



THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO

TECHNOLOGY & THE COURTS

2008 SURVEY



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JULY 2008

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July 2008

Dear Fellow Ohioans:

The Technology & the Courts 2008 Survey demonstrates that information technology is now the central pathway for communication, research and case management in Ohio courts. The Internet is such an integral part of the work of the courts that now 380, or nearly 99 percent, of Ohio courts have access to the Internet and, 313 have Web sites.

The Supreme Court of Ohio continues to grow in its use of technology in its daily operations, streaming oral arguments live on the Web, accepting online attorney registration and mayor's courts statistics and posting court decisions.

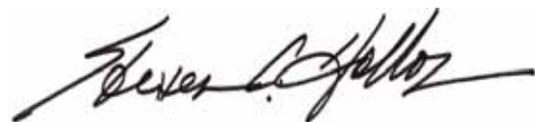
In addition, plans are underway to begin rolling out the Ohio Courts Network. The initial system will connect court personnel to data sources from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, and the Computerized Criminal History database managed by the Bureau of Criminal Information and Investigations. The network will also begin connecting court case management systems to the statewide case data warehouse. Initial Ohio Courts Network training begins this July.

Thank you for your interest in and support of technology in Ohio courts.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Moyer
Chief Justice



Steven C. Hollon
Administrative Director



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INTRODUCTION

The Supreme Court of Ohio is pleased to issue the results of the Technology & the Courts 2008 Survey. This biennial survey provides a snapshot of the status of court technology in Ohio. To capture the continuously changing nature of technology innovation in Ohio's courts, the scope of this survey includes data on the use of the Internet to display information and provide services, commonly used software and planned projects.

In the two years that have elapsed since the release of the 2006 survey results, the use of technology in the courts has continued to increase. The 2008 survey results reflect the expanded use of technology as a tool for the efficient administration of justice by judges, clerks and court personnel.

In an effort to administer the survey and gather results more efficiently, the Supreme Court again used an Internet-based survey form. Two-hundred-eighty-nine courts used the Web form to complete the survey. As a result, the Court will continue using and improving this feature in the years to come. The Court extends its thanks to all the local courts who took advantage of this tool.

The Technology & the Courts 2008 Survey reflects the accomplishments and technology solutions implemented by courts in Ohio. We greatly appreciate the time and effort Ohio judges and court personnel dedicated to completing the survey. This report is a testament to their efforts and commitment to providing justice for all Ohioans.

Statistics for the 2008 survey are based on responses received from Ohio's 372 trial-level courts and 12 district courts of appeals, and the Supreme Court.

The following courts were unable to participate in 2008, so their answers from 2006 were used in the data analysis:

- Clark County Court of Common Pleas, General Division
- East Cleveland Municipal Court
- Licking County Municipal Court
- Morrow County Court of Common Pleas, General, Domestic Relations, Probate and Juvenile divisions
- Muskingum County Common Pleas, Domestic Relations Division
- Muskingum County Court of Common Pleas, General Division
- Trumbull County Court of Common Pleas, General Division.

A glossary of technology terms used in the survey is included as Appendix A to this document.

COMPOSITION OF OHIO COURTS IN 2008	
1	SUPREME COURT OF OHIO
12	COURTS OF APPEALS
206	COMMON PLEAS COURTS
27	General Division only (CP1)
54	General Division and Domestic Relations combined (CP2)
1	General Division and Probate combined (CP3)
5	General Division, Domestic Relations, Probate and Juvenile combined (CP4)
1	General Division, Domestic Relations and Probate combined (CP5)
19	Domestic Relations only (DR1)
5	Domestic Relations and Juvenile combined (DR2)
16	Probate only (P1)
63	Probate and Juvenile combined (P2)
4	Probate, Juvenile and Domestic Relations combined (P3)
11	Juvenile only (J1)
128	MUNICIPAL COURTS with Two Housing Divisions and One Environmental Division ¹
38	COUNTY COURTS
384	TOTAL - OHIO TRIAL AND APPELLATE COURTS
385	ALL COURTS (INCLUDING SUPREME COURT OF OHIO)
331	Mayor's Courts ²

1. Housing and environmental courts are divisions of municipal courts, but they are counted separately for purposes of superintendence. There are two housing courts and one environmental court in Ohio.

2. There are 331 mayor's courts registered with the Supreme Court of Ohio. On Jan. 1, 2003, the Governor signed H.B. 490 requiring mayor's courts to register annually with the Supreme Court and to report case load statistics beginning Jan. 1, 2004. The numbers in the 2008 survey do not reflect the status of mayor's courts.

THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO, OHIO JUDICIAL CENTER

Currently the Supreme Court of Ohio has 400 computers running the Windows XP operating system with Microsoft Office 2003 software. The servers are running Windows 2000 and 2003.

Ohio Judicial Center tenants benefit from several technologies, including:

- Digital audio and video recording capabilities in the Supreme Court Courtroom and two Court of Claims courtrooms
- Multimedia-enabled meeting rooms with connectivity to the network and the Internet
- A meeting room equipped for video teleconferencing
- Receivers in all courtrooms for the hearing-impaired
- A classroom with drop-down video screens, DVD and VHS players, a sound system, data ports and wireless Internet connectivity
- A computer lab available for training and Ohio Judicial College courses

Updates to and features of the Supreme Court Web site include:

- Live streaming of oral arguments and other special events as a companion service to the live broadcasts available on state public television
- RSS feeds of Supreme Court opinions and news
- Online registration, registration fee payment and continuing legal education transcript access for attorneys
- Online submission of caseload statistics for mayor's courts
- Second comprehensive redesign of layout and navigation
- Online viewing of Supreme Court case documents and decision entries.

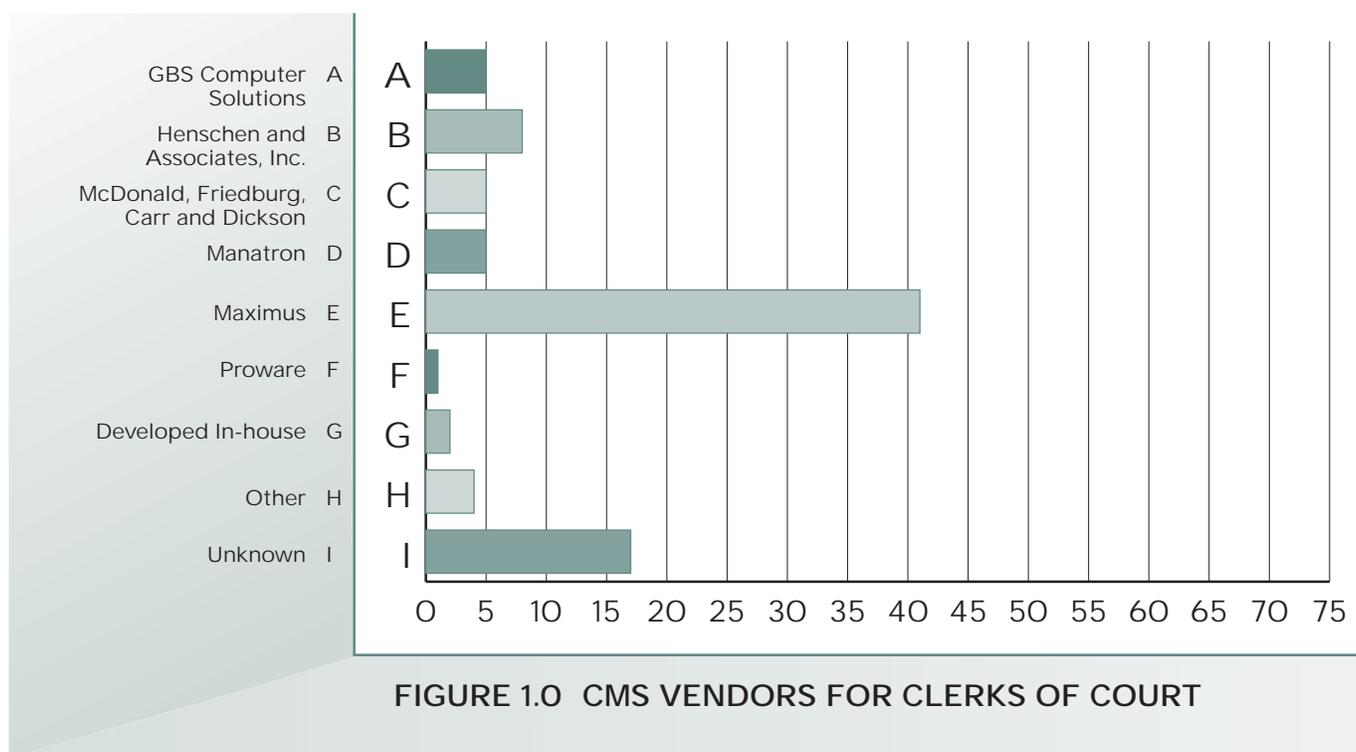


SECTION 1 CASE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Automated case management systems (CMS) provide courts with the ability to manage information electronically using a custom CMS and general office software. By 2008, all cases were being input into a CMS, either by the court or the clerk of court, enabling projects such as the Ohio Courts Network to move toward completion.

