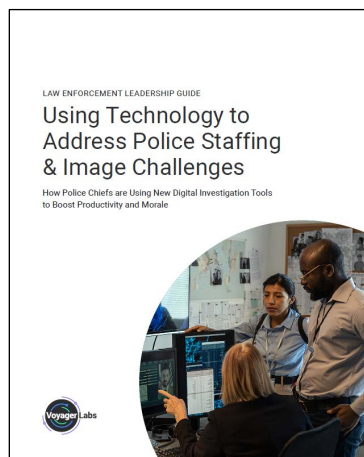




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Using Technology to Address Police Staffing & Image Challenges

Guide

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LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP GUIDE

Using Technology to Address Police Staffing & Image Challenges

How Police Chiefs are Using New Digital Investigation Tools to Boost Productivity and Morale



1. The New Challenges Facing Today's Police Chiefs

A good police officer is irreplaceable. No technology will ever be able to substitute for the skills, bravery, good judgement, and humanity of a well-trained law enforcement professional. However, various circumstances have placed agencies and departments all over the U.S. in a position where they don't have enough officers to meet the needs of their communities. Some cities have found that they just don't have the work force to respond to the calls that come in each day. Others lack the resources to handle the massive amounts of information involved in their investigations. Fortunately, Police Chiefs across the country are turning to the latest investigative technologies to supplement their workforces, improve their efficiency, and save taxpayer dollars.

Patrick Cheatwood recently retired as a Police Chief after 28 years in law enforcement, including work with traffic units, narcotics, forensics, and other assignments. Now, as an Investigation Specialist with Voyager Labs, he helps law enforcement professionals to find and implement the latest analytical tools to make their investigations as fast, accurate, efficient, and cost effective as possible. To put it simply, when the machines are working around the clock on the tasks that they can accomplish, the officers have the time to do the work that only humans can do.

According to Cheatwood, the two biggest problems that Police Chiefs face are staffing and public image. Of course, these two problems are connected in some ways. While studies indicate that fewer than 1% of police officers are "bad apples," controversial incidents and shifting public opinions can greatly reduce interest in joining a police force. Some departments can't get enough applicants to fill their staffing needs. In turn, depleted police forces are less equipped to protect their

communities, which can lead to lower public opinion of law enforcement's effectiveness. When one adds in the crucial factor of reduced funding, it's easy to see that Police Chiefs have some of the toughest jobs in the world because it's up to the Chief to somehow make it all work. Some departments simply don't have the budget to hire needed officers. Others have openings that they have a hard time filling. In the meantime, the public eye is always watching, and the community (understandably) expects quick response times, courteous interactions, and efficient investigations that lead to justice.

2. Thinking Outside the Box: How Technology Can Unlock Staffing Limitations

While real world problems rarely have simple solutions, the right technology can be a very good start. For many police departments, analytical technology can make a massive difference when a Chief doesn't have enough personnel, for whatever reason. Advanced investigations software is a one-time purchase that can fill the gaps in understaffed departments without ongoing expenses. As Cheatwood explains, this software can bring a department many advantages. After purchasing and setting up the systems and training the investigators who are most likely to embrace and apply the new technology, it's like having an additional investigation team on staff, one that works around the clock, every day. Unlike human personnel, this technology never requires sick leave, personal days, disability, or vacation. It also doesn't require training, health benefits, special equipment and other expenses that are reasonable for officers, but sometimes difficult for a department to afford.

When budget constraints or a lack of qualified applicants leaves a department under-staffed, investigation technology can make all the difference by handling the tedious, time-consuming aspects of an investigation and

allowing officers more opportunity to do their main job, answering calls from citizens. As an example, a single social media warrant return for an investigation often comes back in a PDF of 50,000 pages or more. To read, research, cross-reference, and take notes on such a document could take a human officer several days, weeks, or even months of full-time work. Social Media Warrant Return software can process the entire file, re-convert it into its original platform design, highlight relevant key phrases and threads, and define connections and networks in under an hour. When possible, one of the first steps in stretching an understaffed department is to delegate non-crucial tasks to non-crucial staff. In this case, the tedious and time-consuming work is handled by the machines so that the experienced officers can use their time in the most effective ways possible. By the time an officer's eyes touch the data, it has been sorted, organized, processed, translated, and made completely understandable. It should be noted that this level of efficiency is also good for morale, as officers are more likely to remain dedicated and motivated in their careers if they know that their time is well spent.

