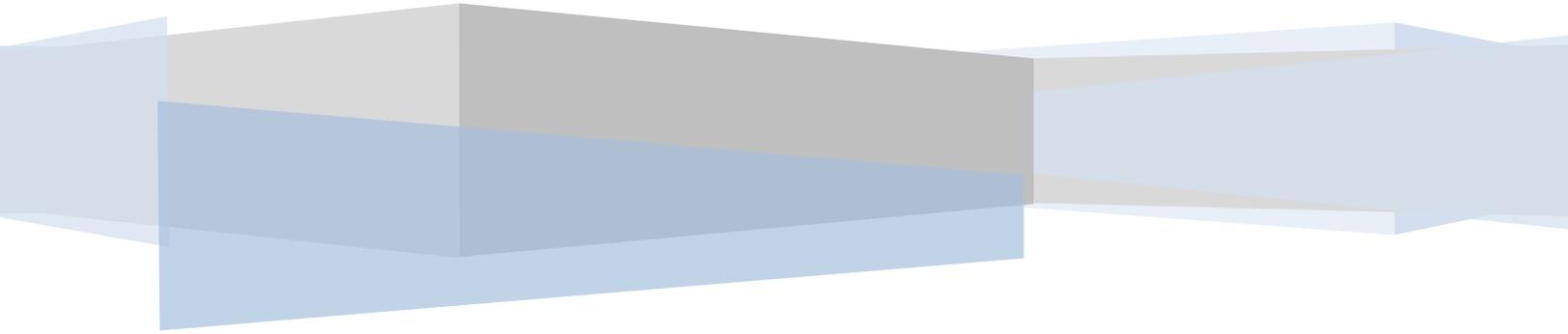




Alto Alliance Offender Interview Study

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Loss Prevention Research Council (LPRC) conducted a series of in-person offender interviews in Los Angeles, CA and Gainesville, FL to provide offender-based insights into the impact the Alliance strategy has in deterring recidivist offenders from committing retail theft. The purpose of this study was to take a preliminary look at the application and effectiveness of the Alliance program for both homeless and non-homeless shoplifters regardless of geographic area.

The main goals of the study are to explore offender perceptions of the Alto program, its effectiveness, and how this program affects offenders' decisions to commit retail theft. To achieve the primary objectives, we explored why and how offenders shoplift, their conviction history and how it relates to their fear of getting caught, and the impact of a shoplifting charge on offenders' decisions to steal. The ultimate goals are to scrutinize whether offenders' are less likely to commit theft if they know retailers and law enforcement are sharing intelligence on their identities.

Offender Interviews

30 recidivist offenders were asked a series of questions about their shoplifting behaviors and their perception of the Alliance program after being introduced to it verbally. Overall, the program appears to have moderate deterrent value to the recidivist offender. After the Alliance program was carefully explained to them, 69% (n=20) of the offenders interviewed indicated they would go to stores that are not a part of this program to shoplift, or they would still steal from stores protected by this solution, but less often. About 31% (n=9) of the offenders interviewed said they wouldn't be affected by the solution. On average, the offenders interviewed felt less likely (3.3 out of 7) to steal from stores protected by the program. Moreover, most offenders indicated that this program will likely affect their future decisions to steal from retail stores that are a part of it.

Discussion

It's important to acknowledge that this group of offenders has been among the most fearless and reckless the LPRC has interviewed. Due to a growing homeless population and the nature of homelessness - desperations arising from hunger, drug addiction, and mental illness for example - many (n=12) of the offenders that participated in this study indicated that they are not at all afraid of getting caught. Many of the offenders interviewed reinforced their fearlessness by noting that a new shoplifting charge on their record matters very little or not at all to them.

Despite the boldness of this group of offenders, the Alliance program still appeared to be a moderately effective asset protection initiative in deterring them from committing theft. The program appeared to be more effective in deterring shoplifting among the offenders that are not homeless compared to those who are homeless. There was a near-significant difference between the homeless group and the non-homeless group in their attitude toward incurring a new shoplifting charge on their record, how the program would affect their considerations to commit theft in stores that are a part of Alliance, and their expected response to the program. In this study, the homeless offenders interviewed cared significantly less about a new shoplifting charge on their record. For the homeless offenders interviewed, the Alliance program would have less influence on their future decision to conduct retail theft, and they would be more likely to steal from Alliance protected store than the non-homeless group.

Project Background

External shrinkage includes different types of theft and fraud, and can be very costly to retailers. This study will focus on the most common type of external shrinkage: theft from shoplifting. According to the most recent National Retail Security Survey, shoplifting has again surpassed employee theft as the leading cause of shrink, representing over 35 percent of total retail shrinkage. This type of retail shrinkage is devastating to retailers because it directly impacts the store's overall profitability.

The homelessness epidemic has been a staggering crisis in Los Angeles for decades. According to The Los Angeles Times, the number of those living in the streets and shelters of the city of L.A. and surrounding area has surged 75% — to roughly 55,000 from about 32,000 — in the last six years. The increasing presence of homelessness and destitution contributes to the widespread epidemic of retail theft in L.A., impacting the bottom line of many retail organizations.

The LPRC conducted this research with the support of Alto US. Interviews were conducted to explore the impact of shoplifting by homeless and non-homeless populations to better refine and enhance current asset protection measures. Through this research, we hope to foster a deeper understanding of how homeless and recidivist offenders approach shoplifting, their thoughts on how effective the Alto program is and how it works to deter theft, and their general response to the program. The survey interviews were collected in the inner city "Skid Row" area of Los Angeles, CA and in LPRC's Innovation Lab in Gainesville, FL. The surveys were administered verbally to offenders and responses were recorded by a LPRC research scientist. All data was collected from June 2018 to July 2018 and this report details the results captured in the surveys.

