



**9 Security Upgrades Retail Chains
Should Make in 2026**

Retail shrinkage remains one of the most pressing challenges facing chain retailers. According to the NRF, shoplifting and merchandise theft have reached alarming levels, with incidents spiking by 19% from 2023 to 2024. This sharp rise underscores the urgent need for retailers to act now, or risk facing even greater losses in the coming years. For loss prevention and asset protection teams budgeting in 2026, the landscape of available solutions has fundamentally shifted. Rather than relying solely on traditional approaches, retailers now have access to emerging technologies and integrated systems that address multiple loss vectors simultaneously while providing measurable ROI.

This guide outlines the emerging solutions and technologies that retail chains should prioritize in 2026 to secure their operations and protect profitability.



1 Implement AI-Powered Virtual Perimeter Guard to Secure the Perimeter

Traditional video surveillance is reactive and doesn't stop a wide variety of security incidents outside the four walls of a store. The Virtual Perimeter Guard has AI-enabled cameras that detect threats in the perimeter, such as loiterers and vandals, proactively. It automatically issues voice-down messages and escalates persistent threats to Interface's interactive security operations center (iSOC) live response from intervention, stopping incidents before they occur.

- Detect loitering and unauthorized access around outdoor perimeters
- Issue autonomous voice alerts that immediately warn trespassers and potential vandals and burglars
- Escalate persistent threats in real-time to a U.S.-based security operations center for intervention
- Integrate seamlessly with existing alarm systems to ensure rapid response

By preventing trespassing, vandalism, and break-ins before they happen, Virtual Perimeter Guard reduces costly incidents and decreases manual monitoring demands, improving overall security effectiveness.

To learn more about Virtual Perimeter Guard, [click here](#).

Video cameras have advanced beyond simple motion detection to sophisticated AI systems that recognize context and behavior. These systems now distinguish humans and vehicles with high degree of accuracy.



2 Deploy Virtual Security Guards

Many retail chains have vulnerable store locations in challenging neighborhoods. These stores can be plagued by organized retail crime or have serious internal shrink issues.

While it might make sense to deploy security guards at vulnerable locations, it might not always be the best approach. Just the cost of employing an armed security guard can be in the range of \$60,000 to \$75,000 a year. Tragically, guards are often the first to be targeted by a determined criminal.

A better, more cost-effective approach would be to deploy a Virtual Security Guard solution with a team of remote security professionals monitoring store locations 24X7X365 via live video and two-way audio with the ability to hear and speak directly to store associates and/or customers.

The Virtual Security Guard can conduct virtual tours of vulnerable locations to check for suspicious activities, remove unwanted people from the property, deter loitering, dumpster diving, and track your employees in vulnerable situations, e.g., during bank deposit runs or exiting the store at night during closing.

If required, they can conduct a voice-down announcement to check in with store employees or warn customers who might be behaving suspiciously. Of course, law enforcement can be called in if needed.

All of this can be done discreetly without negatively affecting the customer experience at the store.



3 Replace DVR with an NVR

Get rid of that old DVR and invest in an NVR (network video recorder that supports IP and analog cameras. This approach will allow retailers to continue using their analog cameras while retaining the option to upgrade to higher resolution IP cameras with video analytics features when budgets allow for it.

Without making a major investment, retail chains can get a significant boost in productivity and effectiveness of their security teams as NVRs come with upgraded features for accessing live and recorded video.

When planning on upgrading analog cameras to IP cameras that typically require more storage and bandwidth requirements, consider upgrading to a solution that's configured for motion-triggered recording and uses the high efficiency video coding (H.265) to keep storage and bandwidth requirements from spiraling out of control.

The best NVRs allow remote access to important clips via a cloud interface, which is extremely valuable when travel is restricted, and enables loss prevention teams to easily share video and collaborate across territories.



4 Invest in Intelligent Video Cameras with Built-In Alarm Capabilities

These multifunctional cameras reduce the need for separate alarm sensors, lowering installation and maintenance costs. AI-powered video analytics detect intrusions in real time, automatically triggering alarms and notifications without human intervention.

Key features to prioritize:

- Intrusion detection: Cameras identify motion in restricted areas or after-hours activity and immediately sound local alarms and send alerts to security teams.
- Audio detection: Built-in microphones detect glass breaks, loud noises, or other audio cues associated with security breaches.
- Edge AI processing: Real-time analytics on the camera itself minimize latency and reduce bandwidth by sending alerts and clips only when verified incidents occur.
- Environmental resilience: Weatherproof, vandal-resistant designs ensure reliable operation in harsh outdoor environments, such as parking lots and building perimeters.

