



Location:

Albuquerque, N.M.,
Police Department

Population:

520,000 Citizens

Challenge:

- Lack of communication between local businesses about crime
- High barrier of entry for citizen involvement

Solution:

- Powerful public crime mapping
- Easy, free crime alerts

For more information:
Ryan Luffkin
Director of Marketing
(801) 828-2721
Ryan@CrimeReports.com



CrimeReports

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– Deputy Chief Michael Callaway

Albuquerque Uses CrimeReports to Connect with Businesses and Community Groups

Albuquerque, N.M.

Deputy Chief Michael Callaway oversees field operations for the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Police Department, and he believes that the key to a good crime prevention program is community involvement. “We always work to involve our community,” he says. “We have citizens get involved in helping take care of their neighborhood. We encourage neighborhood watches and neighborhood patrols.” But more than simply building relationships in residential neighborhoods, the Albuquerque PD reaches out to local businesses to create useful partnerships and coalitions to prevent organized retail theft, shoplifting, and other criminal activities. To help sustain these relationships, the Albuquerque Police Department uses CrimeReports to connect businesses and inform citizens about criminal activity.

Business Partnerships

“From a community perspective, knowledge and information is power,” says Callaway. That’s why the Albuquerque PD has chosen to make CrimeReports part of its overall community outreach program, not only targeting residential neighborhoods, but sharing crime data with local businesses. For example, the Albuquerque PD organized the Construction Industry Crime Association (CICA) in order to prevent crime in the local construction industry. “We brought together groups of people who work in the construction industry and who have experienced some of the crime that is unique to that industry. For example: copper piping thefts, construction and heavy equipment and tool thefts,” says Callaway. And, when they get together each month, officers show the group CrimeReports.com and ask them to help make the map even more accurate and up-to-date by reporting theft and vandalism when it occurs at their construction sites.

By diligently staying informed and sharing information with police, all the local construction companies are aware of the problems and crime trends at sites around the city. “These companies can get on CrimeReports and see what is being stolen and where. They can work together to prevent these crimes from occurring at their own job sites.” In addition to using CrimeReports, they have also set up a specific email list so that business owners can stay in touch with each other about local industry crime. Callaway adds, “And since the market for construction



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equipment is other construction companies, they can be on the lookout for anyone trying to sell stolen equipment."

Similarly, the Albuquerque PD has created crime prevention associations for the Hotel/Motel industry, local retailers, and downtown businesses. "Wal-Mart is sharing information with Walgreens, who is sharing information with Staples and so forth," says Callaway. The local businesses are using CrimeReports, communicating with each other and, ultimately, says Callaway, "communicating with us more. And sharing information in this way leads to a more accurate establishment of patterns and arrests."

An Informed Community

"We are always barraged with requests for information about what's going on in a particular neighborhood," says Callaway. "Our substations are open during normal business hours, but questions come up after hours, and it's not necessarily the job of our first responders to answer simple informational questions. What we wanted was a system where community members could actually pull up the information themselves and see what is going on in their own neighborhood." When the Albuquerque PD discovered CrimeReports, they found a solution that perfectly fit their needs.

Callaway has found that when he goes out to local community watch or neighborhood association meetings one of the most frequent questions he gets asked is, "What's going on in my neighborhood?" The first thing he and other officers do is point citizens to CrimeReports.com. "We show them the information they can access," he says. "We show them the tools that are available to them, and how to use that information. You want accurate information, up-to-date information? Well, here it is." In turn, he asks citizens to keep the police department informed about criminal activity they see in their neighborhood.