Research Goals

1. Why do offenders steal?
2. What are the frequently used theft methods?
3. Is the offender a part of the homeless population or involved in organized retail crime?
4. Were any of the previous shoplifting incidents escalated to a form of violence?
5. Do offenders understand (Get it) the purpose of the *Alliance* program and the mechanism of prevention?
6. Do offenders believe *Alliance* is effective at deterring shoplifting activities?
7. Do offenders perceive greater risks of stealing from stores that are a part of this program?
8. Are offenders deterred (Fear it) by the *Alliance* program? If so, what aspect(s) of the program deter them?

Project Process

Since Alto is conducting pilot studies of the *Alliance* program with several retail stores in Los Angeles, the LPRC decided to collect the majority of the interviews in Los Angeles to study the impact of the program in the targeted area.

To understand the effectiveness of the intervention, detailed feedback was collected via a series of in-person survey interviews. Offenders were asked a series of questions about their shoplifting behaviors, methods, and their reactions to the *Alliance* program. They were questioned about how the

interventions would affect their stealing behavior and their decisions to steal from stores that are a part of this program in the future.

Alliance Overview

Alto Alliance is an innovative approach to combating retail theft—it connects retailers with law enforcement and prosecution to break the cycle of retail theft. The program combines comprehensive analytics, intelligent prosecution, and deterrent marketing to make an impact on would-be offenders’ decision from stealing from a participating retail store.

Analytics

The program provides a technology platform that combines company information with industry-wide data to provide real-time reporting. Combining input from multiple retailers and industry crime resources creates a source of actionable intelligence for both retailers and law enforcement.

Marketing

Throughout the process from apprehension to prosecution to post-conviction, offenders are exposed to the deterrence experience with an awareness campaign such as store signage and offender letters to alter their decisions to return to retailers’ stores where the Alliance program is in place.

Prosecution

The program uses cloud-based storage of relevant case details and supporting evidence that is accessible by participating law enforcement and officials from the judicial system to bridge the gap between retailers and law enforcement.

Offender Background

An LPRC researcher interviewed 30 offenders who had admitted to shoplifting at least once within the past 3 months. Offenders were asked questions on subjects like their conviction history, reasons for conducting theft, methods of theft, and whether they target specific stores. 20 interviews were conducted in Los Angeles, CA, and 10 interviews were conducted in Gainesville, FL. One of the survey interviews was eliminated from the overall analysis because the participant was undergoing mental distress during the interview.

The collected sample included 22 (75%) men and 7 (24%) women. An overwhelming majority (86%, n=25) of the offenders are homeless or were once homeless. More than a quarter (28%, n=8) of the offenders interviewed are a part of an organized retail crime (ORC) group or were once part of an ORC group. These findings are presented in table 1a.

Table 1a: Proportion of Homeless and ORC Offenders

Response	Homeless	ORC Group
Yes	72% (n=21)	21% (n=6)
No	14%(n=4)	72% (n=21)
Formerly yes	14% (n=4)	7% (n=2)

Shoplifting Behavior and Conviction History

This section investigates the frequency and consequences of shoplifting and the offenders' prior conviction history. Over half (55%, n=16) of the offenders interviewed reported that they shoplifted daily. About a third (34%, n=10) of the offenders interviewed reported that they shoplifted weekly, and two (7%) of the offenders interviewed reported that they shoplifted biweekly. One (3%) of the offenders interviewed reported that they shoplifted bi-monthly. These results are presented in graph 2a.

Graph 2a: Frequency of Shoplifting



Almost three-fourths (72%, n=21) of the participants indicated they have been caught before for shoplifting. On average, each of these offenders had been caught 5 times in the past for shoplifting. Over half (58%, n=17) of the offenders who had been caught before for shoplifting indicated that they had been released without any punishment, whereas less than half indicated they had been ticketed/fined (44%, n=13) or arrested (41%, n=12) for shoplifting. About a quarter (28%, n=8) of the participants indicated they've been prosecuted for shoplifting. These results are presented in graph 2b.

Graph 2b: Consequences of Previous Shoplifting Incidents



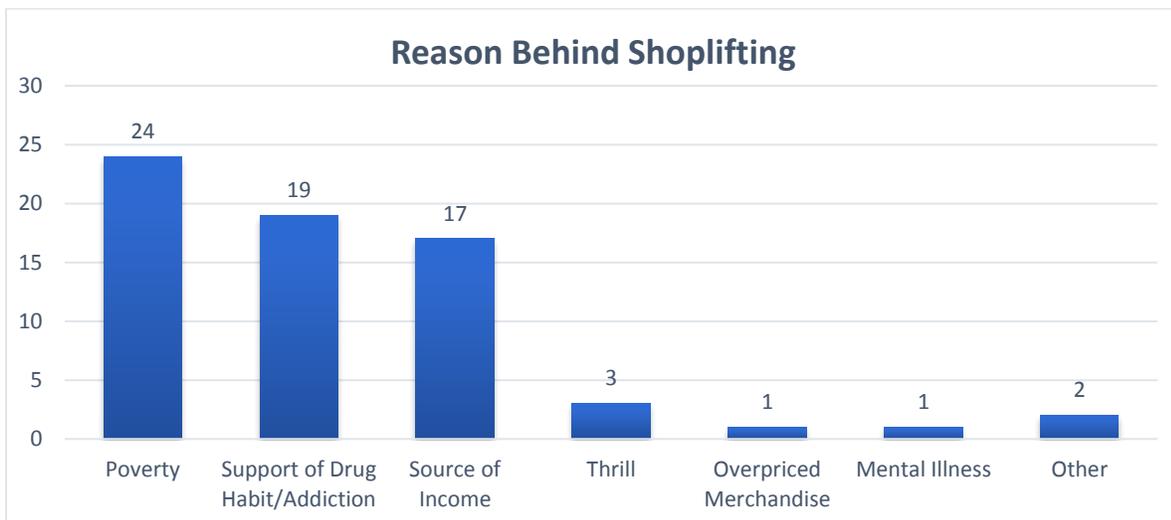
Two-fifths (41%, n=12) of the participants admitted they had been prosecuted for crimes other than shoplifting. The types of crime committed by this group of participants included strong arm robbery,

murder, burglary, identity theft, public intoxication, possession of paraphernalia, receiving stolen goods, fighting and assault, and DUI.

