



WHITE PAPER

# What is the Best Digital File Management Solution for Agency ROI?

Several law enforcement in-car video and body camera vendors offer SaaS file management solutions involving multi-year contracts where 100% of the customer's data resides on the cloud to include the database, video files, and application. This SaaS model offers several notable advantages and several significant disadvantages. This white paper will identify the pros and cons of SaaS and illustrate why Kustom Signals' file management model, the "**Kustom Solution**," provides not only world-class security but the best ROI of tax payer dollars.

**What is SaaS?** SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) and “the cloud” are often used interchangeably, but aren’t exactly the same thing. SaaS is a business model using a cloud based platform to offer software and file storage online on a subscription basis through an Internet connection. Users access software applications exclusively through a web browser. A main advantage of SaaS is the minimal hardware and local IT support required for user business activity. Significant downsides to SaaS include potential Internet outages (disruption of business continuity), slow or poor connection speeds (throttling), lack of actual ownership of the data files, database, and application combined with the high cost of usage/bandwidth.

**What is Local Hosting with STaaS?** Local hosting [as applied by Kustom Signals] is when an application and database are installed on a server owned by and located within the confines of the end user environment with the option of utilizing data storage on a cloud platform; Storage-as-a-Service (STaaS). Locally hosted software also supports use of a web browser to access the software applications, but that access is accomplished through the Agency’s private network (Intranet). Internet outages therefore do not impact web browser access to the locally hosted application or locally stored files. A client application is also included for admin-level access. The advantages of local hosting are that the customer physically owns the database and the user application itself, and that User access does not rely on fast, consistent Internet service. Critical (evidentiary) files can be stored locally and/or on a STaaS platform. This model may require more local IT support and hardware than a SaaS model.

**Where is the data stored?** With a SaaS solution, 100% of the users’ data is stored on the cloud. All digital transactions take place across the Internet. Service interruptions could bring user activity with the application to a halt. With a locally hosted database and application, user access is not predicated on Internet reliability or speed and the actual data storage can be designed to be local, cloud (STaaS) or a hybrid of both.

**What about security?** Data integrity (especially in law enforcement) is critical and cannot withstand any question as to access control, management oversight, redundancy and reliability. One of the top providers for truly secure data storage and management is Microsoft Azure Government cloud services. Azure Government provides world-class security, protection, and compliance services handling data that is subject to certain government regulations and requirements, such as FedRAMP, NIST 800.171 (DIB), ITAR, IRS 1075, DoD L4, and CJIS. In order to provide the highest level of security and compliance, Azure Government uses physically isolated data centers and networks located only in the continental United States.

**cost, Cost, COST?** Bottom line, a full SaaS file management solution can be very expensive over time. Not only is the customer paying for file storage, but for the application, cloud hosting machines (or virtual machine) and web interfaces as well. Many law enforcement video vendors require multi-year contracts where the vendor, not the Law Enforcement agency, owns the data. At the end of the contract period, the agency may renew the contract, or if the agency chooses to terminate, they may or may not have to pay for the return of the video files, but certainly the agency will have no database and no application for file management.

**Why Kustom Signals?** The **“Kustom Solution”** takes the advantages of local hosting and marries it with the security and reliability of Azure Government for file storage in a STaaS model. The customer has the ability to have 100% of their files stored on the Azure cloud, or a hybrid model. Hybrid storage provides for all the security features in Azure Government cloud for evidentiary or sensitive videos. “Routine” or non-evidentiary videos are stored locally with a defined shorter retention period, thereby lowering storage costs. The simple idea being, like the insurance company’s television ad that says, “You only pay for what you need”.

Another advantage of the **“Kustom Solution”** model is reliability for uploading from law enforcement vehicles or body cameras. With a SaaS solution, if there is spotty coverage or dropped coverage, i.e. an interruption or lack of Internet access [as with cellular modem uploading], uploading performance may be degraded at best or non-existent at worst. This means that files will remain on DVR’s until Internet access is restored. And extended outages could result in critical law enforcement events being missed because DVRs’ storage media was full.

With the **“Kustom Solution,”** files are uploaded locally via secured Wi-Fi or hand carry into a workstation or server; and from there transferred to the Azure Government cloud (and/or local storage – hybrid). This means if there is an interruption of the Internet, DVRs will still upload, files will be available in the application, and the DVRs’ internal storage space will be freed up for additional recordings in the field. Once Internet access is restored, files marked for cloud storage would be moved at that time.

Additionally, with the **“Kustom Solution,”** the database and file management application is owned and controlled by the agency. If the agency decides to terminate the contract, the agency will receive all of their files stored on the cloud in a manner that will allow the files to be managed by the locally hosted, customer owned database and application – meaning no loss of continuity or control of the video files. This is our **“Kloud Ownership Promise;”** an offering unparalleled in the industry.

**Bottom line...does one size fit all?** SaaS certainly has its advantages: less initial local hardware costs and maintenance, less administrative IT support, and access to mobile device application features. SaaS also has its drawbacks: business operations that are totally dependent on reliable and unfettered Internet access; no user ownership of the software and data; increased, perpetual operating costs; and issues surrounding data migration, accessibility, and file management at the termination of the contract.

The **“Kustom Solution”** model couples the security and features offered by the Microsoft Azure Government STaaS cloud storage platform and the reliability of local hosting. The **“Kustom Solution”** may very well be the solution to ensure file safety, integrity and maximize your ROI.



**To learn more about Eyewitness Data Vault 3  
and STaaS contact Kustom Signals**



**800.458.7866 or [sales@KustomSignals.com](mailto:sales@KustomSignals.com)**