



Florida Law Enforcement Exchange (FLEX) Initiative at a Glance

Situation – Florida’s Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) wanted to gather better crime-fighting intelligence by exchanging information among various organizations (e.g., courthouses, police stations, public safety) across regional, county and local levels of government. However, most of the regions within the state already had their own information-sharing systems, making it difficult, costly and time consuming to reformat or replace existing systems to accommodate a new, statewide data-sharing program. The FDLE also wanted to exchange data with federal agencies and be eligible for federal funding by conforming to the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM), a program of the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice to create a common language for data exchange at all government levels.

Solution – In February 2006, the FDLE initiated a project called Florida Law Enforcement Exchange (FLEX) to establish a single statewide information-sharing infrastructure that would conform to the federal NIEM standard. The department worked with Sypherlink to accelerate the discovery and mapping of relationships across the hundreds of disparate local and regional systems. Since Sypherlink’s automated processes do not interfere with existing data sources, local agencies did not have to reformat or upgrade existing systems.

Results for the FDLE

- Enabled FDLE to quickly search and identify the gaps among target databases then use those data fields to create a statewide relational data model that also conforms to the NIEM standard.
- Significantly reduced mapping time and effort – helping the FDLE to cost-effectively meet tight deadlines.
- Ensured that regional and local agencies could preserve their investments in existing technology and systems.
- Enabled data flexibility for use in future data-sharing initiatives; Sypherlink is now working with the FDLE on a new initiative called Regional Law Enforcement Exchange (RLEX) to create an information-sharing system for those regions that did not already have data systems in place.

Benefits beyond the FDLE

- The first NIEM-conformant relational data model offers a standardized solution that can accelerate NIEM conformance by other government agencies throughout the country. To help them jump-start NIEM conformance in their own initiatives, the NIEM-conformant relational data model will be made publicly available.
- The comprehensive Sypherlink NIE Gateway solution for government emerged from the FLEX project, which was designed up front to ensure that its relational data model would conform to the canonical NIEM standard.

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