

Gain Key Control At Your Stores

This 500-store retailer reduced operating expenses and improved security of its stores with a key-management system.

by Laurie Pasquerell

After Hours Formalwear is a tuxedo rental and retail chain with approximately 4,500 employees. Like most retail stores, After Hours Formalwear experiences its share of employee turnover. With turnover comes the challenge of managing the keys used at retail locations. Therefore, After Hours Formalwear's Director of Loss Prevention Cory McNeley searched for a keying solution that could enable greater key control.

"Our key management costs were skyrocketing — specifically, having locksmiths re-key our store locations and replacing lost keys while ensuring store access was limited to current employees only," says McNeley. "Since our locations are geographically dispersed, we were using several regional lock hardware providers. This made the coordination of locksmiths and lock distributors cumbersome." Because of the dexterity required to juggle the locksmiths and the frequency at which keys and locks needed to be replaced, McNeley sought to work with one vendor for all store locations. Additionally, he wanted a solution that would reduce the number of re-keys necessary due to employees leaving the company, lost or stolen keys, and changes in employee status that require key changes. After researching solutions, McNeley chose InstaKey Security Systems key-management solution.

InstaKey offers interchangeable key cores that can be installed in most existing door lock hardware (manufactured by popular hardware producers

like Falcon, Arrow, and Schlage). The InstaKey cores use patented technology that enable a step-change key to enter an existing lock and re-key (reconfigure) that lock, rendering all existing keys inoperable with a single key turn. Each core is capable of nine re-keys, each requiring a re-key kit. A kit includes a step-change key and a full set of keys to be distributed to all



InstaKey cores and keys were installed at all After Hours Formalwear's stores to reduce future re-keys.

employees after the re-key is completed. This ensures continual store access by all current employees.

In order to fit After Hours Formalwear's management structure, McNeley chose the master-key solution that provides independence between master-level keys and user-level keys. "We chose the master-key solution because we wanted our district managers to have access to all stores within their regions using one key," says McNeley. "We can reconfigure a key at one store [at the user-key level] up to nine times, and not affect the district manager's access to that store when doing so. Additionally, it is

possible to reconfigure the master-level key up to three times independently of the store's [user-level]." Also, if the re-keying process is needed more than nine times at the user level, a new core can be inserted into the door hardware using a control key. That new core becomes capable of nine more re-keys using re-key kits.

Online Program Tracks Key Holders, Provides Reports

InstaKey offers online key-management software, called Security Records (accessible via SecurityRecords.com), that links non-duplicable keys and individually serialized keys to track all keys in existence for each location. Security Records houses all key assignment information and displays exception reports. An example of a frequently used report is one that displays all keys assigned to each manager, which After Hours Formalwear uses to verify that managers are carrying the appropriate keys.

"InstaKey also provides training on procedures that store managers should follow to ensure employee keys are returned upon dismissal," says McNeley. "They encourage better management practices as part of the implementation, so the number of re-keys required diminishes significantly. Overall, we've only re-keyed 169 times within our 493 locations since we implemented the solution. That results in only having to re-key 34% of the total locations per year." □

For More Information On InstaKey
Go To www.instakey.com