

ON THE MOVE

With the Monroe County Sheriff's Department

“After we'd deployed NetMotion, one of our deputies told me, 'You can take my gun, just don't take my computer.'”

*Mike Grattan, Systems Administrator
Monroe County (Florida) Sheriff's Department*

“Our deputies are spread out across 112 miles of islands. When they roll up on a call, our wireless system has to keep them connected.”

Grattan: We'd been using AT&T's CDPD network, but they're phasing it out, so we went with GPRS. The “bread and butter” application we use in the patrol cars is SmartCOP. It gives officers pretty much all the information they require at their fingertips when they're rolling up on a call. The officers really like it. But, while we got pretty much everything else working over GPRS, we could not make SmartCOP work. SmartCOP needs a static IP

address, but GPRS doesn't provide it. Fortunately AT&T has partners that included NetMotion Wireless. They suggested we look at NetMotion Mobility.

“We got NetMotion Mobility up and running in less than an hour. Lo and behold, it actually solved several problems for us.”

Grattan: Mobility gave us a static IP for each device, so now our SmartCOP application worked. But there's also a federal requirement that any law enforcement data that's pushed over a public network has to be encrypted end-to-end. NetMotion does that for us as well. It also gave us the added advantage of a little extra throughput because of the compression it does. It's been solid—that server just sits there and runs and runs and runs.

“Our Mobility upgrades have been seamless. There have been no headaches and no hidden gotchas.”

Grattan: We use NetMotion Mobility in 130 Panasonic Toughbooks and 30 Dell laptops. Response time to calls has gone down. With GPRS we get transfer rates of about 40 kbps, which Mobility kicks up to about 70 kbps. An officer alone might be covering 10 to 20 square miles. Now information gets to officers faster. They can start rolling toward a location and their backup can also see it and start rolling simultaneously. They can know a car is stolen before they even pull it over or whether they're dealing with a felon or a run-of-the-mill speeder. Mobility's Application Persistence feature keeps our computers from crashing in areas with spotty coverage. When we were trying to get this up and running, we worked closely with NetMotion engineers. They showed a real strong commitment to solving problems and getting us running.

MEET THE MOVERS

The hundred or more Florida Keys form a limestone “left hook” thrusting southwest into the Caribbean and separating the Atlantic Ocean from the Gulf of Mexico. Comprising barely 5 percent of Monroe County, which is largely on the mainland, only some 40 of the islands are occupied by a significant number of people. Many are largely uninhabited, some little wider than one of the 45 bridges that link the principal islands. Access to the ocean and the remoteness of the place make the Keys a major waypoint for illegal immigrants and provide a variety of challenges for the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. Nature also doesn't make the police task easy in subtropical Florida, where Monroe County lies in the path of frequent hurricanes that endanger life, property, and public order. On top of those formidable pressures,



the Florida Keys is a popular vacation spot with over 2,000,000 visitors each year. In peak season (January until April) the population of the county may reach as high as 150,000. In that environment, a major public safety issue is effective communication with road patrol deputies who are often far from headquarters and operating in environments where a solid link to dispatchers, good information, and assistance is crucial to their performance and individual safety.