



XANALYS Investigation Solutions: The Norfolk Constabulary Tackles Drug Trafficking



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Barry Lister
Detective Chief Inspector
Norfolk Constabulary
United Kingdom

The Norfolk Constabulary polices an area of approximately 3,500 square miles and a population of 750,000, with an establishment of 1,500 police officers and 1,200 support staff. As part of the National Intelligence Model guidelines, the Constabulary scans its own policing environment to identify trends and potential crime "hot spots." Information is gathered, analyzed and shared at regular meetings, at which strategic decisions are made and priorities established for future policing activities.

In this modern model of law enforcement, the Constabulary's analysts are increasingly relied upon for investigations and following National Intelligence Model guidelines. Norfolk Constabulary analysts have been using XANALYS® Link Explorer (formerly Watson®) to aid their investigation analysis since early 2000, and they find it one of the most powerful new weapons to help keep Norfolk safe.

THE CHALLENGE

When crime rates began to rise, senior managers and staff within the Norfolk Constabulary had reason for concern. Intelligence relating to crime in the coastal resort town of Great Yarmouth, in the county of Norfolk, UK, confirmed the expansion of a well-organized drug gang into the community. At the same time, vehicle-related crimes were dramatically increasing in the area.

Drug dealers from other parts of the country were systematically infiltrating the town of Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. The gang eventually grew so bold as to conduct "business" in clear view on street corners. Information collected from varied intelligence sources helped ascertain where and when drug deals were taking place. Simultaneously, intelligence about vehicle-related crimes was being compiled.

KEY CRITERIA — INFORMATION GATHERING, MAPPING AND SHARING

"We intuitively knew that tackling the drug gang problem would have a major impact on the auto-theft problem," said Detective Chief Inspector Barry Lister, who led the investigation team. "So we combined the vehicle crime data with gang-related intelligence to tighten the noose around our drug dealing gang."

Gathering Data

Crime intelligence analysts working as part of the investigation team used XANALYS Link Explorer software to analyze the structured and unstructured information gathered for both investigations. Using the software, analysts collected and linked relevant information from multiple databases such as mobile phone, driving, and residency records. That structured information was compared with wide-ranging, unstructured information from witness statements, surveillance and test purchase officer reports.

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- XANALYS Link Explorer
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Mapping Patterns

Using its own analysis techniques and XANALYS Link Explorer to aggregate all information, the Police team identified a crime pattern. From the pattern, they outlined a complete crime timeline for local investigators, highlighting a series of actions that began with a drug purchase request on a mobile phone and ended with delivery by a drug runner. To validate the identified crime pattern, mobile phone calls were put through a time series analysis that conclusively proved a correlation between outgoing calls — "orders" — and the timing of street delivery.

With a clear understanding of the drug-dealing pattern on the street, the investigation team ran similar analysis of auto-related crime activity. Their work showed an obvious pattern of theft and vandalism in the immediate vicinity of the drug dealing locations.

Sharing Information

To make final arrests, all officers involved with the investigation collaboratively created an enforcement strategy based on suspect profiles and relationships they knew existed between dealers. Ultimately, the Norfolk Constabulary arrested 26 suspects on drug trafficking, most of them high-level dealers and suppliers.

As in any investigation, an arrest is only half of the battle. To prepare the evidence for court presentation, the officers used XANALYS Link Explorer to graphically explain the mapped links between people, places and events. This clear representation of the identified links, which depicted the activities that took place on more than one instance of crime, was then presented in court.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Through a combination of superb, collaborative police work and powerful technology, the Norfolk Constabulary not only stopped Great Yarmouth drug trafficking in its tracks, but it also presented such clear evidence in court that all 26 suspects, upon seeing the evidence against them, pleaded guilty and were convicted. No one walked away. The defendants were sentenced to a combined 100-plus years in prison by the court.

For its dedication, hard work and irrefutable evidence in the courtroom, the Norfolk Constabulary was lauded by the judge for conducting a well-run, well-documented investigation. In addition, several officers were commended for their management of the investigation.

"This is a clear example where technology enabled our officers to act definitively with a crystal-clear path for our enforcement strategy," said Detective Chief Inspector Lister. "Furthermore, it is very gratifying that when presented with the evidence compiled with the use of XANALYS Link Explorer, all of the defendants knew defence was futile."

THE FIGHT CONTINUES

Detective Chief Inspector Lister goes on to say that although this is a powerful example of sound investigation by officers, much of the Constabulary's best work is preventative.

"We use the same investigative techniques every day. Using XANALYS Link Explorer to analyze crime patterns, reports and intelligence enables us to proactively deploy our officers at the right time and place for enforcement and prevention," continued Detective Chief Inspector Lister. "The role of intelligence analysis is growing rapidly, and that is where XANALYS Link Explorer makes an impact every day for the people within the County. It's not work that necessarily makes the headlines, but it is most of what we do."

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