WHAT POLICE CAN LEARN FROM COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES

Utilising and Adopting Technology to Serve and Protect More Efficiently

According to the Home Office, UK Police forces have saved £273 million in three years on equipment costs, benefitting from the move towards a more commercial basis for operational management and purchasing. The collaborative law enforcement programme (CLEP) has proven that there is 'strength in numbers', delivering savings on both a regional and national level.[1] But what else can the Police learn from commercial enterprises in their quest to become more efficient?

We have outlined five ways in which the UK Police can emulate commercial successes; Technological Evolution, Strategic Cost Reduction, KPIs and Strategic Management, Outsourcing and Partnerships and Workforce Optimisation and this info paper discusses the first in the series, Technological Evolution.

HOW ARE COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES HARNESSING NEW TECHNOLOGY?

Commercial businesses are harnessing new technology and building a standardised core of new solutions that support the rapidly changing nature of their organisation and each individual department. In addition, the implementation of new technology has resulted in increased agility, so these businesses are able to respond to external pressures and continue to deliver a service even in the face of challenges. Additional benefits include enhanced efficiency and accuracy whilst reducing lost time and streamlining the amount of human resource requirement. The implementation of new technology in the commercial sector also contributes to raising the level of service delivered.

INCREASING ACCURACY, SAVING TIME, ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS AND MAXIMISING HUMAN RESOURCE.

The main benefits of harnessing new technology in the commercial sector are absolutely applicable to the UK Police Force. Increasing accuracy, saving time, enhancing relationships and maximising human resource are areas that both the Police and the commercial sector are focused on enhancing.

In a recent report by Accenture: Technology Vision 2018[2], the consulting firm discuss how business is becoming more personal and how emerging expectations of employees and stakeholders mean that firms need to engage with them differently, something the Police Force has also noted. The rise in consumption of digital media and the expectation of an instant response is evidence of these emerging attitudes and utilising new technology is seen to be pivotal, across the commercial sector, to building and maintaining stronger relationships.

Accenture also reported that by harnessing digital technology, firms can boost output and transform core business operations; enhancing communication, saving time and seeing accuracy levels rise. The firm refer to the digital transformation of industry as 'Industry X.0[3]'. Industry X.0 also discusses how implementing new technology will maximise human resource and can remove cumbersome processes, giving back lost time and assisting a reduced workforce, something that applies to the UK Police Force.

EMULATING COMMERCIAL SUCCESS BY IMPLEMENTING NEW TECHNOLOGY
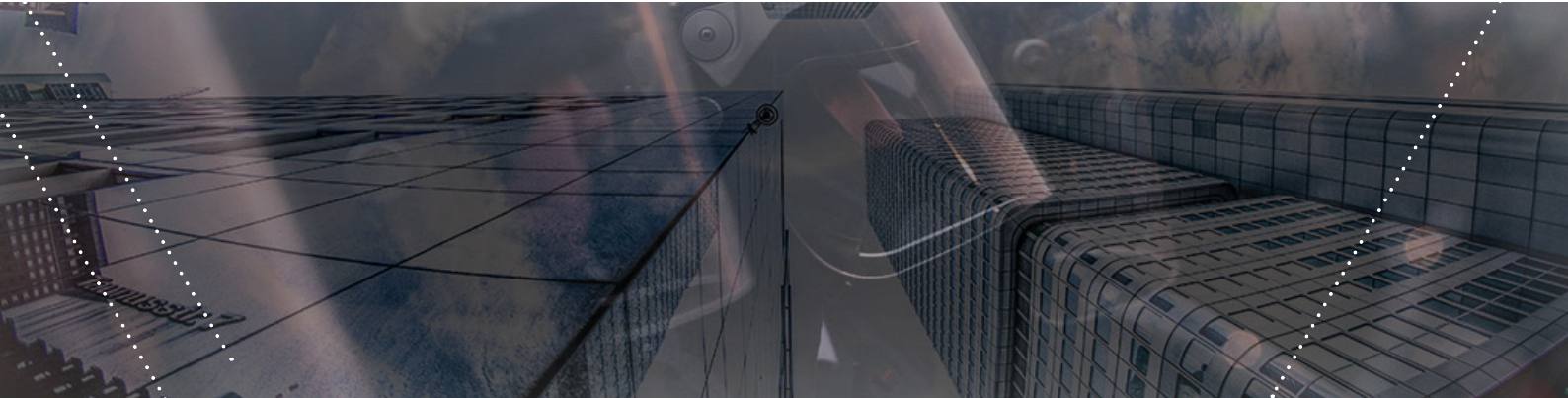
Emerging technology and a shift in the way we procure, implement and manage new solutions are all positives that have been capitalised by the commercial sector and can be mirrored by the Police. In particular, there are a number of areas that the commercial sector has focused on when deciding how to implement new technology that the UK Police Force can focus upon too...

