

Hi everyone and thank you for joining
the Legal Virtual Summit by Verbit.

My name is Tony Sirna.

I'm a Senior Customer Success Manager,
and I work in our legal markets.

Before we get started with the first session,
I just want to review a few things with you.

Today we're going to talk about the future
of digital court reporting,
particularly during these current times with COVID,
and the impact that's had on
the industry across the board.

I'm very excited to have a couple of different sessions
with very accomplished panelists,
representing very different perspectives of the business.

We will have Q&A time
about 10 minutes after each session.

We'll be happy to take your questions.

In addition to that, we will be publishing material
from this presentation for
your review after this session.

Just two quick administrative notes, after the Q/A,
and for the Zoom sessions,
each session has its own Zoom link.

There's a main page that
lists the sessions that you've received.

Once you've finished with that session,

just simply select on the intercession for that link,
and that will bring you right back to it.

We appreciate your time,
and with that, we're going to get into our first session,
which is really looking
at what's going on right now with COVID.

I'd like to take a moment to
introduce our panelists with us.

We have Jim Cudahy,
he's the Chief Executive Officer
for the Speech-to-Text Institute.

Betsy Ertel who's the CEO of SpeedType.

Billy DiMonte, who's founder
and managing partner of Planet Depos,
and Benjamin Jaffe who's

the Digital Training and Development
Manager for BlueLedge. What we're going to do,

is we're going to go to the in the next slide,
and we'll just quickly review the agenda for this topic.

Next slide. Thank you.

We've got five things we're talking about.

It'll be the new normal for
digital depositions after COVID,
the future of the deposition room.

What digital court reporting means for the law firms
and courts as they're the stakeholders in this.

A status update, that'll be session four,

and unveiling live and rough draft digital court reporting which is something Verbit will be bringing to the market.

That's the overall agenda for the entire summit.

Let's get into Session 1.

I wanted to start this with a very quick recap.

A couple of months ago,

Jim Cudahy, Billy DiMonte, myself and some others,

participated in a summit basically a month after

the shutdowns happened particularly in

the New York City and Mid-Atlantic region,

and Boston where we're located from.

It was a very interesting experience.

I think the slide you see is an

analogy for what has happened in

the legal industry and deposition market.

What you're looking at is New York City,

Grand Central where I work.

What you're looking at on the left on the bottom is what

pre-COVID rush hour looked

like the day before we all shutdown.

After the March 22nd stay at

home order in New York, there was nothing there.

It was an eerie experience.

Now, we've come into the phase

reopening in the New York region,

and other states where we have a

very different and very new normal,

which we're learning to adjust to,
and that's where you see keep the social distancing.

If you think about this in terms of
depositions and legal proceedings,

I think it's a great analogy.

You have what happened pre-COVID,
everybody had to quickly adjust to this uncertainty,
and now we're learning how to cope with it.

This whole entire session is going
to be dedicated to that discussion.

Next slide please. A couple of quick facts.

We've been doing some research on it,
and a couple of
interesting statements actually coming
from the court system itself.

There was a testimony in
front of one of the congressional committees,
in which a former

California State and Federal trial judge,
told Congress that this current situation
has opened up the judiciary to completely new technology,
and he doesn't ever expect it
going back to where they were
before because we're learning
how to use it and adopt to that.

You overlay that with the
epidemiological, or the pandemic,

and interesting organization called
the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy
out of University of Michigan,
about two months predicted that
the pandemic will be with us in
some form for 18-24 months,
with these hot spots showing up as they are now.

That has implications for
the industry because we all practice nationally.

What's really happened is,
courts in the legal system were forced to adopt quickly,
some more than others due to regional impact.

The legal system didn't really close.

Aspects of it suspended, certain proceedings suspended,
but it still had to move forward,
which is why it quickly adopted to things
like Zoom and remote proceedings.

Then on top of that,

we have to plan to reopen for
an 18-24 month period as well. Next slide.

Some interesting tidbits from
the literature out there and the reporting.

Ncsn.org,

The National Court Organization reported in a survey,
that now two in three people are
receptive to remote appearances.

Very interesting, and some of you may have seen this.

May 18th in Collin County,

Texas they conducted a remote voir dire.

