

# LAW and ORDER

## Electronic Tracking Systems

Written by Kevin Gordon

The ETS service solution differs from the traditional dye packs and bullet-resistant glass in that it helps in the apprehension of the suspect, resulting not only in that crime being solved but the prevention of others due to that apprehension. ETS is so effective because it permits law enforcement to track the suspect to the last mile, or what is called the "Red Zone."

ETS facilitates a unique partnership, or community coalition, between law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, businesses and local government. The ETS asset tracking solution is used extensively by the St. Louis County Police, the third largest police agency in Missouri.

Major Tim Fitch, commanding officer, Division of Operational Support (tfitch@stlouisco.com), said, "Police agencies and the FBI are well aware that most bank robbers will continue to commit crimes until they are captured. With Electronic Tracking Systems, law enforcement can apprehend a bank robber quickly, stopping a serial crime before it gets going. Our agency, as well as other St. Louis area law enforcement agencies, have partnered with Electronic Tracking Systems and the banking industry to make our community safer. The banks financially support the system in order to deter and apprehend bank robbers."

ETS has specifically designed the tracking system solution device or "tag" to address four key functional issues: pass, discovery, capture, recovery and incarceration. The device must be small enough to be passed to the robber and small enough to be unnoticed by the suspect. It must not be discovered by the robber to prevent him discarding it. The system must work quickly to aid in capture of the suspect in the safest way possible, and it must result not just in the recovery of the stolen items but also in the incarceration of the suspect.

<http://www.etstracking.com>

St. Louis County Police Captain Jon Belmar serves as the commander of the Affton Southwest Precinct. He believes the silent aspect of the system is one of the reasons it is so successful. "Many banks have eliminated messy dye packs from their security arsenal and replaced them with Electronic Tracking Systems' protection devices. Tracking devices are silent and allow the suspect to move safely away from the financial institution before apprehension."

Fitch has worked with a variety of other tracking products but has found that ETS works best for the needs of St. Louis County Police. "We have found Electronic Tracking Systems' Red Zone tracking to be superior to other tracking products on the market," he said.

"Its radio frequency (RF) feature allows law enforcement to quickly and precisely locate the suspect in a safe manner. Other products on the market only point to a general location of the device, causing law enforcement officers to put themselves in an unsafe position while trying to locate the suspect. Quite simply, we are very satisfied with the performance of ETS."

While more common in the banks and financial institution arena, other businesses are using ETS to their advantage. These include pharmacies, golf pro shops, fast food chains and video rentals stores just to name a few. ETS provides products to track just about any conceivable asset.

Recently, St. Louis County found creative uses for ETS. According to Fitch, "St. Louis County PD has been able to adapt the system for other uses. We are using ETS to track and apprehend suspects involved in the theft of copper wire and laptops, just to name a few." All St. Louis County helicopters are equipped with ETS that provide extremely accurate long-distance tracking.

One great advantage for the agency is there is no infrastructure investment required. All network infrastructure-tracking equipment and individual transmitters are supplied by ETS just as is all training for both police and customers. To acquire more detailed information from the Web site, customers must contact the company to be provided with a security login.

Not all items are out for public display, and for that reason, this article will not cover all the products and none in detail, but it will highlight ETS products that might be of interest to agencies.

In general terms, the system is turned on when removed from a magnetic plate. The unit then transmits a silent RF signal that can be received and monitored by a variety of detectors, including vehicle based, handheld or even airborne. TracPac V is designed to be inserted into a pouch made from two pieces of currency.

ETS' BlueTrac Solutions SM division provides sting and stakeout tools that include Motion Beacon™, ATM Tag™, FlashTrac System™, FlatPac Beacon™, Jewelry Tag™, Pharmacy Tag™, and the Ransom Back Beacon™.

The Motion Beacon is a small radio transmitter that can be concealed in decoy items, sting items or other contraband. It is self-contained, has a 13-inch antenna and is powered by a 9-volt battery. The ATM Tag is a motion beacon that has been modified for use in automatic teller machines or small vaults. It is powered internally and is activated by motion or when unplugged.

The FlashTrac System provides law enforcement with a simple and quick deployment in undercover and sting operations. It is installed remarkably easily and quickly. It comes as a complete package and can be deployed in less than a minute. You simply screw the antenna whips onto the antenna mount and put it on the roof of the car, plug in the power cord to the DC power supply, and you're done. It provides signal strength of up to 2 miles.

The FlatPac Beacon can fit in a #10 regular business envelope. Many uses come to mind for this device. The ETS Jewelry Tag is a radio transmitter that is designed for use in jewelry displays. It has a self-contained transmitter with a built-in antenna and battery pack. The jewelry display or case is placed upon an external magnetic plate. When the jewelry is removed from that case, the Jewelry Tag silently sounds.

The ETS Pharmacy Tag is a radio transmitter that is integrated into stock, shrink-wrapped narcotic pharmacy packaging. Like other solutions, it is self-contained with an antenna and a battery pack. The Ransom Bag Beacon is another self-contained radio transmitter built into a gym bag for ransom delivery or large drug buy money, extortion money, etc.

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