



2022 Industry Trends Survey for Law Enforcement



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	03
Methodology	04
2022 Industry Trends Survey Findings	05
Law Enforcement Faces Investigative Challenges	05
Technology Is Viewed as a Force Multiplier	08
Technology Training is Critical for Future Success	09
Digital Evidence Presents Major Challenges to Investigative Teams	10
Digital Evidence is Extremely Critical to Solving Cases	12
Agencies are Revaluating Evidence and Investigations Management	13
Recommendations: Establishing a Digital Intelligence Strategy	14

2022 Industry Trends Survey for Law Enforcement

Modern investigations are changing rapidly as digital evidence becomes increasingly important to close cases. Agencies of every size are discovering the game-changing value of digital evidence in finding actionable intelligence to solve more cases quicker.

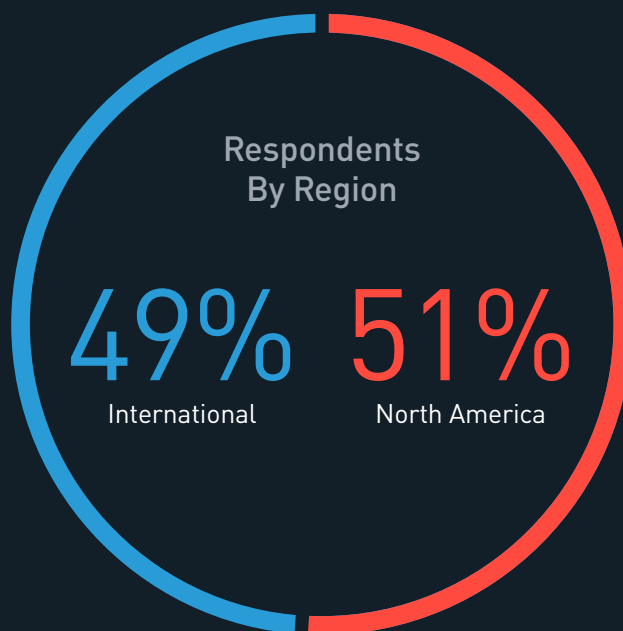
Cellebrite's *2022 Industry Trends Survey* explores how digital intelligence is redefining operations for law enforcement agencies, military organizations, and the intelligence community worldwide.

The survey captured 2,000 responses, including over 100 from police chiefs or similar agency personnel in top leadership roles. The survey also includes feedback from the examiners, investigators, analysts, and prosecutors who gather and manage Digital Intelligence every day.



Methodology

To clearly see the emerging trends in digital investigations, the survey team received responses from law enforcement professionals in 119 countries. The survey uncovers how agencies are implementing digital intelligence strategies to combat the challenges of an ever-increasing amount of digital evidence.



Participants identifying themselves as being from federal/national law enforcement agencies

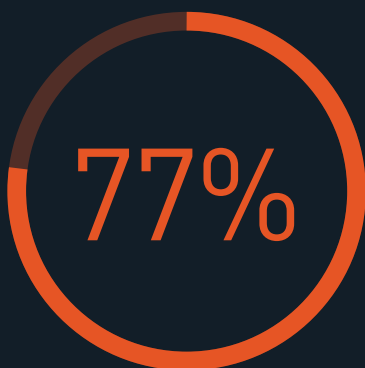


Respondents representing agencies with more than 1,000 employees

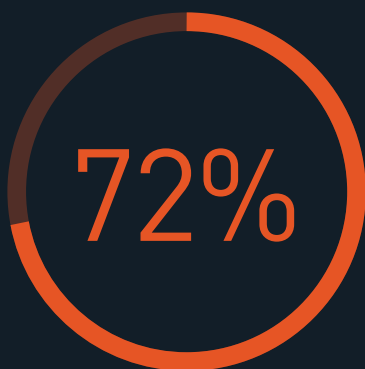
Survey respondents represent a range of agency types and sizes globally, from federal or national law enforcement agencies, military and intelligence organizations, to state agencies, and local agencies, including small departments and sheriff's offices, as well as major metropolitan agencies.

