

Case Study: Gwinnett County Sheriff's Department



Situation

The Gwinnett County Sheriff's Department had bad address data infiltrating its systems wasting time and creating confusion across departments.

Solution

The department deployed QAS Pro to work with database applications in jail admissions, civil processes and warrant tracking to verify address data in real-time as it is captured.

Results

Following the deployment of QAS Pro, the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Department saw an immediate improvement in address quality and reduced address capture time

Problem/Background

Located thirty miles northeast of Atlanta, GA, with a population of about 800,000, Gwinnett County has been one of the fastest growing counties in America for the past twenty years. Serving such a growing population impacts many local government operations including the sheriff's department.

In Gwinnett County the address data captured during jail management and civil processes within the sheriff's department was less than stellar; the sheriff himself frequently pointed

out misspellings, typos, questionable formatting and often asked staff to double check elements.

The county jail was the source of the worst address data for the sheriff's department. The jail houses nearly 3,000 inmates at any given time – most from Georgia but not all hailing from Gwinnett County – and in 2008 a total of 39,899 people were admitted to the jail. Like the total county population, jail admissions and average inmate population have consistently grown throughout the years. The jail commanders and supervisors on-shift

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could only do so much to guarantee the quality of inmate contact data captured in the bookings process. Often inmates would withhold relevant address details; other times inmates didn't know all of their address details; or language barriers inhibited relaying accurate information.

Inaccurate address data captured during the booking process is later used by other divisions in the sheriff's department. Additionally there is a strong likelihood that it will be used again in another booking for the same inmate. When capturing an address, jail staff are often forced to guess or make assumptions on spelling, completeness and accuracy.

"Anyone who has worked in a jail knows that collecting this information from inmates can be a challenge," said Sylvia Black, technical services consultant for the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Department.

The civil division within the sheriff's department, which is responsible for serving civil processes received from the courts, also suffered from operations fraught with bad address data. Civil processes such as evictions, subpoenas, probate orders, writs of possession to seize personal property, personal property foreclosures, condemnations and executing probate orders often had inaccurate contact information for involved parties supplied by the court system.

Solution/Implementation/Training

In order to increase efficiencies in its operations, specifically to help avoid the many problems caused by capturing wrong addresses, Gwinnett County Sheriff's Department implemented address verification from Experian QAS.

In order to ensure accurate address data is captured during prison admissions QAS Pro, a unique, real-time address validation tool, interfaces with Syscon's TAG offender management system, the software the county uses in jail admissions. QAS Pro is deployed on six workstations in admissions to ensure every address entered is accurate.

Additionally, QAS Pro is used with the county's Oracle 10g database in warrant tracking and is available as a standalone tool within the civil division, to make sure addresses are accurate before they are used to execute a service. This is especially useful when fielding phone calls from the public or other local government departments on jurisdiction.

QAS Pro features a unique type-down method of address data capture that is helping jail admissions staff make more educated decisions on probable addresses for offenders. The tool prompts for missing apartment numbers, street directionals and automatically spells and formats address details correctly. In the civil division staff can now quickly and easily ascertain an address' corresponding county and if need be re-route requests.

"With QAS, you can really drill down into an address and make a very educated guess," said Sylvia Black. "Chances are strong that if someone gets arrested one time they will get arrested again. Having a correct address for them in the database makes it easier to find them."

Implementation of QAS Pro took a few hours and all relevant staff was trained on it in a matter of minutes. Its intuitive nature is likeable and very easy to catch on to. Employees who

capture address data as part of their job function like using the software because it cuts down the number of keystrokes needed to capture a full address and eliminates chances of misspelling.

"Training was very easy; in ten minutes everyone at the jail was ready to go on it," said Sylvia Black.

Results

Following the deployment of QAS Pro, Gwinnett County Sheriff's Department saw an immediate reduction in data entry time and improvement in its overall address data quality. QAS Pro ensures that accurate information is flowing into the jail management system and that civil and warrant divisions work with accurate address data within the county's jurisdiction.

From law enforcement administration to the management of parks and recreation departments, accurate address data is crucial to local government operations. Data entry correction software from Experian QAS increases the speed of address capture and ensures that addresses are accurate and deliverable before they reach the database. Therefore, critical documents like warrants, court papers and permits reach recipients on the first attempt. Traditional back end data cleansing products can only standardize a subset of address inaccuracies leaving agencies susceptible to the costs of wasted resource, personnel time and postage.

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