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North Wales Police Pioneers Force-Wide Blackberry Access to Records Management System

MOBILE ACCESS TO NICHE RECORDS MANAGEMENT ESTIMATES SAVINGS OF OVER £630,000 IN MANPOWER HOURS

NORTH WALES, UK – A pilot project equipping North Wales Police officers with BlackBerry mobile devices has proven so successful that its deployment is being increased. The devices are networked to North Wales Police's Niche Records Management System (RMS), allowing officers to swiftly access crucial information and identify and apprehend criminals. Test results from the initiative show that using BlackBerrys to access Niche RMS resulted in officers spending almost one hour more per shift out of the police station and in the community, as well as significant reductions in "dead time", in which officers might be required to escort suspects to the station.

In 2002, North Wales Police implemented Niche RMS, the police information management system that brings together all aspects of operational policing in one unified system. One of the key reasons the force chose Niche RMS was for the possibility of combining the system with portable technology, such as the BlackBerry. Earlier this year, 300 BlackBerrys were distributed to a mix of users. Based on the pilot project's success, additional BlackBerrys are being deployed.

Sergeant Aled Eynon, quality assurance officer on the BlackBerry project comments, "Experience of trying to mobilise our information over the past few years leads us to believe that with BlackBerry, we are now able to provide officers in North Wales with a first class product and clearly, RMS is at the heart of this."

The ten crime car officers that already have BlackBerrys will have 3,300 more productive hours at their disposal, or the equivalent of two officers. Based on the time saved by community beat officers being able to access Niche RMS while on the streets, the introduction of the devices will save the force an

estimated £636,000, or 29,000 productive hours. Police visibility and crime solving rates have improved and the North Wales Police force looks forward to continued success."

"Niche RMS is unique in giving operational officers access to all the information they need to more effectively do their job – preventing and detecting crime," says John James, Director of Operations and Business Development for Niche Technology Inc. "Combining it with mobile data solutions such as BlackBerrys provides enhanced access to that information and delivers information where operational staff need it most – on the street."

North Wales Police has three main goals with its mobile data access initiative: (1) getting officers out of the office and onto the street; (2) a reduction in travel time, as police no longer have to trek back to the office to search records or to enter reports; and (3) more effective, information-led policing.

Already a pioneer as the first UK force to implement Niche RMS, North Wales has one of the widest deployments of the system in the UK, covering intelligence, criminal and non-criminal incidents, warrants, child protection, case file preparation and custody, as well as electronic transmission of data to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

Niche Technology, Inc., based in Winnipeg, Canada, is one of the world's leading suppliers of operational policing systems. Currently, 10 police forces in the UK are using Niche RMS: North Wales, South Wales, Merseyside, Cheshire, Hampshire, Cleveland, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Northern Ireland and Wiltshire.

ABOUT NICHE TECHNOLOGY AND NICHE RMS

Niche Technology is a privately owned company incorporated in Canada and the UK, specializing in law enforcement software. Niche Records Management System (Niche RMS) is used by more than 75,000 sworn officers worldwide, and current implementation projects will see that number rise to over 100,000. The system is being used to create efficiencies and improve performance across a range of operational policing functions. Niche RMS is currently used by over 50% of Canadian police officers; 27% of UK police officers in 12 forces; 20% of Australia's police officers; and is now in production use in the US. Eight of the 25 largest police services in the English-speaking world have selected Niche RMS as their core operational police system. For more information, go to www.nicherms.com.

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