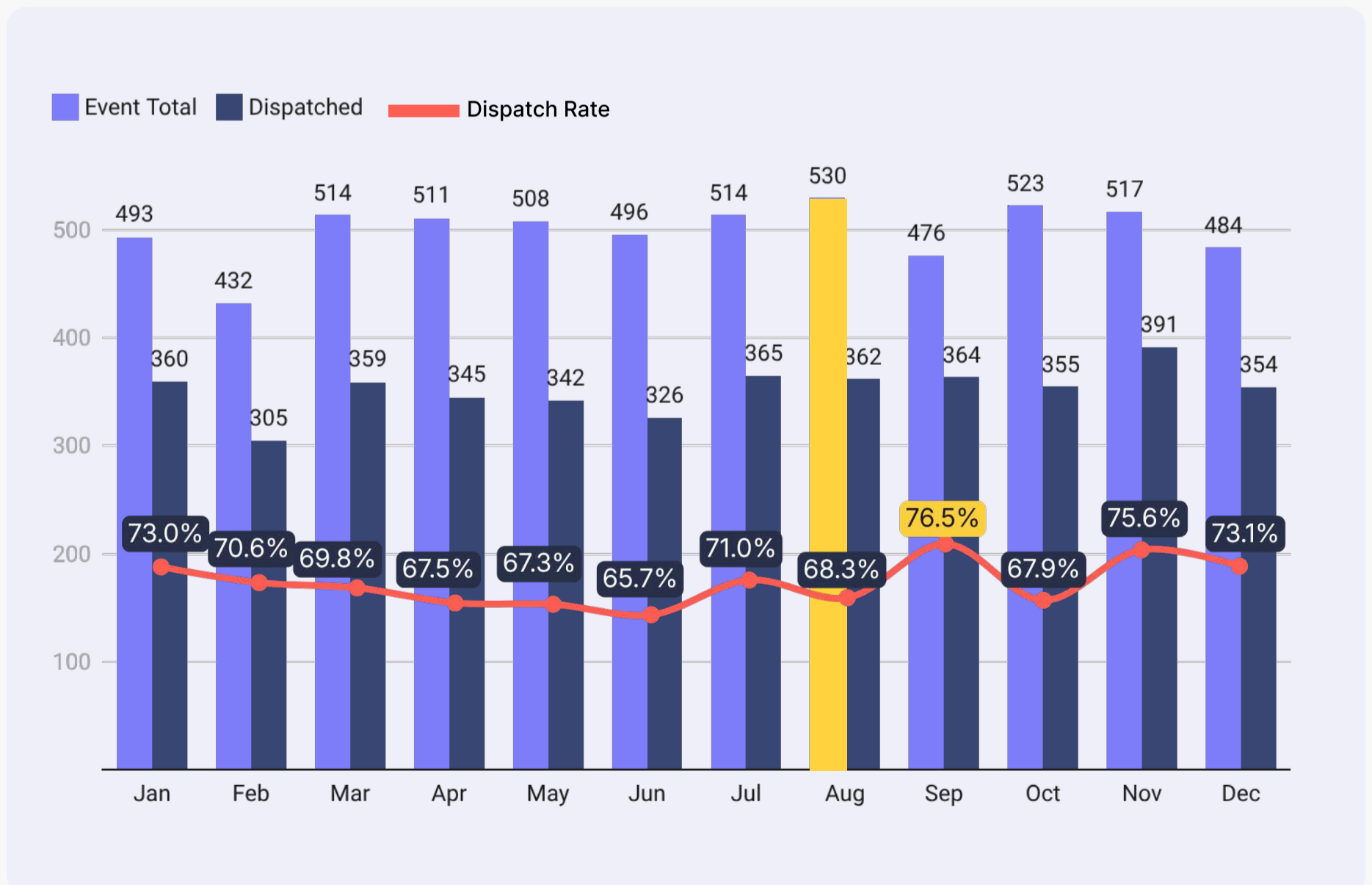

 DISTURBANCE PEAK
76.5%
 Disturbance dispatch rate in **September**, peak month


 DAILY PEAK
6-8 PM
 Daily peak for both disturbances & loitering


 LOITERING PEAK
81.8%