Law Enforcement Faces Investigative Challenges

The biggest takeaways from the survey were the myriad of investigative challenges law enforcement faces. In this new reality, maintaining law and order is only going to become more challenging in the years ahead.



Agency managers that agreed or strongly agreed that protecting and serving citizens is becoming harder than ever



Agency managers that strongly agreed or agreed that the bar for prosecution has been raised substantially

85%

The number of agency managers who agreed or strongly agreed that policing in the coming decade is going to be harder



Case clearance rates remain the key performance indicator for agency managers. To solve more cases faster and more effectively, agencies need technological solutions that can quickly deliver key insights to clear up cases and provide easily understandable, actionable results. 64% of investigators agreed or strongly

agreed that review of digital data is too complex, which was like the 2021 result (60%). The need to acquire better technology to modernize investigative workflows is critical, as is the need to change the investigative culture to fully embrace the efficiencies that modern technology can provide.

These trends suggest that the law enforcement profession may be fast approaching a generational tipping point as public perception, funding, recruitment, and retention become key hurdles for agency managers to overcome. Below are just a few of the many difficulties departments are facing.



The COVID Factor:

The recent pandemic forced law enforcement agencies to change the approach to their investigations. On-site policing suddenly changed, as most law enforcement professionals were forced to work remotely. Processes needed to change to accommodate the remote workforce and human resources needed to be realigned. As the pandemic took its toll on personnel, veteran investigators were assigned back to street duties to fill the dwindling ranks of those officers who fell victim to COVID.



Public Awareness:

Political discourse about distrusting the police made policing even more challenging. Officers felt they were being scrutinized to the point that doing their jobs was becoming all but impossible.



Staff Changes:

Officers on the cusp of retirement took packages, while others moved to the private sector, leaving the remaining forces stretched further. This migration meant that the officers who remained had to work more hours to fill the widening staff shortages. Not surprisingly, the end result was burnout, which added to the growing number of officers moving out of the force; a problem that was recently highlighted in an article by the [Associated Press](#).

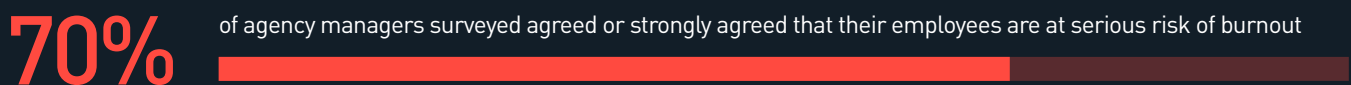
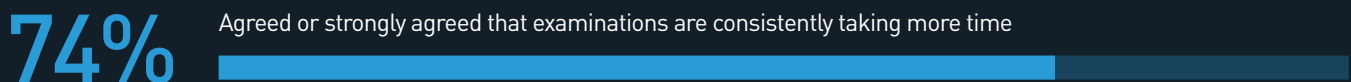
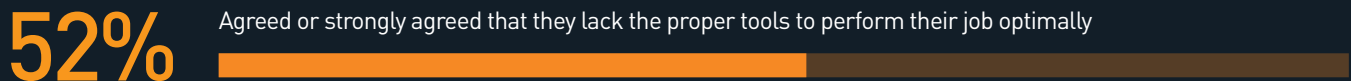
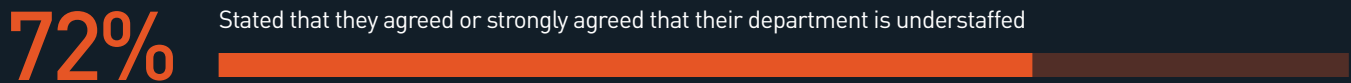


Funding:

It quickly became apparent, as crimes began to rise during the pandemic, that more, not fewer, officers were required to provide adequate public safety. In addition, increased funding was required for training and more modern solutions for dealing with the overwhelming amount of digital data pouring into police labs.



