



Crime Fighter BEAST: Unique Features

Police Property and Evidence Tracking System Porter Lee Corporation

The Crime Fighter Beast Police Property Inventory System developed by Porter Lee Corporation is a completely integrated product for large and small police departments. Currently, the system is being used in approximately 350 state-wide, county-wide, large, medium, and small sized police agencies. As a result Porter Lee Corporation is able to stand behind its recommendation for barcode hardware, media, labels, forms and the user friendliness of the software. Below are a few examples of the unique features of the system.

1. Integrated Crime Laboratory System

The Crime fighter Beast police system is completely integrated with the Crime Fighter Beast Laboratory Information Management System (Purchased Separately). The police system can submit evidence to the lab using the PDF417 bar code technology. The PDF417 bar code contains extensive case and item data that is transferred directly to the lab's database by scanning the bar code. Thereby, providing extremely fast and secure data transfer. In addition, a submission receipt bar code is used to confirm transfer to the lab and provides a tight link for chain of custody. No other POLICE/LAB integrated system provides this level of integration. The lab system is complete with case entry, active bar coding, chain of custody, management reporting, analytical reports, audit logging, security control, and hand held remote inventory capability.

2. Powerful Chain of custody tracking features

The chain of custody features found in the Crime Fighter Beast allows property to be tracked from collection through disposition. You can specify a date, time, officer, locker/bin, custody status, electronic signature and a comment for each custody transaction. Property Items can be updated one at a time or in a batch. With the Multi-Item Status update function it is easy to update multiple items. Detailed reports can be generated for chain of custody, item location, and status.

3. Flexible Case Find Features

The Case Find function allows users to find property or cases by many different methods. Users can specify a department case number or browse through cases by case number to find the case they are looking for. Cases can also be found by the name of the offender, victim, witness, or property owner. Typing a few letters of the last name and then one or two letters of the first name is all that is needed to locate any case by name. (Business names can also be used to find cases.) Property items can be assigned a serial / reference number. This reference number can be used to locate a case. This can really come in handy for credit cards, cell phones, or other types of property that have this kind of unique identification number. Cases can also be found by use of the laboratory submission number. *(The easiest method for bringing up a case is by scanning the bar code from a property item or case folder. See Active Bar Coding for more details.)*

4. Property Disposition by expiration date

It's important to retain property that needs to be kept and to dispose of property that you no longer need. The Crime Fighter Beast helps you to do this by providing a complete set of application tools to manage property disposition. It all starts with case entry where you can specify an expiration date for the case. Expiration dates can default from the statute of limitations or can be set individually. The property officer can then print lists of evidence or cases by specifying an expiration date range. This is a simple way to identify what evidence has expired during a given time period.

5. Property Disposition with Form Letters

Another more powerful method for managing property disposition involves the Crime Fighter Beast Letter Reports. The Letter Reports provide a means for the property control officer to identify property that has been in a locker for a given time period. For example, the property officer may want to get a status update from all officers on any property that has been sitting on the shelf for more than 6 months. He would go into the Letter Reports program and print out letters to each case officer. These letters list all the property for cases they are responsible for and provide a place for them to indicate if the property should be retained or disposed. (Methods for disposition include return to owner, auction and destruction). Every letter report that goes out is assigned a unique report control number. This number can be used to easily update the disposition process for each item into the database.

6. Active Bar Coding

In order to fully utilize the bar code technology "Active bar coding" is used throughout the system. For example, scanning an item label will provide immediate access to the corresponding item and case (*Scanning an item twice in a row brings up the chain of custody for that item*). It is not necessary to go to a specific screen and to tell the computer you are about to scan a bar code (*as is required by other systems*). The Crime Fighter Beast program knows when and what type of label is scanned - and responds accordingly.

7. Field Level Audit Logging

Security is always a paramount concern for criminal justice computer systems. For this reason the Crime Fighter Beast systems are equipped with field level audit logging. This function allows the security administrator to review each change to a case, name, item or status. Both the "before" and "after" image of the change is available. In addition, only the changes are recorded to save disk space. The audit log can be reviewed and for searched by user, by case, or by date.

8. Customizable security functions

Access to the system can be customized for each user. The system administrator and/or designee can easily set-up access for each user based on function or program (Property Inventory, Query Reports, Letter Reports, Remote Inventory, Department Setup etc.). Users are given a password to log onto the system. This password can also be removed to prevent the user from logging on to the system.

