

2015 Technology Innovation Showcase

DeKalb County Recorder's Court: Benchmark Case Management System

DeKalb County Recorder's Court handles 150,000 to 200,000 citations annually, but the lack of integration between its case management system and its adjudication tool created significant operational problems. Systems access was an issue for judges, prosecutors, public defenders and private attorneys, and processes involving duplication of work created opportunities for human error. The volume of citations created a large backlog in warrants, arraignments and trial reporting. The accurate reporting of fine collections was questionable. The court could not provide any form of reply for a defendant to address issues before the court, nor could it comprehensively deal with the volume of defendants entering the court on a daily basis.

The Benchmark Case Management System project provided a fully integrated case management system for the court and an adjudication tool for judges while ensuring access and functionality for judges, prosecutors, public defenders, private attorneys and even the general public through a web-based environment.

In conjunction with the DeKalb County Police Department, the court implemented an e-citation solution in all police vehicles that sends data directly to Benchmark, the new court case management system. The citations are automatically placed on the court calendar in real time. Defendants can check the status of a citation, plead not guilty or pay a citation using a mobile device or any computer. As citations are paid online, the system automatically updates citation records in real time and submits information to the state.

DeKalb County's court IT department and the police department worked closely to ensure systems and protocols were carefully set in place so the database would transfer accurately to the new system. Business processes were modified to provide end-users with a friendly interface.

Since implementing Benchmark, the court is seeing increased employee productivity. The error rate in court reports has dropped drastically, and the case closure rate has increased due to the availability of advanced methods for paying citations.