

# New UNL technology provides location-based crime data to police

March 8, 2012 by [Michael Stacy](#)



*Officer Mary Lingelbach of the Lincoln Police Department uses CrimeView NEARme.*

With a smorgasbord of apps to assist would-be diners in locating somewhere in the neighborhood to break bread, why aren't there similar applications to aid police officers in finding and deterring bad?

Back when Lincoln Public Safety Director [Tom Casady](#) (*below*) was the chief of the Lincoln Police Department, he began to ponder that problem. Now, thanks to technology developed at the [University of Nebraska-Lincoln](#), a solution will soon be made available to police departments nationwide.

Starting in April, 10,000 police departments will have access to a new mobile software tool for tracking crime in their communities. Red Brain Law Enforcement Services, a new UNL spinoff, will release [CrimeView NEARme](#) to allow police officers to access location-based crime data on the go.



Using CrimeView NEARme, officers can see nearby "police points of interest" on their GPS-enabled smartphones or tablets. They can then pursue outstanding warrants, make proactive visits to parolees or check on registered sex offenders through an approach called community policing.

"An offender's ability to be anonymous will be greatly reduced. Officers will know their name, face and where they live," Casady said in a press release. "It has incredible potential in community corrections."

Over the last six months, 75 Lincoln police officers piloted the app. Casady called it "a groundbreaking new technology for police officers. There's nothing else like it available."

Red Brain Law Enforcement Services is a subsidiary of RedBrain Inc., which was founded in December 2009 by [Ian Cottingham](#) (below) and Kevin Farrell. The duo formed Red Brain to assist in transitioning research conducted at UNL into commercially viable products, and CrimeView NEARme is the first such product.



Realizing the product's commercial potential, the development team created Red Brain Law Enforcement Services to further develop and market the software. They worked with [NUtech Ventures](#), the nonprofit responsible for building partnerships between the university and the private sector, to start the company and license the software. They also partnered with [The Omega Group](#), developers of a variety of crime analysis products, to widely release the software application.

Meanwhile, Casady teamed with researchers at the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center to study the software's implications for justice, technology uptake and evaluation. Other members of the development team included spatial data mining researchers and software developers from UNL's Department of Computer Science and Engineering to build the application with a grant from the National Institute of Justice.

"This is a perfect example of how University of Nebraska-Lincoln researchers, when teamed with experts who know the needs of end users, can create value in a market," said [David Conrad](#), executive director of NUtech Ventures.

*Credits: Photo of Lingelbach courtesy of NUtech Ventures. Photo of Casady from [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov). Photo of Cottingham from [unl.edu](http://unl.edu).*

*[<http://www.siliconprairienews.com/2012/03/new-unl-technology-provides-location-based-crime-data-to-police>]*