

City police expand designs on Web site

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An Amber Alert signal scrolls across the screen.

There's the Scranton Police headquarters, a badge and a rippling American Flag.

Three police cruisers appear with red and blue lights flashing through a teeming snowstorm.

The images are on the home page of the Scranton Police Department's new Web site, which started being crafted about a month ago and should be finished in about a week, Police Chief David Elliott said.

"This is something we've wanted to do for a while," he said. "But having someone in the department who could update it and put it all together was a problem."

In March, the city hired Jason DeBiasi, a 35-year-old former Keystone Automotive Industries employee, for Web design. His first project was to make the Scranton Police Web site something worth viewing.

The old site, www.scrantonpa.gov/spd.asp, contained only a couple paragraphs and a few contact phone numbers. It was a link off the city's official Web page, www.scrantonpa.gov.

The new site should have much more than that: current news about the department, contact numbers for supervisors and heads of certain divisions, such as the bomb squad or child abuse investigations. It will also list recent arrests and pictures of most-wanted fugitives.

"We're trying to take it to another level," Mr. DeBiasi said. "People should want to go there (to the site) and have an interest in staying. Most of the time you go on a Web site for a particular purpose but if it's not visually stimulating, you don't want to stay there."

Chief Elliott says he hopes the site will help the public identify who to call in a situation or assist in the apprehension of wanted fugitives.

"One of the biggest ways of catching fugitives is (help) from the neighborhood," he said. "Residents seeing people who don't fit in. Just look at

America's Most Wanted and the people they've caught over the years."

"I've thought it was important for years," Chief Elliott said. "Just to keep up with what's going on across the country."

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