

CRIME NEVER SLEEPS – AND, WITH BUSINESSOBJECTS XI, NEITHER DOES NCIS



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Ofelia Perotti, IT Analytical Cell Division Chief, Naval Criminal Investigative Service



Industry
Government/
Law Enforcement

Business Process
Operations,
strategic planning,
security

Challenge
NCIS lacked comprehensive, real-time visibility into the type, volume, and status of investigations being handled by its agents.

Why Business Objects?
Business intelligence tools from Business Objects help NCIS spot and react to crime trends, and allocate resources more effectively. NCIS uses BusinessObjects software as part of its strategic planning process to improve agency performance.

Business Objects Products and Services
BusinessObjects XI

BusinessObjects Web Intelligence

BusinessObjects Data Integrator

BusinessObjects Dashboard Builder

Crystal Reports

CHALLENGE

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) is a team of law enforcement professionals dedicated to protecting the people, families, and assets of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps worldwide, and investigating crimes committed by naval or marine personnel. Working closely with other local, state, federal, and foreign agencies, NCIS helps counter and investigate crimes ranging from terrorism, espionage, and computer intrusion to homicide, rape, child abuse, and arson. Approximately 2,500 special agents, investigators, forensic experts, security specialists, analysts, and support personnel are located in 143 field and satellite offices around the world. They comprise the navy’s primary source of security for the men, women, ships, planes, and resources of America’s seagoing expeditionary forces.

In recent years, NCIS has increasingly shifted its focus to preventing crimes, in addition to investigating and solving them. By analyzing trends in various types of criminal behavior,



NCIS Special Agent Afloat Takes Notes During USS Wasp Transit Through Suez Canal

complemented by additional economic and demographic information, NCIS can take proactive measures against crimes before they happen. This evolution has made the activities of the service even more strategic within the Department of the Navy.

As a public service organization, accountability to the U.S. Congress is very important; however, tracking and reporting hours worked by NCIS agents can be a tedious and time-consuming process. Nobody knows this better than IT Analytical Cell Division Chief Ofelia Perotti. “Congress allocates funds specifically for different functions,” she says. “If certain agents are paid to do counterterrorism, we need to prove that’s what they’ve worked on during

the year. Before we implemented our BusinessObjects™ XI solution, it would take me an entire month to collect the information we needed for our year-end reports. Now, BusinessObjects does this automatical y – so we can focus more resources on investigating and preventing crime.”

APPROACH

Leveraging its positive experience with Crystal Enterprise™ and Crystal Reports® software from Business Objects, an SAP company, for the new business intelligence (BI) system NCIS chose BusinessObjects XI, BusinessObjects Web Intelligence®, BusinessObjects Data Integrator, and BusinessObjects Dashboard Builder software. Case management, by type of case, allows NCIS to quickly act on trends as well as optimize resource allocation. A dashboard provides at-a-glance visibility. “With BusinessObjects, management can quickly see

what cases we're working on, and where they stand," says Perotti. "In this way, they can be sure that we have the right people in the right place. We investigate murders, fraud, drug-related crimes, and people who steal secrets and sell them to another country. Management can now track these cases quickly, easily, and in real time." When NCIS sees a spike or change in crime-related data, it seeks to implement educational or preventive measures; for example, an increase in domestic abuse at a given naval base might prompt a series of educational briefings.

"We now have several dashboards," says Perotti. "For example, one is used for tracking our labor statistics. Like any other government entity, we always want to optimize the use of our funding – and we get funding by proving what we're working on, how much time we spend on a given case, and how productive our efforts are. This information is provided to Congress to justify funding for more agents, with the goal of continuing to reduce the crime statistics."

The ability to use Business Objects software out-of-the-box was important to NCIS. "When we went to the BusinessObjects XI Release 2, we actually performed the installation ourselves," says Perotti. "The only thing we changed was the banner." By minimizing customization of the product, NCIS will be able to leverage newer versions and expanded capabilities even more easily. "If there are compelling things in upcoming products from Business Objects – and we expect that there will be – we will be able to upgrade to the new software almost immediately."

RESULTS

Business Objects software has transformed the reporting environment at NCIS. "Today, we can quickly generate detailed staffing activity reports and provide them to federal officials on demand," says Perotti. "Thanks to our BusinessObjects solution, managers find the information they need right on their dashboards. They can look at the high-level information and drill down to any desired level of detail. If they identify a new metric they want to track, we can easily add it to the dashboard."

The IT group still fields plenty of requests for reports, but they now respond much more effectively. "We have a single, consolidated source of information that is timely, accurate, and instantly accessible," says Perotti. "And because the system is so easy to use, nontechnical staff can analyze information more quickly on their own. This makes the entire organization much more productive."

Going forward, Business Objects will play an even larger role within the Department of the Navy. Based on the success of the NCIS business intelligence system, Business Objects software was selected for the new Department of Navy Criminal Justice Information System (DONCJIS). The objectives for DONCJIS include providing a Web-based interface for data entry of criminal incidents and case data, incorporating business processes and workflow requirements from the law enforcement, investigative, judicial, and corrections user communities, and enhancing the existing systems for U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Law Enforcement, Judge Advocate General, and Corrections users. Objectives also include providing full data processing and case-tracking capabilities, from incident to corrections, and in-depth reporting capabilities, data extracts, and statistical analysis of criminal data.

A tall order? Yes – but Business Objects can handle it. "Our BI solution has made life a lot easier," Perotti says. "Business Objects saves us time and resources by significantly reducing the administrative burden of our congressional reporting requirements. It also enables us to use information to more efficiently assign agents to cases, and to better understand crime patterns. The bottom line is that Business Objects is allowing us to investigate, solve, and prevent more crime. Because we can now get the information we need for management, Congress, and the navy faster than ever, Business Objects software has become the reporting and analysis standard for NCIS."

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