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Appendix

Excerpt from Jury Management System Presentation
South Dakota Unified Judicial System
Presented at Court Technology Conference VII

Full document available from:

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1. Introduction/Background

We have recognized for many years that a better method of managing juries was needed in the state, but the computer systems developed by private vendors were far too expensive. Our two largest counties, Minnehaha and Pennington, were struggling with trying to manage juries pretty much on a manual basis. In 1999, we applied for and received financial assistance from the State Justice Institute to develop a jury management system. The grant money allowed us to tap the resources of Tom Munsterman at the National Center for State Courts.

Over approximately 18 months, a committee of UJS technical staff, system users and a consultant programmer/analyst, assisted by Tom's technical expertise, developed a jury management system at a cost of under \$50,000.

The system has been implemented in approximately 30 counties in the state. Additionally, the system has a web interface that gives prospective jurors information on jury service in South Dakota and allows jurors the option of completing their juror questionnaires online. The system is currently installed on a distributed basis because of issues involving selection of the Master Jury list with our county auditors that were present at the time the system was developed. Recent legislation has now allowed for a state-wide master jury in South Dakota and our plans are to centralize our jury data base by July 2003.

2. SD Court System/Jury Requirements

The court system in South Dakota is somewhat unique in that we are a state wide court system for a population of approximately 750,000. We are located in sixty or more counties and a land area of almost 76,000 square miles. The Unified Court system of South Dakota is made up of five Supreme Court Justices, thirty seven Circuit Court Judges and fourteen Magistrate Judges. There are ---- (number) support staff made up of administrative, clerical and other non-judicial personnel.

Administration of the system is statewide and per circuit. The statutes of South Dakota dictate that Jury pools are created by county and if need be in our more rural areas by jury districts which may be created from combining several counties. Each year the presiding judge of each circuit directs the clerk of the circuit court located in each county to draw a specified number of jurors from a combined list of registered voters and of licensed drivers residing in that county.

The County Auditor, the Chairman of the County Commission and the clerk of the circuit court make up the board of jury selectors. It is their duty to create the master jury list each calendar year. The presiding circuit judge also set the number of jury panels the number of jurors on each panel and the length of time each panel is to serve. The county sheriff, the register of deeds and the county treasurer draw the jury for each panel. In some counties the master jury panel may consist of 200 jurors with two term panels of 100 each. and in others the panel may consist of 6,000 divided into twelve term panels of 500.

The system doesn't care if it is working with 200 or 2 million. It is only a matter of the number of zeros. The system has the capability to allow the clerk to move jurors from one panel to another to assist the juror in personal scheduling. The system will also excuse a juror for a period of time if the circuit has a year-long term of service. In developing the system we hoped to make jury service as convenient as possible for the juror and yet not lose the integrity of the philosophy of trial by jury.

3. Technical Aspects of System

The Jury Management system is written in Microsoft Access 97 and can be configured to run entirely on one workstation, Local Area Network or over our state Wide Area Network. Why Access 97? Mainly due to the nature of the project at the time the system was developed. Our main goal was to get a few pilot counties using it and prove it would work. Access 97 was a fast alternative to developing in one of the more formal “grownup” languages and had all the “horsepower” we needed to meet our original goals. Why distributed rather than centralized? At the time the system was designed, our state statutes regarding jury selection and current status of the State WAN made it more desirable. Pending legislation to be introduced during the 2003 South Dakota legislative session will allow us to create our Master jury lists from a centralized voter registration list maintained by the state Secretary of State. The legislation is expected to pass and we will no longer be forced to deal with individual county auditors, each running their own unique computer systems. In preparation for this change, our plans are to re-write this system in Visual Basic and convert to a centralized SQL database by July 2003.

The WorldWide Web enabled portion of the system consists of Automated Server Pages running on the State of South Dakota’s Web server under Microsoft IIS. It utilizes a SQL database that has replication links to the various MS Access databases used throughout the state. This SQL database contains both the data for the jury system itself, plus some of the Web content you see on the site. This allows each county clerk of court to maintain certain portions of his or her own county pages without any assistance from a Webmaster.

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Because of changes in South Dakota statutes, upgrading of the WAN and apparent high acceptance of the Web enabling, we plan to revamp the system somewhat to use a centralized SQL database using essentially the same Access 97 program running on a Citrix server/farm over our state WAN. This will probably occur sometime over the next 24 months.

4. Overview of System

When the Jury Management System is opened, the Main Menu shown below appears on the screen.



4.1 Main Menu Options

The Main Menu options are shown in order of use, as clerks select jurors, summons them, etc.

<i>Setup Panels/Utilities</i>	This menu option is used to Import the Master List of Jurors, setup Grand Jury and Term Panels, archive or delete data, edit data in system tables, and print related reports.
<i>Summons Jurors</i>	This menu option is used to print Juror Summons and to print other related reports.
<i>Jurors</i>	This menu option is used to view and update juror information, record contacts made to a juror, add or edit fees, transfer jurors to a different Term Panel, and print related reports.
<i>Trial Panels</i>	This menu option is used to create and edit trial panels and to print other related reports.
<i>Cases</i>	This menu option is used to enter and view information about individual cases, including Trial Panel assignments, Juror Attendance, Voir Dire selection and charges/verdict information.
<i>Vouchers</i>	This menu option is used to issue vouchers, reprint vouchers, and export voucher data to a file.
<i>Grand Jury Sessions</i>	This menu option is used to enter Grand Juror attendance and Voir Dire selection information.
<i>Reports</i>	This menu option shows a listing of all the reports and the screen from which they can be run.
<i>Exit the Database</i>	This menu option is used to close the database and Microsoft Access.

4.2 Setup Panels/Utilities

The Panel Setup/Utilities screen is used to Import the Master List of Jurors, setup Grand Jury and Term Panels, archive or delete data, edit data in system tables, and print related reports.

- To setup panels, go to the main menu and click on “Setup Panels/Utilities.”

When this option is selected from the Main Menu, the screen below appears.



