Special Features

While *all* the features on this list can be considered a part of plan management, *none* of them were described to us as requirements when we started this project almost 20 years ago. We added them over time to accommodate needs as they arose. The list is alphabetical to simplify locating features:

Address and Phone Number History

Some defendants move around frequently. You can keep up with those changes with i-Plow's address and phone number history feature.

Associates and Degrees of Separation

That's right, the Keven Bacon game; only now you are finding a defendant's friend's co-workers mother's sister. This capability is a direct result of the structure of our References Feature.

Authorize $tatus

For those who need it, this feature requires someone to approve i-Plow's decision to send a notification. Basically, it adds an extra human step to the batch printing process. This can be important when the collector is not the one who prints the notifications. This could be terrible for a small collections staff, but indispensable to a large one. We could use our TEST environment to show you why.

Automobile Information

If you are taking advantage of the Scofflaw program, you will need vehicular information.

Automatic Assessments

Examples include charges per notification in Florida and Time Payment Fees 30 days after the sentence date in Texas.

Automatic Voice Notification

We support robocalls, whether we are exporting data to your contracted notification system or using i-Plow's own (included with your service contract).

Automatic Restore Notification

There are instances where i-Plow will recognize that it is necessary to restore a case status to what it was previously. There is an optional configuration option to have i-Plow record a due diligence event with follow-up scheduled for the next day so that you will be aware that it happened.

Bookmarks

Pretty annoying to be in the middle of updating a defendant's record and get interrupted to work on another case, but it happens all the time. Especially in the middle of a Browse, you hate to lose your place. The Bookmarks feature solves that problem.

Browsing

Many of our reports provide an option to browse qualified cases. This means that instead of printing the report, you can jump directly to the first record and use the Next and Previous buttons to view cases. If you are in the middle of a browse and get interrupted and need to work on another case, the Bookmark feature will make it easy to get back to where you were.

Campaign Management

A good example is the annual Great Texas Warrant Roundup. I-Plow can identify eligible defendants, who might number in the tens of thousands, then keep track as you print as many as you want each day. In this example, standard State reporting is included.

Case Image Attachments

Do you have document images that you want to retain and associated with specific cases? No problem.

Celebrity

This is a special security feature. The name is a slight misnomer, because it is seldom used to prevent casual viewing of celebrity information. More often, it is useful to prevent casual viewing of sensitive local information, such as elected officials or other county staff.

Community Service Plans

For those collectors who are responsible for managing Community Service plans, it could not be any easier. The instructions are identical to regular payment plans, we simply swap hours for dollars (and do the math).

CURRENT!

You have sent the defendant 3 notices over the last 6 weeks. Now, he calls and says he'll gladly pay next Tuesday. Now it's Wednesday and he didn't pay. Do you want to start over with the first notice? If your answer is "Of course not, proceed with what was scheduled before we agreed to the Tuesday payment; schedule him for a Show-Cause hearing," then you will have this feature configured in your implementation. This process is described in the discussion of overrides, which is where the link above goes.

Defendant Plans (Consolidated Cases)

This powerful tool restructures your whole i-Plow system that enables you to provide a defendant with a single payment plan for multiple cases, while concurrently applying receipts to individual cases.

Exclude Cash Bond

This doesn't come up often, but when it does, without i-Plow it would be difficult. In some jurisdictions, the collector is responsible for collecting a cash bond, but he or she does not want the case to become Satisfied, unless this payment is taken care of.

Export

Our policy is, it's your data; we'll send it anywhere you want in any electronic format. Exports are either fully or semi-automatic.

External Case References

These will only be included at your request, but they can be quite useful. If there is an external system for which you need to know a system ID for a particular defendant, we will provide a data entry field for that.

Flagging Cases

If you find yourself reviewing cases, perhaps in a Browse, looking for those that share a common set of characteristics for either a report or special processing, you may find a simple checkbox to mark qualified defendants convenient.

Flexible vs Rigid Plans

This feature answers the question, what happens if the defendant makes an overpayment? Does the excess count towards the next payment or the last? It depends on local policy. Most are flexible, but when they want rigid plans, it's because they don't want defendants out of touch for over an installment frequency.

Follow-Up Events

If you tell the defendant you are going to do something days, weeks, months, or years from now; i-Plow will remind you when it is time.

Government Portal (Text)

Government Portal is an i-Plow partner who processes credit card payments. There are many advantages to this, but our favorite is sending a text to a defendant, who can receive the message and make the payment while standing in a grocery line. Due to the high degree of connectivity, the defendant will see the exact amount due as well as the total balance. The collector can either import the receipt immediately or let i-Plow do it automatically overnight.

