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# IDaho Supreme Court 2019 NASCIO Award Nomination

## PROJECT

iCourt – Statewide Court Case Management System

## CATEGORY

Cross-Boundary Collaboration & Partnerships

## STATE

Idaho

## PROJECT INITIATION

October 2013

## PROJECT COMPLETION

October 2018

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Idaho Courts changed the way we do business and serve the public across the state by shifting from a legacy paper-based system to a modern digital judicial system.

The Idaho Supreme Court determined it must modernize its computer systems, infrastructure, and business practices in order to meet its constitutional mandate to “resolve court cases without delay.” The Idaho Supreme Court believed a modern case management system was absolutely essential to meet today’s business and citizen expectations. The Idaho Courts simply could not achieve the efficiencies afforded by recent advances in technology without making a transition to a unified case management platform. The Court also realized the need to standardize our business processes and forms across the state in order to provide fair, consistent, and impartial justice for all. The ability to achieve this level of uniformity across all courts was only possible through a new statewide technology system.

Prior to 2013, courts across the state managed data in 45 independent, siloed systems. Through the use of multiple Tyler Technologies products to include Odyssey’s Court Solutions (Odyssey Case Manager, Attorney Manager, Financial Manager, File and Serve, Guide and File, Portal, Supervision, Appellate, Enterprise Custom Reports, and Integration Toolkit) and Brazos Electronic Citation (E-Citation) Solution, these courts now manage all aspects of court cases at any time, from any location. By transitioning to a fully digital record, judges, clerks, and judicial partners such as prosecutors, public defenders, probation offices, and more, can immediately access court proceedings, optimizing their time and allowing them to work from anywhere across our remote state.

Attorneys now submit documents to our courts, 24/7/365, from anywhere, automatically filing into court cases, improving efficiency and timeliness. Self-represented litigants leverage guided interviews for common case types, easing the burden of interacting with our courts and improving citizen access to justice. Parties are now digitally serving each other, eliminating paper, time, and mailing costs.

Consistent, unified case flow management has been implemented and can be measured across all of Idaho’s courts, with the ability to perform data analytics, case metrics, and statistical reporting on statewide, district, and local courts.

Idaho also implemented the first-ever statewide misdemeanor probation and problem-solving court system, standardizing practices, delivering consistent services, and empowering our partners to make better recommendations about people being supervised.

Idaho improved data exchanges with our justice partners by implementing direct integrations with several judicial partner systems, while also implementing e-citations in multiple jurisdictions across the state.

Idaho implemented multiple automated workstreams to maximize efficiencies of court processes and shifted personnel from administrative roles to providing enhanced public services.

## CONCEPT

Idaho began the iCourt – Statewide Court Case Management System project for two main reasons. First, and most importantly, the Idaho Supreme Court determined it must modernize its computer systems, infrastructure, and business practices in order to meet its constitutional mandate to “resolve court cases without delay.” The Idaho Supreme Court believed a modern case management system was absolutely essential to meet today’s business and citizen expectations. The Idaho Courts simply could not achieve the efficiencies afforded by recent advances in technology without making a transition to a unified case management platform. The Court also realized the need to standardize our business processes and forms across the state in order to provide fair, consistent, and impartial justice for all. The ability to achieve this level of uniformity across all courts was only possible through a new statewide technology system.

Secondly, Idaho reached a crossroads and needed to replace its aging computerized case management system. The Court’s legacy system, Idaho Statewide Trial Court Automated System (ISTARS), was decentralized and siloed, had outlived its useful life, and was extremely limited in its capabilities. The previous platform prevented the courts from achieving its vision and from realizing the numerous benefits afforded by digital court records and modern case management systems.

In 2012, we requested an external assessment by three of the nation’s foremost experts on court technology to conduct an in-depth analysis and provide recommendations on the IT direction for Idaho’s judicial branch. It provided recommendations and guidance regarding:

- Future court software and hardware development to include:
  - Modernizing our case management system
  - Expanding the use of video conferencing with our justice partners
  - Creating a highly robust statewide network, and
  - Establishing the foundation for electronic filing of all court papers
- Recruitment of a Chief Information Officer and restructuring of our current IT staffing model

This assessment was key in providing a strategic technology roadmap for Idaho’s courts.