Homelessness

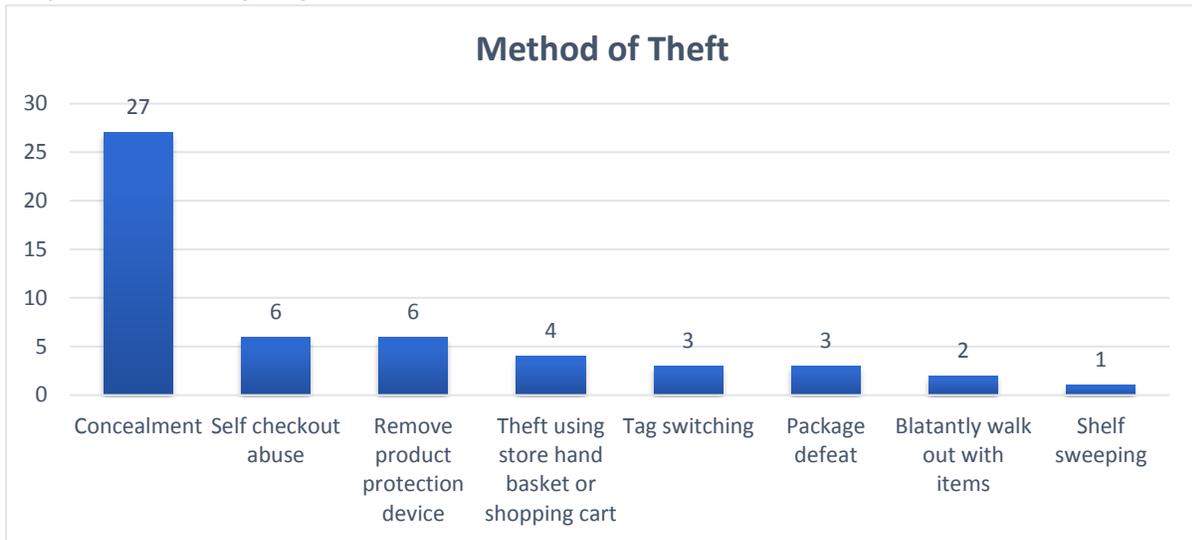
This section focuses on why offenders shoplift, their commonly used methods, and the possible escalation of shoplifting to violence. Offender can select multiple methods of theft if applicable. An overwhelmingly majority (n=83%, n=24) of the offenders interviewed indicated that they steal due to poverty and the need to support themselves and/or their family. Almost two-thirds (66%, n=19) of the offenders interviewed reported that they steal to support their drug habit or addiction. More than half (59%, n=17) of the offenders interviewed indicated that shoplifting is their source of income, and three (10%) offenders indicated they steal because of the thrill. Two of the offenders interviewed (7%) indicated they steal because they either felt the merchandise is overpriced or they have a mental illness, and two indicated they steal to support their alcohol or cigarette habits. One offender indicated that it's too easy to shoplift. These results are presented in graph 3a.

Graph 3a: Why does Offender Shoplift?



During the interviews, offenders were asked to identify the methods they use to shoplift. An overwhelming majority (n=27) of the offenders indicated that they use concealment to commit theft. Self-checkout abuse and product protection device defeat were the next most common methods of theft for this group. These results are presented in graph 3b.

Graph 3b: Method of Theft



More than a quarter (28%, n=8) of the offenders interviewed reported that they've used threat of violence or physical violence to help them to get away from employees who confronted them about shoplifting. These offenders were asked to identify the form of violence used during shoplifting and they can choose multiple answers from the given choices if applicable. Graph 3c illustrated the type of abuse or violence the offenders displayed.

Graph 3c: Escalated Violence from Shoplifting



The majority of these offenders used verbal abuse (n=6) or threat of force (n=6) when shoplifting, however, two offenders reported they used a gun or a syringe to help them escape from the store after being confronted by an employee, and one of them indicated they had used armed force to escape.

Retail Sectors Impacted

To explore the impact of shoplifting on different retail sectors, offenders were asked to identify the type of retailer they target most often. These results are presented in table 4a.

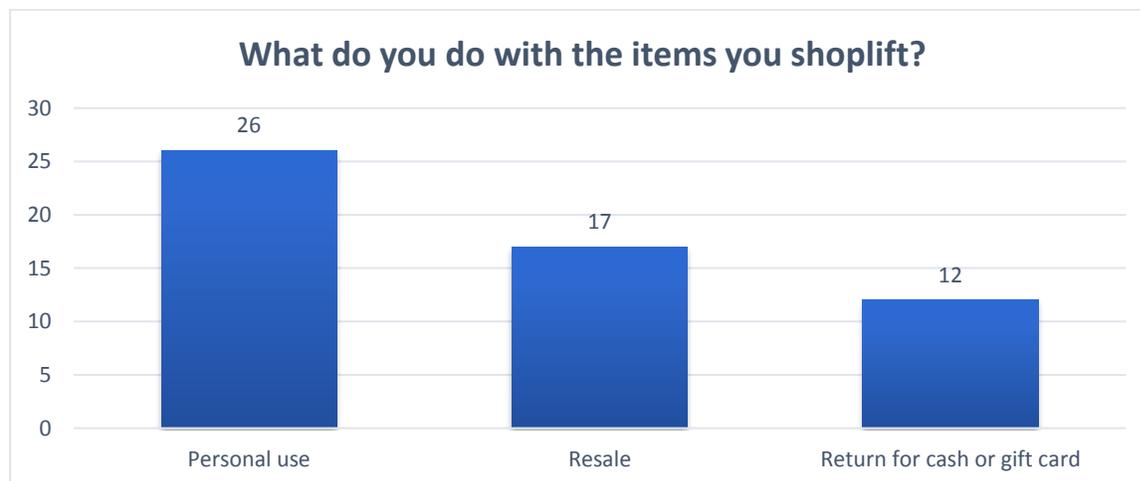
Table 4a: Retail Sectors Impacted

Retail Type	Frequency
Supermarket/Grocery	12
Drug Store	10
Big Box/Mass Merchant	8
Apparel	6
Home Improvement	2
Gas Station	1
Beauty Store	1
Dollar Store	1
Electronic Store	1
Liquor Store	1

It's evident from the interviews that the supermarket/grocery sector is being impacted the most, followed by drug stores, big box/mass merchant, and apparel stores.

