



Nevada
Civil and
Criminal
Information
System

NCJIS Mod Criminal Justice Training News

Leading the way to a safer Nevada.

A COTS-specific newsletter brought to you by the Nevada Department of Public Safety.

ISSUE 5

AUGUST 2021

Program Overview



The **NCJIS Modernization Program** is preparing to roll out new commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software, which has been selected over internal or custom development. Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of off-the-shelf software will help you understand the strengths and/or limitations of the new system.

This newsletter is dedicated to illustrating the advantages and disadvantages of COTS software.

COTS Defined

Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software is a term for software products that are ready-made and available for purchase and are unlike a custom-made environment. COTS approaches are important when an agency has limited IT resources or other major constraints. This modernization moves Nevada's criminal justice applications from interdependent technologies to a more robust, state-of-the-art technology supported by a combination of unified vendors.

Advantages of COTS

- COTS software allows agencies to focus their limited IT resources on integration of the new system and business process alignment.
- It frees up IT resources from development to management and support.
- COTS software is developed to industry requirements and standards, brings industry-wide experience to the product base, and generally yields a better overall product that moves forward with enhancements over time.
- Time used to purchase software is much shorter than time spent developing the software and the risk is generally less.
- Fewer resources in terms of human capital, office space, and money are required compared to development of customized software.
- Reliability of the system is greater since commercial software is tested for a larger variety of use and by many organizations.
- Technology changes at a very rapid rate today, and commercial software vendors stay informed on the latest architecture capabilities and integrate them into their products.

Disadvantages of COTS

- Recurring costs tend to be higher than system maintenance costs, but most agencies do not consider staff costs as part of the total cost of ownership when comparing the two.
- The client has to rely on the vendor's schedule if product upgrades are desired.
- Vendors can be slow to make major technology shifts.
- The software may have either too few or too many features and functions.
- Integration with other agency systems may be complex.
- It may require users to change existing business processes to align with the COTS systems.
- Previously requested agency-specific adaptations may not be possible.

Great effort is being taken to provide the best solutions for the State of Nevada and our criminal justice and civil business communities. The coming COTS solutions are based on high industry standards that will enhance business capabilities, contribute to process improvement, and improve efficiency through time-saving automated features and capabilities. Considering these attributes, agencies need to understand that user agency customizations of the past are not a part of the NCJIS Modernization and new COTS environment.

Should your agency have concerns or questions regarding this modernization and how it impacts previously provided capabilities or features for your agency, please contact the NCJIS Modernization Program Team at NCJISMod@dps.state.nv.us.

Change Management



Stakeholder Outreach

The NCJIS Modernization Change Manager is planning these informational opportunities:

- **August 2021: Criminal Justice Change Ambassador Meeting.** This meeting will inform our ambassadors on the latest NCJIS Mod activities and provide information on the upcoming Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) meeting shown below. Meeting date options are:

08.24.21 02:00–02:30 pm

08.25.21 10:00–10:30 am

- **September/October 2021: Criminal Justice TAC Meeting.** This meeting will provide a brief update of the NCJIS Modernization effort as well as a forum for questions and answers. A survey will be sent out in advance of this meeting for TACs to submit questions to the NCJIS Mod Team. Responses to questions will be provided to TACs in writing prior to this meeting. There will be a discussion time during the TAC Meeting for additional questions or clarification. Meeting date options are:

09.29.21 10:00–10:30 am

10.04.21 11:30 am–12:00 pm

With great appreciation from the NCJIS program management team.

Contact us through this e-mail address: NCJISMod@dps.state.nv.us

Need help or additional information? Call the new NCJIS Moderation Customer Service phone number: 775-687-7263

This communication, including any attachments, may contain confidential information and is intended only for the individual or entity to whom it is addressed. Any review, dissemination, or copying of this communication by anyone other than the intended recipient is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail, delete, and destroy all copies of the original message.

References

1. Galorath, D. (2004), Software Reuse and Commercial Off-the-Shelf Software, pp. 6-10.
2. Taylor, S. J., Turner, S., and Strassburger, S., "Commercial-Off-The-Shelf Simulation Package Interoperability: Issues and Futures," Proceedings of the 2009 Winter Simulation Conference, 2008, pp. 206-207.
3. Reifer, Donald, J., *Practical Software Reuse*, J. Wiley and Sons, New York, 1997, p. 17.
4. SAP Community, "A discussion of COTS versus GOTS Solution costs." <https://blogs.sap.com/2007/08/16/a-discussion-of-cots-versus-gots-solution-costs/>