 Loitering dispatch rate in **July**, highest of the year

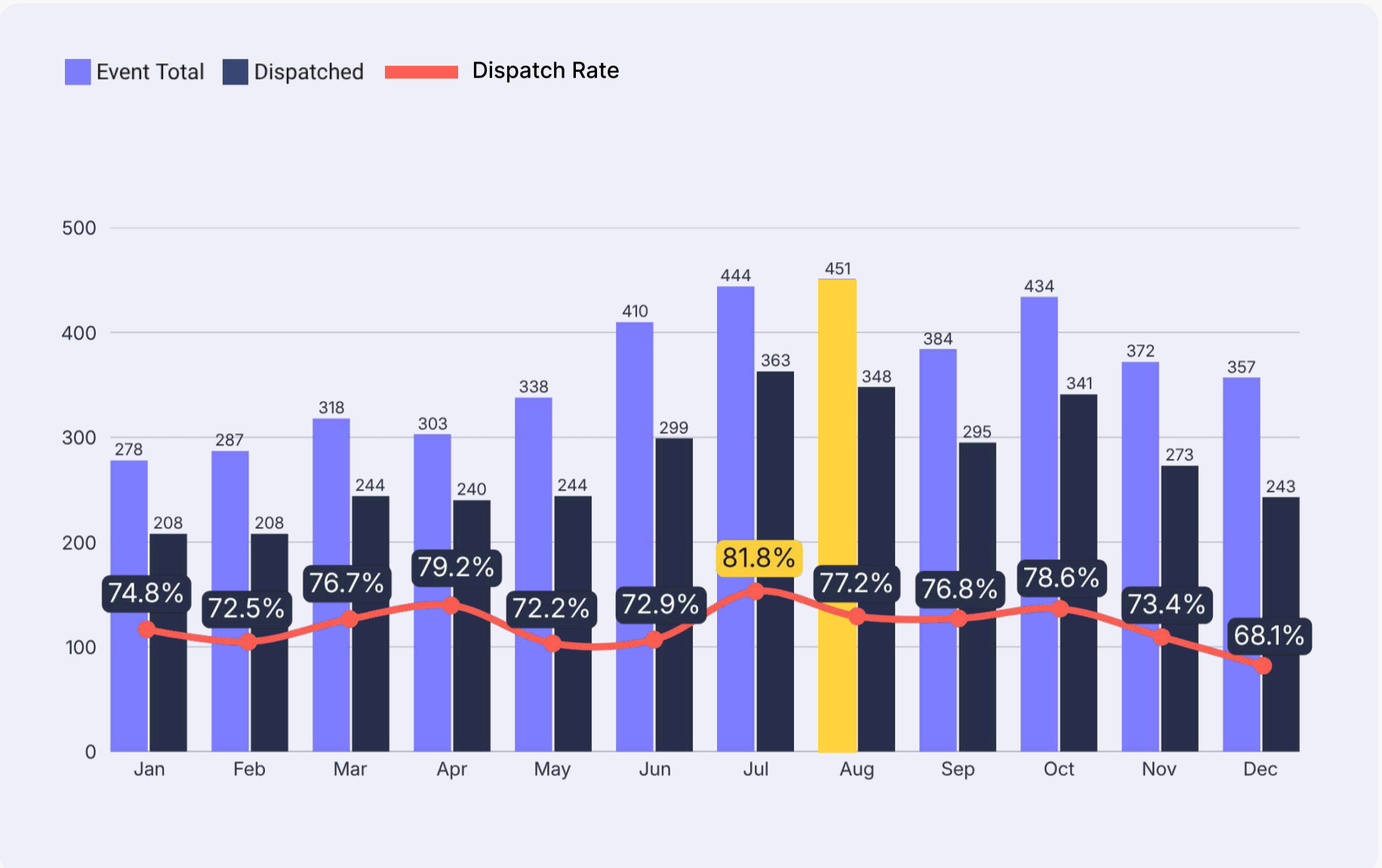
Disturbance Volume by Month

Disturbance incidents peak in August with a dispatch peak in September. Dispatch rate is consistently above 65%.



