Case Study

Transforming Late-Night Safety at White Castle with Virtual Perimeter Guard

How a high-risk restaurant location reduced loitering, restored customer confidence, and cut vandalism costs with proactive AI perimeter protection.

White Castle is a family-owned restaurant chain that began in 1921 and has grown into a multi-state operation. One of White Castle's restaurants in the St. Louis area operates in a high-crime environment and faced persistent challenges in securing its perimeter and drive-thru during late-night hours.

Key Challenges

1   Persistent Loitering & Panhandling

The restaurant experienced ongoing loitering in its parking lot and individuals approaching cars in the drive-thru. Customers waiting in line were frequently asked for money or food, causing many to feel unsafe and leave the line. This resulted in:

- Lost sales due to line abandonment
- Customer discomfort and reduced late-night traffic
- Increased tension and stress for employees

Key Challenges

2   ## Vandalism & Building Damage

The restaurant also dealt with vandalism, including broken windows and defacement. A single broken window could cost more than **$1,000** to replace when factoring in parts and labor. Repairs would temporarily disable the drive-thru window, disrupting operations and slowing service.

> **"People who were not customers would come onto the parking lot, walk up to cars, and ask customers for money or to buy them food, which didn't make anybody feel safe."**
>
> **Cheryl Soest,** District Supervisor

3   ## Visibility Limitations & After-Hours Incidents

Because of the building's layout, teams working inside could not clearly see activity along the side or back of the property. A stairwell area became a recurring hotspot for late-night incidents and drug activity was reported. Over time, the restaurant observed:

- Increased after-hours disturbances
- More morning cleanup
- More pressure on staff and managers to react to exterior issues
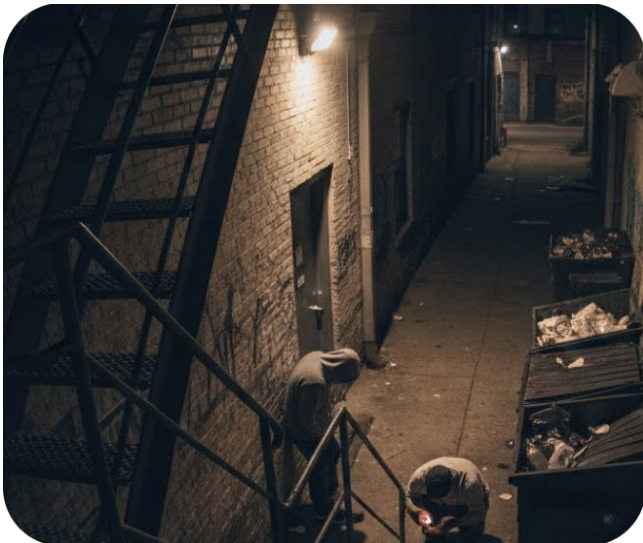
Deploying Virtual Perimeter Guard for Proactive Protection

To help the location reduce late-night risk without increasing staff burden, Interface deployed Virtual Perimeter Guard, an **AI-enabled**, proactive perimeter security solution.

How the Virtual Perimeter Guard Deployment Worked

AI-Enabled Activity Detection

Virtual Perimeter Guard's AI-enabled cameras continuously **monitor** the exterior and **automatically detect** people entering areas where they shouldn't be. This removed the need for restaurant teams to watch for perimeter issues in real time.

Layered Triggers activated

When Virtual Perimeter Guard detected activity, it **triggered a coordinated deterrent** response:

- Voice-down warnings that instruct individuals to leave
- Strobe lights that reinforce the warning messages
- Automatic escalation to Interface's U.S.-based iSOC for live remote intervention if issues persisted

Solution and Impact

Operational Integration

White Castle scheduled the system coverage from midnight to 6 a.m., aligning protection with the hours where incidents occurred most frequently. The deployment included:

- Weekly check-ins to confirm performance with a smooth onboarding.
- Online access for managers to review activity.
- Weekly summary reports providing clear visibility into activations and outcomes.

Noticeable Reduction in Loitering and Panhandling

After installation, the location saw a measurable reduction in loitering and panhandling around the building and drive-thru. Incidents of non-customers approaching vehicles in the drive-thru to ask for money or food were effectively eliminated.

1 Less Vandalism and Cleaner Mornings

The restaurant experienced fewer late-night incidents and saw improvements in:

- Exterior cleanliness in the mornings
- Reduced trash and signs of overnight activity
- Less vandalism-related disruption to operations

With fewer issues happening overnight, the team began each day with fewer unwanted cleanup tasks.

Interface

Impact

2 Reduced Staff Stress and Safer Shift Changes

Employees and their families felt safer entering and leaving during late-night hours. The reduction in exterior disturbances **helped decrease stress** during shift changes and allowed teams to stay focused on restaurant operations rather than perimeter concerns.

3 Lower Reliance on Security Escalation Calls

With the system handling early deterrence and intervention, the restaurant saw a **significant drop in security phone calls** to Interface's iSOC. This reduced the operational burden on staff and managers and minimized escalation-driven interruptions.

> "The warning lights activate automatically, and a voice-down message tells loiterers to leave, and it usually only takes one warning for them to clear out."

Cheryl Soest, District Supervisor

Improved safety and **lower staff workload** have prompted White Castle to explore Virtual Perimeter Guard expansion to other high-risk locations.

Talk to Interface to learn how you can use Virtual Perimeter Guard to proactively stop exterior threats, reduce losses, and protect your business.

→ **Get a free consultation**

Interface Systems is a next-generation security provider that leverages proven AI technologies and expert human monitoring to secure the nation's largest brands with best-in-class customer support.

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