

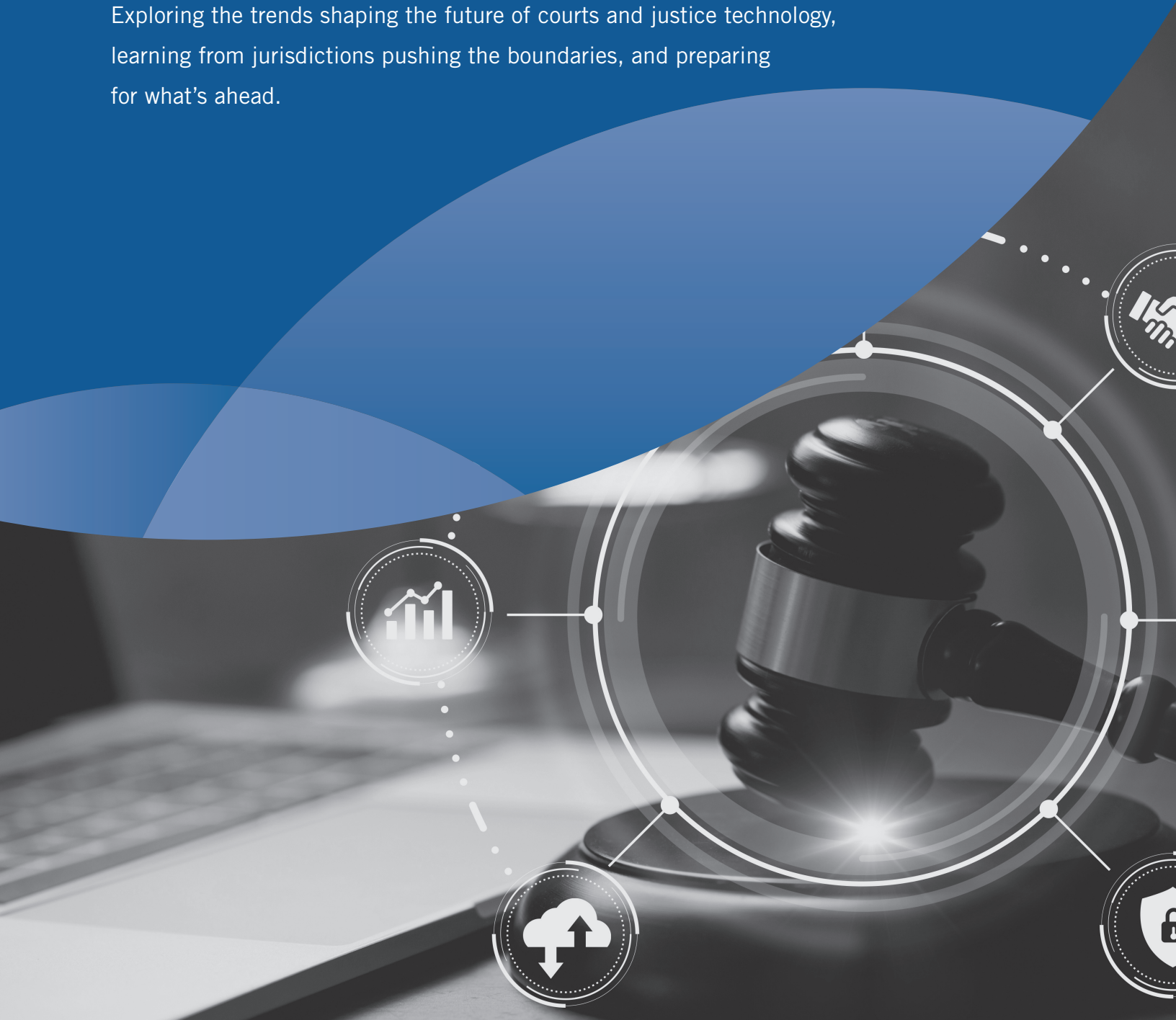
Empowering people who serve the public®



WHITE PAPER

Great Expectations: The Evolution of an Advanced Court

Exploring the trends shaping the future of courts and justice technology, learning from jurisdictions pushing the boundaries, and preparing for what's ahead.