Recognizing the need to become truly digital, combined with the inevitable end of the existing system, the Idaho Courts assembled a broad stakeholder group who undertook a careful analysis of all available options and concluded that Tyler Technologies’ solutions would best serve Idahoans for the next generation and beyond. Tyler was selected as the most capable and cost-effective system.

The implementation of Tyler’s solution required a methodical and deliberate plan to transition all of Idaho’s counties over time while keeping courts open during this transition between the old and new systems.

Idaho needed a modern technology infrastructure in order to implement all of the Tyler applications. A statewide network was built to interconnect all 44 counties and the Idaho Supreme Court across our very geographically diverse state. This network stretches across multiple mountain ranges, swaths of protected wilderness, and high desert plains. High-speed connectivity not previously available in many jurisdictions was built through a combination of microwave technology, commercial circuits, and last-mile agreements with government entities.

Additionally, due to the decentralized architecture of the legacy system, the Idaho Courts did not have a modern data center with present-day servers, storage, and networking equipment. A core infrastructure was built from the ground up, leveraging state-of-the-art server virtualization solutions, storage technologies, and advanced network and security platforms. In a matter of months, Idaho shifted from an outdated technology architecture to a world-class solution.

Realizing the magnitude of this project, combined with the need to administer this new infrastructure and provide ongoing support for a broad suite of applications, Idaho significantly invested in human resources with technology, business, and court operations skills. Starting with a team of 4 technologists, 3 court specialists, a Court Management Director and a new CIO, Idaho now employs over 50 court, training, finance, and technology personnel who provide support to Idaho’s new case management system, applications, and infrastructure. This team deployed Odyssey for all case types, to include e-filing on day one, in a phased, geographical approach: starting first with a pilot county, then an early adopter county (the largest county in Idaho), followed by three regional deployments covering the remaining counties of the state.

## **TWIN FALLS COUNTY (PILOT COURT)**

On June 18, 2015, Twin Falls County was the first county to transition to the new case management system. Over a three-day period, the project team, in partnership with Tyler Technologies, converted Twin Falls County legacy data into the new Odyssey platform. Upon completion of the conversion process, the project team worked with personnel from Twin Falls County to conduct a functional check of the new Odyssey system to ensure the court, problem solving court staff, and the adult misdemeanor probation offices were ready to operate on June 22, 2015. The court and all ancillary offices went live on June 22, 2015, as planned.

Judges successfully transitioned to an electronic courtroom on the first day of operation in Twin Falls County. Judges were able to fully manage their court caseload using Odyssey's Session Works for Judges, leveraging the fully electronic court record within Odyssey for their cases.

The Twin Falls court clerks were able to fully process cases and payments in Odyssey upon go-live. As expected for a pilot court deployment, several issues arose during the pilot transition. However, the Twin Falls court clerks did not experience any significant issues that prevented them from being able to operate the courts. These clerks quickly adjusted to Odyssey and provided instrumental feedback to Tyler Technologies and the project team on how to improve the overall system, business processes, training, and deployment approach for future implementation events.

The Twin Falls adult misdemeanor probation office fully transitioned from a legacy application to Odyssey Supervision to manage their probation caseload. This transition marked the first time the Idaho Supreme Court provided a full solution to these executive-branch offices. Similarly, the Twin Falls problem solving court staff transitioned from a legacy diversion software application to Odyssey Supervision to manage problem solving court participants.

The Odyssey Portal (referred to as the iCourt Portal) was also deployed on June 22, 2015, in coordination with the go-live event of Odyssey. The portal was the replacement of the legacy Idaho Supreme Court Repository web site and is used by both anonymous public users and extended access users (such as prosecutors, public defenders, government agencies, etc.).

## **ADA COUNTY (EARLY ADOPTER)**

On August 8, 2016, following several weeks of on-site training, Ada County – the largest county in Idaho comprising over one quarter of the state's court case filings – became the second county to discontinue use of ISTARS and to transition to Odyssey.

