FIGHT CRIME INSTEAD OF YOUR SYSTEM

Debunking the Myths of Multi-tenant Public Safety Solutions
A CASE FOR CHANGE

The United States alone has more than 17,000 state and local law enforcement agencies, most with their own core law enforcement systems. While the public safety landscape in the US is vast and complex, the challenges facing law enforcement are common. Budget freezes and on-going requirements to go leaner are now the de-facto reality. Law enforcement must delicately manage this fiscal reality against increasingly high public expectations.

In 2012, 51 percent of law enforcement agencies in the US said they are cutting back plans for technology initiatives due to budget cuts.

Law enforcement agencies can no longer afford their own system to support police operations. Criminal activity and people’s needs rarely fit neatly within organizational boundaries. Problems that require public safety interventions typically span the purview of multiple organizations. And even when the public can be neatly served within organizational borders, the movement of criminals and criminal activity cannot be confined. This calls for systems that promote and support collaboration and information sharing.

Disparate systems that prohibit the sharing of information and the maintenance of accurate records are a major problem that law enforcement agencies need to address, but progress is slow. The average state has more than 300 different records management or case management systems. Disparate, disconnected systems are expensive, form information silos, create information sharing challenges and require complex integration solutions.

Why multi-tenancy makes sense

In a multi-tenant environment, the majority of the system can be standardized across agencies—shared applications running on the same operating system, on the same hardware with the same data-storage mechanism. Such standardization makes sense, especially when 75 percent of processes required to track and respond to crimes are essentially the same.
LOOKING TO MULTI-TENANT SOLUTIONS FOR THE ANSWER

Technology advancements and the onset of the digital age have brought fundamental shifts in public safety service provision. Driven by the need to use public money more efficiently and spurred by a public who have become increasingly sophisticated, law enforcement agencies are continuously re-evaluating how they deliver services to improve public value. Organizationally, these drivers are leading to the search for efficiencies through shared information and technology that transforms the way they protect and serve – making the case for ‘multi-tenant’ integrated solutions.

A multi-tenant system allows disparate groups of users to have access to common functionality with common data structures, all managed by security and access controls to regulate who can see and update records—in other words, one system with multiple tenants.

Multi-tenant solutions offer a transformative approach for facilitating public-centric service delivery and a powerful means for driving operational efficiencies. They enable more effective responses to complex calls for service; support the achievement of efficiencies and reduce the cost-to-serve – ultimately delivering public service for the future.

BUSTING THE MYTHS

MYTH: It’s expensive.

FACT: One system for multiple tenants rather than each tenant buying, building and maintaining their own system represents a powerful opportunity to drive savings. Multiple tenants can band together to leverage their collective resources to procure, implement and maintain solutions that support the collective. When smartly implemented, savings can be reaped from the upfront consolidated procurement, and also downstream from reduced systems maintenance requirements.

MYTH: We’ll lose control.

FACT: A multi-tenant system allows for an insight driven approach in a controlled environment: different tenants access common functionality with common data structures, all managed by security and access controls to regulate who can see and update records. Tenants can retain ownership and maintain integrity of their data.

MYTH: It’s not secure.

FACT: A single records or case management system can serve multiple law enforcement agencies without jeopardizing the security and privacy of information. Within these systems, the tenants maintain autonomy and security of their proprietary data and information. Each tenant can further customize access rights and dictate restrictions for their users.

A LONG-TERM ANSWER FOR LINGERING CHALLENGES

Law enforcement agencies cannot continue to effectively enable a safe and secure nation and deliver public services for the future without solutions that break through fragmented information sharing and intelligence gathering barriers. Multi-tenant solutions will generate economies of scale, enable more effective information sharing and promote collaboration, driving mission productivity. Most importantly, it will give the police the information they need to keep their residents safe. Criminals will no longer be able to hide their true intentions from technology challenged agencies of the past. Multi-tenant solutions are the future for modern police agencies.
REFERENCES

1 Police Executive Research Forum, February 2013

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