

Open Source Case Management System Issue Paper

Problem Statement

Several separate proposed projects within the court community have raised the issue of collaboratively developing open source case management and other systems within the court community. The JTC must decide whether it will actively support collaborative, open source development initiatives within the courts.

Background

Over the past few months a number of courts and vendors have begun discussing various options for collaboratively developing Court Case Management and other systems using an open source licensing model.

A number of factors internal and external to the courts have led to this situation including the development of the Consolidated Case Management Functional Standards with its use case and high level activity diagrams which provides a useful set of templates from which to start; the increased focus on the GJXDM and open information exchanges between the courts and other justice partners; and the growing industry acceptance and emphasis on open standards. These factors combined with the need of a number of courts to replace their aging CMSs and an increased recognition of the costs involved in building or buying a new CMS, have caused a number court administrators, CIOs and court vendors to begin exploring the viability of creating an open source court case management system.

Discussion

NCSC has been approached separately by at least five distinct groups representing courts and vendors both domestically and internationally seeking guidance and/or support for their development efforts. These groups recognize the value of collaboration and the natural role the NCSC and JTC should play in sponsoring such efforts. They recognize the complexity involved in taking on this kind of development effort and believe the JTC should provide leadership and focus to these projects.

Recommended Motion

- 1) Charge CITOC with developing a recommendation regarding open source development within the court community to be considered by JTC at the July 2006 meeting, and
 - a. Charge CITOC with identifying a preferred option for open source licensing and to report back to the JTC; and
 - b. Ask CITOC to incorporate open source CMS development in their Recommendation for Standards Development Priorities.

Reference Materials

Open Source Licensing Overview (Meeting Materials^{*})

^{*} Meeting Materials are available at http://www.ncsconline.org/D_Tech/jtc/