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Philly Police will be first big city cops to use Azavea's crime predicting software

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By Juliana Reyes

Philadelphia Police will soon become the first major U.S. city law enforcement agency to use the crime prediction software that local firm **Azavea** (<http://azavea.com>) has been developing for the last three years (<http://technical.ly/philly/2011/04/13/predicting-future-crimes-in-philadelphia/>). Called **HunchLab** (<http://www.hunchlab.com/>), the software uses data to recommend policing tactics, as we first reported in 2011 (<http://technical.ly/philly/2011/04/13/predicting-future-crimes-in-philadelphia/>).

Developed with the support of about \$800,000 in federal grants, HunchLab uses data on past crimes, weather, special events and more to calculate the level of risk for different types of crimes in different neighborhoods. The latest version of HunchLab also provides short-term and long-term crime prediction, said Azavea head **Robert Cheetham**, who worked at the Philadelphia Police Department in the 1990s.

Azavea has also been working with criminal justice professors at **Temple University** and **Rutgers University, Newark**, to develop HunchLab further, he said.



A screenshot of how HunchLab would look when used in Philadelphia.

Cities like Toledo, Ohio and Tacoma, Wash. have already purchased HunchLab, Cheetham said.

Azavea will install HunchLab and give the city initial access for free by the end of the year, as a way of respecting a previous agreement, Cheetham said. In exchange for sharing its crime data, the city was supposed to get HunchLab for free two years ago, when Azavea finished the first version of the software (<http://technical.ly/philly/2011/04/13/predicting-future-crimes-in-philadelphia/>). But the police did not have the required IT infrastructure to support the software, said Cheetham and public safety GIS director **Grant Ervin**.

Now, two years later, Philly's police IT is finally ready and its IT staff is excited.

"It's fantastic stuff," Ervin said.

Read more about the early development of HunchLab here (<http://technical.ly/philly/2011/04/13/predicting-future-crimes-in-philadelphia/>).

Organizations: Azavea, Philadelphia Police Department

People: Grant Ervin, Robert Cheetham

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