

Statewide Case Management Software Standardization



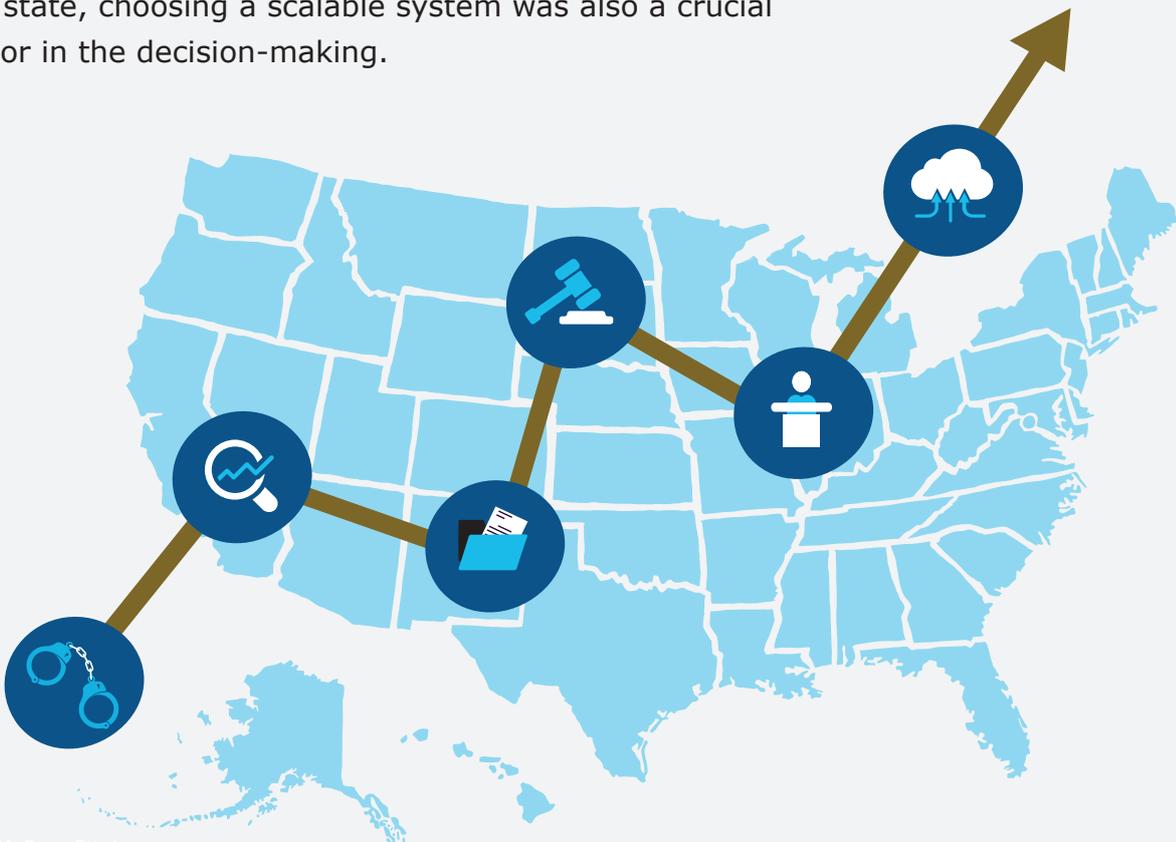
Ultimately, the reason that we chose PbK is because it was ready today to do everything we needed it to. Here in the state of Iowa, your county attorney's office is going to prosecute and deal with every type of case, including mental health, civil, criminal, and juvenile within their office. So, we needed to have a software package that would allow us to do each and every one of those things from day one. The other software packages that were out there, they had a lot of the things we were looking for, but they didn't have everything.

Jessica Trobaugh
Project Manager, ISAC

Summary

The Iowa County Attorney Case Management Project (ICACMP) provides statewide standardization for the county attorney's offices throughout the state, as a program supported and managed by the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC). While membership in the services of ICACMP is optional, the vast majority of County Attorney offices participate, because it makes them more effective in carrying out their duties. ICACMP manages the case management software and data exchanges for the counties that are part of the project.

The county offices started standardizing their software across the state in 2005, but using an on-premises, highly customized system was becoming expensive in terms of support and feature enhancements, which had to be developed on a custom basis. ICACMP set out to find a cloud-based software package that would do everything they need. As a smaller-population state, in Iowa, the county attorney offices handle all kinds of cases, criminal and civil, adult and juvenile, and even administrative violations issues such as collections. Because of this, ICACMP required a fully-featured system that could cover all of the needs of the 99 counties in Iowa. With more than 500 users throughout the state, choosing a scalable system was also a crucial factor in the decision-making.



