

# 2013-2014 Annual Report



Rollie Hawk  
Chief Information Officer  
County of Union, Illinois

July 11, 2014

## **Introduction**

Identifying Information Technology and Telecommunications as vital commodities in local government over the coming decades, the Union County Board of Commissioners saw the need to establishing a public official tasked with overseeing those areas for Union County Government. As the first year in my tenure as Union County's Chief Information Officer draws to a close, I would like to highlight some of the accomplishments involving my office during that time.

## **Establishment of a Communications Department**

At the start of fiscal year 2014, the Commissioners established a Communications Department with the long-term goal of focusing spending and eliminating redundancy in the areas of IT and telecommunications. Given the cross-departmental nature of these areas, many counties struggle to control costs but we are uniquely positioned to succeed in ways many haven't by identifying areas of need years in advance and moving closer to a unified plan for Communications spending over the coming years

## **Insourcing**

With a CIO available to act in a consulting role, several departments have been able to reduce or eliminate the need for outside consultants. Some duties that would otherwise be required of other members of management have also been absorbed by the CIO's office, allowing for more focus on everyone's various areas of expertise. This has allowed for immediate cost savings, much faster response time on support requests and will allow for more predictable expenses in the coming years.

The following are some examples of this.

- 911 Administration – Acting as IT consultant
- Ambulance Service – Primary provider of all IT support, worked with custodian to add security cameras
- Assessor's Office – Sharing support role with various vendors
- Circuit Clerk's Office – Primary support of phone system and provide additional support as requested
- Commissioners – IT support, copywriting
- Communications Department – Billings and clerical duties
- County Clerk's Office – Sharing support role with various vendors
- Court System – Primary support of phone system and provide additional support as requested
- ESDA – Primary IT support
- General Assistance – Primary IT support
- Highway Department – Increasing involvement, now helping with program changes
- Probation – Phone support as requested
- Redeploy – Primary IT support
- Sheriff's Office – Primary IT and cellular support
- State's Attorney's Office – Primary IT and cellular support
- Treasurer's Office – Primary IT support

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**CIO offers steps to more effective vendor relationships**

By Rollie Hawk  
 CIO, UNION COUNTY, ILL.

No county can operate entirely in a vacuum, so we all have to deal with vendors. It's a unique relationship in that the burden is on the county to establish the boundaries and expectations — and the sooner, the better.

By following a few crucial steps, there are much better odds of starting that relationship on the right foot and there is more flexibility to maintain it for the long term, or move on to better options without a hiccup.

**Better RFPs and Contracts**

There's no better time to establish the vendor-county relationship properly than during the request for proposals (RFP) and contracting process. Getting specific can curb most pitfalls before they ever happen.

Keep in mind that "specific" doesn't necessarily mean long; if an RFP or contract doesn't need to be 100 pages, there's no need to force it. Rather, what is needed is a focused approach on not only the short-term goals of the project itself but also the long-term realities and how they will be dealt with.

Important questions to answer in the RFP are:

- Who is responsible for long-term maintenance?
- Who will handle the training of future staff in the product's use?

**Vendor Relations**

Working with County Administrator Kelly Carter, the County has been able to make improvements in relationships with vendors by focusing those vendors' roles and influence more tightly. This allows for fewer unexpected hourly expenses for service calls and allows officeholders to spend more of their time on their office-specific duties. The more time we all spend acting as experts in our own areas as elected and appointed officials, the more efficiently all of the offices in this County will run.

**Transparency**

The County website—unioncountyil.gov—continues to have content added including several years of ordinances and resolutions, meeting agenda, etc. The Communications Department has made an effort to engage both the public and the media more than has ever happened in recent memory, allowing more of what takes place in Union County Government to be known by the public.

**County of Union, Illinois**

Chairman of the Board of Commissioners  
*Don Denny*

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**Closed Circuit Testimony**

We had a situation this year where a juvenile victim had to testify and we were able to—with only a few days notice—set up closed circuit audio and video for her to testify so that she didn't have to face the accused but could still be questioned and cross examined from the courtroom. The setup was not perfect but it was a great example of utilizing new technologies in the local court system.