I think it's one of the first ones that has been done if I'm not incorrect.

You're also seeing where you've had the stipulation to be in person, or the notary would be in person.

Now, at certain courts have gone with motions to compel defense deposition remotely in New Jersey.

Also, another court in New York in a particular case on June 24th, gave an order that said that the proceedings will be remote unless otherwise ordered.

In addition to that, Missouri was I believe, according to this source the 27th state to enact remote notarization.

Significant change, a need to keep justice running, and significant changes to adapt to the current situation.

With that in mind, I'd like to go to one of our first questions. Next slide please.

We can start with Billy, Jim, Ben, Betsy, if you want to contribute.

Real quickly, there was the spring and there's now.

What's one or two words you would use to describe the state of the industry today. Billy?

Yeah. I mean, for us it's really been opportunity.

I mean, really the chance to demonstrate our expertise,
when it comes to technology solutions for
the court reporting industry was key to us.

Because we were demoing that technology,
law firms have been more accepting
to new ways to move cases forward.

We've just become an integral part of the new normal.

So opportunity for me.

Thank you. Jim.

Yeah, I'm going to cheat and say
suspended animation for all the time that we've had,
where we thought we were
coming out of this to some degree,
and were going to reopen.

Everyday you turn on the TV,
and the new normal is level setted once again.

I mean, just see what's happening in
Florida, and Texas, Arizona.

We've redefined the term essential worker,
and not things that we thought of as
just absolutely paramount and had to go on,
things like depositions and
court proceedings they've been as impacted as anybody.

I think that the general concept that we're talking
about that things never really
returning entirely to normal,

I think it's going to be the case.

It's just everything that

has changed over the past three months,

it's amazing how we're still right in the same situation,

and I don't see that changing in the near future.

Thank you. Betsy, anything?

Yes. A quick professional growth period is what I see.

It's a great opportunity to enhance our workforce,

and to train folks to have

more on the professional table here,

and to staff the workplace in

a more I guess concise environment.

We can train everybody the same way

with the online remote options.

Great. Thank you. Finally, Benjamin.

I see growth. I think right now

this is a growth period for the technology,

but also for the industry and the law firms.

We're all growing together,

we're all learning what the new normal is going to be,

but also what the future beyond COVID will look like.

Great. Thank you very much for that.

Let's go to the next slide.

While we're on that topic,

there's something we did want to bring up.

There's this sense that

we were dealing with some type of

stenography shortage prior to COVID.

Business went down,

business is going to start going up again.

We will review in further detail the statistics

behind this because we are very

happy to have a company called Strategy&

doing a presentation for us,

they are part of the PWC network.

But Jim Cudahy, had actually

wrote at one point that annually,

we're looking at about 1,100 stenographers retiring,

while no more than 200 reporters will enter the workforce

Again, great industry, great resources across the board,

but we will come back to and do

have resource limitations and

attrition, this is nothing new.

There are some barriers to new entrants,

and you add on top of that, a potential backlog of cases.

I have a friend of mine who's

a court officer up here in Connecticut,

and they're just still trying to figure out how to handle

the backlog of civil real estate cases they have.

In addition to that, you have

a whole new environment of delivering remote,

which maybe not everybody is prepared for,

and will take people to adapt to.

Given that, I wanted to jump to

our next question. Next slide please.

How does the impact of COVID-19
differ now from what we expected in the spring?

If we can go to the next slide,

I'd like to open this up

to Billy to start, and then go to Jim.

We had a couple of questions here
that we've reviewed before.

The state-by-state complexity,
county-by-county complexity.

What's happening now compared to three months ago,
and what are you seeing? So Billy?

Yeah. In terms of the impact from COVID,

I mean really, in my opinion,

it's coming down to

the companies that are willing to embrace technology,
and that's regardless of platform.

Whether you're using remote applications like Zoom,
or Webex, or Teams,

and regardless of method.

Whether you're a steno, or digital, or voice,

all of those are options on the table,

and none of them are going anywhere.

The shortage is a real thing,

and we're going to need that type of coverage.

The people and companies who are embracing technology,
regardless of those methods and platforms,

are the ones that are going to make
it through these tough times.