The *2022 Industry Trends Survey* reveals the extent to which law enforcement professionals are feeling the pain, as they report their departments are increasingly understaffed, ill-equipped, and over-burdened.



While the workloads continue to grow, the survey revealed that resources remain largely flat, putting additional pressure on investigation teams. Half (51%) of surveyed examiners agreed or strongly agreed that case backlogs climbed in the past year. The cost to departments in overtime has grown as well.

Sadly, 49% of investigators defined themselves as being either average or poorly equipped to keep up with crimes, while 14% stated they are not well equipped at all.



of examiners strongly agreed or agreed that the amount of overtime has increased over the past 12 months

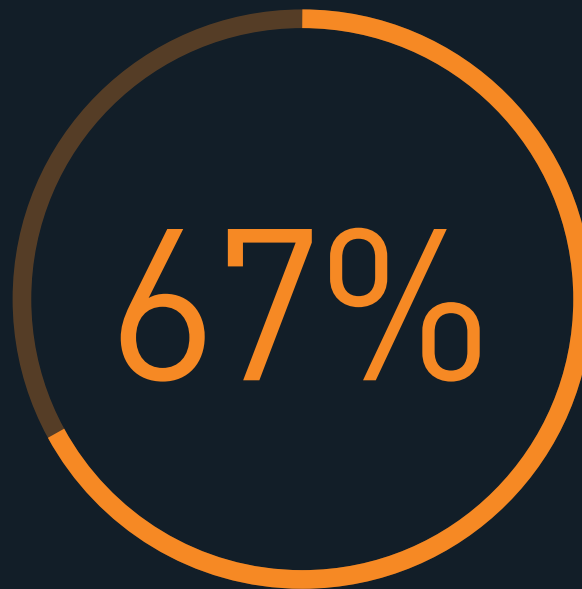


of investigators strongly agreed or agreed that the amount of overtime worked has increased over the past 12 months

Technology Is Viewed as a Force Multiplier

Many of those who responded to the survey see technology as a game-changer in terms of alleviating the workload, providing a force multiplier and reducing overall agency costs.

Much of this optimism springs from the increase in performance and productivity that modern technologies deliver, including artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). Managers are recognizing digital forensics, with the right solutions, that might have taken weeks or months to resolve manually can now be completed in minutes, freeing up key personnel to concentrate on more complex cases.

