

**Ensemble Case Study: Northgate**

# InterSystems Ensemble® empowers the UK Police to enhance public safety

Northgate Public Services understands the pressure on police forces to work more efficiently. For over 20 years, its Public Safety Division has delivered innovative software applications to police forces, emergency services and related organisations throughout the UK.

Today, there is a pressing need for police forces to join up 'silos' of information. So when InterSystems approached Northgate with the InterSystems Ensemble® rapid integration and development platform, Northgate rapidly built a prototype to demonstrate the concept to its police customers. As a result, forces can now consolidate multiple screens and systems and protect existing IT investments, to deliver even better service to the public.

### The challenge

Police forces across the UK are striving to join up their technology. This helps them to generate greater intelligence from their data, to make better decisions and enhance the services they deliver.

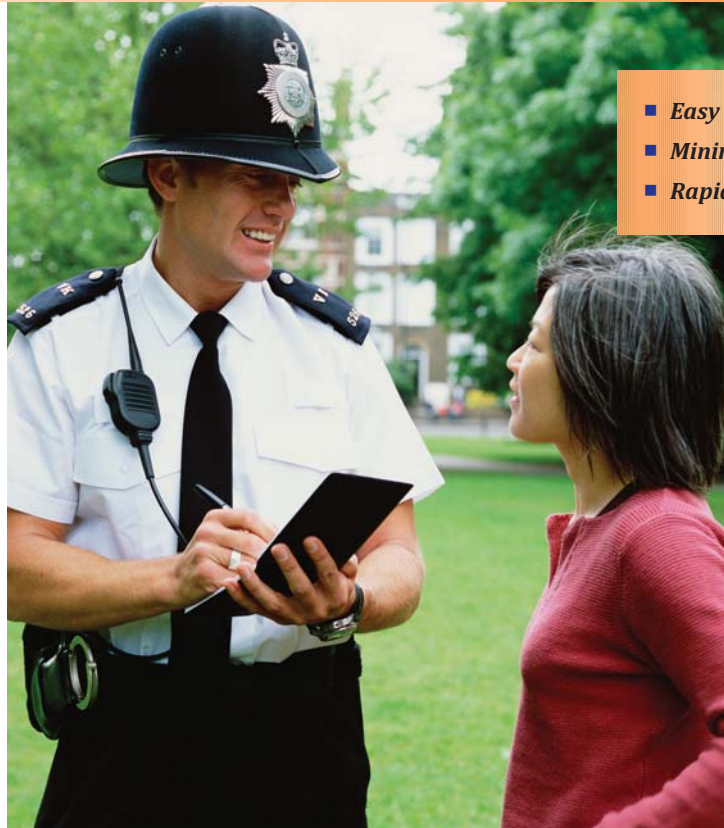
Significantly, there is also pressure coming from within police organisations to update the technology they use.

The younger generation of police staff is calling for a refresh of 'green screen' systems within the control room, and greater consistency of interface to increase operational efficiency and ease training requirements.

Nationally the police service is being challenged by the NPIA to adopt a componentised consistent set of solutions offering joined up information and IT services.

Dealing with these requirements is not without its challenges. "Joining up siloed IT systems can be a complicated and time-consuming process that may lock forces into working with one supplier," explains Simon Blades, Chief Architect of the Public Safety division within Northgate.

Also, renewing siloed IT systems is not always necessary. "Many existing systems within police forces are still living up to those expectations," confirms Simon. "More to the point, staff training and abstraction costs are often significant barriers to implementation of new solutions."



- Easy to use
- Minimal coding
- Rapid integration

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So when InterSystems approached Northgate to showcase its Ensemble technology, the potential of the software rapidly became clear. “By adopting a service oriented approach supported by Ensemble, we saw a way to help forces protect their existing investments, join up siloed systems for greater intelligence, and make all systems accessible to all users,” Simon states.

### **The solution**

InterSystems Ensemble is a leading rapid integration and development platform.

Very quickly, and with minimal coding, Ensemble can service-enable a vast range of applications of all ages and types – even those that are not typically designed for this purpose. Multiple interface styles are consolidated into one, easy-to-use front end, and rules-based business processes are applied to the applications. This allows users to retrieve multiple sets of data from a single query.

The components of Ensemble – integration server, data server, application server and portal development software – are designed to work together as a single technology stack. This makes Ensemble not only very easy to use, but also much faster than any other integration software available on the market.

Finally, because it is effectively a service oriented architecture (SOA) ‘engine’ – with business logic being abstracted from the client and each of the applications – the solution is flexible to change, enabling applications to be added or removed with ease.

*“In just 12 weeks we were able to build and demonstrate a working solution to our police user group”*

early adopter Police clients which will deliver substantial return on their sunk assets. This will lead to the desired strategic goal of truly joined up policing

and eventually joined up government,” says Graham Frost, InterSystems UK Managing Director.

### **The benefits**

InterSystems put together a proof of concept for Northgate in just one week. So impressed was Northgate, that the two companies built Ensemble into a new composite application that can make use of and coordinate functionality from existing police applications. This prototype solution is specifically designed for police forces: the Incident Information Management application (IIM). “In just 12 weeks we were able to build and demonstrate a working solution to our police user group,” states Simon.

Underpinned by Ensemble – and based on Northgate’s Command and Control, Geographic Information System (GIS) and Gazetteer – IIM can now help forces bring together applications to reap a number of benefits.

First of all, multiple applications can be consolidated onto a single screen as discrete ‘windows’. Each retains its original interface style. However, operators can interact with them using whichever method is most familiar – keystroke or mouse. This eradicates the need to replace applications purely because of usability.

The applications can also interact with each other, helping users get greater intelligence out of the information within. “Say a police officer uses the command & control system to dispatch a car. This simple activity can cause multiple things to happen at once,” Simon explains. “For example, Ensemble can ask the GIS to pinpoint the location on the screen, and send a route to the in-car navigation system; at the same time, it can query the crime database, to check if anyone at the address has a criminal record. The specifics are up to each police force, but the result is faster, more informed and much safer working practices.”

Because there is no need for hard-coding, Ensemble also offers investment protection for best-of-breed systems. Applications can be added or taken away with ease. “We can deliver new capabilities based on existing investment whilst adding entirely new solutions in an incremental way; this approach offers an alternative to the ‘rip and replace’ model,” adds Simon.

### **A view to the future**

With the initial benefits realised, Northgate is now starting to use several additional features of Ensemble. This includes the business activity monitoring capability. “Because Ensemble has a data repository that enables an audit trail of all activities, it can be used to monitor patterns. This could be extremely useful to forces that want to study throughput of calls, call origin, percentage of vehicles dispatched... all sorts of statistics that would help them manage their resources more effectively.”

Overall, Northgate is extremely impressed with Ensemble. “The system is low-risk, useful ‘out-of-the-box’ and extremely flexible to the ways different police force customers want to work,” Simon concludes.

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