Discussion Paper: E-filing Service Provider Model

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February 2002

This text is being published thanks to the collaboration of the Office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada
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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

In response to the federal government's commitment to provide electronic access to government services by 2004, the Federal Court of Canada and Supreme Court of Canada submitted Government Online (GOL) Pathfinder project proposals in the area of E-Filing in the Courts. Project proposals were rated on the degree to which they advanced the GOL vision in their exploration of alternative approaches to the secure delivery of citizen-focused electronic services that integrate information sources across organizations and across jurisdictions. Both projects were approved as submitted.

Each proposal approached the subject of E-Filing from a different perspective. The Federal Court proposal focused on exploring standards that would enable the development of E-Filing solutions with potential application in any court that adopted the standard. The Supreme Court of Canada proposal expanded their existing E-Filing efforts to include the exploration of an alternative business model that would provide private sector hosted E-Filing services for courts across Canada. Despite the divergent approaches, these projects have rapidly converged around the exploration of a conceptual model for a standards based E-Filing Service Provider (EFSP) market, which could provide secure, low cost E-Filing services to legal practitioners in Canada.

1.2 Conceptual Model

EFSPs could potentially provide a common E-Filing/document management platform that would interface with individual court case management and records management systems. They could provide single window access for the initiation of cases and filing of documents into multiple courts, and across multiple jurisdictions. In addition, filed documents and decisions could be accessed from the service provider, providing single window access to the consolidated digital case file from trial court to final appeal.

Proponents of this model site many advantages, including:

- The cost, risk, and benefits of such a system could be shared across the entire community, providing an affordable approach to electronic service delivery for all jurisdictions.
- It provides for the seamless flow of cases between jurisdictions.
• It provides for a comprehensive cross-linked digital warehouse of decisions, transcripts, factums, summaries, and in process information not currently available.

• It promotes the consistent treatment of key issues relating to privacy, security, copyright, etc.

• It facilitates access for litigants by providing a common interface and single registration for the initiation of cases and filing of documents, regardless of court or jurisdiction.

1.3 Traditional vs. Internet Enabled E-Filing

The EFSP model is a significant departure from traditional E-Filing models in that it leverages the ability of governments to create a market for the delivery of low cost E-Filing services to legal practitioners in Canada. Traditional models provide E-Windows into current court operations. This approach focuses on the operational requirements of an individual court, resulting in duplication of costs, and disparity of approaches across the system, and discrete islands of information within each court or jurisdiction. The Internet provides an opportunity for service providers to intermediate in the relationship between courts and litigants. Service providers add value by sharing the cost of the service across a much broader community, ensuring a consistent approach, providing single window access to a broader information base, and relieving the courts of the complexities and expense of developing and supporting an electronic filing service.

1.4 Standards as a Key Enabler

For this to be technically feasible however, multiple courts must be capable of accepting and processing information entered through an EFSP as part of a filing. The LegalXML’s Court Filing 1.0 standard being considered by the Electronic Filing Project Advisory Committee (EPAC), a consortium of federal and provincial organizations under direction of the Federal Court, provides this necessary glue layer for the EFSP model. The standard is a key enabler in the creation of an EFSP market. Private sector interests wishing to compete in this market need only develop a Court Filing 1.0 compliant E-Filing application to act as an E-Filing gateway to courts that have adopted the Court Filing 1.0 standard.
1.5 **Private Sector Partnerships**

With sufficient support from the courts, a potential investment opportunity for private sector partners interested in positioning as an EFSP within the judicial system is created. Given the specific mix of highly specialized skill sets, as well as the risk and capital cost involved in such a project, a private sector partnership may have significant advantages:

- The financial risk, including capital and operational costs would be born by the private sector, resulting in a low-cost solution for the courts. Private sector partners focus on electronic services, while the courts focus on managing, processing, hearing and deciding cases.
- Private sector expertise in the development and operation of electronic services.
- Market forces will drive cost/quality improvements and service innovation.

A consortium of private sector interests (Quicklaw Inc., SOQUIJ, and Juricert Services) have committed to the development of an EFSP prototype based on the LegalXML Court Filing 1.0 standard. The prototype will validate the technical feasibility of the EFSP model, and assist these companies in assessing the business case for further investment. The Federal Court of Canada and Supreme Court of Canada have agreed to participate in the demonstration of this service with a targeted completion date of March 31, 2002.