Then in terms of how agencies are adapting and
pivoting in terms of
their operations and delivery of the depos.

We've seen a complete pivot to remote.

The majority of depositions
happening right now are happening remotely.

People are working from home,
depositions are being taken by Zoom and Webex, etc.

That's going to be around.

Of course, there's going to be
some in-person depositions occurring,

but for the most part,
at least for the foreseeable future,

and I agree with Jim,
this isn't changing anytime soon.

The coverage is going to need to be there,
and if you're not pivoting to
embrace the technology that's in the market,
you're going to get left behind.

Jim, a few points?

What occurs to me now is these law firms, in particular,
these court systems, are having to
fundamentally change everything that they're doing.

My wife works for an association that has judges as
its members and they are being

told indefinitely, travel was on hold.

They had to cancel a conference that

was to take place next June

already, because none of their judges are going

to be able to travel by

then, the ones that are members of the organization.

How the record is created, whether it's in-person,

whether it's remote, whether it's

steno, whether it's digital,

whether it's voice writing,

I think becomes less relevant

when these law firms and these court systems are

dealing with such massive backlogs

that we've already talked about and otherwise.

So my word of advice for firms would be don't make

things more difficult at a time when

things are already difficult enough for your clients.

Right, thank you very much.

Ben, you have discussed this

previously when we were talking about

this presentation but not only do you have the complexity

of the regional hotspots

and the way different states are handling,

but you've got county by county complexity and you

brought up an example where

you are in Florida about

how with each jurisdiction is different.

For instance, Palm Beach versus other places.

Can you talk to us just a few minutes about that in terms of the current impact?

Yeah, so we're seeing it just very diverse.

It's not Florida, it's everywhere where one jurisdiction next to the other. One is saying, "We're going to hold trials or we're going to start practicing for that" and others are suspending them through the end of the year and it's really up to the Chief Justice or the Chief Judge or whoever is in charge of that court system depending on the county or area of how that's going. And it's also depends on the level of the court.

Sometimes the lower courts are having it or maybe traffic courts are having it online versus others who are not having it like supreme courts or supreme courts are and then local jurisdictions are not.

So really it's depending.

You can't look at it broadly in all areas.

Betsy, can you give your perspective?

Yes, I'm in Orlando,

Florida as well and

I will just have to validate that's the case that Ben has stated because Ben

actually taught me that it is jurisdiction by jurisdiction and it's different across the state depending on who's in charge and who the judge is.

So just validating what Ben said from Florida.

Thank you very much. Also, for the audience on the right, some of you may have seen this, the law firm Perkins Coie has a site on its website, a page that's keeping up with all the various changes regarding to notary laws and stipulations.

We can send you that link,

I think it'll be part of the package we send out after this but it's a great resource to go to for that.

Thank you. Let's go to the next slide.

This slide is predicting a little bit what the new normal looks like in the next 6-12 months.

And I want to go to the next one to start this conversation.

Billy, let's start with you.

It's an in-person industry that changed overnight.

What's it look like from your perspective as an agency owner for the next 6-12 months?

I'm going to sound like a broken record but 6-12 months look,

I see further consolidation
in the court reporting space for
those firms that do not adapt and embrace
the technology that's out there
and that's technology for steno,
that's technology for digital and that's
technology for voice and anything
else that we can use to
capture an accurate verbatim record.

Those that adapt and embrace
that technology, they're in a great spot.

Those that don't, I think we're going to see
much further consolidation in our industry because
of it and I think we're going to see
a slow movement back to in-person depositions.

I think Benjamin is spot on
that it's really jurisdictional.

There's going to be hotspots
where we're going to have to pull back on that.

But again, attorneys and
our clients are now used to taking depositions remotely.

They're going to think twice,
even if COVID is under control,
before taking a deposition in San Francisco,
if they have to travel from Boston or vice versa.

If the witness isn't
a make or break witness for the case,

I think attorneys are going to say, "Hey,
we took remote depositions during the COVID crisis,
I don't need the expense or the bill to
my client to have to fly out
there and take an in-person deposition.

So I think that's going to come into play as well.

Thank you, Billy. Jim?

I think, you to try to
search for parallels in our history,
where there have been things that roughly
approximate what we're going through now
and it's hard to find anything.

