

GUEST COLUMN

Criminality has no recession

IN A NEW COLUMN FROM ANDY FAIRBANKS, FORMER POLICE OFFICER AND CEO AT UK PROTECTION LTD, SHARES HIS INSIGHT ON HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS AFFECTED THE SECURITY OF RETAILERS AND BRANDS ALIKE. AND HOW NOW IS THE TIME TO BE VIGILANT

Whilst we await the mass impending doom of redundancies that has been promised for months by the media, I will be reflecting on where we are now, what the future looks like and what are we preparing for in the coming months and the run up to Christmas.

There was a steady stream of attempted criminal cases reported throughout lockdown along with increased levels over overnight burglary to boutiques that had been closed.

An experienced group believed to be from Eastern Europe have been targeting stores by tunnelling in with power tools via adjacent buildings. These offences continue with no substantive criminal charges yet to note however they do share the same modus operandi as burglary's seen some years ago in the UK.

Fraud was a particular feature of lockdown from basic card fraud attempts at online purchases to persons assuming the identity of well-known retailers claiming they have unicorn pieces in stock with no waiting list. Luckily, seasoned clients did not fall for this scam and transfer money however some of the frauds were more complex in their nature and set over a more protracted period using the confidence gaining method of entrapment.

Since brands and retailers opened their boutiques and welcomed back clients there has again been a steady flow of watch snatches nationwide with the latest trend using young children to hold the item and run from the store to awaiting accomplices. Whereas before certain brands were the favoured choice it would appear all brands are now a target for these snatches.

With the potential for social and economic turmoil to increase over the coming months it is important to ensure the awareness of crime is not forgotten. The high streets are quieter, and this makes the movement of mobile crime gangs that much easier. There is also less foot traffic which again lends itself favourably to moped enabled crime and other robbery offences which we have seen a downturn of in recent

As with all crime there are certain factors that are common throughout. With our industry key times of the day often play a role. Opening & closing times are always an increased risk period, situational awareness of staff is key to this. Morning opening staff are just starting their day so not always fully alert in their tasks and evening closing can often be dark with staff tired from their day and keen to leave.

Over the coming months I will be sharing tips on how to protect your business better and more effectively.

I will dispel some myths and do my best to keep you all up to date with the latest crime trends and anything new hitting the high streets.



ANDY FAIRBANKS,
CEO, UK Protection

IN BRIEF

Alrosa sales grow by over 500% month-on-month in August

Sales last month «skyrocketed» up to £167m, with the results coming after both Alrosa and competitor De Beers cut rough diamond prices

Rough diamond sales show first signs of recovery after pandemic

August and September sales have begun to outperform the same period last year, according to encouraging figures from De Beers

Engagement ring sales for Taylor & Hart up over 80% YOY in July

The jeweller reported that July can often be a «quiet month» for wedding proposals, but surprisingly 2020 has bucked the trend

De Beers Jewellers appoints new CEO as François Delage steps down

Céline Assimon was most recently CEO at luxury brand de Grisogono, and also boasts experience at companies like Louis Vuitton and Piaget

Government reveals 'bounce-back plans' to help retailers recover

The multi-faceted approach to recovery will have a heavy focus on export and e-commerce