Loitering Volume by Month

Loitering incidents peak in August with a dispatch peak in July. Dispatch rate is consistently above 68%.



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Reclassify loitering and disturbances in your incident response protocols. These are not nuisance events. Dispatch rates for both exceed 76% at peak, meaning more than three out of four require law enforcement.
- Add seasonal escalation coverage for July through September. Loitering dispatch rates reach 81.8% in July and disturbance dispatch rates reach 76.5% in September.
- Confirm your monitoring provider can verify and intervene on loitering alerts in real time. Passive camera recording does not stop a loitering situation from escalating to assault or theft.

The Day Before the Holiday Often Carries More Risk Than the Holiday Itself

Pre-holiday days show the highest average incident volume. The actual holiday is often quieter, and the day before is the real exposure window.

188

Incidents day **before MLK Day**
highest pre-holiday spike

9

Incidents on **Christmas Day**
lowest holiday volume of the year

169

Incidents day after **Memorial Day**
highest post-holiday spike



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Treat pre-holiday days as elevated-risk operating periods.
- Confirm monitoring coverage is active and fully staffed for the day before holiday closures, not just the holiday itself.
- Brief store managers on closing procedures 48 hours before holiday transitions. The vulnerability is the last shift before the holiday, not the holiday.

Interactive Remote Video Monitoring Prevents Escalation



What is Interactive Remote Video Monitoring?

Interactive Remote Video Monitoring allows intervention specialists in security operation centers to see, hear, and speak with employees at the business locations being monitored and eliminates the need to deploy on-site security guards.

This is made possible by deploying security cameras, microphones, and speakers at every location that's monitored.

99.7%

Voice-down interventions resolved without police dispatch

0.38%

Overall dispatch rate across all employee requests

95%

Alarm events resolved as false alarms with Video Verification



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Audit your monitoring contract for two capabilities: live video verification of every alarm before dispatch, and real-time voice-down intervention through on-site speakers. If either is missing, your program cannot match the resolution rates in this report.
- Benchmark your dispatch rate against the 0.38% rate in this dataset. If your provider cannot tell you your dispatch rate, that is a gap worth closing.
- Request quarterly reporting that shows events resolved remotely versus dispatched, broken out by event type and time of day.

Employee Demand Peaks During the Most Vulnerable Operating Windows

Employees rely mostly on remote assistance at opening, closing, and shift changes, not during peak shopping hours.

1.1M

total assistance requests

434K

total Voice-down requests

356K

total Security escort requests

298K

total Monitoring requests



MORNING SURGE

10 AM

Opening and early shift transitions drive the first vulnerability window.

97,432

combined requests



EVENING PEAK

7 PM

Closing routines and thinning foot traffic create the highest-demand window.

146,672

combined requests

The highest employee-support demand does **not** align with the busiest customer traffic. It aligns with **exposure**.



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Align monitoring coverage to opening, closing, and shift-change windows.
- Support employees during operational transitions, not just peak sales periods.
- Use overnight monitoring as a risk-control layer, especially in discount retail.



AI-Enabled Perimeter Deterrence Is Very Effective in Stopping Crime

The Virtual Perimeter Guard is Interface's next-generation perimeter security solution that leverages proven interactive technologies and AI to deliver autonomous monitoring outside the store. Across 29 locations, Interface's Virtual Perimeter Guard stopped perimeter threats automatically 96.1% of the time.

96.1%

Threats resolved through Automated Deterrence

99.9%

Overall effectiveness without police dispatch

Only 1

Police dispatch across 23,810 activations

23,810

TOTAL ACTIVATIONS

11,150

Stage 1: Automated Voice-Down (47%)

7,009

Stage 2: Automated Voice-Down (29%)

4,727

Stage 3: Automated Voice-Down (20%)

924

Escalated to Intervention Specialist (4%)

1

Police Dispatch

Please note: The data set for this study includes the performance data from Virtual Perimeter Guard units deployed by Interface in retail stores only in the last quarter of 2025.



