



Digital document management helps San Francisco Police put an end to time-stealing paperwork

Police work can sure look glamorous when TV and movie stars chase bad guys on the streets of San Francisco. But for veteran SFPD Lieutenant Jack Ballentine, the reality was a massive paper chase with stacks and stacks of police reports waiting to be indexed, photocopied and distributed. Police reports by the thousands were clogging the wheels of justice and creating delays in readying criminal cases for court.

Ballentine’s staff was dwindling due to retirements, and it was clearly time for the 150-year-old law enforcement agency to get smarter with technology. He spearheaded an initiative to bring in document management software from Laserfiche®, with help from local Laserfiche reseller Technical Consultants International (TCi).

Ballentine says, "We greatly appreciate the outstanding service and swift way Laserfiche has handled our operational concerns." That review comes after Laserfiche has only been on the job for a few weeks and only in the records room at headquarters. The SFPD is starting off slowly as it attempts to groom decades of data in electronic and paper forms into something more manageable. There’s lots of room for improvement for their record-keeping. It’s almost as paper-based now as it was 30 years ago. Each day, the SFPD’s 2,300 officers add 1,500 new pages of reports, which quickly accumulate into a massive paper problem. Every month the records room alone goes through an entire pallet of paper.

So far, Laserfiche is used as an electronic data bank. In the past eight years, the department has indexed and imaged nine million pages of police reports. Untold millions more pages of paper reports are in filing cabinets throughout the department.

An incident report is the initial item in what can be a very long chain of documents—supplemental reports, evidence, statements and more. Most of it starts out as paper but must be digitized right away for distribution to officers, attorneys and judges.

In San Francisco, most police reports are written on PCs installed in the 10 district police stations around the city. Sounds good so far, but then they’re printed out and hand-delivered to the records room, where they are photocopied and distributed on paper to the investigations bureau and the district attorney.

Organization Profile

The City of San Francisco is the fourteenth-largest city in America, with over 740,000 residents. Serving the city are the more than 2,300 officers of the San Francisco Police Department.

Situation

Proliferating police reports were impeding everyday police work and creating delays in getting criminal cases ready for court. The SFPD needed to streamline its records-keeping model and improve information access without hiring additional staff.

Solution

With help from their reseller, the SFPD implemented a Laserfiche solution and immediately began digitizing its millions of pages of police reports. A new records management model is in the build stage, and soon, documents will be made available via the secure public safety intranet.

Benefits

- Laserfiche search capabilities nearly eliminate time spent searching through police reports, records and supporting documentation.
- Information is more readily accessible to officers, judges and attorneys.
- The SFPD has reclaimed physical storage space and lowered the cost of reproducing documents.

Laserfiche Components

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Web Access™  
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Lieutenant Jack Ballentine  
San Francisco Police

About Laserfiche

A resource for over 23,000 public- and private-sector organizations around the world since 1987, Laserfiche creates simple, elegant document management solutions that help organizations run smarter. From streamlining digital records management to automating the agenda process, Laserfiche helps improve efficiency while integrating seamlessly within any environment.

Your Next Step

Visit [laserfiche.com/gov](http://laserfiche.com/gov) to get a free white paper on implementing an electronic document management system. Or call **(800) 985-8533** to get answers now.

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