9. Remote Inventory Reporting with bar codes on reports

The remote inventory module provides a simple but accurate means for property to be inventoried. Lockers and bins can be labeled and scanned along with the items in them. When the scanning is complete, the data is downloaded to the computer and an exception report is generated. This exception report will display missing as well as out of place items. *The bar code for each exception is printed out next to the item on the report.* This unique feature allows the user to look up each item on the computer by just scanning its bar code from the exception report. This saves hours of work.

10. Customized & Flexible Code Maintenance and Lookup

Codes are used throughout the system to provide consistent and reliable data entry. The code maintenance program allows users to enter, view and print all codes. In addition, locker codes can have bar codes printed to use on speed sheets. These speed sheets can be posted on or near lockers for quick access when processing chain of custody. Most codes can be assigned a user order. The user order provides control over what order the codes appear in the code lookup screen. Users are not allowed to enter invalid values into code fields. If the code value is known it can be typed into the field. If it is not known the code lookup screen can be used. The code lookup screen allows codes to be viewed by code order, description order, or custom order. Users can switch between these orders with a single mouse click. An incremental search is also provided in the code lookup. Typing the first few characters of a description is usually all that is required to find the desired code even in a very large list.

11. Extensive Management and Statistical Reports

One of the most powerful features of the Crime Fighter Beast system is its management and statistical reports. These reports provide information with detailed lists of information as well as summary totals. All reports can be viewed on the screen, exported to other applications (email, Microsoft Office, Acrobat, etc...) or printed directly to a printer. Utilizing Crystal Reports, you can even create custom reports unique to your agency or modify the existing reports, already distributed with the system. Some existing reports are: master case list, master item list, case, officer, item listing, by court date, item location, item status, collection purpose, chain of custody and more.

12. Reuse of Star Numbers

Many computer systems in the marketplace run into trouble when officers retire or are promoted. Many times a star number may change or be reused by another officer, as a result computer database information tied directly to the star number becomes invalid or must be changed which can be costly and impractical. The Crime Fighter Beast program solves this problem by adding an Employee Number Field. This is a unique series of letters and numbers assigned to a person that you can guarantee will not change (Perhaps, initials followed by a number MAE1, FJR2 etc.) Users can still access records by star number, but if the star number changes there is no system impact. Using Department Setup to update the star number for the officer involved will not affect the past records. All property, custody, and case information will still be attached to the officer's record.

13. Evidence Transfer using PDF417 bar codes and Web Prelog

Evidence is transferred between the police department and laboratory using the PDF417 transfer function or web-based case prelog. PDF417 barcodes encode case, name, item, and submission information into a special 2-dimensional bar code termed "PDF417" (Symbol Technologies). This bar code is transferred along with the evidence. On the receiving end, the bar code is scanned, the data is reviewed, and then received into the system - with a single click of the mouse. This unique method of transfer does not require an on-line wide area network or dial up. This reduces cost, increases security, and protects data integrity. Four part evidence submission forms are available that provide space to affix the PDF417 bar codes. Data for these submission forms is automatically generated by the system and then printed using Microsoft Windows compatible printers. Web prelog allows the agency to prelog their evidence using a secure web site. When the evidence arrives at the lab the laboratory personnel simply pull up the prelogged case and create their lab case record using the prelogged information.

14. Mobile Crime Scene Evidence Collection

While in the field, evidence collection officers can record evidence information, package, and barcode the evidence onsite. This is accomplished by installing the same software used in the department onto a laptop computer. No additional training is required, the internal system and in car system function and look identical. Data captured on the mobile unit can be transferred via floppy disk, network connection, or cellular transmission (CDPD) to the main database.

15. Digital Image Capture

Digital images captured from cameras, flat bed scanners, or digital video recorders can be linked and saved with specific case names, or case items. These images are viewable with the case information from the property program or from the case viewer throughout the department. Each image is saved securely with an encryption key to an image vault to prevent tampering of the original image.

16. Paperless Chain-of-Custody

By utilizing digital signatures for the chain-of-custody, the property officer no longer needs to maintain or store paper records of the chain-of-custody. The complete and updated report can be printed with signatures on demand whenever proof of the chain-of-custody is required. By utilizing the latest in signature capture technology the property officer can capture electronic signatures for every type of custody transaction (i.e. receive, release, return, transfer). Signatures are captured using tablets connected directly to a PC running the property application or they are captured on a portable unit. These signatures are encrypted and stored in the database to ensure no tampering of the digital file can occur.