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Evaluate AI-enabled perimeter deterrence for exterior and after-hours risk.
- Conduct an ROI analysis of savings over paying for physical security guards.
- Reserve human specialists for events that truly require escalation.

Different Retail Formats Require Different Security Models

Jewelry stores and discount retailers face fundamentally different threat profiles and employee support needs. Findings compare 1,068 jewelry locations and 10,796 discount retail locations from the same 2025 reporting period.

Discount Retail

10,796 locations
51,060 high-priority events
38.1% dispatch rate
 Voice-down: **60.4%** of requests

Jewelry Stores

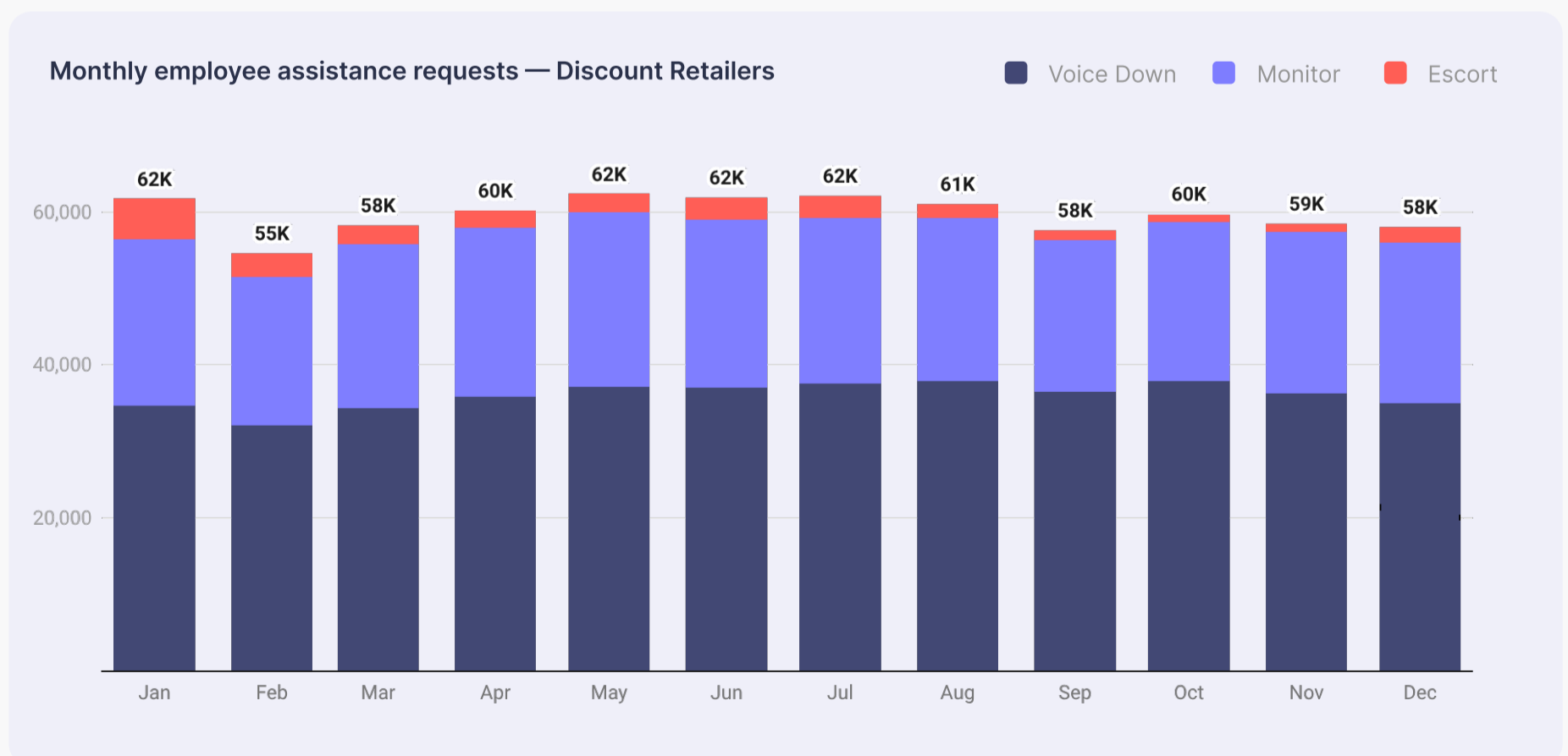
1,068 locations
277 high-priority events
42.6% dispatch rate
 Escort: **98.6%** of requests