Traditional intrusion alarms and standalone cameras are giving way to intelligent video cameras that combine high-definition surveillance with built-in alarm functions triggered by AI analytics.



5 Upgrade to TamperShield Managed Intrusion Monitoring for Proactive Defense

TamperShield managed intrusion monitoring transforms standard alarm systems into proactive defense tools by performing continuous, automated health checks on alarm panel communicators. The system detects interference attempts, such as line cuts or signal jamming, within minutes, allowing Interface's iSOC to identify threats and initiate a response before a physical break-in occurs.

By catching tampering attempts before entry is gained, TamperShield alarm monitoring prevents burglaries and ensures your security system remains active when it matters most.

To learn more about Managed Intrusion Alarm with TamperShield, [click here](#).

Traditional alarm systems often fail when criminals use sophisticated tactics like line cutting or cellular jamming to disable communicators before breaking in. These vulnerabilities leave businesses exposed during the critical moments before an intrusion.



6 Invest in video analytics capabilities

Beyond motion triggered recording, video analytics can detect line crossing, monitor dwell times, count people in queues, spot when objects appear/disappear and monitor occupancy levels. The latest AI cameras go further and differentiate customers from employees and can send alerts only when certain people show up at the door. These are extremely valuable tools for loss prevention departments to have as they can dramatically reduce workloads and help security teams do more with less.

As IP cameras are evolving to become comprehensive data gathering sensors, sophisticated video analytics solutions are now available to dramatically improve security and loss prevention teams' ability to conduct forensic search without having to scan through hours of video footage. It is now possible to easily sift through video recordings to locate, for example, a perpetrator wearing a red shirt or a lost iPhone in a store.

There are immense benefits to understanding customer movement or behavior across the store, customer service issues at the checkout counters, and overall employee performance and productivity. Accordingly, security and loss prevention departments can make a strong case for apportioning the investments needed for implementing a video analytics solution across multiple departments.

Considering the broad-based benefits of video analytics, it's not uncommon to see asset protection teams tap into the budgets of their colleagues in marketing and HR.



7 Upgrade to Video-Verified Alarms

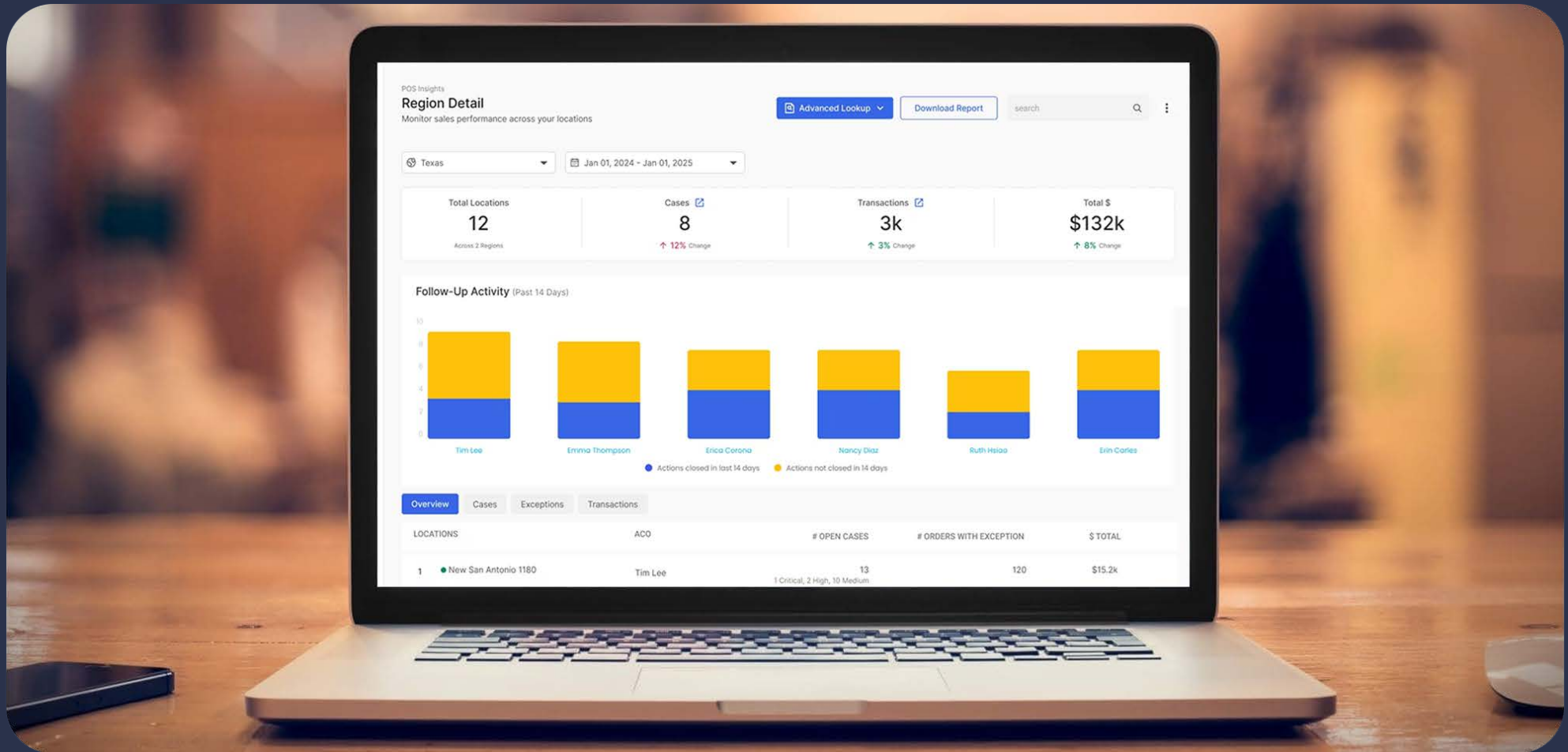
Plan to upgrade alarm systems to a Video-verified alarm. Retail chains that already have an intrusion alarm system and CCTV cameras should consider integrating the two systems to maximize effectiveness and minimize false alarm costs.