1.6 **Feasibility Report**

Consideration of key policy issues will be undertaken through a feasibility analysis that will be conducted in parallel with the development of the prototype. The *Feasibility Report* will consider issues like security, privacy, and copyright that arise in the transition to E-Filing, and examine these issues in the context of the EFSP model. The report will include academic, practitioner, and judicial perspectives, and will be made freely available to interested parties. The target date for the report is March 31, 2002.

It is hoped that these efforts will provide an objective assessment of the feasibility of an EFSP market for the provision of secure, low cost E-Filing services to legal practitioners in Canada. For such a market to exist however, there has to be sufficient support from the Courts. It is therefore crucial that the Judiciary and court administrators be well informed of the potential benefits as well as the key issues that accrue from this approach, so as to provide every opportunity to consider the EFSP model as a potential E-Filing solution within their jurisdiction.
2 Background

The Supreme Court of Canada and Federal Court of Canada submitted separate project proposals for funding as Pathfinder Projects under Government Online. Both projects were approved for funding as submitted.

The Pathfinder Project funding provided an opportunity for federal government departments to explore approaches to the secure delivery of citizen-focused government services that integrate information across organizations and across jurisdictions. The Federal Court project focused on exploring information management standards to promote the development of commercial off-the-shelf E-filing applications, and data-interchange between jurisdictions. The Supreme Court Project focused on exploring the feasibility of relying on private sector service providers for the provision of e-filing services for Canadian courts. Despite their divergent approaches, these projects have converged around the exploration of a conceptual model for a standards-based E-filing Service Provider (EFSP) market, which could provide secure, low cost e-filing services to legal practitioners in Canada. These projects will conclude March 31, 2002.
3 Project Partners

In the context of this project, a consortium of public and private sector interests have entered into a cooperative agreement for the joint exploration of the technical feasibility of the EFSP model. The project partners include the Supreme Court of Canada, Federal Court of Canada, Quicklaw Inc., SOQUIJ, and Juricert Services Inc. The project partners have been brought together by a common interest in:

- Ensuring the availability of secure, low cost e-filing services to legal practitioners
- A concern with the problems arising from the isolated development of E-filing services as an extension of the operations of each court
- A recognition of the importance of information management standards to the development of commercial E-filing solutions and the interchange of data
- A recognition of the potential value in the application of emerging e-commerce business models for the provision of E-filing services

There will be no exchange of monies or other consideration between partners in the context of this project. The cooperative agreement forms the basis of understanding for the project partners, and is based on the following principles:

- The approach should not result in an exclusive or protected market for QL or SOQUIJ, but rather should enable the development of a competitive market space for the provision of E-Filing services in Canada.
- The cost of developing the system would be born by QL & SOQUIJ
- The Courts would only cover the cost of interfacing their case management systems with the E-Filing prototype system
• SCC and Fct would retain the right to use, and QL & SOQUIJ agree to grant royalty-
free licences for use of the middleware software developed as part of the Prototype to
other federal and provincial courts and tribunals in Canada¹.

There is no commitment from the courts beyond the life of this project, and their participation in
the testing and demonstration of the technical feasibility of the EFSP model. The outcomes of this
project will be broadly shared with all public and private sector interests. It is hoped that these
efforts will promote the development of an E-filing service provider market which will provide
secure, low cost e-filing services to legal practitioners in Canada.

¹ The granting of royalty-free licences for use of the middleware software developed as part of the
prototype to other federal and provincial courts and tribunals in Canada is subject to the following
conditions as defined in the cooperative agreement:

“[…] provided that the Services Providers have been given equal opportunity by those courts
and tribunals to compete for any contracts or arrangements which those courts and tribunals
award or enter into with private sector service providers for such services as the interface
work between the middleware and the court=s information management systems; the
maintenance of the middleware and storage of any filed documents; the delivery of any filed
documents to the court or tribunal from litigants and counsel; and the posting of any filed
documents on the Internet”.

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Consistent with the *pathfinder* theme, the partners involved in this E-filing initiative are committed to fully exploring the feasibility of this model. This work includes:

- The consideration of Legal XML’s Court Filing 1.0 standard by the *Electronic Filing Project Advisory Committee (EPAC)* – a group of federal departments and agencies under the leadership of the Federal Court.

- The development of an E-filing service prototype jointly funded by the private sector partners based on the Court Filing 1.X standard

- A broad examination of the key issues surrounding the EFSP Model and electronic filing in general by recognized authorities representing Judicial, practitioner, and academic perspectives.

