



WHITEPAPER

# Smart Access Solutions

Enable Employees to  
Better Serve Customers

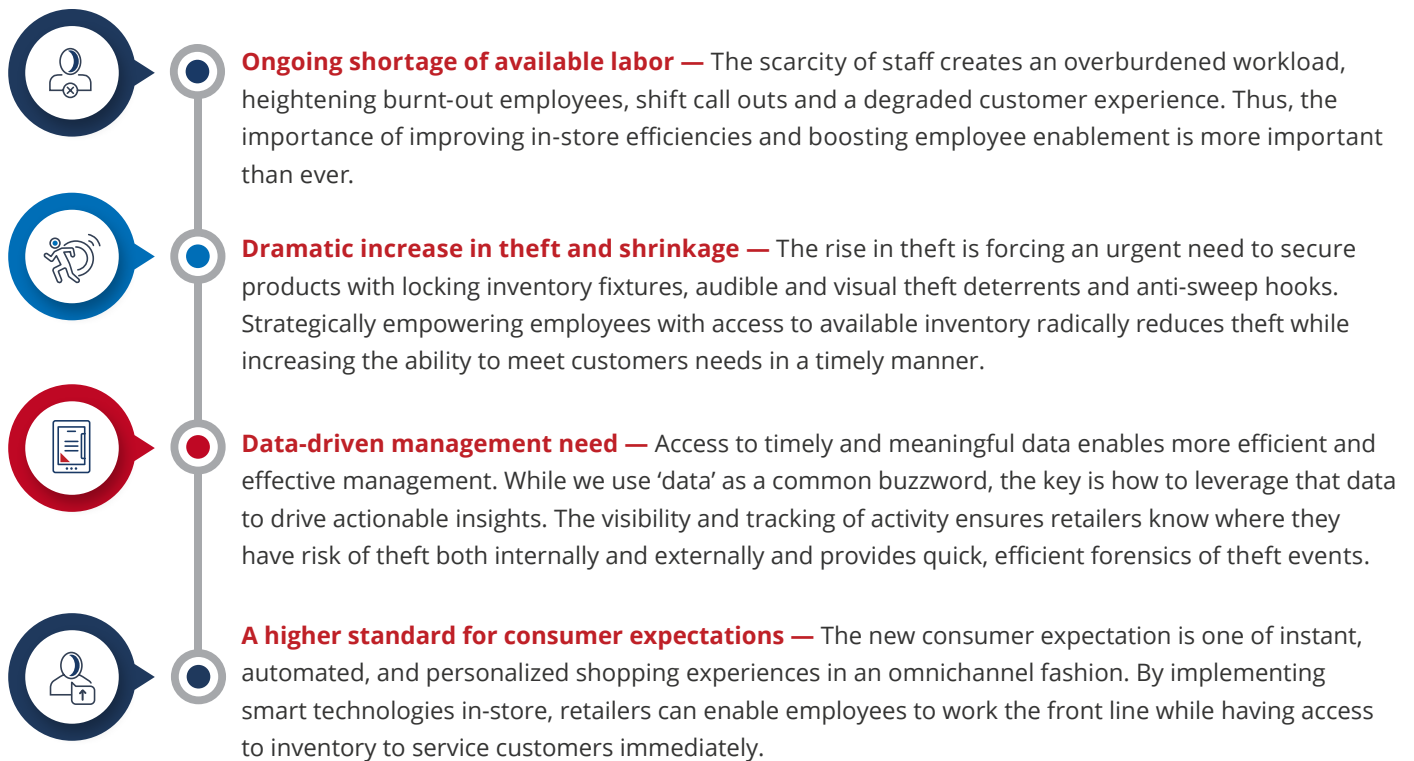
*December 2022*



# Smart Access Solutions

## Enable Employees to Better Serve Customers

The ever-evolving retail landscape has dramatically shifted following the COVID-19 crisis and retailers are facing new challenges forcing an evolution for in-store operations to remain relevant. Given this additional workload, employers and employees are being asked to do more with fewer resources and in-store bottlenecks are more prevalent than ever. This often results in consumer frustration, negative social media reviews, lowered Net Promoter Scores (NPS) and ultimately, impacted sales. Several industry trends continue to negatively impact retailers, including:

