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WHITE PAPER

# Future-Proofing Justice: The Why Now and How

2024 State of Courts & Justice



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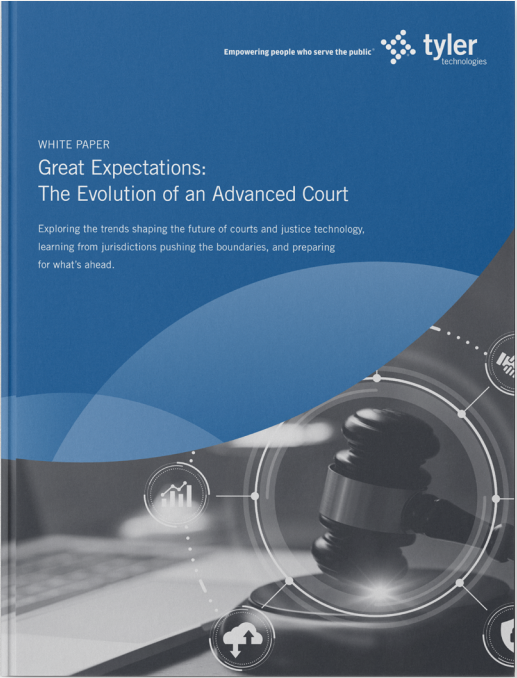
*Thriving in an era where the power and potential of technology are  
reshaping the foundations of justice.*

## Executive Summary

### Moving From the “Why Now” to “How”

The verdict is clear: Courts that have not yet embraced today’s technological solutions will miss opportunities for future innovation. By integrating new technologies like AI and SaaS, we’re propelling the evolution of justice toward unprecedented levels of efficiency and effectiveness. Courts that can adeptly navigate these shifts are now freed to heighten their commitment to fairness, accessibility, and justice and will be well-positioned to meet the complex demands of the coming years.

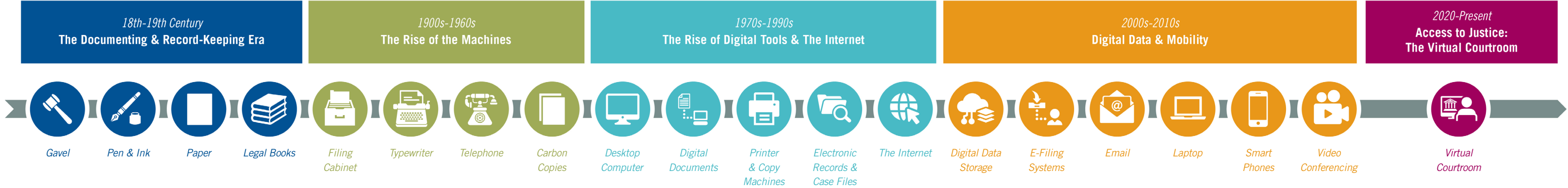
This white paper builds on the groundwork laid in our previous white paper, [The Evolution of an Advanced Court](#), and takes the [eCourt Maturity Model](#) to the next level. Going beyond the “why now,” we’re equipping you with the “how,” so your court can implement technology that not only solves today’s challenges, but also future-proofs against the emerging challenges of tomorrow. We’ll dive into the nitty-gritty, combining research, data, and expert insights from early adopters of AI and SaaS. This is your roadmap to get started.



Today, as courts adopt new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and software-as-a-service (SaaS), we’re not just adapting; we’re ensuring justice **remains adaptive**, continually evolving with society to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

From the click-clack of typewriters to the click of a mouse, ink to AI, and paper to the cloud, technological innovation isn’t just a part of our past — it’s integral to our future. These digital advancements aren’t separate from humans, but rather, they represent the evolution of humans themselves and are as much a product of human ingenuity as the very first manual tools that laid the groundwork in maximizing court productivity for optimal justice efficiency.

Is your court prepared to thrive in the next digital shift?