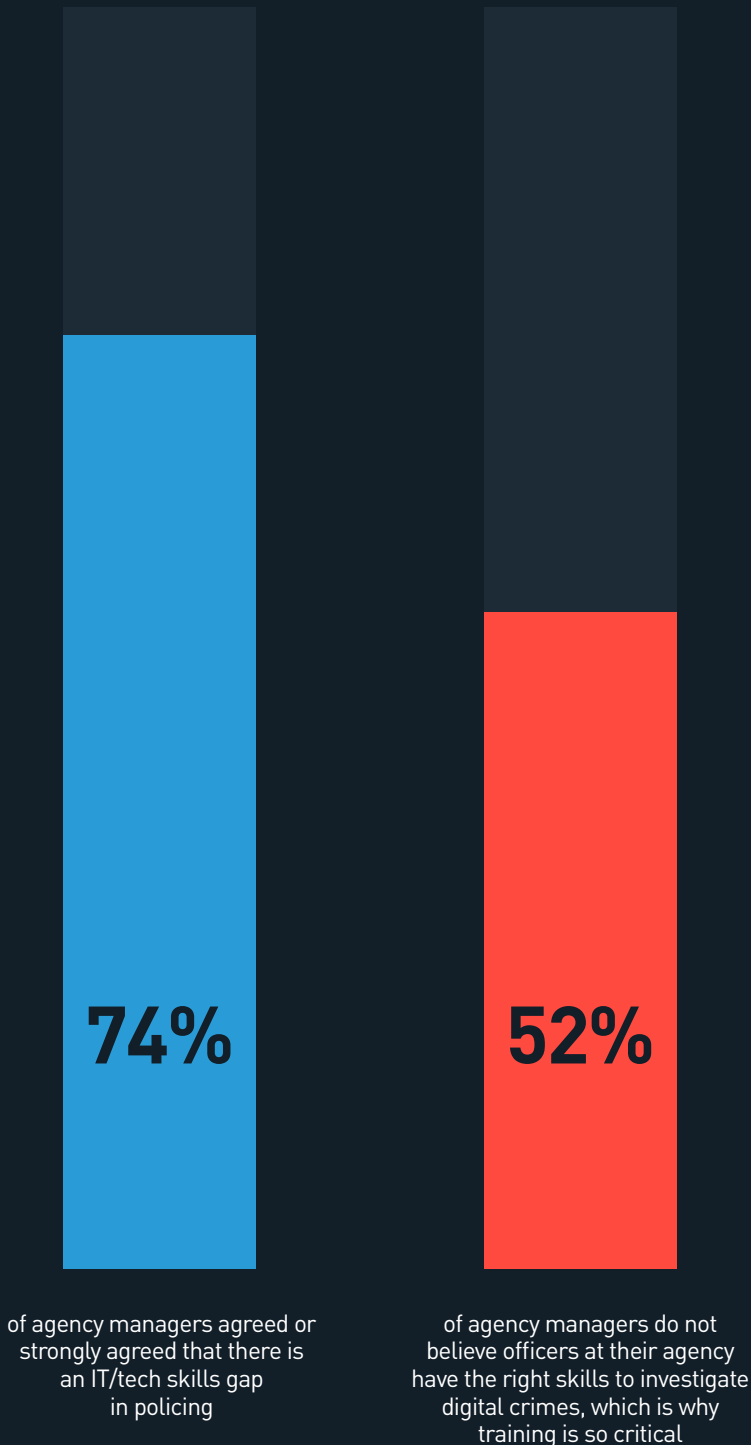


of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that technology can help overcome staffing pressures



of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that technology can help reduce overall agency costs

Technology Training is Critical for Future Success



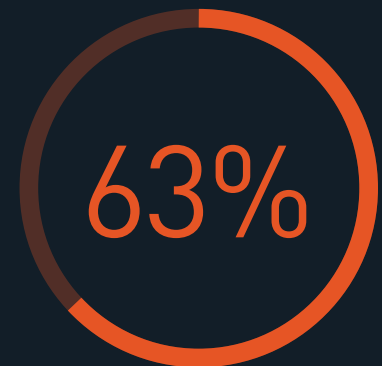
Two major trends reflected in the *2022 Industry Trends Survey* included the pressing need for agencies to modernize their investigative workflow, and the need to get their staff members properly trained with the right solutions to face the technological challenges of tomorrow's investigations.

In their responses, managers identified the growing skills gap.

Digital Evidence Presents Major Challenges to Investigative Teams

The survey revealed that 63% of cases now include digital evidence as part of the investigation. While technology is seen as the answer to the growing digital challenges, devices are becoming more sophisticated and the number of sources that must be examined

to find actionable digital evidence continues to increase. The 2022 survey shows that even for high-priority cases, it can take up to nine days for investigators to receive a digital device extraction report from examiners, compared with an average of only six days in 2021.



of cases now include digital evidence as part of investigations



Up to 6 Days

for investigators to receive an extraction report from examiners in 2021



Up to 9 Days

for investigators to receive an extraction report from examiners in 2022

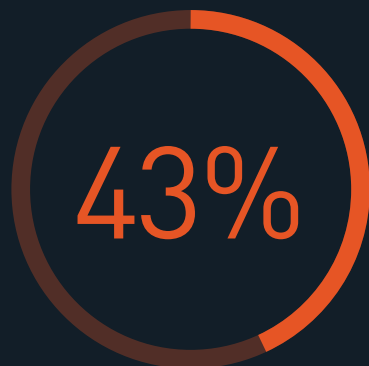
Sources of digital evidence are exploding. Cases may now involve multiple cell phones and other electronic devices.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that 62% of agency managers pointed to the sheer volume of evidence (including

digital sources) as one of the biggest challenges their departments face.