Go back to 1918, I think
that enough has changed that there's
not any relevant comparisons to be
made with the the Spanish flu.

But I think in addition to
having the public health issue that we're dealing with,
we're also in the midst of
a significant recession that we
don't often talk about
because there's so much else to talk about this year.

When I look back to what happened in
the recession from '08 -'11 or '12,
a couple of things come to mind.

Number one, I remember that
the court systems being so

heavily impact with budget cuts and the quote,

I'm not going to get it exactly,

but as somebody said,

"First we were cutting fat,

then we moved to muscle,

now we're cutting bone."

So I think that we're going to see

significant concentration on trying to reduce

costs for the foreseeable future.

And then on the deposition side,

what I remember hearing from firm owners back then was

that during the recession,

these law firms were some of them

larger ones were really in cost containment mode,

and they actually put people on the idea of lowering costs

and that ended up crossing over after the recession

was done to try to find every way that they

can reduce costs and to what Billy just said.

I think people are going to think not

once or twice but very deeply about,

"Do I need to travel?"

That is going to have significant

long-term impact on this industry.

Betsy and Ben, you have

an interesting take on this because you come from

the education perspective and

the consultant perspective of working in the market.

Betsy, you had a take on the next 6-12 months was actually an opportunity for increasing reporting, particularly digital, so one thing you stated is you see more enrollment and more schools potentially coming down the line.

Can you elaborate on that?

Yes, I can Tony.

It's very imperative that we have trained, approved education curriculum online available because I do see an uptick in workforce development increasing and the more attractive we make it, I think we're going to have a better, entrance into this field and we're going to have a lot of need for this because we are on backlog right now.

We are going to get in more of a backlog as time goes on.

We're going to need more reporters, whether digital, stenographic or verbatim, whatever.

We're going to also need to have more transcriptionists available to do all this backlog and these audio files.

So it's important we have it started at the beginning or on the ground floor correctly with the educational curriculum that we provide.

Great. Thank you. Benjamin, you are the one who said and this is what you

said. "It's an in-person industry changed overnight," so for the next 12 months, from your perspective with the work you've done, with video training and the rest of that, what's the 6-12 months look like from that perspective?

Well, I think we all know that it's been moved online and that that's allowed the acceptance of a lot of new technologies by court reporting firms, by lawyers, by all of that. But just speaking from the educational standpoint, we've seen a real increase in demand for courses, a real increase in demand for people, both from individuals who are now out of work or who are worried that their industry may change forever, but we're also seeing it from the firms preparing for the future.

They want digital court reporters and they want to be ready for when the boom hits.

Betsy spoke earlier that it's coming, Billy as well, that work is increasing.

We all know it's coming, so it's about preparing, it's about being ready and we're seeing firms approach us,

"Hey, can we train now while we have this lull.

Hey, can we use federal money"

in some way. People are using

their stimulus checks whatever it is,
to go to training so that they
can get through these programs.

So I see this

just increasing over the next 6-12 months and
really digital is going to be growing exponentially.

Well, thank you very much for that,
all of you and we can go to the next slide.

So this next slide

is probably more from

the agency perspective and I'll address it to Billy,
which is I have family members who are attorneys
and I've been talking to them about this and there's
just a lot of complexity out there for them.

There is significant change
going on within the firms and
how they're dealing with cases.

So if you look across the board
just to illustrate the change in Michigan,
according to the justice there,
they've done 50,000 plus Zoom hearings across the board.

They've already live streaming for 350,000 hours of
proceedings online and then you have the health impact.

In Pennsylvania recently, six staff members at
Allegheny County contracted the virus unfortunately,
and the District Judge Office had to close for two weeks,
and defense attorneys were expressing concern,

and we'll be able to provide you the source for that.

And then we have the amusing saga we saw this in Florida,
which if you saw this,

I think it was in all the major papers,

the the attorney who went to court in a hazmat suit,

which is probably more for publicity,

but it just illustrates this is not going back to normal.

So with that, I want to go

to the next question, please, next slide.

So Billy,

as an agency owner and a practitioner on your side,

what are you hearing from the attorneys on remote,

and what's their willingness?

In the beginning when we first talked,

there was some concern it might

not go as we liked with but

now we are four months into it.

