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CSNews

The CommSOFT and Language Assistant (LA) Newsletter

LA Video Demo: Here *| www.com-sof.com | info@com-sof.com | 020 3287 5582*

LATEST NEWS

- **Zero-Cost Startup with *LA***

- ***LA* - Desktop vs. Laptop?**

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- ***LA* for Custody aligns with all Custody Record Systems.**

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5-Question Survey

This issue we're running a quick (2-minute) survey - no personal data is auto-collected and we'd love to know what you think:

It's here **(or here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3RHKZFK).**

The "Spend to Save" Barrier | Zero-Cost Start-Up with *LA*

After seeing a demonstration of *Language Assistant (LA)* several forces have liked the product and can see clearly how it saves both money and officer time – but go on to say that they "*…don't have funds available to get started with any spend-to-save projects*" – it's all Cuts! Cuts! Cuts!

In reviewing this for one force, we have been able to develop a new financial arrangement for *LA* that can deliver *LA* with zero (or close-to-zero) start-up costs, depending on circumstances.

What is clear is that the same arrangement will work for most forces, not just the force it was developed for.

If your force is in a similar position – either having looked at *LA* and liked it but can't fund getting started **or** perhaps haven't looked at *LA* yet (because there's no money available even if you could see its long-term value) then we'd like to talk - about ways of delivering *LA* with zero or minimal start-up costs.

It's also important to know that this financing model doesn't involve *LA* being more expensive in the long-run in return for using the no/low-cost start-up option.

In case you've not looked at *LA* yet please see the link above and follow it to a video demonstration (this shows one

of the various configurations of *LA* that are available).

So, if your force would like to start getting the benefits of *LA* (70% less expensive than using interpreters; 2 to 4+ times faster than using interpreters; real, safe human translations) then please get in touch and we'll explain more.

LA Desktop and Laptop Versions – How To Choose?

LA can be configured and set up in a variety of ways depending on how and where it will be deployed – there's a lot of choice.

One of the key choices is about whether *LA* runs:

- **On your network, or**
- **Stand-alone**

The main benefit of installing *LA* on your network is that this makes *LA* easier to use from a custody-suite-based officers' perspective – *it runs on the same booking-in desktop PC that your custody record system already uses* – as well as maximising officer time-savings with easy desktop integration.

Stand-alone allows for slightly faster deployment and is also perfect for mobile locations as it runs on a separate laptop that can easily be moved from location to location.

Both versions use the same *LA* "core" conversation automation technology so they both achieve the same outcome, just somewhat differently.

It's also worth remembering that – whichever version you deploy (and it can be *both*) – you are in complete control of the processes that *LA* uses for all aspects of what it does, both in terms of initial setup and future modification – *LA* is a "*does what you tell it to*" solution. For custody detention booking-in this usually starts

by tailoring an existing set of processes from the "closest fit" of our "*off the shelf*" processes.

Which you choose could also be influenced by factors outside *LA's* functionality – for example it may be a matter of available space on booking-in desks or a preference for centralised control of software products.

Depending on your requirements one or other configuration (or a combination) is likely to emerge as the winner for your particular circumstances.

However, *LA* is flexible - configurations aren't "set in stone" and it's easy to switch later, or to add further configuration options over time.

Does *LA* Mean You'll Never Use An Interpreter Again?

Using interpreters is the "obvious" answer when you need to interact with non-English speakers.

However, for processes that are virtually the same every time (e.g. booking a detainee into custody) this means paying an interpreter to have virtually the same conversation over and over again – making interpreters the "*obvious but really expensive*" option – and, until *LA*, it was really the only option.

LA captures your processes and associated conversations, then uses professionally-done translations (that are done once by a real, human translator) to deliver your processes and conversations over and over again at hugely reduced cost (70+%) and in 2x-4x less time.

LA aims to deal with the 'bulk' of such repetitive multi-lingual activity – 80-90% – with no need for an interpreter.

There will occasionally be a "special case" that requires something specific that can only by handled by a live interpreter – in which case you'll still need an interpreter.

LA means that you *don't have to use an interpreter every time, for everything* – *LA* handles the vast majority of "normal" cases so that expensive interpreting is only

needed when it's really needed – to handle exceptions from the norm.

By using *LA* the majority of scenarios are handled automatically and far less expensively.

Yes, there will still be times when an interpreter is needed but *LA* minimises these and means that you use interpreters *only when an interpreter is really required* – which, for lots of processes, isn't all that often.

Interpreters have a genuine part to play - but it isn't "*for everything, all the time*".

LA for Custody Aligns with all Custody Record Systems

Different forces use different custody record systems.

LA has been designed to take this into account and can easily and quickly be configured to align with whichever system a force currently uses (e.g. Genesis, Niche, Athena, NSPIS etc.).

Often this is achieved simply by re-ordering content (questions, statements etc.) from one of CommSOFT's existing 'off-the-shelf' configurations.

However, where a force requires additional content, this can also easily be incorporated for use in either automated or ad-hoc conversations and processes.