Next, offenders were asked to specify what they do with the items they shoplift. 90% (n=26) of the offenders indicated they would use the items, 59% (n=17) indicated they would resell the items they shoplifted, and 41% (n=12) indicated they would return the items to get cash or a gift card. These results are presented in graph 4b.

Graph 4b: What do Offenders do with Items They Shoplift?



California Proposition 47

When discussing the impact of shoplifting on retail business, it's difficult to ignore the effect of Proposition 47. Proposition 47 was a referendum passed by voters in the state of California in 2014, and

was a significant reform targeted at lower-level offenders. Under this policy, nonviolent, small crimes were reduced to misdemeanors.

Prop. 47 has reduced the penalties associated with a certain set of drug and property offenses by increasing the felony threshold to \$950. Offenses such as shoplifting, theft, receiving stolen property, and drug possession have been reclassified as misdemeanors as long as the dollar value involved stays under \$950.

Prop. 47 could have the unintended consequence of incentivizing career criminals to take advantage of these criminal justice reforms which are meant to prevent low-level offenders from receiving lengthy jail sentences. This class of offenders can now steal just under \$950 worth of merchandise with little fear of any repercussions—misdemeanor convictions carry little, if any, incarceration time, and this small risks are greatly outweighed by the potential financial reward of recurring thefts.

The League of California Cities (2017) pointed out that “this measure addresses increased incidents of both individual shoplifting and organized retail theft operations responsible for the loss of millions of dollars in retail merchandise statewide, which entail a corresponding hit to local sales tax revenues.”

According to the study “The Impact of Proposition 47 on Crime and Recidivism” conducted by Public Policy of California, the average monthly number of reported shoplifting incidents stayed relatively flat - between 7,800 and 8,100 per month - in the years before Prop. 47 passed. The figure then jumped to 9,000 shoplifting incidents in November 2014 and reached a seven-year high of 9,900 in January 2015. The post-reform one-year average of 9,050 is roughly 12 percent higher than the one-year pre-reform average. Shoplifting did decrease notably in 2016, when the monthly numbers dropped to pre-reform levels. It is possible however, that the 2016 drop in shoplifting was due to a decline in the likelihood of event reporting – reporting organizations may have begun to understand that petty shoplifting offenders will suffer no major consequences under the new policy.

The LPRC sought to further explore the impact of felony threshold on offender’s decision to commit retail theft in the state of California. During the interviews, more than half (58%, n=11) of the offenders interviewed from Los Angeles indicated that they are not aware of the penalty level on shoplifting and therefore it doesn’t impact how much they steal. About a quarter (26%, n=5) of the offenders interviewed indicated that they are aware of the penalty level on shoplifting and it impacts how much they steal. It’s interesting to point out that these offenders spelled out some clause of Prop. 47 and indicated that due to the high felony threshold of Prop. 47, they are not afraid of stealing repeatedly as long as the value of the merchandise stolen does not exceed \$950. 3 (16%) of the offenders interviewed indicated they are not sure about the penalty level and they don’t think it matters significantly because they tend to steal food and necessities. These results are presented in graph 5a.

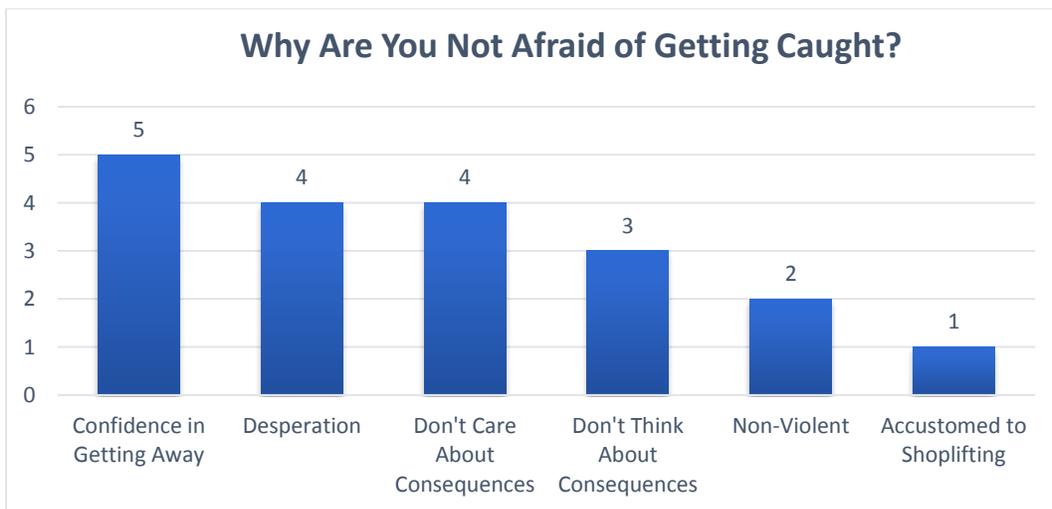
Graph 5a: Impact of Penalty Level on Shoplifting



Fear of Being Caught

This section examines the influence of law enforcement on shoplifting. Offenders were asked to rate their fear of getting caught on a one to seven scale before being introduced to the Alliance program. It's surprising to note the general overall fearlessness for this particular group of offenders - the average fear of getting caught reported is 3.1 out of 7, where 1 represents not at all afraid, 4 represents neutral, and 7 represents very afraid. Offenders who reported not being afraid of getting caught were questioned further to identify the reasons why. These results are presented in graph 6a.

Graph 6a: Why are Some Offenders not Afraid of Getting Caught?



