

Miami-Dade County Clerk of Courts Civil Court – Paperless Operations with Odyssey 2016 NACo Achievement Award Application

Abstract of the Program

Miami-Dade Clerk of Courts celebrated Civil Court paperless operations with the Tyler Technologies, Inc. Odyssey Case Manager. Odyssey allowed for paper-based case maintenance and management functions to be migrated from a legacy mainframe to a distributed platform. The implementation resulted in court records made available in the system dating back to the 1920's.

The implementation introduced several initiatives that had never been performed before in Miami-Dade and whose volume was unlike any of Tyler's Odyssey implementation experiences. Paperless operations commenced seamlessly with queue-driven workflows derived from a Tyler fit analysis; point-forward redaction integration; immediate availability to over 45 million pieces of paper, resultant from ingestion of a multi-year redacted backfile document repository; and a conversion cycle spanning 3 days. In all, paperless court activity and back-office operations, electronic filing of new complaints and subsequent pleadings, real-time foreclosure auctions, automated recordation and redaction of documents, and Internet viewing of electronic court documents by registered Bar were available at 8am March 2, 2015 *for business as usual!*

Miami-Dade Clerk of Courts has not only demonstrated how technology can produce a paradigm shift in doing business, but can also produce improvements in the quality of our work product and in the customer experience.

The Problem or Need for the Program

The Miami-Dade County Clerk of Courts selected Tyler Technologies, Inc. as its vendor for a solution known as Odyssey Case Manager in 2006. Within the 11th Judicial Circuit, Odyssey Case Manager was implemented in the Family Court and Probate/Mental Health Courts in 2008 and 2014, respectively. However, the

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Circuit and County Civil Courts presented several unique challenges in implementation, including the distribution of the staff due to eight District County locations as well as the sheer volume of cases and documentation filed.

Other problems to be solved with the program included a complex and extensive data and document conversion process in order to completely move off of the legacy mainframe system housing over 20 years of information and the introduction of electronic workflows to eliminate all but a subset of the physical paper flowing through the Civil Courts.

The Description of the Program

The objectives of the program were as follows:

- a) to support paperless operations within the Circuit and County Civil Courts;
- b) to provide a foundation to allow interaction with attorneys, judiciary and the general public online, via the Internet rather than in-line;
- c) to review and re-engineer business processes in order to streamline them as well as to reduce the need for customizations to the Odyssey system and;
- d) to ensure that training needs were met for all clerks and other personnel supporting the Civil Courts.

The program was initiated in order to complete the implementation of Tyler Technologies, Inc. Odyssey Case Manager in the Civil Courts. A legacy mainframe solution had been in place to manage and maintain civil cases for well over 20 years, and there was concern that a change in systems could adversely impact operations. The Clerk wished to ensure that case information and documents would be available for access to authorized persons over the Internet. Due to

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these concerns, specific focus was placed on change management and communications.

The Odyssey Case Manager system was designed to support high-volume case management and maintenance with the ability for geographically disparate units to easily create and maintain case information, court document images and hearing calendars. The Circuit and County Civil Courts for the 11th Judicial Circuit have eight locations (six with courtrooms) within Miami-Dade County.

The system was also designed to support the use of configured workflows and queues which allow clerks to efficiently maintain cases and dockets as they are filed. The judiciaries are able to view case and docket information within the system and the workflows allow electronic interaction between the clerks and judiciaries with minimal need for paper document flow.

Over 4 million cases and almost 95 million dockets were projected to be converted from the mainframe system to the distributed Windows-based Odyssey system. In addition, almost 45 million pages of electronic document images stored outside of the mainframe system were to be introduced into the Odyssey system at implementation.

The program/project required approximately 2 years to complete and was implemented within a single weekend in March 2015. Over 1 year of project duration was dedicated to business process review and re-engineering. Data conversion was tested through six cycles using copies of the full mainframe database into test target environments. The data conversion required over 48 hours of job execution time due to the volumes of data being converted. Automated redaction of electronic document images required over eight months of effort to meet state requirements and suppress visibility of sensitive data.

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Participants within the project included members of the Clerk’s Office, the 11th Judicial Circuit, Miami-Dade County’s centralized IT staff (ITD) and consultants from Tyler Technologies, Inc. The Clerk’s Office staff included operational leaders from the Civil Courts support units and members of the Technical Services Division (TSD). TSD provided technical support, hardware support and implementation, development and project management. ITD provided data conversion and hardware/networking support. The 11th Judicial Circuit provided project management support, operational leadership, Subject Matter Experts (SME’s), technical configuration/support and training for their staff. The consultants from Tyler Technologies, Inc. provided project management, implementation services, development and training support.

The program implementation spanned four work days and a full weekend in March 2015. Members of the operational staff were “on-call” to test the configuration and data conversion to provide approval for production business operations. The data conversion process ended late on a Saturday night, and the “on-call” operational staff came in at 11:00pm on a Saturday night to certify the system. A “command center” was established to accept and work issues reported regarding the newly implemented system. The transition went so smoothly that the command center was dissolved before the end of the first week of live operations.

