

Are You Ready for This?

After more than 30 years in the field of security working for corporations and banks, I decided to open my own consulting company. I was soon contacted to be an "Expert Witness" by attorneys representing both plaintiffs and defendants on cases revolving around premise security.

I quickly learned that companies will settle a loss due to inadequate or shoddy security measures. Most of the time the settlement is much more than it would cost to have a good security program with good documentation. I was surprised that most companies settle as a result of inadequate, outdated or just plain dumb policies and procedures they sometimes don't even know they have!

When the documents are sent to the plaintiff's attorney in the discovery process (they know what to ask for), it becomes woefully evident that security was not a priority at this business and an avenue to pursue by the attorney. It also becomes quickly evident that training records are missing or that training was never done. You need records, sign-in sheets and the name of the instructor/subject to prove you conducted the training.

Training – especially simple courses on awareness of suspicious activity, workplace violence prevention, workplace safety and job specific security – seems only to be in place in a few, mostly larger companies. Many companies, both large and small, that I have been an expert for or against seem to take

these types of training for granted or give the impression that they did not care about the security of their premise. Most of us know that legally a business has no obligation to provide security measures unless there is a "foreseeability of a crime" or a pattern of criminal behavior that indicates there was a great possibility of a like crime to happen.

So if you think a crime won't happen based on your measures of foreseeability, you may feel no obligation to provide security measures including policies and

"If you think a crime won't happen [on your premises] based on your measures of foreseeability, you may feel no obligation to provide security measures.... Please consider that there are industry standards and scholarly papers, that make you stand out if you do nothing."

procedures, training and countermeasures. Please consider that there are industry standards and scholarly papers, books, etc. that make you stand out if you do nothing.

Other companies take a different approach and make security, employee awareness and training an important part of their business. And then experts like me will "opine" for you as to why you meet those standards or why others deserves to pay

for not meeting the "generally accepted practices of the industry."

BOMA Greater Cleveland is proud to provide this space to our Associate Members so they can inform, educate and share their knowledge with property management professionals. This article was written by Tom Lekan, Senior Vice President, The Atlantis Company. He can be reached at 440-223-5730 or tlekan@gmail.com


Janice Parham
Executive Vice President
BOMA Greater Cleveland

For more info on this article or BOMA Greater Cleveland, contact Janice Parham at 216.575.0305 or jparham@bomacleveland.org



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