King County

The Strategy of a Master Plan

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King County Clerk

ESTABLISHING YOUR OWN ELECTRONIC COURT RECORDS PROGRAM
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PRESENTED BY THE KING COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE, SEATTLE, WA

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Session Outline

- Our Experience, What We Did
- What Happened
- What Saved Us
- What is a Master Plan
- A Little About Our Master Plan
- What We Built/How We Built it
- What Made us Successful

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Our Experience

- We wanted to:
  - Address a problem
  - Serve our customers better, be more efficient
- We heard bits and pieces of national innovations
  - We recognized that technology could be part of the solution
  - We could see the payoff at the end
- We had Leaders, Visionaries

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What Did We Do?

- Decided to start down the path with the vision
- Set up a series of committees, internal and external, operational and oversight, staff, judges, outsiders
- Spread the word to everyone

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What Did We Do?

- Decided that pilots and small chunks were the way to go
- Appointed some staff to take the lead
- Started going…….
- No one disagreed
- Not everyone was buying in
- Many excited

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What Happened?

- Best Intentions, but…….
- Confusion
- Many leaders saying great things
  – all just different enough
- Committees' roles were confused
- Project Staff roles not clearly defined

INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AWARD WINNER

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What Happened?

- Operational managers bumping into project manager, project staff
- High level thinking wasn't being translated into the month-to-month, day-to-day operations
- Strong need to get everyone's brain involved and get on the same page

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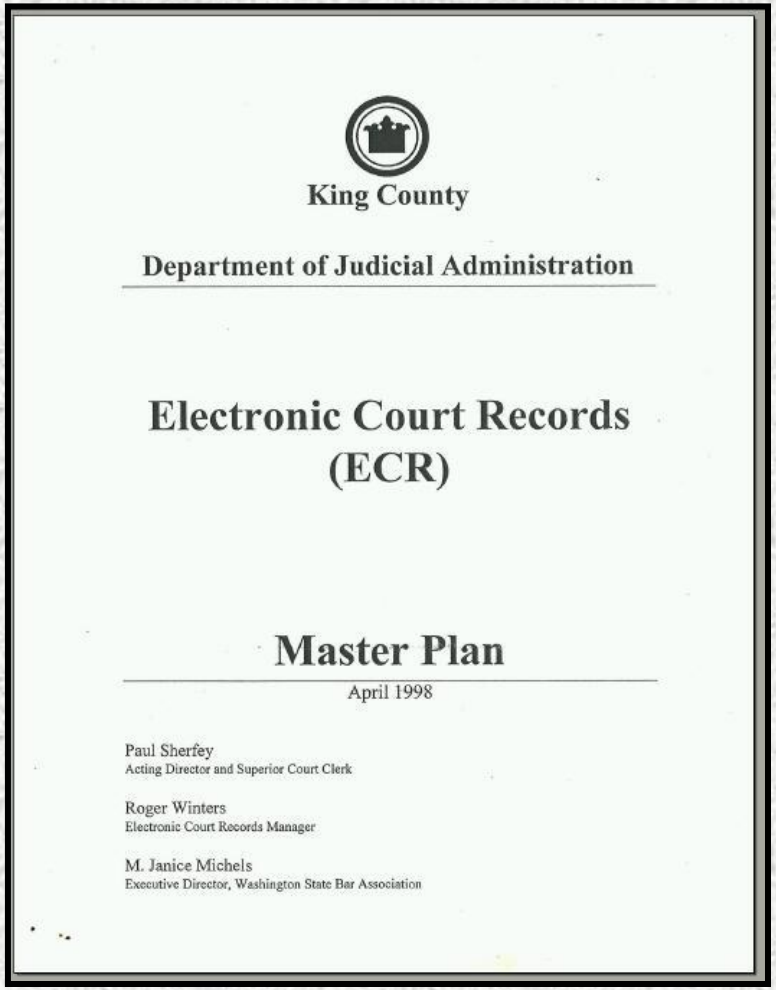
What Saved Us?



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Department of Judicial Administration

Electronic Court Records (ECR)

Master Plan

April 1998

Paul Sherfey
Acting Director and Superior Court Clerk

Roger Winters
Electronic Court Records Manager

M. Janice Michels
Executive Director, Washington State Bar Association

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What's a Master Plan?