For example, one force's NSPIS deployment required 30 new phrases to be incorporated, mainly to support their existing **risk assessment** and **welfare** procedures.
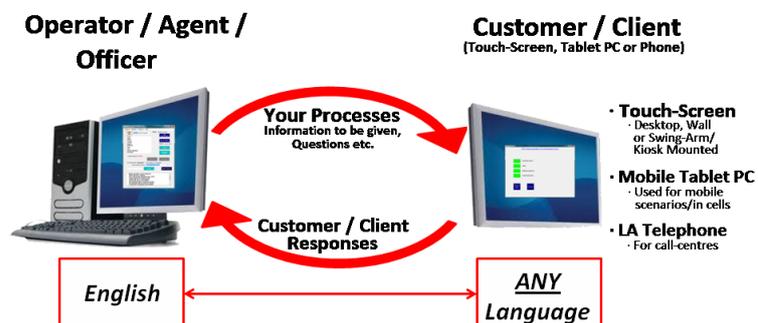
These were easily integrated into *LA's* conversation functionality and were then aligned so that *LA* asked questions in exactly the way the force's NSPIS system expected answers to those questions. This additional requirement was completed in under a week.

Many forces will find that one of *LA's* existing 'off-the-shelf' configurations will already align with their current custody record system.

Where this is not the case, the re-alignment process is quick and easy.

A further benefit of *LA's* designed-in ease of configuration is that conversations and processes are easy to modify – for example, when PACE requirements change or when a force replaces its custody record system with a new product.

Alignment, configuration, testing and deployment – even with a new custody record system – can be achieved within weeks, with only a few hours of staff input and minimal 'project' overhead.

Operator / Agent / Officer

Customer / Client
(Touch-Screen, Tablet PC or Phone)

Your Processes
Information to be given, Questions etc.

Customer / Client Responses

English

ANY Language

- **Touch-Screen**
  · Desktop, Wall or Swing-Arm/ Kiosk Mounted
- **Mobile Tablet PC**
  · Used for mobile scenarios/in cells
- **LA Telephone**
  · For call-centres

How Does *LA* Reduce Officers' Time Overhead?

> *"Three clicks and they're detained – it's that easy. LA automates everything else, and in any language".*

From a custody officer's perspective, 'processing' a non-English-speaking DP can be fraught with hassle – from the very involvement of an interpreter (who may even have inappropriate conversations with the DP) through to the extra wasted time involved in *everything* having to be said at least twice during the process – once in each language.

LA removes these problems and automates your process so that in 3-4 mouse-clicks the detaining officer can have their DP processed – with no reduction in quality or compliance.

Really? How can this be true?

The graphic above shows *LA's* workflow screen. This shows *LA's* four detention workflow

Foreign Language Detention
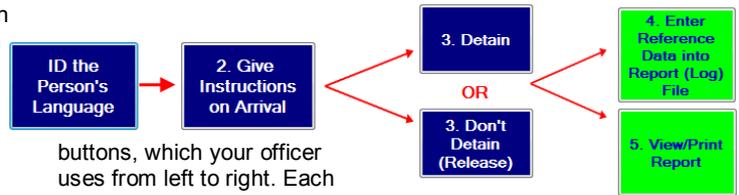
buttons, which your officer uses from left to right. Each button initiates an automated multi-step process:

BUTTON   **ACTION**

1. **ID the person's language:** this allows the DP to choose a language.
2. **Instructions:** Asks if the DP has any language problems; explains the process; asks DP to be quiet.
3. **DETAIN:** Asks all of the questions required to detain; makes all of the statements required

to detain; reports all answers to officer (in English) for custody record,

OR

DON'T DETAIN: Equivalent statements and questions for release.

Buttons **4** and **5** provide facilities to 'tag' *LA's* logfile with a custody reference number or comments, and to view/print the conversation.

Each button starts an automated process/conversation with the DP relating to that aspect of the overall detention process. Your officer simply has to note answers to questions as *LA* asks them. All of the workflow is entirely in your control and can be specified and modified to fit your force requirements.

Opinion | *LA* Works Even When it Isn't Used? | Neil Coulson

> *"Sometimes people can't speak English – until it turns out that they can!"*

Custody officers sometimes need patience beyond the call of duty, especially when a detainee decides to be awkward for fun.

You know the kind of thing – during booking-in a detainee refuses to speak a word of English and – only later – turns out to speak English like it's their mother tongue. They just wanted to create a bit of hassle.

Point this detainee at *Language Assistant's* language selection screen and they may start to think: "*oh, my plan to create hassle maybe isn't going to create that much hassle after all?*"

Once *LA* starts to speak to them in their own language they'll become convinced that their plan to be awkward isn't going to create any 'awkward' after all.

Faced with this, quite a few detainees will simply give up – "*Okay, okay, I can speak English after all*".

Some may keep trying – for example, by claiming that they

don't speak any of the 49-languages-per-screen that *LA* can offer them.

Really? Of the commonest umpteen languages heard in the UK, Europe and elsewhere, you can't speak any of them?

LA can process the more compliant or genuinely non-English-speaking detainees easily – but it can also help to "flush-out" those detainees who are minded to mess around.

When an awkward detainee is convinced to give up and admit that they do really speak some English – at least enough to get themselves detained – *LA* has "worked" without even being used, acting as a deterrent to detainees who fancied a bit of 'non-English-speaking' fun.

LA's language identification screens can also identify languages that aren't currently available in *LA* – but can still immediately tell you which language the detainee has chosen so you know which

language to ask for when calling for an interpreter. *LA* also notes these cases so that its management information functions can let you know when it's worth adding a new language to *LA's* full capability.

So, whether *LA* is used fully or simply as a way of getting detainees who can speak English to *actually speak* – job done.

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CAN YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?

☐ YES

☐ NO

☐ MAYBE?

☒ SOMETIMES

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