

MOBILE EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT:

BULLETPROOF



CHAIN

OF CUSTODY

IN LAW ENFORCEMENT



BARRIERS TO JUSTICE

In June 2018, the South Carolina Supreme Court reversed a cocaine-trafficking conviction stemming from a 2013 traffic stop. The basis for the overturned conviction was the **state's failure to establish a complete chain of custody** for the cocaine found in the car.

The South Carolina Supreme Court noted that one of the arresting officers initially testified that he couldn't remember *how* the cocaine made its way from the scene of the traffic stop and arrest to the patrol office. The evidence custodian testified that he couldn't tell from his records *who* delivered the cocaine to the evidence lockbox. "Although a perfect chain of custody is not required, a sufficient chain of custody requires more than the state presented in this case," the high court concluded.

When the defense succeeds in getting key evidence jettisoned from a criminal trial, it can be a crushing blow for the case – negating the hard work of the dedicated law enforcement officers who collected and processed the evidence in their efforts to serve justice.



Defense attorneys are looking for the slightest discrepancy in the chain of custody to convince a court that your evidence is inadmissible.





BROKEN CHAIN OF CUSTODY: A DEFENSE STRATEGY

An overturned conviction such as the one handed down by the South Carolina Supreme Court is music to the ears of defense attorneys across the country. **Defense lawyers consider broken chain of custody to be a fundamental defense strategy.** They examine the chain of custody with a fine-tooth comb, looking for the slightest discrepancy to convince a court that key evidence – potentially damning evidence for their client – is inadmissible.

The repercussions of lost, stolen or mishandled evidence can be enormous for law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. A broken chain of custody could result in a murderer, drug dealer or violent criminal walking free.



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TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR EVIDENCE

Evidence is the foundation of any criminal investigation, and the quality of the evidence (or lack thereof) can make or break a case. So can the the chain of custody – the documentation proving that the evidence was properly handled and processed throughout its lifecycle.

Law enforcement's responsibilities are clear: Keep track of the evidence at all times, and know:

- 🔗 Who touched it.
- 🔗 When they touched it.
- 🔗 Where they were when they touched it.
- 🔗 And why they touched it.

In other words, **don't break the chain of custody.**



It's more important than ever for police departments to utilize leading-edge mobile technology to modernize their evidence management.

With law enforcement agencies under increasing public scrutiny and pressure to operate with higher levels of transparency and accountability, it's more important than ever for police departments to utilize leading-edge mobile technology to modernize their evidence management.

21ST-CENTURY EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT

Chain of custody begins the moment evidence is touched. An advanced mobile evidence-management system streamlines the process of collecting, tagging, tracking and securing evidence, ensuring bulletproof chain-of-custody documentation. Utilizing GPS, signature capture and other mobile technologies, a modern mobile evidence-management solution enables law enforcement agencies to identify, document, photograph and track evidence at the scene of the crime – **accurately, efficiently and transparently.**



With mobile evidence-tracking software, [officers can use their smartphones or tablets to:](#)



Log evidence in the field and upload it to a database for management in real time.



Capture the GPS coordinates of the location where evidence was first seized, at the push of a button.



Scan the government-issued ID of a suspect, victim or witness for automatic parsing.



Perform evidence audits that produce nearly real-time evidence-room accuracy.



Safely transfer chain of custody to another user by capturing their e-signature with an embedded time/date stamp.

BENEFITS OF MOBILE EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT

When law enforcement agencies implement advanced mobile evidence-tracking solutions in the field, these are some of the biggest benefits:

1

Rock-solid chain of custody.

Every transaction in the lifecycle of a particular piece of evidence is precisely and accurately documented with complete transparency. The entire lifecycle of a piece of evidence can be located in seconds, and officers have constant mobile access to all the pertinent information for a specific case or piece of evidence.

2

Increased efficiency.