Imports

i-Plow supports a wide range of import requirements among our customers; from none, to virtually everything that goes into i-Plow. Our service includes custom import support for any data field in i-Plow. The only requirement is that the data is in an electronic readable format. This

includes comma separated value (CSV), text (TXT), PDF, fixed length, or Tab delimited, to name a few.

Multicounty Implementation

Some Counties manage collections for neighboring counties. This feature enables collectors to accomplish this task while maintaining complete independence of both databases.

Omni

Take advantage of the Texas State program to stop a defendant from renewing a driver's license until fines, fees, and court costs are Satisfied.

Online Case Record Search

Do you have a need for other departments to access case information from i-Plow without having to learn how to use i-Plow? Use the Online Case Record Search to give them the information they need easily.

Opt-Out

In some jurisdictions, defendants may chose not to receive robocalls, emails, or texts. I-Plow accommodates that.

Participant System

Unless you specifically ask for it, you won't see this system. But if you need to be able to identify *anyone* associated with a defendant, this is what you want. Probation Officers, Paroles Officers, and Attorneys have all been associated with individual defendants. This is done to enable the collector to send a notification to them: "Defendant X is behind on his payments and we are requesting your help in seeing that he pays."

Plan Synchronization

There is an established payment plan on file. The total assessment amount changes. What now? I-Plow helps manage this issue.

Probation Expiration Report

Some county collectors never run this report; others can't do their jobs without it. It depends on local policy. Either way, i-Plow is ready.

References

We introduced this feature in response to the Office of Court Administration requiring collectors to identify 3 personal references in a defendant's application for an extension for payment agreement. A by-product of our database structure is that i-Plow can take this a step further and produce our Associates and Degrees of Separation Report.

Reset SENT to SEND

Someone just spilled a cup of coffee on the batch of notifications you just printed and ruined them all? No problem, this is the procedure to reset them so that they may be printed again.

Restitution

Some collectors are tasked with notifying victims when a defendant makes restitution payments. i-Plow simplifies this task.

Resurrect (then scrutinize) last plan

This is another thing that doesn't come up very often but is very useful when it does. The plan is gone, either because of a mistake or a payment that Satisfied the case is voided. Now you want your plan back. Here it is.

Scofflaw

This is a State of Texas managed program to alert Tax Assessors that a defendant has outstanding fees, fines, and court costs at the time they try to renew their license plates. The object is to refuse the renewal until these fees are paid. I-Plow's role is to submit the data in either fully or semi-automatic mode.

Scrutinize this Plan

"Your payment is past due." "Is not." "Is so." "Is not…" See the Problem? This feature helps solve it by mapping out what your expectations were and what the defendant did.

Show-Cause

This feature enables a collector to manage a special docket for the Court, wherein the judge will address the problem of non-payment. The feature essentially manages lists identifying defendants who are eligible, scheduled, and been to a Show-Cause hearing. They can even print Case Detail Reports a day or two before the scheduled hearing date.

Signatures

With i-Plow the collector has the option of imbedding an image of their signature for inclusion in notification documents.

Spanish Language Support

If you provide Spanish language translations of the documents used in your notifications, i-Plow supports the ability to flag a defendant as having a Spanish language preference for all written communication.

Special Announcements

Suppose a centralized collector needs to notify all the defendants with an active case for a particular JP court that the court is moving to a new address. No problem.

TEST Environment

Every night, i-Plow makes a copy of each implementation's databases and reproduces the entire environment. This TEST environment is a safe place to experiment with any feature in i-Plow or even to verify what a record looked like yesterday.

Text Messages

Text Message might be the most effective way to reach defendants, and the response can be immediate. i-Plow supports both individual on-demand texting and automatic batch processing according to your Blueprint.

Third party Referral

It is important when you have a 3rd party collector involved, that either the collector or the 3rd party has control. I-Plow enforces that in both directions.

Transfer Case

If you accidentally assign a case to the wrong defendant and even added due diligence notes and assessments, you can transfer all of it to another defendant with this simple feature. If you are in a department where "Case Ownership" is a thing, you can use this same feature to transfer a case to another collector.

Translate Implicit Plan to Explicit

An implicit plan is easy to create; simply specify an instalment amount or the total number of payments and let i-Plow calculate the rest. Sometimes things change and the established plan is no longer adequate; the defendant requires an irregular payment schedule. I-Plow lets you change the implicit plan to explicit, when allows you in turn to further modify individual payment dates and amounts.

Victim Restitution

Some collectors are responsible for notifying victims when restitution payments have been made. I-Plow facilitates this process.

ZIP Code Management

Over time, ZIP codes can change. This feature enables you to accommodate those changes. It doesn't happen very often, but this feature prevents problems when it does.