



Success story

POLICE

San Fernando
Police Facility

A powerful
tool for
transparency
and trust

The motto of the San Fernando Police Department in southern California is “Serving with Honor and Integrity” – and to the officers, detectives, and administrators in the agency, it’s not just a saying but a philosophy they embody every day.

The facts

The customer

San Fernando Police Department,
San Fernando
www.ci.san-fernando.ca.us/police/

The solution

PUMA-5 and PUMA Evidence Management Software, the only Audio Recording Solution in the market specifically designed for law enforcement use

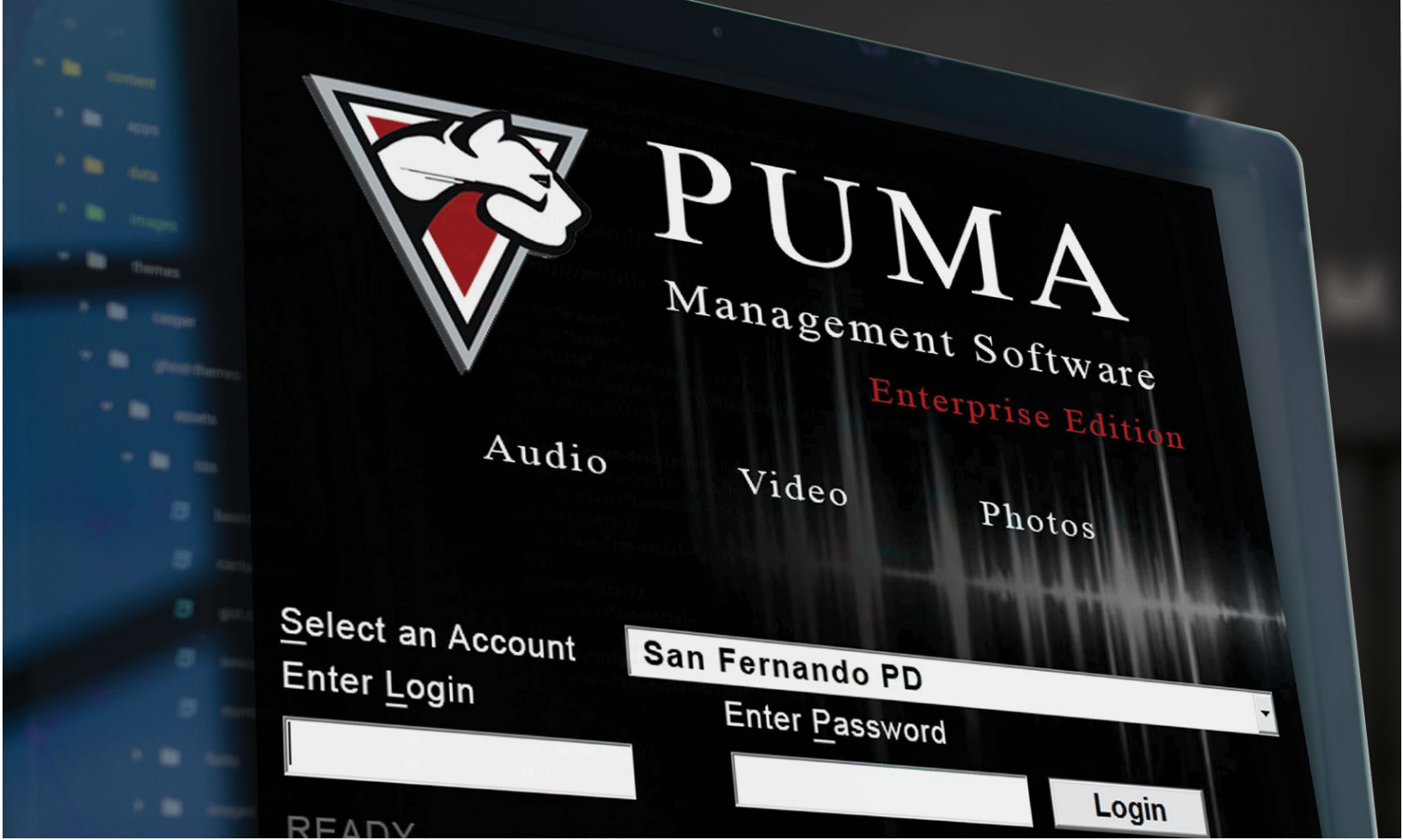
As proponents of community-oriented policing, at the core of which is building relationships with citizens, leadership within the Police Department is continuously looking for ways to nurture positive interactions with the public.