The Ada County deployment was principally noteworthy as this was the first implementation phase that delivered the full suite of capabilities in a single go-live event for a broad group of criminal justice stakeholders to include: Odyssey Case Manager for all court case types; Odyssey Attorney Manager for the Ada County prosecutor and public defender offices; Odyssey Supervision for problem solving courts; Session Works for Judges in which over 30 judges transitioned to an electronic courtroom in less than 30 days; Odyssey File & Serve for e-filing and e-service for the Ada County prosecutor and public defender offices, the City of Boise prosecutor office, and all other attorneys practicing in Ada County; iCourt Portal for Ada County hearings, party, case searches and online payments; Ada County data sharing integrations to the Idaho State Tax Commission, Division of Juvenile Corrections, Idaho State Police, Idaho Transportation Department, and Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) notifications; e-citation integration for the City of Meridian; and data sharing reports to the cities of Boise, Meridian and Garden City.

The overall transition to this new solution set was highly successful for the scope and scale of Ada County. As expected for any go-live event of this size, several issues were reported as part of this deployment. However, at the end of the first week, only one critical issue remained open which was a remarkable outcome for such a complex implementation event. This result was a testament to the commitment and focus provided by both county and state stakeholders who collaborated throughout the previous year in preparation for this go-live.

Effective October 3, 2016, mandatory electronic filing was required of all attorneys filing cases in Ada County. This accelerated e-filing timeline – four months sooner than previously attained in Twin Falls County – enabled Ada County to more quickly transition to an electronic courthouse, enabling parties to submit electronic documents at any time, from anywhere, while driving significant efficiencies for attorneys and court clerks. This system also allows filing parties to digitally serve others and eliminate time, paper, mailing and courier costs.

## **WAVE 1**

"Wave 1", comprised of 12 counties (Canyon, Owyhee, Boise, Elmore, Valley, Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, and Minidoka), successfully launched on October 10, 2017. This was the first multi-county implementation event of the iCourt project.

The iCourt project team, with team members from nearly all divisions of the Administrative Office of the Courts, were assigned a location to support the go-live for a period of three weeks (October 8 – 27, 2017). Specific training sessions were held to equip each project team member with the knowledge to be a successful go-live resource. In addition, Ada County and Twin Falls County offered resources to assist throughout Wave 1 as part of the go-live transition.

The iCourt project team conducted a detailed review of the go-live checklist activities, as well as defined a new issue management processes for a multi-county deployment. The detailed checklist, with specific actions for each day of the month leading up to the go-live date, ensured that all essential work was completed for the go-live event.

As indicated to all go-live counties, the iCourt project team expected issues as part of this implementation event. With this being the first multi-county deployment of the iCourt project, combined with the larger user count when Canyon and Owyhee Counties were added to Wave 1, it was inevitable issues would occur. There were no critical, showstopper issues that prevented critical operations in the 12 counties. As of October 17, 2017, the on-site support personnel, along with the central "war room", resolved or closed over 70% of reported issues.

## **WAVE 2, WAVE 3, AND APPELLATE COURTS**

On April 9, 2018, fourteen counties comprising "Wave 2" (Adams, Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Gem, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, Payette, Shoshone, Washington), successfully transitioned to Odyssey. This implementation was the second multi-county implementation event of the iCourt project with the largest geographical region covered.

On October 9, 2018, the final sixteen counties comprising "Wave 3" (Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Caribou, Clark, Custer, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, Oneida, Power, and Teton), were converted, completing the statewide implementation of Odyssey. This go-live event was a monumental milestone for Idaho's Courts, in which all courts across the state were now fully operational on the statewide case management system.

On June 4, 2018, Odyssey was successfully implemented for Idaho's appellate courts. The Idaho Supreme Court justices, Court of Appeals judges, judicial assistants, clerk's office, and law clerks began to use the statewide iCourt platform for all appellate cases. By using a common system, the process to submit appeal records from the trial courts to the appellate courts has been greatly streamlined. Additionally, the transition to a fully digital court record for Idaho's appellate courts has reduced data entry, enabled automated workflows, and simplified voting processes.

Leading up to each go-live event, several weeks of specific training sessions were held in regional locations to equip judges, court clerks, and other county personnel on how to use the new case management system. The iCourt project team, along with county volunteers from courts that had previously made the transition to Odyssey, provided on-site support in all counties for at least 2 weeks.

