



Cannabis MSO Chooses Highly Recommended March Networks

Fine Fettle finds video surveillance system lives up to the hype in terms of features and functionality

Multi-state cannabis operators need to comply with a long list of complex rules and regulations in order to be in business. Navigating video surveillance systems that are equally as complex isn't necessarily something they want to have to grapple with. Ben Zachs, chief operating officer of Fine Fettle, a medical and recreational cannabis dispensary chain serving Connecticut and Massachusetts, found that out the hard way.

In business since June 2018, Fine Fettle operates five dispensaries — three in Connecticut and two in Massachusetts. Zachs describes the video surveillance systems in Fine Fettle's first four dispensaries as a hodgepodge of different systems, all falling below his expectations. Accessing video proved problematic, so did setting up new users. He regularly had to reach out to vendors for support, and it was all needlessly stressful. ▶



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By the time he started looking at video surveillance systems for Fine Fettle's fifth dispensary in Stamford, Connecticut, he had a long list of required features and functionality gleaned from experience. First and foremost, Stamford's video system had to be user-friendly. It also had to be easy to add new cameras, new users, and new sites. Finally, it had to allow for different permission levels to be applied to different users.

Zachs sought the help of [Convergent®](#), a global security systems integrator that has a deep understanding of regulatory compliance requirements for physical security in the cannabis market. "Matt Gifford acted as a consultant to help guide us in selecting the best products and design to meet our needs," said Zachs of Convergent's Senior Director of Sales. After Gifford recommended March Networks, Zachs reached out to a local marijuana producer and supplier with an extensive March Networks system monitoring a 98,000 square-foot facility in Watertown, Connecticut. "They were a great reference," said Zachs. "They were really helpful and pointed us in the right direction. It's important to do research and learn from the experience of others." ►



Fine Fettle chose a March Networks system that includes a [9264 IP recorder](#), which accommodates up to 64 high-definition IP cameras and a total bandwidth of up to 400 Mbps. It features an embedded Linux operating system and internal battery backup. The recorder includes front panel LEDs for easy diagnostics, and a QR code technicians can use with the March Networks [GURU Smartphone App](#) for access to serial numbers, warranty coverage, and much more.

The Stamford dispensary is monitored by a total of 48 IP cameras. Most are [March Networks devices](#), including seven cameras positioned around the exterior of the building, four ceiling mounted cameras over the point-of-sale (POS) areas, 25 wall-mounted cameras located throughout the dispensary, and 11 ceiling-mounted Oncam 360 cameras that integrate with March Networks Command video management software for de-warping and viewing of multiple video streams simultaneously.

The entire system is powered by [March Networks Command Enterprise™](#) — advanced system management software available as an on-premise or cloud-managed deployment. It features centralized system and user management, advanced system-wide health monitoring, and mass firmware and configuration updates. As per Zachs' requirements, Command Enterprise provides multi-level user access privileges so that each person in the organization sees only what he or she needs to perform the job.

The video surveillance system has to comply with the strict regulations of Connecticut's Department of Consumer Affairs, which requires 30 days of video storage, as well as 100% camera coverage inside and outside and compulsory levels of redundancy. "The requirements are very, very strict, so we have to make sure that we're really on top of it," said Zachs.

“The March Networks solution meets all of the compliance requirements of state authorities, allows members of management to remotely access video on their smartphones, and is much easier to use. In fact, Fine Fettle is considering switching to March Networks video surveillance systems at its other four dispensaries.”

— Ben Zachs, COO of Fine Fettle

Being able to remotely access video on his smartphone using the [March Networks Command Mobile App](#), available as a free download from the Apple Store and Google Play, was a big plus for him. “We’re living in a smartphone-centric world, so it’s important to be able to access video on my phone if I’m on the go and something happens,” said Zachs. “I’m on my phone right now and can see a customer walking into the Stamford dispensary, which is awesome.”

In addition to providing the video surveillance Fine Fettle needs to secure the facility and protect both staff and customers, the March Networks system allows Zachs to zoom in on the POS stations to review transactions. This is helpful if, for example, a customer complains about being shortchanged or if there is a cash handling problem that needs to be resolved.

As a future add-on to the Stamford system, Fine Fettle could take advantage of [March Networks Searchlight™ for Retail](#) software, which integrates surveillance video with POS transaction data and business analytics. Searchlight allows cannabis operators to view exception-based reports tied to surveillance video, significantly reducing investigation time; it can also alert dispensary operators to things like instances of potential theft, transactions being conducted without a customer present, and occupancy and speed of service.

Going forward, Zachs said they are considering switching to March Networks technology at their other four locations. Knowing March Networks is compliant with all applicable state regulations for cannabis, and that its systems can scale to accommodate growing MSOs, makes standardizing a viable option.

“We’re very happy with March Networks,” said Zachs. “Compared to the other systems, it’s much easier to use and there have been no problems with it.” ♦

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the challenge

The Fine Fettle cannabis dispensary chain serving Connecticut and Massachusetts had a hodgepodge of video surveillance systems that failed to impress. When the time came to open its fifth dispensary, management decided to canvas the market for a solution that was highly user-friendly and made it easy to add new cameras, users, and retail locations. Finally, the system had to allow for different permission levels to be applied to different users.

the solution

Following a recommendation from its security integrator Convergint and a glowing reference from a local marijuana producer and supplier with an extensive March Networks system, Fine Fettle acquired a 64-channel March Networks all-IP recorder and 48 cameras powered by March Networks Command Enterprise video management software.

the result

The March Networks solution meets all of the compliance requirements of state authorities, allows members of management to remotely access video on their smartphones, and is much easier to use. In fact, Fine Fettle is considering switching to March Networks video surveillance systems at its other four dispensaries.

