

RAMSEY COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Industry

County Government

Application

Criminal Justice

Business Solution

Integrated Windows based application utilizing a SQL RDBMS application integrated with multiple heterogeneous mainframe systems.

Architecture

Compound client/server architecture utilizing a SQL RDBMS application integrated with multiple heterogeneous mainframe systems.

Products & Services Used

MS/Windows 95
PowerBuilder 4.0
Oracle 7.0
Mitem/View 5.1
Intel desktops - Pentium III

Benefits

- Reduced duplicate data entry
- Increased accuracy
- Improved information sharing across county law enforcement & criminal justice systems
- Increased accuracy in retaining criminal history from 65% to 100%

Ramsey County, which includes the city of St. Paul, is the 2nd largest county in Minnesota with a population of 1/2 million. As in most local governments across the US, Ramsey County was facing ever constrained budgets for criminal justice at a time when the criminal activity in the County was increasing. Ramsey County's objective was to increase the effectiveness of law enforcement, detention, and court services by consolidating the diverse criminal information systems at the county and state levels while streamlining the process.

Environment

The process of issuing and managing warrants, bookings, court dispositions, and criminal history were handled in different information systems on disparate platforms. Sentencing for a convicted criminal has become more complex in recent years. The law which punishes repeat offenders for enhanceable crimes requires complete and accurate history of court dispositions for repeat offenders.

For example, warrants issued in the state of Minnesota are entered into the Honeywell BULL based TCIS (Total Court Information System) application and the IBM based CJIS (Minnesota Criminal Justice Information System).

The warrant, booking, and criminal history systems were all on separate computing platforms, each containing duplicate and inconsistent data (figure 1).

"The process of looking up individuals with outstanding warrants on the local or state system and their criminal history was very labor intensive and error prone," said Dave Fenner, Lieutenant, Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. Difficult or inconsistent surname spellings and aliases used by repeat offenders often required people to make judgment calls in matching an individual with

"Sharing criminal justice information among agencies has been the dream of policymakers and users in Ramsey County for several years. This project is a major step toward accomplishing that goal and will ultimately make Ramsey County a safer community."

Bob Fletcher
Sheriff, Ramsey County

past criminal history and outstanding warrants. Sharing data with the state and nationwide criminal justice systems was a manual process with inconsistent results. When final court dispositions were issued, a batch printout was forwarded to the county where individuals had to look up past bookings to update criminal history with court judgments. Only about 65% of the cases were correctly matched.

When a person is being booked into a county jail, county personnel check for outstanding state or federal warrants. Determining whether individuals had outstanding warrants or criminal history required the use of cryptic commands and multiple systems. Difficult or different spellings of new and repeat offenders using aliases required people to make judgment calls in matching an individual with past criminal history as well as doing repetitive searches.

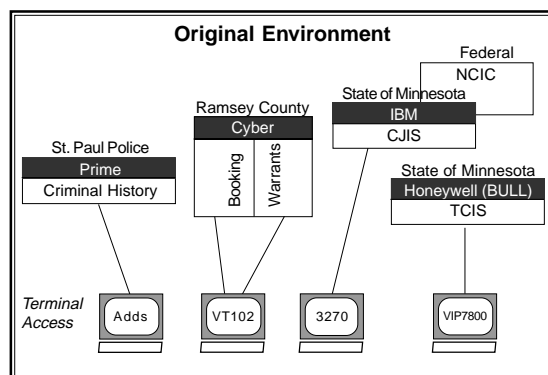


figure 1

Overall Objectives

- ◆ SAFER COMMUNITY (DECREASED CRIME RATE)
- ◆ 100% DISPOSITION TRACKING (% BOOKED AND POSTED TO CRIMINAL HISTORY)
- ◆ 100% APPREHENSION OF SUSPECTS (WARRANT CLEARANCE RATE)
- ◆ COURT SYSTEM INTEGRATION (WITH INCIDENT TRACKING)
- ◆ INTEGRATION WITH OTHER CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES
- ◆ 100% VICTIM NOTIFICATION ON RELEASES
- ◆ REDUCED REPORTING COSTS
- ◆ REDUCED DATA ENTRY (SINGLE ENTRY) REDUNDANCY AND MANUAL PROCESSING

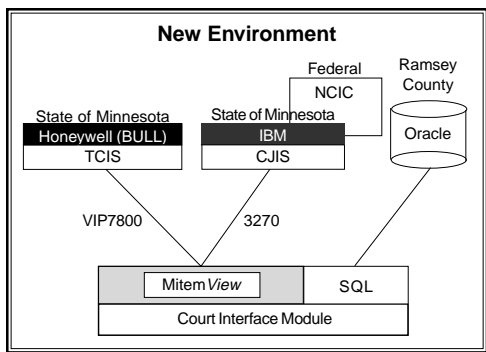


figure 2

Project Objectives

Ramsey County wanted to provide comprehensive and more timely information to the State of Minnesota. Users needed a logical view of the information without knowing or caring which system it resided in or how to get it. Improving accuracy and reducing the time and effort County employees spent entering redundant data

across several systems and eliminating subjective judgments from the process were key objectives.

Approach

Computer Task Group (CTG) was selected by Ramsey County through a formal bid process to design and develop an integrated criminal justice system to meet Ramsey County's user objectives. The Cyber which managed bookings and warrants was replaced with a new Ramsey County Criminal Justice System using an Oracle database.

The new system integrates data from multiple systems and eliminates redundant data entry. The following criminal justice activities are supported:

- BOOKINGS & JAIL MANAGEMENT
- CRIMINAL HISTORY
- WARRANTS
- CIVIL PROCESS

"Integration in the Criminal Justice industry is complex. There are several legacy systems integration points that are required to facilitate a comprehensive CJIS.

Our job was to effectively build a single system that would serve our customer so they could better serve theirs -- the citizens of Ramsey county," said Mike Engel, Engagement Manager, Computer Task Group. In order to simplify the process and integrate the new county criminal information

system with CJIS and TCIS, CTG recommended MitemView® as a non-invasive approach (figure 2). "The choice of MitemView was driven by our past experiences and the fact that MitemView is the only tool of its kind in the industry that could be counted on to bridge the gap between legacy and new systems while meeting the service level requirements for performance, availability and reliability," said Engel.

Results

Employees now enter booking information into the in the Court Interface Module or CIM (figure 3), attaching the booking to a master-name and entering address information. Court employees using CIM initiate hearings. During this process, CIM automatically enters plaintiff's data into TCIS using MitemView. TCIS automatically assigns a case number that is synchronized with CIM and a hearing is created on the court docket. Following a court hearing, judgments that include fines, community service, and jail time are entered into CIM. Warrants are recorded in CIM which updates TCIS, the State's Criminal Justice Information System – CJIS, and the national NCIC using MitemView without the user re-keying the information. By using MitemView to synchronize warrant, booking, and judgement information with the TCIS, Ramsey County has seen the completeness and accuracy of maintaining criminal history increase from 65% to 100%.

"The new system greatly streamlines the process of dealing with warrants, criminal history, court dispositions, and jail management. This new architecture will be the foundation on which we build future integration projects at Ramsey County."

Dave Fenner
Lieutenant
Support Services Unit
Ramsey County Sheriff's
Department

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Court Interface Module

figure 3