

NEWS RELEASE

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Arizona Superior Court in Cochise County Honored by National Association for Court Management

Bisbee, Arizona-The National Association for Court Management (NACM) awarded the Cochise County Court for implementing remote court reporting. It was recently named as one of the ten best technology solutions at the NACM annual conference held in Pittsburgh, Pa..

The courts in Cochise County, like many courts are faced with the challenge of creating a record of court events that must be covered per rule and statute with certified court reporters. With few people entering the field of court reporting and a string of retirements, the court found itself in a crisis. The court experienced daily challenges meeting coverage needs with staff and freelance reporters.

Court Administrator Eric Silverberg and his staff searched for a solution that would increase the supply of qualified reporters. In 2014, he learned of a new company, Revotext LLC, that was formed specifically to address this challenge. Revotext, LLC provides remote court reporting services to courts. Their technology allows certified reporters who may be thousands of miles away to connect through a virtual private network (VPN) and the internet to the courtrooms. The reporter can view and hear all of the parties in the courtroom. The audio record is captured in the courtroom and is also safeguarded in remote locations. The judicial office is provided with a real time text feed of the proceedings on a tablet. The judge can annotate and save this feed for later review. The judge is also provided with a draft transcript a couple days later.

The first pilot was in a dependency courtroom presided over by Judge Terry Bannon. With the success of the pilot, this courtroom is now in full production and a second courtroom will join the program in August, 2016. Already, this program has proven its value and has reduced the need for the court to hire freelance reporters, reduced the necessity of rescheduling court due to reporter unavailability, and has reduced the stress of staff reporters and those who must recruit and schedule reporters. The judge is happy to have guaranteed access to reporters as well as the availability of text feeds.

Cochise County is the first trial court in the United States to implement this technology. This project is successful and became a reality because of many people and organizations working together in partnership. First, the willingness of the court to try a new and untested technology. Second, the willingness of the County Board of Supervisors to provide funding and technical and logistical support. Third, the willingness of Judge Bannon to try out a technology with no iron clad assurance of success. Finally, the willingness of Revotext to try this product in a rural location and to work with Commercial Audio/Video Integrator, ExhibitOne based in Phoenix, Az. to install and configure the solution.

The National Association for Court Management is one of the largest organizations in the world dedicated to advancing the practice of court management.

Cochise County, established in 1881, is located in the Southeastern part of Arizona at the International border of Mexico and spans more than 4 million acres. It is home to 130,000 residents and nearly 300,000 visitors each year. It includes the historic cities of Bisbee, Benson, Douglas, Tombstone and Willcox. The city of Sierra Vista is home to historic Fort Huachuca, an active Army installation. The County has jurisdiction over tax assessments, health and social services, solid waste, elections, and floodplain issues throughout the County. It also has responsibility for courts, highway improvements, law enforcement, schools, libraries, and planning and zoning in the unincorporated areas. Visit www.cochise.az.gov for more information.