Great Expectations: The Evolution of an Advanced Court

Introduction

Courts understand technology is critical to their processes. The digital tools considered advanced just years ago are quickly becoming the norm. Rapidly evolving technologies allow courts to do more than meet expectations. Today's virtual justice tools are empowering courts to raise those expectations — redefining what's possible both in and outside the courthouse, among staff, and through interactions with citizens, attorneys, and justice partners.

With the promise of perpetual improvement comes an important question: **How do courts keep up?** Transformation doesn't happen overnight, and the path toward progress can vary greatly among courts. To achieve a successful, sustainable evolution, it starts with a long-term roadmap, guided by both a knowledge of the past and anticipation of the industry needs to come. This is why we've created the Electronic Court Maturity Model — to help courts navigate their growth journey.

The Electronic Court Maturity Model

How It Started

The first iteration of the E-Court Maturity Model was created in 2013, in anticipation of increased technology needs to support upcoming legislation mandating e-filing for non-criminal cases in several states. The pioneering courts in these states served as a model and catalyst for others, and by 2015, e-filing was becoming the benchmark of an advanced court.

With more courts adopting e-filing, there was an inflection point. "There was this golden opportunity for courts to adopt other electronic processes around e-filing," says Kevin Issitt, director of strategy for Tyler's Courts & Justice Division. Beyond offering guidance for taking the first steps toward becoming an electronic court, the E-Court Maturity Model offers a plan for continuous, thoughtful improvement to advance court systems along a natural progression.

Today, less than 10 years after the first states mandated civil e-filing, 88% of the population served by Tyler's web-based e-filing portal have mandatory e-filing rules in place for at least some case types, or plan to do so in the next year — highlighting the need for courts to constantly measure progress relative to expectations.

A Unique View

Much has changed since the E-Court Maturity Model launched 10 years ago. And, with 55% of the U.S. population served by a Tyler Courts & Justice solution, paired with 40+ years' experience in court technology, this breadth and depth of knowledge enables Tyler to see trends and adjust course alongside them — from supporting the first large-scale statewide e-filing application in 2014 to 200,000+ court documents e-filed daily through Tyler-enabled technology today.

As the E-Court Maturity Model has evolved, it has moved past simply sharing information electronically, to connecting and automating workflows that streamline the justice experience for courts and those they serve.

The Pandemic's Push

"During the pandemic, the focus was on a rapid evolution to serve justice in innovative ways but was also accompanied by a lull in filing volume around the nation, a minor reprieve during times of massive change," notes Matt Davis, general manager of public facing solutions for Tyler's Courts & Justice Division.

As public relief policies enacted during the pandemic have dried up, case types that saw historically low volumes during the pandemic are now spiking to levels at or above pre-pandemic levels:

- In a sampling of nine unified state courts, evictions are up 80% year over year, and above pre-pandemic levels.
- High inflation and rising consumer debt is showing substantial increases in debt collection and garnishment cases.
- Divorce cases, while not as pronounced, show similar upward trends, up 6% from the pandemic low.

While the pandemic may have caused a surge in new virtual justice technologies, advanced courts are already looking ahead, driving the new solutions redefining the meaning of digital maturity. In this white paper, we'll introduce the latest maturity model and showcase the real-world impact through courts who have successfully implemented multiple aspects of the model.

"The maturity model is both a self-evaluation tool and an aspirational roadmap for courts and our business."