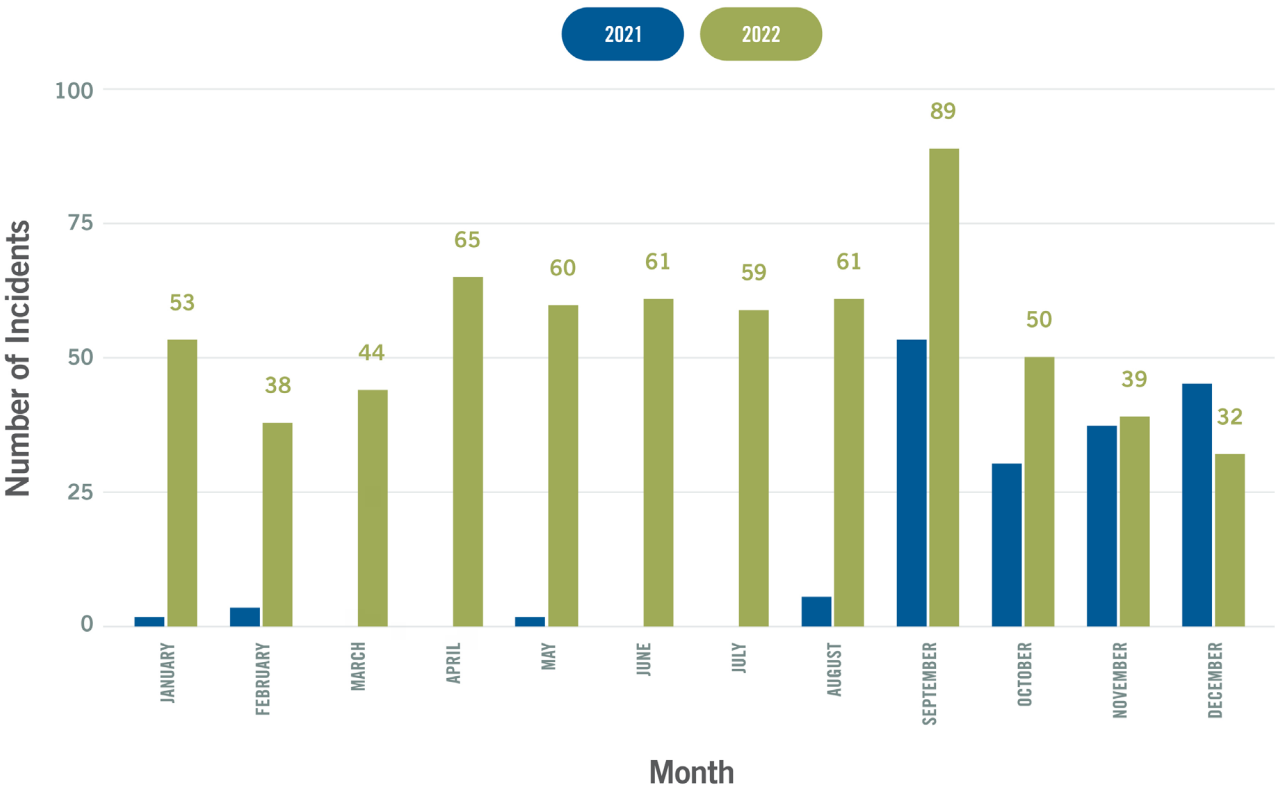
## Current Challenges & Future Trends

### Why now? It's time to modernize justice.

#### *Evolving technology means evolving laws.*

The rapid evolution of technology, expedited even more through the pandemic, surfaced new legal issues related to cybersecurity, data privacy, AI, and environmental regulations. As a result, courts are tasked with the continual need to stay abreast of new statutes, enactments, and legal frameworks to ensure compliance and effective adjudication. Most prevalent in recent years are data breaches and misuse of personal information. Judges and legal professionals must be well-versed in federal, state, and sectoral data privacy laws and understand the nuances of how data is collected, stored, protected, and shared.

### Number of Cyber Incidents Targeting the Government Sector



Source: CloudSEK

#### *Cybersecurity attacks are at an unprecedented high.*

Courts are increasingly leveraging data analytics to inform decision-making, optimize resource allocation, and predict trends in caseload types and quantities. While these tools can significantly enhance operational efficiency, they also necessitate a vigilant focus on data privacy, security, and ethical considerations within the justice system. According to [one study](#), there was a 95% increase in cyberattacks on the government sector in the second half of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Criminal justice reforms will shift case volumes, procedures, and outcomes.*

Criminal justice reforms are anticipated to induce shifts in case volumes, necessitate procedural changes, and demand policies that align with a rehabilitative justice system focused on delivering positive outcomes. The United States has the highest incarceration rate per capita than any other country, housing nearly [2 million individuals](#) in state and federal prisons, local jails, and juvenile centers<sup>2</sup>, including those awaiting trial inside overcrowded facilities.

