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Speaker Notes

The rise of shoplifting in the UK

Certificate of Higher Education

Speaker Notes: Preventing Shoplifting in Tesco, UK

Introduction

Good morning, everyone. Today I will discuss practical strategies for preventing shoplifting in Tesco stores across the UK. Shoplifting costs UK retailers approximately £1.9 billion annually, making prevention crucial for businesses sustainability (British Retail Consortium, 2019).

Challenges

Tesco faces significant challenges with retail theft. Self-service checkouts have increased opportunities for theft, while high-value items like alcohol, cosmetics, and electronics remain prime targets. The rise in organized crime and economic pressures on consumers have contributed to increased shoplifting incidents across the UK stores (The Guardian, 2025).

Prevention Methods

Modern technology offers effective solutions. CCTV systems with facial recognition can identify repeat offenders and alert staff immediately (Butler, 2024). Electronic article surveillance (EAS) tags on high-risk items trigger alarms when unpaid items leave the store (Prosegur, n.d.). Smart shelving systems can detect when multiple items are removed quickly, alerting security personnel (FRESH USA, 2025). Self-checkout cameras with AI technology can identify suspicious scanning behavior and alarm staff intervention (Veesion, n.d.).

Training and Awareness

Proper staff training forms the foundation of theft prevention. Employees should learn to recognize suspicious behavior such as avoiding eye contact, carrying large bags, or

spending excessive time in high theft areas. Regular training sessions should cover techniques and procedures for handling suspected shoplifters. Staff should maintain a visible presence in the store, particularly in vulnerable areas (Swan Training, n.d.).

Store Layout and Design

Strategic store design can help reduce theft opportunities. Placing high value items near checkout areas or customer service desks increases risk and more surveillance is needed. Mirrors at high ends eliminate blind spots, while proper lighting in the store decreases criminal activity. Reducing clutter and maintaining clear sightlines allows staff to monitor customer behavior effectively (Storflex, 2024).

Security Measures

Visible security presence decreases the risk of theft significantly. Security Guards should patrol regularly and interact with customers, demonstrating active monitoring without creating uncomfortable environments. Clear signage warning about CCTV monitoring and prosecution policies reminds potential thieves of the consequences. Bag checks at exits, when legally implemented, can prevent theft while maintaining customer relations (Facewatch, n.d.).

Community Support

Positive relationships with customers create additional security for preventing theft. Local community programs and partnerships with police can decrease broader crime in a specific area. Customer loyalty programs encourage regular shopping patterns, making unusual behavior more noticeable (Facewatch, n.d.).

Best Practice and Considerations

Staff must understand legal procedures when dealing with suspected shoplifters. Only trained personnel should approach suspects, and physical interventions should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Proper documentation of incidents supports legal proceedings, while following company policies protect both staff and customers (Maybo, n.d.).

Conclusion

Preventing shoplifting at Tesco requires a complex approach combining Technology, Training, Strategic Design, Security and Community Support. Success depends on creating an environment where theft is difficult to commit and easy to detect, while maintaining a positive relationship with customers. Regular evaluation and adaptation are necessary to ensure effective methods against retail crimes. By implementing these measures, Tesco can significantly reduce losses while protecting both customers and employees.

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