

10/04/2009



People and Personalities of Law Enforcement
with PoliceOne Junior Editor Hannah Simon

IACP Products: Follow the money

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Departments around the country deal with drug-seized money, money laundering, and cash attached to criminal enterprises daily. Officers often struggle to identify, trace and seize the assets of these criminal groups because of a lack of technology associated with currency tracing and validating.



The iCVn system in action at IACP. (PoliceOne photo)

[iCVn](#) (Intelligent Currency Tracing and Validation Network) is hoping to change all of that.

iCVN demonstrated their sophisticated product at the IACP tradeshow, where I got a chance to talk with Steven Cramer about how the system works and how police departments are saving time and money with state-of-the-art technology.

"The idea is that we take the anonymity out of the criminal use of cash by recording serial numbers and tagging that serial number electronically with transaction information such as time, location, date, agency number, or case number," Cramer said. Targeting the drug enforcement agents, iCVn aims to alleviate the task of manually tracking drug money.

Manually tracking money means that agencies are sometimes not sharing information within their own departments, let alone with other jurisdictions or other countries.

"This network-based system allows for information sharing on the state, federal and local levels – domestically and internationally," Cramer explained.

So how does it work? All currency notes have a "fingerprint" – a serial number. The iCVn system has the ability to read that serial number and compare it to the data available in the server database, determining if it is a valid number, if there are multiple bills with the same serial number, or if the serial

number is included in wanted lists maintained by government agencies like the FBI, DEA, etc.

"It allows for an inter-agency, cross-border operation that links bad guys and criminal organizations together that [officers] never even knew existed," Cramer said. "Recording serial numbers is not new technology, but electronically tagging them and associating them with criminal activity is new – it's like biometrics for cash."