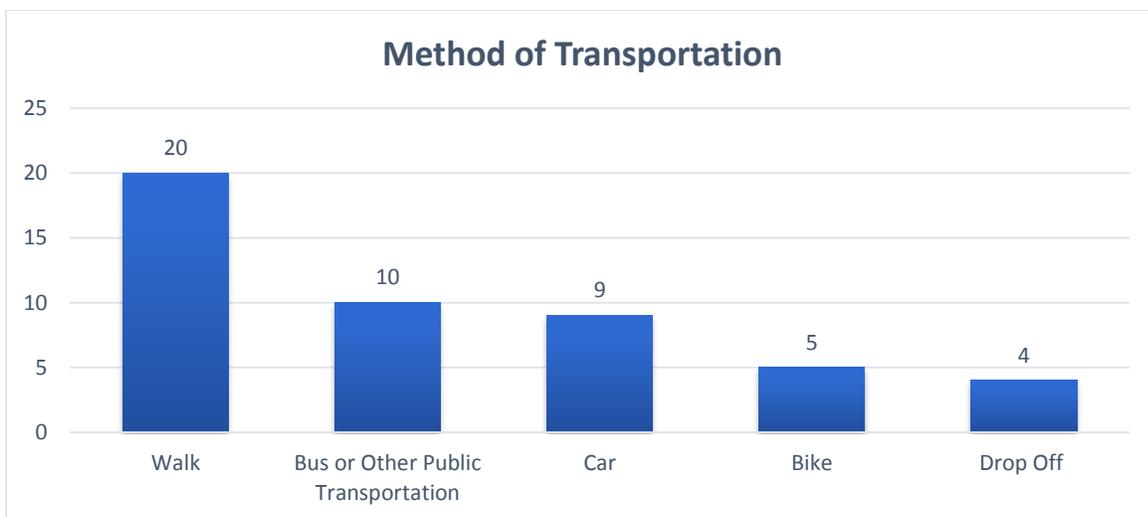
Five of the offenders interviewed indicated that they believe they are extremely skilled at shoplifting and confident they can get away with it. Four of the offenders interviewed indicated that they steal out of desperation and the need for survival. Four of the offenders interviewed indicated that they do not care about the consequences because they have prior offenses, have been prosecuted multiple times, and do not care about accumulating additional shoplifting charges. Three of the offenders interviewed

indicated that they don't think about the consequences of their actions when shoplifting. Two of the offenders interviewed indicated that because they are non-violent, they are more likely to have charges against them dropped. Finally, one of the offenders interviewed indicated that he is accustomed to shoplifting and there aren't any serious consequences even if he gets caught.

There is a notable difference between the homeless group and the non-homeless group in their fear of getting caught when shoplifting. The results show a mean of 2.6 for the homeless group compared to a mean of 4.5 for the non-homeless group: the difference is approaching statistical significance ($p=0.09$). The difference in these two groups might stem from the fact that the homeless offenders interviewed are very desperate and reckless due to their need to survive, drug addiction, and prior convictions.

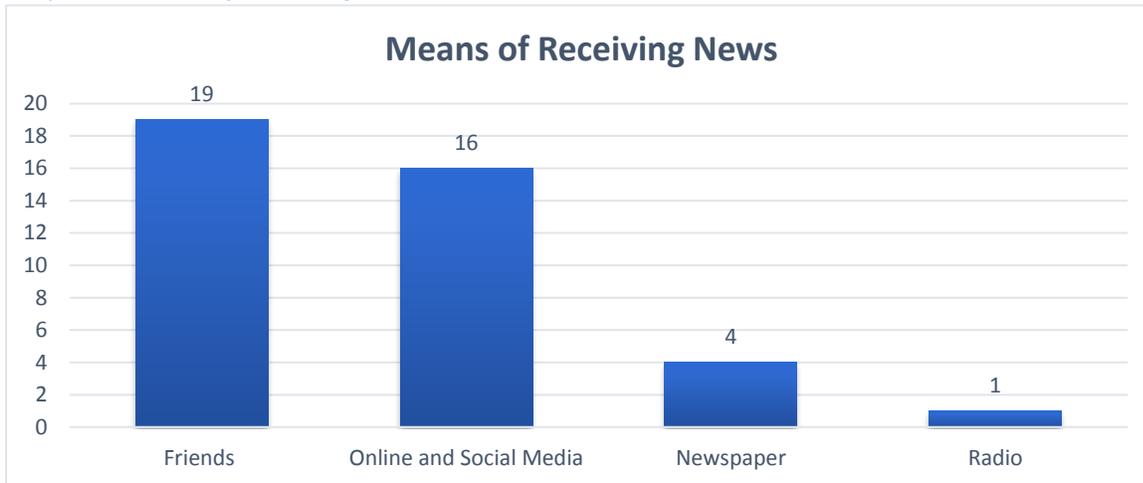
Next, offenders were asked to report their method of transportation to the stores they shoplift from. Offenders can select multiple choices if applicable. Due to the large number of homeless participants in this study, more than two-third (69%, $n=20$) of them indicated that they travel by foot as expected. Approximately a third (34%, $n=10$) of the homeless offenders interviewed travel by bus or other public transportation, and less than a third (31%, $n=9$) travel by car. A few of the offenders interviewed indicated that they travel by bike (17%, $n=5$) or get dropped off by a friend (14%, $n=4$). These results are presented in graph 6b.

Graph 6b: Method of Transportation



To help Alto identify communication strategies they could use to reach recidivist offenders in the community, offenders were asked to identify how they receive news and can select multiple choices if applicable. About two third (65%, $n=19$) of the offenders interviewed receive news through friends and word of mouth, it should not be surprising to note that most of these responses came from the homeless population in Los Angeles, CA. More than half (55%, $n=16$) of the offenders interviewed reported receiving news from an online source or social media, and only a few read newspapers (13%, $n=4$) or listened to the radio (3%, $n=1$) for news. The results are presented in graph 6c.

Graph 6c: Means of Receiving News



An essential aspect of deterring offenders from returning to Alliance protected stores is the increase in the likelihood of incarceration and the possibility of additional criminal charges for recidivist offenders. Through intelligent marketing, offenders are informed about the partnership between retailers and law enforcement agencies which is central to the Alliance program. Offenders are further educated about how retailers and law enforcement agencies are able to leverage intelligence through the Alliance Program to effectively catch and incapacitate bad actors.

