



Co-innovation

Delivering more for less

Co-innovation

Innovation and how it can help achieve added value has been a cornerstone of many public sector organisations' strategic agendas over the last few years. As technology is undoubtedly one of the key drivers and accelerators of innovation, a fact that is not lost on IT suppliers, 'innovation' is a term that is frequently bandied around. In this paper we, PDMS Limited, put the spotlight on "co-innovation" – an approach to public and private sector organisations working together in partnership to achieve genuine innovation and deliver benefits.



'We want to share and reuse existing purchases across the public sector - not just to avoid paying twice, but to reduce risks and to drive common, joined up solutions to the common needs of government'

Angela Smith Minister of State for Cabinet Office

Open Source, Open Standards and Reuse: Government Action Plan

According to Kate Hanaghan of K2advisory, co-innovation "means that as a buyer you should expect suppliers to be able to create new solutions and approaches WITH you, not just for you". From PDMS' perspective, this means working in close collaboration with our clients, seeing the world through their eyes and focusing on beneficial business outcomes rather than simply selling solutions.

There has been a big push recently to engage more SME's in government procurement initiatives, to help tap into this traditionally, more innovation-led supplier base and to help deliver better value for money. SME's, such as ourselves, are often better placed to really deliver on co-innovation initiatives - we are often more nimble and flexible, and cost effective. Delivering innovation need not be expensive. It should more than pay for itself if done well. Nevertheless, for co-innovation to work the emphasis is on partnerships and collaboration; to effectively achieve this, public sector organisations must be open to engaging SME's on a more a more flexible basis, rather than requiring a response to strict specifications.

Back in 2008 in a paper written for DEMOS, Ian Keys and Roger O'Sullivan argue that public-private partnerships increasingly need to be based on a process of defining and redefining problems and answers, rather than contracting for predefined and ready to use solutions. PDMS believes, and our experience demonstrates, that this approach helps deliver real transformation with significant service and efficiency improvements.

We advocate a more entrepreneurial approach to working with the public sector as a technology partner, whilst still seeking to reduce risk and achieve better value for money through re-use. The following case study is just one example of where this approach has delivered a number of new national services that have delivered cost savings to the public sector and the tax payer.

Co-innovation in action

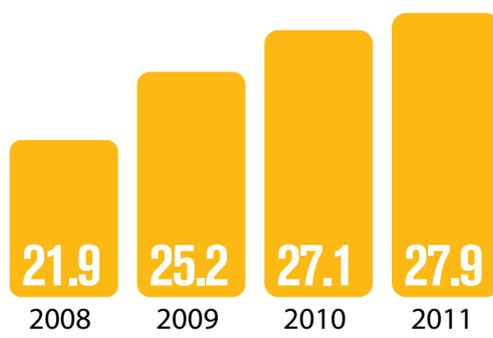
The PNLD and PDMS partnership

The Police National Legal Database team (PNLD), based at West Yorkshire Police, provides a range of commercial services funded on a subscription basis. This small team, comprising only 16 staff (11 full time and 5 part time employees), delivers a range of valuable services to over 450,000 end users and has helped the police achieve savings of over £40 million over the last 8 years.

And it's not just police officers, forces and the wider criminal justice community that are benefiting from PNLD's services; their reach extends to other areas of government such as local authorities and Trading Standards and to the wider general public.

PNLD were looking for an innovative technology company that would work with them to move their core services to an online delivery, and also work creatively with them to develop new services. One of the key drivers was achieving value for money - PNLD is completely self-funded, with all revenues derived from subscriptions to the services it provides and ensuring value for money for subscribers is paramount.

After successfully delivering PNLD's online legal database, also referred to as their document management system, PDMS has worked proactively with PNLD to remove barriers to the effective use of this primary service. In partnership we have developed a number of new, award-winning shared services based on the same underlying technology platform.



Police National Legal Database
Page Views (millions)

This collaboration between PDMS and PNLD has created a number of nationally important services which have been independently recognised at Cabinet level as making a real contribution to the effectiveness and cost of police information services to the public, as well as to criminal justice professionals. This collaboration is predicated on a co-innovative approach, where the emphasis is on business outcomes rather than product or licence sales.

