CASE STUDY

ASAP Systems Helps Vancouver Police Department Track Law Enforcement Equipment and Stock Inventory

Case Study Overview

COMPANY:  
Vancouver, WA Police Department  
www.cityofvancouver.us/police

INDUSTRY:  
Law Enforcement

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:  
Automate the management of thousands of police inventory and assets throughout their lifecycles, including their costs, movement, maintenance, and disposal in order to improve accountability and meet city and state auditor guidelines.

SOLUTION:  
Passport Stock Inventory  
Passport Assets  
Passport Mobile

BENEFITS:  
• Custom reporting to track the use of grant funding  
• Effortless management of equipment calibrations, repairs, and replacements  
• Reduced inventory and asset costs and losses  
• Secure database of inventory/asset information

VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT  
“Beyond the Call”

Because the Vancouver Police Department was experiencing organizational changes, they were faced with a significant increase in the number of acquisitions of both assets and consumable inventory which needed to be tracked. Due to increasing regulations and compliance issues on fixed assets and inventory by auditors, VPD consistently needed to perform important inventory and asset audits in order to meet controlled mandates.

For many years, Vancouver Police tracked and assigned assets utilizing a hard copy check out-in system in combination with multiple spreadsheets without accounting for inventory values and disposition of items. They needed an effective automated system of tracking inventory consumables and fixed assets to consistently meet city and state auditor guidelines which mandated that they were able to show asset transfers and disposal.
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THE CHALLENGE

VPD needed an automated system to track and manage thousands of inventory items and assets.

The Vancouver Police Department was faced with the challenge of tracking and managing thousands of items—everything from inventory on-hand, inventory costs, lifecycles and the disposition of inventory to assets that are checked out-in, assigned, filed, and calibrated for required maintenance repairs such as police equipment, bullet proof vests, radars, and PBT’s. With recent cuts to the department and City, logistics did not have the resources to routinely administer cycle counts or verify equipment issued to personnel.

“One of our main challenges was that majority of personal equipment being manually tracked; the ability to generate necessary reports or accessing information to equipment issued outside of VPD HQ was non-existent. Without an automated inventory and asset tracking system, it was time consuming when equipment was issued out and returned because files had to be manually pulled, filed, and entered into spreadsheets. In addition, many errors occurred with paperwork being lost, misfiled or not properly updated.”

The Vancouver Police Department needed an inventory and asset tracking system that would allow them to:

- Provide updated information regarding the location and cost center of each asset. Thus, improving management of assets/consumables and control costs.
- Reduce department costs by minimizing inventory losses of unaccounted assets.
- Faster data entry with greater accuracy and eliminating duplicated records, by utilizing barcode readers
- Increase accountability with built in data verification and system security.
- Reduce processing time to create/produce reports and export data, by using advanced reporting features easily accessible by personnel other than Logistics.
- Manage inventories to meet City and State Auditor guidelines in being able to show asset transfers and disposal.
- Eliminate the redundant manual systems and increased transparency of logistics.

FINDING A SYSTEM TO FIT THEIR NEEDS

With the help of an IT project manager, VPD had a list of questions to vendors that included features, support options, and training. Their research lead them to ASAP Systems’ Passport solution for inventory and asset tracking, paired with two handheld Motorola MC55 scanners, and two Zebra label printers. One of the greatest features that lead VPD to ASAP Systems’ inventory and asset tracking system is being able to accommodate grant compliances.

“Probably one of the biggest advantages we have experiences over the last couple of years is being able to provide grant compliance. We wanted to be able to track grant awarded items, run reports for auditing purposes, and attach pictures and documentation associated with the grant to the item all in one place.”

ASAP Systems’ inventory and asset tracking system Passport made it easy to manage grant requirements by enabling grants to be centrally deposited with documented storage copies of original paperwork and it provided the usability to take pictures and tag the items in the system as being purchased with grant money.
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GETTING STARTED

The Vancouver Police Department implemented a tracking process that helped establish a uniform system that was user-friendly to fit the overall operation of the department. Since there are a large number of asset items assigned with uniquely different numbers already, certain assets had to be distinguished between assets with auto generated barcode numbers that were created within the system. A process was set up to differentiate between a system generated number and a preprinted number by choosing to identify system generated numbers with the letters of their agency.

Stock inventory went smooth for VPD; they took advantage of the auto generated numbering system that ASAP Systems provides, making it easier to implement items within the system. This made the labeling process easy as they were able to keep track of all items associated with stock inventory.

Some additional benefits that helped VPD setup ASAP Systems’ inventory and asset tracking system include:

- Great support/implementation team, ease of importing information
- Learning curve for someone using the system constantly with little instructions was quick for basic functions and the reporting features with no problems.
- For all our stock items we did not have any tracking or barcode system in place, so we only used the auto generated barcode/numbers that Passport assigns which made it easier to assign item numbers.
- Ability to attach documents (e.g. repair documents) that will follow an item through its life cycle.

THE SOLUTION

Saving time and money

ASAP Systems’ Passport solution provided Vancouver Police Department with a more automated and proficient way of keeping track of the movement and value of over 5,000 expensive assets throughout the department with an estimated value of over 3,000,000 dollars. The wide variety of functionality that ASAP Systems provided for fixed asset management helped the Vancouver police department substantively decrease the amount of lost funds—and equipment—incur on an annual basis.

Passport made individuals within Vancouver Police Department more accountable for their equipment by accurately identifying where an item should be assigned, located, and when it should be replaced or restored. Increased organization of assets within the system made viewing equipment issued out to individual personnel simpler as it helped reunite lost assets with their owners and show a detailed audit trail for movement of materials including the disposal and run history on stock items issued to appropriately charge the individual using the units.
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Equipment is not only managed by location and holder, but ASAP Passport helps track the asset’s history throughout its lifetime. This is a key benefit in understanding the scheduling when equipment needs be calibrated, repaired, and replaced so that the equipment is consistently used on a day-to-day basis.

When tracking stock inventory consumables, money was saved by not overstocking items and they are given the power to quickly find items that are spread out over two warehouses where stock inventory is stored. Inventory purchasers use money more efficiently by not over-stocking items. Moreover, the system has given the power to quickly find items that were spread out over two warehouses where stock inventory was stored.

“We over the last couple of years its help us to save money by not overstocking items or in the ability to find items that are spread out over two warehouses.”

MEASURING THE USABILITY OF GRANTS AND EQUIPMENT WITH CUSTOM REPORTING

Because it is the public’s money that is funding such equipment, it is important for officials to be frugal and savvy with the way they made purchases and managed their fixed assets as well as consistently report to make sure the funds are being used properly. The Vancouver Police Department utilized the custom reporting feature within ASAP Systems’ Passport solution to track grants and ultimately to see how funding is used.

They are now able to centrally deposit grants with document storage copies of original paperwork, take pictures, and tag the items in the system as being grant purchased, which is a critical aspect of their grant requirements. Using the robust functionality of ASAP Systems’ Passport, over two hundred asset transactions are associated with grants, giving VPD the ability to measure grants.

Customizable reporting has also helped give a better understanding of where all their equipment is and was at all times. Due to the majority of personal equipment being tracked, the ability to generate necessary reports or accessing information to equipment issued outside of VPD HQ gives the department a better understanding of who is responsible for equipment.

By automating their inventory management and asset tracking with ASAP Systems using barcode technology, VPD has drastically cut down on lost equipment, made their team more efficient, and increased accountability for consumables and grants used within the department.

For more information on ASAP Systems’ inventory and asset tracking solutions, visit www.asapsystems.com or contact at sales@asapsystems.com