



## OVERVIEW

**Industry:**  
Law Enforcement

**Organization Facts:**  
Investigation Division of Lakewood Police Department, five interview rooms, four requiring interview recording.

**Environment:**  
VHS and audio cassette recorders used for recording interviews.

### Challenges:

- Improve the quality and delivery of interview recordings and transcripts.
- Facilitate state-of-the-art transcription production.
- Provide quick and easy access to recorded interviews and transcripts.

### Return on Investment:

- Reduced overall operating costs and streamlined workflow.
- Significantly improved transcription quality and turnaround times.

## Case Study: Lakewood Police Department - Lakewood, Colorado, USA

***Lakewood Police Department upgrades to FTR digital recording solution - streamlines workflow and improves transcription production process using FTR Interrogator***

### Organization Overview

For over 30 years, the Lakewood Police Department (PD) has proudly served the residents of Lakewood, Colorado. Lakewood PD has served as a model for law enforcement agencies and has been recognized nationally and internationally for its achievements and contributions to further law enforcement standards of excellence. The Department has over 300 dedicated sworn and civilian personnel, and has been ranked as one of the top eight suburban police forces in the country. Many of the programs created by this agency have been used nationwide, including at the FBI National Academy in Virginia. Lakewood PD continues to be one of the nation's most innovative, leading the way by implementing one of the first digital interview recording solutions in the country.

### Organizational Challenge

The Persons Crimes and Property Crimes units of Lakewood's Investigation Division were using VHS recorders to record their interviews in four of their five interview rooms. The once state-of-the-art VHS recorders were a good way to capture both audio and video in one easy solution. However, according to Sergeant Phil Tenney of the Investigation Division, problems arose when transcripts needed to be prepared to submit to the courts and district attorney's office. Often, even though the video was decent, sound quality was poor, and transcribers needed to repeatedly rewind and review the tapes in order to hear exactly what was being said in an interview. Storing and retrieving VHS tapes from central storage also made it difficult to get to information when it was needed. The need to upgrade to a digital solution was clear.

### Technology Solution

Lakewood PD initially considered various digital alternatives to their current solution, including commercially-available Digital Video Recorders (DVRs). Their primary buying criteria was that the solution should be simple, easy-to-use and require minimal user training and support. These aspects are particularly important in an investigations-type environment where users cannot be removed from their daily duties for extended periods of training on how to use particular software. When CEAVCO – an FTR authorized reseller – approached them and demonstrated FTR Interrogator, Sergeant Phil Tenney quickly realized that this complete audio/video digital recording and content management solution would meet the agency's functional and business goals.

The FTR Interrogator solution includes three main components: (i) a software recorder with easy, push-button controls (ii) a computer-based, linked note-taking solution designed to aid in the navigation and retrieval of recorded content and (iii) a replication service that enables the interview recording to be simultaneously archived to a network (or other secondary) location. In addition to requiring minimal user training, Lakewood PD detectives and transcribers have found the network archiving feature to be a boon. By downloading FTR's free Player from the company website, any authorized person could access and play back recorded interviews directly from the network. They also have the option to save a copy of the entire recording to optical media for storage or distribution as desired.

According to Lakewood PD, FTR Interrogator's feature set offers three significant advantages:

- (i) **Redundancy:** A back-up of the audio and video is available in case of failure with the primary system. It also eliminates the need for separate audio cassette recorders and expenses associated with their operation and maintenance.

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- (ii) Instant Access: Authorized users can access and review recorded interviews from their own desktop rather than the cumbersome process of using a VCR.
- (iii) Transcribers receive significantly better quality recordings that greatly speed-up generation of transcripts.

FTR Interrogator has been installed on four computers at Lakewood PD and is used for recording audio and video in four out of five interview rooms. In order to ensure a smooth transition, the agency is implementing the solution in phases. They started with installing just the recording components for each room, followed by implementation of network archiving. They are planning on rolling out the note-taking solution shortly, which will provide users with additional capabilities to navigate recorded content using FTR's ThinkLink technology.

Lakewood PD's current operational process begins with recording of an interview and its automatic replication to a specified network location. Once complete, a copy of the recording is immediately memorialized to optical media. With the recording available over the network, transcribers can easily access the recording and make the necessary transcripts to submit to the court. They love the FTR system because they can watch the interview during their transcription process, which often gives them the context required to produce an accurate transcript of the interview. Thanks to the vastly improved quality of the recording, transcribers are also able to save a lot of time as they no longer have to continually re-visit specific interview segments to decipher what the participants are saying. In addition, FTR's free Player has several features, such as individual channel controls, to further facilitate the transcription process.

#### Operational Results

Lakewood PD has been using FTR Interrogator for over 12 months and is very pleased with the results. Per Sgt Tenney, transition from the existing VHS system to FTR's digital solution has been hassle-free, and the learning curve for administrative personnel was minimal. Lakewood PD will be installing an FTR solution in their fifth interview room in the near future.