Data from ISTARS (the court's legacy case management system) for these 30 counties was successfully converted to Odyssey. Courts were fully operational on "day one" with the ability to hear cases with digital case files. Access to court data for the public and judicial partners transitioned from the legacy ISC Data Repository to the new iCourt Portal. The iCourt project team developed and scheduled reports to be delivered to specific judicial partners (such as prosecutors and public defenders) to assist with their daily business processes. Misdemeanor probation offices and problem-solving courts transitioned to Supervision, completing the transition to a statewide supervision application.

Statewide integrations to the Idaho State Tax Commission, Idaho Transportation Department, Idaho State Police, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Department of Juvenile Corrections and VINE were expanded for all counties across the state. Additionally, several new e-citation integrations were implemented for city and county jurisdictions. The statewide Idaho State Police e-citation solution became operational in all of Idaho's counties.

Legacy court documents previously scanned by counties were converted into Odyssey as part of each implementation event. Counties then began scanning active cases directly into Odyssey. All counties are now functioning with digital case files, providing easier access to court files at any time, from anywhere.

Financial transactions were accepted at each court at the time of go-live. Online payments are also now available via the iCourt Portal for all 44 counties. Financial processes were outlined for the court clerk staff and county auditors. All counties traveled to the Idaho Supreme Court in Boise, Idaho to conduct their first end of month financial close process using Odyssey, ensuring court monies were accurately distributed to state and local entities.

The transition to a digital court case management system for all magistrate and district courts across Idaho was a substantial undertaking by the Idaho judiciary. The successful completion of this immense effort was only possible through the partnerships with county commissioners, elected clerks, judges, court clerks, prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement and many other stakeholders.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Through our Tyler partnership, Idaho proved that any statewide or large jurisdiction can move aggressively with an immense amount of capability in a short timeframe and make a positive impact for a broad group of stakeholders across the entire criminal justice landscape. Although the project was phased due to geographical constraints, the amount of capability provided in a single implementation was vast, regardless of case type.

Idaho rolled out the entire Odyssey portfolio at each implementation event, bringing maximum value and impact to a region on day one. These capabilities included case management for courts, as well as online access for prosecutors and public defenders; electronic signature processes for judges; statewide party management; a digital court record on day one enabling enhanced access on the bench, throughout the courthouse, and online for the public and justice partners; enhanced statewide financial management capabilities; a streamlined process for appellate case management; supervision case tracking for probation officers; case management for problem-solving (specialty) courts; automated processing of e-citations; day one availability of 24/7 electronic filing for the state bar; electronic service between parties; enhanced online public access to real-time court data; web-based payments for citizens; expanded access to justice for self-represented litigants for evictions, small claims, and other cases; automated reporting for judicial officers, clerks, judicial partners, media and others; and enhanced data sharing with other government entities.

Idaho also set the standard through their innovative support strategy to provide care for all users – the general public, attorneys, courts, justice partners, prosecutors, and many more. Early in the project, Idaho implemented a state-of-the-art support management system (ServiceNow) and new support structure to enhance the experience for judicial employees and citizens. All end-users have a modern, omnichannel method to interact with Idaho's service delivery teams for self-help, incidents, and knowledge on a 24/7 basis.

As part of the transition to Idaho's new case management system, a statewide electronic filing and service system is now available for all attorneys across Idaho. Odyssey File & Serve (OFS), used by the legal community to submit court filings electronically and to digitally serve other parties, was fully implemented for all of Idaho's courts – for both trial and appellate courts. Attorneys from across the state are now required to submit electronic filings to all courts. This system decreases file processing time and makes documents immediately available to the courts for processing. For attorneys, OFS takes processing court documents and filing from a time-consuming, tedious task to a simple, online process. Attorneys are now able to track documents online and get proof of delivery while eliminating trips to the courthouse and the time wasted waiting in line to file documents. Today, attorneys are able to file and gain online access to filed documents 24 hours day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

## BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

The foundation of a modern, technology-enabled statewide court management system is now a reality; however, the work continues to evolve Idaho's courts to maximize efficiencies, improving data sharing with judicial partners, and enhance access to justice for Idaho's citizens.

