



Customer Profile

Public Safety

Website

www.leics.police.uk

Location

England

Business Needs

- Sharing digital evidence with the CPS

NICE Solutions

- NICE Investigate

The Impact

- All digital evidence now shared electronically with CPS
- Faster pre-charge and remand decisions
- Supports cross-force investigations
- Efficiency gains

Streamlined Evidence Sharing Returns Faster Pre-Charge and Remand Decisions

About Leicestershire Police

Leicestershire Police and its 1,800 officers are responsible for providing a policing service to the people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The force covers an area of over 2,500 square kilometres and serves a population in excess of one million.

The Challenge

Just a few years ago many UK police forces (Leicestershire Police included) had to rely on manual processes to share digital evidence with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the main justice partner for prosecuting criminal cases across England and Wales.

This often involved copying evidence onto CDs, DVDs, USB drives and paper files and then hand-delivering them to the CPS. But increased wait times for evidence also meant slower response times, proceedings, pre-charge and remand decisions. This meant suspects could be released from custody before ever having the opportunity to be charged.

With new national requirements now mandating that all digital evidence be shared with the CPS electronically, many UK forces, including Leicestershire Police, are now forging a better way.

The Solution

For Allan Graham, Project Manager for Leicestershire Police, that 'aha' moment came in the form of a phone call with a counterpart from another force, who had related to Allan that he'd encountered and solved the very same problem. The solution they used: NICE Investigate



“We came to the same conclusion as other forces, that NICE Investigate would be the right approach.”

The force decided to run a pilot test to trial the new approach. This involved 200 officers from Leicestershire’s complex investigation, serious sexual offences investigation team, domestic abuse and neighbourhood teams (and focused mainly on shoplifting and public order offences). Twenty investigation support staff from Leicestershire’s criminal justice team were then responsible for sharing evidence with the CPS, once officers had completed their investigations.

“The teams were carefully chosen to ensure we tested the full range of functionality and capabilities of NICE Investigate,” said Allan. “In addition to supporting our investigations, NICE Investigate needed to be able to support high volumes of activity and more crucially, make it easy to share information with the CPS for pre-charging decisions.”

The results of the pilot were much anticipated by officers working in other areas of the force, who could see the potential of NICE Investigate and were eager to start using it.

The pilot team realised improvements in both process efficiency and time savings, relating to a range of different investigation and offence types. What became instantly clear however was NICE Investigate’s ability to share evidence quickly for pre-charging decisions - a huge benefit.

“In addition to sharing evidence quickly to the CPS for pre-charging decisions our officers were also quick to recognise the ability to speed up remand decisions,” observed Allan. “Getting body worn video and CCTV footage to the CPS fast enough to obtain a pre-charge or remand decision was simply not possible with our previous manual evidence sharing methods and this often resulted in a suspect being bailed or released under investigation. With NICE Investigate we were able to share digital case evidence immediately and that meant decisions could be made much faster.”

One-Stop Shop For Accessing All Evidence

Another benefit of NICE Investigate is its ability to automatically correlate and pull relevant evidence into digital case files. Investigators work in one system instead of silos. Instead of wasting time searching in different systems for evidence, and phoning, emailing and filling out forms, investigators simply log on to NICE Investigate where their evidence is waiting.

For example, as soon as a case is opened (and an electronic case folder is created in NICE Investigate), any relevant records from the force’s NicheRMS Police Records Management System, STORM Command and Control system and Body Worn Video system are automatically ingested. In the next phase, the force plans to add further integrations to its interview room and 999 recording systems.

Officers involved in the pilot also reported efficiency gains and time savings, as a result of having all case information relating to an investigation located in one place. This is aligned to a larger force-wide data strategy to rationalise storage. Allan explained: “Officers demonstrated that they could locate information and evidence faster, as well as share it between teams.”

Collaboration with neighbouring forces also improved with Leicestershire Police using NICE Investigate to share evidence during joint investigations with other forces. Allan shared an example involving a recent case: “Instead of driving to the witnesses house, obtaining CCTV footage and then transporting the evidence to the other force, we were able to complete the entire end-to-end process while at their desk within half an hour,” he said. “Our officers see this as a real gamechanger.”

“There’s also a lot of hype and excitement around the force about NICE Investigate and how it can also be used to improve how we interact with our communities,” Allan added.

He also pointed out that the system was very easy to use. “There simply isn’t time to pull officers from their duties to partake in training. So, we produced a series of short ‘How to’ guides which have worked very nicely. Fortunately, the system is very intuitive and our officers and criminal justice team have been using it with confidence. To date we have not received any ‘how to’ enquiries.”

The success of the pilot has now led to the Assistant Chief Constable to authorise a full force wide rollout of NICE Investigate.

“First and foremost, NICE Investigate delivered on our primary objective,” he said. “The criminal justice team has fully embraced the system, the flow through to the CPS is working well and they are happy with the process and quality of digital evidence they receive.”

About NICE Public Safety

NICE public safety solutions integrate and put into context information from many sources to help emergency communications centres and investigation departments to reconstruct and understand the who, what, when, where and why of an incident. NICE Inform, the industry-leading digital evidence management (DEM) solution, gives emergency communications centres better insight into how to continuously improve their operations. NICE Investigate is the leading open, digital policing solution that automates and expedites the entire digital investigation process, helping to increase case clearance rates. Over 3,000 organisations worldwide rely on NICE public safety solutions.