Shared Interest Group

Court Trends in 2025

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National Association for Court Management
Midyear Conference
Hyatt Regency, Savannah, February 10, 2014
The Surveys
Tell us what YOU Think the Trends Will Be

“Stop Us Before We Kill Again”
Trial Courts Will Have Web Based Information

Highly Likely – Average Probability 1.5 Summer Survey

Web based court systems provide answers to public inquiries about cases and court processes including:

• Calendar information
• Fill-in-the-blanks Forms
• Reference information on the court
Trial Courts Will Use Electronic Recording Systems

Highly Likely – Average Probability 1.6 Summer Survey

Electronic recording becomes the official record for court proceedings which could include either audio or audio and video recording.
Centralized Data Storage

Highly Likely – Average Probability 1.9

Spring Survey

With ever increasing centralization of data storage, input, and transactions, centralized (state) centers for payment of traffic fines, payment of filing fees, payment of restitution, and bail bond payments will become the norm.
Courts Will Increase User Based Revenue

Highly Likely – Average Probability 1.8 Summer Survey

As many cases require more services than others, courts will charge users fees for a variety of specific types of activities based on the resources needed including probation visitation fees, warrant issuance and quash fees, electronic filing fees, public defender recoupment fees, drug testing fees, counseling fees.
Public–Private Courthouse Construction

Equal (50-50) Chance – Average Probability 2.7
Spring Survey

Budgets continue to shrink eventually forcing courts to turn to the private sector for help with revitalizing the physical plant. Courts develop innovative new ways private entities can help fund courthouse construction.
Paper Money Disappears

 Likely – Average Probability 2.3 Spring Survey

The ease of credit, debit, and gift cards along with the electronic funds transfers results in virtually no one having paper money any more. Courts are forced to adapt their financial transactions to exclusively electronic funds transfers of restitution, bail, bonds, fees, and fines payments.
Most Court Hearings are Conducted by Audio–Video

Equal (50-50) Chance – Average Probability 2.7
Spring Survey

Video conferencing continues to increase until most non-dispositive court hearings are held through remote electronic court hearings with parties physically in the courtroom becoming the exception rather than the rule.
Case Complexity Increases

Likely – Average Probability 2.0 Spring Survey

Some types of cases will continue to become more and more complex.
More Accurate Differentiated Caseflow Management

Highly Likely – Average Probability 1.9 Spring Survey

Continued refinements in analysis of case filings, parties, and investigations through multiple regression analysis lead to increasingly accurate predictions of which cases go to trial, how long trials will take, which cases will settle and when. Courts become increasingly able to direct resources to where they will manage cases most effectively and even proactively manage cases that predictions indicate are likely to go to trial.
“Prediction is very difficult, especially if it’s about the future.”

Niels Bohr

“. . . Some days involve putting out fires; others focus on encouraging subordinates and giving the political protection needed for the organization. Some time must be spent envisioning the future.”

Paraphrased from Suzanne James

“Courts desperately need risk taking leaders. Whether they are public or private, organizations that thrive have one common bond: they are spirited and not afraid to take calculated risks.”

Hon. Kevin S. Burke