- Raising awareness and understanding of the potential advantages of the EFSP model across jurisdictions

*As pathfinders* however, it should be recognized that this work does not constitute an *endorsement* of the EFSP model, but rather a commitment to the comprehensive and systematic exploration of an alternative approach to E-filing for the purposes of improving our collective knowledge in this area.
When we think of electronic service delivery, we immediately think of the Internet as the communications infrastructure. Add to this the fact that the browser has emerged as the standard for navigating the Internet, and an organization planning to provide access to and deliver services electronically, need only create a web interface to their current operations, and they are in business. We can think of this as using a traditional business model for the delivery of electronic services – essentially, we have created an electronic window into the operations of the business.

To make it all work smoothly however, the new service delivery channel – it’s inputs and outputs – must be integrated within the existing organization. Additional resources, skill sets are hired to manage and maintain the technology for this new channel. More technology, resources and skills are required to manage and support the new electronic client base. And still more technology, resources and skills are required to manage the digital information. Despite the potential gains from streamlining processes we have succeeded in adding considerable cost to the business.

In the private sector, the added costs are offset by closing down or transitioning from traditional means of service delivery to arrive at a viable business case. This scenario is not as easily applied in the public sector, and it is especially difficult in the courts. Given the current fiscal climate, workload increases, and resource constraints most courts operate under, it is difficult to justify the diversion of resources away from core activities like processing, hearing and deciding cases. Without significant increases in operating budgets to support electronic service delivery initiatives (E-filing), the added costs must be financed through the diversion of resources from traditional service delivery mechanisms (in the end doing little to improve access to justice), and/or high service fees that are passed onto the litigants.

This approach to E-Filing however would be in many respects “paving the cow path”. Instead, we need to examine the potential value of applying emerging private sector e-commerce business models for the provision of E-filing services. Similar in the way networking computers within organizations in the mid 80s resulted in a restructuring of those organizations (business process re-engineering) to achieve significant cost/quality advantages, Internet enabled business models
are restructuring entire industries by using the Internet to enable new relationships between organizations to achieve significant cost/quality advantages.
Approaches to E-filing based on traditional business models involve the vertical integration of process layers within each organization in effect creating an *E-Window* into each court’s operations. The components required to achieve this would be consistent across organizations, and would typically include a web interface (E-filing application), document management system for the management of electronically filed documents, and a case management system to track the disposition of cases. The Internet provides the infrastructure to communicate with clients and other business partners.

Each of these layers involves a one-time capital cost, as well as an on-going maintenance cost. Given that the acquisition, development and maintenance costs for the technology, as well as the support costs of an electronic client base would be replicated across the Judicial system, the high cost of this approach would make it difficult for any single jurisdiction to justify an E-filing initiative. If a cost-recovery strategy is employed, the resulting service fees would be prohibitively high and a deterrent to using the system. In addition, we can expect considerable disparity between these systems in terms of user interfaces, authorization procedures, security, computing platforms, and data models resulting in significant obstacles to sharing of data between them.

The Internet is potentially much more than a communications infrastructure however. It is a powerful and disruptive force that is transforming entire industries. While these forces are extremely complex in nature, we can to some degree explain this transformation using the economic principles of *Economies of Scale* and *Focus*.

The principle of *economies of scale* suggests that unit costs will decrease as the volume of production increases. From an E-filing perspective, we can expect transaction costs (filing fees) to decrease, as the volume of filings increase, and accordingly, the lowest costs would be achieved where all filings (across all jurisdictions) were processed on a single platform.

The principle of *focus* suggests that quality is increased and cost is decreased through specialization. In this sense, organizations that attempt to internalize all of their various business functions and service delivery mechanisms ultimately add cost to their business, and sacrifice
quality in other areas – areas that are often core to the business i.e. the processing, hearing and deciding of cases within the courts. Conversely, we can expect better quality and lower cost E-filing services from organizations whose core business is in the delivery of electronic services.

Together, the principle of *economies of scale & focus* provide a powerful framework for understanding the economic advantage of the EFSP model over E-Filing strategies based on traditional business models. Simply put, where enough demand exists for a sufficiently homogenous service, (E-filing) the consolidation of that service on a single *electronic transaction platform* will result in increased quality and decreased cost of service.