- Very similar to a Strategic Plan
- Sets your mission, your vision
- Defines your goals and strategies
- Defines your stakeholders

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What's a Master Plan?

- Includes options analysis
- Puts forward a time frame
- Lays out as many issues as you know
- Describes estimated costs, benefits, savings
- Describes the risks
- How will you mitigate them?

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What's a Master Plan?

- Defines the management structure of the project
- Clearly describes roles for each committee
- Links this project to the mission of the court or clerk

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The King County Master Plan

- By the time we got to writing ours, it was easy to write
- Almost all the development work had been done
- All the right steps had been taken
- But there was no written guidance, no reference book
- Incredible help to our success

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The King County Master Plan

- It brought us all together
- It kept us from re-visiting the same question over and over
- Used it to communicate to our funders
- And to our constituents – the court, the Bar
- All reading the same page of music
- One of the reasons for the award

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The King County Master Plan

- Laid Out Where We Were Going
- Divided the VISION into Small, Manageable, Standalone Pieces
  - Separately funded
  - Separately structured, separate goals
  - Separately successful
  - Separate return on the investment

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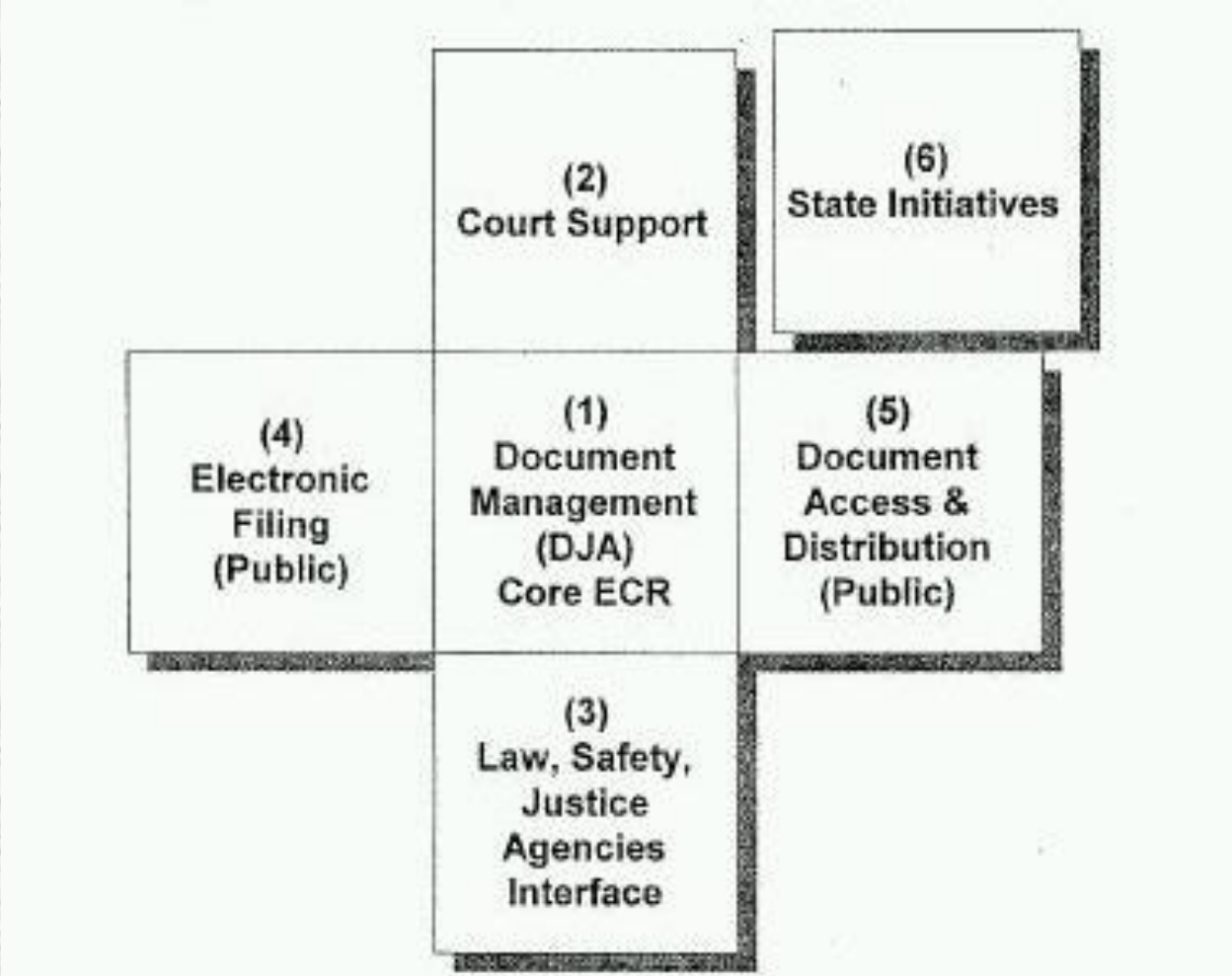
Most Important Page



