



Inside the Green Zone: Expert Insights on Cannabis Security Systems

In this interview with **Rikk Kretue** and **Tim Shafer** of Detex Security Solutions, we discuss the critical importance of security in the cannabis industry.

The cannabis industry in the U.S. is booming and is expected to reach almost \$40 billion this year while achieving its highest levels of employment and sales to date. By 2026, the global market is projected to be valued at approximately \$90.4 billion. This growth is largely driven by facility owners and retail operators, who have made substantial investments in their businesses. For instance, constructing a commercial grow facility can cost between \$250 and \$600 per square foot, in addition to expenses for lighting, HVAC systems, racking and benching, and irrigation.

However, security in the cannabis industry is not keeping pace with its growth.

Q: *It's estimated that there were 465,000 business burglaries in the USA during 2023. That means almost 1,300 break ins a day. Are cannabis facilities and retailers doing enough today to protect themselves?*

RIKK



The problem is a lot of cannabis businesses across the supply chain think a camera will stop people from breaking in. Whether it's a cultivation facility, dispensary, distribution center, or testing lab, cameras really don't stop anyone from getting in. And, because cannabis is involved, the motivation for breaking in is even higher than other businesses. So, no they are not protecting themselves as they should.

Q: *Detex has a lot of experience providing security products for many types of businesses around the world. Is the cannabis market different?*

RIKK



For us, the cannabis market is a distinct sub-vertical. While retail involves brick-and-mortar operations like the kind of business we have safeguarded for decades, cannabis facilities are unique. They resemble sub-components of the pharmaceutical, processing, or healthcare sectors, areas where Detex has delivered comprehensive security solutions.

Q: So, you view the security requirements of cannabis facilities as similar to those of pharmaceutical facilities?

RIKK



Absolutely. My background was in healthcare, and we targeted ISO-rated compounding pharmacies where you're required to have multiple levels of security. For example, security at the front door, the compounding room, the clean room, and the mixing room. And, like the pharmaceutical industry, the cannabis industry uses advanced lighting systems, climate control units, and high-tech machinery in their facilities. Those assets need to be protected with a solid security system.

Q: Is contamination of the process a security issue?

RIKK



Yes, security wise, you must be careful to not have plastics that can contaminate the process within growth facilities. That's why, unlike a lot of competitors, our security products are made of stainless steel inside and out. Not just coated with stainless steel, but all internal parts are all stainless steel too. They are anti-microbial, so they inhibit the growth of microorganisms, such as bacteria.

Q: From a 30,000-foot level, what are the top security concerns of a facility owner or retailer?

TIM



Number one is the processing machines. These are the machines that make the oils, and other products used by millions of people every day. Not only can they cost up to \$1 million, but these assets also need to be protected or it's game over. This is a big target for sophisticated thieves. For others in the supply chain, in addition to protecting their products, there is often a lot of cash on hand, so those are big areas of concern.

Q: What security products would you say work best for cannabis facilities as well as retailers.

TIM



For starters, anything that protects the back door or the front door like our 230 DX Exit Control Locks or our EAX-500 that sounds to warn unauthorized use of a door or gate. Our Tailgate Detection Systems are ideal for this market too, as well our Security Turnstiles. Because facilities can vary in size and need, we also provide custom solutions for the market.

Q: How long should security products last?

TIM



Some manufacturers produce low-end security products that only last a year due to wear and tear. Our products are built to last and outperform the competition in several ways. Like I said, every product we sell is made of stainless steel with absolutely no plastic parts. You know they are going to work a long, long time. That's why we back our products with a 10-year mechanical warranty and 2-year electrical warranty. No competitor offers that either.

Q: After Detex delivers the products, do you have any involvement with the customer?

TIM



Yes, we've built our business on building relationships. We walk them through the process, provide training, and can engineer a custom security solution if needed. Customers know that when they call us, it's us who pick up the phone, not an overseas call center.

Q: What's the most important question facility owners and retailers should ask themselves when thinking of a security system?

TIM



They need think about it and to ask themselves if they really are protected. And when they do, they may be surprised at how vulnerable they are. We provide solutions our competitors cannot. And you can call us.

Q: Any concluding thoughts?

RIKK



Yes. A lot of people have a skewed view of cannabis and think of the stereotypes. The truth is, in the U.S., cannabis is used in making products for the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and food and beverage industries. This is a business that needs the security of every other well-established industry. That's where we come in.

Q: Thanks for your time, this has been enlightening.

RIKK



Thanks, and stay safe out there!

TIM



Speak with a Security Expert Who Understands Your Industry.

Contact **Tim Shafer** of **Detex Security Solutions** at tbs@detex.com.