#### *Public trust is wavering. There's a growing urgency for equity and accessibility.*

Trends in public perception reveal a concerning decline in trust toward the judicial system, with outdated court tools proving inadequate in supporting the fair and prompt resolution of cases. Backlogs within the court system pose a significant barrier to justice access, causing errors and straining staff as they try to keep up with increasing caseloads without an accompanying budget increase to provide additional support.

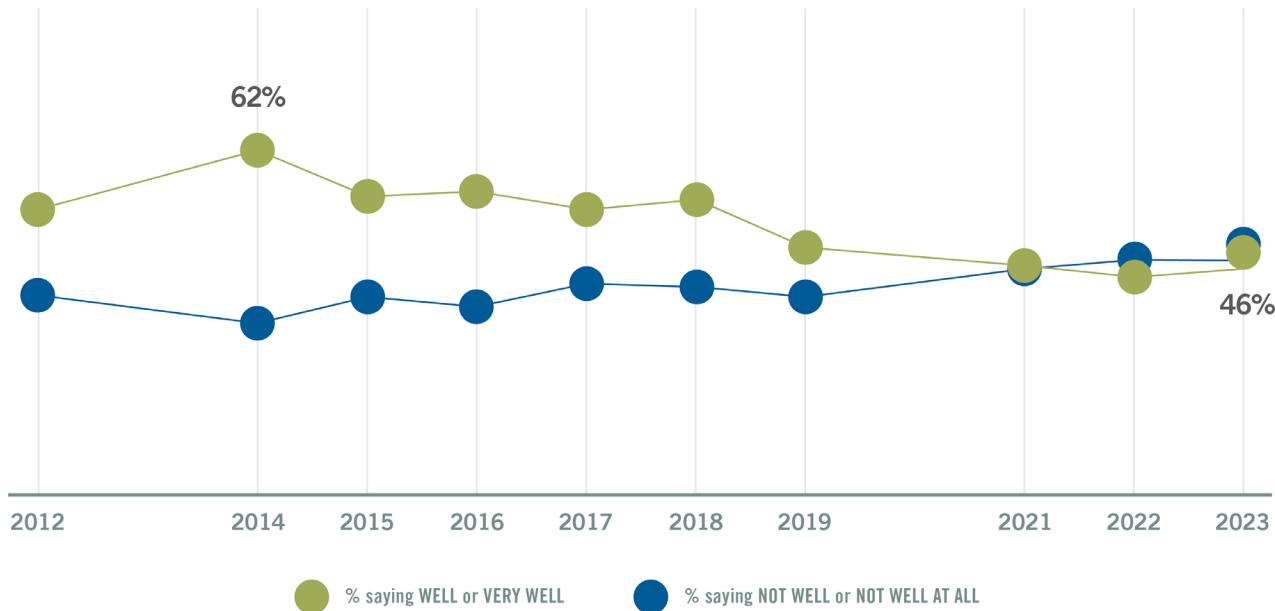
Mounting evidence underscores a growing urgency to enhance accessibility within the courts. A survey of registered voters conducted by the [National Center for State Courts](#) revealed 68% of respondents expressed diminished faith in the fairness and transparency of the courts<sup>3</sup>, indicative of the pervasive erosion of public trust.

### Public Sentiment Toward Courts

QUESTION:

“Does the following word or phrase describe [state] courts very well, well, or not well at all?”

