

University Police at Albany-Suny Incident Tracking Software Development for the Small Department

Caught between increasing reporting requirements and no concurrent increase in staffing the University Police at the University at Albany, New York choose to look toward technology to cover the gap. Budgetary constraints forced us to look outside of the quick fixes available in the form of pre-packaged incident management software. Trading a quick implementation for budgetary control, the development of the program was stretched out over two years with a number of corrections made and applications added over the course of the program's development. What started out as a process driven primarily by budgetary necessities quickly moved into a project where all members had input into nearly all aspects of the program's development. This process increased the employee "buy in" and also allowed for members, particularly those less comfortable with computing environments, to develop facility with the program at a pace more comfortable for them. The program naturally evolved to fit our department's particular needs and situation. We found that as a small department we were in a unique position. We turned the negatives of our small department status into positives by turning our small budget and small staff into a flexible budget and flexible staff. We took advantage of being a small department by engaging all of our members in the project. Our size also made managing, training, and promulgating updates a relatively quick and easy process. The result is an outstanding platform for incident management that handles all of our unique needs and greatly assists us in making our department activities both more productive from a management stand point and more transparent from the standpoint of the community we serve.