Attorneys were able to view case information and electronic documents over the Internet. Between the ability to file documents electronically via the Florida Courts eFiling Portal and the ability to view documents filed on their cases over the Internet, there is no longer a need for attorneys to come into one of the Clerk’s Office locations to request a civil case file.

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The Use of Technology

The Odyssey Case Manager system utilizes a distributed Windows-based server framework over a Microsoft SQL Server database. The system is browser-based, but has an application component which must be installed on each workstation. Servers are identified by function, including application, job and integration. Additional servers were added to the existing server farm to support the data and document volume of the Circuit and County Civil Courts.

Other software required for implementation of the Odyssey Case Manager system included:

- Microsoft Word (for each workstation printing forms)
- Lead Tools (for each workstation scanning paper filings)
- Microsoft Document Image Writer (for each workstation importing orders)

The Cost of the Program

The program was facilitated through both in-house and vendor resources. Capital costs could be estimated as follows:

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| • Vendor professional services and travel | - \$1,200,000.00 |
| • Software costs | - \$ 500,000.00 |
| • Hardware costs | - \$ 450,000.00 |

COC personnel costs could be estimated as follows:

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| • Clerk’s employees (15,000 hours) | - \$ 750,000.00 |
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Not accounting for administrative costs, the 11th Judicial Circuit’s costs or support provided by County ITD staff, the estimated cost of this program implementation

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was \$2,900,000.00. Note that the use of vendor-supplied web-based training, at no additional charge, did reduce the anticipated number of hours for vendor professional services for the Clerk’s Office.

The Results/Success of the Program

The Odyssey system successfully supported the creation of almost 100,000 new cases and 5 million dockets from March through December 2015. Almost 80,000 of the new cases were electronically filed by attorneys. Cases were automatically created within the Odyssey system after clerk review in the Florida Courts eFiling Portal, saving time and effort by the Clerk’s Office. Attorneys were able to access their case information and filed documents over the Internet via Odyssey for the first time. In 2015, this translates to an estimated savings of \$500,000 just in parking fees for attorneys.

Approximately 1 million documents and over 6 million pages were sent through automated redaction for the Circuit and County Civil Courts from March through December 2015. Computing System Innovation’s (CSI’s) Intellidact automated redaction solution, with a 99.5% accuracy rate, was selected to expose Odyssey’s document repository. The outcome for our workforce was driving the business from an intensive, error-prone manual inspection of tens of thousands of documents daily to automatic redaction, routing only those documents suspect of containing confidential information in non-native format to queues for manual inspection.

The implementation of the Odyssey Case Manager system resolved a significant risk to the Clerk’s Office and County ITD by replacing a legacy mainframe system which was getting more difficult each year to maintain. A significant percentage of personnel within Miami-Dade County with the skillset required to maintain the mainframe system are retiring within the next 1-5 years.

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Other benefits of the system include:

- Reducing costs and efforts of storing/locating paper filings;
- Ability to batch scan paper filings and “group add” dockets to support a large volume of “over the counter” filings;
- Ability to escalate pleadings and orders to judiciary and other Clerk’s units through the use of workflows and queues;
- Visibility of an audit trail in determining when and who initiated docket entry;
- Automated creation of forms from the system, reducing clerk’s efforts required to certify case information;
- Mandated state reports were generated from the system, reducing the need to manually collect and calculate statistics;
- Access to online business process documentation and training materials.

Focus on training and communications were keys to the overall success of the program. Over 400 employees (almost one third of the total staff in the Clerk’s Office) viewed online video training or attended instructor-led training as a result of the program. Business process documentation and training materials were developed for employee use. “Subject Matter Experts” within the Clerk’s staff were identified and given extra training and access to the new system so that they could provide support to the remainder of the staff.

Finally, a presentation was provided to members of the Miami-Dade County Bar Association to introduce the system as well as User Guide and Frequently Asked Questions documents made available through the Clerk’s Portal.

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The Worthiness of the Award

As change agents, Miami-Dade Clerk of Courts has not only demonstrated how technology can produce a paradigm shift in doing business, but can also produce improvements in the quality of our work product and in the customer experience while keeping up with the high case and document volume demands of our Circuit. A direct benefit to the community is time saved by constituents and reduced impacts to air quality given the need for fewer cars on the road to drive to local courthouses to conduct business.

To better understand the volume of paper managed by the Odyssey Case Manager System upon Go Live, if laid end to end, 45 million document pages would cover 1/3 of the Earth’s circumference. The reduction of the volume of paper has direct cost savings to the Clerk’s Office, 11th Judicial Circuit, the Bar and the constituents of Miami-Dade County through the inherent efficiencies introduced into the COC’s re-engineered business processes no longer dependent upon paper.

Training of the Clerk’s employees was a significant focus of the program. The legacy system had been in use for over 20 years and many employees were concerned about the change that the new system would have on their jobs. By utilizing “Subject Matter Experts” and many hours of online and instructor-led training, employees were able to transition to the new system with minimal impact.

The implementation of the Odyssey Case Manager system for the Circuit and County Civil Courts allows for case information and electronic court documents to be exposed to all constituents over the Internet as authorized by the Florida Supreme Court Administrative Order 15-18. This service allows constituents, whether they are members of the Florida Bar, staff of state, county or local

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governmental agencies, or the general public, to be able to view documents online rather than in-line.