

SWVTC High Tech Innovation Award

Commonwealth Systems, LLC (CWS) is a small software development firm specializing in custom software solutions for the public and private sectors. Founded by Barry Tate and Donald Purdie, CWS's primary product, *eLegal Case Pro*, is a software package which is designed to improve the efficiency of the court system and achieve a higher level of service for those who interact with it.

Currently, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is no universal case and document management system designed specifically for the circuit courts; *eLegal Case Pro* fills that need as it is a case and document management system. *eLegal Case Pro* gives attorneys and judges the ability to submit, review, and retrieve documents pertinent to any case on which they are working. By having all court case documents stored on a central server in the courthouse, judges and attorneys can simply view digitized documents in the court room without the need for multiple paper copies for each party.

eLegal Case Pro also provides for legacy cases and files. By Virginia law, certain physical documents submitted to the court must be stored. This creates the need for large amounts of space to be set aside for document storage so the files are close by in the event they are needed by a judge or attorney. By scanning the older documents into *eLegal Case Pro*, the court is able to move those files offsite and free up valuable space in the courthouse. Additionally, because new cases are e-filed (submitted electronically), the amount of physical documents coming into the courthouse is drastically reduced. This reduces the negative environmental footprint of the court, associated agencies, and subscribing attorneys.

eLegal Case Pro is also useful to any organization or office that interacts with the legal system. The Sheriff's Office, Commonwealth Attorney's Office, and any other state agency that needs or produces legal documents benefits from *eLegal Case Pro*. By using custom portals, these agencies can view and

submit case files relevant to their organization. As an example, since implementing *eLegal Case Pro* into the Wise County Circuit Court, the time needed to perform certain tasks has been reduced by 65%; which equates to a \$61,000 a year savings. A specialized version of *eLegal Case Pro*, designed specifically for the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, provides additional features which improve the efficiency of that office as well.

Arguably, the group that benefits most from *eLegal Case Pro* is attorneys. For a small fee, they are able to access any documents for their cases, submit new documents by e-filing, and check the status of pending cases all without having to travel to the courthouse. They can save time, effort, and money while providing a more efficient service to their clients.

eLegal Case Pro is specifically designed for the Virginia Circuit Court System. As such, it can be easily implemented into circuit courts across the commonwealth. There are 121 cities and counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Each of these can benefit from the implementation of *eLegal Case Pro*.

It is important to note that *eLegal Case Pro* can be released in stages allowing each county to implement the system at their own pace. This allows Commonwealth Systems to set up a customized system for each county that is tailored to their specific needs. This level of customization is one of the key features of *eLegal Case Pro* and provides each customer with the most cost effective solution.