Challenges

Previous system needed major customizations which required legacy software and operating systems.



It was inefficient for every county to maintain hardware and IT administrators for the software.



Update of new legislation was slow and could take months.



Integration with **justice and police systems** needed to work seamlessly.

Although it was not an initial requirement, with the spread of COVID-19, **remote training and administration** suddenly became a necessity.

Conversion of all data from the **previous system** was required to maintain past records.

Must support more than **500 client installations**.



Benefits

ELIMINATED THE NEED FOR LOCAL HARDWARE AT COUNTY OFFICES.



FULLY FEATURED SOFTWARE: ALL TYPES OF CASES ARE ALREADY BUILT IN.



SUCCESSFUL CONVERSION OF ALL DATA FROM LEGACY CASE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE.



POSITIVE RESPONSE OF VENDOR TO ADDING REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL FEATURES INTO THE PRODUCT.



FEWER CASE DISMISSALS BECAUSE OF PROCEDURAL ISSUES SUCH AS MISSED DEADLINES.



ABILITY TO IMPLEMENT AND COMPLY WITH LEGISLATIVE CHANGES WITHIN 15-30 DAYS.



Statewide standards: the need for easy implementation

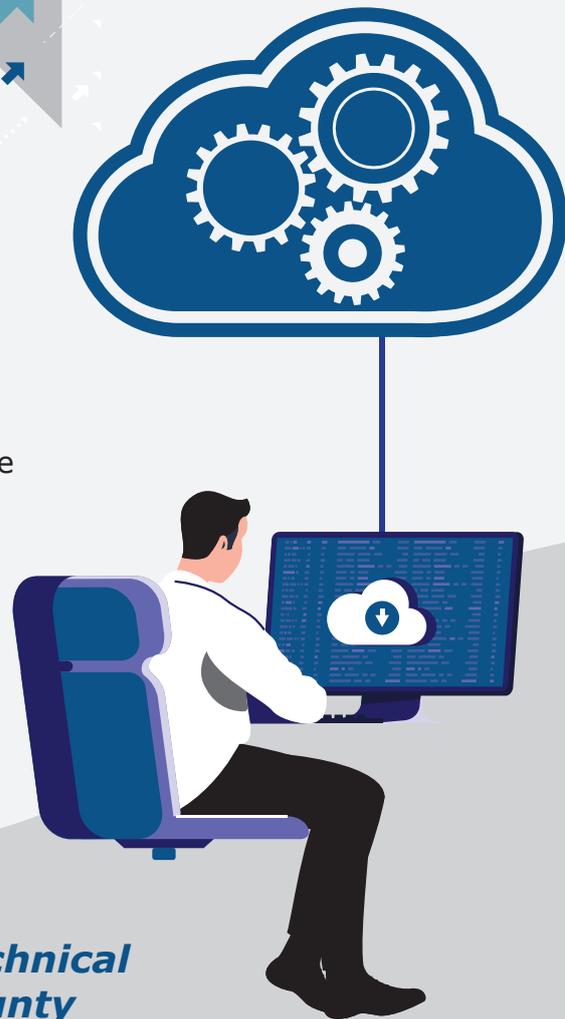
In looking for case management software for the county attorneys, Trobaugh and her team assessed a number of software packages and did a deeper dive into two solutions before making the choice to go with PROSECUTORbyKarpel (PbK). “We liked the product, but ultimately, our decision came down to the fact that it did everything we wanted and needed it to do without having to make too many adjustments to the software,” said Trobaugh. “In a lot of states and a lot of larger jurisdictions, there may be a criminal division and a juvenile division, and a child and mental health divisions. We don't have that luxury here in the state of Iowa. Your county attorney's office is going to prosecute and deal with every type of case, including mental health, civil, criminal, juvenile within their office. So we needed to have a software package that would allow us to do each and every one of those things from day one. The other software packages that were out there had a lot of the things we were looking for, but they didn't have everything.”





Technical Solution

The roll-out of the statewide system includes PROSECUTORbyKarpel user licenses for each office, cloud hosting through Azure Government, and eDiscovery. Azure hosting provides an additional layer of data security and document protection while assuring Iowa prosecutors' offices meet strict CJIS compliance requirements. eDiscovery capabilities give attorneys greater control in disclosing and tracking discovery on individual cases.



The solution included a number of technical aspects and modules to serve the County Attorney offices:



Integration with state criminal justice information systems such as ECCO, Court Notice, Hearing Order, and Charge Code Updates..



PbK victim services capabilities including a Victim Portal and automatic production of the VOCA Grant report.



