

# 101

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## Good Reasons for Using an ASP



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### What is an ASP?

ASP is an abbreviation for Application Service Provider. It is a company that puts an application, like PRIME - Clients Case Management (PRIME), up on the Internet and allows people to use it for a fee. It allows a legal aid office to outsource their computer needs and get back to what they are best at, representing clients.

PRIME is a computerized case management system that tracks cases for legal aid, law school clinics, and pro bono offices that represent low-income people. The ASP version of PRIME is located in an extremely secure data center that is accessed over the Internet. Your computers become thin clients when using the case management software.

The ASP version of PRIME is:

**Secure**  
**Economical**  
**Easy**  
**Powerful**  
**Flexible**

### Secure

The information at the data center is actually much safer than it is in your own office. This is why:

1. Your database is backed up on tape on a daily basis.
2. The backup tapes are stored off-site in a vault.
3. Backups are transported in metal boxes with seals by a courier service.
4. There is redundancy built into the hard drive systems.

5. Usage and access to the database are monitored 24 hours a day.
6. There is intrusion protection.
7. There is 24-hour physical security at the data center.
8. The facility uses biometrics to identify people who attempt access. Only if they are approved can then get in.
9. There is fire protection.
10. Virus protection is monitored and updated regularly.
11. Employees' backgrounds are checked for criminal records before being hired.
12. Cleaning service employees' backgrounds are checked for criminal records before being hired.
13. A firewall is in place to prevent unauthorized traffic.
14. Venture Technologies' data center is a Tier 1 facility, which requires passing stringent tests.
15. No data leaves the data center. The workstation sends mouse moves and keystrokes. It receives pixel data to construct an image on your monitor.
16. Even the above information going over the Internet is encrypted.
17. A backup of the data (in a Microsoft Access format) can be downloaded to your local hard disk once a week.
18. The data center provides enhanced security and redundancy that you couldn't afford in your own office.
19. Your database will not be "marooned" on broken hard drives or "lost at sea" on computers that have been stolen
20. The data center is more dependable than a typical wide area network, being available for use more than 99% of the time.
21. If your Internet Service Provider goes down, you can use an office or home dial up connection, such as MSN, ATT or AOL to access your data.
22. The data center is inspected and monitored by third-party evaluation companies.
23. There is a password to access the ASP.

24. There is a password to get into the database.
25. The ASP password is changed periodically.
26. You own your data.

## Economical

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Studies show that offices using ASPs save money. In evaluating your savings it is important to look at the total cost of ownership (TCO) of operating your computers.

*With an ASP, you DON'T need:*

27. To buy a SQL server.
28. To hire anyone with SQL server knowledge.
29. To buy SQL licenses.
30. To buy a Citrix Server or Servers.
31. To hire anyone with Citrix XP knowledge.
32. To buy Citrix XP software.
33. To upgrade your computers, since the speed of the system is independent of the workstation using it.
34. To buy Microsoft software licenses.
35. Upgrade your hardware to run Windows 2000 or XP (which is what the database runs on at the data center).
36. To buy and setup backup hardware, backup software, and tapes.
37. To spend time backing up, rotating and storing the tapes, and testing the backup.
38. To figure out load balancing within servers in your office.
39. To find a safe, locked, secured room with air conditioning to house your servers.
40. Bigger bandwidth coming into the main office, since each office communicates with the data center. No one office acts as the compilation point for all the others.
41. To provide dual data lines from multiple providers into your main office to deal with outages that might occur to one.
42. Routers and dedicated lines. All you need is adequate access to the Internet.

43. A team of engineers debugging the latest version of Windows, Citrix XP, SQL or how they interact with each other. Venture Technologies has that team working for you.
44. To staff a help desk.
45. A Diesel generator.
46. Battery backups.
47. To install a fire suppression system.

*You also save in other ways.*

48. There is an extremely short setup time. You and your staff are not tied up for six months getting things working.
49. There is a low cost to get up and running
50. An ASP causes reduced overall costs for both management and hardware.
51. Bandwidth requirements are kept to a minimum, 12 to 20K per user.
52. Your application costs become predictable. This makes budgeting much easier.
53. The ASP compensates for lack of internal IT resources. If you don't have highly skilled computer people, you don't need to hire them.
54. Extend the useful life of your old computers. Replace them three years after you normally would.
55. Buy new inexpensive desktop or laptop computers with no performance penalty. The speed of PRIME depends on the equipment at the data center.
56. Pull old computers out of the closet and start using them again.
57. Expensive hardware and software experts don't sit idle for long periods of time waiting for calls when things are working correctly.
58. Attorneys and administrators can go back to doing their normal jobs, rather than trying to be an IT department.
59. Other high-end applications that you might not otherwise afford are now within reach.
60. Complex applications usually require support for both the application (PRIME) and the database (Microsoft SQL).

