



# AIS™

## Case Study—Elkhart County Sheriff's Department, IN

### Proactive Efforts Avoid Costly Hiring

*AIS™ handles 84% of all corrections facility calls freeing up time for busy staff.*

#### SITUATION

Elkhart County, located in Northern Indiana, is growing, rising from approximately 183,000 residents in 2000 to almost 198,000 in 2010. And the county's correctional facility population expanded even faster with an average daily population of 580 in 2007 to 914 in 2009. The facility growth was accelerated by the move to its new \$97.3 million complex in November 2007, which increased capacity from 344 to 936 inmates. The additional capacity relieved the previously cramped conditions and facilitated additional revenue through housing State of Indiana Department of Correction (DOC) inmates sentenced while detained in Elkhart County.

The Elkhart County Corrections Facility Management recognized that the increased scale would be accompanied by increased administrative demands. One concern was the volume of public telephone inquiries, which typically involved requests for inmate case and general facility information. One solution was to allocate more officers to the Booking, Main Control, and Lobby areas that were responsible for the phone calls. But this approach would be costly and repetitive phone calls were known to cause distractions that impacted booking accuracy and officer morale. Also, Elkhart County took pride in its responsive citizen service and knew it would be next to impossible to eliminate busy signals and missed calls during peak periods.

#### SOLUTION

AIS™, the nation's most widely deployed voice response solution for correctional facilities, was selected to automate citizen information requests. Telerus, the developer of AIS™ and a leading voice application hosting company, worked closely with Facility Management to identify the most common types of citizen inquiries, and AIS™ was put to work for Elkhart County within a few weeks. Now, every call placed to the Facility receives an immediate answer and AIS™ handles approximately 84% automatically. Callers simply speak the name of an inmate and AIS™ provides case information such as the inmate charge(s), bond amount, bond type, court date/time/location, projected release date, visits remaining for the week, and inmate identification number. Callers may also speak key words such as "location" or "mail" to obtain general information about the facility and its policies.

2010 Statistics	
Total Calls Handled	88,193
Total Calls Automated	74,120
Automation Rate	84.04%

#### BENEFITS

While AIS™ allows callers with special needs or issues to transfer for staff assistance, the vast majority of routine calls are automated, which frees staff to supervise inmates and perform other complex tasks requiring critical thinking. As a result, additional staffing resources for telephone inquiries were not required.

With staff less often distracted by concurrent phone calls and walk-up traffic, booking accuracy and officer morale have improved. Equally important, Elkhart County citizens now have quick and convenient access to information from any telephone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

"If we had not had AIS™, we most certainly would have had to request additional staff to answer phone calls. AIS™ also helped reduce booking errors and citizen complaints. Over 88,000 calls came into our corrections complex during 2010 and 84% were automated by AIS™, which directly impacted our operational efficiency and capacity to service citizen information requests."

—Sheriff Brad Rogers, Elkhart County

Through proactive effort and innovative thinking, the Elkhart County Sheriff Department is operating efficiently while meeting citizen requests for information on a timely basis...all while saving taxpayers money.