The Idaho courts are now in the initial stages of configuring and testing a new statewide jury management system. This software application, Odyssey Jury, will allow jury commissioners to efficiently organize, manage and simplify the entire jury selection process to include compensation. The solution will enhance the citizen experience by providing text message reminders of their jury service or changes in status, provide online access for responding to a jury summons, and improve faster check-in processing times. This new jury application will also streamline jury processes by providing an interactive seating chart for the judge to quickly review juror questionnaires' and other relevant documents for each juror.

Building on the successful implementation of an attorney case management system for prosecutors and public defenders in Ada County, the iCourt project team transitioned Bonneville County's prosecutor office to Odyssey Attorney Manager to track, organize and manage their caseload. This solution will enable their office to maintain case data and documents for hearing and trial preparation. The iCourt project team is also working with prosecutor and public defender offices across the state to begin exploration for expanding this solution to any interested prosecutor or public defender office in all counties.

As part of the data sharing goals set forth by the Idaho Courts, improvements to the existing data integrations with the Idaho State Police, Idaho Transportation Department, and Idaho State Tax Commission are underway. These improvements will bolster the resiliency of these data exchanges and provide opportunities to expand the types of data exchanged. Initial discussions are underway with other entities such as the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and other executive agencies to explore the opportunities of automated data exchanges to improve outcomes for Idaho's citizens.

The need for reliable, accessible, and current data is essential for Idaho's courts to effectively measure our performance, provide transparency to stakeholders, and gain insights into our strategic, operational, and financial outcomes. Building upon the Odyssey system deployed to all courts, the iCourt project team is actively working to establish a data platform that will enable users to more easily access and analyze data, create visualizations, and establish measurements across departments, courts, or programs. A proof of concept of this new capability will be completed this fiscal year with the goal to expand the solution for multiple needs in future fiscal years.

## IMPACT

The completion of technology transformation with Tyler has drastically changed the landscape for Idaho's Courts, enabling our courts to drive further advancements. The strategic business goals of this initiative – to improve access to Idaho's Court for both internal and external stakeholders; to improve data sharing with judicial business partners; and, to maximize the efficiency of Idaho's business processes -- have been achieved.

Idaho's court system is now dramatically more efficient. Courts across the state now operate with standard business practices, ensuring each local jurisdiction consistently conforms to Idaho statutes and rules while providing an efficient experience for all stakeholders regardless of location. Through the use of workflows and automation, our courts no longer spend needless time on rudimentary administrative tasks; instead, they now focus their energy on value-added services to our constituents.

Through electronic filing and service, electronic case processing, electronic court operations, and electronic access, citizens can now expect the same level of service and capabilities within their courts as they expect with other entities that they commonly engage. Furthermore, this transformation is enabling the courts to optimize the time and use of existing court personnel, to share statewide data via a unified statewide case management system, and to enhance statewide, district and local court data reporting capabilities.

Due to the geographical and rural nature of our state, Idaho judges typically work in multiple jurisdictions. Prior to our Odyssey initiative, the amount of duplication and redundancy of work in each of these jurisdictions was disconcerting; work would often wait for the judge to arrive in their assigned jurisdictions. Now, with a centralized solution, judges are able to complete their work in a timely manner, can better prepare for scheduled cases in other jurisdictions, and eliminate scheduling issues previously caused due to a lack of visibility across locations.

Through Tyler's integration toolkit and reporting architecture, Idaho has been able to make significant strides in improving our data sharing capabilities with the entire criminal justice system. These capabilities have enhanced our ability to share information with correctional facilities, law enforcement, tax entities, transportation departments, felony probation officers, prosecutors, public defenders, child protection officers, and more. Through timely information access, our citizens are safer and all criminal justice entities are able to be more responsive to their respective constituents.

This once in a lifetime opportunity afforded Idaho's criminal justice system to make strides no one thought was possible. Beyond the benefits to our courts, multiple aspects of the justice community advanced from this transition. A statewide probation and problem-solving court platform was envisioned and implemented. The foundation for a statewide prosecutor and public defender case management system was proposed and built. A modern public access system, allowing for online public and judicial partner access to digital court records/documents, calendars, and electronic payments was implemented. And, the future has just begun.