Kevin Issitt
Director of Strategy, Tyler Courts & Justice Division

55% of the U.S. population is served by a Tyler Courts & Justice solution



Among courts currently leveraging a Tyler solution, nearly half operate in a SaaS environment, with 100% of new customers choosing to operate on SaaS

88% of the population served by Tyler's web-based e-filing portal have mandatory e-filing rules in place for at least some case types, or plan to do so in the next year



200,000+ court documents are e-filed daily through Tyler-enabled technology today

The drive for digital maturity has increased drastically among courts leveraging a Tyler solution over the last several years — with business improvement projects increasing by

49% since 2020

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The Five Dimensions

Moving through a process of continuous assessment and improvement includes steps in five dimensions:

- The courtroom
- Back-office court operations
- Citizen self-service and transparency
- Attorney access and engagement
- Justice partner integration

Realistic Assessment and Planning

Using the maturity model as a reference, Tyler approaches strategic planning by first gaining a deep understanding of a court's current state through guided self-assessment across the organization. Planning is the second layer, building a realistic multiyear roadmap that considers both the court's future priorities while also accounting for any gaps surfaced in the assessment that must be filled in order to support the future vision.

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Key Factors Driving the Evolution

Demand for Data and Transparency

Actionable, accessible data is as critical factor within each dimension of the E-Court Maturity Model. Advanced courts are turning to innovative applications that can not only do the leg work of surfacing data, but also, can transform these metrics into digestible insights that can be acted upon and combined with justice partner platforms.

While a priority across the model, the meaning of “data” and “transparency” vary from the courtroom to the back office to the way courts interact with citizens, attorneys, and justice partners.



Within the courtroom, judges are leveraging data to measure the outcomes and impact of key initiatives to make more informed decisions, such as pretrial risk assessment and release. Going a step further, advanced courts are integrating their case management systems and data with disparate justice source systems, giving court staff, attorneys, and justice partners full insight on an individual — from dispatch through disposition — to serve justice more effectively and ultimately, create safer, more equitable communities.

Real-World Impact: Supporting Better Outcomes With Evidence-Based Decisions

In Clark County, Nevada, a specialized program, The Harbor, helps at-risk youth before they even reach the point of entering the juvenile justice system. Since launching in 2016, The Harbor has served more than 20,000 kids, and more than 90% of children referred to the program do not escalate further within the juvenile justice system.

The Harbor’s comprehensive intake process includes multiple survey and validated assessment tools from its case management software to extract data in ways to support evidence-based decision-making and measurement of potential outcomes. Integrations with case management systems from the juvenile justice department’s parole systems and other justice data continues to improve the program’s ability to track and understand youth needs.

“Citizens expect more today from the justice system, and that’s not diminishing. But the demand for better, faster, more transparent systems from court staff, justice partners, and attorneys behind the scenes is growing too. There’s always going to be room for improvement.”

Kevin Issitt

Real-World Impact: Illinois Connecting Pretrial Data With Supervision

After Illinois passed the Safe-T Act, becoming the first state to eliminate cash bail as part of its pretrial reform legislation, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) set out to automate the collection of dynamic pretrial data to not only evaluate the effectiveness of the legislation, but also to create new pretrial processes that drive positive societal impacts.

By connecting a pretrial analytics application with their supervision platform, in addition to monitoring caseload statistics, the AOIC will be able to evaluate the impact on an individual’s life during the term of supervision and the public safety impact in the community — for example, whether that individual re-offended or was arrested while under supervision. Having one comprehensive, standardized set of pretrial data will also allow pretrial officers and judges to understand how their risk assessments compare to pretrial process outcomes.



Behind the scenes, court staff are leveraging real-time data to track performance — comparing these metrics against performance standards to identify which case types may be underperforming. Advanced courts are using this information to augment staffing, training, and business processes and identify new tools to improve.

Real-World Impact: Performance Insights Help Dallas Manage E-Filing Growth

As electronic case filings rose in the civil courts of Dallas County, Texas, “Both clerks’ offices were wanting some sort of ability to provide metrics, not just of their staff, but also filing metrics of the individuals filing into the courts, to see whatever trends they could to improve efficiency as a filer, as well as a reviewer,” explains Ashley Arnold, court technology manager for Dallas County.

To accomplish their goals, the Dallas County IT department and county clerks integrated a cloud-based e-filing analytics tool with their existing case management and e-filing solutions. “Since implementing [the analytics solution], reviewers have improved the quality of filings coming into the court and constituents have experienced an increase in efficiency in the manner in which they file,” says Arnold.