So from a practical perspective, what are you hearing?

Yeah, I think for law firms I think you're right, Tony.

Initially, I think our law firm friends

and clients saw this as

a short lived blip

and adapting the strategy of we can wait it out,

and then as month after month passed and we

realized that this was going to be a longer crisis.

I think law firms were quick to pivot at that point

because they have cases that need to move forward,

remember, justice delayed is justice denied.

So they have to move these cases forward by any means necessary and so that's when we saw the big pivot to remote.

But again, it comes back to education and I know we have some good educators on this webinar today, but clients need to be educated.

You can't just throw them a Zoom link and say, "Hey, good luck," Education is key.

At Planet Depos we did hundreds of demos to thousands of clients from March until about a month ago and so I think that was key.

In regards to addressing their concern, it varies, it's all over the map, some clients are all remote, some are fully in person and following CDC guidelines for in-person, and some are hybrid, it's a mix and I think from us, from on the agency side is the key is to be adaptable to all of these requests because all of the clients are going to have different ones.

Billy can you just expand a little bit about hybrid. What do you mean from that?

Yeah, we do have some clients that won't have an issue with the court reporter being with

the witness or a person attending in person.

We do have some deposition taking place in person,
albeit they're the exception,

but they are occurring and so

I think there's a mix between clients and

their clients and what they're comfortable with

and safety precautions that each agency has taken.

Thank you. Jim, anything

you want to answer this from your perspective?

From the association perspective?

Hold on. I will

just say that I just looked up the numbers,

57 million K-12 students in the US

and if every school system

in the country just about moved

online in a period of a couple of weeks,

there's just been such wholesale change

and people doing whatever is

necessary to move forward with their business

over the past three or four months.

I just think that you have to be willing to

adapt and as Billy

suggested about the consolidation earlier,

I think those firms that will think that

nothing can change or they think

this is a short-term problem,

are going to have a rude awakening.

I think that people that you need to do whatever you can to help your clients and help your, whether your client is the court system or whether your client is a law firm, just do whatever you can do to become functional expert in remote depositions, remote court proceedings, and find a way just to make it happen because I think people realize that the time for excuses and why you can't do these things is over. If 57 million students can move online so can your deposition.

Billy, just a quick follow-up question for you.

Prior to COVID there were certain preferred methods of fulfillment for deposition, whether it was in room, whether it was using court reporting, etc.

Now we have COVID and now we have the future.

So the future is uncertain right now.

How important is that really for the attorneys how it's fulfilled, or right now are we in the stage where let's just get it fulfilled?

Yeah, that's a great question, Tony.

I think COVID and the virus fast-tracked that because COVID to Jim's point a moment

ago has moved everybody to remote deposition. There's just no way around it, especially in the early months of this pandemic, if you wanted to move a case forward you had to do it remotely, and by going to remote, attorneys and law firms had to embrace that technology. So that thought opened their eyes to, "Oh my God, there's all this new technology in the space of legal that's available to me that I wasn't aware of," and quite frankly, some of the things you can do in remote depositions are even more powerful than you can do in the actual deposition room. And to take it a step further and really can answer your question directly, I think this opened up the law firms mind and eyes to different methods of court reporting. I view court reporting as the umbrella and then there's methods of court reporting. There's stenography, there's digital court recording, there's voice court reporting and those are all the facets underneath the umbrella. And so now lawyers are seeing that this technology is out there, that

they can get a verbatim, accurate transcript
regardless of method and
they need their depositions covered. And
they're open to experiencing those,
trying them out and I think this is,
the toothpaste is out of the tube.

There's no putting it back in at this point.

Great. Thank you. Let's go to the next slide.

That begs the question of,
are we prepared to adopt long-term?

So what I'm hearing is there's really
no choice but start changing long-term.

And granted, there'll be a middle ground I think
everybody finds maybe we're 90 percent
remote today and we'll go back to a 50-50 mix whereas
previously it was 90 on-site, 10 percent remote.

Most of those very large cases may have been
doing live depositions remote as well.