#### Provide equal justice to all?



Source: NCSC

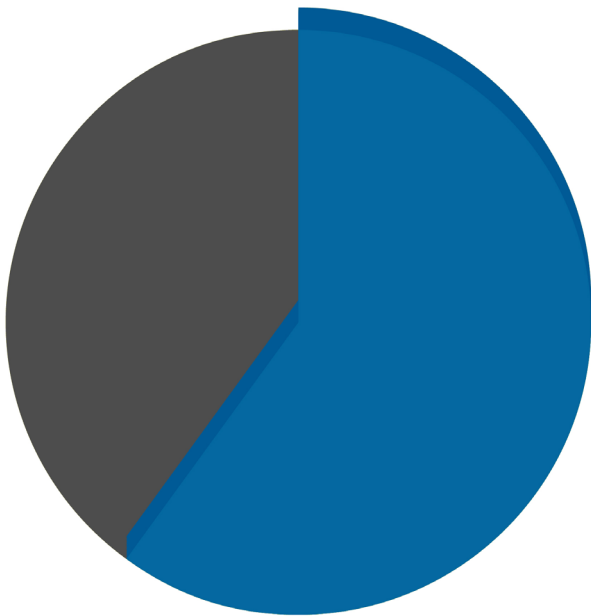


*The lack of performance data will cannibalize outcomes.*

There is a growing emphasis on measuring and enhancing court performance through data-driven metrics, including case resolution times, access to justice indicators, and user satisfaction. Taxpayers place a high merit on strategic spending of their tax dollars, while the integrity of court-appointed staff is upheld through informed decision-making. This trend of transparent data will drive courts to adopt integrated tools and methodologies for tracking and reporting on performance outcomes.

*Limited resources and funding impede modernizing an aging infrastructure.*

Courts are confronted with the arduous task of operating within tight budgetary constraints. The prospect of economic downturns or funding limitations further exacerbates the strain on outdated and limited resources, compounding issues of understaffing and hindering the necessary implementation of technology to modernize an aging on-premises infrastructure.



60%

of U.S. courts feel budgetary constraints are obstructing agency missions.

Source: GovTech

A [GovTech Center for Digital Government](#) analysis reported 60% of courts feel budgetary constraints are obstructing their agency missions. Often at stake are the technological upgrades, hindering efficient and equitable dispensation of justice<sup>4</sup>.

Now, let’s answer the real questions ...

**Why now?**

*Backlogs and burnout delay justice.*

**How?**

*Non-generative AI and automation accelerate justice.*

## Technological Integration and Digital Transformation: A Roadmap



### Artificial Intelligence & Automation

*Myth: AI will replace government jobs.*  
*Truth: AI is enhancing the workforce.*

Many courts report wrestling with high turnover rates and vacancies of entry-level staff. To fill these gaps, specialized software bots can perform court tasks with precision and speed, surpassing human capabilities and resulting in faster data processing and improved accuracy. But rest assured, bots eliminate backlogs — not the human element of your court. Think of AI as a powerful tool in your staff’s toolbelt that **reduces the manual workload for a refocused effort on meaningful work.**

AI tools not only enhance day-to-day operations, but also allow court personnel to focus on more value-driven tasks, reducing burnout, addressing staff shortages, and improving the overall job experience. This AI-enhanced paradigm leads to a more efficient workforce, attributing to faster access to information for the public and increased return on court investment.

The integration of non-generative AI technology with legal proceedings isn’t just about efficiency; ***it’s a profound acceleration of justice.***

*Why does the form of AI technology matter?*

Let’s face it, misinformation about AI and its various types can cause reservations for courts. That’s why it is essential to make the distinction between generative AI and non-generative AI; **one has the potential to cloud justice while the other accelerates it.**

*Generative vs. Non-Generative AI*

**Generative AI** autonomously produces new content like text, images, and music. Though these models are trained on data, generative AI should be carefully warranted within defined boundaries. In the case of sentencing decisions, generative AI cannot offer the necessary rationale like a judge would in a typical hearing, diminishing the authenticity of the process. Alternatively, in the case of scheduling hearings based on factual patterns in case types and duration, generative AI can automate much of the repetitive and manual workload — a win for court staff. However, the authority and responsibility of final decision-making should still fall on the shoulders of humans — only human intelligence can apply reasoning and ethical considerations.







On the other hand, **non-generative AI is the workhorse**, focusing on automating tasks and excelling in rules-based functions. Data is under an agency's strict control through non-generative AI models — it's only processed and never leaves the agency. Examples of non-generative AI include document classification and data extraction. Unlike generative AI, non-generative tools prioritize efficiency and accuracy, making them reliable allies in industries like the justice sector, where precision and adherence to procedures are essential. "According to [Gartner®](#), by 2026, more than 60% of government organizations will prioritize investment in business process automation, up from 35% in 2022<sup>5</sup>."

### Generative vs. Non-Generative AI: Myths vs Truths

#### Is generative AI a trustworthy tool for courts?



Depends. Caution is needed when embracing generative AI in the justice sector — humans must be in the loop.