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What King County Built

Core ECR:

- Electronic file/document management
  - Filed papers scanned into electronic images
  - Electronic indexing, workflow
  - Started with all Case types 1/1/2000
  - Also put in archived records

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What King County Built

Connectivity:

- Electronic Internal Access via a Browser
- Public Viewing of Court Records
  - Computers in the clerk's office
- Court Access
- Prosecutor, Defense, others on the County WAN

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What King County Built

Electronic Filing over the Internet:

- Initiating new cases, filing in existing cases
- Online forms
- Judicial filings (orders with digital signatures)
- E-Commerce for filing fees
- E-Service
- Electronic Working Copies

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What King County Built

Document Access and Distribution

- Web-based ECR On-line
- Fee-Based, draw-down account
- View, copy, print
- No sealed/confidential access

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How King County Built It

- Local government funding, ownership, control
- The funding was pieced together
  - Every project justified as part of the whole
- Local ownership of the record
- Custom-built by one vendor
  - Extensive involvement by those who use it most
  - Also by stakeholders

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How King County Built It

- Local Project, based in State/National Standards
  - Worked directly to help build these standards
- Master Plan Guided the Way
  - Outlived many Clerks, PJs, project managers, County Budget Directors, County IT leaders

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What Makes the Success?

- Electronic records are official
  - No dual systems; not keeping the papers
  - Allowed in state statute

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RCW 36.23.065

Electronic reproductions are acceptable media for this purpose if one of the following conditions exists:

(a) The electronic reproductions are continuously updated and, if necessary, transferred to another medium to ensure that they are accessible through contemporary and supported electronic or computerized systems; or

(b) The electronic reproductions are scheduled to be reproduced on photographic film, microphotographic, photostatic, or similar media for indefinite preservation.

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What Makes the Success?

- Electronic workflow processes for staff
- Public viewing in the Clerk's Office
- Connectivity to county partners
  - Desktop access, training, equipment
  - Written protocols clarify expectations
- Printing is a reasonable alternative

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What Makes the Success?

- Access/controls for sealed records
- ECR interacts with statewide mainframe
  - Integrated with electronic docket
- Two versions of the ECR program:
  - CORE – software on each staff person's desktop
  - ECR Viewer – Web-based, needing only a browser (AKA Delta Viewer)

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What Makes the Success?

- Specialized features
  - ECR On-line, allowed by State Court General Rule 31
  - Public Print Queue
  - Automated assembly of documents on appeal

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What Makes the Success?

- Electronic filing (PDF or TIF)
  - Washington General Court Rule 30 authorized state e-filing
  - Allows local courts to mandate e-filing under certain conditions
  - Digital signatures for judges, defined in State law

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Why We Built It This Way

- Necessity
- Strong sense that it would benefit everyone; use that to build the constituency
- Budget constraints and staff constraints; couldn’t do it all at once
- Intuitive and evidence basis for projections
- Saw other models that didn’t make sense to us

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Why We Built It This Way

- Other models that we rejected included:
  - Starting with E-filing
  - Implementing by Case Type
  - Vendor ownership of the records
- Choice: Could wait for ideal or get going
  - Some are critical of scanning
  - Waiting for real data

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Why We Built It This Way

- Have to find the middle ground
  - Would still be waiting…….
- Getting to incoming data, instead of .pdf or .tif was in our master plan and still part of our goal

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You Should Do What We Did

- No -- not exactly
- We learned a lot – made many mistakes
- We have a great amount of insight into what we should have done differently
- Talking this week about a combination of what we did and what was right about it
- And insights into what we know now …..

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The Strategy of a Master Plan

Questions?