The need for transparency and reliability

One of the increasingly important aspects of the relationship between law enforcement organizations and the communities they serve is transparency and openness. Having referenceable records of witness/suspect interviews, traffic stops, and other interactions is a significant component of supporting transparency.

While the San Fernando Police Department has earned a strong reputation within the community and already maintains a good relationship with their public, the department saw opportunities to utilize best practices from agencies in neighboring areas for proactive improvement. Documenting statements and interviews is not a new practice, and many police organizations use recording devices to capture interactions with citizens. However, Irwin Rosenberg, Sergeant of Professional Standards and Training, says there were opportunities to expand departmental excellence in this area.

Sergeant Rosenberg leads a variety of operational, administrative, and training initiatives, and points out that though there are evidentiary rules and processes in place, there was a lack of consistency and reliable quality when it came to capturing



and filing recordings. Some officers and detectives were using different types of recording devices, but the files were not uniformly named and the audio quality varied widely. Further, there wasn’t a complementary software system to streamline and standardize the upload, processing, categorizing and searching of recordings once they were captured. This created challenges when interviews, interrogations, traffic stops or calls for service required review, analysis or export for court proceedings.

A solution purpose-built for the needs of law enforcement

As the only full-scope audio recording solution tailored to the Law Enforcement market, the PUMA-5 powered by Philips and PUMA Evidence Management Software, quickly became the clear choice to address the department’s challenges. The San Fernando Police Department conducted research on several options, but Sergeant Rosenberg’s recommendation to the department Chief and City Manager to choose the PUMA-5 and PUMA Evidence Management Software was based on best practices and adoption among

other agencies: “We asked ourselves what other departments were using. El Monte, Glendale and Burbank, as well as other agencies, were all using PUMA.”

The PUMA-5 is a comprehensive solution combining robust, field-tested hardware and software by Philips, the leader in professional dictation solutions. Equipped with special law enforcement-focused capabilities, many of the features directly aligned to the San Fernando Police Department’s needs from start to finish. For example, the superior audio quality captures interactions with interviewees more clearly and accurately, while non-editable audio files ensure correct data capture every time. Further, the PUMA-5 solution is built to be as accessible as possible for officers, with simple record activation and a customized uniform holster so the recorder is always at the ready to keep up with officers’ fast-paced environment.

When it comes to uploading files, PUMA Evidence Management automates many traditionally manual tasks that can lead to errors or misfiling.



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Irwin Rosenberg
Sergeant at San Fernando Police Department

Finally, it provides role-based access and a complete audit trail for recordings, tracking the full history of the file's lifespan. This allows for very quick retrieval and sorting of files, which now enables officers or administrators to quickly access and review recordings.

Sergeant Rosenberg led implementation and training when the PUMA Solution was introduced and adds that while such solutions are not always met with positivity, the officers within the department have embraced it. Police Administration took a collaborative approach with implementation of Audio Recorders. "We worked hand in hand with the union prior to introducing the solution, they reviewed and approved the policy we developed, which means it wasn't a directive," he says. "This was key in gaining buy-in and advocacy ahead of the introduction of the solution."

Achieving objectives for today, keeping an eye toward the future

The PUMA-5 solution has been implemented for nearly a year, and it has been well-received across the San Fernando Police Department and has helped to enhance workflows and efficacy. The leadership team is already seeking ways to make the investment even more effective: The PUMA-5 has been issued to all full-time sworn officers. In addition, devices are available for reserve officers to checkout during their shifts.

Not only has the PUMA solution added better data organization and recording functionality to make administrative tasks easier, it has also provided a uniform process and reliable methods to further increase transparency with the San Fernando community. Sergeant Rosenberg recognizes the value this brings to the department, and further underscores the driving reason behind implementing the PUMA-5 solution: "It's valuable to have consistency and reliability, and it's a way to maintain the trust of our public."