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- Ongoing shortage of available labor** — The scarcity of staff creates an overburdened workload, heightening burnt-out employees, shift call outs and a degraded customer experience. Thus, the importance of improving in-store efficiencies and boosting employee enablement is more important than ever.
  - Dramatic increase in theft and shrinkage** — The rise in theft is forcing an urgent need to secure products with locking inventory fixtures, audible and visual theft deterrents and anti-sweep hooks. Strategically empowering employees with access to available inventory radically reduces theft while increasing the ability to meet customers needs in a timely manner.
  - Data-driven management need** — Access to timely and meaningful data enables more efficient and effective management. While we use 'data' as a common buzzword, the key is how to leverage that data to drive actionable insights. The visibility and tracking of activity ensures retailers know where they have risk of theft both internally and externally and provides quick, efficient forensics of theft events.
  - A higher standard for consumer expectations** — The new consumer expectation is one of instant, automated, and personalized shopping experiences in an omnichannel fashion. By implementing smart technologies in-store, retailers can enable employees to work the front line while having access to inventory to service customers immediately.

In addition to these trends, retailers are also rapidly evolving brick-and-mortar strategies to better maximize their physical footprint. As part of this strategy, retail stores are migrating to full-service locations including managing BOPIS, curbside service and regional distribution center management, as well as increasing in-store security to include locking up many new high shrink categories. These new workflows and labor requirements are further driving the need to enable employees with tools and full access to product in order to effectively serve customers.

## Smart Store Technology

The good news for retailers is with the rapid pace of innovation and technology, smart solutions are now available and cost effective. These solutions allow management to drive labor efficiencies, empower employees, and protect valuable inventory while amplifying a smooth workflow. Smart technology solutions effectively service consumers by enabling employees to provide great customer service from parking lot to service floor and back of house. Additionally, this technology provides management control, driving accountability and enhanced employee activity.

*Providing the proper balance between employee enablement and accountability has been one of the differentiating factors for us. We have demonstrated an increase in sales while driving operational efficiencies and reducing overall shrink in retail.*

Travis Hooper, CTO  
MTI



# 70% of retail leaders

believe customers will wait 5 minutes or less for service before going elsewhere.

— Upstream Commerce

### SMART ACCESS

As shrink continues to be a major problem for stores, many product categories are being locked behind glass cabinets requiring employees to assist customers in the buying process. Historically, this has been managed with mechanical locks and keys. Although this approach helps reduce theft, it creates real challenges for both managers and customers.

- Distribution of keys is limited to a few department leads
- There is limited to no visibility into key management
- Keys are shared amongst employees with no traceability or accountability
- Forensic on theft events is time consuming and inefficient

In addition to management challenges, customers are forced to wait until a manager can be located and often abandon the purchase due to the frustration of waiting for a cabinet to be opened.