#### Is non-generative AI a trustworthy tool for courts?



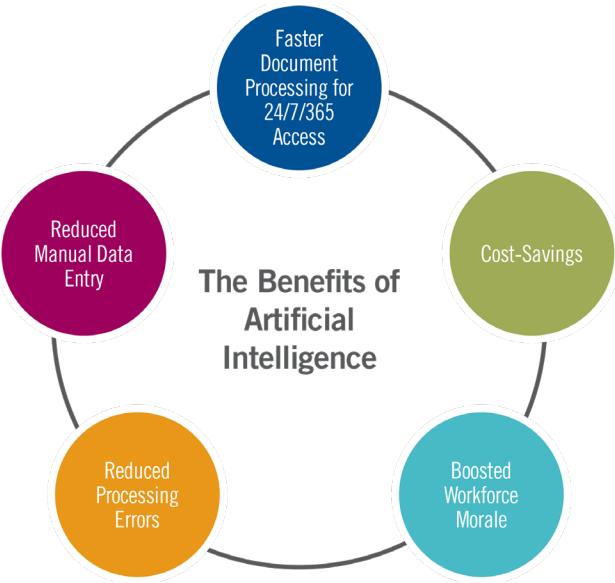
Yes. Trusted in industries like the justice system for precision and adherence to procedures, non-generative AI offers reliability where generative AI may be unwarranted.

*Is your court still breaking down the basics of AI? Share this [Beginner's Guide for Court Professionals](#) with your court staff as an educational tool to get started with navigating AI.*

Thanks to pioneering justice agencies that embraced non-generative AI technology early on, the proof of its benefits is vividly clear, signaling not only **the inception of a new justice technology era**, but also serving as a roadmap for others to follow.

### A Path Forged by Courts ... for Courts

County officials from across the United States [shared their innovative efforts](#) in deploying non-generative AI within their operations, making monumental strides in **operational efficiency, boosted staff morale, and cost-savings**.



[Tarrant County's venture into AI](#) proves to be a pioneering initiative in Texas. [Mary Louise Nicholson](#), Tarrant County Clerk, highlighted the significant enhancements brought by AI, including streamlined processing and reduced backlogs. Nicholson emphasized the time-saving aspect for staff, ensuring accuracy, efficiency, and round-the-clock processing. Through AI bots, **processing times were cut from 48 hours to minutes**, improving data accuracy, reducing human errors, and enabling more reliable case handling. "[It gives] time back to staff members," said Nicholson. This effort freed staff from data entry tasks and drove Nicholson to empower her team with revised work schedules, boosting staff morale.

“Start simple. Build a foundation of what you have. Look for the low hanging fruit, the numerous documents you can process, look at your resources. [AI] is a tool, and it is something that can be extremely beneficial for your court process. You have to commit to spending time to make sure [AI tools] understand your business process and how things work in your court system. The more you invest in the AI tool and teach the bot organically, the information is going to grow, the library is going to grow.”

Mary Louise Nicholson  
Tarrant County Clerk, Texas

In Florida, Charlotte County's adoption of AI was driven by operational challenges faced by clerks in managing repetitive tasks due to system limitations. Automated solutions using bots were successfully implemented to handle various document types, starting with basic tasks like docketing and document extraction. This led to a **73% automation rate without manual intervention**, freeing up time for clerks. **Accuracy levels increased to 98%**, with more than 124 docket types processed, comprising 44% of all system filings. [David Lane](#), chief information officer, emphasized, **“Our clerks are expected to do higher level work now, attending court, servicing customers, doing more complex work within our case [management] system, and the bots are handling the rest.”**

With an eye toward the future, Florida's Miami-Dade Public Defender's Office anticipated how AI could transform their work, ensuring justice is more accessible and equitable. Their initiative underscores a strategic investment in technology, aimed at enhancing legal preparations and optimizing resource allocation, all while keeping justice centrally accessible. **“We're the first state attorney's office to use AI for research and case preparation for our lawyers,”** shared [Cindy Guerra](#), executive chief assistant public defender of Operations and Assistant General Counsel, 11th Judicial Circuit, Florida.

