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Best practices for securing a cannabis facility - The five D's: Deter, detect, deny, delay and defend - by Mike Ginty

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The cannabis industry has a significantly higher risk profile than other industries, and accordingly requires significant thought in order to properly secure a cannabis facility. Securing a cannabis facility requires a sophisticated plan of action to ensure inventory, personnel, logistics, and cash are secure and in compliance. When choosing security solutions, it is important to keep in mind the five D's: Deter, detect, deny, delay, and defend.

Deter: Visual deterrence is your first line of defense. Most thieves are opportunists and are likely to be deterred if breaking-in appears too difficult. The most common and effective deterrents include gates, visible surveillance cameras and light and motion sensor exterior lighting. Some cameras are equipped with two-way audio functions allowing a remote operator to speak directly to a would-be-thief and let them know they are on video and security or police have been dispatched.

Detect: In the event that a thief is not deterred, you must have a strong detection system in place. Your surveillance equipment should cover all access points to the building. It's not just windows and doors that should be covered; avenues of approach, such as pathways or low walls near the back entrance should also be viewable.

When setting up your camera equipment, positioning is key. It's not just about visual deterrence; it's about considering what the cameras will actually be capturing.

An effective video analytics program can enable cameras to send alerts to the security team to let them know when an intruder has climbed a fence, entered a limited access area or simply was loitering too long after hours.

Deny: Your third line of defense is your access control. Access control logs and procedures should be regularly audited, especially for limited access areas, such as product vaults or cash storage areas. Even if you haven't had any reports of lost or stolen keys, someone who is planning on breaking into the building may have obtained a copy or learned your access codes.

Delay: Most break-ins are committed by someone who has been inside the building before. Observation of lax security practices, or mishandling of product and cash can lead employees or visitors to believe theft is an easy opportunity.

Tight visitor controls requiring each individual to sign in and wear a badge when they entering the building. This way you'll be aware of all unknown person(s) in the building at all times.

Additionally, only authorized individuals should be allowed in inventory or cash storage areas.

Defend: Along with your technological and physical security measures, it's important to have trained security guard services that can carry out your policies and respond. To be as effective as possible, you must train guards thoroughly on your security procedures and monitor to ensure they are doing what's expected.

Remote Guarding and Its Role in Orchestrating All Elements

Remote Guarding is Security as a Service (SaaS) that harnesses the power of artificial intelligence and video analytics, combined with a reduced on-site guard force and a Remote Guard Center – a 24/7 solution that greatly increases the impact of your on-site security people, processes, and technology.

Each of the above elements must be orchestrated professionally to work together to meet the end goal. Your remote guarding consultant provides all elements of the system, managing the entire end-to-end physical security of your facility.

Compliance, in reality, only represents a minimum acceptable level of security; but mere compliance is no substitute for a comprehensive secure, cost-effective approach to cannabis security risk management.

By using a Remote Guard Force solution, you will ensure the success and sustainability of your cannabis business. If done correctly, you will rest well with the confidence of knowing that your assets, facilities, operations and personnel are secure beyond mere compliance.

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