



## So, Everyone's an Expert?

In this age of Do-It-Yourself (DIY), there are many individuals who are trying to resolve their lockout and security issues on their own. This sense of empowerment is compounded by the Internet. The popular video-sharing website, YouTube.com, for example, shows ordinary folk unlocking car doors with nothing more than a tennis ball. Young children can also be seen bump-keying their way back into their homes. Elsewhere online "help" abounds for the amateur locksmith (and, no doubt criminal) on lock-picking and safe-cracking.

In light of this, how do you, a security professional, convince an increasingly confident handyman/woman public to turn to you first, instead of doing it for themselves?

It may sound obvious, but the most important step is to demonstrate superior knowledge when promoting yourself and your trade.

This is easy if you remember that, as a qualified locksmith:

- † You are more aware of the latest security threats and how to combat these than the amateur. For example, you will know which locks are least/most susceptible to being bump-keyed and therefore which ones to install or avoid.
- † You are the best person to recommend effective security systems in a landscape where miscreants are becoming more sophisticated.
- † You have the skills to install devices and systems safely and correctly.
- † You have access to products not available to the general public. For example, you may be the only ones permitted to provide certain keys due to keyblank and equipment sales restrictions.

You can also convey how much time and cost is saved by hiring a professional. For example, in your marketing materials mention your ability to respond promptly and to quickly fix a lockout situation, and that clients needn't waste time fiddling unnecessarily.

Also, it is not uncommon for folks to damage their own locks or security systems as they pick or dismantle them. This is another reason to discourage untrained hands from tampering.

Showing you're a few steps ahead knowledge and skills-wise is only one part of getting clients to come to you. A professional demeanor, a continual and effective marketing presence and relationship-building are also crucial.