The impact of PNLD in providing services to a growing number of public sector organisations, and in significantly contributing to a joined up Criminal Justice Sector in the UK, is exceptional in the following ways:

- The national reach and quality of the services provided.
- The scale and scope of the solutions provided compared with the cost of the operation.
- The technical sophistication of the managed services - which allow the same infrastructure to provide services to the general public on the internet and to police officers on the secure Police National Network (pnn).
- The commercial approach to new projects which is based on the most economic way to provide new services based on the re-use of an existing flexible platform and an agile approach to new developments.

PNLD has managed to expand their products and services whilst maintaining paid subscriptions at the same level for the fourth year in a row. This was only possible through imaginative re-use of PDMS' technology assets and successful, ongoing collaboration between the two companies. Delivering more for less!

Police National Legal Database

PNLD manage the legal database which is used by all 43 police forces in England and Wales. This system is now available online, via BlackBerry and other handheld devices, and on the secure police national network, to over 200,000 end-users.



The legal database is a national knowledge management system of up-to-date legal information, and is used by serving and student police officers, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the courts. It is also available on a commercial basis via subscription to other partners within the Criminal Justice Sector (CJS), criminal lawyers and other investigators.

The use of the legal database by investigators and practitioners within the CJS is seen as a step forward in simplifying and speeding up the legal process, and the Trading Standards Service signed up two years ago and make use of the increasing content specific to their needs.

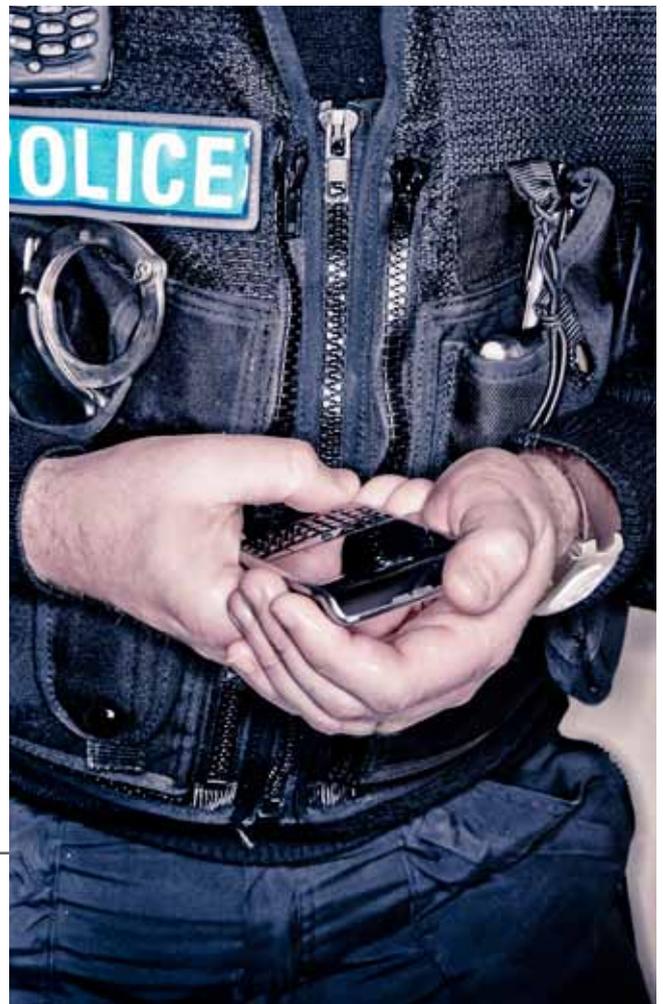
With an expanding cross-sector customer base, the usage of the legal database has substantially increased since its inception:

- On the PNN the increase has been from 100,000 events per month to 1.6 million per month.
- On the internet, from a starting point of less than 5,000 events per month, it has latterly achieved over 650,000 per month.

By delivering tools which enable non-technical users to manage the legal database content via a browser, PNLD have been able to offer greater working flexibility and have improved direct productivity. A spin off consequence has been a built in business continuity and disaster recovery plan.

