

WashingtonTechnology

Compiled Logic buys DTS

05/06/08 -- 01:24 PM

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Municipalities are increasingly outsourcing the management of police-initiated and private automobile towing and tracking. As one indication of the growing market, two providers of such services announced a merger this week.

Compiled Logic Corp., of Houston, announced May 5 that it is acquiring Dispatch and Tracking Solutions LLC, of Newport Beach, Calif. Both companies are privately owned, and financial terms were not disclosed. DTS will become a unit of Compiled Logic.

A number of municipalities, such as San Diego, San Francisco and Houston, are outsourcing the dispatching, tracking and management of towing, said Ron Smith, vice president of marketing at Compiled Logic.

Law enforcement agencies traditionally have tracked police-initiated tows, such as after traffic accidents. But some jurisdictions, including California, have passed laws to require private towing companies to report all vehicle tows to communities.

The California law applies to so-called nonconsent tows by private operators, such as cars removed from private parking lots and shopping malls.

The new tracking systems require software to compile and update data from many sources, fuse the data into an accessible database and allow access to the database to assist motorists and officials.

“Houston had 135,000 nonconsent tows last year,” Smith said. “There are 65 separate lots and thousands of tow truck drivers.” Compiled Logic is bidding on a request for proposals from Houston to consolidate and track such tows to better assist motorists in retrieving their cars, Smith said.

Motorists whose cars were towed previously had to seek information informally to find their cars. But with the new tracking services available, a motorist should be able to get the information from a Web site.

Another advantage offered by the new tracking systems is that they can extend service beyond municipal borders to track vehicles regionally.

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