



Michigan E-Filing & EDMS Report

News about the Statewide E-Filing & EDMS Initiative

Overview

E-filing is a top priority of the Michigan Supreme Court and the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO). We understand the critical implications to the courts in having a statewide e-filing and integrated electronic document management system (EDMS). They provide a landmark opportunity to help courts become more efficient by reducing the need to receive, process, store, and retrieve paper files. At the same time, e-filing will improve service to the public, increase access to courts, and reduce the cost of filing for litigants.

This vision of more efficient and accessible courts must be achieved in the context of Michigan's diverse and decentralized judicial structure. Therefore, a future statewide e-filing and integrated EDMS must include:

- *Multi-tenant, hosted solutions for e-filing and document management that respect and support a balance between mandated statewide functionality and local control;*
- *A common statewide web-portal for filing;*
- *Ability for courts with local document management systems to continue using their local systems, while allowing the use of a shared EDMS by courts that desire it; and*
- *Effective integration between the new systems with local case management and document management systems.*

Over the past six months, SCAO has made substantial progress in identifying a statewide e-filing and integrated EDMS that will best meet the needs of Michigan courts. A Request for Proposals was developed with extensive input from courts and other stakeholders and responses are currently being reviewed by subject matter experts. Once those reviews are complete and scores have been tallied for each proposal, qualifying vendors will be invited to demonstrate their products in early to mid-January. Following the demonstrations, SCAO will select the finalist and proceed with negotiations. The contract is expected to be awarded by the end of February with initial implementation activities beginning shortly thereafter.

Request for Proposals Published

The Michigan Supreme Court released a Request for Proposals (RFP) on August 25, 2016, seeking a vendor to supply a statewide system that would allow litigants to file cases electronically from anywhere at any time. The RFP also asked that vendors submit proposals for an integrated electronic document management system so that all courts could receive and manage e-filed documents. Release of the RFP was a major step forward in our efforts to help trial courts across Michigan benefit from the potential

improvements in efficiency that e-filing can provide, including reduced handling of paper files and reduced need for manual data entry of case information.

As described in the RFP, the proposals had to meet three critical objectives:

1. Provide a consistent user experience – the system must enable a common experience for all filers in the state regardless of jurisdiction and case type.
2. Enhance operational efficiency – from filing to case disposition, the system must allow courts to manage documents and provide for a paperless workflow.
3. Information exchange and accessibility – the system must allow courts and filers the ability to share documents through a central e-filing backbone regardless of the differences in case management systems in courts statewide.

A vendor pre-proposal conference was conducted on September 15 for the purpose of answering questions submitted regarding the RFP. The conference was attended by 15 individuals from 9 organizations. Responses to conference and subsequent questions were provided by SCAO in the form of two separate addendums.

Proposals Received by SCAO for Review by Evaluation Team

By the deadline of October 25, 2016, SCAO had received several proposals from firms interested in fulfilling the terms described in the RFP. An evaluation team of subject matter experts including court administrators, judges, SCAO staff, and other key stakeholders was formed to review the proposals. Team members participated on one of five subcommittees established in alignment with the areas below. These individuals have been evaluating the proposals line by line, focusing on the following questions:

1. *Organizational Profile* – Does the vendor have a good track record? Do they have experience successfully completing similar projects? Do they have the organizational capacity to do the job? What is the long-term plan to support their products?
2. *Solution Design and Operation* – What are the specific products the vendor is recommending? What is the system architecture and why does it make sense for Michigan’s courts? What kind of network infrastructure is involved and how will state courts connect to it? What kind of hardware and software is needed for local courts to use the system? How will the proposed system be integrated with local case management and document management systems? What is the capacity of the system to easily share data between the courts and with external agencies? Is the system secure? Does it adhere to national standards? Can it work with mobile devices?

3. *Application Functionality* – How does the proposed solution reduce the manual effort needed to identify and redact information that should not be disclosed to the public? How does the system allow payment methods other than credit or debit cards (such as electronic checks and PayPal)? How does the system support filers who might need assistance? How would the proposed system allow for public access to documents if such a feature is desired in the future?

Also in this section, vendors had to indicate how their proposed system could meet more than 400 functional specifications that had been recommended by stakeholders. Specifically, vendors had to indicate whether it was:

- an existing function;
- met by court-defined configuration;
- in development;
- a modification of a current function;
- met by a Michigan-specific customization;
- met by integration with a third-party vendor; or,
- not available.

The 400+ functions range from the ability of users to setup their own accounts to the ability for courts to automatically store documents and notices created by their local case management system.

4. *Implementation* – What is the vendor’s work plan to implement the suggested solution? What’s the timeframe to roll out the system to Michigan’s 242 trial courts? In particular, what is the vendor’s plan to implement the new system in 2017 for courts that already have e-filing? What project management tools will the vendor use to make sure the project stays on track, addresses potential risks, ensures quality, and accommodates change? How will the vendor make sure courts are able to conduct regular business while implementing the new system? How will the system be tested to verify that delivered functionality is consistent with what was expected by users? How will existing documents be migrated into the new system for courts that choose to convert? What training will the vendor provide to courts and filers?
5. *Post-implementation support* – What help desk services will be provided to courts and filers? Are there self-service help capabilities and customer support programs such as user groups? What is the vendor’s commitment to maintain and upgrade software? How does the vendor secure the facility that is hosting the system and what are protections to prevent intrusion attacks? How will the vendor minimize scheduled system downtime? How will the vendor monitor system performance and address any problems that might develop?

As the evaluation team completes their reviews, questions are being gathered that will be sent to the vendors invited to demonstrate their solution. Their responses to these questions will be used to clarify and supplement their proposals.

Next Steps – Vendor Demonstrations, Choosing a Finalist, Awarding a Contract

Once proposal review and scoring is complete, qualifying vendors will be selected to provide demonstrations of their proposed solutions. Based on the current project timeline, we expect these demonstrations to take place at the Hall of Justice in early to mid-January. More information about the vendor demonstrations will be provided as soon as it is available. The finalist will then be chosen and a contract negotiated by the end of February. Initial implementation activities are anticipated to begin in early March.