

DIGITAL FORENSICS

Rimage System Organizes and Expedites Digital Evidence for St. Paul Police

Customer

Digital Forensics
City of St. Paul Police
Department

Challenge

- Eliminate backlog and volume of digital data
- Create a more efficient process for analyzing, storing, and archiving data

Solution

Rimage Evidence
Disc System (EDS)

“I can load up to 100 CDs and DVDs and that makes the workload more manageable, especially in ICAC cases where the volume can be overwhelming.”

Sgt. Greg McDonald, head of the Computer/Digital Forensics Lab at the St. Paul, Minnesota police department, faces a problem common to many law enforcement agencies: the increased need for processing and archiving digital evidence with automated technology. McDonald said, “The backlog of evidence to be processed is massive, particularly in the child pornography cases, which made up half of my case logs.” Ingesting and analyzing each disc was taking an unacceptable amount of time, given the quantity of unprocessed evidence on optical media waiting for analysis for each investigation. McDonald needed a system to bring evidence chaos to order, with a streamlined process to collect, manage, and distribute professional looking discs that would hold up in court.



The Challenge

The exponential growth of digital evidence coming into the department was an ongoing challenge. All evidence seized on optical media required analysis, which was a lengthy process due to the department’s outdated technology. Each disc was manually uploaded onto a hard drive and analyzed to determine if there was any incriminating evidence. This process was time consuming, given the hundreds of discs in a single Internet Crimes against Children (ICAC) case. “I would have stacks of CDs needing to be processed and had to find the time to do it,” said McDonald, the only member of the police department assigned to the Computer/Digital Forensics Lab. Long-term storage and distribution of evidence was also a major issue. Archiving and distributing evidence on hard drives was not economical, given the huge amount of data flooding the department. McDonald realized the process had to be automated to ensure efficiencies in analysis, time, and accuracy. They also needed a standard archival format to meet their retention requirements.

The Solution

Sgt. McDonald discovered the Rimage Evidence Disc System (EDS) while attending a conference. He also talked to his counterparts in neighboring Minneapolis, Minnesota about their department’s positive results with the EDS System. McDonald’s department now uses the Rimage EDS System. The

process of analyzing evidence seized on optical media is completely automated. Instead of having to go through each disc manually, the discs are loaded into the Rimage System and the machine automatically processes each disc, filtering out any discs that are commercially generated and not useful in a case. Finally, the system generates an electronic report that is examined by the officer. This process saves an enormous amount of time because the system does all the work. Archiving and distribution are no longer an issue because the EDS system automatically publishes evidence to CDs, DVDs and Blu-ray Discs with a permanent label thermally printed directly onto the disc.

The Results

Sgt. McDonald found positive results with the Rimage EDS System because it eliminated the backlog of optical media by streamlining his process. "I can load up to one hundred CDs, DVDs, or Blu-ray Discs into the system to automatically analyze each disc. This is especially beneficial in cases where the volume of evidence can be overwhelming," he said. "You just set up the automated system to run for the night or weekend." Another benefit is the system's capability to filter out discs that are commercially manufactured and irrelevant to the investigation, as well as its ability to package the contents of each disc into compatible formats. With the Rimage EDS System it takes only a few hours to process evidence, instead of several days.

The Rimage EDS resolves preservation and distribution issues by publishing digital evidence to CDs, DVDs, or Blu-ray Discs, which are an ideal technology given their storage capacity, compatibility, and disc lifespan of 50 to 100 years. The EDS distribution component produces secure discs with a professional presentation for investigators, attorneys, and court discovery proceedings. The professional appearance of the high-quality Blu-ray Discs improve courtroom presentations. "Before we had the EDS, I would have to find the case, find the report, and manually make a copy, but now the streamlined publishing function in the Rimage EDS system takes care of that," McDonald said. "It's an enormous time saver and the discs can be labeled for easy cataloging and accessibility."

Another valuable EDS component is the Rimage Everest™ 600 Thermal Retransfer Printer, which produces photo-realistic images on CDs, DVDs, or Blu-ray Discs that are scratchproof, waterproof and have a life span from 50 to 100 years.

Rimage also has premier customer service and knowledgeable technical support for all of their products. "Customer service and technical support are two aspects I respect most about Rimage," McDonald said. "They have a genuine concern that every problem is solved and it's a great working relationship."

"One of the things I respect most about Rimage is their great knowledge of the product and their technical support."

Greg McDonald
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