The LPRC wanted to investigate the deterrent value of an increase in the possibility of incarceration or higher sentencing penalties if offenders get caught. On average, offenders reported that they are still somewhat likely (4.2 out of 7.0) to steal even if the likelihood of incarceration is increased or sentencing penalties are raised. Some comments from offenders are captured below:

- *"It's my top priority to support my kids, and I have to steal to get by."*
- *"I've been in the prison so many times, prison is like a vacation."*
- *"It's (shoplifting) so easy to get away."*
- *"The penalty is harsh already, I'm not scared, you know what you are signing up for."*
- *"They can't keep me in the jail forever."*
- *"No matter how harsh the penalties are, I still need to support my drug habits. "*
- *"I'm out here trying to survive regardless of the penalty levels."*

Additionally, offenders were asked to report how much a new shoplifting (petit theft) charge would matter to them on a one to seven scale, where one represented it not mattering at all, seven represented it mattering a lot, and four representing neutrality. On average, a new shoplifting charge doesn't seem to matter significantly (4.8 out of 7.0) to this population of offenders. However, more than half (59%, n=17) of the offenders interviewed indicated that a new shoplifting charge matters to them to some extent. These offenders indicated that a new shoplifting charge matters greatly to them because it will prevent them from finding a job, or because they have never been caught before, so they would prefer to maintain a clean record. On the other hand, offenders who would not mind a new shoplifting charge on their record unanimously agreed that because they have a bad record already, with so many charges from prior offenses, new shoplifting charges are insignificant to them. Offenders who are homeless showed significantly less concern over a new shoplifting charge than the offenders who are

not homeless, reporting a mean response of 4.2 compared to a mean response of 6.3. The difference is approaching statistical significance ($p=0.07$).

Finally, offenders were asked how likely they would be to shoplift from a retail store if they knew that specific retailer was partnering with law enforcement and sharing intelligence on offenders. On average, the offenders interviewed remain somewhat likely (4.8 out of 8) to shoplift even if they know that the retail store is partnering with law enforcement. Over half (55%, $n=16$) of the offenders interviewed indicated that knowing of the partnership between retailers and law enforcement doesn't affect how likely they would be to steal from the retailer. Many of the offenders interviewed noted that they are under the impression that a lot of retailers are doing that already, so it wasn't a news to them. Others indicated that they are confident they could get away with shoplifting, and therefore, are not worried even if retailers are partnering with law enforcement to catch shoplifters. One offender said that he would be thrilled to see the partnership because he wants to know what retailers and law enforcement are capable of and would like to see where that partnership could lead in catching shoplifters.

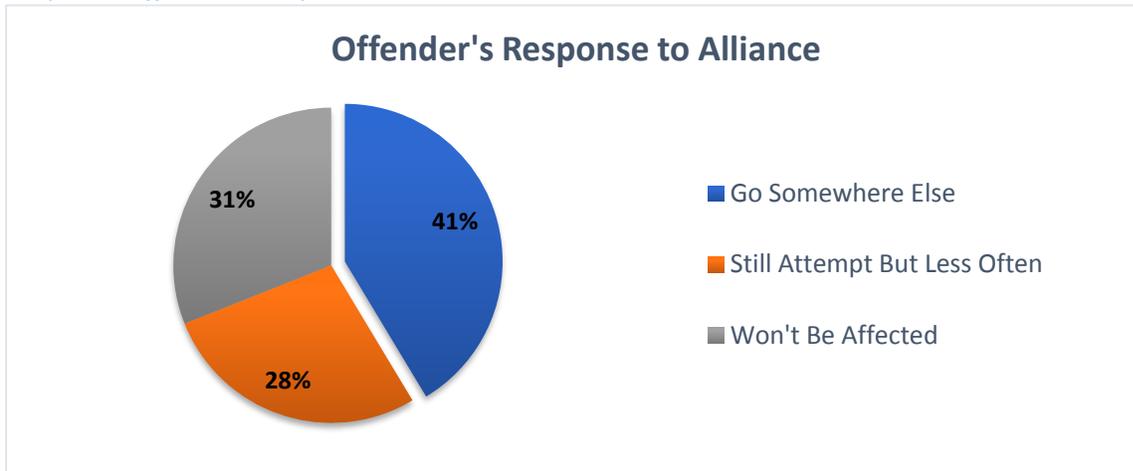
Impact of Alliance on Shoplifting

The most impactful aspect of any solution used for loss prevention is the "fear" factor among offenders. Offender must decide if a treatment presents a clear danger to them or their success to be deterred by the solution. The overall effectiveness of most security measures will hinge upon whether offenders "fear" the solution. Therefore, offenders were asked how they would respond to the Alliance program in this survey.

During the interviews, a LPRC Researcher explained the concept of Alto Alliance to the offenders, informing them of the different aspects of the program before asking them a series of questions regarding the effectiveness of Alliance in deterring shoplifting. Some of the questions asked during this section are on a one to seven likelihood scale, where one represents least likely, seven represents most likely, and four represents neutral.

