

GOING OUT FOR BUSINESS: PROVIDING THE CURE

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While lockmakers and locksmithing may be two of the oldest professions, with the fact of Egyptian locks dating to over two thousand years ago, you would think that the age old professional knowledge and the longevity would put the locksmith of today in a primary position in the world of physical security. Not so, as the ebb and flow of the sales of locks and security hardware into the twenty-first century suggests differently.

Today, “locksmiths” as a category, accounts for less than three percent of the source of residential locks sold. Residential sales are dominated by big-box retailers, who account for over fifty percent of the sales of locks and related hardware. Contract hardware dominates the new construction segment, with well over a forty percent share and the emerging “players” include catalog houses and industrial suppliers. The locksmith is not a major player in the sale of locks and locking devices and many locksmith businesses are relegated to “aftermarket and emergency” service and repair as a primary business, with sub-contract labor the single fastest growing area of revenue for many locksmith firms.

The age of electronic security, on the scene since the early seventies, drifted through the locksmith industry, capturing a few business owner’s attention but found a “home” within the alarm and access control segments and through direct sales to large industrial, commercial and government end-users. Those segments account for multiples of billions of dollars in sales, while the locksmith segment hovers in the single billion-dollar area...not a small piece of the pie but certainly not a major influence.

Traditional locksmith services twenty-five years ago included automotive work as a primary business segment, fitting keys for automobiles and repairing or replacing worn out or broken key locks. Today it is the business of a specialist, primarily an electronic ball game with an investment of twenty-five to thirty thousand dollars a “common” range, plus the vehicle, technician and the ongoing training. The average locksmith firm perhaps dabbles in emergency car opening, but unless you are indeed a specialist, automotive work has disappeared from the daily norm. Auto Dealers are the large winner in this segment, consumers perhaps the big losers, but in the process the few locksmith specialists are generating significant revenues.

So where does that leave the locksmith business owner? The locksmith will not ever be number one in the new construction market or retail sales or alarm installation or systems integration or access control or key cutting...locksmiths are number one in selling and servicing proprietary key control products but such

a minor segment it is hardly a major influence of change. A major category is needed where the locksmith can in fact be clearly the leader.



An effective Loss Prevention Program includes a variety of hardware tools that are managed by a series of rules, policies and procedures. All entities must be designed to work together to become the whole.

In the book “The 22 Laws of Immutable Marketing” by Author Al Ries and Jack Trout the author says, if you are not number one in a category, create a category in which you are! For locksmiths looking for “the angle” how about Physical Security RETROFIT Pro? Locksmiths who are up-to-date on national and local building codes generally have more application experience, more general product knowledge, more mechanical knowledge and more practical understanding of how safety & security flows traffic in a facility...this is what makes you different!

Assuming that is a fair and solid idea, how can the locksmith get their message of superior knowledge and service to the public at large? Without major advertising dollars and the ability to create millions of impressions over a long period of time, we are where we are today, generally a misunderstood profession on a national level. We must go out for business, as a means of “thrival” surviving is not good enough; collectively we must thrive as a channel. Individually is how it starts, you must carry a torch people can see and more importantly convince them to take action.

As a Retrofit-Pro you deal with loss prevention situations every day. There is more to loss prevention than physical protection. A good loss prevention program includes written policies, procedures and programs from many parts of the business from employee compensation to cash handling and virtually everything in between. Your customers at every size and every industry have loss prevention issues if they have employees and or deal with the public. Loss Prevention has primarily been an area with support in the largest firms who employ the services of an individual with Certified Protection Professional credentials, board certified by ASIS international. The CPP is a respected professional who earns between one hundred fifty to two hundred thousand dollars annually, typically beyond the budget of the majority of businesses.

The Locksmith Retrofit-Pro business owner is in dire need of an effective vehicle to promote their skills and knowledge to generate increased revenues and virtually every business owner needs loss prevention programs they can execute that will return hard earned profits to the bottom line. A “product” has been developed to solve both needs!

Security Wise Group of Pennsylvania has a cost effective loss prevention program for business owners that do not have on-staff loss prevention professionals. The program includes a modular approach beginning with a comprehensive survey executed by locksmiths, supported with written code compliant policies, procedures and programs as appropriate, showing business owners how to make “vanishing profits” re-appear. When you can make or save your customer money, they keep coming back!

Locksmiths/Retrofit Security Pro’s know through hands-on experience that small and medium-sized business owners are as susceptible to theft, fraud and safety problems as any large company. Because Locksmiths/Retrofit Security Pro’s get the “first call” when something goes wrong, they are in a position to provide a total solution. However, many just address the physical hardware or key system. This is treating a symptom and not offering a cure! The end-user needs to solve the problem not prolong it! WE believe locksmiths should be the lead marketing force for the SWG product and provide effective security and safety solutions.

This new program offers locksmith business owners a method of leveraging the trust and integrity their customers place in them, and using the experience and knowledge of the retro-fit security pro by offering a larger range of services to complement the physical security products. The result is increased income and higher customer retention through the sale of a wider range of products and CPP Services.

Often the lack of a loss prevention professional results in a business owner losing potential profits due to the lack of expertise or financial resources to protect the business...in effect writing off loss as a necessary part of doing business! SWG provides a customized roadmap with the steps to increase

profits by reducing shrink or product loss and Workers Compensation claims frequency.

The SWG loss prevention program introduction includes a method to evaluate loss potential with a systems audit modeled after the latest published industry standards. A written analysis of your customer's areas of loss exposure focusing on defining specific operating systems and/or products needed to effectively control losses is produced by SWG and then presented by the locksmith business owner to the end-user.

To assist in the implementation, SWG loss prevention professionals are "on call" and available to assist the locksmith business owner with appropriate support to maximize results. The support also includes presentation materials for the locksmith business and the availability of "hands on" assistance where feasible and cost effective. Will this approach work for you?

Author's note ask yourself these questions, if you answer yes to one or all, SWG provides the ANSWER!

1. Do you take the opportunity after every repair call to suggestively sell your other services?
2. Do you advise your customers after an emergency call that it is more cost effective for their business to not have lock and hardware emergencies that can disrupt their business when it can all be avoided with your preventative maintenance plan?
3. Do you need a better approach to providing more opportunities to grow your locksmith business by leveraging the relationships that you already have with your existing customer base?

If you would like information on how you can bring SWG services to your clients contact: Bill Wise CPP at 267-994-0024 or Joey Dalessio at 717-519-0579 or via e-mail at bill@securitywisegroup.com or joeyd@securitywisegroup.com Visit SWG on the web too at <http://www.securitywisegroup.com>

Take action, call for more information TODAY!