Freed up from hours of tedious paperwork, the same number of officers now can handle more cases. Inventory reports are more accurate. Evidence rooms run like well-oiled machines – every piece is accounted for and in the correct location, with the complete tracking history available on demand when needed.

3

Safer communities.

Less time processing evidence behind a desk means more hours out on the streets, protecting communities. Eliminating hours of tedious paperwork improves morale and on-the-job satisfaction for officers. And with indisputable chain-of-custody documentation, prosecutors are better-equipped to bring lawbreakers to justice – especially in cases where evidence integrity can make or break a conviction, such as those involving drugs or guns.

eTWIST + HONEYWELL



eTWIST® is a mobile evidence-tracking solution that prevents lost, stolen or tampered evidence from sabotaging a potential conviction. With this **complete, multi-patented chain-of-custody system**, officers use smartphones (iOS or Android OS) to log evidence into a database while on the scene – saving countless hours of repetitive manual entry at the station.

Leveraging GPS, mobile signature capture, driver's license scanning and other technologies, this **customizable** software solution brings precise control and accountability to the collection, processing and maintenance of evidence, ensuring bulletproof chain of custody. With eTWIST, every movement of evidence throughout its lifecycle is precisely and accurately documented, **eliminating discrepancies that can lead to a criminal walking free.**

eTWIST

- 🔗 Digital evidence
- 🔗 Dual-authentication logins
- 🔗 Voice-activated inputs (common speech to text)
- 🔗 Easy-to-use, intuitive mobile-screen interface
- 🔗 Barcode scanning, GPS tagging
- 🔗 Near-real-time alerts
- 🔗 Seamless CAD/RMS and back-end connectivity that exceeds FBI/CJIS standards

Learn more about
Mobile Evidence Tracking
www.e-twist.com
888-261-9178 x208

Honeywell

Honeywell CT40 XP

The rugged, ergonomic CT40 XP mobile computer is the ideal hardware solution for deploying eTwist in the field. The connected device reduces operational downtime thanks to its warm-swap capability and a protective booth that's tested to survive nearly 6-foot drops.

The CT40 XP can capture data from up to 32.8 feet away, with Honeywell's innovative FlexRange scan imager, a 13-megapixel auto-focus camera and eight-megapixel front-facing camera. With its "Device Finder" solution, users can locate the device when it's misplaced or lost, even when the batteries are drained after a certain period of time.



DESIGNED FOR THE CHALLENGE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Conventional pen-and-paper evidence-management methods leave too much room for costly errors and discrepancies. eTWIST is an end-to-end solution built from the ground up – with the challenges of law enforcement in mind.

KEY FEATURES:

Proof of where evidence was seized

eTWIST provides the ability to capture GPS coordinates (longitude, latitude and altitude) at the push of a button. By tapping the “Fetch Location” button, users can instantly see where the case occurred and/or where evidence was found.

Driver’s license scanning

Utilizing IDScan.net auto-capture technology, officers on the scene can collect information from a suspect, victim or witness by scanning a government-issued ID with their smartphone. The ID is automatically parsed into useable fields and uploaded to the database.

The ability to be truly mobile

eTWIST developed this evidence-management system to run with or without connectivity. If severe weather completely wipes out the power in a community, eTWIST is still operational.

Mobile signature capture

With e-signature capture, users can transfer chain of custody safely and securely. Signatures are saved with an embedded time/date stamp.

Automatic alerts

Maximize storage space and improve evidence-room efficiency by setting automatic alerts to notify users in one week, one year, 10 years, etc. that a specific piece of evidence can be purged.

SAYING GOODBYE TO SPREADSHEETS



The Issue

A police department was using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to keep track of evidence. The evidence room was in disarray, and without a modern evidence-management system in place, inventory accuracy suffered.

The Solution

The department turned to Primary Marking Systems' eTWIST's mobile evidence-tracking solution. With each and every piece of evidence accounted for and in the correct location – and the ability to track every piece from cradle to grave – the department is more efficient and productive, and is able to provide a high level of transparency and accountability in its chain of custody.

