

How to solve nighttime crime faster with purpose-built ALPR

Collect better vehicle data day or night, and in any weather
condition using a vehicle-centric investigation system



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The challenges of solving crime at night

Crime can happen anytime, but according to a recent Genetec survey, 65% of violent criminal acts occur at night. Another report titled [Crimes at Night: Analyzing Police Incident Reports in Major Cities](#), found that incidents such as murders, assaults, robberies, and DUIs generally peak from 9 pm to 2 am.

For many police officers, investigators, and public safety agents, this isn't surprising. When most citizens are sound asleep, perpetrators take advantage to commit illicit acts. Not only does darkness offer criminals greater anonymity, but there are fewer witnesses around to catch them in the act. Freed up roadways also help them quickly flee crime scenes and get out of sight before first responders arrive.

The challenge is that the very things that help criminals get away — lack of witnesses and information — also make it harder for investigators to solve cases. In our report, law enforcement professionals confirmed that there's about a 15% reduction in clearance rates for nighttime crimes versus daytime offenses. Over time, this puts more undue pressure on resources that are already maxed out.





Why existing vehicle monitoring tools don't always help

Identifying the vehicles involved in a crime can often help crack a case. And while city-wide video cameras and other vehicle monitoring solutions might be available to investigators, they aren't as reliable and useful in identifying vehicles at night. Here are a few reasons why:

Nighttime performance is lacking

Without enough light in the frame, some video and vehicle monitoring solutions are unable to distinguish vehicle characteristics. So, while your officers might be able to confirm pertinent vehicle data for daytime crimes, they cannot rely on existing solutions to validate the vehicle color, make, or model when incidents occur at night.

Image quality isn't always the best

Images from older video cameras or even newer vehicle recognition solutions can often be too grainy or blurry. The darkness at night, or even bad weather conditions, compounds this poor output quality, making it impossible for your investigators to use context images, retrieve a license plate number, or spot other vital leads in the frame.

Searching through video drains resources

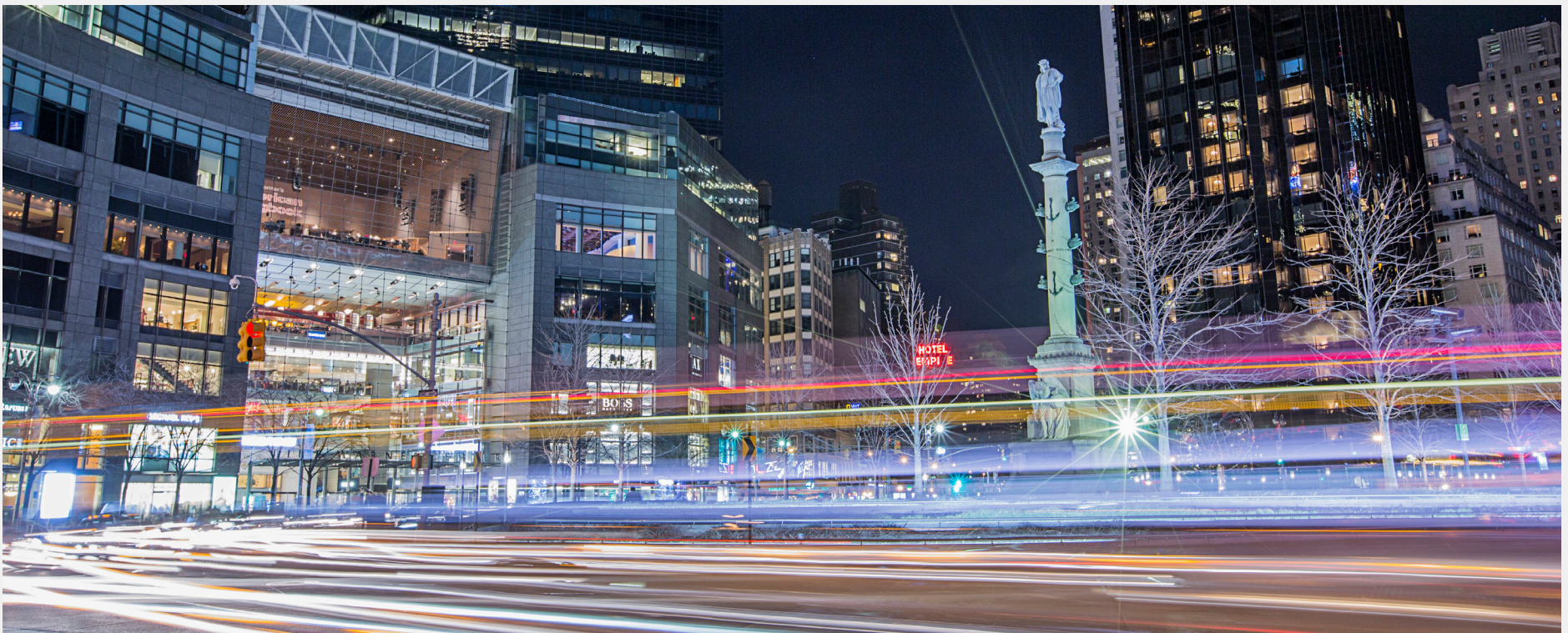
Even with the best nighttime video cameras, investigators could spend hours or days trying to search through recordings to find a vehicle lead. While video analytics can help narrow searches, many applications aren't designed specifically for vehicle-centric investigations which slows efficiency.

