

CRIME-LITE® AUTO – THE COMPREHENSIVE FORENSIC DIGITAL DOCUMENTATION TOOL

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“Succinctly put, a crime scene is like an archeology site. If an excavation is botched or bulldozed away, there’s no going back.” says the American crime writer Patricia Cornwell. The quote rightly points to the importance of crime scene examination, timely collection of evidence, and the testing of this evidence. If evidence gets overlooked and the crime scene is wiped clean, the investigator or forensic expert would permanently lose out on crucial incriminatory evidence at the scene. Such scenarios highlight the need for state-of-the-art equipment to conduct crime scene searches, evidence detection, and documentation of evidence.



Image Courtesy : Foster + Freeman

One such piece of technology designed for effective crime scene search, evidence identification, and documentation in crime scenes and laboratories is Crime-lite® AUTO. Developed by Foster+Free-man, the equipment is stated to be “the most integrated, complete, and compact forensics digital camera solution in existence”.

Conventional crime scene searches employ DSLR (Digital Single-Lens Reflex) cameras that require investigators to carry alternate light sources, image filters, and goggles separately. Crime-lite® AUTO proves an exception as the device comprises a 20MP (Megapixel) multi-spectral UV-Vis-IR (Ultraviolet-Visible-Infrared) camera with about 55 waveband combinations to document and examine all types of evidence in the crime scene. Apart from the above features, the device offers the following:

- 7” multi-touch display interface that helps capture high-resolution live crime scene images and videos and preview captured images
- Autofocus macro lens to help effectively process the crime scene faster
- Wide-angle illumination to help cover a wider area of the crime scene instantaneously
- HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) port to enable connection to an additional viewing monitor for enhanced visualisation
- Internal storage of images and videos using micro SD (Secure Digital) and USB (Universal Serial Bus) ports
- Export of images and videos to an external device when in need of immediate digital transfer to forensic labs through the companion app
- Motorised filter wheel that enables both automatic filter selection and complete manual control aiming to help visualise

evidence better

- Wi-Fi (Wireless Fidelity) and Bluetooth connectivity

The handheld device has an interface that requires minimum personnel training for use. The device was introduced in 2021. Ocean county sheriff's office in New Jersey (United States) and Gloucestershire Constabulary (United Kingdom) are among the few offices utilising the equipment for better policing. The latter obtained the device for £22,000 through a bid. Owing to the futuristic and sci-fi-like technology, Crime-lite® AUTO also found its way to the popular BBC show Silent Witness. The device helps reveal evidence like body fluids (including saliva, semen, blood, urine, and vaginal secretions), fingerprints, and trace evidence (including gunshot residue, glass shards, hair, and fibre). The equipment weighs around 1.6 kilograms with the battery included. Crime-lite® AUTO is equally suited to the crime scene and laboratory.

Foster+Freeman, being the leading innovators in forensic equipment, has recently introduced DISCOVER®, a two-part workstation to be used in combination with Crime-lite® AUTO for particularly visualising and examining fingerprint marks on crime scene exhibits.



Image Courtesy : Foster + Freeman

The equipment holds immense potential to reduce the workload of forensic examiners and crime scene investigators while at the same time ensuring effective and swift crime scene processing. Such

technologies help prevent overlooking evidence at the scene and negligent disposal of cases, reducing successful convictions.

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