

Using Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) For Courtroom

Lessons Learned in Arizona

Key Concepts:

- Successful implementation in other states
- Replication in largest general jurisdiction court in state
- Install technology for interpreters to appear remotely for hearings of limited length.
- Save travel time for freelance and staff interpreters, allowing them to service more interpreting events within a jurisdiction.

Timeline/Process

- Utilized grant funding to assist pilot courts- but courts pay maintenance costs
- Evaluated vendors from state contract list (2012)
- Pilot began with one county in 2013; second and third counties up within 6 months
- Most recent county installation completed Aug. 2014

Initial Challenges

- Arizona's 15 counties cover 114,000 square miles.
- 63% of known interpreters of lesser used languages reside in Maricopa County.
- Distance between courts within counties
- Non-unified court system
- Commitment/buy-in
- Existing technology & courthouse historical status
- Network security/ownership
- Costs

Critical investments

- Top down support from judges, IT, administration and interpreters
- Early and frequent communication plan with IT and all
- Evaluate anticipated volume and ROI
- On-site visits to courthouses and planning meetings- not rely solely on vendor
- Maintain knowledge of current/changing technology

Additional considerations

- Interpreter resources
- Training/user issues
- External justice partners and connectivity issues
- Functionality requirements
- Interpreter use/culture of court staff
- Court rules/statutory limitations
- Additional uses with other justice partners

Operational Efficiencies

- Reduces loss of valuable bench time from delays and continuances
- Better coverage with less wait time for routine, brief hearings
- Ad hoc requests from remote locations can be addressed immediately
- Reduced travel time and associated costs

Using Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) For Court Customer Service Counters

Lessons Learned in Oregon

Key Concepts:

- Convenient and immediate access to an interpreter at front counters in courthouses
- Improve language access services for LEP court customers at the courthouse front counters
- Implement emerging technology at the courthouse front counters for language access
- Enhance immediate service capacity, efficiency and effectiveness for LEP court customers
- For use of short non-courtroom business activities at front counters

Challenges / Tips:

- Bandwidth
- ETSD security
- ETSD Support
- Video delay due to connections
- Types of windows at the counters
- Accessibility at the counters
- Court counter staff culture and support

Applications:

- Work with procurement on price agreement
- Work with ETSD regarding installing software
- Obtaining proper VRI equipment
- Train staff on VRI
- ORS 133.515 requires that an interpreter be made available to a person with a disability

Operational Efficiencies:

- Reduces frustrations for counter staff
- Reduces frustrations for LEP court customers
- Speeds up counter business processes

Resources

Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts- VRI Project Email: cmitchell@courts.az.gov

Oregon Judicial Department Email: Yvette.p.tamamoto@ojd.state.or.us

National Center for State Courts

<http://www.ncsc.org/sitecore/content/microsites/trends-2014/home/Monthly-Trends-Articles/Video-Remote-Interpretation-as-a-Business-Solution.aspx>