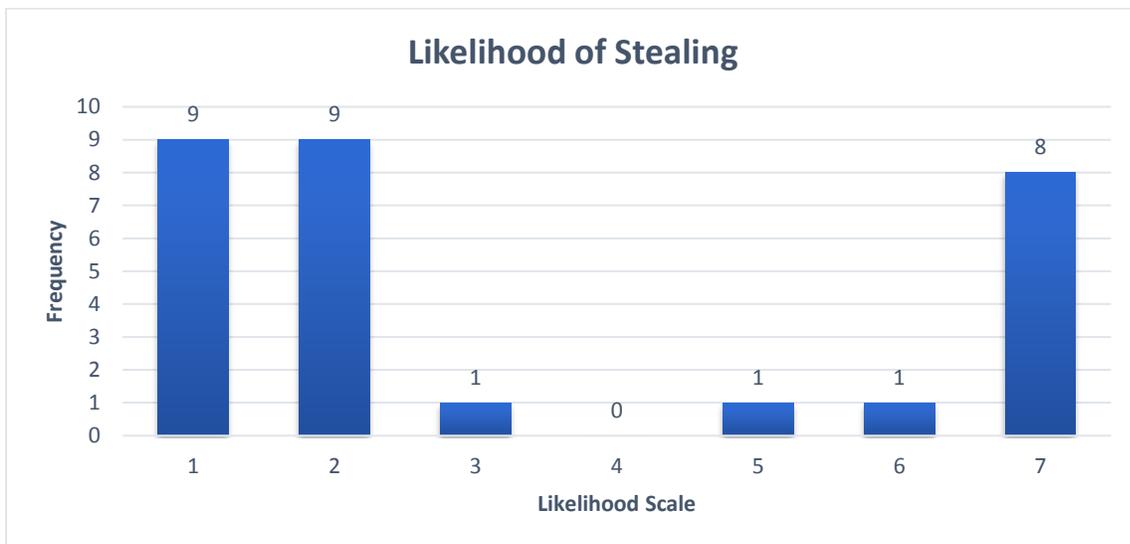
In response to the presence of Alliance, twelve (41%) of the offenders interviewed indicated they would go to stores that are not a part of this program to shoplift, eight (28%) of the offenders interviewed said they would still steal from stores protected by this solution but less often, and nine (31%) of the offenders interviewed said they wouldn't be affected at all by the solution. These results are presented in graph 7a.

Graph 7a: Offender's Response to Alliance



Finally, shoplifting offenders were asked how likely they would be to steal from stores protected by the Alliance solution. The question was asked in a one to seven likelihood scale, where one represents not likely, seven represents very likely, and four represents neutral. Overall, the offenders interviewed indicated that they felt less likely (3.3 out of 7) to steal from stores protected by the Alliance program. About two-thirds (66%, n=19) of the offenders interviewed felt less likely to steal from stores protected by the program, whereas one-third (34%, n=10) of the offenders interviewed still felt likely to steal from Alliance protected stores. The breakdown of the average is presented in graph 7b.

Graph 7b: Impact of Alliance on the Likelihood of Stealing



Offenders who indicated they are less likely to steal from stores protected by Alliance made the following comments:

- *"I don't want to get caught/go to jail."*
- *"The program made me think twice about shoplifting."*
- *"The program is on point, the items that I shoplifted aren't worth the penalty of getting caught and prosecuted."*

- *“I feel targeted and have to pay for the price of the offenses I have committed before.”*
- *“I could spend the time elsewhere to get the product.”*
- *“It’s scary because I have a lot of petit theft cases, with my history I’ll probably go to jail.”*

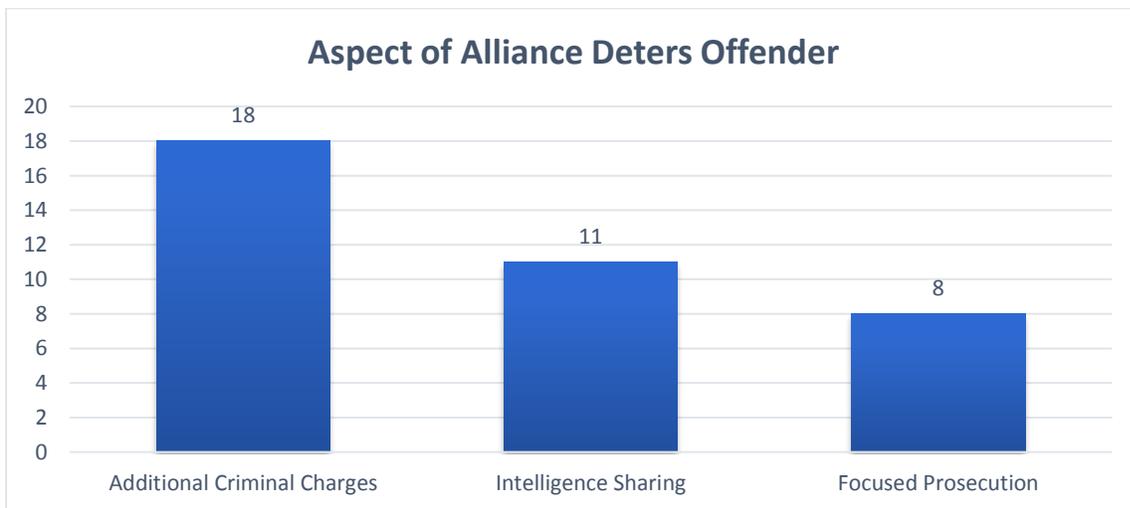
On the other hand, offenders who indicated very likely to steal from stores protected by Alliance made the following comments:

- *“Nothing would deter me from shoplifting, I’m desperate.”*
- *“I’m desperate, I don’t care.”*
- *“I have a lifetime criminal history, I don’t care if I go back to jail again.”*
- *“They are not going to catch me, I’ve got to do what I got to do to get high.”*
- *“It’s (Alliance) the same thing as security officers, they don’t scare me.”*
- *“As long as I stay under the felony threshold I wouldn’t be prosecuted, even if the security catches me I could just drop the stuff and walk out.”*

Offenders who are homeless are more likely to attempt shoplifting than offenders who are not homeless. Offenders who are homeless scored a mean of 3.6 compared to a mean of 2.8 for offenders who are not homeless, although the difference is not statistically significant.

The twenty offenders who indicated the Alliance program would deter them from shoplifting in some extent were asked to explain which aspect of the program would deter them. Multiple choices can be selected if applicable. The results are presented in graph 7c.

