



Photo courtesy of Police Facility Design Group, image taken by Brent Isenberger Photography

Ankeny (IA) Police Department

Sgt. Scott Crouch with Ankeny PD first heard about Aladtec back in 2013 from someone at the nearby Altoona Fire Department, where members had been using the scheduling platform for about five years.

After a demonstration and several months of frisking his budget for money, then-Police Chief Gary Mikulec told Aladtec account executive Ericka Hawkins that Crouch told him “it clearly meets our needs. I believe I’ve found room in our budget to make the purchase as proposed... We are hopeful the software performs well because we have at least 10 agencies who track our research on these products before they make a decision.

“Our agency has a strong reputation for research and exploration of new technology, so it is great that we’ve been able to partner with you on the police version of your product.”

Aladtec did represent “new technology” for APD, as compared to the spreadsheets and whiteboards Crouch had been using to assemble monthly schedules for his department.

Before Aladtec, Crouch said he made “a lot of phone calls. We were using Excel spreadsheets. When we had a lot of overtime postings, we were using whiteboards in our roll call room and putting stuff up there. All of our scheduling was manually entered into spreadsheets.”

Has it saved him time?

“Oh certainly. That’s what we liked about it right away,” said Crouch. “The ability to send out notices of shortages to all of our members, without having to pick up the phone and trying to call them, one by one. That’s really what sold us -- to get that blast out in the text messages and e-mails.”

In the old days, Crouch said if he “were the sergeant at home and got a sick call from an officer, I’d have called into the office and had the night sergeant begin the process of calling for a replacement.”



Department Info:

Roster: 55 sworn officers, 16 civilian staff

Calls: About 35,600 in 2016.

Service area: Pop: 65,000, approx. 29 sq. miles.

Features: Fourth fastest growing city in America. Situated beside busy I-35, Ankeny frequently lauded as a clean, safe, family-friendly community with 50 parks and 70 miles of trails.

Aladtec users since 2013

Neighboring agencies also using Aladtec:

Polk City Fire Dept., Polk City; Iowa Donor Network, Des Moines; Mercy Medical Center - Mercy Ambulance, Mercy Nurses & Mercy One Emergency Transport Service, Des Moines & Knoxville; Clive Fire Dept., Clive; Life Flight, Des Moines; Altoona Fire Dept., Altoona; Pleasant Hill Fire Dept. & Pleasant Hill Police Dept., Pleasant Hill; Dallas Co. EMS, West Des Moines; Westcom 911, West Des Moines; Waukee Fire Dept., Waukee; Norwalk Fire Dept., Norwalk; Iowa State University Police, Ames; Mary Greeley Medical Center, Ames; and Nevada Fire Dept., Nevada.





Photo courtesy of Des Moines Register

Now he can view everything from home, determine staffing levels and send out a request if needed.

Ankeny's Patrol officers work nine-hour days in a five-on, three-off rotation, said Crouch.

He's still using the scheduling scheme established by Aladtec's Support Specialists when they programmed a custom demonstration for APD six years ago. Schedules are now created up to a year in advance.

APD has a unique protocol for scheduling vacations.

Each of three shifts is guaranteed one spot off each day. At the beginning of the year, once the schedule is assembled, officers begin entering their time-off preferences, based on seniority.

"It just works its way down from the most senior down to the least," said Crouch. "First-come, first-served."

He uses the block feature in scheduling to restrict days for training or special events.

Crouch shares scheduling duties with Lt. Brian Kroska. Together, they've explored and experimented with a variety of Aladtec's other features.

Kroska created some e-forms for two specialized traffic patrol details, but officers didn't jump on-board to use them, preferring to use an alternative available on another platform.

APD frequently uses the Aladtec feature to announce and staff special events.

"I like Zanager (an old Aladtec product name) because it programs the whole calendar for our officers, and the only thing we'd have to plug in, unless it was something that you guys created that was the overtime shifts cause right now, that feature doesn't exist ... our practice is kind of convoluted, to be honest with you. For an officer to get a day off, they have to request it on Zanager, then they have to fill out a paper request -- because we have to, for some reason -- then we have to manually enter it into TimeCenter so that it jives with City Hall's requirements.

"So, Zanager is probably what we look at the most to figure out if we have enough people working, who has a vacation coming up," said Kroska.

In general, Aladtec's scheduling functions has become a daily tool for Ankeny PD.

"Oh yeah -- over the years. I remember that first year, I was frequently calling (Aladtec support). They were always very useful and helpful, especially as they continued to add more features."

Are they satisfied users?

"Sure, very much so. We're satisfied. It's benefitted us greatly. Don't know how long we've been using it -- four or five -- but we're glad we were kind of in on the ground floor for police departments using it. It's been very useful for us," said Crouch.



Sgt. Scott Crouch



Lt. Brian Kroska



Aladtec provides online employee scheduling and workforce management software to 2,000-plus organizations, primarily within the Public Safety Sector. Customers count on Aladtec constantly to help save time, improve efficiency and enhance communications. The company is headquartered in River Falls, WI. For information about our affordable platform or to try a free demo, please visit: www.aladtec.com