While survey responses showed that smartphones, feature phones, and Windows-based computers were the most frequent sources for teams, other sources are now surfacing.

Year-over-year trends show a significant increase in cryptocurrency turning up in cases:



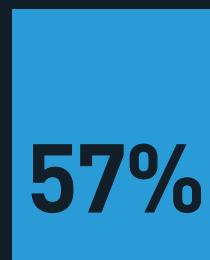
of investigators agreed or strongly agreed that cryptocurrency is emerging as a critical source of digital evidence

An emerging trend in agencies using OSINT (Open-Source Intelligence) to augment their investigations shows an estimated 37% of examiners frequently or very frequently use a commercial OSINT solution.



of agencies stated they did not have an OSINT solution. Responses from examiners were similar.

Challenges, such as locked and encrypted devices, remain a big problem for forensic labs:

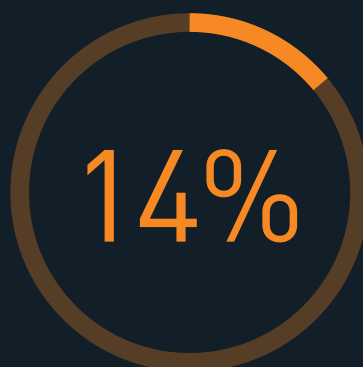


2021



2022

Average percentage of locked devices that reach the lab



of examiners noted that when faced with a locked device, they simply exclude it – potentially missing crucial evidence

In addition, key evidence may lie in the deleted data, requiring physical or full file system extractions. On average, 55% of extractions are physical / full file system, up from 45% in 2021.

Digital Evidence is Extremely Critical to Solving Cases

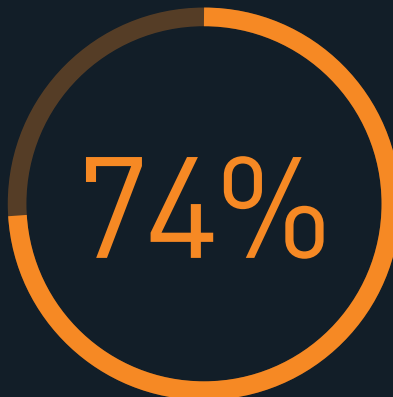
Despite the challenges outlined above, it is clear the power that digital evidence brings.

Solving Cases Faster: The response from agency managers clearly pointed to the power of digital evidence in helping shorten the investigation cycle and increase case solvability. Most (88%) of agency managers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that digital evidence significantly

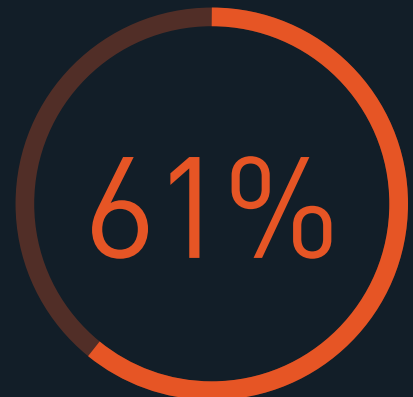
increases case solvability. An overwhelming 81% of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that the likelihood of case closure grows when digital evidence is available. Meanwhile, 72% of investigators agreed or strongly agreed that digital evidence shortens the investigation cycle. Finally, 74% of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that **prosecutors feel more confident** in cases where digital evidence is available.



of agency managers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that digital evidence significantly increases case solvability



of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that prosecutors feel more confident in cases where digital evidence is available



of agency managers, agreed or strongly agreed that digital evidence has surpassed DNA evidence in its importance to solving cases

Digital 'DNA': It therefore comes as no surprise that majority, or 61% of agency managers, agreed or strongly agreed that digital evidence has surpassed DNA evidence in its importance to

solving cases. Meanwhile 66% of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that digital evidence has surpassed physical evidence in its importance to solving cases.

