MAPSYS

SYSTEMS & SOLUTIONS

MAPSYS PARTNERS WITH THE OHIO PUBLIC DEFENDER TO CREATE A CUSTOM CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

Created in 1976 by Chapter 120 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Office of the Ohio Public Defender (OPD) is the state agency responsible for providing legal representation and other services to people accused or convicted of a crime who cannot afford to hire an attorney. The office, which is overseen by the Ohio Public Defender Commission, is divided into Administrative, Appellate Services, Policy & Outreach, and Trial Services divisions.

OPD provides representation on appeals and post-conviction actions in death penalty, criminal, and juvenile delinquency cases; at trial when requested by local courts and in counties that contract with OPD for trial services; and at parole revocation hearings for the more than 50,000 people in Ohio's prisons. The agency provides technical assistance, research services, educational programs, and investigation and mitigation services to local public defenders and court-appointed counsel across Ohio. OPD also reimburses counties for a portion of the cost of running local indigent defense systems, and enforces standards established by the OPD Commission.

Challenge.

The Ohio Public Defender's office legacy systems could no longer keep up with the demands of the office and its constituents. To that end, OPD worked with MAPSYS to define requirements for a new, browser-based, web application that would fully support all the business functions required to provide case management to their authorized users. This solution would need to be broad enough to support case management functions across all counties in Ohio as well as flexible enough to support very specific and unique business workflows within the individual county offices.

Solution.

MAPSYS engineers designed a scalable, multi-tiered application architecture that serves as the backbone for the online case management system. This architecture includes RESTful web services, distributed background processing, a modern SQL Server database environment, and a load balanced web server layer presenting a rich front end utilizing HTML 5.

Along with this new, custom built case management system, OPD required a secure and scalable document imaging system to store and index a large volume of supporting documents being tracked within their cases. To accommodate this need, MAPSYS' in-house product, DIF (Document Imaging Foundations) system was leveraged. Due to DIF's flexible design, MAPSYS engineers were able to seamlessly integrate the new case management system to DIF's document imaging platform, providing a simple, yet powerful document storage and indexing component to the system.

Utilizing an iterative approach to software development, MAPSYS worked closely with the OPD team to map out a delivery plan that allowed OPD to rollout this new platform in phases. This phased approach allowed for quicker delivery of key functionality during the early phases of rollout.

Along with OPD's implementation team, MAPSYS has provided technical and development support during a series of successful migration efforts to bring multiple counties across Ohio onto the new case management platform. Many of these migrations included many large custom database transformations from legacy case management systems to the new platform.

Results.

The solution, which is commonly known as OPD Online, has been rolled out to 9 counties across Ohio as well as the central office in Columbus. It currently tracks over 10K active cases in Ohio and maintains archival history on an additional 375K cases. The application has been very well received and there are plans to continue the rollout across most of the counties in Ohio. The original MAPSYS development team has continued to be retained by OPD over the past two years to extend functionality well beyond the initial scope of the project and the system is currently on its 5th major release version.

Along with expanding the scope of the original case management system, OPD has also enlisted MAPSYS to deliver a new, native mobile version of the application which is supported on both Android and iOS devices. This new mobile version was recently completed and released; and is currently being used in a pilot program at OPD.