Employee Assistance: Fundamentally Different Needs

In discount retail, most requests are for voice-down and monitoring. In jewelry stores, nearly all requests are for security escorts. It is a fundamentally different model.

Discount Retailers

716,043 total requests · Voice-down: **60.4%** · Monitor: **35.7%** · Escort: **4%**

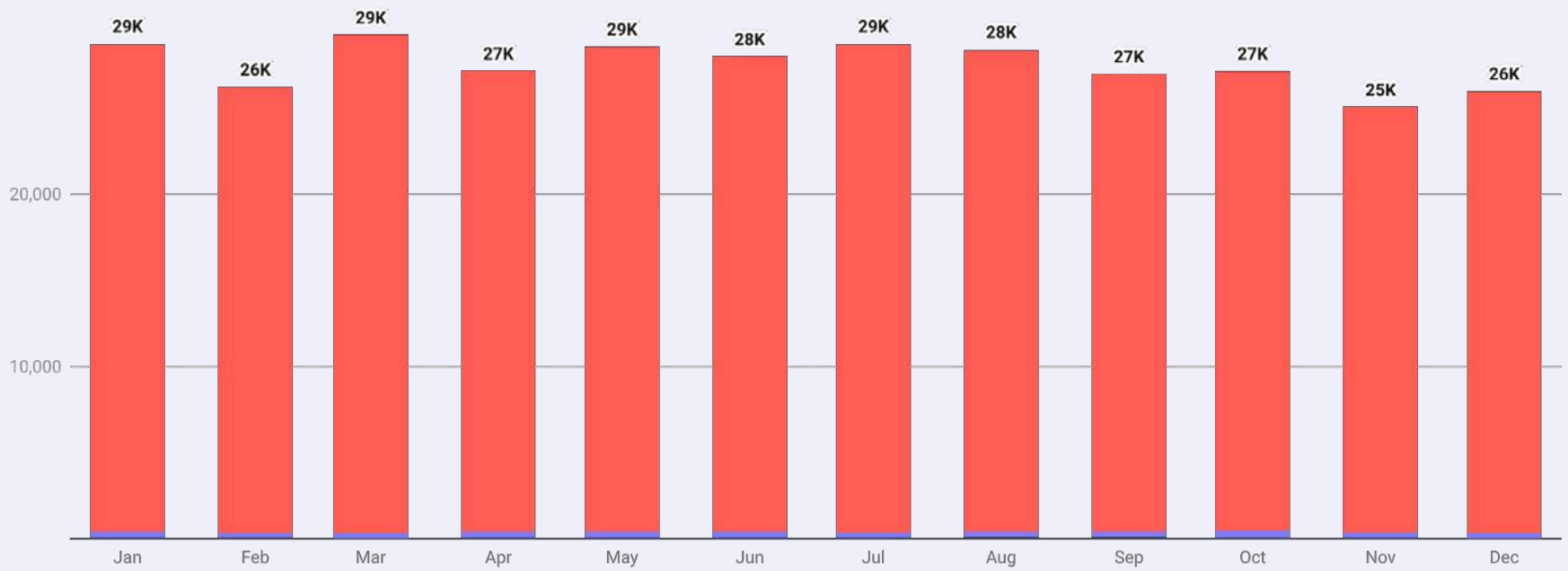


Jewelry Stores

330,591 total requests · Escort: **98.6%** · Monitor: **1.1%** · Voice-down: **0.3%**

Monthly employee assistance requests — Jewelry Stores

■ Voice Down ■ Monitor ■ Escort



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Match response model to store format.
- Do not assume the same intervention mix works across all retail environments.
- Build service coverage around actual employee-support patterns.