So with that said, if we can just go to
the next slide and Jim,
this picks up on what you're talking about
the previous recession and its impact on legal community.
From 2008-2018, this is after the Great Recession period,
a couple of things happened and we will
cite the sources for you when we publish this,
is a price inflation did not return to
the pre-crisis levels prior to

2018 in terms of court fees,
and this comes from
the Bureau of Labor Statistics, I believe.

We saw interest and an increase in
alternative fee arrangements across the legal community,
that had some adoption and
legal tech innovation happened.

Even if attorneys may not have wanted it,
they were forced to adopt and it's been tremendous change
within the legal industry in terms of
technical option in technologies that are out there.

Everything from starting with data mining,
for example, and the bottom line is,
the firms and attorneys will use
new technology provided they do what they
need to do and they maintain
the existing [inaudible 00:29:43] practice with what they have to do.

So Ben just a quick question
to you because, from an education perspective,
how do you promote the innovation?

What's out there today?

What gets the adoption
going from an education perspective?

Well, I think it's getting
out there as Betsy talked about,
it's more programs but also
high-quality, approved programs that have been vetted.

It's working for similar standards across the industry.

So making sure that agency A and agency B,

you don't get the same thing and

you don't order the same thing and have

two separate expectations or

two separate returns on products.

It's at baseline, a solid baseline of understanding,

and it's educating on

the idea that court reporting is the bridge,

like what Billy said and there are

multiple types under that

and so digital court reporting

is just one of the methodologies.

You can get a high-quality record,

you can get accuracy,

you can get security the same way you would

have with any other methodology.

Thank you. Let's go to the next slide please.

Betsy and Ben, I'm going to try to get the records to you

from your education perspective.

There's definitely going to be

success and there's definitely

challenges to adoption of new ways of doing anything.

Want to share your experience over

these next two slides over what you're doing

over any things you can address in

terms of providing agencies

the ability to transfer to digital or to adopt.

If we can go to the next slide.

Ben, can you start addressing some of this.

We're seeing broader adoption, higher-quality tools.

You come from the media world, you understand that.

Can you get into it from a practice level?

Yes. I really think that we're seeing a broader adoption,

especially by court systems and

larger to medium-size agencies.

They were feeling the hurt

the last few years for not having

stenographers or voice writers,

and a lot of them moved to

digital and have realized that it's

this alternative that really

produces the same quality and same effect.

You're seeing new high-quality tools,

so better microphones, better software,

better recorders, and that's key.

Ten years ago your phone didn't do a whole lot.

With a flip phone it sounded really tinny.

Now you have these phones

that can surf the whole Internet and

can do more than a laptop could 10 years ago.

Same thing's happening with

all of the microphones or recorders,

the softwares, they're getting better.

Some of them are including ASR,
some of them are including
clarity and different things. it's really good.
I also am seeing an increase in training.
We're seeing the numbers, of course,
we've been around a couple of years now,
but we're also seeing other programs pop up.
It's great to see a growing number of digital programs.
Alternatively, other methodologies are
seeing a dwindling number of programs.
It's that inverse of what is
growing and what is shrinking.
Challenges. We're still seeing a challenge in
mentorship because this is not as established,
especially in the depositional market.
We don't see as many mentors
available to mentor that next-generation.
So it's finding videographers or
stenographers who are open-minded,
who are willing to do training or
those who have been in the industry a while.
This isn't new, I mean,
ART has been around over 25 years,
so it's not new,
it was just smaller and now it's getting bigger.
We're also, as I mentioned earlier,
varying standards is a challenge.

We need to make sure that we have universal standards that are of high quality and that are respectable and equal, if not greater than the other methodologies. And fear, both internal to the industry and external. We have to overcome that.

This is a great technology, secure, they have people with ethics behind them running it.

That's why you have a court reporter there.

They're that neutral third-party, that ethical person who's not changing the record, they're taking it verbatim.

We need to get over that fear and move forward.

But I think we've made a lot of progress in a short time.

In the last couple of years, we've seen huge adoption and I think that will only continue.

Great. Thank you very much for that.

Let's go to the next slide.

This one is going to be towards Betsy with Ben.

Basically, the question is, what tools are out there today that have a consistent digital reporting and transcription in the industry in general.

If we can go to the next slide, what you'll see on the right, as I just did some logos up there,

there's a plethora of technology.