External Agency Portal for law enforcement, which includes modules for external users to look up limited case data and add digital files directly to cases. Law enforcement will be able to refer cases via the portal as well as be subpoenaed electronically.



Conversion of data from ProLaw, Judicial Dialog, and other legacy systems used by county prosecutors for use by PROSECUTORbyKarpel

Easy and Smooth Upgrade to PbK

One of ICACMP's main concerns was around preserving all of the data from the legacy systems in making the transition to PbK. Most of the County Attorney offices were moving from ProLaw, while others were using Judicial Dialogue. To Trobaugh's relief, the transition went smoothly and all of the data converted from the old systems is now in PROSECUTORbyKarpel.

For every county office that transitions to the software, it takes several weeks to do the installation and configuration and another week to fully train the staff in using the software.



It's gone well—I mean, it's 2020. We were going to train three counties together and four days before the date to go live, we found out one of the counties had a COVID outbreak. Of course, that was the county that was supposed to be hosting everyone for the training. So we had to go virtual. We have done three counties completely virtual at this point. We also have done seven counties completely on-site with a trainer from Karpel and myself, and one county with myself on-site and the Karpel trainer from St. Louis on remote. We've kind of had to just go with the flow.

Jessica Trobaugh
Project Manager, ICACMP

By the end of 2020, Iowa transitioned eleven counties to the new software, and they are continuing to transition the rest as quickly as possible. Under the current circumstances, the main concern is the ability to roll the software out as rapidly as the counties are demanding the upgrade. So far, the counties who have transitioned have found it easy to use and intuitive. "I have not had anybody call and say they have regrets," says Trobaugh. "They're happy with the extra things that it does for them. They didn't have as many options in the old software, for example, now they can work from anywhere."

Advantages of Statewide Standardization

Using a statewide system has had major benefits for Iowa, which Trobaugh expects to continue with the implementation of the PbK solution. Furthermore, it's her hope that other states will follow suit to gain similar efficiencies.

The most dramatic time savings Trobaugh cited is the reduction in data entry. Prior to using case management software, they found they had to re-enter information such as name, case number, citation numbers, etc. in different software across the various agencies. Now, when a law enforcement officer writes a citation or complaint, they can file the affidavit, which sends it through to the court system. When the court system assigns a case number, that assignment is made automatically in the PbK system.

Standardizing on one software package allows Trobaugh, as the central administrator, to attain very deep knowledge of the product so she can provide high-level support to the county offices. Similarly, when they are all working on the same system, they can help one another, so county offices with more tech-savvy people become hubs that train and assist other counties nearby. If they were using different software, they wouldn't be able to provide such a high level of assistance to one another. Ultimately this leads to faster resolution of problems and more effective use of the software.





Beyond Standard Software: The PbK Boost

In addition to the value they already gained from the previous software package, ICACMP reaped additional benefits specifically from the transition to PbK. First and foremost, the cloud solution is already showing benefits not just in the reduction in hardware and administrative costs, but also in the ability to work from home. Under the circumstances imposed by COVID-19, the remote working capability has proved invaluable.

“ I was very happy with the conversion of what was in our system into PbK. I was very worried about taking what was in our legacy system and putting it into PbK because of past experience. And it has literally been phenomenal. For the most part, it is pretty seamless. This has turned out to be a very pleasant surprise for me and for the counties that things came over as well as they did..

