

CASE STUDY: DIGITAL PLATFORM GIVES COURT NEW INSIGHT AND ACCESS TO CASE FILES

Overview

Montgomery County Juvenile Probation is located in Jeffersonville, Pa., and is working to ensure that citizens live in safety, that victims are restored to the extent possible, and that juvenile offenders are held accountable and develop competencies to become positive members of society. The organization is committed to carrying out this mission with dignity, respect and compassion to all.

Background

The department manages a significant amount of documents and files pertaining to individual cases and judgements. These documents were traditionally paper-based and manually processed, and housed in physical storage rooms. The organization needs to maintain content for historical purposes, but only cumbersome manual searching was possible in that environment.

Montgomery County's leadership is proactive about technology enablement and saw an opportunity to bring a more digital approach to document storage, and provide more streamlined and efficient access to case information.

Project

Following a request for proposal process, Montgomery County chose RSM to design and implement a massive document digitization project. Initially, RSM initiated a discovery phase to understand the court's specific needs and document storage goals—both now and in the future. With this knowledge, advisors determined the right technology to transform Montgomery County's processes and bring a new level of insight and productivity to the court.

RSM's modern workplace team developed a full automation of all existing case folders that were previously stored in multiple physical rooms at the court. By leveraging technologies such as optical character recognition and robotic process automation, RSM developed a platform that allowed the county to digitally scan its entire historical juvenile court archive, but also to continue to take in new cases in both paper and digital format.

In addition, RSM has set up a comprehensive storage and search system, powered by Microsoft Office 365 SharePoint Online, which allows all incoming case files to be easily classified by data such as offender name, date of birth, case number or date, the gravity of offense or resolution, and final verdict. This system allows new cases to be taken in digitally, but is also set up for continuous scanning to support any new paper cases.

Hundreds of thousands of paper pages were scanned as part of this project into a searchable PDF format, enabling more direct access and a much easier way to search for necessary information. All files and their related metadata are stored into SharePoint Online, where they are indexed and where their full text is available to be searched.

The new automated framework has demonstrated its value during the COVID-19 pandemic, with employees forced to transition to a work-from-home environment. With cases now in a digital format, employees can access files without going in the office, enabling existing cases to proceed without interruption.

Outcomes

Montgomery County is now equipped with a digital, centralized, easily accessible record center, powered by a comprehensive search screen that allows users to remotely query the court's archives, find offenders, enter new case information or even cross-references cases and find trends. The new framework removed departmental silos and brings insight employees never had before.

Furthermore, Office 365 provided additional incentives by being automatically backed up in the cloud, secure and easily accessible over mobile devices.

Key benefits of RSM's digital scanning and storage engagement with Montgomery County Juvenile Probation include:

- A modern technology platform to archive historical case documents and scan new files
- An efficient, easy-to-use platform with direct access in and out of the office
- A storage solution that can scale with case growth, and can be integrated with other state systems

The RSM modern workplace team worked with Montgomery County Juvenile Probation to transform its existing paper-based records system into a more effective digital archive.



- Storage rooms for paper case files
- Only manual processing
- Only manual search
- Large volume of historical content

- Access to data from anywhere with wifi
- Efficient search—by offender name, date of birth, case number, etc.
- Fast and easy to use
- Centralized and backed up
- Integration capabilities with other state systems
- Cross referencing potential to identify trends and serial offenders

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