

More arrests are made thanks to “screen shots”

Dutch Regional Police Force Groningen have implemented a new system for the whole Province to bring APBs to the attention of their officers in a greatly improved, more targeted manner. The innovative system significantly increases the chance that suspects are recognized and caught. Resulting in safer streets.

The system, called Eye-View and developed with software developer Netpresenter, continuously shows APBs on large plasma screens in secure locations in the police offices. These APBs include information on suspects and mug shots or sketches. The message can also contain video images, as in some instances these paint an even clearer picture. The same information can be viewed on the intranet and PDAs. In the future, APBs will also be shown on PCs, as a continuously updateable screensaver or, when urgent, as a pop-up message.



“The right information to the right people at the right time”

“Many detectives were struggling with the overload of information from intranet, briefings and e-mail. They were having trouble filtering the most important data, such as APBs, from that enormous amount of information,” says Roland Hiemstra, head bureau digital media at Regional Police Forces Groningen. “We searched for a system to get the right information to the right people at the right time. Netpresenter software does just that.”

“The strength of the solution is repetition of the message”

Showing APBs on large screens already has proven its worth during a trial phase in the Groningen-Haren district. Showing APBs on only a few large screens resulted in seven extra arrests in the first months. “The strength of the solution is recurrence of the message,” claims Hiemstra. “Faces and names of suspects are remembered better because officers see their APBs time and time again. They often tell me they were able to detain a suspect because they thought: ‘Wait a minute, I know that guy from Eye-View.’”

“The combination of words and images ensures messages are more easily remembered”

Every Eye-View message consists of a picture or composite sketch, along with key information on the suspect or missing person. A fixed template is used for each message, so officers simply need to fill out a form. “The combination of words and images ensure messages are remembered better. Individual slides only stay on a few moments at a time, so the information needs to be brief and factual,” explains Hiemstra.

The system works with color codes, so officers can instantly see what kind of information the slide contains and what priority it has. The messages refer to the case file or the officers on the case for more information. To ensure officers do not need to watch

the complete presentation in order to see whether new slides have been added, summary slides are included between every few slides.

Finally, the user can select the target group and publication method of each message with a few mouse clicks. For example, if there is an acute safety risk, the news will be published on all 23 screens in the region. However, if the slide contains an APB for someone likely to be in the city of Groningen, the message will only be displayed locally.

“Re-using the same information for different channels”

“The advantage of Netpresenter is that we can re-use the same information for different channels and the ease of use. Anyone that can send an e-mail, can use this system,” continues Hiemstra. “You can easily quantify the merits. That is why we have received a 50,000 euro grant from the Dutch Ministry of Internal Affairs for this project.”

Currently, expansion of the project with other media is being trialed. One of these trial projects is a six months’ PDA trial in Groningen City. Through a GPS link, officers receive location specific information on their PDA, varying from real-time information on incidents to locations that need extra attention in their local area (the so called hot spots) to relevant APBs. Officers can also see where their colleagues are. The force is currently trialing the added value of popup and screensaver messages on all PCs. Ultimately, the goal is to allow users to select the print media in which the news should appear as well.

Other Police Forces benefiting from Netpresenter technology include the Canadian Toronto Police Service, who use Netpresenter for a wide range of purposes from finding missing children to reminding ALL of their employees of their “Most Wanted List”. The Belgian GAOZ Police Service solved over 12 extra cases each year by using PC screens to broadcast information on unsolved cases. “But this system is not only interesting for police forces. There are many organizations that can optimize their information flow by implementing the right mix of push and pull technology,” concludes Hiemstra.

Dutch Regional Police Forces Groningen

Dutch Regional Police Forces Groningen is dedicated to uphold order, safety and quality of life in the 25 municipalities of Groningen Province. The forces employ about 1,600 professionals.

www.politie.nl/Groningen

Sector

Law enforcement

Challenge

To bring APBs under the attention of the officers in a better and more targeted manner.

Solution

To continuously show APBs on 23 large plasma screens in secure locations in the police offices (sometimes including video images), and on the intranet, PDAs and PC screens.

Benefits

An effective method to get the right information to the right person at the right time. During a trial with only a few screens, the number of arrests increased significantly.



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Netpresenter is a leading developer of innovative end-to-end visual broadcast solutions, such as emergency alert notification, enterprise communications and narrowcasting. It has offices in The Netherlands, US, UK and Germany. Its 1 million users can be found, among others, at Nokia, Sony, Jaguar and GE.