

Video Surveillance for Car Dealerships

Car dealerships are the perfect environment for video surveillance, both because of the value of the inventory and its susceptibility to theft. Automobiles, depending on make, model, year and features, can vary in price from a few thousand to a few hundred thousand dollars. Dealerships also leave a large majority of their inventory out in parking lots – leaving million dollar inventories exposed to theft and harmful weather for hours at a time.

Benefits of Dealership Surveillance

- **Prevent theft** – Like other retail stores, the dollar is the bottom line for auto dealerships. Protecting their inventory and potential profit is an essential aspect of sales, and with expensive inventory, security becomes that much more important. Video surveillance cameras placed around lots can help prevent thieves from taking cars, as well as help identify any thieves who steal cars.
- **Track customers and visitors** – The ability to track customer's habits, especially correlating data between which cars customers look at and which they decide to purchase, can be valuable information for marketing, inventory and sales staff. Video security cameras, especially those equipped with intelligent video analytics technology, can help you count and track customers as they move around your business.
- **Protect building, employees and customers** – Surveillance cameras can help your security staff posted about any security issues that may arise throughout the day. Modern security cameras allow your security staff to be more flexible in their duties with features like video alerts. Instead of sitting in front of a monitor all day, guards can actively patrol your grounds and receive video alerts from networked cameras about issues that have arisen.
- **Future integration** – Integration is a huge buzzword among security experts at the moment, and is a technological possibility that could benefit nearly every user of video surveillance. A networked security system utilizing IP cameras is the key to any integration and technology advancements. An integrated security system at an auto wholesaler has a multitude of possible functions, including:
 - Integration into an ID card timekeeping system for tracking employees
 - Integration into current physical security systems such as door locks and car alarms
 - Integration into buildings systems like heating and air conditioning

Risks of Auto Wholesaler Surveillance

- **Privacy** – Be careful to only install security cameras in public places like showrooms, parking lots and lobbies. Any area where a customer or employee has an expectation of privacy – like a bathroom or a break room, should be left alone.
- **Damage** – Cameras, especially those monitoring cars in outside lots, are susceptible to damage from weather. A damaged camera can lead to interruptions, which can make your inventory susceptible to damage and theft.
- **Over reliance** – While video surveillance may be an effective security solution for an auto dealership, it should not be used as the sole security system. Rather, a system of security cameras should work to enhance an existing security system or systems like car alarms and security guards.

Things to Consider When Installing Dealership Surveillance

The perfect security system for any business depends on a wide variety of factors. Consider the following when choosing a security system:

- How many thefts have you had in the last year?
- What part of your dealership do you feel is the most vulnerable, security-wise?
- Have you ever experienced problems with organized car theft rings?
- What kind of security system or systems do you currently have in place?

Best Practices for Dealership Security Cameras

- Make sure outdoor cameras are placed in protective housings to shield them against weather and wind damage
- When placing outdoor cameras, be sure to not miss any areas of your lot, especially outlying spaces. Different types of cameras (e.g. bullet cameras and dome cameras) provide different types of footage and can be networked together to create a comprehensive system
- Place cameras in storage and maintenance areas to prevent theft of valuable equipment and/or customer belongings.