

Choosing a specialized forensic tool or one with multiple functions depends on what you need to examine and present in court, says **Keith Gilbert**.

Digital forensics is a field that never stops evolving. Constant R&D often results in new products suited for a specific purpose. This year's forensics Group Test is largely composed of specialized products.

Some forensic investigators may not like the idea of having a certain

specialized tool for each specific problem that needs to be solved. More tools mean you can spend more time in court explaining how each tool works, which likely isn't anyone's idea of fun. They also could require more resources from your organization to acquire different solutions.

However, there also are benefits. Since they are designed for one specific purpose, many offer more robust options than an all-in-one solution. Similarly, many of these tools are very efficient at what they do, and therefore don't require the computing resources that some larger solutions do.

NetDetector/NetVCR Alpine v4.0



Vendor Niksun

Price \$4,995

Contact www.niksun.com

NetDetector/NetVCR is a hardware appliance used to monitor a network and capture and warehouse network traffic. It complements other existing network security tools to help provide comprehensive defense of hosted intellectual property, mission-critical network services and infrastructure.

Setup is straightforward. The directions were clear and easy to understand, whether it be through the shortened setup manual or through the detailed user guide. As a result, we had the NetDetector up and running in less than an hour. No software installation was needed since everything was run from the hardware device.

The solution runs from a browser-based graphic user interface. It performed well and ran quickly and smoothly. A lot of the content is generated using the Flash multimedia platform, so it would be difficult to use if Flash is not installed on your computer. It can detect network data down to the millisecond.

The documentation was excellent. It covers every aspect of the device, with additional screen shots for reference.

If the documentation is not sufficient for your needs, customer support makes up for it. We had a very pleasant experience, especially since we spoke directly with the Niksun developers and technical specialists, not customer service personnel.

Basic no-cost support is offered with the appliance. However, support also includes standard and

premium levels. The standard level provides all upgrades for free, as well as customer support by telephone, email and return material authorization (RMA). The premium level provides all upgrades free, as well as customer support by telephone, email and so forth, with onsite, next-day return merchandise authorization (RMA), hot spares and more. The fees are variable depending on the product offering and enterprise license.

SC MAGAZINE RATING

Features	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

OVERALL RATING ★★★★★

Strengths The ability to reconstruct web pages, but also chat logs and data on the background of a site.

Weaknesses The most updated Flash must be installed.

Verdict Excellent features. Recommended.



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