



CASE STUDY: City of Seattle Justice Information System (SeaJIS)

ONLINE TURNS THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE TO DELIVER INFORMATION INTEGRATION TO THE CITY OF SEATTLE



The City of Seattle is the Pacific Northwest's largest city with a population of nearly 600,000 City and 4 million urban area residents. The task of maintaining order and safety for this population falls to the City's justice and public safety (J&PS) community, including the Seattle Police and Fire Departments, Seattle Law Department, and Seattle Municipal Court.

A CITY'S SECURITY AT STAKE

For Police Officers on the street, for jails taking in potentially dangerous criminals, or for courts making legal decisions, quick access to accurate and complete information is critical for protecting both the public safety defenders and the citizens they serve.

The City of Seattle also needed to deal with the larger scale efforts to increase security across the country. Backlogs of local, state and federal initiatives, including those from US Homeland Security, were demanding the timely transfer of criminal justice information across agencies at all levels of government.

The City recognized that the state of information sharing across its agencies was not up to handling the new levels of security required.

OVERVIEW

Challenge

With non-integrated information systems threatening public safety and local, state and federal government initiatives calling for the improved distribution of criminal justice information, the City of Seattle needed a strategic approach to the integration and management of information. The Seattle Justice Information System (SeaJIS) program was established to facilitate interoperability and information integration amongst the City's J&PS agency community as well as with these agencies municipal, county, state, and federal level partners.

Solution

Online developed and deployed an advanced information sharing framework based on the principles of service-oriented architecture (SOA) and built on Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) technology. The result effectively integrates and streamlines the flow of information being used by Seattle's law, safety and justice communities – giving them the information that they need securely and reliably.

Benefits

- Time and cost savings of reduced manual processes.
- Faster processes with immediate access to more complete criminal justice information.
- Increased speed and quality of service thanks to real-time data exchange.
- Improved agency collaboration and public safety with more effective use of shared information.
- Future scalability with a common data format.

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SPEED BUMPS ON THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

With each agency maintaining its own records and databases, the duplication of both information and efforts was high and the potential for the loss of information always existed. Turning information into knowledge usable on the front lines was an uphill battle. Efforts to integrate information required manual compilations and cross-referencing, slowing down a process that relies on quick response.

In the few cases where capabilities existed to share information across agencies, they involved point-to-point connections that were difficult to maintain and reuse. In most cases, transferring information involved manually collecting data and sharing it in batches using slow processes with little security.

While internal inefficiencies were the most obvious result of these issues, they were also hindering the quality of service that the agencies could provide - inevitably translating into reduced safety for the people of Seattle.

LOCAL GUIDES FOR HIRE

The Seattle Justice Information System (SeaJIS) program was established to facilitate inter-operation and information integration amongst the City's J&PS agency community as well as with these agencies' municipal, county, state, and federal level partners. Online Business Systems' Justice and Public Safety practice was engaged by SeaJIS to implement an advanced information sharing system that provides standardized and secured integrated data exchange across the agencies served by SeaJIS.

THE LONG (AND INFORMED) ARM OF THE LAW

By providing an enterprise-scale integration solution based on the principles of Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) and using Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) technology, SeaJIS seamlessly integrates the agencies' disparate applications. The applications and systems used by the various agencies are now linked together with a reliable, secure, and high performance infrastructure that facilitates agency interoperation through real-time information sharing.

"Online's knowledge of the criminal justice system combined with their methods and skills with integration technology have given us a flexible foundation for the exchange of information with our justice partners. Online has also helped us develop our own skills and provided us with the methodologies that we need for the future development of our law, safety and justice partner integration initiatives."

– Diane Mathson
The City of Seattle
SeaJIS Program Manager

"The return on this investment can be seen in cost benefits from staff hours saved through the improvement in the exchange of data as well as an overall improvement in the quality of service due to more complete and timely information sharing. ... As an example to other projects within the City, SeaJIS stands out as a model of successful Enterprise Application Integration. As it grows, this project will also serve as a center of excellence for other City Departments and Agencies to develop best practices around Service-Oriented Architecture, inter-agency cooperation, business integration, and the use of standards based technology implementations."

– Conclusion – Business Case for the
Seattle Justice Information System

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National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) and/or Global Justice XML Data Model (GJX-DM) standards-compliant message exchanges flow smoothly across the agencies, improving their ability to coordinate their public service. For example, the SeaJIS ESB connects Seattle's Municipal Court and Law Department systems with a suite of message exchanges supporting the operational workflow related to out-of-custody case initiation, court order, and court case information. The SeaJIS ESB also connects the City with King County to share electronic booking (eBooking) information between the County jail systems, Seattle Police Department, Municipal Court, and Law Department.

A CITY UNDER SeaJIS

SeaJIS provides real-time data exchanges that eliminate redundant data entry, errors, and reduces report and technical interface development, maintenance, and redundant databases. This enables Seattle public safety organizations to more easily participate in and benefit from integration programs of other municipalities, counties, states and federal agencies. Other City departments will also benefit from SeaJIS's standard infrastructure when they explore designing their own SOAs. SeaJIS is a perfect working example of how integration solutions can scale horizontally to embrace new partner agencies and information exchanges.

SeaJIS was implemented using a proven integration implementation methodology that made deployment quick and clean and that enables SeaJIS staff to easily manage future integrations. The rollout of SeaJIS was supported by a City employee knowledge transfer plan for future maintenance. Armed with this knowledge, SeaJIS staff are now positioned to maximize the effectiveness of SeaJIS and ensure that its benefits can be extended into the future.

PEACE OF MIND FOR THOSE MINDING THE PEACE

The benefits of SeaJIS are ultimately not just measured in costs and time. SeaJIS has revolutionized Seattle's entire criminal justice system, improving overall speed, quality and reliability. Seattle is now a working model for other cities looking to effectively integrate internal and external public safety agencies - and for organizations of all types looking for a secure and reliable way to share information across departments.

ONLINE SERVICES USED

The solution utilized Online's services in...

- Service Oriented Architecture
- Integration Services
- Sonic ESB

ABOUT ONLINE BUSINESS SYSTEMS

For more than 20 years, Online has been increasing productivity and innovation for our clients through planning, transforming, and managing their IT environments. We achieve this through our people who not only have their finger on the pulse of technology, but also have an astute understanding of how business works. It is the combination of our people, our methodologies, and our culture that enables us to deliver results – without compromise – to clients across the Public and Private sectors. As a result we are trusted advisors, guiding clients in the Health Care, Financial Services, Energy, and Justice & Public Safety industries.

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