



## Siemens Helps Sheriff's Department Capture Efficiencies.

Advanced Customer Solutions

**Custom applications arrest waste; free manpower.**

### SITUATION ANALYSIS

Orange County Sheriff's Department in California is the fifth largest sheriff's department in the nation, with close to 4,000 employees scattered throughout a 950-square-mile area. As if that wasn't enough responsibility, the Department also serves as the backup site for the California State Law Enforcement System, should there be a catastrophic failure at the Department of Justice in Sacramento.

As the man responsible for ensuring that these critical law enforcement functions operate smoothly and within budget, Sheriff Michael S. Carona is always looking for ways to make his department more efficient. So it was not surprising when he sent out an RFP to upgrade several of the Orange County Sheriff's Department's 15-year-old legacy systems. A long-time proponent of technology, Sheriff Carona has led the department to become one of the technology leaders in the nation. And with the current RFP, he hoped to not only bring his systems up to par for Y2K, but also to improve efficiencies in outdated processes.

Captain Ron Wilkerson of Orange County Sheriff's Department was given command of the RFP project. A 24-year department veteran, he has been a captain for the past five. In addition, he sits on a committee that is designing what the future of California law enforcement technology will be – through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System. His long history with the department and technology experience made him ideally suited to evaluate bid contenders.

### BUSINESS PROBLEM/SOLUTION

The challenges of the RFP were considerable, as the department had seven different tracking processes – some legacy, some manual – that they wished to upgrade, ideally under a single platform. After an extensive selection process involving up to 20 different vendors, the choice was clear: Siemens' Advanced Customer Solutions (ACS) professional services organization.

"We formed a committee of technical, management and procurement specialists to evaluate the various proposals," says Wilkerson. "And Siemens ACS offered the bid that most closely met the requirements that were specified."

ACS recommended a customized Remedy® Action Response System® business application that could accommodate seven distinct and separate functions using a single base platform. Says Wilkerson, "We thought it was a unique solution, and we were very pleased with the recommendation to utilize a single platform."

**Research and experience make the difference.**

ACS' decision to choose Remedy was not made lightly. Arnold A. Noche, the Siemens ACS Project Manager during the selection process, says, "As consultants, we work hard to understand the customer's business before we even begin structuring a solution." With this business philosophy in mind, Noche met with 38

individuals at 18 locations throughout Orange County to research the requirements of the project before coming up with his recommendation.

According to Noche, ACS chose Remedy primarily because of its open architecture, which allowed the developers to interface with Orange County's legacy systems, as well as introduce new applications in the future. "Remedy's open architecture solved that problem," says Noche. "And because of its versatility, we were able to build all seven applications on a single platform – which was ideal since another of Orange County's objectives was to keep everything in a centralized server."

In addition, ACS was able to get the applications up and running quickly, since base applications already existed in the Remedy suite. "However," says Noche, "I don't believe in making a customer change their business processes to accommodate an application. It should be the other way around. The Remedy packaged applications were mainly tailored for businesses that didn't already have an existing process. That's where the integration and customization came in. The team at ACS had the experience to build these custom applications to fit the customer's existing business processes so they could continue conducting business as usual."

### Seven solutions streamline operations.

The seven applications developed by ACS on the Remedy platform went a long way toward meeting Sheriff Carona's objectives of enhancing efficiency.

**Internal Affairs.** Before the ACS solution was initiated, Internal Affairs maintained confidential information about complaints and



investigations on a closely guarded Microsoft Excel file, which was shared among the dozen or so investigators as needed. Today, thanks to ACS, the Internal Affairs department has their own secure computer network, allowing them to share files safely, securely and conveniently.

**Mooring Tracking.** Orange County's Pacific Ocean frontage makes it a popular place for recreational boaters, and the hundreds of public moorings are all managed by the County. As Noche describes it, "This network of public moorings is essentially like a series of parking lots. Residents obtain permits to moor their boats on specific moorings. The application we designed had to accommodate the database for permit holders as well as a billing system. The moorings also require periodic maintenance, which had to be tracked as well."

Before the ACS solution was implemented, all these records were kept manually. Now it's all automated. "And because all the information is now on an integrated database," says Captain Wilkerson, "it's much easier for us to locate the records we need to do our job effectively. For instance, it's sped up the process of retrieving and circulating photographs of a particular boat assigned to a mooring if we have a theft."

**Community Feedback.** Orange County Sheriff's Department has what Captain Wilkerson believes is a unique program for soliciting community feedback – a program the department has run for about 15 years now. In the past, contact information was manually extracted from dispatches. Then the department would randomly mail surveys to those who had interactions with law enforcement officers. When the surveys were returned, the information was manually entered into a computer system using FoxPro and reports were generated to review overall performance.

With the new ACS solution, says Noche, the entire process is automated. The Remedy application taps into the dispatch database to form a mailing list, questionnaires are automatically generated and mailed, and the incoming questionnaires are exported into the statistical reports that are needed by the department to measure the overall effectiveness of deputies within a specific area.

