

CUSTOMER STORY

# Unlocking the mainframe brings order to the courts



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# Meet our customer hero

The Delaware Judiciary is composed of the Supreme Court, the Court of Chancery, the Superior Court, the Family Court, the Court of Common Pleas, the Justice of the Peace Court, specialty courts and related judicial agencies. The oldest business court in the U.S., the Delaware Court of Chancery was established in 1792 and has broad jurisdiction over disputes involving Delaware businesses. Delaware is also known for offering a safe regulatory haven for around 1.3 million legal entities.



## New Challenges

- Provide a better citizen/customer experience
- Give judges and attorneys access to up-to-date case information
- Lack ability to quickly change or update data in databases
- Keep original programs running on reliable **IBM Z platform** while enabling web services



## Key Benefits

- Citizens, judges and attorneys can access updated court case information in real time
- Ability to keep back-end systems current
- Reduces anxiety and frustration of the courtroom experience
- Consistent and error-free data flows through systems
- Courts can provide data to outside services
- Improves community safety through increased visibility of perpetrator crimes



## Solution

- Adabas & Natural on **IBM Z®**
- webMethods for integration
- webMethods EntireX

“ We are not stuck anymore. It was seamlessly wonderful. And the database administrators love that it is so easy to use.”

— Betsy Bachmurski, Senior Application Project Lead, Delaware Courts

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## Unlocking the mainframe in Delaware's courts

The tiny "Diamond State" may be only 100 miles long, but it packs in a lot of courts. From the Supreme Court to specialty courts, as well as related judicial agencies, there are more legal entities in Delaware than there are people. That keeps the state's court system very busy, and they are constantly looking for ways to streamline their courtroom processes to improve the experience on all sides of the bench.

This mattered for the courts. Criminal Court judges, for example, need to know a person's record—even what happened that day—before they can accurately assess a case. Do they owe child support? Have they been arrested? Have they served time in prison?

Lack of up-to-date information can lead to wrongful sentencing, or even to letting criminals go free when they should be in jail. This is what concerned the Delaware Judiciary; it was afraid valuable information was either not updated quickly or was falling through the cracks.

But it also mattered for citizens. For example, they weren't able to pay fees online and would have to arrive at the courts early to do so. They would then have to ask a clerk for their scheduled courtroom. Throughout their scheduled hearing, there was limited visibility to real-time information, adding stress to an already stressful experience.

The courts were handcuffed by legacy IT systems. It was taking days to sync the data manually. Clerks in one court would send the data to be uploaded by another clerk in another court. Data on many topics and from many sources, including attorneys and judges assigned to the cases, arrests by police and fines by other courts, has to flow through the system continually. This was not happening in Delaware.

## Enabling data to flow in real time

So the Delaware Judiciary decided it needed a better way to access and expose information from its proven Adabas & Natural system and other systems. The difference was remarkable. They were able to roll out an interactive voice response (IVR) phone line for citizens to use. They could pay fees via credit card, which would then communicate back to the mainframe applications and send a response back about what time to report to court. All of a sudden, the whole experience became a bit more pleasant!

Using Software AG's webMethods, the court system will be able to access all this data from the different court systems while keeping it in sync – without touching the original programs running on the IBM Z platform. By using web services, the disparate information from all these different systems can be unified into a consistent format by mapping the field names of one system with the field names in another system.

They used webMethods EntireX to create web services and URLs that app developers could consume one at a time, adding data elements, verifying them and stopping them if they were incorrect.

New and existing applications can now talk to each other, and the courts can access all data and update within each other's systems. "We created them very quickly and individualized every app, adding parameters and fields without disrupting the whole shebang," said Bachmurski. "We are not stuck anymore. It was seamlessly wonderful. And the database administrators love that it is so easy to use."

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## See you in court

What's also exciting about the new integration is that the scheduling system, which is posted in the lobby of each courthouse, now "knows" who is using which courtroom.

Clerks can enter room numbers, which they often don't know till the last minute, assign judges and assign scrolling calendars. All this is updated in real time.

As people enter the building, they are matched with schedule records, and then can go to the info desk to retrieve their data. Case history data is pulled into an app with real-time defendant data, so everyone can see when defendants are called and their charges.

On real-time monitors, the public can see events, hearings, trials and room numbers. This keeps citizens informed, helping to reduce stress, which was another objective of the data integration project.

Judges know the history of their latest cases, updated to the second they walk into the courtroom from other courts and agencies, including Family, Superior, Criminal, Corrections, Police, Drug Courts, and Human or Social Services.

"What was even more exciting was that none of the other courts or agencies knew it was happening," Bachmurski said. "Suddenly they had more relevant, more up-to-date information without any disruption to their daily activities. Wow!"

That is the power of webMethods for integrating IBM Z applications. Now the Delaware courts can easily address the ever-changing requirements and mandates issued by government and state officials. All while maintaining the high level of security, reliability and processing provided by running on the IBM Z platform.

## Take the next step

To learn more, contact your Software AG representative or  
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