Key takeaway

Solving crime at night requires purpose-built solutions

There's no question that having tools such as video surveillance and daytime-performing vehicle tracking cameras are assets to your crime-fighting efforts. But with a higher rate of violent crimes occurring at night, your officers and investigators need solutions that make it easier to find critical vehicle data and evidence from sundown to sunup, and through all weather conditions.

An automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) solution that is built for efficient vehicle monitoring and investigations is the answer. Up next, find out how purpose-built ALPR optimized for nighttime crime-fighting helps you keep your city safer.





What is ALPR and how does it help you solve crime?

For more than a decade, automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) technology has helped law enforcement and public safety agencies solve crimes faster. With the right ALPR system in place, you can actively track suspect vehicles and gather strong evidence of how vehicles were used in crimes.

When installed on strategic roadways or in crime hotspots, ALPR cameras automatically capture license plates and pertinent vehicle characteristics as they drive by. The ALPR system then compares that information to various hotlists, and if there's a match, notifies officers immediately. Detectives can also browse through historical vehicle license plate reads to find additional evidence during active investigations.

How does ALPR outrival video surveillance in vehicle-centric investigations?

Using standard video solutions, police officers can gather a lot of information. But searching through the volume of footage from city-wide cameras can be frustrating and tiresome. When focus wanes, even the best investigators could miss important details.

And while witnesses can provide vital case leads to help narrow searches, they may not be able to retain specifics. In fact, according to our report, law enforcement professionals said that witnesses are most likely to recall the vehicle color and type, and are least likely to remember license information, whether partial or full. So not only do

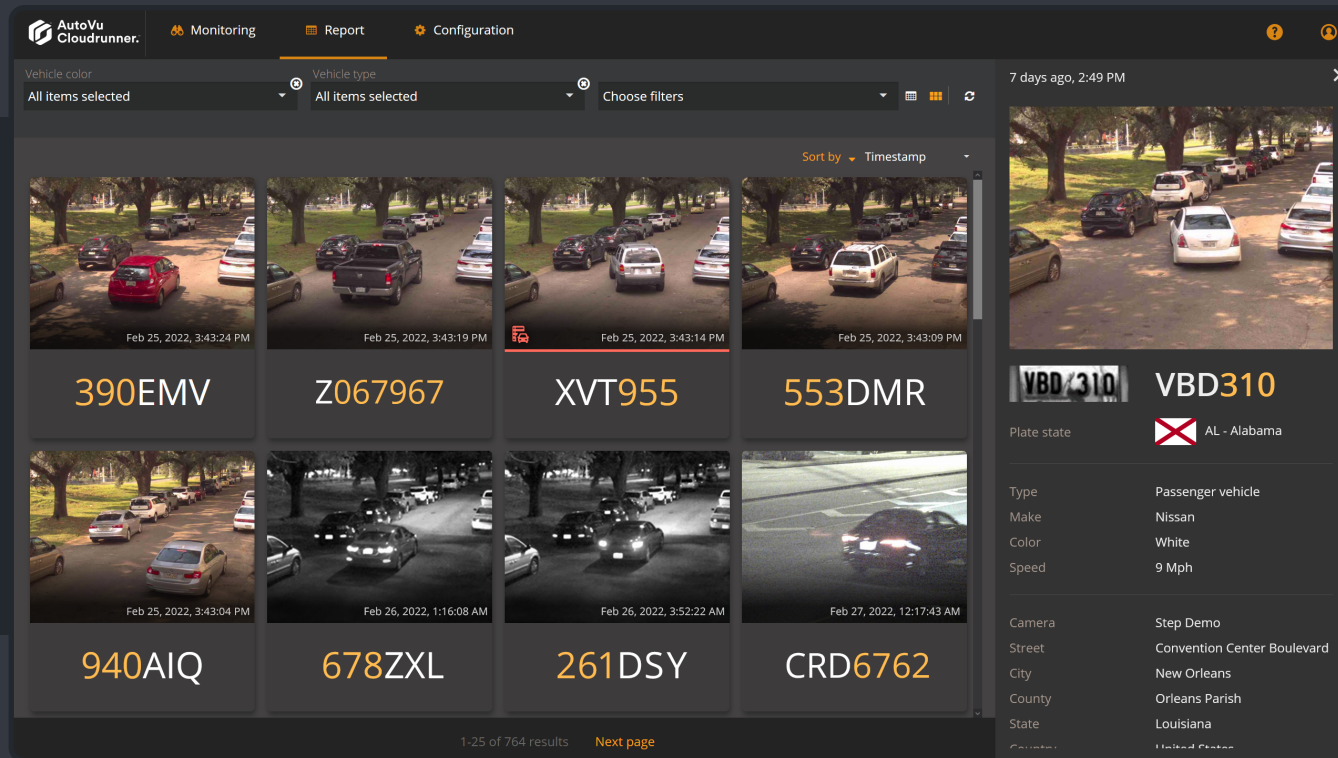
officers have to dig up and filter through video recordings from various cameras, but they're also essentially looking for a needle in a haystack.