Also in Florida, Palm Beach County Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller's office pioneered unattended electronic filings through AI, earning them a global acclaim and CIO magazine award. Since its AI implementation in 2018, Palm Beach County has **processed more than 1.6 million documents** with improved accuracy, efficiency, and timeliness. Palm Beach County has **achieved significant cost savings by incorporating AI bots into their operations**. [Parik Chokshi](#), director of Information Technology, explained the county introduced AI to address backlogs, resulting in approximately **\$2 million in savings**. This enabled staff to handle backlogs and streamline processes without the need to hire and train additional staff. The benefits have extended far beyond budgetary. As a result, the current workforce can now concentrate on customer-facing tasks and more high-value work, leading to greater job satisfaction, less turnover, and operational efficiency.



“It’s not just a savings we gained, our staff satisfaction has gone up drastically because they are no longer doing the mundane tasks they used to do. We’re more customer focused. We’re providing a great customer experience when they walk in. It’s been a huge game changer for us.”

**Parik Chokshi**  
Director of Information Technology  
County Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller, Palm Beach County, Florida

### Where to Start With AI

Many agencies have been able to fund AI initiatives by leveraging existing labor budgets. Flipping dollars set aside for staff vacancies into funds that pay for automation technology helps agencies address case backlogs or workflow bottlenecks. From there, a [crawl-walk-run approach](#) can return a rewarding and strategic AI implementation.

**Step 1: Digitize your workflows.** Small steps as easy as scanning documents for input into court systems, instead of relying on paper, are perfect precursors for AI, setting your court up for streamlined workflows and optimized processes.

**Step 2: Automate simple, repetitive tasks.** Rules-based tasks like redaction are very safe to automate, given their simplistic nature. Removing the repetitiveness in court staff responsibilities also starts to build trust in the concept of automation. However, this doesn’t remove the need for or prevent courts from performing manual quality control checks, but over time, most agencies find less dedicated time is required as the results grow in accuracy.

**Step 3: Look for more robust opportunities to automate processes.** Document classification and data extraction tools use robotic process automation (RPA) to improve data processing efficiency and reduce human errors. These tools also use rules-based processing, making it a low-risk and high-reward handoff to AI.

### Importance of Choosing a Trusted Partner

Embracing AI technology in public services hinges on partnering with a trusted ally for AI tools. When on the hunt for the perfect AI collaborator, attributes like reputation, experience, successful track record, and commitment to data privacy should top the checklist. By teaming up with a dependable partner, organizations can trust in their AI solutions, guaranteeing operational efficiency and compliance. A dynamic partnership paves the way for the effective implementation of AI tools.

### Why now?

*Outdated systems delay justice.*

### How?

*The cloud delivers a connected justice experience to solve problems more efficiently.*



### Making the Transition from On-Premises to SaaS

#### What is SaaS?

Agencies who operate on-premises systems often deploy a large number of servers to manage applications — sometimes as much as 40-50 per agency and on varying levels of maturity. Alternatively, SaaS is a subscription model in which client data is hosted in the cloud, rather than client owned and operated on-premises infrastructure. Eliminating the need to install and run applications on individual servers, SaaS offers a strategic approach for maintenance, support, and operational workflow with vendor-managed applications, storage, and networking.

#### Why SaaS?

On-premises systems delay justice. As organizations seek to modernize and future-proof their operations, transitioning from on-premises systems to SaaS solutions has emerged as a strategic pathway. Gartner predicts “By 2027, more than 70% of enterprises will use industry cloud platforms to accelerate their business initiatives, up from less than 15% in 2023<sup>6</sup>.”

By adopting cloud-based software solutions, organizations can revamp their systems to align with the digital age.

A transition to the cloud not only allows for a sustainable digital infrastructure but it also streamlines operations, reduces costs, enables enhanced data security measures, and ensures scalability and efficiency in court operations.



### Why Move to the Cloud?



#### Cut Hardware and Maintenance Costs

The cloud makes budget planning more predictable and saves money in the long run by eliminating expensive equipment purchases and maintenance.



#### Reduce the Burden on IT Staff

Eliminating the management of on-premises servers frees up IT resources that can be redirected to deliver better services that directly impact the lives of community members.



#### Improve Security

Critical information in the cloud has extra security measures in place to safeguard against potential threats, paving the way for improved data security protocols.



#### Scalability

The scalability of cloud solutions increases functionality and eliminates the need for expensive hardware purchases that will quickly be outdated in a few years.