99.5% of commercial burglar alarm signals are false with police often taking more than 40 minutes to respond. Conversely, Video-verified alarms provide live eyes on site giving law enforcement a play-by-play account of what's happening when an alarm goes off during a break-in or robbery. The police arrive within minutes because they know they've got an opportunity to catch a criminal in the act and they can respond with a lot more intent to apprehend the perpetrator.

Additionally, Integrating video with intrusion detection devices such as motion detectors, glassbreak detectors or even devices used to monitor environmental parameters at warehouse locations or stores such as water, carbon monoxide, temperature or fire, will significantly improve the speed and precision with which security teams can react to real threats as they happen.

Integrating video with alarms reduces the instances of false alarms and the expenses associated with them. Having a reliable solution to avoid false alarm penalties will more than pay for the service.

Most importantly, key store associates won't be frequently called up to visit a location after shift hours to verify an alarm or the operations team won't be busy handling the paperwork associated with paying fines.



8 Utilize Video-Integrated POS Exception Reporting

Probably the easiest way for retailers to get a return on their security investment is to implement a point of sale exception reporting solution.

Wherever there is cash being transacted, there is loss. Even if there are no cash transactions and all transactions are virtual or credit card only, there may be sweetheart deals happening when transactions are rung up at much less than what they should be.

With a point of sale exception reporting solution, suspect transactions surface to the top and generate alerts. If a store associate voids a \$100 transaction at one of the stores, loss prevention teams can check that out by going right down to the receipt level and see the void. With an integrated system, the team investigating the transaction can also view the video associated with the transaction to see if this was a legitimate void or something suspicious.

At Interface, we have customers that are saving thousands of dollars per store per year by taking every point of sale, overlaying the exception reporting and integrating it with their video systems.



9 Upgrade Network Infrastructure to Support Advanced Security Systems

- Bandwidth auditing: Determine current network utilization and capacity headroom. Many restaurants discover that network limitations prevent them from deploying the security solutions they've purchased.
- Quality of Service (QoS) configuration: Implement QoS to prioritize payment processing and POS transactions. Security systems utilize available bandwidth without degrading mission-critical applications.
- Parallel connectivity options: Deploy 5G/4G/LTE wireless backup connectivity at high-traffic locations to ensure security and POS systems remain operational if primary internet fails.
- Video compression: Modern H.265 (HEVC) video compression dramatically reduces storage and bandwidth requirements compared to H.264, enabling more cameras on limited bandwidth.

Any sophisticated security solution depends entirely on the network backbone supporting it. As retailers deploy IP cameras, cloud-based POS, and real-time analytics, network capacity becomes a critical constraint as they require substantially more bandwidth than traditional systems. When security systems compete with POS transactions and payment processing for limited bandwidth, both suffer.

Protecting customers, staff and company assets is crucial to business success. The best bet for security and loss prevention teams is to focus on implementing targeted solutions that maximize ROI, improve customer satisfaction, and employee experience.

Talk to Interface solution experts to understand how consumer-facing, multi-location enterprises can innovate faster and grow rapidly with our suite of managed services.

→ [Schedule a Free Consultation](#)

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