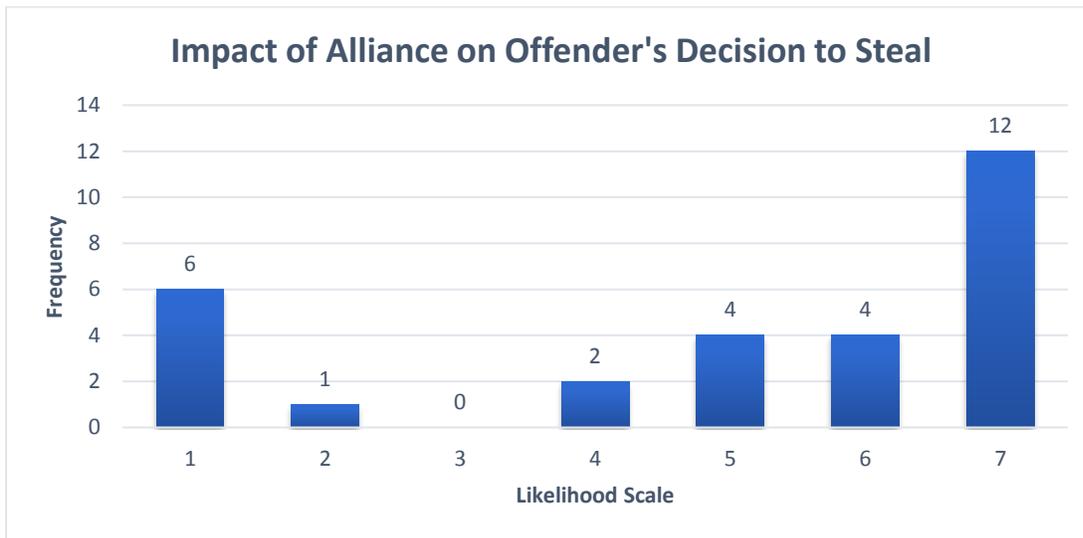
Graph 7c: Impact of Alliance on the Likelihood of Stealing



A majority (62%, n=18) of offenders indicated that the possibility of additional criminal charges would deter them from shoplifting from stores protected by the Alliance program. More than a third (38%, n=11) of the offenders interviewed indicated that intelligence sharing between law enforcement and retailers through the Alliance program would deter them from shoplifting, and more than a quarter (28%, n=8) of the offenders interviewed indicated that the focused prosecution facilitated by the Alliance program would deter them from stealing from the participating retail stores.

In addition, offenders were asked how likely the program would impact their decision to steal from the Alliance protected stores. The question was asked in a one to seven likelihood scale, where one represents not likely, seven represents very likely, and four represents neutral. On average, offenders reported that this program will likely (5.0 out of 7.0) affect their decision to steal from retail chains that are a part of this program in the future. The breakdown of the average is presented in graph 7d.

Graph 7d: Impact of Alliance on the Likelihood of Stealing



Finally, offenders reported that they are likely (4.0 out of 5.0) to tell their friends who shoplift about this program.

Conclusion and Discussion

An understanding of the logic model behind Alto Alliance and its underlying rationale, theory, and impact on offender’s decision-making process is crucial to developing effective crime prevention programs to deter shoplifting.

When discussing the effectiveness of the Alliance program in deterring shoplifters, it’s important to address the differences between the homeless and the non-homeless offenders. Although the two groups may have similar motivations, they are intrinsically different in both their criminal history and level of desperation. Therefore, the homeless offenders interviewed reported being less afraid of getting caught compared to the non-homeless offenders. For this reason, the homeless offenders are less likely to be deterred by Alliance than non-homeless offenders. Alliance is based on the rationale that offenders will face an increased chance of getting caught and possible additional criminal charges if they’ve offended in other retail stores that are a part of the program. If the fear of being caught is removed from the overall deterrence equation, it’s speculated that the program will not be as efficacious to these group of offenders.

Table 8a presented the differences in response to *Alliance* by these two populations. Although the sample size of the non-homeless offender population is small, it’s apparent that offenders who are not homeless are more likely (88% versus 62%) to go somewhere else or steal less often if the target store is

a part of the Alliance program than the offenders who are not homeless. Offenders who are homeless also reported being less afraid of getting caught and less concerned with a new shoplifting charge on their record.

Table 8a: Impact of Alliance on the Likelihood of Stealing

Reaction to Alliance	Homeless Offender	Non-Homeless Offender
Go Somewhere Else	33%	63%
Still Attempt to Steal but Less Often	29%	25%
Wouldn't be Affected	38%	13%

For the non-homeless offenders, the increased risk of getting caught in those retail stores protected by Alliance will result in a diminished willingness to offend in that store. On the other hand, homeless offenders are much more desperate due to the need to survive. Many of homeless offenders have prior criminal convictions and were prosecuted for offenses far more severe than shoplifting. Many of the homeless offenders interviewed reported that the risk of getting caught was insignificant to them. Moreover, due to the high felony threshold under Proposition 47, offenders reported that they are only getting a slap on the wrist from the city police if law enforcement is even present at all when they are apprehended.

Overall, the Alliance program is shown to be moderately effective in deterring recidivist offenders from committing theft in stores it protects; the program impacted majority (69%, n=20) of this offender population. The program appears to be more effective among offenders who are not homeless. However, due to the limited (n=8) number of non-homeless offenders interviewed for this study, the LPRC recommends more extensive offender interviews with non-homeless offenders to further substantiate the findings drawn in this study.

Appendix A: Additional Methodology

Sample Selection and Technique

For the offenders interviewed in this study, a convenience sample of active shoplifting offenders was recruited using online forums and a snowball sampling method. Offenders received \$15 McDonald's gift cards and \$25 Visa gift cards in Los Angeles, CA and Gainesville, FL respectively as compensation for participating in the study. A screening interview was conducted by an LPRC Researcher verbally prior to the interviews to determine if the candidate had the appropriate qualifications to participate in the survey. These offenders self-reported their past and current shoplifting behavior to qualify as active or recently active. The screening questions asked are as follows:

1. *Are you currently homeless?*
2. *When is the last time you shoplifted?*
3. *How often do you shoplift?*

This sample was made up of a range of offender types from thrill and opportunity-based shoplifters to more advanced and frequent offenders and was comprised of a mix of races and genders. Some offender interviews were recorded to provide contextual evidence to Alto. Due to the sampling technique used, this sample may not be representative of the general offender population.