**Budget Process**

During the budget process for FY2014, the CIO was able to assist the Commissioners by tracking budget adjustments in real time on a large monitor. This allowed for the various impacts of those adjustments to be witnessed live and cut down on errors.

**Courthouse Open House**

For our open house in August, the CIO designed and printed the programs and had a Powerpoint display running in the community room highlighting the progress of the courthouse over time.

*Special thanks to*

*Union County Courthouse  
Project Committee*

*Don Denny, Randy Lambdin, Duane Hileman,  
Joan Edwards, Judy Travelstead, Leroy Chooper,  
Tyler Edmonds, Mark Boie, Wes Wilkins,  
Mike Smith, Doug Hileman*

*Welcome to the  
Dedication of the Fifth Union County Courthouse  
10:00 AM - August 24, 2013*

*and the taxpayers of Union County*

*Today's Schedule*

*Introduction Don Denny*

*Invocation Danny Hartline*

*Color Guard JPN  
& National Anthem Julia Hill*

*History of the Courthouse Randy Lambdin*

*Closing & Thanks Don Denny*

*Town, Photos & Refreshments to Follow*

*Our Elected Officials*

*Commissioners Don Denny  
Richard Cunningham  
Danny Hartline  
Mike Miller  
Dale Russell*

*Circuit Court Judge The Honorable  
Mark Boie*

*Circuit Clerk Lorraine Moreland*

*Coroner Phil Hileman*

*County Clerk Terry Bartruff*

*Sheriff David Looney*

*State's Attorney Tyler Edmonds*

*Treasurer Darren Bailey*

## Law Enforcement

The Communications Department has been able to assist in multiple law enforcement projects. The State's Attorney's Office has received several pieces of equipment that will improve their productivity and is in the process of migrating to case management software that will modernize that office in many ways. We've also migrated this office from a traditional postage meter to Stamps.com which has meant both cost and time savings.

The Sheriff's Office has been moved from deputies carrying flip phones and wireless cards to smart phones with built-in hotspots, a more cost effective and more practical option. Also, all road deputies have been provided with hands-free systems for their phones so that they can lead by example while on duty.



## Public Safety

With the CIO providing support and consultation to Union Count 9-1-1 and Union County Ambulance Service, these department now have 24-hour access to IT and telecommunications support at no additional cost to their offices. This has limited downtime over the past year to only a few hours. With 24-hour access to dispatch, server maintenance for 911 is scheduled for non-peak hours and usually on weekends so as to cause as little impact as possible.

## Internships

The Communications Department has been fortunate to have two interns in its first year: Michael Black and Jerry Hunter. As public officials, I believe we have a duty to provide these opportunities for residents of Union County to better themselves with this kind of hands-on experience as much as we are able to provide. As CIO, I am in the unique role of being able to provide interns not only practical experience in technical areas but also to allow a glimpse into enterprise management and public policy. This is a combination that simply isn't available in schools or many businesses in the region.

**Email Usage**

Most departments are now utilizing the County email service, a project that has taken several years to accomplish. Use actually increased so much that we had to quadruple the memory on the mail server (this comes out of my contract amount and does not cost the county any additional monthly charges).

- 911 Administration – All using County email
- Ambulance Service – All administrative personnel using County email
- Assessor’s Office – All staff using County email
- Circuit Clerk’s Office – Using County email for subpoenas as some companies will not send subpoena responses to Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.
- Coroner’s Office – Two staff using County email
- Commissioners – All using County email
- County Clerk’s Office – All staff using County email
- ESDA – Using County email
- General Assistance – Coordinator using County email
- Highway Department – Administrative staff using County email
- Maintenance – Lead custodian using County email
- Redeploy – Coordinator using County email
- Sheriff’s Office – All road deputies using county email and dispatches using more frequently
- State’s Attorney’s Office – All staff using County email
- Treasurer’s Office – All staff using County email

**Improved Bill List**

County of Union, Illinois  
Departmental Bill List

OFFICE/DEPARTMENT: CIO/Communications  
BOARD MEETING DATE:  
DATE SUBMITTED:

CHECK	BILL INFORMATION	AMOUNT
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendor Name: [Dropdown] Vendor ID: [Dropdown] Invoice # (Select a Fund Line): [Dropdown]	
TOTAL		\$ 0.00

The CIO has worked with the Treasurer’s Office to develop a very simple and functional PDF-based bill list that has cut down on errors and simplified the voucher process by making fund lines and vendor names selectable. This has complemented the changes in our voucher procedures over the last year quite well. Nearly all offices are utilizing the new form.

