



ILLINOIS POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCELERATES JUSTICE WITH NIGHTHAWK®

Agency Type

City Police Department

Agency Size

270 sworn officers

Agency Need

Tools to efficiently analyze a large volume of digital evidence to discover leads that help solve cases

LeadsOnline Solutions

- **NightHawk** for digital evidence fusion and visualization
- **Toolbox** for phone and vehicle data lookups and other investigative resources

Results at a Glance

- Reduced evidence processing and analysis time from days to minutes
- Unified evidence across years and data sources to solve a mass murder case
- Improved collaboration inside and outside the agency
- Easily built court-ready presentations to help juries understand evidence

ABOUT JOLIET POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Joliet Police Department is one of the largest law enforcement agencies in the State of Illinois. Located 40 miles southwest of Chicago at the 'crossroads' of Interstates 80 and 55, Joliet is home to a vast community of residential, commercial and business districts. It is the county seat of Will County, with a population of 150,362 as of the 2020 census, making it the third-most populous city in Illinois.

CHALLENGES

Like most law enforcement agencies, the Joliet Police Department faces increasing case volumes and resource constraints. Their work is now more complex, involving significant amounts of digital evidence associated with every investigation. From cellular records to vehicle telematics and social media interactions, the volume and complexity of data overwhelms traditional tools and slows down time to leads. Investigators needed a way to easily integrate and visualize massive datasets so they could analyze digital evidence faster and deliver justice for crime victims.

SOLUTIONS

NightHawk and **Toolbox** have strengthened the Joliet Police Department's investigative capabilities. With **NightHawk**, detectives can unify data from multiple sources within one platform and view suspects' movements and interactions in



Detective Jeff German with the Joliet Police Department has more than 20 years of law enforcement experience. He has been a detective for more than a decade, and his particular focus is using digital evidence to solve a range of criminal cases.

chronological timelines and maps. **Toolbox** simplifies phone and vehicle data lookups, supports writing precise search warrants, and provides guidance on where to request additional records.

SOLVING MAJOR CRIMES WITH CONFIDENCE

In a recent mass murder investigation, Detective Jeff German and his team were faced with years of messages from hundreds of phone numbers, vehicle location data, social media histories, and more.

"**NightHawk** allowed us to put all that together into one chronological, viewable format that's searchable. We could see the motive and identify the suspects—something we might've missed without it," he said.

TIME SAVINGS AND REAL-TIME COLLABORATION

"Before **NightHawk**, it would've taken me days—maybe longer—to piece everything together manually," said German. "Now, with a few clicks, we can merge datasets, spot patterns, and collaborate with other investigators, within our agency or in other jurisdictions, in real time." The ability to securely share the workload, all the data and findings, makes a crucial difference in large, time-sensitive investigations.

COURTROOM-READY PRESENTATIONS

German highlights **NightHawk**'s Storyboard feature as a standout tool. "With just a few clicks, I can pull screenshots and evidence into a PowerPoint that's ready for court. It helps judges and juries understand the full story—even when the data is complex."

THE ADDED BENEFITS OF TOOLBOX

Toolbox also plays a vital role in everyday investigative workflows. "As soon as I get a phone number or vehicle, **Toolbox** is where I go first," said German. From identifying carriers to confirming connected vehicle compatibility, **Toolbox** helps guide the next steps quickly and accurately. "It's also great for drafting strong search warrants. The built-in templates and references save a ton of time."

TRAINING AND SUPPORT THAT GOES THE EXTRA MILE

"LeadsOnline has been incredible for training," said German. "Their instructors are experts who are really helpful, and they're available after class to contact by email or phone. And when I provided feedback about capabilities to explore, they acted on my requests."

ADVICE FOR OTHER AGENCIES

Detective German urges other law enforcement agencies—especially smaller ones—to consider investing in tools like **NightHawk**. "Even if your budget is tight, the time you save and the cases you close make it worth it. And if you can't get the tools directly, partner with agencies that have them. It's about being smart and efficient."

"NightHawk helped us find the evidence hidden in millions of lines of data."

Detective Jeff German
Joliet Police Department