



eFileTexas

Background & Overview



Overview and Background

What's Been Accomplished

- One of the most successful IT projects in Texas government history
- Rolled out on budget and ahead of schedule
- Texas is the largest mandatory e-filing system in the country, and possibly the world
- Nearly flawless implementation with virtually no hiccups
- Has the support of county court officials, the bar and private sector across 254 Texas counties
- Become a model in other states (California, Indiana, Georgia)
- Uptime is 99.95% - day, night, weekends and holidays - 24/7/365
- Expected to handle 4.4 Million transactions in 2015
- Saving more than 3 pallets of paper per week

Some Details

- 254 counties - Coordinated, trained and implemented with court staff in all TX counties, including multiple offices in many counties. Thousands of court staff now use it every day.
- 565 offices in total - Impacted all 14 Appellate Courts, the Court of Criminal Appeals, the Supreme Court, 40 Justice of the Peace Precincts and every District and County Clerk office in the state.
- 115,000+ Users - Registered and trained users from the bar & legal community
- Promotes competition - The eFileTexas system was integrated with the systems of 11 - 3rd party private companies (EFSPs) who can now offer their services who compete to provide attorneys the best e-filing related services at the lowest price (includes 3 high-volume filers with direct connection for automated processing).
- 9 months - The system was up and running within 9 months of contract signing
- Mandatory in a year - Mandatory e-filing was live within a year in the 10 largest counties in Texas.

Who Deserves Credit - This wasn't Easy

- Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan Hecht - Showed leadership and commitment to something many said couldn't and shouldn't be done.
- The OCA - For carefully guiding the plan, providing clear direction to the county courts in all 254 counties, and for guiding appropriate legislation
- Texas Legislature - for supporting the initiative with the required legislation
- County Clerks - For taking on the significant workload the transition required without additional resources, for making adjustments to business processes, and for using e-filing as a an opportunity to eliminate paper and make their courts more efficient.
- Tyler Technologies - For implementing the technology and providing their expertise in e-filing.



Why it Matters - The Benefits

- Makes the court more efficient - allows them to eliminate paper from court processes
- Saves more than 30 million pages of paper, per year - which if stacked would be more than 30 times the height of the Texas capital
- Quicker access to e-filed documents
- Increased efficiency for attorneys and litigants
- Reduced printing and mailing costs
- Reduced storage costs for clerks
- Greater security of court documents in the event of disaster
- More efficient use of court staff
- Increased transparency and access to courts

Background & History

Objective

The objective for creating the eFileTexas.gov system was to provide an efficient, cost effective and reliable platform for submitting and processing court documents electronically. Attorneys needed a convenient way to interact with Texas courts without coming to the clerk's counter, and they needed to be able to do so 24/7/365. Courts needed to improve efficiency and eliminate paper so they can provide citizens improved access to the court system and reduce costs. Everyone, including citizens expects to be able to interact with government entities the same way they interact with the private sector – electronically, via the internet. eFileTexas.gov enabled this.

Benefits for Citizens, Attorneys and the Court System

Benefits for Citizens – eFileTexas.gov saves tax dollars by allowing courts throughout the state to eliminate paper, and to run more efficiently. E-Filing shortens lines at clerk counters, provides staff immediate access to information, so they can provide answers faster and make better decisions. It also simplifies access to public record information.

Benefits for Attorneys

Attorneys and other filers avoid trips to the courthouse and waiting in line at the clerk's counter, and can file 24/7/365 from their desks. eFileTexas.gov improved tracking and reporting of filings and is a free service as provided by eFileTXCourts.gov (other than the standard court fees that would apply to paper documents). Specific benefits of e-filing include:

- Instant access to file stamped copies of filings
- Online tracking and proof of delivery



- Advanced search functionality that indexes, bookmarks and locates documents in seconds
- Allows users to send required preliminary and/or courtesy copies instantly at no charge
- Easily generates an audit trail as well as provides logs and reports that represent a firm's filings, and sorts reports based on primary parties, date range and document type
- Accepts statutory court fee payments online and generates relevant financial reports based upon case type, date range and primary parties
- Provides optional status notifications by email for filings submitted, filings accepted, filings rejected, service undeliverable, and/or filing submission failed
- Accepts multiple documents in one electronic envelope, eliminates the need for separate submissions for each pleading

Benefits for the Courts

E-filing makes courts more efficient, shortens wait times at counters, allows courts to redeploy staff to other tasks, reduces costs for paper, and frees up space used for storing paper records. Electronic filing of documents creates a tipping point for the courts to eliminate paper from the court system and become more efficient. It is a tipping point because filing is the first step in the process for civil cases, and once documents enter the system electronically it simplifies the task of using electronic case files throughout the life of a case.

How The System Works

eFileTexas.gov is a system that accepts electronic documents from attorneys (as pdfs) and other filers via Web portals, and securely distributes these documents to the appropriate county or appellate court where they can be accepted into the case management system of that court.

Historical Background

Beginning January 1, 2014 Texas became the most populous state in the country to implement a mandatory electronic filing system for its courts.

In November of 2012 the Office of Court Administration (OCA) of the State of Texas announced a plan for providing an e-filing system to be used across the state, and identified Tyler Technologies as the system provider. In December 2012 the Supreme Court announced that e-filing would become mandatory for civil matters in all county and appellate courts, starting January 1st 2014 in the 10 largest counties.

Within 9 months the eFileTexas system went live on a pilot basis when an attorney in Gregg County filed the first document into eFileTexas in June 2013. In the fall of 2013 additional courts began using eFileTexas, and now 565 offices across 254 counties are



using the system. Volume has been increasing steadily and more than 115,000 users have registered.

Schedule Timeline

- December 2012 – Texas Supreme Court Issued Mandatory order
- June 2013 – Gregg County District Court became the first court live on the new system
- Fall 2013 – Broad go lives across 60 courts
- January 1 2014 – Mandatory e-filing began for civil matters in the 10 largest counties as well as appellate courts
- July 1, 2014 – E-filing became mandatory in another 12 counties – with populations greater than 200,000
- Jan 1, 2015 E-filing became mandatory in counties with populations greater than 100K
- July 1, 2015 – E-filing became mandatory in counties with populations greater than 50K
- Sept 15, 2015 - E-filing became available for all 254 Texas counties
- Jan 1, 2016 E-filing becomes mandatory in counties with populations greater than 20K
- July 1, 2016 – E-filing becomes mandatory in counties with populations less than 20K