#### The Latest Tech

A cloud solution keeps software up to date, ensuring access to the latest functionality, without the need for extensive hardware investments or IT delays. Upgrades and updates are managed by dedicated experts, guaranteeing software is continually improved to deliver enhanced functionality.



#### Improve Connectivity

A cloud solution enhances remote and mobile functionality for improved worker and community connections, while assuring reliability in system resiliency.



#### Data-Driven Decision Making

Data-driven policy is the future of government. Democratizing access to clean, trustworthy, and secure data is key to creating mission critical outcomes. The cloud breaks down data silos and aligns technology with modern justice administration procedures. Staff become empowered to transform data into actionable insights, enabling strategic outcomes, better resource allocation, and positive public engagement.



## Future-Proofing Justice: The Why Now and How

### *Importance of Choosing a Trusted Partner*

Choosing a trusted partner can [unlock the full potential of the cloud](#). A reliable partner will understand your current system and industry challenges, offering tailored and innovative solutions that address your specific needs and prioritize your success. The right partner can make all the difference in the outcome.

As a first step to embracing a future in the cloud, [document questions](#) to garner insights and projections about scalability, integration, data migration, support, and stability to name a few. Consider the following:

- What additional pain points could be addressed by transitioning to a higher level of digital maturity?
- How are third-party integrations approached?
- How will data be migrated to the cloud? What costs are associated?
- What agency resources are needed to support a successful transition?
- What are some recent investments made in research and development?

### *A Blueprint for Today to Create a Better Tomorrow*

Early adopters like North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) and DeKalb County, Georgia, have successfully navigated the transition from on-premises to SaaS solutions. Their experiences serve as valuable blueprints for organizations looking to embark on a similar journey.



*A dusty shelf somewhere in the courthouse is not where justice happens. Unified, transparent technology enables us to accomplish access to justice. It's a bold vision, but a necessary one.*

**Brad Fowler**  
Chief Business Officer  
North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts

The [North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts](#), facing challenges with their outdated case management system (CMS) applications and diminished support for their mainframe infrastructure, sought a modern and comprehensive solution. The state's strategic approach not only allowed them to substitute the antiquated CMS applications but also introduce a robust cloud-based SaaS environment to drive process efficiency and cost savings. In less than a year, **more than 94% of citations across the state were filed electronically**, marking a significant shift toward digital solutions and emphasizing sustainability efforts. Since implementation, **NCAOC has saved more than 4 million pieces of paper by accepting more than 1.3 million electronic filings.**

*Since implementation, NCAOC has saved more than 4 million pieces of paper by accepting more than 1.3 million electronic filings.*



*This strategic shift not only enhanced operational efficiency, but alleviated the strain on both hardware and human resources. We have freed up valuable resources, enabling us to redirect our focus toward resolving business process challenges.*

**Cynthia Moran**  
Innovation & Technology Manager  
DeKalb County, Georgia

The [DeKalb County Department of Innovation and Technology](#) embraced operational excellence by successfully moving to a SaaS model after 10 years of on-premises infrastructure. As the county expanded its use of the case management platform through various solutions, it led to **increased infrastructure, IT, and security demands**. Adopting a SaaS model not only enhanced operational efficiency, but also **freed up valuable resources so county staff could redirect focus on resolving other business process challenges**. DeKalb County is now positioned to focus on customer service and efficiency, while improving the county's protection of data against security threats.



*We knew it would be vital for everything to be under one roof, one umbrella, so partnering with a company that's able to provide all of our judicial applications was extremely important, especially when it comes to maintenance and upgrades.*