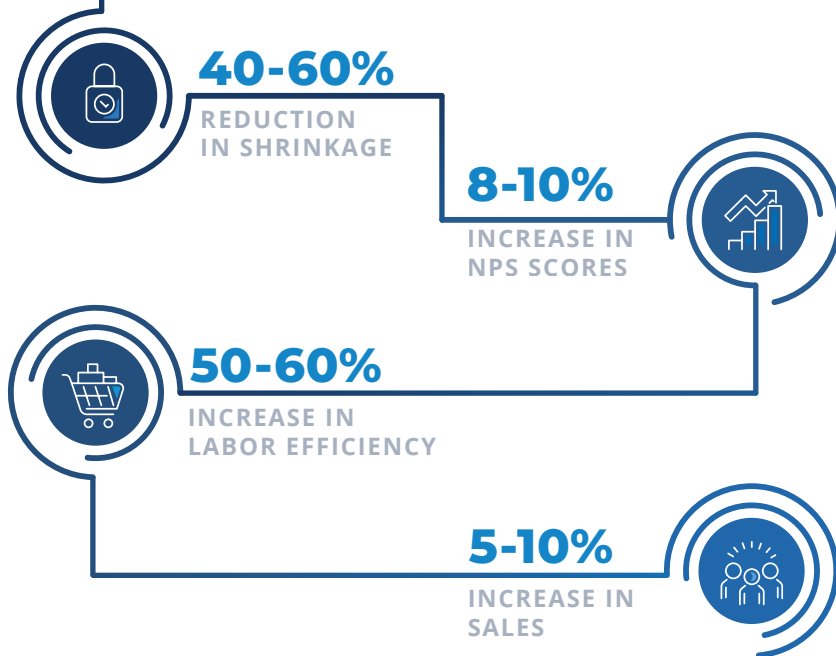
In our new faster paced, on-demand reality, consumers' time is more valuable. Large wait times to access product is causing missed sales opportunities and degrading the customer relationship.

Smart Access solutions provide a compelling alternative to the traditional lock and key. Utilizing digital locks, Smart Access platforms provide centralized management of employee's access rights and allow managers to effectively assign and manage keys for all employees. With Smart Access solutions, gone are the days of asking "Who has the key?" and replaced with an empowered workforce where everyone has the right access at the right time to service customers anywhere in the store. The main elements of an effective Smart Access solution include:

- **Accessible & Affordable Key Management** — All employees are given the appropriate access based on their job function and managers are able to drive efficient workflows and drive accountability with employees
- **Timely Data & Forensic / Audit Logging** — IoT technology provides the capability to track the who, what, where, when and how long for critical functions & locations
- **Configurable Business Rules** — Not all stores are the same, so managers have the ability to optimize employee workflows and drive labor efficiencies
- **Meaningful Insights** — Managers don't have the time to search for data, so insights are designed to be meaningful, action-orientated and readily available

## In a recent case study:

a major electronic retailer was able to achieve significant benefits by moving away from mechanical keys and empowering all sales associates with the ability to service customers.



Retailers that adopt Smart Access technology are able to achieve the balance between empowering employees with product access and providing the right level of accountability and control for loss prevention. With Smart Access, all employee activity is tracked so that proper accountability is assigned and management has the control and visibility to drive efficiency and reduce overall shrink. Smart Access solutions realize tangible benefits for both customers and employees including:

- **Enhanced customer interaction**
- **Increased speed of service**
- **Elevated shopping experiences**
- **Seamless transactions**
- **Increased labor efficiency and capacity**

## Summary

Retailers continue to face increased pressure to deliver a compelling in-store customer experience, while dealing with many new challenges introduced post COVID. Retailers that have adopted technology strategies focused on fully enabling employees to serve customers are seeing significant benefits in both NPS and sales. Smart Access solutions are highly effective in driving these benefits and strike the balance between employee empowerment and accountability. As theft continues to rise and more merchandise is secured, it is imperative for retailers to minimize the friction introduced for customers and enable all employees to service customers anywhere in the store. Smart Access needs to be a critical part of the new brick-and-mortar strategy.

## MTI

MTI is the only provider of a complete set of IoT-enabled products and services to secure products, doors, and valuable assets within retail, hospitality, and healthcare. MTI's latest innovation is our Managed Access Digital Locking solution which allows retailers to provide all employees with necessary access to service customers in all areas of the store while providing the appropriate level of accountability and control for managers. MTI combines our expertise in Loss Prevention hardware with our Smart Access software solution to revolutionize the way our customers protect their valuable assets while providing a great customer experience.

In addition to our innovative solutions, MTI provides the best customer service in the industries we serve. The key to our success is our shared purpose that is the lens through which our company operates: **#makinglivesbetter for our customers, their customers, our employees and our communities.**

**For further information, please contact: SK Panda, SVP Global Sales — [sales@mtigs.com](mailto:sales@mtigs.com)**

**To learn more, visit [mtigs.com](https://www.mtigs.com)**