**IT and Telecommunications Bill Processing**

Like many County offices, the CIO now handles the majority of the IT and telecommunications bill payments for the County. This has cut down on delinquencies and late fees dramatically.

**Civic Engagement**

The CIO is now serving on the CEO Program advisory board, regularly attends 911/ETSB board meetings and serves on the Union County Economic Development Board. While the involvement of the CIO in these boards is not strictly speaking

a County function, it’s important for the County to have some degree of representation on these various boards and others in the community. The more County officials are aware of happenings within our County and outside of government, the more responsive we are capable of being.

Consent given by the County Board

 \_\_\_\_\_

Official/Department Head Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
Unless noted by circling an item on this form, board consent implies approval of all individual requests.

## Media Coordination on High-Profile Arrest

The CIO was able to act as a media liaison for the State's Attorney's Office and the court system after a high-profile arrest when a hearing took place in the new courthouse, providing a live audio and video feed and additional support to media sources throughout the Midwest region.

While the First Circuit has adopted policies that have changed how such situations will be handled, we were able to show a large amount of professionalism while getting serious media exposure.

This was an exceptional opportunity for Union County to shine, from our Sheriff's Office to the State's Attorney's Office and throughout court system. Being able to present a professional face on Union County with such a surprise scenario reflects well upon all of us in Union County Government.



<h3>Doctor accused of 4 killings waives extradition hearing</h3>	<a href="#">Go Back</a>	<a href="#">Print Page</a>
<p><i>By Rosemary Regina Sobol, Chicago Tribune, JONESBORO, Ill. - An Illinois doctor accused of the revenge killings of four people, including an 11-y</i></p>		
<p>Tuesday, July 23, 2013</p>		
<p>Dr. Anthony Joseph Garcia, 40, appeared calm as he answered a judge's questions in downstate Jonesboro. He was dressed in a gray striped jail jumpsuit. Garcia, who has practiced in Chicago, was pulled over by Illinois state police near Jonesboro early Monday after authorities had been tracking him as a suspect in the slayings. He was arrested without incident, but police said he had a .45-caliber handgun on him and appeared to have been drinking. He was arrested on a warrant charging him with four counts of first-degree murder and use of a weapon to commit the murders.</p>		
<p>Appearing before Judge Mark Boie, Garcia said he was waiving his right to an extradition hearing, clearing the way for his return to Omaha. "They're going to try to get him back to Nebraska in a couple of weeks," said Union County spokesman Rollie Hawk.</p>		

## Network and Computer Systems

One of the most important but difficult to quantify improvements in the last year have been to the County's network and computer systems. After years without upgrades, many systems have been and continue to be replaced with modern machines. The County has gone from a tangled mess of disjointed networks to a focused, more unified system. Over the next couple of years, the majority of County offices will operate on a single computer system that allows for centralized system and user management while also providing for autonomy in elected offices and allowing for more direct interaction by vendors on systems they are responsible for maintaining. The end result will be reduced downtime, increased security and long-term protection of public records.

- Private Wifi throughout courthouse
- Public Wifi throughout courthouse
- County Clerk's Office – Public access PC added, one PC replaced
- Treasurer's Office – Public access PC added
- Assessor's Office – 4 PCs added, public access PC upgraded
- State's Attorney's Office – 2 PCs replaced with laptops, 1 PC added, several software upgrades
- Sheriff's Office – 2 Laptops replaced, several software upgrades
- Ambulance – Will deploy new server soon
- 911 – Replaced PC and migrated to new software
- ESDA – Upgraded PC
- Redeploy – Deployed laptop
- Deployed 2 new domain controllers

## Conclusion

I thank the Board of Commissioners and the various County offices and officials for the trust they've placed in me over the last year and look forward to continued collaboration in the future and—most importantly—the opportunity to provide the residents of Union County with more transparent, more responsive and more responsible government.

Sincerely,



Union County CIO