**Diamond Crutcher**  
Systems Analyst  
DeKalb County, Georgia

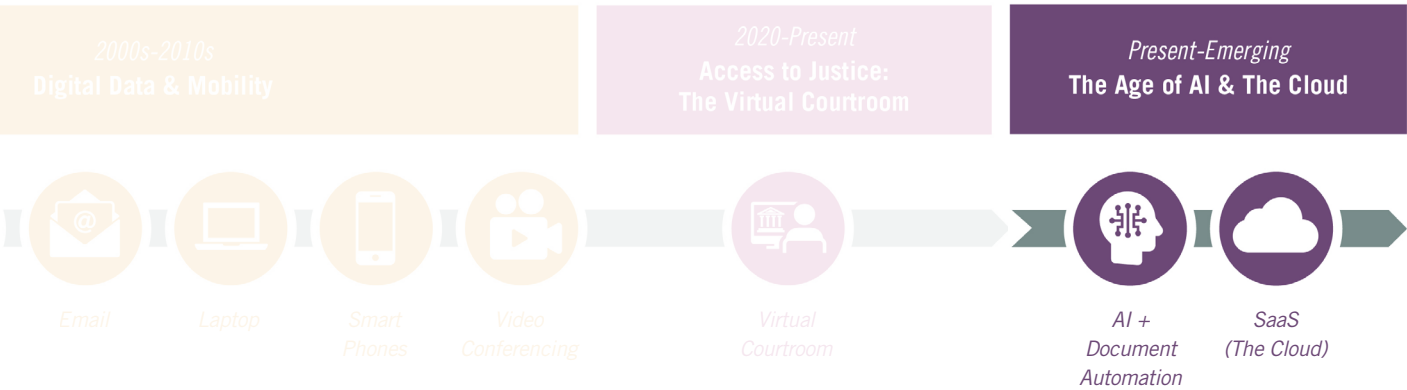
The transition from on-premises to SaaS solutions is more than just a change in technology — it is a strategic shift toward operational excellence, increased efficiency, and enhanced data security, ultimately paving the way for a more sustainable and future-proofed justice system.



## Looking Toward the Future

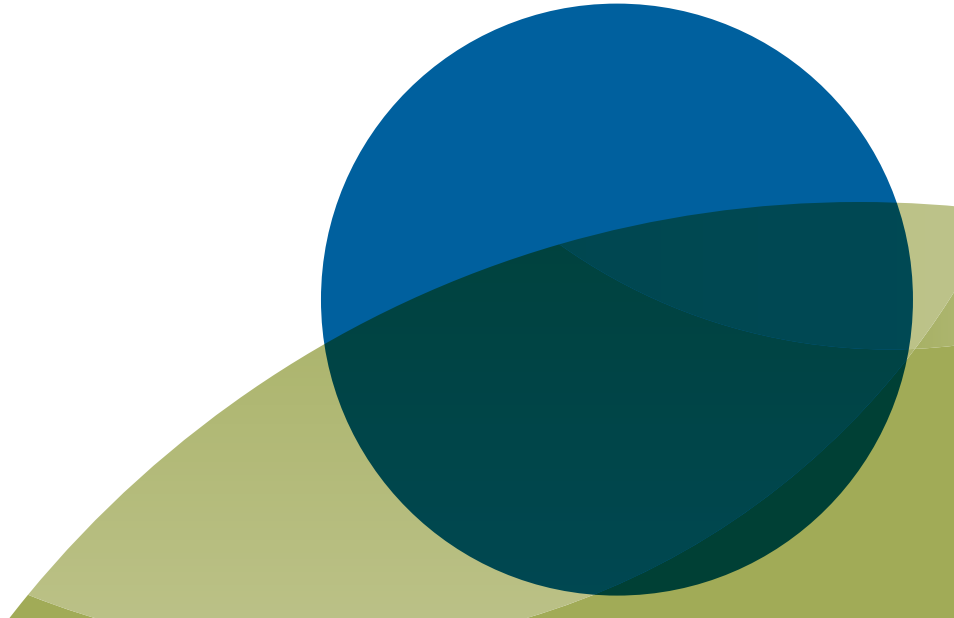
As we stand at the intersection of technology and justice, it is evident the integration of innovative solutions like AI and SaaS is not a matter of choice but a necessity for court evolution. Embracing these digital advancements is crucial for enhancing efficiency, accessibility, and effectiveness in the delivery of fair and timely justice.

The challenges posed by evolving laws and the emergence of new legal issues underscore the importance of courts staying ahead of the curve in leveraging technology to navigate through complex legal landscapes. By preparing for the digital shifts and equipping themselves with the tools to address current challenges and anticipate future trends, courts can remain resilient, adaptable, and responsive to the needs of our communities.



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## About Tyler Technologies, Inc.

Tyler Technologies (NYSE: TYL) is a leading provider of integrated software and technology services for 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 44,000 successful installations across 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 on 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](https://tylertech.com).

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