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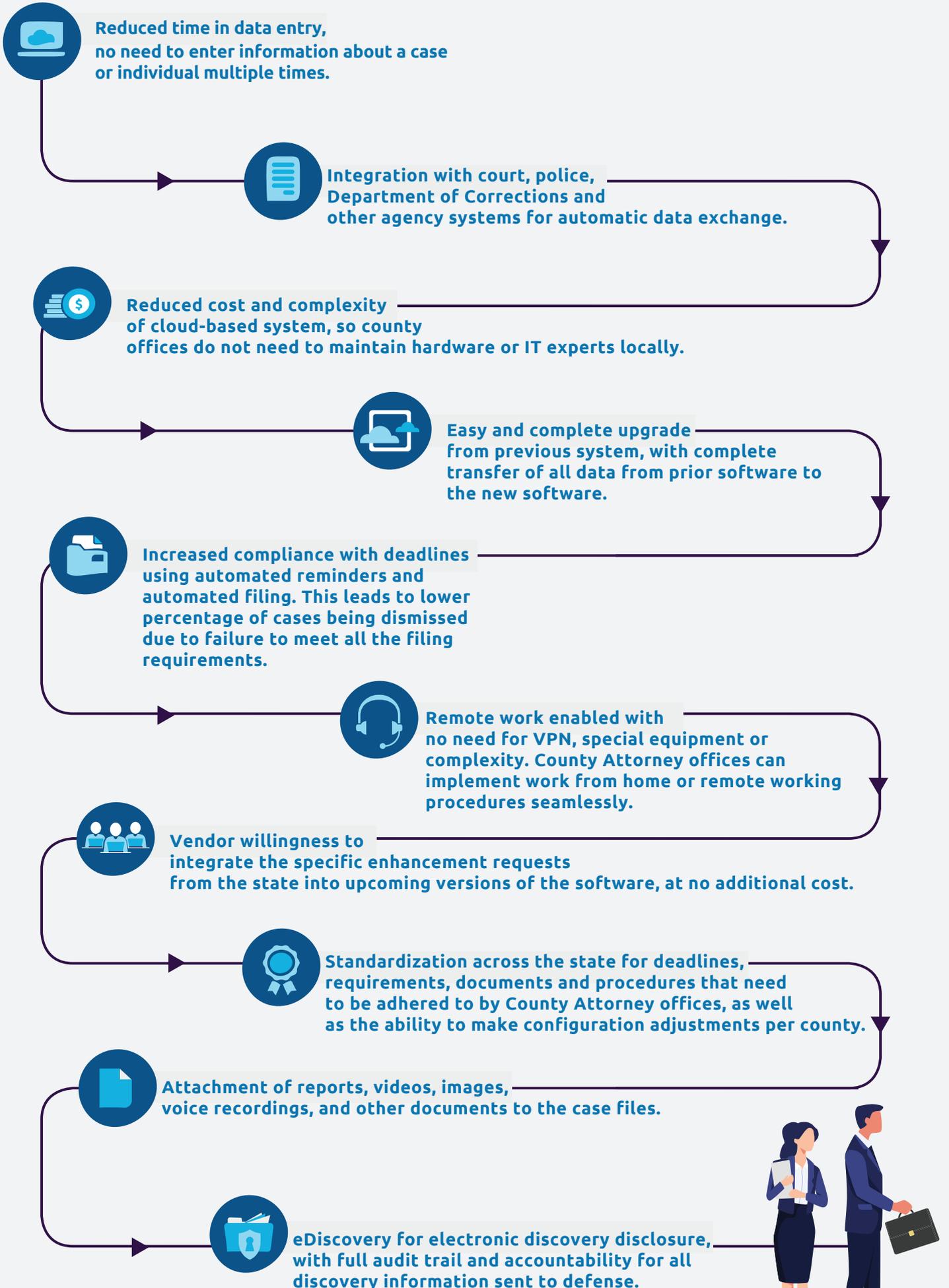
ISAC
Iowa State Association of Counties

Furthermore, the eDiscovery module is a feature that was missing in the previous software. This capability allows electronic discovery and redaction/bates numbering capabilities. Having precise tracking of discovery provides a full audit trail of exactly what discovery information was sent to and received by the defense counsel. Also, in the state of Iowa, several counties still charges a fee for discovery, and the PbK software includes the ability to automatically invoice for discovery when it's performed.

The county attorney offices have also taken advantage of the capability in PbK to attach audio files, reports, videos and photographs directly into the case files, which saves time and administration.

Finally, Trobaugh has enjoyed the Karpel team's dedication to client satisfaction. "They're very respectful. They listen to what I have to say and take the time. I never feel like they are rushing me through a conversation," she said. "I put in an enhancement request before we even signed our contract and they just kind of laughed. It was for our collections department, and it turned out they had already put that together for Washington County. Once I saw how they had built that, we didn't really need much of a modification. But there are definitely some enhancements that they're certainly willing to work with us on."

Benefits summary



About Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC)

The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) is a private, nonprofit corporation. ISAC members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. In July 2016 ISAC began management of the Iowa County Attorney's Case Management Project (ICACMP). Currently 58 counties and the attorney general's office participate in the project and on average five new counties are added each year. The mission of the project is to improve the efficiency of the prosecutor's office in Iowa.

About Karpel Solutions

St. Louis-based Karpel Solutions is a business and government solutions and managed services provider that helps clients achieve their strategic goals through the application of cutting-edge, cost-effective technologies.

PROSECUTORbyKarpel is the most widely used case management software in the United States. Founded in 1985, Karpel is a four-time Inc. 5000 company, providing business solutions that mobilize technology to meet specific business needs. Karpel Solutions employs more than 60 business professionals and technology experts with experience in various industries.

PROSECUTORbyKarpel is used by over 500 clients in 30 states with over 12,000 users nationwide.

For additional information visit <https://www.prosecutorbykarpel.com/>.