All this stuff exists today.

It's just a matter of how you use them.

Nothing is new here.

Some of the things you may see coming

out of the AI world,

ASR world or on that leading edge,

but most of this, even that's

already been in an adoption

across the board by other industries.

Betsy, I wanted to get your take on this as a trainer.

If you can go through a couple of these points,

talk a little bit about what you've been

doing with SpeedType and this

is at a very practical level.

Thank you, Tony. SpeedType has been

around for 20 years and we use it

to train students on

a student perspective to learn expansion technology.

That's something we need to incorporate in

our schools, in our curriculum,

and get these folks trained when they're in

school online so that

when they're done with their training,

they can take their brief forms,

their shortcuts for Windows into the workplace.

The whole idea is to connect

our student community with law firms or companies that want to take them on and train them based on their customization and then put them out in the workplace to do their productivity flow.

It's like Education 360,

so that we have people trained in the right manner and with the right best practices.

Everybody's trained with the standardization level of knowledge base and a high-quality productivity tools, which is something that we have

here on this slide to enhance our workflow management, and this is all designed for digital court reporting.

It's designed for stenographers.

I went to Stenotype Institute

at Jacksonville Beach about in the '70s,

and I still use some of my brief forms

there inside my SpeedType application,

like the word individual,

the ID, you write it on the stenograph machine.

in SpeedType, it's VID equals the word individual.

that's just a quick example of what this tool can do.

It depends on the capacity you're talking about as well.

Your transcription tools, you want to

compare apples and oranges,

you want to make sure that they are at

the maximum capacity so that you can get the

best out of your tools that you're using.

My take is to start early in the student community to bring as our industry grows and our workflow demands.

We want to get the best folks out there that we can have for our law firms and to put out the quality workflow that we need.

Great. Ben, how long is the adoption?

How long does that take to get somebody over to the digital reporting segment with the different standards in the industry from your perspective?

If you're coming into this, it depends on the agency you're working with, it depends on the program you go through, how many hours per week you're dedicating, but it can take somebody anywhere from 8-12 weeks plus some mentoring or in-person time to really become a digital court reporter.

Sometimes that can be shorter if you dedicate yourself to longer periods.

But having that firm training base is really needed and making sure you're really instilling the same values you would with any methodology into this digital court reporters.

It's not about showing up, pressing a button and going and texting on your phone.

That's not what it's about.

There's so much more to the proceeding, to the procedure,
to everything from swearing
in to knowing what a certified question is,
to understanding what read-and-sign is,
managing the proceeding in court and out of court.

How to interact with court officials.

It's Your Honor. It's all about giving that training.

It's all about learning your management.

Betsy touched on a little bit about workflow management.

Right now a lot of the agencies and
even the court systems are set up for stenography,
but digital is slightly different,
larger file sizes,
a little bit different pathway through,
and we need to understand that.

It's not that it's going to be this seismic shift,
it's just we got to open our mind to
what's going on and I think
that will help with adoption in the near future.

It's just opening our ideas to new workflow management.

The old tools are great,
we just have to adapt them a little bit.

Great. Thank you very much and thank you both for that.

Next slide. This next question is

I think their closing slide because

then we want to open it up for some questions.

Is digital court reporting,
remote deposition here to stay?
Court reporting is obviously here to
stay and it's just court reporting,
the fulfillment can be
different from the attorney perspective,
but it's here to stay. And will it
provide healthy innovation and
choices to agency owners?

I think that's a fundamental question and I'll start this
off and then go to Billy and Jim,
and Betsy and Benjamin,
but I want to go to the next slide
and just use this little analogy.

Just bear with me here. Basically,
if you look at any changes in technology,
any changes in workflow that have happened over time,
you have a before state,
adoption state, and then an after state.

I thought this was a great way
to talk about the ongoing debate within
the reporting community because it
is a healthy debate and we need healthy debate.

I remember New York City when
the rideshare companies such as Lyft and Uber,
were trying to penetrate the market back to 2012.
There were substantial concern and resistance,

some of it legitimate, some not.

You had an established practice with the taxi and livery service.

It was highly regulated. The City of New York was making a lot of money off the fees for that and all sudden you'd have these new players that come in that essentially have a business model which is driven by one thing, an app on the cell phones if you can see it, alright. Big change, not hardware, but app.