The 2008 survey asked courts to indicate the CMS vendors for all systems used within their court. Seven courts of appeals reported using the Appellate Case Management System developed by the Supreme Court of Ohio; three reported developing their own system in-house; and three use systems developed by commercial vendors.

The results for clerks of courts and common pleas, municipal and county courts are illustrated in figures 1.0 (*below*) through 1.5 (pp.6-8).



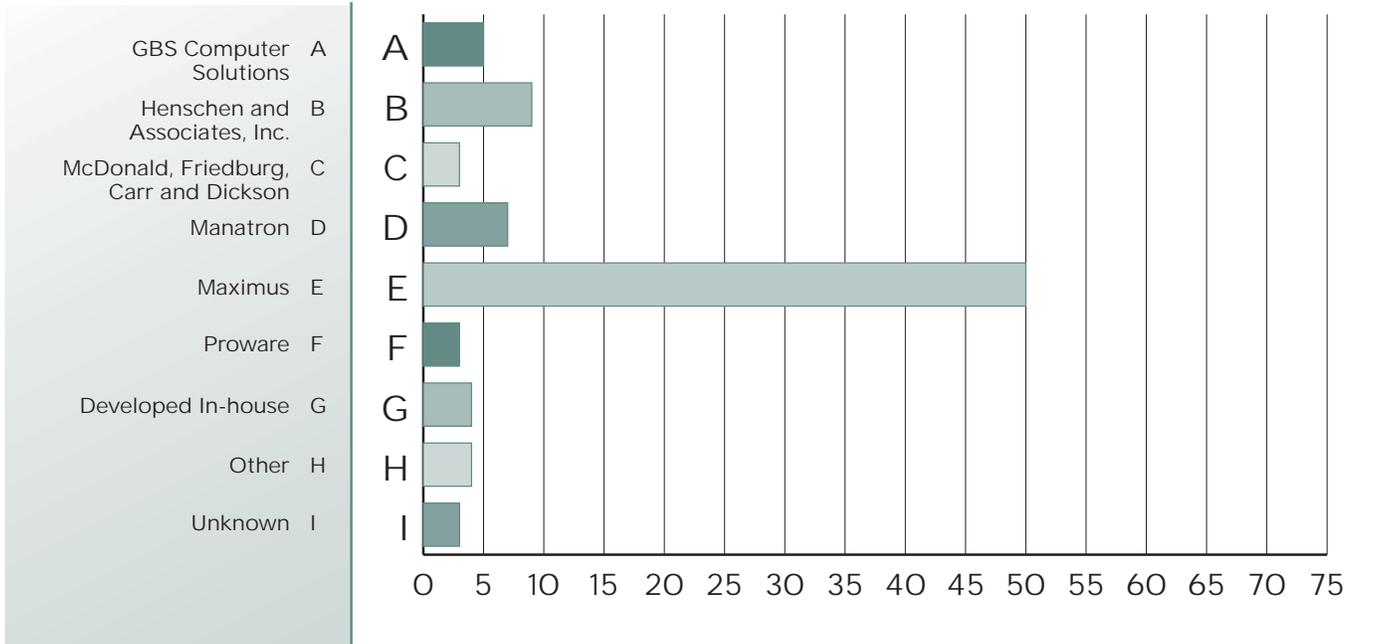


FIGURE 1.1 CMS VENDORS FOR COMMON PLEAS COURTS, GENERAL DIVISION

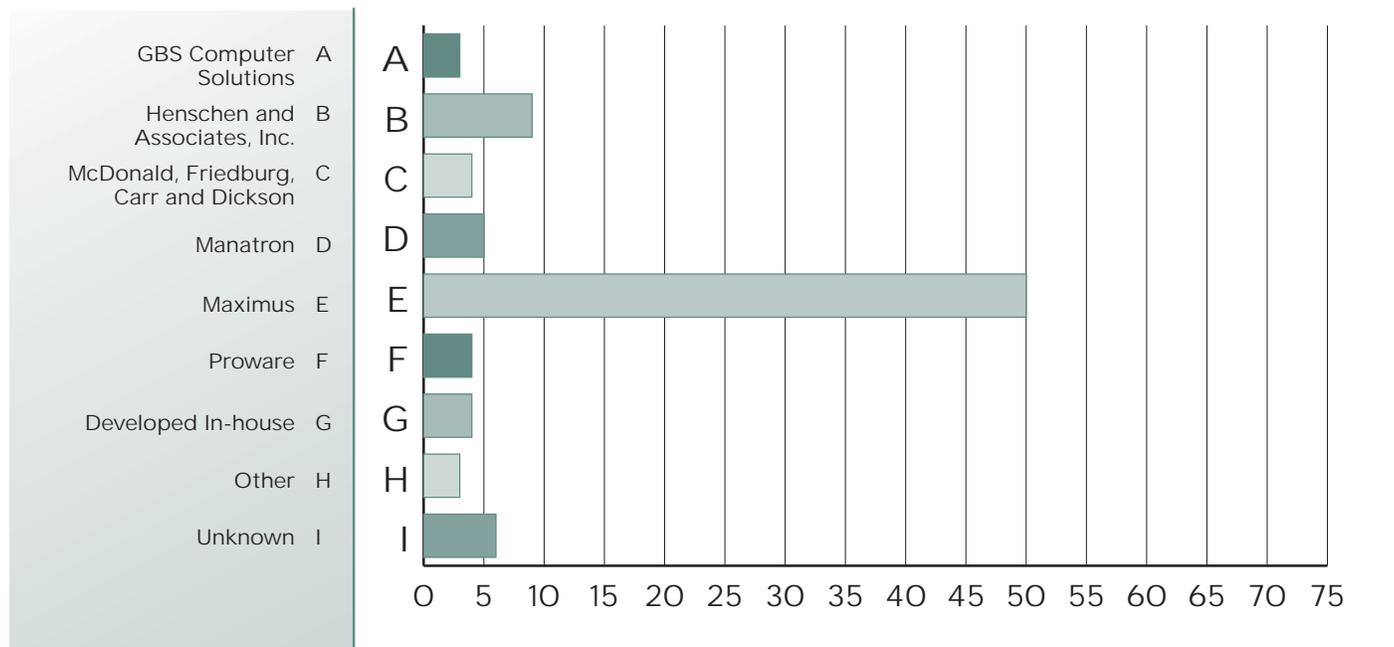


FIGURE 1.2 CMS VENDORS FOR COMMON PLEAS COURTS, DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

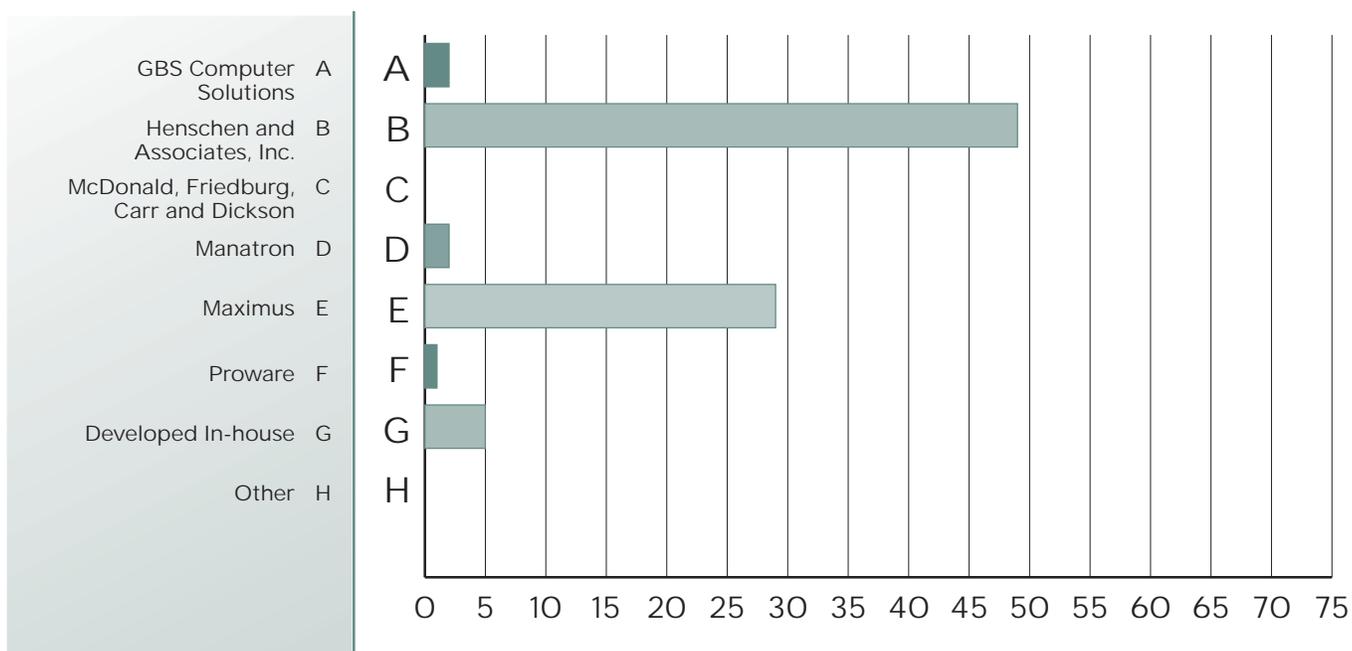


TABLE 1.3 CMS VENDORS FOR COMMON PLEAS COURTS, PROBATE DIVISION

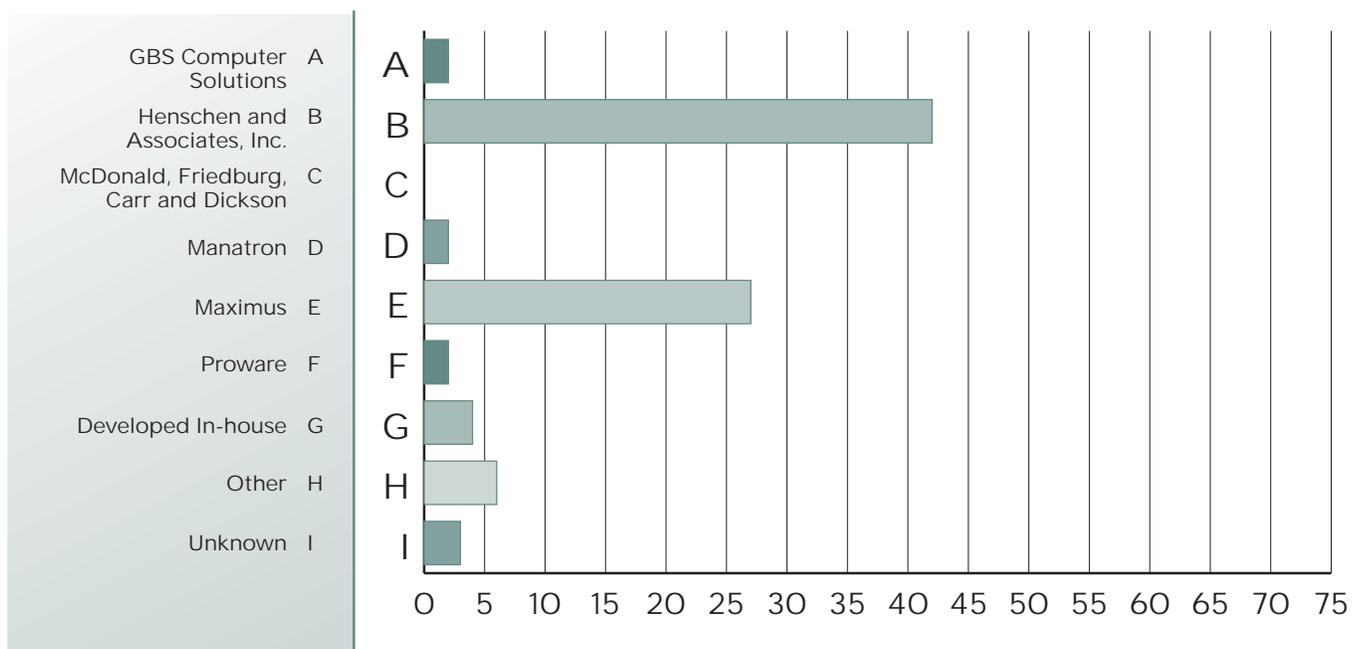


TABLE 1.4 CMS VENDORS FOR COMMON PLEAS COURTS, JUVENILE DIVISION

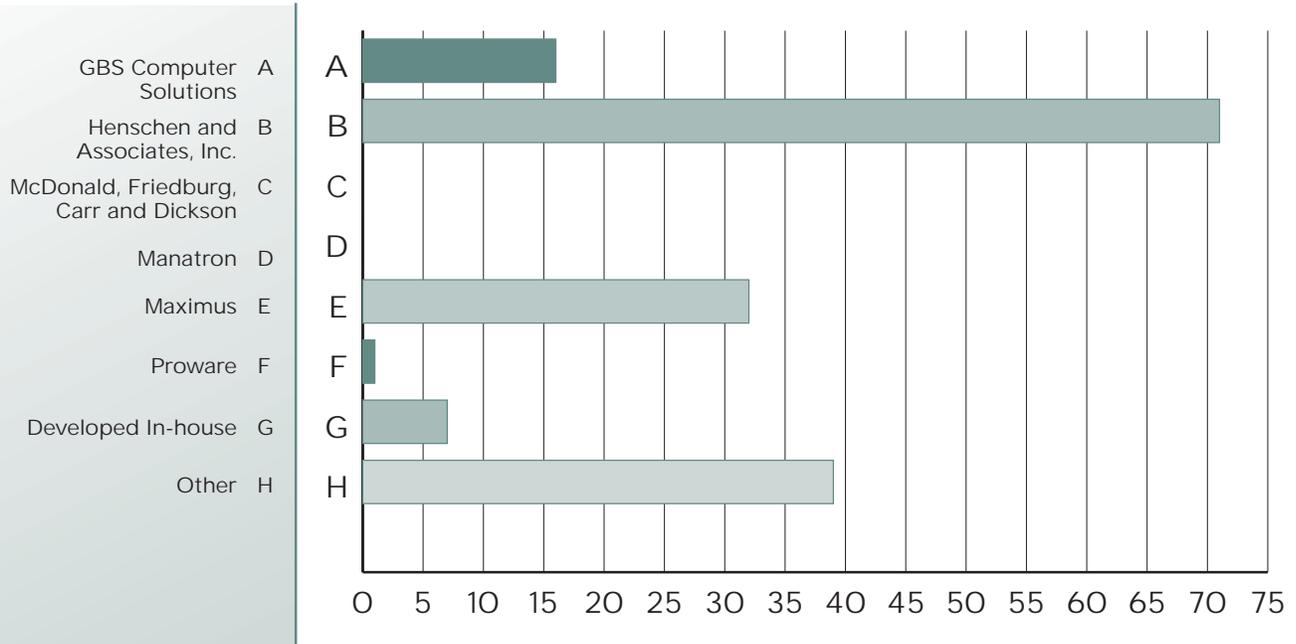


