IPE Essay

Distinctive Ride is a company located in Wasilla, Alaska that supplies customers with after-market modifications for their vehicles. Some of the items they provide are window tint, lift kits, sound systems, floor liners, light bars, etc. There are a total of 23 employees. The building they are in has 4 shop bays that are for employees only and a show room and waiting area for both employees and customers. Distinctive Ride shares the building and employees with its sister company, Wasilla Auto Detail.

The building has several entrances, all covered by cameras and flood lighting. There is a security system in place to which only a select few employees know how to disarm. Each of the 23 employees has their own unique code to enter the building through one designated employee entrance and each entry is logged. There is a server room doubling as the owner and bookkeepers’ office on premises which remains locked when not in use. Distinctive Ride contracts out all maintenance and IT support to an external company who provide monthly checks and constant remote monitoring.

There are lots of factors that could have effects on this business. They do not keep any uninterrupted power supplies or alternate sources of power on site, so when the electricity goes out, they are closed. They also only have a landline available for phone calls, so when the phones are out, they are unable to make any appointments or speak to customers. The company they hire for all their IT support is not on site and is in fact located the next town over, so anytime they need help, and the company is unable to remote in to fix the issue, they are spending time waiting on a person to show. Distinctive Ride is also very dependent on good weather for product shipments.

The largest threat that I foresee for Distinctive Ride would be employees attempting to steal customer card information or company financial information for financial gain. For instance, while the owner is assisting on the shop floor and the bookkeeper is out to lunch, they rarely lock the office. This allows an employee access to the server to install hardware or software that intercepts the necessary data. The second largest threat would be inclement weather. While not necessarily preventable it effects many aspects of day-to-day business. Without product shipments, they are unable to fulfill appointments for customers. Inclement weather also takes down the phones and power systems.

Courses of action for threat number one is to keep employees happy and well compensated along with ensuring the door remains locked when the bookkeeper and owner are not present. There should also be routine checks and balances to inspect the physical hardware. The course of action for inclement weather would be to ensure that there are additional power sources available to keep the shop up and running.

The IPE process is very useful in the breakdown of potential threats to any business, virtual or physical. It allows you to evaluate and workshop threats in order to best prevent any impact in workflow. While not all threats are foreseeable or preventable, any amount of pre-emptive protection is better than none.