

**Leveraging
Information
Sharing to
Improve State
& Local Public
Safety**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive Summary

The ability to quickly and effectively share information across the criminal justice system can be a matter of life or death. State and local justice and public safety agencies require that accurate and complete information is delivered to the right people at the right time. When information fails to arrive, arrives late, is incomplete or contains errors, the consequences can be catastrophic. Ineffective information sharing can lead to everything from a warrant being denied, to a case being dropped, to an improper release of a dangerous prisoner. These outcomes are dangerous to public safety and largely increase the risk to the public. Additionally, this ineffectiveness can cost agencies significant money in the long run.

The main barrier to mitigating this risk is inadequate integration of information technology systems. Each justice and public safety entity has its own technology system that contributes information to the criminal justice process. Most of these systems, however, cannot efficiently talk to one another and reconfiguring all of them is not a viable solution.

In order for agencies to break out of their information siloes without reconfiguring their systems, they need a solution that gives them real-time access to information they need, when they need it.

To learn more about how public safety agencies can adopt an information-sharing solution that ensures public safety, mitigates risk and improves collaboration, GovLoop partnered with Software AG, a company that specializes in enterprise software. David Taylor, Vice President of State and Local Solutions at Software AG, discussed how public safety agencies can overcome this information-sharing challenge in a recent interview with GovLoop.

In the following pages, you'll learn why information siloes are hindering public safety, how agencies can overcome this without reconfiguring IT systems and how to implement an information-sharing solution at your justice or public safety agency.

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THE CURRENT STATE OF INFORMATION SHARING IN PUBLIC SAFETY

In practice the criminal justice process often looks something like this:



A reported crime is investigated by the local police, the county sheriff or the state police.



From this initial investigation, a police report is generated, an arrest made and the report is reviewed by the prosecutor's office.



If the prosecutor decides to file charges, the accused then moves through the court system, where responsibilities range from prosecuting to defending the accused to judging and sentencing.



If the accused is convicted, he or she proceeds through the corrections, parole and or probation system.

The Current State of Information Sharing in Public Safety

Each department and agency taking part in this process needs information from the other entities to make effective decisions. This is difficult to achieve, however, because many departments have built and are operating on a technology system that is independent of others. This means that individual systems can't always talk to one another, requiring many data points to be entered multiple times.

These manual processes waste time and money while also increasing opportunities for error. They also don't allow for practitioners to proactively analyze data and identify critical trends and changes in the criminal justice system as they emerge.

Lack of information at any point during this process can have devastating consequences. "Let's say there is a prison and a jail within a state, but their systems can't communicate," Taylor said. "If someone is transferred from the jail to prison, how does each department know the mental health history or the legal information of this individual? They don't know whether he is schizophrenic and needs certain medication or if he's a dangerous offender, because there is no integration of the health systems and the justice system."

The policing, courts, corrections, parole, and health and human services systems each play a unique but important role in the justice process. The common denominator for each entity in the criminal justice system is that they need access to data from across each system in order to make the most informed decisions at each step of the process.

To accomplish this, agencies need a more modern approach to information sharing.

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**BREAKING OUT
OF SILOES**

In order to overcome the information-sharing challenge in the justice process, public safety agencies must break out of their siloed IT systems and begin leveraging a solution that allows each system to talk to the others.

Traditionally, accomplishing this would require completely reconfiguring each system, a time-consuming and costly endeavor because there are so many agencies in the public safety enterprise. One way to do this without complete reconfiguration is utilizing a software-based integration platform that acts as a “connector” between different agency systems. Doing so provides an easy way to get the right information into the right hands at any point in the justice process.

Breaking Out of Siloes

In addition to information sharing across the justice system, an integration platform provides:

Real-time monitoring and reporting:

By incorporating data from all data sources within the criminal justice system, an integration platform allows agencies to see a complete picture of data to make informed decisions.

Accessibility:

By using an integration platform to access data, you can reduce manual tasks, duplicate entries and opportunities for error. Additionally, it is much easier to track individuals and cases across organizations and automate information exchanges between agencies and systems.

Predictive analysis:

A platform approach allows agencies to use statistical analysis techniques to detect variance in processes and recognize potential problems before they occur and when there is still time to prevent them from having a negative impact on the enterprise.

These capabilities allow each arm of the justice system to focus on its individual role while considering data from across the enterprise. For example, an investigator can focus on gathering all the relevant data and analyzing it to solve her crime while being confident that she has a complete picture of the data she needs.

Leveraging a platform approach to business processes in the criminal justice arena is critical to fostering inter-agency collaboration and real-time decision-making to ensure public safety.

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**SOFTWARE AG'S
JUSTICE
INTEGRATION
SOLUTION**



Security is baked in and is a priority for us, making it perfect for the justice community, which must comply with standards related to the exchange of justice information.

David Taylor, Vice President of State and Local Solutions at Software AG

Software AG's Justice Integration Solution

Agencies looking to break out of their IT system siloes should look to adopt a platform that allows them to leverage the aforementioned capabilities. Software AG offers a standards-based solution toolkit that provides fast integration and a real-time view of data.

Software AG's toolkit is a basic integration engine that offers other components like its Digital Business Platform, webMethods Integration Platform and Business Process Suite that users can plug and play into the framework. While the toolkit is a collection of solutions, the most valuable to the criminal justice enterprise are the robust integration capabilities and the single source of truth approach to data management.

