

Rethinking Retail Loss Prevention Without Compromising the Experience

INSIGHTS ARTICLE

Safe and Open:

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Loss Prevention
Without Compromising
the Experience



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Retailers today face an impossible-sounding mandate: reduce rising shrink, ensure employee and shopper safety, and do it all while preserving a frictionless, welcoming experience. But for many, the solutions that aim to stop theft have created a new kind of barrier—one that drives away customers, frustrates employees, and makes stores feel more like fortresses than places to shop. At Gatekeeper Systems, we believe loss prevention and positive customer experience can—and must—coexist. Our suite of intelligent theft prevention technologies, led by our Purchek® pushout theft prevention solution, is designed to do just that: create safer stores that remain open, efficient, and welcoming to shoppers.

The Safety Challenge Is Real—and Growing

Retailers aren't imagining the problem. According to the Motorola Solutions 2024 State of U.S. Retail Worker Safety Report, 83% of retail workers say they've felt unsafe at work in the past year. And nearly 20% say they've considered leaving their job specifically because of safety concerns.

The increase in theft—especially pushout theft, where full carts of unpaid merchandise are wheeled past registers and out the door—has not only hurt bottom lines, but also morale. It's contributed to employee turnover and the implementation of high-friction loss prevention tactics that customers find frustrating.

In fact, a joint 2024 study by the NRF and RILA found that locked cases and restrictive product access are the top sources of shopper dissatisfaction in food retail, with 67% of customers reporting they've abandoned a purchase when an item was locked up or unavailable due to theft concerns.

And as Walgreens CEO Tim Wentworth recently noted, “locking up products makes it harder for honest customers to shop and harder for team members to serve them.”

A Better Approach: Safe, Open, and Smart

At Gatekeeper Systems, we believe the solution isn't to make stores harder to shop—but smarter to secure. Our Purchek® technology offers retailers a non-confrontational, intelligent way to stop pushout theft before it leaves the store. Here's how it works:

- Cart wheels lock quietly at the exit if merchandise hasn't been paid for
- A video event is triggered instantly to support investigations and case building
- The system acts as a deterrent—without creating conflict or interfering with the shopping experience

Paired with FaceFirst's AI-enabled face matching, our solution doesn't just prevent the incident—it helps retailers uncover patterns, identify repeat offenders, and gain the upper hand against organized retail crime (ORC) trends. The combination provides retailers with a dual-layered defense that's proactive, discreet, and intelligent.

The result?

- ✓ Reduced theft
- ✓ Safer employees
- ✓ Actionable insights
- ✓ Smarter operations
- ✓ Seamless shopping experience for paying customers

The Data Speaks for Itself

According to a 2023 report from IHL Group, retailers using intelligent loss prevention technologies saw significantly reduced shrink and reported improved employee confidence and safety. Our own Gatekeeper Systems case studies reflect these findings. In one study, a major U.S. retailer saw a 93% reduction in pushout theft attempts at locations equipped with Purchek®.

And a 2022 evaluation by Professor Adrian Beck, a globally recognized retail crime expert, concluded that Gatekeeper's technology delivers measurable deterrence while maintaining store openness. That balance—safety without sacrifice—is at the core of our approach.

Moving Beyond Locked Cases

With shrink and safety concerns intensifying, retailers are understandably exploring every available tool. But customer trust is eroding when theft prevention methods interfere with access and experience.

A Coresight Research 2024 report revealed that 32% of shoppers will seek out a store employee when faced with a locked case, but 55% will simply buy the item elsewhere—or not at all. That's not just lost sales—it's lost loyalty.

Gatekeeper Systems offers a better alternative: theft prevention technology that doesn't lock customers out. Instead, we quietly lock in security, enabling stores to stay open and accessible while reducing the risk of theft-related losses.

A Partner in Protection—and Progress

Gatekeeper Systems has spent 27 years developing technologies that respond to real-world challenges without disrupting retail operations. From cart containment and theft deterrence to AI-enabled investigations and ORC tracking, our solutions are engineered to enhance—not interrupt—the shopping experience. We also know that protecting stores goes beyond devices and software. It's about partnering with our customers to understand their risks, support their teams, and evolve with the industry. It's why we work closely with retailers, law enforcement, and industry associations, and why we're proud to sponsor programs like the NRF PROTECT Student Scholarship, helping invest in the next generation of loss prevention professionals.

The Future Is Frictionless—And Secure

The retail industry doesn't have to choose between security and service. At Gatekeeper Systems, we're proving every day that it's possible to create safe, open, and intelligent stores where teams feel protected, shoppers feel welcome, and crime has nowhere to hide. If you're ready to explore how Purchek® and our full suite of solutions can transform your approach to safety and shrink, let's talk.

About Gatekeeper

Gatekeeper Systems' expanded product suite of intelligent cart solutions offers solutions for EVERY retailer's needs to minimize merchandise loss, reduce asset and labor expenditures. Gatekeeper's loss prevention and cart containment solutions utilize patented locking technology to put an end to cart-based shoplifting, shopping cart loss, and uninformed decision-making. Cart management solutions increase safety and reduce labor costs by maximizing productivity while simultaneously resulting in a positive store image. Intelligent pushout theft prevention solutions stop thieves and their cart full of unpaid merchandise from leaving the store. Customizable technology allows retailers to defend their entire store or just a high loss department based on the store's unique layout. Business Intelligence solutions provide increased visibility for informed decision making. Increase efficiency, optimize fleet size, and perfect the entire customer shopping experience with store and enterprise-level analytics.

