

Tableau Selected for Homeland Security Pilot Project

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory to Analyze Structured and Unstructured Data

Customer Profile

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) is a Department of Energy Office of Science national laboratory that solves complex problems in energy, national security and the environment and advances scientific frontiers in the chemical, biological, materials, environmental and computational sciences.

Customer Case Description

PNNL was asked by the Department of Homeland Security to participate in a pilot program. The goal was to pilot an analytical application for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) department that would leverage analysis techniques used for unstructured text analysis with those used in structured data analysis. PNNL's primary objectives over the project were threefold:

- + Provide a new capability for structured and unstructured data analysis,
- + Evaluate/characterize ICE data, and
- + Be deployable within eighteen months.

Gus Calapristi, the project's lead, notes that there are many tools for either unstructured or structured data analysis. PNNL wanted to address the question of mixed data: information typically found in structured forms with annotations, case files, reports, etc. Said Calapristi during a presentation to a VAC Consortium Meeting, "we wanted to ensure data sharing and interoperability and to facilitate data exchange between specialized tools. We wanted to build upon the known strengths of current technologies. This would give us the potential for earlier field deployment and user acceptance as well as compatibility with wider toolsets."

Since PNNL was already using standalone analysis applications for managing and reviewing its unstructured data, it needed to identify a structured data analysis tool that would seamlessly integrate with the preexisting analysis technology and provide new ways to visually organize and present information.

The Solution

PNNL chose Tableau to help blend analysis of structured and unstructured data while simultaneously fulfilling the data visualization and presentation requirements. Throughout the lengthy pilot, PNNL is using Tableau coupled with In-Spire, a tool for unstructured data analysis, in simulated real-world environments in order to assess the following factors:

- + Ease of use (minimal time requirement and intellectual investment),
- + Ability to integrate into the existing infrastructure, and
- + Ability to improve current processes.

For More Information About This Case

Contact: visualanalysis@tableausoftware.com or call (206) 633-3400 x1

"Our job is to take information and turn it into visual intelligence. It's a way to simplify data, so that large volumes of data are simpler to understand"

Joe Garofalo
Acting Chief of
the National Initiatives Unit
Pacific Northwest National
Laboratory