



Photos Matter: PaintShop Pro at Work

PaintShop Pro is used to edit the photos taken at crime scenes, so they can be used as evidence in court.

Crime Scene Technician, Daryl Clemens, uses PaintShop Pro to crop, resize, and adjust photos to attach to reports, and file as evidence to be used in court.

Daryl told Corel just how PaintShop Pro plays a role in the Police Department.

Interview with Daryl Clemens: PaintShop Pro's role at a crime scene

Q: Tell us about the agency you work for:

A: The Grand Rapids Police Department is a full service police agency comprising around 300 sworn officers and 7 civilian Crime Scene Technicians. Divisions include patrol, SWAT, investigations, vice and support. The agency as a whole responds to over 120,000 calls for service each year. Crime Scene Technicians, like me, respond to around 5,000 of those, which can range from shoplifting to homicides and mass disasters.



NAME:

Daryl Clemens

ORGANIZATION:

Grand Rapids Police Department

TITLE:

Crime Scene Technician

LOCATION:

Grand Rapids, Michigan

INDUSTRY:

Legal and Law Enforcement

PRODUCT:

Corel® PaintShop® Pro 2018

PROJECT SUMMARY:

PaintShop Pro is one of the trusted photo editors that the Grand Rapids Police Department relies on for enhancing and correcting photo documentation of crime scenes.



Q: Please describe a usual day as a Crime Scene Technician:

A: We respond to calls for service, often house or vehicle break-ins, process fingerprints and take photographs as necessary at the scene of the crime. If we collect any evidence, we return to headquarters to either process it further, or to submit it for storage.

Q: Tell us more about photography's role in your day-to-day job:

A: One of the main parts of our job is photographic documentation of crime scenes. We photograph the scenes showing the overall area, with markers placed to highlight items of evidence, and we take close-up photos of each item of evidence as well. Once our work at the scene is complete, we use the computer in the vehicle to complete a report and attach the photos to the report.

“ Personally, I much prefer PaintShop Pro over Photoshop Elements as it includes all the features I'm used to from the full version of Photoshop, such as full layer support with masks, channels and filters.”

Q: Has the rise of digital photography had any impact on your work?

A: Prior to digital photography we did not take many photos at minor scenes, other than the odd Polaroid. With digital, we are more likely to take photos if there is anything interesting at a scene, plus we take photos of the point-of-entry at all burglaries.

Q: Do you edit the crime scene photos you take?

A: Generally speaking, we try not to edit the photos at all, as it could lead to objections in court. However, there are a couple reasons why we use photo-editing software at work.

Reason 1: Cropping and resizing

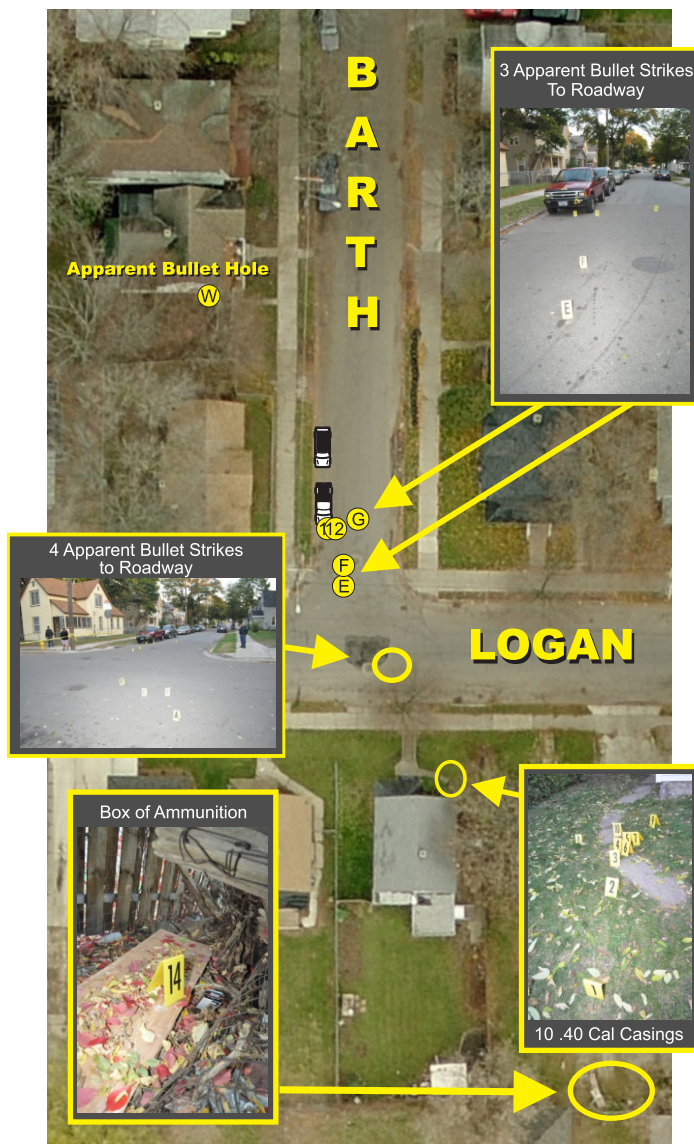
For years, we've used CorelDRAW® Graphics Suite as our tool for making diagrams of crime scenes. We often include photographs and either maps or aerial images as part of those diagrams. The aerial images are enormous—far larger than we require. This is where photo editing comes into play. We use PaintShop Pro to crop and resize the large images so that they are appropriate for the diagram they are being inserted into. Similarly, photographs from the scene are often cropped and may have brightness/contrast or color adjustments applied.

Reason 2: Applying minor photo fixes

Photo adjustments that mimic a traditional darkroom technique to make the image easier to see or less distracting don't generally cause an issue in court. We work 24 hours a day, so night and indoor images may need additional light applied. Personally, I like using PaintShop Pro's Levels feature to adjust brightness and contrast, but other Technicians often just use the Brightness/Contrast tool. We generally only correct color if it is so out of balance that it's distracting. In a few cases, we have used a blur effect to either tone down or conceal parts of the photo that were considered either massively distracting or as ordered by the court which felt that the image was too graphic.

Q: Is PaintShop Pro the only photo-editing software you use at work?

A: No. As a department we also have Photoshop Elements available to us. The choice of which to use is a matter of individual preference. We used to have Photoshop, but once they went to a subscription-pricing model, we could no longer afford it.



Case: 12-099947 Drawing by: D.Clemens Date: 10-9-2012 Not To Scale

Q: Why do you choose PaintShop Pro?

A: Personally, I much prefer PaintShop Pro over Photoshop Elements as it includes all the features I'm used to from the full version of Photoshop, such as full layer support with masks, channels and filters. Price-wise, PaintShop Pro has an enormous advantage over Adobe, and the subscription-free model with PaintShop Pro means we can own and not rent our software.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add about PaintShop Pro?

A: PaintShop Pro is a comprehensive image-editing program that is ideally suited to meet the needs of law enforcement investigators. It has the ability to store and export a history of each and every change made to an evidence image, which is so important when working with the court. You can also use it to enhance sharpness, brighten dark images or remove the color shift from images shot in poor lighting conditions—perfect for anyone working in the field of legal and law enforcement. I highly recommend it!

Try a risk-free trial of PaintShop Pro today

Visit paintshoppro.com/business and contact the Corel licensing team today for a multi-seat trial and licensing quote.