

# naplesnews.com

Wednesday, October 17, 2001

By SONJA BJELLAND, [skbjelland@naplesnews.com](mailto:skbjelland@naplesnews.com)

A new wave of technology will splash into Lee County law enforcement in 2002.

In less than a year, all arresting agencies will use the same forms when detailing an arrest and copies can be eliminated, said Maj. Mark Levens of the Lee County Sheriff's Office.

This means that someone arrested by the Florida Gulf Coast University police would have the same type of form as someone arrested by the Sheriff's Office. Currently, this is not the case and can cause confusion, Levens said. Each agency prepares its own booking sheet to fit the particular statistics it needs.

The company VisionTEK Inc. created a design that allows fluency within the justice system and each department can still have the information needed.

"Everybody's on the same sheet of music for the arrests," Levens said. "It's bound to improve the system."

Specific improvement, Levens said, may include an ease in training new clerks at the jail and having important information easily available because no one is looking differently at each sheet.

---

"It will eliminate a lot of redundancy and the need to have data touched several different times. I think the way Lee County is approaching this is a new integration concept for criminal justice systems."

— Carroll Allison, Vice President Sales and Marketing.

---

The new automated booking system will also allow reports to immediately be sent to the departments that need the information such as the jail or courts.

"Now a lot is done through hard copy," Levens said. "It's delivered to us and then disseminated by us to the jail."

While this will eliminate the need for many of the estimated 250,000 copies made last year at the Sheriff's Office, some legal requirements demand a judge must have the original papers.

Levens said the cost of all those copies led to discussing the possibility of having the system.

The company already provides the Sheriff's Office with technological tools for the patrol cars and has been for about two years, said Carroll Allison, vice president of sales and marketing.

VisionTEK, based in Superior, Colo., developed the plan about a year ago in response to a request from local agencies.

"I think it's unique in Lee County from the officers' standpoint because it will be Web based," Allison said. "It will be easy for the users."

The company plans to train certain people in the criminal justice system who can then train more people who will be using the software. According to the company Web site, creators spent hours on ride-a-longs with officers and deputies to understand what law enforcement agencies needed. For the company, it is a novel approach for all the different agencies to agree to work in concert.

"It will eliminate a lot of redundancy and the need to have data touched several different times," Allison said. "I think the way Lee County is approaching this is a new integration concept for criminal justice systems."