



JTC Priority Topics for 2018-2019

National Court Open Data Standards

With so much interest in court performance, the demand for court case data has increased exponentially in recent years. The JTC has discussed this issue at length and intends to track closely progress on the recently announced National Court Open Data Standards Project. Ultimately, this work will require all stakeholders coming together to develop a common data model and common definitions that will allow more consistent and reliable access to court data. More information on this project can be found [here](#).

Extraction and Redaction

The JTC convened a Focus Group meeting on this topic in November 2017. From the Focus Group . . .

The rise of machine learning – evidenced most recently by the law firm Baker & Hostetler “hiring” Ross – presents courts with new opportunities. Once upon a time, we discussed technologies that could assist human court staff with their effort to redact confidential or sensitive information from electronic court filings. Now courts should be discussing ways that machine identification of data in unstructured documents, coupled with matching algorithms, can support a host of judicial processes: automated redaction to enable greater public access to electronic case files, to be sure, but also auto-population from unstructured documents of e-filing envelopes, case management systems, self-represented litigants’ document assembly programs, risk/need and triage assessments, court performance metrics, and the like.

Court Component Model

As a follow-on to work on the NextGen Court Technology Standards, the JTC has developed a Court Component Model with a goal of standardizing court application components and interactions between components. This work started with an [Introduction to the Court Component Model](#) published in 2017. With support from CITOC, the vendor community (via the IJIS Institute’s Courts Advisory Committee), and many other technology and court practitioners, the JTC continues its work to 1) define the scope of court components, 2) refine the model as new capabilities are identified, and 3) develop technical specifications for standardized interfaces for priority components.

Online Dispute Resolution

Abstract from JTC’s 2017 paper titled [“ODR for Courts”](#) . . .

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) encompasses a broad array of technologies used to resolve a growing variety of business and consumer disputes throughout the world. It has grown to become a distinct and particularly effective dispute resolution mechanism. Courts have implemented ODR for low-dollar personal injury claims, landlord-tenant, small claims, and minor traffic and code enforcement violations. ODR presents opportunities for courts to expand services while simultaneously reducing costs and improving customer experience and satisfaction. This Resource Bulletin provides a basic primer in Online Dispute Resolution and describes several implementation models, as well as court-specific opportunities

and considerations. A companion publication – [Case Studies in ODR for Courts: A view from the front lines](#) – describes ODR implementations in a variety of court settings.

The JTC will continue to monitor progress on court ODR initiatives and will develop additional guidance on the topic as warranted.

Open Source Repository

Many courts have invested significantly in development of their technology solutions and have expressed interest in collaborating with other courts and/or sharing software they've developed in-house. The JTC will develop guidance, in the form of a brief white paper, on how courts can go about creating an open source repository while addressing issues around governance, licensing, hosting options and other considerations.

Court Related Tele-Services

In today's world of tight budgets and distributed communities, many courts are looking for ways to better leverage telecommunications to enhance and deliver services in a more timely and cost-effective way. We've only scratched the surface when it comes to opportunities to use tele-services. Many courts have implemented video conferencing for some types of non-adversarial proceedings, remote testimony from expert witnesses and remote interpreting. However, there are still many challenges and considerations that are limiting its use, including cultural, constitutional (such as rights of a defendant to confront accusers), security and reliability. The JTC hopes to develop guidance for courts on opportunities to leverage tele-services more effectively and how to overcome some of the challenges.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity threats are increasing for all organizations, public and private. In spite of good prevention efforts, every court will almost certainly face a cybersecurity incident including data breach or cyberattack. JTC's 2016 paper [Responding to a Cyberattack](#) provided some guidance, but the number of incidents and challenges continue to grow. The JTC intends to continue its effort to provide guidance to the community while collaborating on plans for regional summits that will help courts develop plans for monitoring, analysis and response to cybersecurity incidents.

Litigant Portals

While there have been many access-to-justice initiatives over the years. The complexity of our legal system still makes it difficult for many citizens to navigate the system let alone find useful resources. There are many great resources available but going about finding the right resources for the type of issue one is dealing with can be mind boggling. This is where Litigant Portals or Legal Portals come in. The idea is to have a portal that allows someone to describe, in lay terms, a potential legal issue they have, and then be directed to available resources and guidance on how they might be able to deal with that issue. The vision includes integration with providers of legal assistance to streamline access to their services.

The JTC will continue to collaborate with organizations implementing portals and developing standards for integration with portals.