FIGURE 1.5 CMS VENDORS FOR MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY COURTS

**SECTION 2
OTHER TECHNOLOGY USE**

**SECTION 2.0
DIGITAL DOCUMENT IMAGING**

As the number of court filings continues to grow, increasing the need for storage space, courts have become increasingly interested in alternative imaging technology. (For records retention schedules, refer to Sup. R. 26.) Digital document imaging stores document images as electronic files instead of on microfilm. The number of courts using imaging technology continued to increase in 2008 (see Table 2.0, *below*). One-hundred-sixty-eight now use document imaging, compared with the 152 from 2006. (Policy recommendations for document imaging are available at www.supremecourtfohio.gov/tech_services/resources/default.asp.)

TABLE 2.0 DIGITAL DOCUMENT IMAGING

30	Henschen and Associates, Inc.
28	Maximus
16	Vista Solutions Group
9	Hyland Software, Inc.
9	Results Engineering
8	Civica CMI (Creative Microsystems, Inc.)
7	GBS Computer Solutions
5	Intellinetics
5	Perceptive Software
5	Proware
3	Shelby Computer Connection
3	SoftTec, Inc.
3	Unknown vendor
27	Other
10	Developed in-house
217	Do not use document imaging

**SECTION 2.1
VIDEO HEARINGS AND ARRAIGNMENTS**

Another technology that is gaining in popularity is the use of video conferencing equipment, which allows a court to conduct long-distance hearings, arraignments and other meetings with full video and audio contact. Courts have continued to express interest in implementing video conferencing as a way to cut costs and expedite the arraignment and hearing processes. In 2008, 141 courts reported conducting video arraignments and/or hearings (see Table 2.1, *below*).

**SECTION 2.2
DIGITAL RECORDING**

Courts are increasing their use of digital recording methods, which store audio and/or video as electronic computer files. Electronic files can be copied faster and more easily than tape, thus speeding and facilitating distribution to the multiple parties that can be involved in a case. Survey results (Table 2.2, *p. 11*) indicate 273 courts now use some form of digital recording.

**SECTION 2.3
MULTIMEDIA COURTROOMS**

Multimedia courtrooms use such technologies as wireless network connections, digital cameras, slide presentations, video reenactments and digital recording equipment. There are now 59 courts using this technology (see Table 2.3, *p. 11*). It is expected that as the demand for this technology increases, the number of multimedia-equipped courtrooms also will increase.

TABLE 2.1 VIDEO TELECONFERENCING EQUIPMENT

45	Polycom, Inc. (owns PictureTel)
13	Jefferson Audio-Video Systems (JAVS)
6	Tandberg
5	Staley Technologies
4	AT&T Broadband Network Solutions (and SBC)
3	Court Vision Communications, Inc.
3	Industrial Video Corporation
14	Unknown vendor
7	Use equipment from another court or agency
34	Other
7	Developed in-house
238	Do not use video teleconferencing equipment
6	Did not respond