With an ALPR system, an officer would be able to input characteristics such as vehicle type, color, make, model, and even partial plate numbers to narrow down historical license plate reads. They can then search through the most relevant data to find the evidence they need.



“We do things a little bit differently than other cities. We’ve taken the reverse approach, using the ALPR system as our core technology, and video surveillance as a secondary tool to follow up and drive investigations further. The ALPR system gives us actionable intelligence. Based on that information, we use video surveillance to support our efforts and that’s made a huge impact on the areas where we have deployed these solutions.”

—Lieutenant Brent Feig
St. Louis Police Department



What type of data can you collect with ALPR technology?

License plate information

- Full license plate picture and read
- State where the license plate is registered
- Location of license plate capture

Vehicle context data

- Full color context image
- Timestamp
- Geolocation tag

Vehicle characteristics

- Make
- Model
- Type
- Color



Understanding the differences between various ALPR technologies

When it comes to ALPR technology, solutions offerings can differ in big ways. Below, we're breaking down some of the key criteria you need to know about when considering your ALPR options.

Option 1 – Standard cameras paired with ALPR software

This ALPR solution allows you to purchase various standard IP cameras and combine that with ALPR software. Whether hosted in the cloud or on a local server, the ALPR application offers built-in algorithms that identify vehicles and license plates in the video frame and extract relevant data.

Reasons to appreciate this option:

- Flexibility in choosing the cameras
- Ability to leverage existing investments
- Simple path to basic ALPR functionality

The trade-off for analytics-based ALPR?

- Limited vehicle characteristics and behavior
- Diminished performance in low light conditions
- Lag in receiving vehicle data and hit notifications



Option 2 – Turnkey, purpose-built ALPR solution

A purpose-built ALPR system comes with high-performance, edge-based ALPR cameras and software specially designed for vehicle monitoring applications. Algorithms and data processing happens within the camera, and information is immediately sent to the ALPR application for viewing.

Reasons to appreciate this option:

- Engineered for vehicle identification and tracking
- Highest plate read accuracy at night and in all conditions
- Immediate access to more vehicle context and data

**Think there's a trade-off for
purpose-built ALPR?**

Think again.

You might believe that choosing a purpose-built ALPR solution limits your choices of hardware. But that's not always the case.

Choosing a provider that offers a purpose-built ALPR solution as well as the ability to leverage other types of cameras gives you the best of both worlds. It allows you to maximize the high-performance ALPR cameras in certain neighborhoods or for specific investigations, while still using other cameras to collect critical vehicle data across your city.

Key takeaway

Choosing the right technology helps you solve more crime at night

In our report, law enforcement professionals said that 60% of crimes involve a vehicle. This is why ALPR technology can be a massive force multiplier for your teams. In cases where vehicles are spotted, police officers and investigators can use ALPR solutions to uncover solid leads much faster than searching through standard video recordings.

While you can easily access basic ALPR capabilities using standard cameras and vehicle tracking software, purpose-built ALPR solutions offer you better performance, higher accuracy, and access to broader vehicle data.

