



E-Filing White Paper

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The purpose of this white paper is to discuss the electronic filing system implementation project that was done at the Supreme Court of Nevada (Court). One of the first initiatives for the Court was to implement a Document Management System (DMS) solution. The second initiative was to move the Court toward a paperless environment. In order to meet this initiative, an electronic filing system solution was required along with use of DMS and Case Management Systems (CMS). The first step was to evaluate which key decisions to consider when designing and/or purchasing an electronic filing solution. The following are examples of questions used to analyze the pilot project:

- Does the Court want to try to conform to NACM and COSCA standards?
- Does the Court want an open system so that no one vendor can control the court electronic filing system?
- How open does the Court want to be?
- Can a few select vendors control the electronic filing process?

- Will any e-filing vendor be allowed to file to the court?
- Do you outsource the process of hosting the credit card payment process?
- Are all documents submitted directly to the Courts via the electronic filing system?
- What electronic filing system process would accept large document submittals that could contain tens of thousands pages?
- What is the official docket time for the electronic filing?
- What processes will be automated?
- Should there be a fee charged for using the electronic filing system?
- Will the system provide an option to integrate existing systems, such as the current DMS and CMS?

The Court decided that it was best to own the electronic filing system and host the system on the Court's network, allowing the Court control of servers, firewalls, and application software. The other area of interest was to provide a filer's interface solution at no cost to the filers. This type of electronic filing system is

often referred to as a “license model.”

After the initial assessment was completed, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was generated. The goal and purpose of the RFP was to collect information from vendors that could provide a licensed model for an electronic filing system, which offers integration between the electronic filing system and the existing DMS and CMS. Upon awarding the RFP to the selected bidder, the project began.

Once initial project management tasks were complete, the next effort was the Systems Analysis Phase that focused on a mutual learning experience for both the vendor as well as the Court staff. The vendor needed to gain a detailed understanding of the Court’s current systems for functionality as well as an understanding of the electronic filing system, CMS, and DMS interface design. To assist in functional specification development, Court staff was required to comprehend basic principles in which the electronic filing system operated throughout various project life cycle phases.

After collecting requirements, functional specifications were documented. The next step was to start CMS and DMS interface development and customization of the electronic filing interface. After development completion, the vendor and Court IT staff performed final testing of the e-filing system including integration with the existing CMS and DMS. Once the stakeholder

signed off on the testing phase, the system was migrated to a production environment.

The Nevada Supreme Court’s e-filing system was launched through a pilot program, which was conducted in two phases. The pilot implemented electronic filing in criminal fast track cases where public lawyers represented all parties and was limited geographically to Clark and Washoe Counties. White Pine County and Carson City were also involved, as these are jurisdictions served by the State Public Defender’s Office. Training was provided to public attorneys and their support staff as well as clerks’ office staff and system administrators.

In phase two, district clerks began to initiate fast track appeals electronically and submit trial court records and transcripts for those cases.

This two-phased approach included periodic software program evaluations and incorporation of case processing issues that arose during transition from a paper-based system. To coincide with the criminal fast track appeal lifecycle, the pilot program lasted six (6) months.

At the end of the pilot program, the Court must decide how and when to open the e-filing system to more cases and attorneys.

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Disclaimer: The advice and opinions represented in this bulletin are based on the experiences of the Supreme Court of Nevada. Such recommendations may not be suitable for other jurisdictions, and are only offered in the spirit of sharing experience as information to others considering the installation of similar technologies and adoption of similar processes.