

The Overlooked Expense in Retail FM

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While cutting-edge technology and AI continue to transform in-store operations in retail, several elements in shop management have remained untouched for decades. Keyholding is one of them. It can cause a series of minor issues that, if left unaddressed, can accumulate into a significant expense. [Keynetics](#) explains how storing keys at the point of entry is an effective solution for the retail sector.

The Archaic Methods

When discussing retail store operational efficiencies, most of the focus is on the customer-oriented technology, ranging from self-checkout implementation to enhancing point-of-sale experience with the help of AI.

At the same time, some very basic facility management issues are overlooked. As a result, the “unnecessary expenses” bill escalates and increases exponentially with every additional store location. Keyholding is one such issue and, quite often, it has not been reviewed for years despite costing companies a significant amount of money.

Avoiding unnecessary key and lock replacement costs

Multiple retail customers with hundreds of outlets in the UK have shared the same story with Keynetics: keys go missing. Whether they are lost, or Store Managers make a sudden career change and simply walk away with keys in their pockets, the outcome is the same: both locks and keys must be replaced.

Initially, this may appear to be a small expense in the overall context of seven figure budgets. However, when the annual total of avoidable fees approaches five or even six figures, warning bells start to ring.

This is the key reason why well-known retailers have partnered with Keynetics. Its SentiGuard® key management solution enables them to securely store keys at the point of entry in the only commercially

graded key safe available on the UK market. Staff and other regular users, including security services and contactors, can access keys using a bespoke app, while a temporary code can be provided in case of an emergency, like reactive maintenance.

With all access audited and no keys being carried off-site, key and lock replacement expenses are subsequently eliminated, saving money and eradicating logistical challenges associated with keyholding.

Alarms going off? Be there right away!

Another benefit of storing keys at the point of entry is less evident but even more crucial in terms of security. Traditional keyholding and alarm response relies on security vehicles patrolling specific areas and transporting keys in heavy key lockers. If an alarm activates, only select patrols that hold relevant keys can respond to a callout, and even then, they must search for the correct key.

However, what if they are quite a distance away? What about other alarms going off at multiple locations? In many cases, it can take several hours for someone to check the branch, and it might be too late by then.

Enabling rapid alarm response is another benefit that Keynetics solutions have demonstrated over years. A well-known banking client was able to decrease the average response time from more than two hours to around 45 minutes across hundreds of its branch locations.

Maximising applications: out-of-hour deliveries and secure storerooms

Once the primary keyholding issues have been resolved, additional applications of a system like SentiGuard can be explored to extend those savings even further.

Many retail locations are within restricted inner-city zones, thereby deliveries can only take place out-of-hours. Normally, this requires a staff member to be present to accept each delivery. However, if an approved driver has access to selected stores and can create notes and photos in an app as proof of delivery, logistics become less complex and, as a result, cheaper.

Alternative use of SentiGuard can be seen within a shop itself, particularly in settings with high value stock and restricted access storage rooms.

Let's not forget about security accreditation

One could argue that similar benefits can be obtained by using any key safe available on the market, but there is a catch: security ratings and insurance premiums. These two factors can impact domestic applications, and even more so commercial settings!

Prior to deploying any keyholding or access control solution, accreditation and certifications must be verified to ensure that the chosen system is reliable and, most importantly, will not void the insurance.

Keynetics' SentiGuard is the only key safe suitable for use on commercial property. It holds LPS 1175 C1 and C3 security ratings from the globally recognised Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB). This certification assesses every aspect of the product, including its design and manufacturing processes, as well as includes physical attack tests carried out by professionals.

Keynetics advocates for due diligence and security standards and encourages everyone to ensure that security systems in place comply with the demands of commercial applications.

Find out more about Keynetics and its SentiGuard key management solution:

<https://www.keyneticsltd.co.uk/key-safe-solutions/sentriguard/>