

# SUCCESS STORY

## HMCTS & CPS

Driving Digital Transformation



The overarching vision for the Criminal Justice System (CJS) in the UK is that it will be fully digital by 2020. This will enable new ways of working that will strip costs out of the system, improve efficiency and effectiveness, enable more joined-up working in justice, and provide better access for citizens.

### Background

The current ICT landscape of systems within HMCTS was designed and built around business processes and technologies that are at least 15 years old. The Criminal Justice System Common Platform (CJS CPP) and System Efficiency Programmes (CJS EP) are joint initiatives between the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) to deliver IT-enabled business.

### Digital Transformation

Sopra Steria's onsite integrated, co-located project team at HMCTS has been working in collaboration with HMCTS staff and other partners to deliver digital transformation within the Criminal Justice System via the HMCTS Court Store application: a new digital repository and document management system primarily for use within the Magistrates' Courts.

The principal objective of this project is to deliver a data store that is accessible from different devices and by individuals across the Criminal Justice System, and is capable of storing both structured and unstructured data. The Court Store project is crucial for HMCTS to be able to move away from the reliance on paper, and towards working digitally in the court room; in line with GDS principles the system is being delivered in an Agile way.

### About HMCTS

HM Courts & Tribunals Service is an agency of the Ministry of Justice that is responsible for the administration of the criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales and non-devolved tribunals in Scotland and Northern Ireland. It provides for a fair, efficient and effective justice system delivered by an independent judiciary.

### About the CPS

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is a Government Department responsible for prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police and other investigative authorities, in England and Wales.

## Solution

Agile working is new to Whitehall and has involved a massive cultural shift. Sopra Steria has been supporting the client on their journey towards Agile, introducing them to this very different way of working, bringing innovative solutions and experience from other Agile deliveries.

As part of the Discovery phase Sopra Steria spent time with the product manager (a person from within the business who embodies the product or system being developed) and stakeholders e.g. visiting a courtroom and seeing the back office process to understand how those working within the system went about their daily tasks. There was a huge reliance on paper documents, all of which need to be filed, stored and later destroyed or archived, making the process costly, inefficient, difficult to manage and location-dependent.

Professionals in the courtroom were often presented with printed information related to cases just prior to entering the courtroom, leaving them little time to act on it. Making this information available ahead of time digitally will massively increase efficiency and improve the service being delivered to victims, witnesses and others involved with the Criminal Justice System.



## Agile Delivery

Using the Agile sprint-based methodology Scrum enabled us to place the Product Manager at the heart of the decision-making process. Following an open, inclusive delivery approach enabled the creation and prioritisation of functionality in collaboration with the Customer Team (critically the Product Manager and Subject Matter Experts who came from the business side). Sopra Steria's architects also worked closely with the CJS Efficiency and Common Platform programmes and Information Assurance bodies to meet the security and performance requirements and ensure architectural fit with the CJS Common Platform principles.

### About the CJS Common Platform and Efficiency Programmes

The aim of the Criminal Justice System Common Platform Programme (CJS CPP) is to transform the HMCTS and CPS businesses by implementing new ways of working that are location and building independent. Evidence and information will be entered once, shared electronically and accessed via any device based on the role (defendant, prosecutor, judiciary, witness, court clerk etc.) at the right time in the life of the case. Paper will be removed from the Criminal Justice System, delivering better, swifter justice.

In parallel to the CJS CPP, the Criminal Justice System Efficiency Programme (CJS EP) focuses predominantly on delivering business change and hardware to the courts i.e. in-court WiFi and Magistrate Tablet devices to enable secure digital collaboration within courts.

The CJS Common Platform and Efficiency Programmes involve a range of component projects, largely delivered with third party technology partners and suppliers, and are completely underpinned by Government Digital Service (GDS) design principles.



### Focus on users

Putting in place a consistent and constant user feedback loop is key to a successful digital delivery: it enables the design to be flexible to ensure that user needs always remain at the heart of the development. For the initial (alpha) prototype the client wanted to demonstrate as much functional capability as possible in the new system in order to gather user feedback from court rooms around the country. Sopra Steria ran a number of usability GDS-compliant workshops to understand the way that users interact with the system in context, so that their feedback could be evaluated and then incorporated back into the build, as the system was being developed.

### Multi-Disciplinary Teams

This project required a truly flexible and integrated multi-disciplinary team with varied skill sets. The Sopra Steria team was very fluid throughout the lifecycle of the project, to ensure the right skills were always available and that the client got the best out of everyone involved in the project. Our experts were involved in different stages of the project in specific areas such as User Experience, Dev-ops, Architecture and Test Automation.

The client also worked with other technology partners on this programme as “one team” and collaboration and partnership behaviours have been critical to the success of the project.

“ We cannot underestimate just how far the Criminal Justice system has already come in its digital journey. Across the country we have Court Staff, Magistrates, Judges, Police Officers and Advocates routinely sharing and presenting cases digitally. This progress has been feasible as a result of the strong commercial and public sector partnerships throughout the programme. ”

Court Store Programme Director

### Open Source and Cloud

In alignment with GDS principles, all the components in the solution are Open Source products - some enterprise level Open Source, others community Open Source. In addition, the deployment model chosen for Court Store has been a Cloud Infrastructure, and the solution included fully automated regression testing and deployments to the chosen infrastructure.

## What has been delivered so far?

Sopra Steria has delivered HMCTS's Court Store application. This new document management system was successfully rolled out nationally at the end of March 2016 and enables:

- Automated receipt of case paperwork from the CPS
- Direct access to the documents relating to the case for the Legal Adviser
- Documents to be shared with Bench members using tablet devices
- Role-based access for other authorised Criminal Justice practitioners
- Robust data housekeeping and archiving capability

## Benefits so far

The new electronic document management system is already delivering benefits to CJS staff in the Early Adopter Areas including:

- **improved efficiency** - with the automation of a number of in-court processes, the reduction of administrative overhead and the replacement of documents with a single data store
- **improved quality** - greater transparency and accuracy provided by a single accurate view of information for all parties
- **a more modern workplace** - via an easy-to-use digital system that is responsive to the business needs

## Did you know?

Sopra Steria was the digital delivery partner behind the first live GDS 'exemplar', Student Loans Company, and continues to deliver real value to Government through user centric design and location aware techniques, 'Open' by default, Agile delivery methodologies and innovative commercial models. We also actively support industry forums and open source communities across the UK.

“My belief is that success has been down to everybody's contribution and the skills and knowledge of the team as a whole have enabled Court Store to be a great success. It has been my pleasure working alongside such a talented Sopra Steria Team and I have myself learnt so much along the way.”

Product Manager



Sopra Steria, European leader in digital transformation, provides one of the most comprehensive portfolios of end to end service offerings in the market: Consulting, Systems Integration, Software Development and Business Process Services. Sopra Steria is trusted by leading private and public organisations to deliver successful transformation programmes that address their most complex and critical business challenges.

Sopra Steria  
+44 (0)370 600 4466  
info.uk@soprasteria.com  
[www.soprasteria.co.uk](http://www.soprasteria.co.uk)

SS010V01