What LP Teams Should Do by Retail Format

Security strategy should reflect the threat profile of each retail format, not a universal playbook.

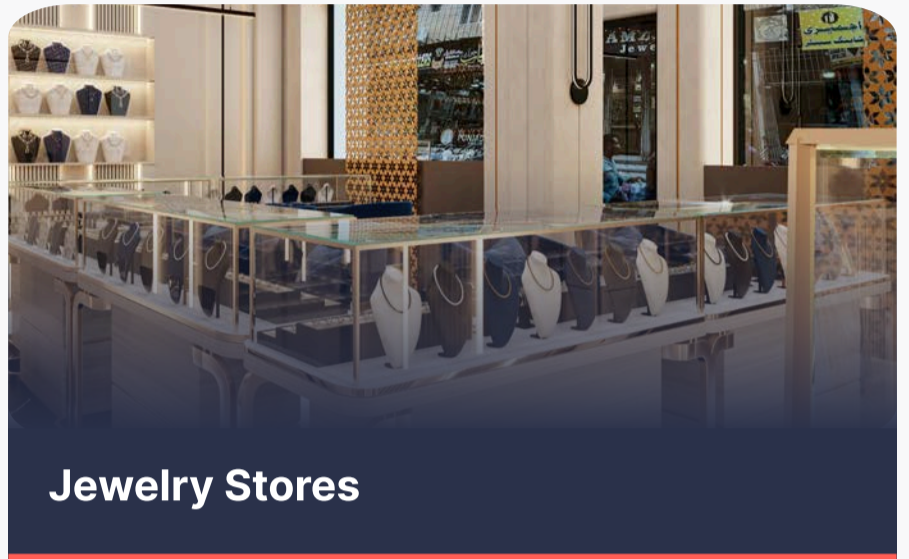


Discount Retail



Prioritize Evening Coverage

Incidents peak at 7 PM.



Jewelry Stores



Prioritize Mid-day & Evening Coverage

Incidents peak at 11AM and 6PM-7PM.



Prepare for Weekend Escalation

Friday through Sunday has the highest incident volume and dispatch rates.



Prepare for Early Weekday Risk

Monday through Wednesday has the highest incident volume and dispatch rates.



Voice-Down Is the Primary Tool

60.4% of employee requests are for security voice-down intervention.



Escort Is the Core Service

98.6% of employee requests are for security escorts.



What LP Leaders Should Do

- Audit your current security model against your retail format.
- Discount and jewelry retailers face different threats, different peak windows, and different intervention needs.
- One-size-fits-all security models underperform.

How Interface Helps Retail LP Teams Act on These Findings

Retail LP teams need more than visibility. They need intervention. Interface helps retailers prevent escalation, reduce unnecessary dispatch, and extend protection to the perimeter.



Interactive Remote Video Monitoring

Live specialists detect, verify, and intervene in real time before incidents escalate.



Live Video Verification

Every alarm is verified before dispatch is considered. **95%** of alarm events resolved as false with video verification.



Real-Time Voice-Down Intervention

Specialists intervene immediately via live audio. **99.7%** of voice-down interventions resolved without police dispatch.



AI-Enabled Perimeter Deterrence

Virtual Perimeter Guard automates first-line deterrence. **96.1%** of perimeter threats resolved before human escalation.

Book a Free Security Consultation

See how your incident profile compares to 18,258 U.S. retail locations. We'll show you where interactive monitoring and AI-enabled deterrence can reduce your risk.



Get A Free Consultation

Interface Systems is helping retail security teams shift from passive surveillance to proactive, interactive protection.