TABLE 2.2 DIGITAL RECORDING

99	Dolbey and Company
62	Business Information Systems (BIS)
26	Jefferson Audio-Video Systems (JAVS)
11	Sound Communications (Voice IQ, Inc.)
10	Courtsmart Digital Systems, Inc.
9	Norlson Inc Dictation Systems
6	Roach-Reid Office Systems
19	Unknown vendor
31	Other
109	Do not use digital recording
3	Did not respond

TABLE 2.3 MULTIMEDIA COURTROOMS

13	Jefferson Audio-Video Systems (JAVS)
5	Ashton Sound and Communications, Inc.
4	Ace Communications (previously DOAR)
3	Dolbey and Company
3	Sound Communications (Voice IQ, Inc.)
12	Unknown vendor
14	Other
5	Developed in-house
326	Do not have a multimedia courtroom

SECTION 2.4
ELECTRONIC FILING

Traditionally, case filings were submitted on paper. However, with the increasing number of technological tools available, courts have been looking for alternative methods. The adoption in 2000 of the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (R.C. 1306) and revisions to the relevant rules of court in 2001 empowered courts to accept electronic filings. Eleven courts (Table 2.4, *right*) now offer electronic filing, which is the transmission of case filings over the Internet, rather than through the U.S. mail or by facsimile.

SECTION 2.5
ELECTRONIC RETURN RECEIPT

Another fairly new technology is the electronic return receipt, which allows courts to minimize paperwork by receiving certified mail acknowledgment electronically instead of receiving the traditional green card used by the U.S. Postal Service. In the 2008 survey, 44 courts (Table 2.5, *right*), including the Supreme Court, indicated they have begun the using electronic return receipt.

SECTION 2.6
ELECTRONIC TICKET

Some clerks' offices are equipped to receive electronic transmission of traffic citation information. Though not applicable to all courts, 16 courts (Table 2.6, *right*) indicated they make use of this technology, an increase from the nine courts using it in 2006.

TABLE 2.4 ELECTRONIC FILING

2 Unknown vendor
 9 Other
 367 Do not use electronic filing
 7 Did not respond

TABLE 2.5 ELECTRONIC RETURN RECEIPT

25 Pitney Bowes
 8 WALZ Postal Solutions, Inc.
 2 Unknown vendor
 9 Other
 334 Do not use electronic return receipt
 7 Did not respond

TABLE 2.6 ELECTRONIC TICKET

285 No
 16 Yes
 6 Unknown
 78 Did not respond



**SECTION 3
INTERNET ACCESS AND WEB SITE INFORMATION**

**SECTION 3.0
INTERNET ACCESS**

In 2008, 380 Ohio courts indicated that they have some kind of Internet access (see Table 3.0, *below*). The vast majority of these, 362, are using high-speed access, such as DSL or cable, instead of the older dial-up method. The higher speed and increased bandwidth of the high-speed Internet makes possible many of the current technologies, such as electronic filing and electronic access to court documents.

**SECTION 3.1
COURTS WITH WEB SITES**

As of 2008, 313 courts have Web sites providing general information about the court. Many of those also provide additional services on their Web sites (see Section 3.2, *below*). Courts are recognizing that a Web presence is an important source of information and services for their constituents and are expanding the information and services available online. (A list of court Web addresses is available at www.supremecourtofohio.gov/Web_Sites/courts/.)

**SECTION 3.2
INTERNET SERVICES OFFERED ON COURT WEB SITES**

Constituents turn to court Web sites for information. In addition to general information, such as location, driving directions and hours of operation, courts are beginning to offer other online services, such as access to the court docket and electronic fee payment. (See Table 3.2, *below*.)

TABLE 3.0 INTERNET ACCESS	
362	Use high speed access
10	Use dial-up access
8	Do not know method
5	No Internet access

TABLE 3.2 INTERNET SERVICES	
144	Public access to case records
105	Record of all concluded events (docket)
99	Court calendars
49	Public access to case documents
30	Electronic fine and/or fee payment
15	Opinions searches



**SECTION 4
TECHNOLOGY PLANNING AND SUPPORT**

Technology requires ongoing maintenance and support. It is important to have resources available to stay current on technology, fix problems as they arise and plan for routine maintenance to ensure systems function properly. As the functionality of systems increases, so will the need for support.

**SECTION 4.0
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT METHODS**

Courts were asked to report their primary method of information technology support (see Table 4.0, *below*). This might be a county or city employee, a court employee, a paid consultant, or even a volunteer. While it may be ideal for a court to have a dedicated system administrator, many courts do not yet have technology personnel on staff and have found other methods of support. Although only 41 courts indicate a complete absence of technology support, growth is clearly still needed in this area.