Cheatwood explained, "The best thing to me as far as the tech goes is the keyword search. You can set them up for a week, day, or hour and they can notify you every time they get a match." These keyword search features, often called "topic queries," search the worldwide web, deep web, and dark web for specific keywords and phrases, slang terms, and even emoji combinations. The best investigative tools can search in 100 different languages, so translation is no issue. This constant monitoring of social media sites and other open sources is the equivalent of having at least three investigators conducting thorough searches of all available platforms. This capability is especially useful when preparing security for an upcoming event like a concert, political convention, demonstration, or sporting event. The software might flag certain combinations of words that could indicate a crime (bomb, shooting, kidnapping, riot, looting) is being planned at a particular place or event. If certain code words, slang, or emoji codes are known, they can be added to the system's lexicon and spotted when they are used. Those who would disrupt or take advantage of such gatherings often coordinate their plans via social media, so officers can gain crucial information to help prepare for these events and prevent or minimize criminal activity. This provides a kind of ongoing situational awareness that never turns off and keeps law

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Former Police Chief &
Investigative Specialist,
Voyager Labs

enforcement informed as new developments happen. All officers need to be able to respond to calls. In many cases, if a major crime, natural disaster, or some other all-hands-on deck situation arises, all Intelligence at headquarters stops because everyone needs to focus on the physical threat at hand. With the right technology in place, the investigation process continues even if every officer is in the field. Not many people join the police force so that they can comb through mountains of unstructured data. With analytical tools in place, officers can be where they are needed most, and the important data still gets located, organized, processed, and presented for review when human eyes are available.

3. Finding the Right Technology: The 8 “Force Multiplier” Capabilities That Drive Big Productivity Gains

Police Chiefs who are considering supplementing their organizations with investigative technologies have several factors to consider when making their decisions. In terms of cost versus benefit, it's not difficult to find technologies that will pay for themselves quickly. The key is to make the very most of those technologies, choosing the best options for the greatest results.

If software is going to truly act as a force multiplier for your team it must have the right mix and breadth of capabilities that will help your existing staff work faster and smarter. There could be any number of factors that will influence the types of capabilities a department needs: jurisdiction, types of crimes commonly investigated, languages spoken in the area, security camera access, regular public events, vulnerable populations, gang or extremist activity, and countless other considerations.

That said, according to Chief Cheatwood and other law enforcement leaders, certain capabilities are proven to deliver big payoffs in efficiency, speed and results for every police agency. With this insight, Police Chiefs can assess the potential time savings and ROI of investigation software platforms by evaluating how well they deliver the following nine capabilities:

- **Rapid, accurate profile search and identification with minimal input.**

KEY INDICATOR: the best system can take one data point and find the right profile out of thousands of possible choices.

- **Detailed mapping of primary, secondary and tertiary relationships, including ghost accounts, intermediaries and sub-groups.**

KEY INDICATOR: if a platform doesn't identify ghost accounts, you won't know which accounts to request a warrant for.

- **Automated AI-driven content analysis to prioritize the most relevant posts and images from massive volumes of data.**

KEY INDICATOR: if a system can't parse out the most important posts based on content and author, it's not going to save time for your team.

- **Sophisticated image matching and analysis to find persons or items of interest and better understand relationships.**

KEY INDICATOR: look for systems which not only precisely match people, weapons, cars and other items, but also provide contextual analysis to determine locations, understand relationship strength, and provide other deeper insights.

- **Wide breadth of search coverage across social media networks (including the niche networks used most by criminals) and the dark and deep web.**

KEY INDICATOR: to ensure adequate reach, insist on coverage of at least 15+ networks and a commitment to continuously add more.

- **Customizable topic query capabilities, with customizable automated notifications delivered in near real-time (within 1-2 minutes).**

KEY INDICATOR: systems which require the user to manually run topic queries each time won't enable rapid response for your most critical emergencies.

- **Automatic language translation for all content across wide breadth of languages.**

KEY INDICATOR: insist on a minimum of 100+ languages.

- **Automated ingestion and analysis of social media warrant return data to surface and organize the relevant direct messages and other content from thousands of PDF pages.**

KEY INDICATOR: warrant return "readers" vary greatly and many don't have the analytical features built-in that save staff time -- make sure you ask for real-life demos to understand the differences.

While there are other capabilities to consider, these eight should ensure that your investment pays off, so make sure you see them demonstrated via live demos. The right investigation software platform may seem expensive, but with these nine capabilities the benefits will most certainly be much larger.

About Voyager Labs

Voyager Labs, based in the U.S. with offices worldwide, is an award-winning, global leader in developing advanced digital investigation solutions which help public safety organizations to identify threats, mitigate risk, and fight crime.

Our proprietary technology acts as a force multiplier for investigative teams, enabling investigators to quickly search, sift and analyze massive amounts of publicly available data from across the open, deep, and dark web to find the "needle in a haystack" insights needed to advance an investigation. Our solutions are used by law enforcement and national security organizations to tackle many of the world's most pressing public safety challenges, including homicides, illicit narcotics, human trafficking, criminal gangs, terrorism, insider threats, and fraud.

To learn more or request a demo, email contact.us@voyager-labs.com or go to voyager-labs.com.