### 6.1 EFSP - Economic Advantages

Looking at the EFSP model, the *E-Filing* component that was previously replicated across all courts/jurisdictions is now centrally operated as an E-Filing Service. As a result, we can expect decreased transaction costs and higher quality of service resulting from specialization (focus) and economies of scale. Conversely, the courts could avoid diverting scarce resources from core business areas to cover the development and maintenance of a new service delivery channel.

### 6.2 EFSP - Continuous Cost/Quality Improvements through a Contestable Market

Beyond the notion of consolidation in the EFSP model is the notion of a *contestable market space*. While conceivably some agency of the government could act as an E-Filing service provider, they would be without the benefit of competitive forces. Monopolistic conditions do not produce *client-focus* – competitive conditions do. Arguably in many cases government programming may be the preferred or only vehicle for the provision of services. Where sufficient demand exists, and public interest is not compromised however, the market provides the competitive forces necessary for continuous cost/quality improvements and service innovation. In addition, an investment opportunity is created for private sector interests promoting the development of industry within Canada.
6.3 EFSP - Document Management - Copyright and Privacy

Comparing the traditional E-filing model with the EFSP model, the function of Document Management has been un-bundled, with Document Archival (court of record) services being retained by the courts, and search & retrieval services provisioned by the EFSP. Again, the economic advantages of scale and focus apply here. Far more important however are the advantages that accrue from having single window access to an integrated information base of case-filings across all jurisdictions.

Providing electronic access to case-filings raises concerns over copyright and privacy. While all documents filed in the courts are in the public domain, (and provisions exist for the protection of documents where conditions warrant), it is generally recognized that certain protections of privacy inherent in the burden of searching through hardcopy filings, do not exist in the electronic world. Given the accessibility (single window access), and the powerful search tools available, there is great potential for the misuse of electronic information bases of case-filings. With the public’s concern over individual privacy, it is likely that public access to electronic case files may deter individuals from seeking Justice through the Courts. Conversely however, the notion of an “open court” is fundamental to our concept of justice, and the protection of documents filed in an open court should be by exception, and not by rule.

It may also be the case that copyright exists in the arguments contained in case filings. Providing access to electronic copies of case filings will facilitate (promote) the borrowing of legal arguments from similar cases. Furthermore, such access may constitute an act of publishing, both of which would infringe on the rights of the copyright holder.

The EFSP model has two significant advantages over the traditional model with regard to privacy and copyright. Firstly, service providers can be expected to levy a fee for access to the materials filed on cases. This may be bundled as a subscription fee, or a per transaction basis. The fee constitutes a burden to the access of this material, equivalent in nature to that which exists in a paper based world, deterring the misuse of such material. Secondly, the filing of and subsequent access to documents represents a transaction between the service provider and the practitioners, and issues surrounding copyright would as a result be negotiated between these parties and not the courts.

6.4 EFSP - Movement of Cases within the Judicial System

There exists a significant cost and delay associated with the movement of cases within the system relating to the re-filing of authorities, transcripts, decisions, and related materials.
produced in lower courts. If courts follow a traditional business model strategy in the implementation of E-filing, information management standards will be decided in relative isolation, and these costs and delays will persist and perhaps be further aggravated in the transition to a digital case file. The EFSP model is based on a robust and mature information management standard that will enable service providers to play a crucial role in the interchange of documents between courts. While arguably each court would maintain a primary copy of all documents produced at that stage of the process, a service provider could provide an acceptable copy for reference as a case moves through the system, thereby removing cost and delay related to the transfer of material produced at earlier stages.

6.5 EFSP – Client Perspective

It is essential that any E-Filing strategy consider the client’s perspective. If the system does not provide significant value to the client, they will not use it, resulting in significant expense with little or no gain. We have already dealt with the matter of transaction fees. Unless the courts are in a position to finance the development and operation of an E-Filing system without concern for cost-recovery, the EFSP model is the most attractive approach to providing E-Filing services from a transaction fee perspective. Significant advantages accrue in the EFSP model beyond lower transaction fees however.