TABLE 4.0 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT METHODS	
127	County- or city-employed systems administrator or IT manager
120	Court-employed systems administrator or IT manager
65	Paid consultant
4	Volunteer consultant
28	Other
41	No technology support

**SECTION 4.1
DISASTER RECOVERY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANS**

It is important for courts to have a written disaster recovery and business continuity plan in place to ensure their ability to function in the event of a fire, flood or other catastrophic event. This does not encompass merely having back-up tapes of data, but also includes a plan for continuing operations in the event of a disaster. While 214 courts indicated that they have a written disaster recovery plan, the remaining 171 courts could find it difficult to continue operations in the face of an unforeseen disaster.

It is recommended that courts create, maintain and enhance their disaster recovery plans.

**SECTION 4.2
PLANNED PROJECTS**

In order to maintain working systems, courts must prioritize their need for new technologies and upgrades to older systems. Table 4.2 (*below*) lists the projects courts plan to implement over the next two years.

TABLE 4.2 PLANNED PROJECTS	
82	CMS upgrade
80	Document management system
77	Electronic filing
63	Web site
58	Electronic fine and/or fee payment
51	Digital recording system
44	Video arraignments/hearings
39	Electronic tickets
31	Electronic return receipt
30	Internet access
22	Multimedia courtroom
30	Other
54	None

**SECTION 5
THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO, TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

The Technology Services Section of the Supreme Court of Ohio Information Technology Division can trace its roots to 1993, when Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer created a new program of technology assistance and policy development for courts in Ohio. The Technology Services Section has since provided courts with a variety of services in support of their technology initiatives.

A list of Technology Services resources for the local courts is available at www.supremecourtofohio.gov/tech_services/resources/default.asp

Program managers are also available to provide guidance to courts seeking assistance with information technology projects.

**SECTION 5.0
IMPORTANT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

Courts were given the opportunity to indicate the most valuable resources and services that the Supreme Court of Ohio should or does provide to courts and clerks. Table 5.0(A) (*below*) reflects the services already provided that courts find valuable. The single most-valued item is the consulting service provided by the Technology Services Section. Table 5.0(B) (p. 20) reflects services that local courts would like the Supreme Court to make available. The most frequently requested item is funding for information technology projects.

TABLE 5.0(A) SUPREME COURT SERVICES FOUND VALUABLE

56	Consultation services (e.g., disaster recovery planning, CMS upgrades, document imaging systems, etc.)
22	Standards/guidelines
20	Ohio Courts Network
15	Education/advice on technologies
10	Information on vendors and software used by Ohio courts
7	Annual Technology Conference of Ohio Judicial Conference
5	Networking/collaboration with other local courts
5	Training
4	Supreme Court Web site
3	Appellate Case Management System (ACMS)
4	Other services (cited by fewer than three courts)

TABLE 5.0(B) SUPREME COURT SERVICES REQUESTED

- 46 IT project funding (e.g., CMS upgrades, electronic filing, document management systems)
- 22 Regular updates on available software and/or vendors
- 17 Standard case management system and/or system definitions
- 10 IT project standards development
- 10 Vendor recommendations/approved vendor list
- 9 Training and seminars on technology use and availability
- 9 IT Solutions (e.g., Web development, CMS support, document management)
- 6 Work with vendors, agencies, and courts to ensure system compliance with requirements/law changes
- 5 Electronic Supreme Court reporting
- 5 Vendor evaluations
- 5 Security-related solutions
- 14 Other service requests (cited by fewer than three courts)

APPENDIX A

TECHNOLOGY TERMS USED IN THE 2008 TECHNOLOGY & THE COURTS SURVEY

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Plan put in place to ensure that essential functions of an organization can continue during and after a disaster, prevent interruption of mission-critical services, and reestablish full functioning operations as soon as possible. (reference: www.whatis.com)

CABLE MODEM

A device that enables a computer to connect to a local cable television connection and receive data at about 1.5 Mbps. (reference: www.whatis.com)

DIAL-UP MODEM

A device used to transmit digital data over telephone wires by modulating the data into an audio signal to send it and demodulating an audio signal into data to receive it. (reference: www.dictionary.com)

DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

See *business continuity plan*.

DIGITAL SUBSCRIBER LINE (DSL)

Technology that uses existing telephone wiring with special hardware attached to both the user and switch ends of the line to enable high-speed data transmission over the wires. (reference: www.whatis.com)

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT OF FEES

Payment of court fees over the Internet using credit or debit cards.

RSS

Really simple syndication. An RSS feed is an easy way to distribute a list of headlines, updated notices, and sometimes content to a large number of people; it is used by computer programs that organize the headlines and notices for easy reading. (reference: www.whatis.com)

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR

The individual responsible for managing and maintaining a computer system.





THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO

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