



Critical Communication for Today's Responders

Public safety personnel need real-time data — and they can get it now, simply and inexpensively.

Crucial Data at the Right Time

Sprint networks and BlackBerry® smartphones greatly enhance public safety communications.

For today's public safety personnel — whether police, fire or EMS — information is everything. Having the right data at the right time can mean the difference between life and death. The importance of real-time information cannot be overstated. Things move quickly, and if responders are operating with old data — even a few minutes old — the results can be disastrous.

The ability to share information with other agencies is also critical. Many incidents require a response from several jurisdictions, including local, state and federal. However, disparate radio systems often prevent neighboring agencies from communicating with each other seamlessly.

BlackBerry® smartphones, with data applications running on Sprint's networks, help first responders and law enforcement connect to each other and access critical decision-making data. This includes criminal background checks, warrant data, weather information, driver's license and address records, maps, health records and much more. In fact, the number of applications delivering key information to public safety officers on their BlackBerry smartphones is growing rapidly.

Nextel Direct Connect® is a powerful push-to-talk capability that allows the BlackBerry to interoperate with existing radio systems. Direct Connect on the Nextel National Network also enables integration into public safety console systems, and talk groups for better collaboration. These Sprint network capabilities are one reason the BlackBerry device has become a logical addition to the communications system for agencies all over the country.

Better, Faster Tools

Wireless networks are getting faster, which also speeds the flow of information. Video, for example, is easier to transmit with networks that are more robust and powerful. Video being recorded by a squad car can now be seen by a dispatcher. Users can see surveillance videos on their BlackBerry devices, and photos and videos can be shared more easily.

Sprint's NextMail capability allows users to send voice messages as e-mails from a BlackBerry smartphone to one or many dispatchers, commanders, responders and others. More

and more of these applications are giving public safety agencies access to comprehensive information in real time.

On-scene photos can be sent to a command post. Hazardous materials data can be overlaid on maps. Locations of people and resources can be tracked, enabling more efficient deployments. Mission-critical conversations can occur without needing to go through a dispatcher. Push-to-talk communications can occur on a secure Sprint Nextel dispatch network rather than through traditional radio systems.



These and other capabilities are enabled by BlackBerry smartphones and Sprint's networks. Often, users can get data themselves via their BlackBerry device instead of having to request information from busy dispatchers. It all means better safety — for both the public and responders themselves.

Sprint and BlackBerry products provide comprehensive situational awareness and help all responders be on the same page at the same time. This is done with commercial, off-the-shelf tools that are less expensive and easier to deploy than custom-built solutions. And people already know how to use them.

Numerous public safety incidents in recent years have underscored the need for better interoperability and access to more data for responders. Fortunately BlackBerry smartphones and the Sprint networks can deliver an ever-growing number of applications straight to those who need them — the people responsible for protecting the public.

Year-Round Dependability

Prosecutors outfox criminals and keep officers safe with new tools.

The Ocean County, N.J., Prosecutor's Office has a big job to do — and the job gets bigger every tourist season. The county's beaches and barrier islands attract a huge influx of summer visitors, so the Prosecutor's Office has a bigger workload at times — without the benefit of a larger staff.

Whether in tourist season or off-season, the Prosecutor's Office has become more productive thanks to the numerous mobile capabilities of BlackBerry® smartphones and applications running on Sprint networks.

Nextel Direct Connect® push-to-talk, Group Connect®, mobile e-mail and remote access to databases enable more efficient communications and faster workflows. The BlackBerry smartphones and Sprint networks give the Prosecutor's Office an advantage in law enforcement and criminal justice. "I think the suspects or criminals who we deal with are becoming more technically savvy," said Jim Hill, investigator with the Prosecutor's Office. "So they're able to find out where we are and know when we're coming."

That's changed with the tools from BlackBerry and Sprint. "People think we're texting," Hill said. "So it's very unassuming when people try to figure out what we're doing. We've had detectives make arrests clearly because a person thought we were texting and didn't realize we were really running their name through our warrant database."

