



### **PART 1**

As part of FMS' series on best practices, we will be focusing on the front-end operations. Because of the broad scope of this area, we will be breaking this into a three part series. Part One will be covering ATM's, Self Serve Registers, Cash On Hand Levels, Safe Security, Cash in Register levels, and unused checker lanes.

#### **Store Owned and Operated ATMs**

Store owned ATM's offer a great opportunity to bring extra revenue into your business. However, they also represent a theft opportunity if not properly checked. Cash placed into the ATM should be logged and removed from cash on hand and placed into an AR ATM account. The balance of this AR ATM account should be monitored for any excessive growth. The person checking the ATM cash should vary and should be audited periodically by the owner or other key personnel in larger organizations. Failure to monitor cash levels going into the ATM may result in gradual theft over a period of time, which can add up to a significant value.

#### **Self-Check Out Registers**

Self check out registers offer a great way to serve your customers while reducing labor costs. However, they should be treated the same as store owned ATMs above.

#### **Cash on Hand Levels**

You should monitor and maintain your stores ending cash on hand levels. This can be accomplished through a simple sheet with maximum cash needs in one row by store, a row with actual ending cash on hand and a variance row. If you find excessive cash on hand on certain days of the week, you should adjust your deposit schedule or armored car pickups. By preventing excessive cash on hand at the store, you will reduce the risk of robbery and if one occurs you will reduce your loss. You may ask how reducing cash on hand reduces your chance for a robbery. The answer, it reduces word of mouth. It is not uncommon for front office personnel to talk to people on unusual days and state "wow, we had over \$100,000 in cash last night." This statement while innocent may reach the ears of the wrong individual, resulting in a robbery.

#### **Safe Security**

This area is very simple, but rarely followed—lock your safe! Many stores leave the safe unlocked during the day. It sounds simple, but laziness sometimes prevails.

### **Cash in Till Levels**

Perform frequent pick-ups on registers during the day to prevent cash build-ups in register tills. Many front-end systems will track cash levels and signal necessary pickups.

### **Unused Register Lanes**

Any closed registers should have their lanes blocked. This prevents two occurrences, one being extra exits for shoplifters to work their way to the front door. The second issue relates to cash in the till. It is not uncommon for thieves to work their way behind a cashier in an unused lane. The person then reaches in the open till in a split second when tender is exchanging hands between the cashier and the actual customer. By reducing the “grab” you will reduce liability.

### **Monitor Void Logs and Training Mode Logs**

Take time to review logs provided by your front-end system. By reviewing these logs you can prevent the opportunity to get product out of the store or maybe even cash. It is very simple to put a register in training mode and ring customers up and in the end collect the cash. Sometimes, personnel may put a sign up on the register, Debit Credit broken, cash and checks only. By reviewing logs of training ring ups and tender types collected, you can find patterns that may be followed up with camera systems to identify potential problems.

In addition to reviewing the logs themselves, review the security of your front-end system. Typically access to “training mode” should be limited to management and not available to all cashiers.

### **SUMMARY**

Part one of the front-end best practices hit on some very basic items that you could address immediately with little additional effort or expense. In part two we will look at proper check up of the cashiers and front office and what to watch out for in certain tender types and service offerings.