

HIGH-TECH CRIME

San Bernardino High-Tech Crime Detail Depends on Rimage Disc Publishing to Increase Productivity on Each Case by 25 Percent

Customer

San Bernardino Sheriff's Department High-Tech Crime Detail

Challenge

Streamline Electronic-Evidence Backup

Solution

Rimage Producer system, Prism™ Thermal Printer and Rimage Software Suite

Since 1999, The San Bernardino Sheriff's Department High-Tech Crime Detail has supported law enforcement agencies throughout San Bernardino County (Calif.) by providing computer forensic services. Any electronic device or storage medium containing data, audio, or video associated with a criminal case is sent to the Department's lab for forensic examination. The Department's team of detectives processes more than 350 cases per year, producing up to 60 DVDs of content per case for use during criminal trials and archiving. For the past three years, the department has depended on a Rimage disc publishing system to completely eliminate time-consuming administrative processes and significantly increase productivity on each case.



The Challenge

Any single case could have multiple devices (e.g., computers, smart phones, tablets, etc.) or storage mediums (e.g., discs, flash drives, external HDD, etc.) collected as evidence. When electronic evidence for a case arrives, the Department's detectives are charged with extracting and organizing the information, including enhancing audio and video, reformatting data and converting various computer files, which are often as large as 200 gigabytes. Once the forensic examination is complete, CDs and DVDs containing required evidence and case information are developed for case agents and district attorneys. Prior to using a Rimage system, detectives burned individual disc copies on standalone computers. Twenty-five percent of the detective's time on each case was spent backing up, archiving and labeling each disc by hand. In addition—because of reliability issues—each disc had to be loaded and tested to verify the information appeared properly on the disc. “We previously could only work one case at a time because the process was so slow,” said detective Mike Belicki. “In our office, ensuring a criminal is put behind bars can boil down to making sure evidence is reliable and follows the proper chain of custody. If I'm on the witness stand, I need to stand behind the DVD or CD being reviewed in court. To automate our disc production and provide our detectives confidence, we needed to implement a proven solution.”

“Rimage has changed the way we work within the office—we can't live without it now.”

Mike Belicki, Detective, San Bernardino Sheriff's Department

The Solution

Soon after replacing its one-off process for producing discs with a Rimage Producer system, the Department experienced incredible return on investment, increasing productivity to the point where detectives are now able to work three to four cases simultaneously. "Once we got started with Rimage, we immediately eliminated 25 percent of the time we spent on cases. Our case load was overwhelming before. Now we are at a manageable level because Rimage has cut out so much busy work. Rimage has changed the way we work within the office—we can't live without it now," added Belicki. In addition to streamlining workflow, the Rimage system has delivered the reliability Belicki and his team were seeking. "The reason we don't have bad burns anymore is the reliability of the Rimage system—the software, hardware and high-grade media."

The Results

Providing an Integrated Output Solution for Guidance EnCase Software

To process its cases, the Department utilizes Guidance Software's EnCase Forensic—the standard software tool for uncovering, analyzing, and presenting forensic data that provides Belicki and his team a robust way to authenticate, search, and recover computer evidence rapidly and thoroughly. The Rimage system's easy-to-integrate technology platform has enabled the Department to seamlessly link EnCase with the system, creating an end-to-end solution. "The Rimage system works perfectly with the forensic software departments like ours are using throughout the country. The complete solution makes creating a disc as easy as sending a file to a laser printer."

Archiving Cases with Confidence

With cases often appealed and defense teams raising questions years after the completion of a trial, the Department must have a fail safe process for archiving evidence. Using the Rimage system, master disc copies for each case are created and labeled appropriately. The Department now has a library of more than 7,000 discs. "If something was overlooked on a case, we can go back, load the disc and be confident the evidence has been stored properly. The fact we are using a combination of the Rimage system and gold media to archive our cases gives us all great confidence."

Custom Labeling Every Disc Creation

Every disc the Department creates must be properly labeled with a predetermined data set: a report number; the detective's name; the type of crime or incident; an internal database number; the type of file; the number of duplicate discs; and a serial number. "The information we include on the label is essential for the district attorneys, case agents, and our records." The Rimage system enables the Department to automatically customize each disc label. Rimage's thermal printer provides Belicki and his team an affordable method for direct-to-disc printing, delivering scratch-resistant quality and a level of resolution that makes the smallest, most precise details easily readable.

"The complete solution makes creating a disc as easy as sending a file to a laser printer."

Mike Belicki, Detective, San Bernardino Sheriff's Department

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