

MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGY PLAN 2002
Revised by the Legal Services Computer Committee
February, 2002

Background

In 1995, the Statewide planning for legal services was conducted by the Legal Services Association of Michigan, the Michigan State Bar Foundation, and the State Bar of Michigan. This planning process resulted in The Michigan Plan containing 57 recommendations, including eleven technology recommendations. Most of those technology recommendations have been partially or fully implemented. New technological developments have made it important to continue a dynamic, on-going process—updating the statewide Technology Plan—rather than a static, one-time event. This updated plan is called the *Michigan Technology Plan (MTP)*. It will guide implementation of technology in legal services in Michigan at the statewide level. This Plan will be revised by the Legal Services Computer Committee annually to reflect the status of technology projects as well as to incorporate new technology developments.

I. Needs/Goals of the Michigan Technology Plan

The MTP flows from the 1995 Michigan Plan technology recommendations and subsequent needs identified. All of these fall into three major need areas identified through a 1993 technology survey of legal services programs. These revised goals of the Legal Services Computer Committee were adopted on April 10, 2000.

MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGY GOALS

- Promote collaboration and improve service by intra and inter program communication and resource sharing among legal services programs and other constituents.
- Assist legal services staff and pro bono attorneys in collecting, managing, utilizing and reporting on client and case information by implementing an efficient case management system.
- Improve client/community access to justice and extend the reach of advocates through technology.
- Develop a technology and communications infrastructure to support these goals.

An underlying assumption of these need areas is that every legal services program will need to acquire the computer technology necessary to support and participate in the statewide development of technology in addition to the objectives that the program intends to implement on its own.

II. Description of the Michigan Technology Plan

The MTP incorporates technology developments in each of the three goal areas noted above, as follows (references are to the Technology Recommendations of the Michigan Plan for Legal Services, 1995):

A. Infrastructure

1. PC on every desktop of fulltime Advocates and Support Staff
2. Local Area Network in every office of 3 or more
3. Broadband Internet Access (where available) at the Desktop for all Advocates and Support Staff
4. Automated Phone and Voice Mail Messaging System
5. Video Conferencing Pilot

B. Integrated Case Management System

1. Uniform Case Management, Intake and Timekeeping System
 - a. Kemps Case Management Software for every office
 - b. Standard Configuration and Reports
 - c. Standard Intake Question and Advice Development
 - d. Internet-based Replication - server, set-up and support
 - e. Citrix & SQL Pilots
2. Automated Document Assembly System - HotDocs or Acrobat PDF integration with Kemps
3. Document Management

C. Collaboration and Substantive Support

1. Statewide Website (mplp.org)
2. Web-based Brief Bank
3. Discussion Webs
4. Web-based PAI Support and Outreach
5. Internet Based Email Account for all Advocates and Support Staff
6. Statewide Email Address Book
7. Statewide Email Lists
8. On-line Legal Research Capability at no cost or favorable pricing
9. Accounting Software Recommendation

D. Community Outreach and Client Access

1. Community Oriented Website (mlan.net, using LawHelp.org)
 - a. Web presence for every program
 - b. Legal Aid Locator
 - c. CLE and Pro Se Materials On-line
 - d. ADA Compliance
2. Digital Divide Working Group
3. Community Access Outreach Pilots
4. Electronic Filing

III. Implementation and Support

Technology planning and implementation in legal services is accomplished through the cooperation and support of all organizations involved. These entities include the following:

A. Committee Structure

1. Legal Services Computer Committee (members include representatives from Legal Services Association of Michigan [LSAM], State Bar of Michigan Access to Justice Department [SBM-ATJ], and Michigan State Bar Foundation [MSBF])
2. CRP Task Force (Legal Services Program Computer Responsible Persons)
3. State Bar Access to Justice Task Force Technology Subcommittee

B. Organization Functions

1. Michigan Poverty Law Program (MPLP) -Technology implementation and support and state support integration.
2. Michigan State Bar Foundation - Funding and technology support
3. MSBF Funded Programs - Technology implementation - designated Computer Responsible Person (CRP) for program and every office.
4. State Bar of Michigan (Access to Justice Technology Position)—Technology implementation and support

C. Staffing of Statewide Technology Initiatives

1. MSBF funded Programs (.2 FTE) - CRP in every office
2. MPLP (1.5 FTE) - Technology development, coordination, and support
3. SBM (0.5 FTE) - Technology development, coordination, and support
4. MSBF (0.5 FTE [up to 0.4 from Student Intern]) - Project financial management and support

D. Training

1. Mini-seminars and taskforces (CRPs)
2. Annual Tech. Training - "Roadshow" (CRPs/Users)
3. Web-based Training Pilot (CRPs/Users)
 - a. Partner w/CORT for On-line Kemps Training
 - b. Server at MPLP
 - c. On-line video training library
 - d. Live web casts

IV. Evaluation

The Legal Services Computer Committee evaluates technologies that have been implemented and reports to LSAM (whose members implement the projects), the Foundation (which funds many of the projects), and through the Technology Subcommittee to the State Bar Access to Justice Task Force (which

coordinates statewide service delivery issues). It also makes recommendations as to future action, such as expansion of the email network, exploration of case management systems, etc. Members of the Computer Committee also are regularly reviewing emerging technologies. As the committee evaluates these technologies and identifies ways in which the technologies can improve service to clients or improve service delivery support systems, it makes modifications to existing systems to incorporate these changes, or it develops pilot projects which are narrow in scope to test the assumptions about the applicability of the new technologies. Final recommendations include background as to decisions made in order to make it clear the context and assumptions upon which the decisions are based.

V. On-going Systems

The question we have to ask each year is whether the delivery of legal services in Michigan, as a whole, is better off through the use of technology which has been implemented. Does what has been put into place assist in more efficient and more effective delivery of legal services? The Michigan technology planning process provides an effective framework for incorporating what works into the systems that will take us into the future. It also provides a framework for learning from what does not work as well, so that what eventually emerges as the technology systems in use in legal services will be the most effective in serving clients and in supporting the legal services delivery systems.