

Savvy Video Surveillance Helps Sustain a Top Retailer

with **Envysion**



Challenges

- Reducing theft and fraud from both customers and employees
- Safeguarding merchandise shipping and receiving processes to ensure and be able to prove proper safety and handling
- Addressing gaps in processes and procedures to improve customer service and employee training

Solution

Maycom is using Envysion's Managed Video Solution to reinforce loss prevention strategies, minimize theft and fraudulent practices and returns, and secure valuable merchandise.

Business Outcomes

- Switched from old analog cameras to high-quality video surveillance for a comprehensive view into operations for all 52 store locations across 3 states
- Utilized video zoom mechanism to document device conditions and serial numbers to reduce liability and win appeals
- Accurately investigated and appropriately resolved suspicious in-store activity with searchable footage while protecting employees from false accusations
- Uncovered employee mistakes to capitalize on training opportunities

Maycom relies on Envysion's Managed Video Solution to reduce internal and external theft and to safeguard how merchandise is shipped, received, and handled in stores

► STAYING ON TOP MEANS STEPPING UP LOSS PREVENTION

As an authorized retailer of Sprint products and services, Maycom was constantly striving to be number one in everything it does. Founded in Florida in 1997, Maycom eventually expanded into North and South Carolina, where even with a larger, multi-state, 52-store operation to oversee, the company continually leads the retailer pack in upgrades and combined box sales.

But though the company's stellar sales performance had earned accolades and admiration within the Sprint community, the complexities of the wireless communications retailer industry still presented major challenges for Maycom. Keeping tabs on everything happening in every store at all times — from customer interactions to point-of-sale (POS) transactions to back-of-the-store merchandising, device purchases, and plan setup — has always been a difficult task. And it proved even more challenging when the roles of Operations Manager and Loss Prevention Manager happened to be two hats worn by the same person — in this case, Richie Stabile.

“Identifying and addressing fraud or theft, whether it’s customers skipping out on their bill or trying to game the returns policy, has always been a problem,” explains Stabile. “But the old analog cameras we were using that could only store footage locally couldn’t give us what we needed to truly understand what was happening in our stores. At times, it felt like we were flying blind despite having hours upon hours of available video footage.”

► MISTRUSTFUL EMPLOYEES, MISHANDLED MERCHANDISE

“External and internal fraud are part and parcel of any retail operation. But for wireless communications retail where extra steps are required to complete phone purchases or to help customers take advantage of special promotions, there are myriad “open doors” where theft can occur.

“With external fraud, the most that we can do is watch the transaction to see if we properly utilized main tools like a customer ID scan, so we can appeal the loss with Sprint,” Stabile says. “But promotions are a big one for internal fraud. We had one employee who was taking advantage of a promotion by adding multiple lines to a customer’s account without the customer knowing it — just scanning the phones under the counter so the customer couldn’t see them being added. It was an ongoing issue until the promotion ended.”

But more than just dealing with quibbles over POS transactions or bad employee behavior, problems behind the scenes with shipping, receiving, and handling merchandise were creating unnecessary strains on the business as well.

At times Maycom has to accept returned phones from customers for various reasons and, according to Stabile, changes hands multiple times before the device makes it back to Sprint. “A returned device will go to the in-store sales rep, through our management team, our courier service, and then to various warehouses after that,” Stabile says. “Along the way, the phones inevitably come up missing or the screens get damaged or it’s reported that we sent the wrong phone back with the wrong serial number. So appealing to Sprint to show visual proof that the damage or mistake wasn’t on our end had to become a critical part of the process.”



“Envysion has really solidified the loss prevention department within our organization where we didn’t have much of one before. It has been the main tool we use to identify any issues surrounding loss prevention and keep our business performing as it should be.”

Richie Stabile, Operations and Loss Prevention Manager, Maycom

▶ EXTENDING VIDEO SURVEILLANCE INTO UNUSUAL PLACES

To combat all of these issues, the company knew they needed to use a quality video surveillance system like Envysion's Managed Video Solution to acquire footage of all the usual in-store scenarios — footage that could then be saved or accessed on-the-fly — but that they also needed to get creative and use the solution in more unconventional ways as well.