For external customers, such as the CPS, the courts and other CJS members, the service has significantly contributed to joining up services within the CJS and ensuring the immediacy of communication of changes to legislation and procedures.

A mobile version of the legal database, accessible on hand held devices, provides police officers and staff away from their station with immediate access to solutions to legal issues, thus inspiring confidence in what they are doing and ensuring more presence and visibility on the streets. In 2011 there was a 100% increase in pages viewed on electronic handheld devices issued by forces on the police national network, significantly improving accessibility to PNLD's core product. In addition there has been a 200% increase in the use of the mobile commercial version.



In 2005, PNLD and PDMS were actively looking to see in what other ways centralised shared services provided by PNLD could help benefit the criminal justice community. The result was the Police FAQ portal, a solution to a problem originally identified by an HMIC inspection of Police Communications.



'Ask the Police'

Every week the police receive thousands of non-emergency calls from members of the public. Such calls are time consuming and often relate to questions about routine aspects of criminal law and police procedures. It was found that the same questions were asked hundreds of times over – simply because members of the public had no other way to find the relevant information for themselves.

In essence there was a need for a corporate and nationally consistent database of answers to questions which were most frequently asked by the public. By turning to an online database of questions and answers, instead of calling their local police force, the number of non-emergency calls to the police could be substantially reduced, thus saving time and money.

The online Police National Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Portal was created (www.askthe.police.uk) to provide up-to-date information in a timely and user-friendly manner to members of the public and the police. The PNLD team manages and distributes the FAQ database, whilst PDMS provides the underlying technology, by re-using the platform and some of the components designed for the original PNLD legal database/document management system.

The FAQ Portal project was completed within a tight 3 month time frame. The first phase, the public-facing website, was launched in 2005 by Hazel Blears MP, the then Policing Minister. Initially there were 500 questions and answers created on the portal; today there are over 700. A facility to "ask a question" was also provided, and in 2011 alone PNLD answered 15,240 questions e-mailed via the website by the public.

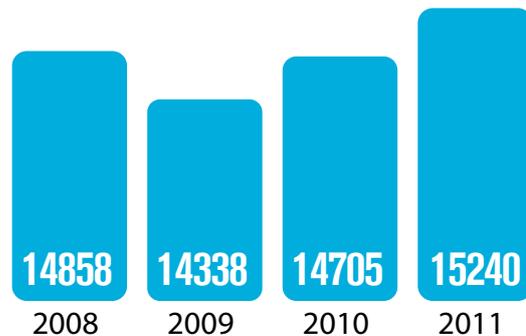
Over the years, thanks to the way the database was built by PDMS, other additions have been made to the site to assist the public in finding an answer and the police in saving time and effort. For example, local perspectives can be added to answers and local questions and answers can be created. The FAQ Portal is

also now embedded in a local council website, helping drive the localism agenda.

A free to use Ask the Police iPhone app was launched in 2012 to provide people with quick and easy access to the FAQ information whilst out and about.

The FAQ site has evolved to become an invaluable resource for staff at police call centres. It has helped to deliver more time savings and ensured more consistency in responses. A version of the portal has also been developed for BlackBerry and other hand held devices; whilst a Scottish version (www.askthe.scottish.police.uk), which reflects their unique legislation and procedures, was launched in November 2010.

The FAQ database has proved to be an efficient and wholly cost effective solution, with 43 million hits on the UK /Wales portal and 4.8 million on the Scottish portal in 2011/2012. The savings for the police, based on a non-emergency call lasting on average 4.0 minutes, means that this innovative project has saved approximately 400,000 hours a year at a potential cost of £6 million. The cost of the initial project was under £50,000, largely because PDMS were able to re-use software components previously developed for PNLD for no additional charge.



Number of direct public questions answered by PNLD using the 'Ask a Question' facility

Police National Statistics Database

The Home Office's iQuanta site provides forces and partners with access to displays of data which Police Forces submit on monthly or quarterly cycles. This data enables comparisons to be made between forces in respect of the performance of their identified Basic Command Units (BCUs) and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs).



This system increased the existing appetite, within forces, for detailed data to allow analysts to explore more fully the range of information associated with the inferences contained within the iQuanta outputs.

