

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
A Subcommittee of the Commission on Technology
Minutes
February 11, 2005

Members Present:

Mohyeddin Abdulaziz
John Barrett
Eric Ciminski
Karl Heckart
John King
Cary Meister
Carol Merfeld
Gregg Obuch
Eloise Price
Rick Rager
Will Tagart

Members Not Present:

Ron Beguin
Janet Cornell
David Davis
Daniel Edwards
Joan Harphant
Kyle Rimel
Alan Turner

Others Present:

Stewart Bruner, Staff
Gary Graham
Melinda Hardman
Randy Kennedy
Patti Noland
Jeff Viemont

* indicates attendance via phone

Welcome and Introductions

The February 11, 2005, meeting of the Technical Advisory Council was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Karl Heckart, Chair. Karl briefly previewed the topics on the agenda for the meeting.

E-Filing Technical Review: Appellate Court Division II

Mohyeddin Abdulaziz talked members through a diagram of Division II's "paperless court environment" built around an integrated electronic document repository. The e-filing system he described is server-based and uses the browser as its front end to address client disparity and reduce the amount of training needed. Mo described the development history of the system, the functions of the system, and the technological components that currently provide those functions. He also detailed how document integrity is assured at the server level and the business process of clerk acceptance. The system does not perform any financial transactions.

He unveiled a proposal for a new pilot of a single-point e-filing system to be run by AOC on hardware and software at AOC. The proposed new pilot system would handle financial transactions using Verisign Commerce Site software.

Discussion ensued about the relative similarity of appeals courts to other courts in the State, the cost of registering and supporting users, whether a task force should be selected to work out development details, and whether it is still premature to select an e-filing method before the new case management systems (CMS) are completed. No action was taken concerning the proposal for a new pilot.

E-Filing Technical Review: Pima County

Patti Noland, Clerk of the Superior Court in Pima County, described Pima's decision to create an electronic filing system using LexisNexis as their approved "e-runner." The application is for probate cases only and is permissive at the moment with a couple of law firms as pilot users. She described the financial side of the system and pointed out advantages of having an outside vendor handle the financial transactions. The vendor also performs service both electronically and by traditional mail for its customers. Patti summarized the pros and cons of the system and informed members that Pima is beginning a relationship with a second "e-runner," LawDex. She felt that much more knowledge would be gained over the next six months as the second vendor comes on board and that it's premature to select one model over another until then.

Discussion ensued about the complexity of expanding from a single vendor to multiple vendors, customer service requirements for clerks' office employees, how clerk review is accomplished on the Lexis system today, and who has access to see case information.

E-Filing Technical Review: Maricopa County

Will Tagart described Maricopa County's original intent to get a system up and running quickly as the driver for their partnering with LexisNexis in a full service model for complex litigation cases. He explained that e-filing is mandated in certain cases deemed appropriate by the judge. Over time, the emphasis has changed from making an e-filing solution work to the importance of criminal justice integration with e-filing. Maricopa's new, expanded approach is to define the stream of data needed from filers and then loosely couple systems to leverage multiple vendors in a public/private partnership. Will shared the timeline for the award of contracts under the expanded pilot. The court is also developing e-filing systems for *pro se*, indigent, and clerk's office filers.

Discussion focused on the location for the clerk review queue in relation to the OXCI standard and digital signatures related to e-filing.

Discussion of Future Direction for E-Filing in Arizona

Now that electronic document management systems (EDMS) are becoming prevalent in the courts, the next step is leveraging the value of those systems through e-filing. Karl Heckart facilitated a lengthy discussion concerning the Branch's philosophy, the Bar's philosophy, the degree of cultural change e-filing requires, the necessary prerequisites to mandating e-filing, and the breadth and cost of support required in light of the presentations made by the pilots.

Members made a distinction between court-to-court e-filing being conducted between Pima Superior and Appeals Div. II and attorney-to-court e-filing more typically associated with the term. Members generally favored continued operation of current e-filing pilots for several more months with no new pilots being approved during that time.

None of the three models presented previously was considered strong enough to be recommended as the statewide standard. The Pima/Maricopa multiple-vendor/standard interface model was determined to be the most promising approach going forward, but more time is needed to prove the promise of the model before spreading its use.

The value of integrating case management and document management systems behind e-filing was underscored. The new limited and general jurisdiction case management systems must be developed in a manner that facilitates multi-vendor e-filing.

More discussion needs to occur before a recommendation is made to COT.

FTE Instruction Change in JPIJ

Stewart Bruner presented proposed changes for the language of the instruction that appears in Section III.B of the long version of the Judicial Project Investment Justification (JPIJ). John Barrett and Rick Rager described the confusion that pointed out the need for changing the language. They agreed that the increased detail of the new language would remove the confusion they described. Members agreed that the new language should be used and the instruction should be updated.

Approval of Exception Request Document

Karl Heckart reviewed the history of the development of an exception document based on the JPIJ and why COT had returned the finished document to TAC for formal approval. Members agreed that the document may be presented to COT as approved by TAC for use in requesting a one-time exception to an established state enterprise architecture standard.

2006-2008 Strategic Plan Update

Stewart Bruner informed members that COT agreed with the process and strategy TAC recommended for generating next year's plan. He reviewed the timeline of activities

approved by COT and emphasized the March 18, 2005, deadline for input from the courts. He continues to collect the names of those who perform the actual planning and asked members to please relay names or questions to him as they encounter them. Karl Heckart reminded the members that AOC anticipates revisiting the strategic plan development process, as discussed at the previous TAC meeting, in the May/June timeframe.

Karl asked for any other issues from members and guests. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

TAC's next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2005, (based on the usual second Friday of every even-numbered month) in Conference Room 230.