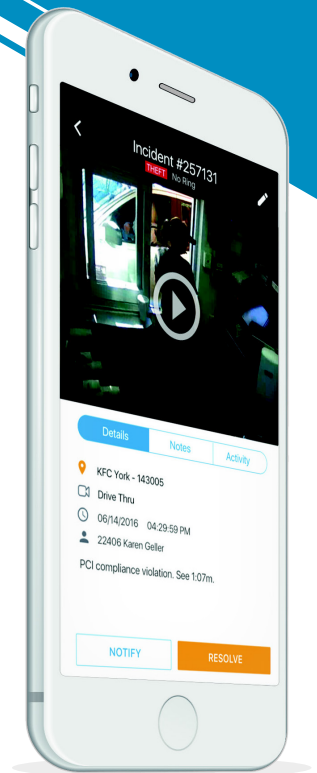
"With the higher-quality Envysion camera, we get a nice, clear video-zoom of a phone to show the condition and highlight the serial number. We use the camera for the packaging and boxing process all the way up to putting the label on it," Stabile says. "If it comes back that there's a problem, we have video footage showing that wasn't the case when it left our location. We've never had a case where we did not win the appeal and get our money back."

Envysion's high-definition, cloud-based platform lets Stabile and the team of district and floor managers access real-time footage at any location, from any Internet-connected device, at any time. Saving and sharing video clips is easy when there are any disputes about how merchandise was handled, and time-stamped video helps store leaders capture POS transactions and suspicious in-store behavior by customers or employees to investigate and resolve incidents accurately.

Sometimes, however, Envysion helps Stabile's team uncover other issues that appear at first to be cut-and-dried examples of employee theft.

"In one case, I noticed on video an employee taking money from a customer and putting it in his back pocket, like he was using it as a secondary cash drawer—a tell tale sign of theft and usually a quick exit from that job," Stabile says. "After reviewing the footage, it turned out he was just new and was making all kinds of mistakes, which was why there were shortages in his drawer. The insight we get with Envysion helps us walk the fine line between catching people in the act and going overboard with misguided assumptions that can hurt the employee and the business."

Stabile also notes that Envysion's motion search function has become especially important to the company and is used in a variety of scenarios from making sure employees punch in their time correctly to proving that shipments are being handled appropriately and securely — all in a manner that doesn't cost the company extra time or resources.



"Sifting through footage to find one specific issue or track an item from point to point was difficult and could take what felt like forever in the past. Now, I use Envysion's motion search feature to follow a shipment when UPS first drops it off to when the box gets opened and locked in the safe, or to follow a person or certain item or cash. I can narrow down hours' worth of footage to just a few minutes, which is vital to staying efficient and addressing problems quickly."

*Richie Stabile, Operations and
Loss Prevention Manager, Maycom*



ABOUT MAYCOM

In 1997, Maycom Communications pioneered their first independently owned wireless communications store in Florida, providing a strong backbone for a robust and growing business solutions sales organization. Maycom consistently scored among the top performing dealers throughout the early years of the business and began broadening their retail footprint in east central Florida. More recent acquisitions have expanded their footprint to be one of the most dominant retailers in the states of Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

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► VIDEO AS SALES AND TRAINING TOOL

Stabile acknowledges the company still has room to grow into Envysion’s full suite of capabilities, and that in addition to using the solution to prevent loss, he also wants to use it to increase sales. “Envysion is so robust and feature-rich that I’d like to use it for sales training, so that if a sales rep loses a sale, he can sit down with a manager and watch the sale and see where it may have gone wrong,” he says. “There’s a lot of potential for the solution to start helping us make money in addition to tracking lost money.”

As with any company with multiple locations and employees, consistent training is a necessity to ensure good customer service across the board and that store procedures and policies are being followed, with the secondary aim of validating and rewarding good behavior when it’s noticed.

“Right now we use screenshots of employees sitting down when they shouldn’t be or out of uniform for quick-fix training purposes,” Stabile explains. “But in the longer term, Envysion’s video will be a great asset for capturing instances of great customer service or other above-and-beyond efforts that we can share with employees across the company via email to say, ‘Hey, we just happened to catch Joe Smith greeting a customer in a perfect way and here’s how he was rewarded for it.’”

Even with opportunities to expand video surveillance into the HR realm and help set company training standards, loss prevention remains Maycom’s highest priority. Envysion’s Managed Video Solution bolsters Stabile’s dual roles with actionable footage, helping to maintain the retailer’s top-performing record by improving in-store operations and experiences from every angle.

“Envysion has really solidified the loss prevention department within our organization where we didn’t have much of one before,” Stabile says. “It has been the main tool we use to identify any issues surrounding loss prevention and keep our business performing as it should be.”

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