Safety First

Investigators can access the same data from their BlackBerry smartphones that police officers can view in their squad cars. While having more data in the field helps get the work done, the BlackBerry capabilities also improve safety for the officers.

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*Jim Hill, Investigator,
Prosecutor's Office,
Ocean County, N.J.*

"The biggest thing on everyone's mind is officer safety," said Hill. "When you hit the officer-needs-assistance button, it sends out the coordinates to anyone who is logged into the system. So if someone needs help, they can hit that, and it sends out their exact location from the GPS."

Prior to getting the BlackBerry phones nearly three years ago, the Prosecutor's Office relied more heavily on text messages and radios. "We were getting reports of people listening to radio communications and posting them on Web sites," said Hill. By using Sprint and their BlackBerry smartphones, Hill and his colleagues have been able to get around that problem. "It allows us to communicate with each other in a way that can't be intercepted," Hill said.

As the lead law enforcement agency in the county, the Prosecutor's Office is also reaching out to other agencies and sharing data with them. It's allowing some of the county's 32 municipalities to have access to law enforcement data on BlackBerry smartphones. The Prosecutor's Office is providing that access to nine agencies currently, with plans for others to join in the future. Many of these jurisdictions are tourist destinations that receive numerous visitors in summer.

Whether dealing with the extra workload that comes with tourist season or managing day-to-day operations, the Prosecutor's Office relies on BlackBerry and the Sprint networks for improved, dependable communications 365 days a year.



Data Does the Trick

Leading-edge communications are the norm in Charlottesville, Va.

BlackBerry® smartphones running on Sprint's networks have aided the fire department in Charlottesville, Va., for many years now. The department uses push-to-talk capabilities on the Nextel National Network to complement its traditional radio system. It has also integrated the Nextel Direct Connect® BlackBerry smartphones into that system.

"It makes us more effective from the standpoint that we have information quicker, are able to respond more effectively, and can do our jobs better because of the technology," said Charles Werner, chief of the Charlottesville Fire Department.



The Nextel National Network and the BlackBerry smartphones with push-to-talk have allowed the department to break through traditional communication barriers by using e-mail and text messaging. While various police and fire organizations have separate radio systems and built-in voice-communication silos, these new tools transcend those with their ability to enable interoperability and move beyond voice communication. "When we send messages out, we're able to communicate through different data applications," Werner said. "It goes across to many people at once, without those barriers."

Multimedia Messaging

The chief sees a lot of potential in Sprint's NextMail capability, which lets responders at an incident scene send a photo, a voice message and a map to one recipient or many people simultaneously. "I can send that voice dictation with a photograph and a geospatial

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Charles Werner, Fire Chief, Charlottesville, Va.

location," he said. "It can go out to a lot of people simultaneously with the push of a button."

In the case of a damaged building, for example, responders could send the comprehensive message to police, fire, EMS, public works, building inspectors, public information and other departments. NextMail gets the information out to all those agencies instantly. "We're more effective because we're able to let others see the extent of the damage in one message," said Werner. "If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a picture painted with voice, photos and GIS mapping is worth a million."

The department uses a number of free applications to access data via its BlackBerry smartphones. Users get data on hurricanes, hazardous materials, earthquakes and more, from virtually anywhere. "We use the BlackBerry and the Sprint network as a combined device," said Werner.

The chief also receives notices of all the dispatch calls within his jurisdiction on his BlackBerry smartphone. "I look at the calls in general, and I can see if there are specific trends that are occurring," he said. "For example, if the number of EMS calls is increasing, people are sick, and that might be a situation like H1N1 flu I need to ramp up for"

Werner likes the current capabilities, but he's also looking forward to future possibilities for improved public safety. "I think this is just the tip of the iceberg," he said. "The networks become more prolific and the coverage is better. You're going to see things like more video access, and more real-time capabilities tying things together, especially with 3G/4G networks."

By using leading-edge technologies from Sprint and BlackBerry in creative ways, the Charlottesville Fire Department will continue to provide better public safety during disasters and in day-to-day operations.



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