Agencies are Revaluating Evidence & Investigations Management Methods



6/10

examiners and investigators stated their agency currently uses external storage, such as USB sticks, to manage digital evidence



Traditional methods for storing and managing digital evidence are becoming increasingly problematic, hindering the processing of that digital evidence. Six out of 10 examiners and investigators stated their agency currently uses external storage, such as USB sticks, to manage digital evidence. Agencies are realizing that this opens the door to evidence either being lost or compromised, making agency managers much more receptive to secure cloud-based solutions as part of their evidence management strategy.

Security concerns and perceived costs are the two most common barriers to adopting SaaS (Software as a Service) investigation and evidence management solutions. Before the pandemic, there was little receptiveness to SaaS evidence management solutions. Now, 47% of agency managers said they are receptive or very receptive to storing and managing evidence and investigative processes in the cloud. Interestingly, six out of 10 agency managers also stated that the cost of solutions, security, and legal concerns are the biggest barriers to adopting a cloud/ SaaS solution for investigations and evidence management and storage.

Recommendations: Establishing a Digital Intelligence Strategy


48%

of agency managers rated their agency's digital transformation strategy as poor or mediocre



10%

of agency managers responded that their agency has no digital transformation strategy at all



The *2022 Industry Trends Survey* revealed that while some forward-leaning managers are far down the road in establishing a Digital Intelligence strategy, many agencies are still behind. 48% of agency managers rated their agency's digital transformation strategy as poor or mediocre, while 10% responded that they have no digital transformation strategy at all, which was the same as the 2021 results.

The path to modernizing workflows and investigative culture requires agency managers to look both inwards and outwards.

Looking Inwards:

Careful self-evaluation of the department's infrastructure and personnel is the first critical step toward modernization.

1. What is the current state of your workflow and infrastructure?
2. How would adding solutions that integrate with your current platform increase time to evidence allowing you to solve more cases more quickly?
3. What kind of training do your staff members need to keep up with the changing landscape of modern digital investigations?
4. Are you equipping staff with the right solutions to solve cases more easily?
5. Do staff feel valued and believe they are being invested in for the future?
6. Where do you want your digital intelligence to be in five years?

Reaching Outward:

Agencies need a trusted partner with innovative solutions to manage the entire case workflow, from crime scene to courtroom. They need a partner that can help them first identify their strengths and weaknesses, and then build a Digital Intelligence strategy that can solve departmental challenges both today and in the future. Cellebrite's professionals are here to help your agency begin its digital transformation by working in a consultative capacity to identify and prioritize the areas where help is needed, and then provide solutions to help meet your challenges.

Cellebrite's Digital Intelligence platform empowers agencies with market-leading collect and review capabilities, investigative analytics, investigation and evidence management, open-source intelligence, and training that can be a force multiplier to achieve better results with fewer resources.

In cases where departments need to outsource devices to decrease their backlogs and/



or need specialized expertise to solve a particularly difficult case, [Cellebrite Advanced Services](#) can help.

When it comes to [training](#), Cellebrite professionals are best in class, with instructors bringing years of law enforcement experience to the training programs. Cellebrite offers a wide range of instructor

led, live online, and on-demand courses to fit your agency needs and budgets.

In the recent survey, 78% of agency managers agreed or strongly agreed that Cellebrite is a trusted partner. Let Cellebrite professionals begin helping you build the agency of the future today. For more information about Cellebrite, [contact us](#).

About Cellebrite

Cellebrite's (Nasdaq: CLBT) mission is to enable its customers to protect and save lives, accelerate justice, and preserve privacy in communities around the world. We are a global leader in Digital Intelligence solutions for the public and private sectors, empowering organizations in mastering the complexities of legally sanctioned digital investigations by streamlining intelligence processes. Trusted by thousands of leading agencies and companies worldwide, Cellebrite's Digital Intelligence platform and solutions transform how customers collect, review, analyze and manage data in legally sanctioned investigations.

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