Implementing the right purpose-built ALPR solution first, and then expanding coverage with existing city-owned devices offers you the best returns on investment over the long haul.

Up next, learn how a vehicle-centric investigation system that is powered by purpose-built ALPR technology and optimized for nighttime crime can help your team gather stronger leads in the darkest hours.



Introducing AutoVu Cloudrunner

AutoVu Cloudrunner is a vehicle-centric investigation system that helps law enforcement and public safety agencies leverage purpose-built ALPR to gather better nighttime leads and solve more crimes.

It includes high-performance ALPR cameras with edge-based analytics that deliver optimal performance and vital vehicle evidence 24 hours a day. That means even in total nighttime darkness or the worst weather conditions, AutoVu Cloudrunner delivers unbeatable license plate read accuracy and the highest quality images that clearly show the most important vehicle details. This ensures your officers can find the information they need to quickly apprehend suspects, close cases, and make tomorrow safer.



Here's what you need to know about Cloudrunner

- Even with no witnesses around, the ALPR cameras collect vehicle data 24/7
- Every vehicle within a camera's view is immediately captured and logged
- Clear nighttime license plate and context images remove any guesswork
- Intuitive filter functions simplify searches even when limited information is available
- Officers are immediately alerted to wanted vehicles any time of the day
- Other vehicle details such as location, type and color offer more vital leads



Tips on how you can start solving crimes 24/7

Set up a virtual nighttime stakeout to speed up investigations

With ALPR cameras on roadways, you can automatically capture license plates of vehicles entering or exiting specific areas or track wanted vehicles as perpetrators move around at night. The system immediately alerts you when specific vehicles are detected, so your team can act on them. This not only optimizes your resources but also ensures your team remains proactive, even during off-duty hours.

Collect more extensive vehicle evidence around the clock

According to our report, almost 30% of crimes involving vehicles have stolen plates. That's why it's vital for your team to be able to decipher other critical details such as the color, make, or model of a vehicle. Offering superior night vision, the AutoVu Cloudrunner system ensures your officers will always be able to export a full-color, high-quality image of the vehicle and retrieve vital vehicle facts including where the vehicle was headed and how fast it was going.

Start gathering vehicle evidence in less than one hour

Whether you want to monitor vehicle activity in known crime hotspots or need to collect more information for a specific investigation, you can start using AutoVu Clouddriver in fewer than 60 minutes. With plug-and-play cameras that require little configuration and an intuitive cloud-based portal, your team can quickly access reliable ALPR data when you need it most.

Compile cases using a digital evidence management system

A smooth investigation leads to faster criminal prosecutions and safer communities. Connecting your ALPR solution to a digital evidence management system such as Genetec Clearance™ simplifies your entire investigatory process. You can easily build cases by exporting vehicle data, reports, and other types of evidence into Clearance, and securely share it all with district attorney's offices via email. Unique user privileges and audit trails ensure evidence is always protected and court-ready.

Search through ALPR data any time, from anywhere

AutoVu Clouddriver is a cloud-based system that is accessible on any device including your phone or in-vehicle tablet. Your team can use an intuitive web application to search and filter through historical license plate reads. So no matter whether an officer gets a partial vehicle description after arriving on the scene, or a detective is building a case with multiple offenders at home or the precinct, your team can quickly identify and track potential suspects to move investigations forward.



“AutoVu Clouddriver provides us with high quality, accurate reads day and night. In pouring rain or total darkness.”

—Thomas Sexton

Investigator, Belle Meade Police Department



Get more violent offenders off your streets with purpose-built ALPR

When the sun goes down, acts of violent crimes spike. Though ALPR solutions help you detect and track vehicles, not all of them are optimized for nighttime or bad weather conditions. And while standard city-wide video systems are helpful, searching through recordings to find vehicle-related information can sap resources and slow investigations.

With AutoVu Cloudrunner, a vehicle-centric investigations system that is optimized for strong nighttime ALPR performance, your police officers and public safety personnel can work more efficiently to solve cases day or night. Whether they're trying to gather more leads using only a vague vehicle description or setting up a full stakeout on known suspects, your team can quickly deploy AutoVu Cloudrunner to collect better vehicle evidence and get criminals off your streets faster.

Ready to make tomorrow safer?

[Get a quote](#) for Cloudrunner

All quotes for this subscription-based solution include AutoVu Cloudrunner ALPR equipment, access to the cloud-based Cloudrunner user portal, remote configuration, and all maintenance and technical support.



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