

Argos captures in-store incidents with new technology

Argos has deployed a web-based incident reporting system from ORIS to manage the follow-up processes when incidents occur in stores and to provide intelligence on trouble spots, potential targets for theft and opportunities for civil recovery.

Up to 1,200 calls a week are logged by Argos' centralised solutions helpdesk, which enables store staff to report security incidents, such as criminal acts and broken CCTV cameras.

The system, Incident Manager, alerts the relevant area managers and field staff within the profit-protection team so they can follow up on the incident and

document the action that was taken. The system also provides realtime analysis of incidents that can be categorised by country, region or individual store, and by type and cost of incidents, enabling Argos to prevent further problems.

Argos solutions manager for profit protection Adrian Sherry explained that the system is enabling the prioritisation of the follow-up of incidents. "We can log in to an incident and action it from anywhere in the country," he said. "It drives our profit-protection strategy in terms of the priority of site visits, which is important when your field staff

each have 60 stores under their control. Now, they can work with quality information."

The reporting functionality of Incident Manager means that it can alert Argos to criminals' methods of operating and predict possible targets. For example, Sherry said that Argos has had a problem with burglary where thieves use the same method of entry, but until now there was no system to identify which other stores would be susceptible to similar burglaries.

ORIS operations director Andrew Wood said that, although many of the benefits of the system are intangible, such

as making sure that assaults on staff are properly documented, the system can also provide a clear return on investment within a year.

"Most retail chains would recover the cost of Incident Manager through civil recovery within the first year," he said.

"If you don't have a proper application to capture all the information on an incident, you lose the opportunity for civil recovery, or you don't tend to claim for the full cost of the incident. With Incident Manager you can capture the cost of the investigation and add that to the claim," he said.