Arnold credits the analytics integration with uncovering valuable trends in the filing process, including the need to increase training for some reviewers. By identifying common rejection types and the reviewers having more issues, court staff can deploy training resources where they’re needed most. They can also provide this additional information out to the state bar so reviewers can improve the quality of filings coming into the court from attorneys or case parties.

“They’re able to educate the filers a little more, as well as educate their reviewers so that they’re not having to reject as many filings,” says Arnold. With fewer filing rejections, clerks can process more efficiently. “The level of service in which items are flowing through the court is increasing.”



For both citizens and community leaders, the demand for insight into court performance is increasing as well.

Combatting public distrust in the justice system, court systems — especially local and state courts — are under more pressure than ever to re-instill positive public perceptions. By making the results of key initiatives and court metrics transparent to the public, courts can show that tax dollars are being spent effectively and justice is being served fairly and efficiently.

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Balancing Growth and Economic Pressure

As caseloads across the country reach numbers at or above pre-pandemic levels, compounded by increasing cybersecurity concerns, many courts are taking on more responsibility without an accompanying lift in staff resources.

Automated electronic tasks between the clerk and court are critical, and over the last couple years, advanced courts are extending automation to include digitally recorded court transcripts, online dispute resolution activity flowing into case management systems (CMS), and juror list management. Furthermore, by leveraging integrated, SaaS-based systems, courts are eliminating redundant tasks while also enhancing security.

Real-World Impact: Shreveport Increases Security and Efficiency

Brandon McEachern, IT director for Shreveport City Court in Shreveport, Louisiana, encouraged his court to transition to SaaS-based software in 2021. With a high volume of low-complexity cases paired with a large number of self-represented litigants, Shreveport needed a CMS that automated as many steps as possible to accelerate and simplify resolution.

The increase of cybercrime was another key driver for the court's move. McEachern adds, "We could not afford to employ [additional] people. But together, we can [increase security]. And I think that's one of the major benefits of having a cloud solution is we can piggyback off each other and get these features, the security that we couldn't get by ourselves."

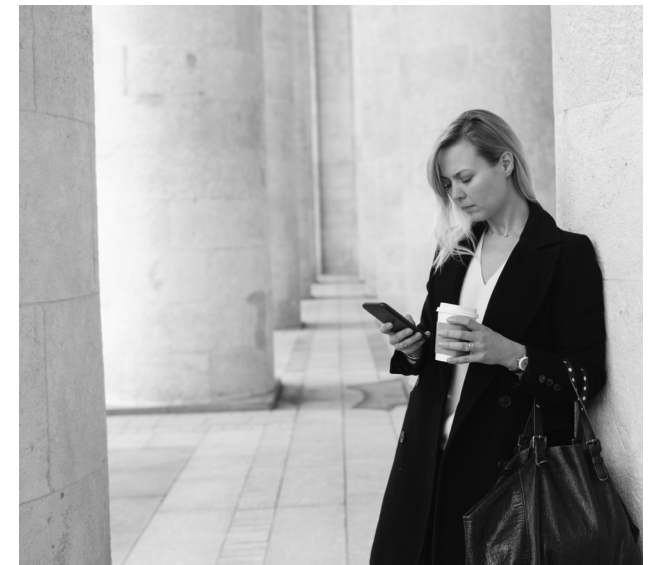
For Shreveport, the need for integrated solutions to replace its siloed homegrown modules provided an additional reason to partner with a cloud-first software vendor. "The system works better when we can all work together. The way that we can work together is through the integrations," says McEachern.

And, when court staff and justice agencies work together more efficiently, those efficiencies are passed along to the public. For example, by integrating the technology Shreveport's court clerks use to capture minutes into the city's case management solution, court clerks can now access and enter data from the courtroom in real time, eliminating duplicate data entry, and in turn, provide immediate case transparency to the public.

With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), the (very near) future of court automation is bright. Enhanced document processing and security is already being leveraged in advanced courts, including applications for data redaction, data extraction, document classification, and process automation. Through intelligent, automated document review and data entry to process electronic and counter filings, courts are making the filing process quicker, less redundant, and more accurate — giving court staff more time to focus on higher-value tasks.

