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Onalaska police get 'cyber sleuth' help

The Onalaska Police Department has added **LeadsOnline** to its crime-fighting arsenal, courtesy of Pawn America.

LeadsOnline, a system that tracks and analyzes transaction records from pawn shops, secondhand stores, Internet drop-off stores and scrap metal recyclers enables investigators to track stolen property and suspects nationwide. More than 1,000 law enforcement agencies around the country use LeadsOnline.

"This service will allow us to conduct searches for stolen property much more expeditiously," said investigator Chad Marcon of the Onalaska Police Department. "With LeadsOnline we can search for stolen items that potentially could end up for sale online or mistakenly on the shelves of local pawn shops. With the proliferation of sites like eBay and Craig's List, having access to the data available with LeadsOnline is vital to recovering stolen property."

"We were very interested in acquiring this service," said Onalaska Police Chief Jeffrey Trotnic, "but current budgetary constraints made it very unlikely that we would be able to join LeadsOnline this year."

That's when Pawn America stepped in.

"We are very invested in assuring that local law enforcement agencies are equipped with the best tools available to investigate reports of stolen property," said Brad Rixmann, founder and owner of Pawn America. "As a secondhand goods retailer, credibility is a top corporate priority, so naturally we support partnerships such as underwriting this subscription to LeadsOnline. Anytime we can proactively support local law enforcement efforts, it sends a clear message that Pawn America stores do not accept property obtained illegally."

Onalaska Mayor Mike Giese said this is an excellent example of the business community partnering with law enforcement to make the community better. "Government and business working together with residents is what makes Onalaska a great place to live," Giese said. "It's a tradition worth continuing."

Onalaska will begin using the LeadsOnline system this month.

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