

33,000 Member Public Safety Organization Taps Essextec for Application Development Overhaul



Client: APCO Intentional (apcointl.org/) is the world's oldest and largest organization of public safety communications professionals that supports the largest U.S. membership base of any public safety association. It serves the needs of public safety communications practitioners worldwide by providing expertise, professional development, technical assistance, advocacy, and outreach to benefit its members and the public. In a nutshell, APCO's members are the professionals who administer and run 911 call centers across the United States.

Challenge: APCO provides subscribing members with a catalog of logically prioritized interrogation scripts for more than 100 typical scenarios including fire, law enforcement, and medical emergencies. This is the content that is used nationwide by public safety answering points (PSAP) during emergency calls.

Call center managers need a responsive and flexible system to guide their call takers through the scripts in the most consistent and expedient means in order to dispatch the appropriate emergency service response. Moreover, once 911 cases have been closed, their transcripts must be audited and scored in a consistent manner to ensure quality and to assure the public of the PSAP agency capability. Currently, only a small subset of cases are reviewed and scored by agency supervisors due to the sheer volume of case transcript data. APCO seeks to move overall quality assurance capability to the next level and allow agencies to achieve 100% case review coverage instead of the industry standard 10% assessment target.

Solution: Due to the fine reputation of our professional services team in application development with cloud infrastructure and cognitive computing, Essextec was chosen by both IBM and APCO to create a solution which would enhance the capability to provide more complete quality assurance coverage. We proposed a centralized strategy that included IBM Cloud (Bluemix) to replace a 12 year old on-premise client-server application. Essextec defined a road map for the client to integrate selected Watson product capabilities, all on the IBM Cloud, into its new proprietary software. The delivered solution included a defined API for third-party system integration with the new platform. During this complex implementation, Essextec was able to build an entire ecosystem of cloud environments for development, QA, and production as well as satisfy 40 key use cases and deliver on two thirds of an IBM defined two-year road map — all within five months.

Benefits: Once fully implemented, the complete suite of cognitive capabilities will help agencies exceed professional standards on quality assurance case reviews through a dynamic and cognitive process. For example, Watson Speech-to-Text and other IBM Watson and machine learning capabilities will be used to understand the actual context of the emergency calls. This information will be aggregated and, using a variety of IBM Watson services, PSAP directors will more readily analyze the conversations and compare them to pre-scripted content. The resulting feedback will be provided to agency and call center directors in an easy to read format so they are able to modify training or response communications materials accordingly.

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