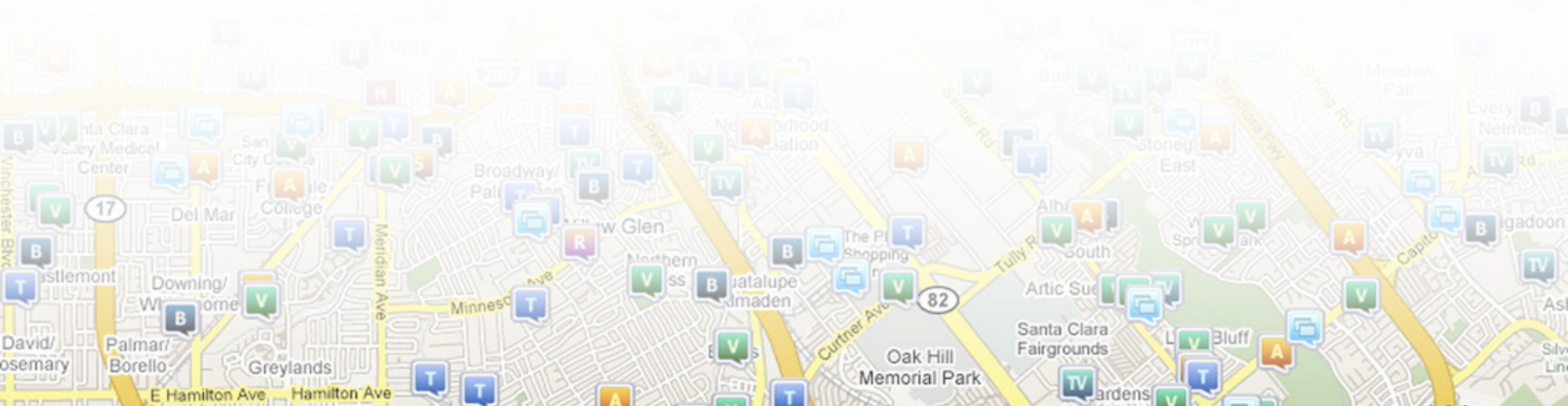
Providing timely crime data to citizens recently paid off with a string of neighborhood burglaries. After being alerted to the problem, a neighborhood board member sent out an email to others in the neighborhood with the description of a vehicle spotted at some of the burglaries. With a combination of sharing crime data and an engaged community, the vehicle was spotted within the week, and the Albuquerque PD was able to apprehend the individuals responsible.

Making it Easy

Callaway believes that CrimeReports has lowered the barrier of entry for citizens and business owners who want to get involved in local crime prevention efforts. "The more information they can retrieve on their own," says Callaway, "the more informed they are, the better they will be in terms of being our eyes and ears in the community—and the more interest they will take in their neighborhood." Citizens are so busy between work, school, social activities, running businesses, and taking kids to soccer practice that not everyone has time to go to a community watch meeting or go out and patrol their neighborhood. "But," says Callaway, "everyone has the internet" and it only takes a few minutes to check your neighborhood online or sign up for a free email crime alert.

Information Sharing

"Community awareness and crime prevention is not just the Albuquerque Police Department's responsibility—it's everybody's responsibility," says Callaway, and sharing timely, accurate



information is key to that philosophy. "If we can show community members what we are doing to provide them with this information, it helps them become more involved as well. It's a two-way street." Callaway feels, in a very real way, that the department should be accountable to the citizens it serves. And a good relationship with citizens is key to helping the department prevent crime. So, he says, "you foster those relationships by keeping them informed."

For the Albuquerque PD, CrimeReports has been essential to filling a gap in communication between police, residents, and businesses. "CrimeReports is a piece of the puzzle," says Callaway. "It leads to an increase in community interaction and involvement, and—ultimately—that is an important component to helping solve crime and reduce crime rates."

About CrimeReports.com

Working nearly 700 law enforcement agencies across North America, CrimeReports is the largest and most accurate online resource for up-to-date crime information. The CrimeReports network offers a family of affordable, easy-to-use software tools for law enforcement agencies to understand crime trends and share up-to-date neighborhood crime data with the public, including a free iPhone app. Community members can access the integrated crime map and receive email crime alerts for free at www.CrimeReports.com, empowering them to make informed decisions to help improve the safety of their neighborhood and community.

CrimeReports services are offered by Public Engines, Inc. For more information, visit www.CrimeReports.com.

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