



# ReadyTech digitises the County Court of Victoria

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County Court of Victoria uses the Ready Case solution to become the first criminal court in Australia to eliminate paper processing.

# Customer overview



Established in 1852 to handle small civil claims, the County Court is now Victoria's principal trial court.

The Court hears both civil and criminal matters from across Victoria, as well as appeals from the criminal jurisdiction of the Magistrates' Court and the criminal and family divisions of the Children's Court. This adds up to more than 12,000 cases a year.

For as long as the legal system has existed in Australia, criminal courts have relied on paper documents and manual processing. In 2014, the County Court of Victoria was no different. Like all other criminal courts across Australia, folders of paper filled with important documents would sit idle lawyers' desks; lawyers would carry copies of manually submitted applications and defence documents to court, and the case files would be carried from the registry office to the judge's chambers for review prior to the hearing.

Unfortunately, the paper trail would only get worse at the court hearings. The judges would grant or refuse the applications from the practitioners with their associated documentation and following the hearing Associates would draft, print and email orders to the interested parties to explain the outcome of the cases. The orders would be placed on the case files by the registry officers who would once again find themselves returning them to the filing room. Managing any deviation, from lost documents to requests for case documents from other jurisdictions could mean weeks of delays.

# The challenge

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Staff at County Court Victoria knew they could gain great benefits if they could digitise their processes. A pilot for an electronic case file took place in the regional Courts, and ReadyTech was engaged to design and implement an electronic lodgement solution to complement the electronic court file. This included an external lodgement portal and lodgement notification generation.

# The solution

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ReadyTech worked closely with the court to design and build the solution, which went live in May 2015.

The new system enables lawyers who are registered with the State Legal Services Board to file electronic documents against criminal cases. The system supports all criminal case documents for prosecution and defence practitioners. The system is seamlessly integrated with the court's 20 year old Unix based system (Case Listing Management System) and the piloted electronic document management system.

The new, digital process operates as follows:

- Authorised practitioners can login to an easy-to-use portal 24/7, to file court documents from their desktop, tablet or smartphone
- They select the cases against which they wish to file, then submit documents such as police summaries, subpoenas, applications for bail, plea submissions, case notices etc.
- The system automatically accepts certain document types. Other types require court approval prior to being stamped and electronically returned to the filing party
- The system automatically notifies the user of success or failure of the filing via email. Users can also view the history of their filed documents
- The eFiling system updates the case management system, and loads the document to the document management system for electronic storage.

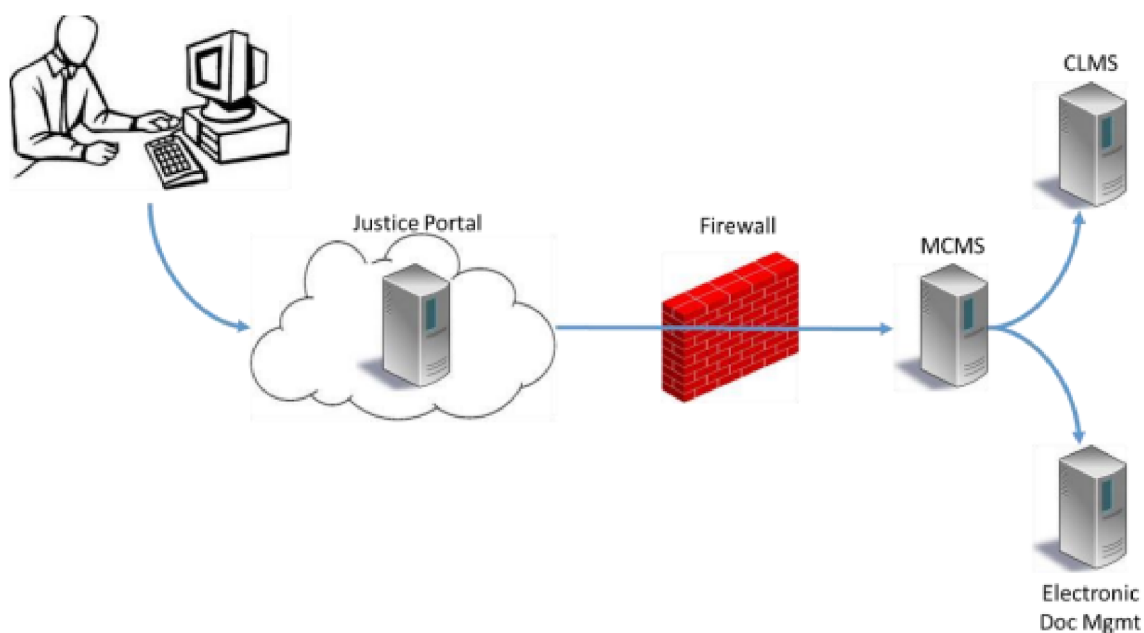


Figure 1 Overview of the Justice Portal and MCMS integration with the County Court of Victoria, Australia

# The result



The new solution makes the County Court of Victoria the first criminal court in Australia to eliminate paper processing and manual workflows from end-to-end.

This has delivered great benefits for the court including:

- Huge reduction in manual work for court staff
- No more lost documents and delays
- Less errors

The lawyers and other practitioners also benefit from:

- Now able to file 24/7
- No more trips to the registry with urgent documents
- No more paperwork
- Saving time and money

ReadyTech is currently working with Court Services Victoria to extend the system to support additional functionality such as:

- eFiling and Online Dispute Resolution for civil cases
- “Smart” court orders
- Case calendaring
- Digital communication between the court and court users
- Expanding to other Victorian Jurisdictions

The ReadyTech Court Management System offers a range of configurable features to suit any court process.



[eFiling] was a critical step in the County Court's journey to becoming truly paperless. It enabled us to realise the full potential of ... our electronic document management system by allowing practitioners to file documents directly into the relevant case file.

It is an accessible, easy to use system which the profession have taken up with enthusiasm. We now have accountability of who filed what document and when, all documents are named in accordance with a clear court standard, all documents are filed in the right case file and now any judge can see the document in the file from their chambers virtually straight after it has been filed.”



*To find out more about Ready Case, visit [readycase.io](https://readycase.io)*