If courts follow a traditional business model strategy in the implementation of E-filing, we can expect significant differences in user interfaces, registration, identification and authorization procedures, etc. between courts/jurisdictions. Dealing with these differences translates into higher costs and delays to the litigants. Under the EFSP model, a practitioner could file documents in any court/jurisdiction through a single interface, with a single authorization procedure. While it may be argued that many practitioners work within a single jurisdiction, it is generally recognized that the practice of law in Canada is trending towards the development of areas of expertise which is being applied across jurisdictions, as opposed to practice based on traditional jurisdictional boundaries.
Extending the EFSP Model

Extensibility is a key factor in any service automation strategy. Extensibility refers to the ability to leverage the investment in a service platform to pursue other valuable service automation opportunities in the future. Again, from a client perspective, the EFSP model provides significant automation opportunities in the areas of records management and litigation support. Many small to medium sized law firms in Canada do not have the cost structure to support automated records management or litigation support systems. As a result, paper-based procedures and/or poorly maintained electronic systems are used to support these practices. Records management and litigation support services are a natural extension of the EFSP model, and provide a cost-effective solution to a growing problem for practitioners in small and medium sized firms. As courts are unlikely to provide services in these areas, E-Filing strategies based on the traditional business model do nothing to address this problem.
8 Obstacles to Cross-Jurisdictional Approaches to Service Automation

Discussions surrounding the prospects cross-jurisdictional approaches to service automation have been constrained by the perceived need to first harmonize procedures across jurisdictions. Given that formal and informal procedures have evolved to best fit each particular jurisdictional context, it is generally perceived that the potential savings from joint development would not offset the cost of compromise, implicit in a joint approach. This perceived trade-off remains as long as we view E-Filing as an extension of the operations of a court. When we view E-Filing as a service provided by an intermediary however, the opportunity for a cross-jurisdictional approach emerges. The EFSP model based on the Court Filing 1.X standard provides for court/jurisdiction specific procedures through a court policy data type definition that produces court specific views of the E-Filing system.
9 Public Perception – Independence of Courts

The effect of common approaches and private sector partnerships on public perception is an important factor. A consideration of practices in the Canadian Banking industry however, serves to illustrate how common approaches to electronic service delivery can be achieved without affecting the identity or independence of the participating institutions.

In 1998, e-route inc. was created by six of Canada’s leading financial institutions – Canada Trust, CIBC, Mouvement des Caisses Desjardins, National Bank of Canada, Royal Bank of Canada, and TD Bank as a joint electronic billing settlement solution. Six fiercely competitive financial institutions shared the costs and risks associated with developing a common electronic service delivery infrastructure, while preserving their corporate identity. Each institution maintained its unique public identity by applying its own branding strategy without concern for the underlying ESD infrastructure. Similarly, the Courts, and any other stakeholder involved in the Justice process, are capable of participating in a common ESD infrastructure without loss of identity, by managing public perception through their individual branding strategy, similar to the way they currently do through their individual Web presence.
10 The Electronic Envelope & Courier

An E-filing service should provide a method for the secure transmission of digital documents between litigants and the courts. Similar to a courier service, the secure transmission need not concern itself with the contents or format of the digital document being transmitted. Rather, the information required to complete the transaction is limited to source and destination addressing, identification of subject matter, time stamping, 3rd party notification, and instructions on how to process the contents. As such, an E-filing system is properly concerned with creating an electronic envelope, and not an electronic file.

The distinction is important because there is great dissimilarity between courts in document format requirements, as well as in the word processing tools used by practitioners to create them, and this is often presented as an obstacle to a cross-jurisdictional approach. The electronic envelope provides a method for secure transmission of digital documents without encountering the issues surrounding disparate document formats. The metaphor is also useful in pointing out from a common-sense perspective the questionability of creating a custom “courier service” for each court/jurisdiction.
11 Private Sector Investment Opportunity

With sufficient support from the courts, a potential investment opportunity for private sector partners interested in positioning as an EFSP within the judicial system is created. Given the specific mix of highly specialized skill sets, as well as the risk and capital cost involved in such a project, a private sector partnership may have significant advantages:

- The financial risk, including capital and operational costs would be borne by the private sector, resulting in a low-cost solution for the courts.
- Private sector partners focus on electronic services, while the courts focus on managing, processing, hearing and deciding of cases.
- Private sector expertise in the development and operation of electronic services.
- Market forces will drive cost/quality improvements and service innovation

