

# Bookseller Sold on Partnerships

## Indigo Books & Music Selects March Networks as Preferred Vendor for Digital Video Systems

After 25 years of experience in senior roles with some of Canada's largest retailers, Jim Slessor could probably write the definitive book on loss prevention. In his office atop Indigo Books & Music Inc.'s 310,000-square foot (28,800 sq m) distribution center in suburban Toronto, he certainly doesn't lack for inspiration.

Vice president of loss prevention for Canada's largest booksellers, Slessor is responsible for battling shrinkage and fraud at more than 250 stores from coast to coast.

One of the chapters in Slessor's book on loss prevention would probably focus on return on investment (ROI). Another would zero in on the importance of vendor partnerships.

"That's what impressed me most about March Networks and that's why they are my preferred vendor for digital video recording systems," he says.

"A lot of DVR vendors have a 'take it or leave it' attitude that doesn't take into account the unique needs of a customer. March Networks™ has a different attitude, and is much more open to working with us to ensure that the equipment and software are optimized for our environment."

Indigo's first exposure to DVR technology was with a PC-based system that was plagued by hardware and software problems. In addition, the system did not offer the portability or durability Slessor required for use in covert installations.

KM Video, a Toronto-based systems integrator, introduced Slessor to March Networks technology.

"I did my due diligence in terms of performance, costing, stability and functionality – all of the key drivers for DVR systems – and bought my first four-channel systems for covert installations in early 2005," recalls Slessor.

"If the systems will withstand being shipped across the country, installed in dirty, nasty conditions and manhandled by loss prevention (LP) managers, I figured they would perform well for us in our stores."

touching their network. They're very possessive about it, so when we started looking at digital video as a solution, we brought everyone together to talk ones and zeros."

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Vice President, Loss Prevention,  
Indigo Books & Music Inc.

The Indigo loss prevention team now has six mobile kits with all of the equipment, cabling, and tools required for a covert installation. If the internal audit team or store management suspects a problem, a kit is dispatched, installed and monitored to collect the evidence required.

Slessor was impressed with the performance of the March Networks systems and decided to begin acquiring 16-channel 4000 Series DVRs for the company's large format stores and its Toronto distribution center, an enormous facility equivalent in size to six football fields.

"I like the software. I find it very easy to set up and use. I like the search capabilities, the indexing for alarms and the health monitoring," he says.

### **IT buy-in**

Before proceeding with the rollout, Slessor made a point of bringing the company's IT department into the decision-making process. "This is a network appliance and we're

The main issues were bandwidth, stability, security and support, recalls Slessor.

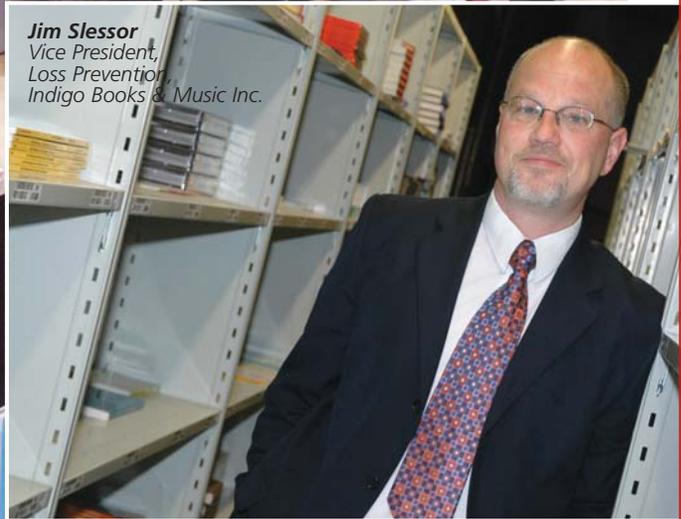
"We had a town hall meeting to address each of their concerns in a logical, methodical manner and got their buy-in."

Indigo's marketing and retail operations management were quick to catch on to the opportunity to use the system for purposes other than loss prevention.

"Marketing and retail operations people who would normally need to go to a store to see a display, see a merchandise mix or observe customer traffic patterns can simply call up video on their computer," says Slessor.

By inviting other departments to use the system and help pay for the equipment, the loss prevention team will be able to get more mileage out of its capital budget.

As additional systems are deployed through 2006, Slessor is planning to dedicate one pan-tilt-zoom camera in the center of each



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store to marketing and retail operations management.

Also in the works is a plan to equip loss prevention field staff with PDAs to allow them to access video wirelessly through March Networks' Mobile DVR Viewer.

### Enterprise management

To help manage Indigo's DVR systems across Canada, Slessor will rely on March Networks' Enterprise Management Suite, a powerful set of client software applications and server tools that make the deployment and management of unlimited numbers of DVRs as efficient and effective as possible.

The Enterprise Management Suite also enhances reliability through advanced health monitoring and provides for better organization of DVRs through functional, geographical or other custom hierarchies.

While he has yet to decide on integrating the DVR technology with Indigo's point-of-sale (POS) data mining system, Slessor acknowledges "it's very slick and very convenient" to be able to conduct searches and view transaction details with accompanying video in one user interface.

Established in 1996, Indigo was preoccupied in its early years with rapid growth and the absorption of a rival chain, Chapters, beginning in 2001. Loss prevention became more of a priority as the company turned its attention to consolidation.

Since joining Indigo in 2003, Slessor has succeeded in reducing shrinkage through the development of an integrated loss prevention program encompassing employee communications, advanced security systems and a team of 14 field staff and internal auditors.

March Networks DVR systems are helping Indigo achieve its loss prevention targets by providing the video evidence required by the company's loss prevention team.

"March Networks is a leader in DVR technology," says Slessor. "We are very happy with the performance of our DVR systems and look forward to building on the partnership we have established." ✨

## Indigo Books & Music

Indigo Books & Music Inc. ([www.chapters.indigo.ca](http://www.chapters.indigo.ca)) is Canada's largest bookseller with 6,200 employees and more than 250 stores from coast to coast. Founded in 1996 and merged with Chapters Inc. in August 2001, Indigo operates 86 superstores ranging in size from 20,000 to 30,000 square feet (1,858 to 2,787 sq m) and 167 smaller format Coles and SmithBooks locations in shopping malls across Canada. The company also operates the 67,000 square-foot (6,224 sq m) World's Biggest Bookstore in Toronto, and [chapters.indigo.ca](http://chapters.indigo.ca), Canada's largest online destination for books, music and DVDs.



## KM Video Systems

KM Video Systems ([www.kmvideo.com](http://www.kmvideo.com)) is a Canadian CCTV systems integrator with offices in Toronto, Ottawa and London, Ontario. Founded in 1978, the company provides leading-edge video security systems, technical support and training to the retail, banking, telecommunications, government and law enforcement sectors. To contact a sales representative, please call 1-800-361-2675, or email [tontosales@kmvideo.com](mailto:tontosales@kmvideo.com)