



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

ELIMINATING OVERT DRUG MARKETS IN HIGH POINT, NC

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Eleazer D. Hunt
Crime Analyst
High Point Police Department
1009 Leonard Avenue
High Point, NC 27260
Phone: 336.887.7822
FAX: 336.887.8230

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

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|----------------------|---------------|
| Sworn Officers | 225 |
| Population Served | 94,000 |
| Square Miles | 54 |
| 911 Dispatched Calls | 89,558 [2005] |
| Self-Initiated Calls | 64,992 [2005] |
| Telecommunicators | 25 |
| Investigators | 19 |

PRODUCT PROFILE

- Computer-Aided Dispatch (OSSI CAD)
- Records Management System (OSSI RMS)
- Mobile Computing (OSSI MCT)
- Mobile Field Reporting (OSSI MFR)
- Internet Technology
 - OSSI P2P (Police-to-Police)
 - OSSI P2C (Police-to-Citizen)



SITUATION:

Illegal drug use and distribution exist in all cities and towns. In some communities drug-related activities are not visibly apparent, while in other areas drug dealers work in the open-air creating overt drug markets. Although already precarious, these markets also serve to concentrate violent crimes. And the High Point, NC Police Department is no stranger to that trend. Having a core of violent crimes—stimulated by overt drug markets—the police department initiated a program that focused on dismantling those drug markets.

The department, along with the help of a nationally recognized criminologist and local support services, took a pragmatic approach to eliminating overt drug trafficking. The High Point Police Department (HPPD) applied an industry recognized violent crime task force model to their drug market problem. The model partners law enforcement with the community to identify and investigate drug dealing locations and individuals. It also offers any offenders a choice: change behavior with the help of local resources to avoid prosecution or face arrest and imprisonment due to the continuation of illegal activities. This approach was pertinent only to individuals who were actively dealing drugs.

The first phase of the data-driven process requires identifying and targeting troubled geographic areas and individuals. To achieve this, the department needed to extract data points from 9-1-1 calls, field contacts, serious offenses, and drug arrests.



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SOLUTION:

Rely on the expertise of Dr. Eleazer Hunt, crime analyst for the High Point Police Department, to tap into SunGard Public Sector's OSSI Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), Records Management System (RMS), and Internet Technology to pull out the necessary data for the investigation. According to Hunt, "Because we use the OSSI CAD system to directly receive and dispatch our 9-1-1 calls, we had the information right at our fingertips. We queried the system by geographic designators, pulled out the data points, then exported those points to a mapping program. The OSSI CAD system is so easy to use and flexible; you can quickly organize information and analyze it, using what you've learned to make good decisions and develop solid strategies."

Hunt added, "We also employ OSSI RMS, which collects and stores information such as arrests, warrants, and field interviews gathered by law enforcement personnel during their daily activities. Because our RMS is integrated with our CAD geographic database, we were able to extract the locations of field contacts, serious crimes, and drug arrests for a segmented geographic location, then export that information."

After data mining the locations from its 9-1-1 calls, field contacts, and serious offenses such as part one crimes, weapons, sex/prostitution, and drug arrests, HPPD developed four maps that pinpointed locations and generated "hot spots." The CAD map answered the question: "Where are the bulk of the 9-1-1 calls coming from?" The three maps generated from RMS answered the question: "Where are the serious crimes occurring?" To determine the overall hot spots, the three RMS-generated maps were combined to create one density map. This map was instrumental in identifying the three potential target areas for the project.

To identify individual dealers, HPPD relied on a combination of information gathering techniques. It used surveys from police, probation, and vice officers, as well as community members to identify dealers and locations. The department also relied on another OSSI solution—Police-to-Police (P2P Information Sharing Software)—to gather information from surrounding agencies. According to Hunt, "We combed all sources of information related to each person in order to build a complete profile of each dealer's activities, friends, and an area of operation. HPPD also used Link Analysis, a SunGard Public Sector OSSI program that identifies and links relationships between

incidents, people, locations, vehicles, and evidence. The program enabled HPPD to instantly produce relationship diagrams without having to manually create the linkages." HPPD is a beta test site for the Link Analysis function in RMS.

IMPACT:

With the community's commitment mobilized, 43 identified drug offenders from the three target areas were "called-in" to a face-to-face notification with the community and law enforcement. It was time for the offenders to hear the voice of the community. Citizens spoke out against illegal drug dealing, citing that it was wrong and it needed to be stopped. But the drug dealers also heard another message: "If they wanted to change their behavior/lifestyle, then help would be provided." Law enforcement officials had a similar message: "Drug dealing and violence would no longer be tolerated." Police made offenders aware of their "holding charges", and the offenders were put on notice, so if they continued to deal drugs, then they would be arrested and given the maximum penalty.

Since the first "call-in" two years ago, violent crime has decreased in one area, the West End neighborhood, by an average of 36 percent, while drug crime has decreased 31 percent. Hunt concluded, "We're proud of the program's success. It has allowed the citizens to regain their neighborhoods, and the community has rallied to help the dealers change their lives by providing an alternative to the arrest and prison cycle. The project also had a greater city-wide impact; overt drug markets are now gone, and violent crime has dropped in the entire city by 21.5 percent for the last two years.

For the maintenance of the target areas, High Point officers continue to rely on OSSI CAD and RMS to track and review incidents and activities.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

The program is data-driven,
targets the most suitable area to implement a plan.
community-involved,
offers social, ministerial, advisory, and educational programs.
measurable,
reduces crime significantly in target areas.
and sustainable.
holds steadfast to reduced drug dealing and violent crimes levels.