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Recently I flew on Silver Airways, an airline I had never heard of. With only a couple of routes out of South Florida it's a small airline yet, incredibly efficient. They had the only flight left to where I needed to go that day.

When I checked in at the counter, the representative was alone, handling me, the phone, the computer, and the pilot. Yes, the pilot. On the desk was a desktop radio-phone. The pilot called in over the radio that he was "2 minutes out" and checked to confirm his gate was ready. The employee at the counter responded, "roger, all set". I had to ask- "is that the pilot?" Yes, it was; "we wear many hats here", he said with a smile.

Direct, simple and incredibly efficient. A full ground to air operation with a customer experience in between that gets the job done with precision and utter simplicity. Naturally, being the process guy that I am, I immediately thought, "if only..."

Frame what you are about to read with the understanding that I came from the job that you do. A decent amount of time, 20 years in law enforcement with a stint in records and IT, provided me with a great frame of reference and well-grounded, first-hand knowledge. It provided the experience needed to successfully consult and train literally hundreds of agencies. I get to see some really great operations but more often than not, some real head scratchers.

If only... criminal justice agencies operated with that same kind of direct, simple, incredibly efficient approach to business process and customer service. In 2018, the overwhelming majority of agencies in the U.S., despite having the tech in place to enable otherwise, operate with paper-driven, overly-complex business processes and workflows. Reports get printed, filed, sent to the court by a courier (usually an employee), fax and horse and buggy (exaggeration but you get the point).

Take a quick mental inventory of how your agency is managing its records and data. Is it efficient? Direct? Centered on providing information to others in the most expeditious, efficient manner possible?

One recent client of ours, a large sheriff's office, operates with a robust CAD/RMS system yet *p-r-i-n-t-s e-v-e-r-y c-a-s-e, c-r-e-a-t-e-s -a -f-o-l-d-e-r f-o-r e-a-c-h o-n-e, a-n-d f-i-l-e-s t-h-e-m.*

"I'm 45 minutes out..."

The other required ingredient that made the whole round-trip experience pleasurable were employees who at every level displayed such a positive experience. The flight attendants were as nice as could be; the baggage handlers handed your bag to you; the pilot told us jokes before take-off. I've never had such a pleasurable travel experience and I fly nearly every week.

It's safe to say that if you work in records management, you already know the laws in your state that enable paperless operations. If not, it's reasonable for others to scratch their head and think "why not?" That's a problem.

We *all* pay for inefficiency. Higher costs, higher taxes, more bureaucracy.

Be the champion at your agency and drive forward progress. We can help.

About PRI

PRI is a highly specialized management consulting firm that provides criminal justice agencies records management, IT and crime data consulting, training and project management services. With core competencies in public records compliance, UCR/NIBRS, CJIS, RMS/CAD systems and records operations, PRI has proudly served over 1400 agencies since 2008.

Unlike many consulting companies, PRI is owned and managed by public safety practitioners who specialize in the nuances of today's information management compliance requirements and bring deep expertise with a businesslike approach to problem solving. The success of every project is not just about the latest technology. It means a commitment to first learning your agency's operations, understanding your challenges and delivering comprehensive solutions that support your needs.

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