Eliminate the need to support the database.

61. Eliminate the worry of or liability for illegally pirated software existing on workstations.

## Easy

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The ASP version of PRIME is actually easier to install and work with than the normal version. This is because the work is done for you.

62. When your data is ready, we can set you up in a day.
63. Venture Technologies can set you up with all your applications on an ASP, not just case management. You can add email, word processing, accounting and other applications that wouldn't be affordable to buy and support.
64. In a totally ASP-based system, the only software required on the user's desktop is a Web browser. This would totally eliminate the need to manage client software desk-by-desk.
65. Venture Technologies can arrange to provide you with connectivity to the Internet if you need it.
66. All you need to run PRIME ASP is a computer that supports an Internet Browser. PRIME ASP will run on Windows, Linux, Unix, Macintosh and even Windows CE.
67. Upgrades are easy. Changes can be made to your system from our offices in Atlanta or at the ASP.
68. Data entry error checking is easy. Check data entry daily or weekly from your own office.
69. Avoid the search every two years for experienced hardware and software people to replace ones who left for higher paying jobs.
70. Escape the pain and challenge of installing and managing a Wide Area Network (WAN).

71. Almost totally eliminate application maintenance tasks. Take the time you would have used learning SQL and Citrix and use it to train your staff on how to use case management. Use the time freed up to use case management information to manage, rather than fiddling with hardware and operating systems.
72. Be worry free about server and workstation setup. (Did the backup really work, and should I test it?)
73. Dial-up connections will work for one or two people.
74. KCW can help you with data changes without having to visit your office.
75. Guaranteed performance and uptime.
76. There are no additional development, testing, or deployment procedures for other individual applications. These can be 'turned on' in a day.

## Powerful

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PRIME ASP has all the features of the normal version and more. Having it on an ASP makes it even more powerful.

77. Your case management runs on extremely fast computers at the data center. As time goes by, these data center computers will be upgraded without you even knowing it.
78. PRIME ASP has all the powerful features of the normal PRIME program, and more.
79. Use case management from any device, at any location through the Internet.
80. Add additional applications that are just as easy to access over the Internet.
81. Access case management from visitation sites, senior centers, at home or even on the road.
82. Use your time to improve your focus on what case management does, rather than maintenance and installation.
83. Training and support can be handled centrally using "shadowing." This means we can take over a computer and show the user what they need to do, even if the user is on the other side of the country.
84. Eliminate the need for visiting each office and desktop to troubleshoot or install updates.
85. There are no WAN servers in the central or branch offices, so having a technical person on staff travel around to maintain them is not necessary. Your technical staff can concentrate on how the software works and helping advocates, rather than traveling.
86. The available power expands to match the size of your data (there is scalability).
87. The speed of the application is almost completely independent of the equipment being used by the staff member.
88. Use your freed up time to use case management for strategic objectives.
89. Eliminate disk or email transfers of data from branch offices.
90. The system uses the industrial strength Microsoft SQL Database.
91. The more complex technology tasks a legal services office takes on, the more they jeopardize their ability to represent clients. Legal Aid offices should focus on what they do best, representing clients.

## Flexible

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One important reason offices purchase PRIME is that it is very flexible. Putting it on an ASP makes it easier to utilize this flexibility.

92. PRIME ASP can be modified and adjusted just like the standard version.
93. You can have custom queries.
94. You can have custom reports.
95. You can have custom 'special program' tables and intake sheets.
96. Expansion of storage, users or speed is fast and easy and invisible.
97. Customizations to the program need to be done to only one 'front-end'.

98. Once customizations are completed, they are automatically sent out to users in the evening.
99. Load balancing works invisibly.  
Underused servers can pick up the work of servers that are being heavily used.
100. Improvements and lessons learned by one legal services program using the ASP are shared among all of them.
101. An experienced computer responsible people can be given extensive rights to customize and administer their version.
102. Major upgrades to new versions of the program can be handled without an on-site visit or mailing the database on a CD.
103. Downtime for upgrades is minimized.
104. Cases can be transferred to other legal aid programs.

Please contact us for current pricing.



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