Real-World Impact: AI-Powered E-Filing in Palm Beach

Since leveraging AI to automate the review and data entry of electronic filings, Palm Beach County's Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller is noticing fewer processing errors, faster turnaround times, and less time spent training staff. In fact, their AI-powered system can process more than four times the number of documents as a human in an hour's time. Palm Beach noted that 42% of the documents processed by AI required no human intervention, a number likely to increase as the technology learns and improves.



Expectations for Access and Digital Convenience

From dentist appointments to grocery shopping, the public's expectations for digital access on demand are not slowing down post-pandemic, and court interactions are no exception. Advanced courts have been prioritizing self-service tools that improve constituents' access to and experience with the justice system for years, and now these courts are moving on to optimizing these solutions, creating seamless processes for citizens that allow them to communicate with the court when and how is most convenient.



For much of the public, the only interaction with the court is through jury duty, which is why creating a user-friendly juror process is vital to improving the public perception of the court. Allowing jurors to submit questionnaires, waivers, and deferrals online is just the first step. Advanced courts are offering jurors online check-in processes, qualifying and empanelling jurors remotely, leveraging text notifications and reminders, and disbursing payments electronically.

Real-World Impact: Texting Turns Court Staff from "Villains" to "Heroes"

With text messaging now the dominant form of communication, it should be no surprise that it's becoming an expectation of jurors, too. As Chester County, Pennsylvania, made the switch to a modern jury management solution that provides the texting and mobile features the public prefers, the court is finding what's good for jurors can boost their own efficiency as well.

Elizabeth Dumond, chief deputy court administrator for Chester County, says updating their jury communication system has turned court staff from villains, who have to turn people away when there's a change in schedule, to heroes, who communicate quickly and helpfully in advance of problems. In fact, Chester County court staff has eliminated nearly 100% of miscommunication with jurors.



While virtual court was often initially deployed to help courts process cases and avoid backlogs during the pandemic, innovative courts have recognized the important role this solution plays in prioritizing efficient, accessible resolution as they evolve post pandemic. As courts take the next steps, integrating virtual hearing technology with their court's CMS, they're finding that virtual court technology is not only expanding access for defendants, but it's also creating substantial benefits for the court — increasing compliance, saving resources, promoting more punctual payments, and giving court staff more flexibility.

Real-World Impact: Courts Share Why Virtual Court Is Here to Stay

- "With our in-person dockets, our failure to appear range anywhere from 40 to 60%, but with our virtual court dockets, our failure to appear are less than 10%." - Jeanelle Andersen, court administrator for the city of Fort Lupton, Colorado
- "We are seeing a whole salary of savings, from being able to reduce security measures in that way because the foot traffic isn't there, so we don't have to arm the building in the same way." - Danielle Trujillo, court administrator for the city of Littleton, Colorado
- "We have found that it has created more time efficiencies across the board. To allow our court staff to be doing other tasks, to prepare better for our live dockets, and then we are out of here much earlier versus having all the people in person, and our clerks have appreciated that as well." - Amy Foster, business services manager for the city of Gardner, Kansas



An upward trend of public-facing resolution and document-access solutions can also be seen among advanced courts — through applications that allow the public to view statewide case information, acquire certified documents electronically, and resolve traffic citations 24/7/365.

Real-World Impact: County Streamlines Citation Payments

Glynn County Clerk of State Court in Georgia created immediate, measurable benefits for constituents and court staff after going live with a seamless online payment solution for traffic citations. By integrating their new payment solution with their CMS, the county allows clients to view and pay basic traffic citations online, often within hours — expediting resolution and lessening the need for constituents to appear in court.

Since going live, approximately 71% of the payments received through the online system are made within the first or second notice from the court, while 17% are made prior to any notice at all. This has improved efficiency for the court as well, reducing the steps required by staff to close a case and the number of hearings scheduled.

