



Officers spend more time on police work, less on photography, with Sony's SnapLab™ System.

Photos are integral to law enforcement and most police officers receive some photographic training. Nobody would complain, though, if the process were simpler or required less time – so they could concentrate on more traditional police work.

That's the situation in one New Jersey community, where the Upper Saddle River Police Department has made life easier for its officers by installing a Sony SnapLab™ digital photofinishing system.

Detective Patrick Rotella, who oversees photo operations for the department, says the SnapLab system has completely changed the way photography is handled.

"The switch from traditional 35mm film to digital was a big improvement, but switching to the Sony system has brought even greater improvement," Rotella said. "Officers get their prints instantaneously. They don't have to worry about sending their film out for processing or hooking their camera up to a computer. They just upload their images from Memory Stick® media right into the printer."

Officers have found the SnapLab printer to be a very effective tool for the wide variety of photographic images that law enforcement requires. Rotella said the system is used for everything from mug shots to documentation of traffic accidents to images for the D.A.R.E. officer's presentations to community groups.

Like everywhere else, New Jersey requires controls on photographic images to be used as evidence in a criminal investigation or trial.

Rotella said the department can take advantage of the SnapLab printer's ease of use and quick turnaround in such cases by adding one step to the image process: Images are first burned

directly to a CD from the camera before loading them into the system and producing prints.

"This gives us a fixed, unedited copy of the image and allows us to maintain proper custody and control of the photographic evidence," he said.

Built to fit into small spaces, weighing only 24 pounds and compatible with just about any digital camera and imaging card, the SnapLab system has the added benefit of producing extremely sharp, color-accurate prints.

"The photos are just incredible," Rotella said. "We were all taken aback with their clarity. The colors are perfect. The prints look like they came out of a professional photo lab. That's a plus when you're using the images to memorialize an event or present important information to other parties. We used to use a color laser printer, but their images just don't compare."

Rotella said the officers also appreciate how easy the SnapLab system makes the whole photographic process. A colorful, intuitive user interface on the system's large, touch-sensitive LCD screen puts a lot of imaging technology right at the department's fingertips.

"Often, when some kind of new technology comes into the office, it's hard to learn and harder to get to the point where it makes you more efficient," Rotella said. "But this is so easy. You just walk up to the SnapLab system, insert your Memory Stick media and go."

That means officers in Upper Saddle River can spend more of their time on traditional police work – and that's good for the department and the community.

