

## Police computer crimebusters in frame for award

[Nov 5 2007](#) by Roland Hughes, Daily Post

NORTH Wales Police are in line for a major award for their pioneering use of technology.

Around 440 of the force's officers have been given BlackBerry mobile devices to carry out quick checks on suspects.

And the success of the scheme could now scoop the force a national award.

North Wales Police along with Niche Technology, which runs the computerised records system, are in line for a prize in the National Business Awards, in the Best Use of Technology in Business category.

The BlackBerry devices allow police to make calls and access the internet and computer files.

Tests have shown that the BlackBerrys cut down on the amount of time officers spend doing paperwork or research in offices.

The Niche system, run by a Canadian company, gives officers access to details of warrants, child protection, case file preparation and custody, as well as data sent to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). It allowed officers to quickly access data on offenders, and helped in the arrest of a man in a high-profile murder case.

Mum-of-four Kerry Edwards, 39, was stabbed in her car while parked in a lay-by near Mold in July 2004.

Within 40 minutes of the report of the attack on Ms Edwards, police were able to confirm she had been a witness to an assault the previous week, and quickly found she had previously been threatened by her ex-husband Peter Davies.

Davies was arrested within 16 hours and sentenced to life for murder two years ago.

North Wales Police Sergeant Aled Eynon said: "Policing on the street is different from a desk-bound job and effective mobile solutions have to reflect this.

"We are delighted that our efforts are being recognised by the National Business Awards and we look forward to the finals."

John James, director of operations and business development for Niche Technology, said: "We are pleased that the National Business Awards has recognised North Wales Police and its technology initiative as a finalist for this prestigious award.

The finalists will be announced at a London ceremony next Tuesday.

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