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLOUD-BASED APPS

The heightened availability (and functionality) of cloud-based apps has led to an exponential rise in companies replacing legacy solutions with new software, something the Police can replicate. With low cost of entry and no physical assets required, cloud-based apps offer the UK Police Force the opportunity to replace out of date processes and systems with solutions that enhance their capability and service level as well as helping to deal with the lack of human resource across the sector. These applications can also replace cumbersome, inaccurate methods of working such as the use of static spread sheets and documents that are open to the risk of human error.

MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL OF INTEGRATIONS – ARE YOUR SYSTEMS TALKING TO EACH OTHER?

As more software solutions come onto the market, the availability of integrations has increased remarkably. Now, commercial companies are utilising the ability to link all of their systems and processes together, ensuring a single source of data and minimal risk of confusion or error. The use of available integrations, and the selection of software based on the availability of such, will increase police efficiency and open the lines of communication across staff members. There are even tools available that, if the software you want to link together doesn't integrate directly, provide a bridge to link the two together. Integrations also offer the possibility of linking 'on the job' technology with that used in back office and management areas.

TECHNOLOGY FOR ENHANCED VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Commercial organisations are harnessing the power of new technology to boost visibility and communication at both departmental and individual

employee level. Designed to enhance business output, the technology that enables better visibility and communication reduces the risk of error and ensures that business critical situations are dealt with by the right people in the right time frame. The UK Police are able to minimise the impact of reduced staffing and replicate the success of commercial enterprises through the implementation of new technology that enhances visibility and communication and deals with critical situations faster and more accurately.

KEY BENEFITS TO HARNESSING NEW TECHNOLOGY

- Enhanced accuracy
- Less pressure on human resource
- Improved communication
- Reduced risk of human error
- Less time wastage
- Higher productivity
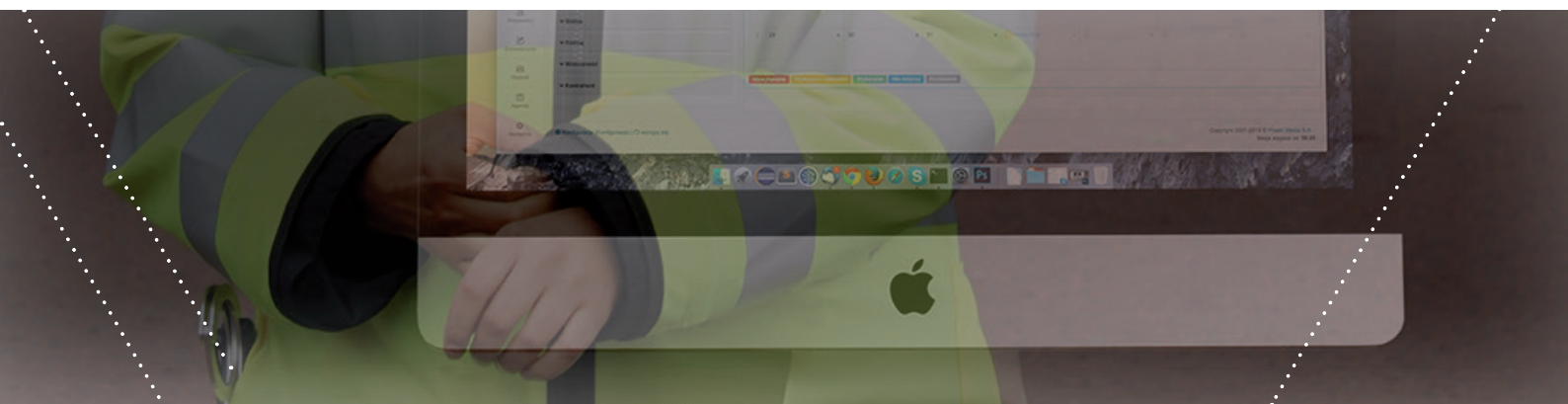- Minimal task repetition

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND COPING WITH A REDUCED WORKFORCE

With lower officer numbers, the ability to maximise your workforce has never been so important and the implementation of new technology can significantly improve your force's ability to respond to demand even with lower numbers. By removing dependencies on specific staff members, sub-standard communication methods and planning processes that rely on multiple points of data entry, your force will boost back office accuracy and efficiency. In addition, it will see better organisation of the workforce, clarity over available resource and ultimately see less pressure on individual officers, distributing the workforce evenly.

InTime is a workforce management and scheduling solution that not only provides the above but, is built specifically for complex organisations that deal with complex staffing patterns and need to respond to emergencies. InTime also offers a low cost of implementation and no requirement to purchase physical assets, perfect for reduced budgets.

For more information on how new technology could benefit your force and maximise your reduced human resource, please do get in touch.

REFERENCES

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