In 2008 the ACPO Performance Measurement Development (PMD) Committee identified a need for detailed data, in a format suitable for more detailed analysis, particularly in relation to crime and user satisfaction. This need was endorsed via the regional structures and sanctioned by the ACPO Performance Management Business Area.

PNLD's reputation and its ability to deliver solutions with its technology partner PDMS, resulted in "the partnership" being approached to come up with another managed service. The new Police National Statistics Database (PNSD) system was needed to provide easy and timely access to forces' data with minimal administrative or financial overhead. Tapping onto the PNLD system would therefore ensure that forces already had access to the central system and that there was an existing 'pooled' budget for funding the development.

The specification for the PNSD was developed by the ACPO Performance Measurement Development Committee (as part of the ACPO Performance Management Business Area) and

submitted to the management team of PNLD (who act on behalf of the police service across the country). The PNSD was then developed by PDMS based on the technical platform that was already driving the PNLD document management system and the National Police FAQ Portal, thus achieving PNLD's value for money objectives.

The system was launched via correspondence to all Chief Constables, inviting them to identify a single point of contact for their force to take care of the (minimal) administrative overhead and authorised users for their force.

The overall efficiency gains that the PNSD system brings are difficult to quantify, but data comparison that was not immediately available in iQuanta is now available in a matter of minutes; this has served to both save time and increase the range of data that is analysed. The outcome is better informed decision making and action based on sound and comprehensive analysis. Forces are able to compare detailed performance information around offence profiles, methods of detection and diagnostic user satisfaction findings, at the Force, CDRP and BCU level. The information is of use corporately, to support strategic decision making, and locally for BCU management and dialogue with partners. This supports the continued delivery of performance improvement by police forces.

Police and Crime Commissioners

In 2012/13, there will be major changes to the policing landscape with the introduction of the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC). PNLD and PDMS have been looking at how some of their existing products and services could be used on a shared services basis by the new PCCs - to help them get up and running quickly and efficiently and ensure even better value for money.



The new role of PCC will replace the former Police Authorities and is to be the voice of the people: to hold the police to account and ensure they deliver efficient and effective policing. Increasingly, as the PCC elections approach, the public will want to learn more about the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner generally, and later, once elected, how their new Commissioner will represent them and their communities.

PNLD and PDMS have now developed a number of new services, all provided on a managed service basis, to inform the general public and help PCCs share information with the public and their partners whilst keeping costs to a minimum.

These include:

- The Ask the Commissioner Portal (www.askthecommissioner.co.uk) – which is based on the Police FAQ Portal and platform, and provides answers to frequently asked questions about PCCs.
- PCC Website Template – an editable website to enable current Police Authorities to publicise information about their constituency and the election process before subsequently handing the website on to the new Commissioner.
- A secure, cloud-based document portal - which the PCC can use to store, control and share documents with limited user groups, or the general public, including agendas, minutes, policing plans etc.

By providing cost-effective, national solutions, PNLD is helping each region to save time and money.

How can PDMS help you?

Large enough to deliver but small enough to care, PDMS employs 60 staff, has an office in central London and holds ISO accreditations in Quality Management, Security Management and Environmental Management.

In addition to PNLD, we work in partnership with clients including Transport for London (TfL), Department of Health, NHS, Centrica and Government Procurement Service.

Our track record demonstrates that:

- PDMS can help you deliver cost effective new services through a co-innovation, partnership-based approach.
- PDMS will provide you with value for money through re-use.
- PDMS will reduce the risks of bespoke software development to you, through the re-use of our existing technology platform and components which have been tried and tested in hundreds of successful systems.
- PDMS will provide you with personalised services, based on long term relationships between our team and your staff.
- PDMS can reduce your procurement costs, as we are accredited on the G-Cloud framework in Software-as-a-Service and Cloud Application Development services.



Supplier to
 Government Procurement
 Service

Find out more

Please contact Giles Milner for a chat about how we can help you deliver real business benefits - through a partnership and co-innovative approach. Together we can deliver IT solutions which cost-effectively solve your business problems.

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