A consortium of private sector interests (Quicklaw Inc., SOQUIJ, and Juricert Services) have committed to the development of an EFSP prototype based on the LegalXML Court Filing 1.0 standard. The prototype will validate the technical feasibility of the EFSP model, and assist these companies in assessing the business case for further investment. The Federal Court of Canada and Supreme Court of Canada have agreed to participate in the testing and demonstration of this service with a targeted completion date of March 31, 2002.
For this to be technically feasible however, multiple courts must be capable of accepting and processing information entered through an EFSP as part of a filing. The Legal XML’s [http://www.legalxml.org](http://www.legalxml.org) Court Filing 1.0 standard being considered by the Electronic Filing Project Advisory Committee (EPAC), a consortium of federal and provincial organizations under direction of the Federal Court, provides this necessary “glue” layer for the EFSP model. The standard is a key enabler in the creation of an EFSP market. Private sector interests wishing to compete in this market need only develop a Court Filing 1.0 compliant E-Filing application to act as an E-Filing gateway to courts that have adopted the Court Filing 1.0 standard.
Positive Network Effects - Reaching Critical Mass

Potential benefits of information systems are often tied to the number of users. Consider e-mail as an example. Being the only user of e-mail has no real benefit. The benefits increase exponentially however as the number of users increase, and as the number of users increase, the demand for the system among potential-users increases as well. The result is a powerful network effect between the adoption rate of a system, and the benefits that accrue. The network effect is exponential in that as the number of users reaches a critical mass (the system is perceived as the de facto standard), the adoption rate increases dramatically. The relationship between Utility and Number of users is represented by Metcalfe’s equation $Utility = Users^2$. The resulting curve defined by Metcalfe’s equation is illustrated to the right.

As Metcalfe’s curve illustrates, if a common approach is to be successful, it must reach a point of critical mass before individual courts commit to an alternative direction. The benefits of the EFSP model begin to accrue exponentially once a critical mass is reached.
14 Conclusion

EFSP’s could potentially provide a common e-filing/document management platform that would interface with individual court case management and records management systems. They could provide single window access for the initiation of cases and filing of documents into multiple courts, and across multiple jurisdictions. In addition, filed documents and published decisions could be accessed from the service provider, providing single window access to the consolidated digital case file from trial court to final appeal.

Proponents of this model site many advantages, including:

- The cost, risk, and benefits of such a system could be shared across the entire community, providing an affordable approach to electronic service delivery for all jurisdictions.

- It provides for the seamless flow of cases between jurisdictions, removing a significant burden in the filing of cases on appeal.

- It provides for a comprehensive cross-linked digital warehouse of decisions, transcripts, factums, summaries, and in process information not currently available.

- It promotes the development of digital standards in the preparation and filing of documents, and publication of decisions.

- It promotes the consistent treatment of key issues relating to privacy, security, copyright, etc.

- It facilitates access for litigants by providing a common interface and single registration for the initiation of cases and filing of documents, regardless court or jurisdiction.

The EFSP model is a significant departure from traditional e-filing models in that it leverages the ability of governments to create a market for the delivery of low cost e-filing services to legal practitioners in Canada. Traditional models provide E-Windows into current court operations, focusing on the operational requirements of an individual court, resulting in duplication of costs, and disparity of approaches across the system, and discrete islands of information within each court or jurisdiction. The Internet provides an opportunity for service providers to intermediate in the relationship between courts and litigants, adding value by sharing the cost of the service.
across a much broader community, ensuring a consistent approach, providing single window access to a broader information base, and relieving the courts of the complexities and expense of developing and supporting an electronic filing service.

For this to be technically feasible however, multiple courts must be capable of accepting and processing information entered through an EFSP as part of a filing. The Legal XML’s Court Filing 1.0 standard being considered by the Electronic Filing Project Advisory Committee (EPAC), a consortium of federal and provincial organizations under direction of the Federal Court, provides this necessary glue layer for the EFSP model. This standards based approach is a key enabler in the creation of an EFSP market. Private sector interests wishing to compete in this market need only develop a Court Filing 1.0 compliant e-filing application to act as an e-filing gateway to courts that have adopted the Court Filing 1.0 standard.

It is hoped that these efforts will provide an objective assessment of the feasibility of an EFSP market for the provision of secure, low cost e-filing services to legal practitioners in Canada. For such a market to exist however, there has to be sufficient support from the Courts. It is therefore crucial that the Judiciary and court administrators be well informed of the potential benefits as well as the key issues that accrue from this approach, so as to provide every opportunity to consider the EFSP model as a potential e-filing solution within their jurisdiction.

Further information is available through the e-filing web site at www.e-filing.ca, http://www.depot-electronique.ca/

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