



CASE STUDY

# Sensormatic

by Johnson Controls

**DOUGLAS**, Europe's leading premium beauty retailer, benefits from a comprehensive loss prevention strategy by Sensormatic.

## Overview:

- **Industry:**

Omnichannel premium beauty destination in Europe

- **Solutions:**

- Acousto-Magnetic (AM) Electronic Article Surveillance (EAS)
- Merchandise protection
- Advertising panels

- **Key Benefits:**

- Reduced shrinkage through targeted theft deterrence
- Stronger store-level security and staff confidence
- Enhanced customer experience
- Improved profitability through reduced sales losses and better on-shelf availability

With its brands DOUGLAS, NOCIBÉ, parfumdreams and Niche Beauty, the DOUGLAS Group stands as Europe's leading omnichannel retailer of premium beauty products. Operating 1,920 stores alongside a rapidly expanding online presence, DOUGLAS seamlessly blends physical retail with digital commerce. Customers benefit not only from a wide-ranging product portfolio, but also from personalised advice delivered in store.

Recognising the strategic value of retail media, DOUGLAS prioritises partnerships with brand manufacturers to unlock the full potential of its platform and deliver innovative advertising solutions.



# The Challenge

*'Our branded products were increasingly targeted by organised theft – traditional security measures were no longer sufficient.'*

*'It became clear that to safeguard our margins, ensure product availability and above all maintain trust in our brand, we needed a comprehensive and sustainable loss prevention solution.'*



**Julia Grzybowska**  
Head of Compliance & Loss Prevention, DOUGLAS DACH

The high-demand branded products in the DOUGLAS range – particularly fragrances, skincare and make-up – were increasingly turning stores into prime targets for shoplifting. Existing security measures were no longer sufficient: there was no standardised loss prevention strategy in place, only occasional use of doormen or security staff. Products were displayed openly, which made them especially vulnerable to theft.

As a result, shrinkage and inventory discrepancies rose significantly. DOUGLAS had to act – especially as the financial losses were not only impacting the bottom line, but also causing inefficiencies in product availability and replenishment. Additionally, the growing grey market threatened brand integrity and price consistency – a strategic risk for a business that places strong emphasis on brand image and exclusivity.



DOUGLAS also faced internal challenges: staff were often not sufficiently trained to handle suspicious situations or deal with organised theft groups. At the same time, standardised processes for preventing and tracking shrinkage were lacking. Transitioning to an effective yet customer-friendly security concept required more than just technological investment – it demanded a cultural shift within the organisation, particularly in navigating the tension between marketing, store operations and loss prevention.

# A Tender with Ambitious Goals

To address these challenges, DOUGLAS launched a comprehensive tender process with ambitious goals. At the heart of the initiative was the rollout of a modern, nationwide electronic article surveillance system – one that not only met the latest technological standards but also integrated seamlessly with the brand's premium store design.

The solution needed to be connected and scalable to support future developments, particularly in response to trends such as mobile payment. One of the key challenges was the tight timescale: 301 stores needed to be equipped within just six months. It was also essential to find a partner with strong presence across the DACH\* region who could reliably support the implementation.

*'Rolling out the pilot during the busiest trading period of the year was a true stress test – not just for the system, but for our partnership as well. During the Christmas season in particular, technology, processes and support had to run flawlessly. This phase proved that Sensormatic delivers not only on the technology front, but also operationally – under real-world conditions and intense pressure.'*



**Julia Grzybowska**  
Head of Compliance & Loss Prevention, DOUGLAS DACH

\*DACH refers to Germany, Austria and Switzerland – the three central European countries in which German is the predominant language.

# The Solution

Following a structured selection process, DOUGLAS chose to partner with Sensormatic – the leading provider of intelligent loss prevention and merchandise protection solutions. The alliance began during the busiest trading period of the year: the Christmas season. This critical phase saw the launch of a pilot project designed to address the specific challenges of retailing premium beauty products.

Over the course of three months, seven selected stores were equipped with loss prevention and merchandise protection solutions and thoroughly evaluated. Sensormatic assigned a dedicated project team to work closely with DOUGLAS throughout the rollout. The aim was to test and assess various approaches to securing different product categories – from fragrances and skincare to make-up – under real-world conditions.



## Complex Product Requirements Demand Tailored Solutions

The unique characteristics of beauty retail products – often liquid, housed in metallic packaging, or extremely compact – posed a significant challenge for conventional merchandise protection systems. In this context, standard solutions proved ineffective. Sensormatic responded with customised concepts, specifically designed to meet DOUGLAS's requirements.

At the heart of the development were innovative tagging and labelling strategies. For example, ultra-compact AM labels were selected to ensure reliable performance even on the smallest product surfaces. At the same time, label placement had to be carefully managed to prevent metallic packaging from interfering with signal transmission – a technical challenge that was successfully addressed through detailed application guidance.

Particular attention was paid to the brand experience: the solutions needed to provide effective theft protection without compromising product aesthetics or the premium shopping environment. Sensormatic succeeded in aligning protection with brand presentation – a key factor in ensuring store-level acceptance of the measures.

# Mobile Payment on the Shop Floor – Seamless and Secure

DOUGLAS offers its customers a particularly convenient shopping experience: they can pay directly on the shop floor via mobile devices, assisted by store staff.

To ensure this service ran smoothly, the deactivation of merchandise protection also needed to be flexible. For this specific use case, Sensormatic developed a tailored solution: a mobile hand-held deactivator that enables store staff to deactivate tags immediately after a mobile payment – without needing to return to a traditional checkout area. This ensures the shopping experience remains not only convenient, but also secure and efficient for customers.

## Additional Revenue Through Marketing Partnerships

By attaching advertising panels to its EAS antennas, DOUGLAS benefits from a dual advantage: effective loss prevention is combined with a high-impact advertising format that generates additional revenue while reinforcing brand engagement within the in-store experience.



# The Result

*'Our inventory figures have improved significantly: shrinkage was reduced by 50% – a success we largely attribute to the implementation of the harmonised loss prevention and merchandise protection solution.'*



**Julia Grzybowska**  
Head of Compliance & Loss Prevention, DOUGLAS DACH

The introduction of the loss prevention and merchandise protection solution marked a true turning point for DOUGLAS. Combined with other measures, **electronic article surveillance enabled a 50% reduction in shrinkage** – a compelling testament to the effectiveness of the technology.

Customer experience also improved. With a heightened sense of security, shoppers can now fully immerse themselves in the store environment – a crucial factor in the sensitive world of premium beauty retail.

The solution not only delivers today, but is also future-ready: its scalable technology allows for seamless integration of upcoming IoT applications. The system's ease of use was particularly well received, reflected in high levels of satisfaction among store teams.



## Conclusion

The nationwide rollout of the loss prevention and merchandise protection system at DOUGLAS in Germany is a compelling example of how technological innovation, strategic planning and collaborative partnership can successfully overcome complex challenges.

### Sensormatic distinguished itself through:

- **A bespoke technical solution, precisely tailored to the specific demands of the beauty retail sector**
- **Service and operational excellence during rollout, demonstrated by meticulous planning, seamless execution and on-schedule delivery**
- **Close, continuous coordination with the DOUGLAS project team – from the pilot phase through to scale-up and final implementation across all locations**

This collaborative partnership proved to be a key success factor: challenges were identified early, processes adapted flexibly, and solutions developed jointly. As a result, the rollout was not only technically flawless, but also widely accepted by store teams.

DOUGLAS is now not only better protected, but also future-ready and digitally connected – all without compromising the brand experience.