**Harbor Patrol, Vehicle Maintenance Tracking and Aircraft Tracking.** As Orange County encompasses over 42 miles of Pacific Ocean coastline, its law enforcement operations include an extensive Harbor Patrol, as well as a fleet of motor vehicles and helicopters. "We do our own maintenance on harbor patrol boats and aircraft," says Wilkerson. And keeping track of all these various vehicles – plus their scheduled maintenance, engine hours

and mileage, the flight logs of their pilots, and parts inventory and ordering – used to be a labor-intensive chore.

The old applications, written in Microsoft Access and dBase, seriously limited what they could do. Says Noche, “They really wanted to have a full-blown asset management system that captured the daily flight logs of their aircraft, the scheduled maintenance and repairs of their aircraft, boats and vehicles, and their inventory items. Using the Remedy system, we were able to move them out of their legacy system into something more scalable and robust.”

“Now,” says Wilkerson, “if we have to rebuild a motor, our maintenance crew can easily check to see what parts we have in inventory before they get started. That saves time and money, and lets us provide better service to the public.”

**Property Tracking.** Orange County stores close to half a million records within 20,000 storage locations, and collects between 150 and 300 new pieces of property per day at five substations. These pieces of property might be evidence from the scene of a crime, lost and found belongings, material held for safekeeping, or property that belongs to inmates.

According to Captain Wilkerson, evidence in particular has to be handled in a very specific manner. “It has to not only be tracked, we also have to know every time it moves from one place to another, and who touches it. If this chain of evidence is broken, you jeopardize losing a criminal case.”

Under the old system, officers would hand-write a property tag when submitting an item, then place the item and affixed tag in a locker. The Property Tracking staff would then enter the information from the handwritten property tag into the computer. Because the 15-year-old software system was hosted on a mainframe, anytime someone wanted to make a change or conduct a search, they had to find someone who understood how to use the database. This slowed down the item retrieval process and required specially trained staff. What’s more, when a judge asked to have all the evidence for a particular case in his/her courtroom in a short time period, it was often difficult, if not impossible, to locate and collect it quickly.

The ACS solution – which integrated the Remedy system, a barcode label printer, a property tag printer and a portable scanner – simplified the process considerably. Remedy terminals were installed in each of the five booking substations. When a deputy



came in with an item to submit, they entered the information directly on the computer, hit save, and out came a preprinted property tag and a set of barcode labels.

With the ACS solution in place, when a judge requests evidence, the Property Tracking department can find a piece of property and conduct queries very quickly and efficiently. ACS also interfaced the system with the District Attorney’s system so if cases were adjudicated – due to an inmate’s death or statute of limitations, for instance – the Property Tracking department would know to release that property for public auctions.

Says Wilkerson, “We have five different property storage facilities located throughout the county, so to be able to locate where that one piece of property resides is very important. And to be able to get it to court in an hour, as we can now, is extremely impressive. It really helped our efficiency and productivity.”

### **Professional management from beginning to end.**

The new applications obviously went a long way towards improving the internal processes at Orange County Sheriff’s Department. But what about the process of implementing the new applications themselves?

According to Wilkerson, “My first impression of the ACS staff was confirmed throughout the entire project. Everyone was very professional, and their project plan included everything you look for to make sure that a project is going to have a successful conclusion.”

The transition from ACS to in-house maintenance of the applications went smoothly as well, according to Wilkerson. “We took ACS’s advice and sent some of our staff to get certified in the Remedy product and some of the development products

that are associated with it. That turned out to be our saving grace. You always have changes and modifications you want to put in effect. And thanks to that training, we've been able to maintain and modify our applications on our own. In fact, we have since used some of the custom components ACS developed to build a department-wide inventory tracking system. It's going to be a tremendous savings to us because until now, we had to manually conduct our annual inventory."

Going far beyond just software development, the ACS team provided a thorough end-to-end solution that gave Orange County everything it needed to implement and maintain its efficient new systems, including:

- Solution requirement specifications
- Application development
- Systems integration
- Hardware recommendations
- Data migration
- IT and end-user training
- Project management

## RESULTS

### Long-lasting benefits you can take to the bank.

The seven projects were all completed in time to meet the County's Y2K deadline, and helped push the Orange County Sheriff's Department even further to the forefront of law enforcement technology. According to Wilkerson, "I'm not aware of any other sheriff's department that has this combination of applications from a single vendor. Today, after implementing the Siemens ACS solutions, we have a versatility we didn't have before. We're light years ahead of where we were just three or four years ago."

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The Siemens solutions have helped Orange County in other ways as well. "Our department really maximizes our manpower," says Wilkerson. "And thanks to the ACS solution, I haven't had to hire more people, whereas I probably would have otherwise. That's a tremendous advantage to us." As for the department's staff, says Wilkerson, "When I ask them what they think of the new system, they say it works great, we don't have a problem with it. And that is truly a tremendous endorsement in this business."

And now for the big question: If he had to make this decision over again, would Captain Wilkerson still choose Siemens ACS and the Remedy solution? "Yes I would, because it works. I deal with a wide variety of vendors, some more successfully than others, and this has been a very successful venture for us. The product works, the company backs its product, they do what they say they're going to do, and they do it all at the price they say they're going to do it for. You can't beat that."

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