Robust integration allows criminal justice agencies to effectively manage data across disparate and heterogeneous systems. This allows agencies to create an agile enterprise while simultaneously maximizing IT investments.

By taking a single source of truth approach to data management, criminal justice agencies can avoid instances of conflicting information. The solution unifies and manages reference data, providing consistent and comprehensive access across the system. By consolidating data from different sources into a unified data model, the solution allows each justice organization access to the correct version of data.

"The toolkit is designed to make solving justice system problems easier," Taylor said. "It's not so much of a solution where you unwrap the box, plug it in and it solves your problem." Instead, the toolkit brings together capabilities like real-time monitoring, single source of truth, robust integration and predictive analytics to allow agencies in the justice system to effectively leverage data.

One tool that is particularly useful for the justice system is the Digital Business Platform. The platform aims to enhance, rather than replace, your existing core IT systems by improving things like analytics and decisions, processes, integration and in-memory data.

With the Digital Business Platform, agencies can tailor the solution to fit their unique needs. "It's essentially a set of tools and different programs that can fit into the framework how an organization needs them to," Taylor said. "Depending on what the agency wants to do, they only have to buy the pieces they really need."

By leveraging different parts of the toolkit, justice and public safety organizations can seamlessly start accessing and leveraging data from across the justice enterprise.

Additionally, the toolkit integrates security into the solutions. "Software AG is proprietary software, so the code is our own," Taylor said. "Security is baked in and is a priority for us, making it perfect for the justice community, which must comply with standards related to the exchange of justice information." With Software AG's toolkit, public safety and law enforcement agencies can share information quickly and accurately through an easy-to-build, use and amend platform. Their solutions have helped law enforcement and public safety entities across the United States, from San Diego to Georgia.

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CASE STUDIES



Case Study: San Diego Association of Governments

In San Diego, more than 11,000 law enforcement officers, adjudicators, investigators and analysts at over 80 agencies rely on the Automated Regional Justice Information System (ARJIS) to do their jobs effectively and ensure public safety.

ARJIS works to provide access to real-time criminal and justice information to agencies throughout the San Diego area. As a result, it is critical that the system is leveraging the most up-to-date technology. Recently, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) wanted to expand ARJIS's capabilities by improving how information was integrated, shared and re-purposed.

This is where Software AG came in. Through the components of its platform solution, it helped SANDAG take ARJIS from an expensive, hard-coded mainframe based system into a more cost-efficient, process-central service-oriented architecture.

In order to do this, SANDAG employed Software AG's webMethods Integration Server to move processes off of the mainframe to a web-based solution. By reusing existing logic and leveraging modern interfaces, SANDAG was able to preserve its IT investments and make the ARJIS solution easier to use. Additionally, SANDAG leveraged Software AG's consulting services for support in creating the architecture, installation, configuration, testing, implementation and training.

Leveraging elements of Software AG's solution toolkit allowed the justice and public safety agencies in San Diego to have unfettered access to data while improving operational efficiency and public safety and reducing costs.



Case Study: Georgia Technology Authority.

The Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) manages the delivery of IT infrastructure to executive branch agencies AG's webMethods platform as well as its Business Process Management Suite to facilitate collaboration in agencies at the front end of their projects to quickly and effectively create a solution.

With webMethods as its main platform, GTA can offer Data Sharing Services (DSS), which allows agencies to share real-time interoperable data. Through the DSS, agencies can focus more on streamlining their services and meeting citizen needs and less on whether they have access to the data they need.

Leveraging solutions in Software AG's toolkit allows Georgia's public safety enterprise to share information on things like stolen vehicles, driver's license history, criminal history and the sex offenders' registry. Information is exchanged on everything from pardons and parole releases, vehicle tags and stolen vehicles and between the public safety and health and human services enterprises to make better decisions faster.

Through the Business Process Management Suite, GTA is able to better collaborate with other agencies and promote more effective project management. For example, GTA developers can create dynamic what-if scenarios to see how data will be used before integration construction begins. Once a business process is locked in, developers can deploy the model in one simple process.

Ultimately, GTA has provided consolidated connectivity for 20 different agencies and facilitated over 700,000 daily data exchanges. This connectivity has allowed GTA to save money, improve decision-making and collaboration, and deliver new services to citizens faster.

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CONCLUSION

Looking forward, it's critical that the justice and public safety system has access to the data it needs to keep the public safe. While the criminal justice enterprise faces unique challenges in achieving this, it is possible.

Leveraging a platform-based approach can greatly improve data visibility across the justice enterprise, allowing agencies to share necessary information and decrease threats to public safety. Delivering a single view of real-time data to support justice and public safety decisions doesn't have to be difficult or costly.

A comprehensive approach like Software AG's justice and public safety toolkit can help your agency gain access to the information you need, when you need it, to ensure public safety throughout your jurisdiction.

Conclusion

About Software AG

Software AG helps agencies with their digital transformation. With Software AG's Digital Business Platform, innovative companies can interact with their customers and bring them on new 'digital' journeys, promote unique value propositions, and create diverse and exciting new business opportunities. The Digital Business Platform is built on decades of uncompromising software development, IT experience and technological leadership.

To learn more, visit government.softwareag.com.

About GovLoop

GovLoop's mission is to "connect government to improve government." We aim to inspire public-sector professionals by serving as the knowledge network for government. GovLoop connects more than 250,000 members, fostering cross-government collaboration, solving common problems and advancing government careers. GovLoop is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a team of dedicated professionals who share a commitment to connect and improve government.

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