

Different fields of digital forensics require various tools, but these tools assist in completing a focused task as optimally as possible, says [Nicholas Logan](#).

Digital forensics is just one of many fields that have posed the question, "Is there a tool that provides universal functionality?" There are multipurpose tools, but there will be situations that cannot be handled by a single tool.

The analysis of petabytes of data in real time, and the use of mobile

devices, are just two examples of unforeseen situations to which digital forensics has had to adapt. Though the use of one tool that applies itself to any situation would no doubt seem convenient, it could not possibly account for these types of unforeseen advancements. Furthermore, multipurpose products

could burden users with many tools they may never have cause to use, as different fields of digital forensics place a vast range of requirements on the tools being used.

Approach each of these product purchases with a clear understanding of needs and the functionality that the product offers.

NIKSUN NetDetector/NetVCR Alpine v4.1



Vendor NIKSUN

Price \$24,705

Contact www.niksun.com

In the field of network forensics, the NIKSUN NetDetector is a user-friendly, all-in-one appliance. Its features include full-packet capture and analysis, including application reconstruction, full-featured intrusion detection, along with a powerful reporting tool and the NetXpert analysis utility.

The setup for this product is straightforward. Once the IP address of the management interface is configured, it can be plugged into the network and accessed via a web browser that supports Java. The last step in the setup is plugging the network monitor interface into a switch's span/monitor port or other network feed.

NetDetector's packet viewer allows users to see all network traffic in a prompt manner. Once the packets have been captured, the analysis is easily completed through dashboards that break down the information into easy-to-understand graphics and charts.

Application reconstruction is a powerful tool that allows users to view this layer from raw packet data. On top of that, there is built-in IDS that allows users to not only see alerts on current data but also data captured at an earlier date.

The NetXpert function lets users fully analyze their data with built-in queries that would normally be time-consuming to answer by hand. For example, one "Ask the NetXpert" question is: "Are there any port scans on my network." This report then gives a list of hosts that have been performing port scans.

Support from NIKSUN is offered in several tiered packages for multiple languages and countries with "around the clock" service. Assistance can easily be found under the support tab on the NIKSUN website. The support staff is pleasant to work with and professional.

The NIKSUN NetDetector has a base price of \$24,705. At this price, it is a top-choice tool for simplicity and power in network forensics.

SC MAGAZINE RATING	
Features	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★
Strengths NetXpert, reporting features and application reconstruction make for simple network analysis.	
Weaknesses None that we found.	
Verdict Easy-to-use, all-in-one network forensic tool that allows analysis and reporting. For its superior performance, value and comprehensive functionality, we designate this tool SC Lab Approved.	



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