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Market Shift to Cloud Expectations

Gartner® predicts over 75% of governments will operate more than half of workloads using hyperscale cloud service providers by 2025.* Among courts leveraging a Tyler solution today, nearly half operate in a SaaS environment, up from 26% five years ago. An even sharper trend can be seen among courts newly adopting a Tyler solution, with 100% choosing SaaS.

The benefits of cloud migration are plentiful — from improving security and equity to stretching budgets and helping agencies meet compliance requirements. But advanced courts also recognize that a SaaS environment serves as a springboard for improvement — supporting faster upgrades and laying the foundation for an integrated platform between their CMS and justice partners.

Real-World Impact: Integrated Justice in Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Judicial Branch is a long-standing independent branch of the Choctaw government. With a legacy court system that could not scale or sustain continued growth or the tribal court's long-term vision, a move to more sophisticated technology was necessary.

The challenges included how to continue to provide fair justice in alignment with the jurisdiction's core beliefs, how to move to digital operations, and how to better serve residents in rural areas. An answer came in the form of a comprehensive SaaS solution that reduced the complexity of navigating the judicial process and increased electronic access to court services.

The integrated, SaaS-based solution manages and automates civil and criminal judicial processes across multiple departments, including case management, court management, prosecutor management, probation management, jury management, and electronic filing. Moving from manual to automated processes in this comprehensive way has positioned the Choctaw Nation Judicial Branch to be hailed as one of most efficient tribal court systems in the country. "We take pride in offering tribal members and Oklahoma residents a judicial process they can believe in," says John Miller, IT director of government services.

Getting On the Path to Continuous Improvement

Matching the rapid advancements in court technology post pandemic, the drive for digital maturity has increased drastically among courts leveraging a Tyler solution over the last several years — with continuous improvement projects increasing by 49% since 2020. As a benchmark, today, the average Tyler-enabled court sits within the All Electronic category of the E-Court Maturity Model, with breakaway courts, like Collin County, Texas, sitting at the very edge of innovation in the top of the Advanced Electronic category.

Caren Skipworth, Collin County CIO says, "Collin County uses the Maturity Model as a guidepost on our continuous improvement journey. Our elected officials and department heads understand that we have to have a mindset of constant growth to keep up with technology. Our public continues to demand more electronic access and we have to provide that access under shrinking budgets. The Maturity Model helps us align Collin's multiyear strategy to Tyler's capabilities."

For courts just starting their digital maturity journey, implementing a modern CMS is not just a first step, it's a leap forward. "Having that strong CMS foundation can move courts 50% higher in the maturity model. And once courts are there, they're on the road to continuous improvement," says Issitt.

What's next?

While the pandemic accelerated advancements in court technology, the priority now is to optimize these solutions, integrating them with CMS and justice partner systems to create more efficient processes across each dimension of the E-Court Maturity Model. And, with so many opportunities for maturation, focusing on the data unearthed from cloud-based integrations can help courts understand the next steps to take and evaluate the effectiveness of these new technologies along the way.

Additionally, AI-powered solutions are offering new opportunities for automating processes that can empower courts to achieve more without adding staff. The tools available today are just the beginning, and with such rapid progression, courts cannot afford to be reactive. More than ever, courts need to carve out their path toward digital maturity.

*Gartner Press Release, Gartner Announces the Top 10 Government Technology Trends for 2023, April 17, 2023. <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2023-04-17-gartner-announces-the-top-10-government-technology-trends-for-2023>

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About Tyler Technologies, Inc.

Tyler Technologies (NYSE: TYL) provides integrated software and technology services to the public sector. Tyler's end-to-end solutions empower local, state, and federal government entities to operate efficiently and transparently with residents and each other. By connecting data and processes across disparate systems, Tyler's solutions transform how clients turn actionable insights into opportunities and solutions for their communities. Tyler has more than 40,000 successful installations across nearly 13,000 locations, with clients in all 50 states, Canada, the Caribbean, Australia, and other international locations. Tyler has been recognized numerous times for growth and innovation, including Government Technology's GovTech 100 list. More information about Tyler Technologies, an S&P 500 company headquartered in Plano, Texas, can be found at tylertech.com.

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