There are some analogies here.

There was a lot of fighting and a lot of resistance from stakeholders and it's understandable.

City and Taxi Commissions fought to prevent it.

The concerns were it was too risky, the regulation wasn't there.

I remember reading an article where this is just a fad nobody wants to get in the car with a stranger and there were no background checks and all understandable, all had to be addressed.

What happened is consumer demand won out, there maybe a 100,000 taxi drivers and 11 million people who go into New York City every day for work and other needs.

What happened? Rideshare matured.

It had to be regulated, the regulation

caught up and the technology was
already there to enable a completely
new way of doing things.

It opened up innovation and competition and it's led to
brand new markets that
everybody that nobody could foresee,
like using Uber or others to deliver food,
expanded the restaurant industry prior to COVID.

Gave options they both co-exist,

I use rideshare door

to door when I get out of the Grand Central,

I'll take a taxi because it's sitting there right for me.

It also forced both industries,

in particularly some of the cab companies,

to up their status a little

bit and this is

just to saying from my own personal experience.

I'd much rather get in the taxi today than 15 years ago.

They had to compete. But

they're both coexisting and servicing needs.

We've got a few minutes left Billy.

We may have lost Billy here.

I'm here.

Okay.

I can chime in via voice for you. I don't know.

Go ahead.

It looks like I got booted out there, but yeah,

for us to answer your question directly is digital court reporting here to stay? Absolutely. No one is going to stop technology, whether it's Uber or Lyft in the rideshare space or Airbnb in the hotel space. Technology is not going to be stopped by regulation or rubbing a magic genie bottle and hoping that it will go away, but guess what? Steno and voice reporting isn't going anywhere either just like Yellow Cab hasn't gone anywhere to your analogy, Tony. It was a perfect one. We're going to work together in harmony just like they do and they'll be multiple methods to take down the verbatim record. It's not going anywhere and it's going to be really exciting in our industry to see where it goes next. Thank you. Jim.

One thing that I think, it's certainly digital's new to the deposition side of the business, but it's not at all new in courtrooms. I can remember 10 years ago, sitting with a number of official court reporters in Washington, D.C and getting a tour of

the sophisticated digital reporting capability they had at the time.

The court reporters there, the steno reporters were probably threatened at the start, but they realized that there could be a triage that is taking place for it to work that was being done by digital at the start, was work that they didn't really want anyway.

I go back to when I started as CEO at National Court Reporters Association, when I was interviewing for the job, I implored upon the board, this a Manhattan type project that we need to embark upon to get as many steno students into school and as many court reporters out into the market as possible, and unfortunately it was too little, too late.

I think the efforts have been noble, but it's just that, I love steno.

I think steno was great. If we didn't have the significant shortage that we have, that we'll continue to get worse and worse over time. Mathematically certain to do it, you hit on it earlier.

There probably wouldn't be the need for us to have such an accelerated use of digital to start with.

That said, once you are familiar with the capabilities of digital, and once you are familiar with the capabilities that are ASR, you realize it's not a binary choice.

You don't have to turn your back on steno, in order to acknowledge the capabilities of the other technologies.

Are they here to stay? Absolutely, but extend your metaphor a little bit on the rideshare, which I could do in lots of different ways, but it includes self-driving cars and our future and already exists.

That would be the equivalent of ASR right now in this market.

The markets probably not ready for wholesale adoption of self-driving cars as a replacement for taxis and Ubers, but there's no question it's coming sometime down the road.

As Billy hit on this and what court reporters, steno reporters have been reluctant to acknowledge in a lot of cases is the power of the market.

Ultimately, the market will have its say.

Ultimately the market will determine what this all looks like and how it's integrated.

But it's not binary, it's not either or.

Thank you, and with that,

we ran over and to
those participants who submitted questions,
we have those, we will answer those for you.
Because we have another session to go on,
I want to thank each and every one of
the participants Billy, Betsy,
Jim, Benjamin, for your input and to the attendees,
I hope you found this useful,
we will respond to your questions.
I thank you very much for your time
and I wish everybody the very best
at this period and have a great day.
We'll see you at the next session.