

South African OCJ implements digital justice system

South Africa is implementing paperless digital courtrooms across the country after selecting CaseLines - a global provider of digital evidence management - which will allow judges and lawyers to work in a secure online environment. The digital system will save costs of copying and transporting paper files, while at the same time removing the risk of losing or misplacing files.



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Chosen by the South African Office of the Chief Justice (OCJ), CaseLines is a tool that will help meet the OCJ's vision for a single, transformed and independent judicial system with integrity and protection for all. The software, which is initially to be used in all civil litigation cases across South Africa, will eliminate the need for paper in court by introducing an entirely digital platform. The software's tools allow the creation and presentation of a fully digital bundle including multi-media evidence; collaboration tools for enhanced pre-trial preparation and secure role validated videoconferencing for virtual hearings.

Today, legal professionals in South Africa travel long distances to access case material. Judges as far as 1000km away in Pretoria can be called to Cape Town at unsocial hours just to review legal documents for urgent cases. This process incurs considerable time and cost. CaseLines provides a digital solution to this challenge, helping to increase efficiency and security surrounding legal proceedings.

The opportunity was presented by CaseLines' South Africa reseller Tirisian Tech Solutions, who will provide local implementation services, training and support, over the lifecycle of the contract.

Judge Edwin Molahlehi, in the high court of Gauteng said: “One of the OCJ’s objectives is to eliminate financial and practical barriers to justice. By adopting CaseLines, South African courts will become more efficient and processes such as physical filing will become obsolete. This will make a huge difference to both judges and litigants and will bring us closer to achieving access to justice for all citizens.”

Paul Sachs, chief technology officer and founder of CaseLines, said: “In many countries the use of paper bundles in the court room can lead to problems when evidence is ‘misaid’, and justice is compromised. The introduction of a digital evidence system removes this possibility from the justice system, something we are humbled to be a part of.”

CaseLines is already delivering paperless hearings for lawyers and courts around the world, including the UK and the Common Market for Eastern and South Africa (COMESA). It provides a secure and easy-to-use cloud-based service to collaboratively produce, present and review high quality professional trial bundles. The platform continues to make the delivery of justice even more efficient and is bringing the legal system firmly into the digital age.

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