

SP8 - Tools for SRLs^{*}

Fabien Gélinas¹
Alexandra Pasca²

Working paper N° 1

Version 1.0 – June 2021

^{*} The authors wish to thank the CLEO team for their cooperation in the preparation of this inventory.

¹ Team Leader, Subproject 8 Head & Professor, Faculty of Law, McGill University.

² Research Assistant & Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Law, McGill University.

Table of contents

Introduction	3
1. Our goals	4
1.1 Our mission	4
2. Background	5
2.1 LegalTools.....	5
2.2 Services offered.....	5
3. Our history	6
4. Author	7
4.1 Where is it used?.....	7
4.2 How does it work?.....	7
4.3 Is it compatible with other systems?.....	8
5. A2J Guided Interviews in United States	
5.1 How to Find A2J Guided Interviews?.....	9
6. Evaluation.....	22
6.1 Methods	22
6.2 Limitations.....	22
Conclusion	23
Team.....	24
References.....	25

Introduction

The phenomenon of self-representation of citizens produces a risk of overloading the courts with cases that are inadmissible, have low stakes or have low chances of success. In order to overcome these difficulties, many tools are being developed in the field of citizens' self-representation and must therefore be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness, relevance and satisfaction rates of the target audience.

CLEO Case Study

Our first case study is Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)'s new tool: the Family Law Guided Pathway (FLGP)³, using A2J Author technology. This is the first of many guided pathways to family court forms that CLEO has created to help people complete family court forms on child support, custody, access, and other issues. We are helping CLEO in assessing the successes, failures and potential improvements of the tool.

Evaluation Model

The Montreal Cyberjustice Laboratory and CLEO have developed an evaluation model, inspired by various existing frameworks, and discussed in our paper entitled: "A Step-by-Step Evaluation Model for Legal Tools" (available upon request).⁴

³ CLEO, "About Guided Pathways", online: <<https://stepstojustice.ca/guided-pathways/home>>.

⁴ Alexandra Pasca et al, "A Step-by-Step Evaluation Model for Legal Tools" (2020) CLEO & Montreal Cyberjustice Laboratory.

1. Our Goals

GOAL #1

An inventory of legal tools using technology to serve SRLs.

GOAL #2

Evaluation of their effectiveness and larger social impact on access to justice.

GOAL #3

Development of an evaluation model and best practices for empirical assessment of legal tools.

Mission

Our mission is to provide tools (evaluation model, guide, inventories) in order to facilitate the work of entities wishing to assist SRLs.

2. Background

An extensive literature review was undertaken. Over 150 sources were reviewed, including studies on online legal tools using the same platform as CLEO (A2J Author) or other technologies (HotDos), as well as other types of legal assistance (legal aid, legal clinics). We focused mainly on Nord America (Canada and the United States), but also looked beyond North America (United Kingdom, Asia, Africa, South America). The scope of the literature review was broad, so as to cover a wide range of legal tools and materials for SRLs, offered online or off-line.

2.1 Legal Tools

The increase in the number of SRLs, in Canada, as well as in other jurisdictions, has led to the development of various legal tools to assist them. These tools range from general legal information and tailored guides to help with court forms or case management, and even assistance with the judicial process or settlement. While the traditional legal system was paper-based, resources and tools for both lawyers and SRLs are increasingly available online. Legal documents can be completed electronically (e.g. interactive court forms, document assembly platforms, triage portals and e filing systems), and hearings and dispute resolution tools may also proceed online. The question of which tools are effective (and which are not) is important not only for legal services providers, but for all stakeholders, including policy makers and the citizens they intend to serve.

2.2 Services Offered

The types of services for SRLs vary widely: from help with legal aid applications to filling out legal forms or drafting procedures in various legal situations. This inventory focuses on A2J Guided Interviews in the United States. In addition to A2J Guided Interviews, the vast majority also provide other kind of services, such as legal information, forms templates (Word, PDF), online assistance or referral to appropriate resources (lawyer, legal aid, legal clinics). The most popular areas of law are: family law, housing, debts, and wills.

3. Out History

A2J Author was created by Chicago-Kent College of Law's Center for Access to Justice ("Chigago-Kent"), in partnership with the Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction ("CALI").⁵



⁵ "A2J Author", online: <<https://www.a2jauthor.org/>>

4. A2J Author

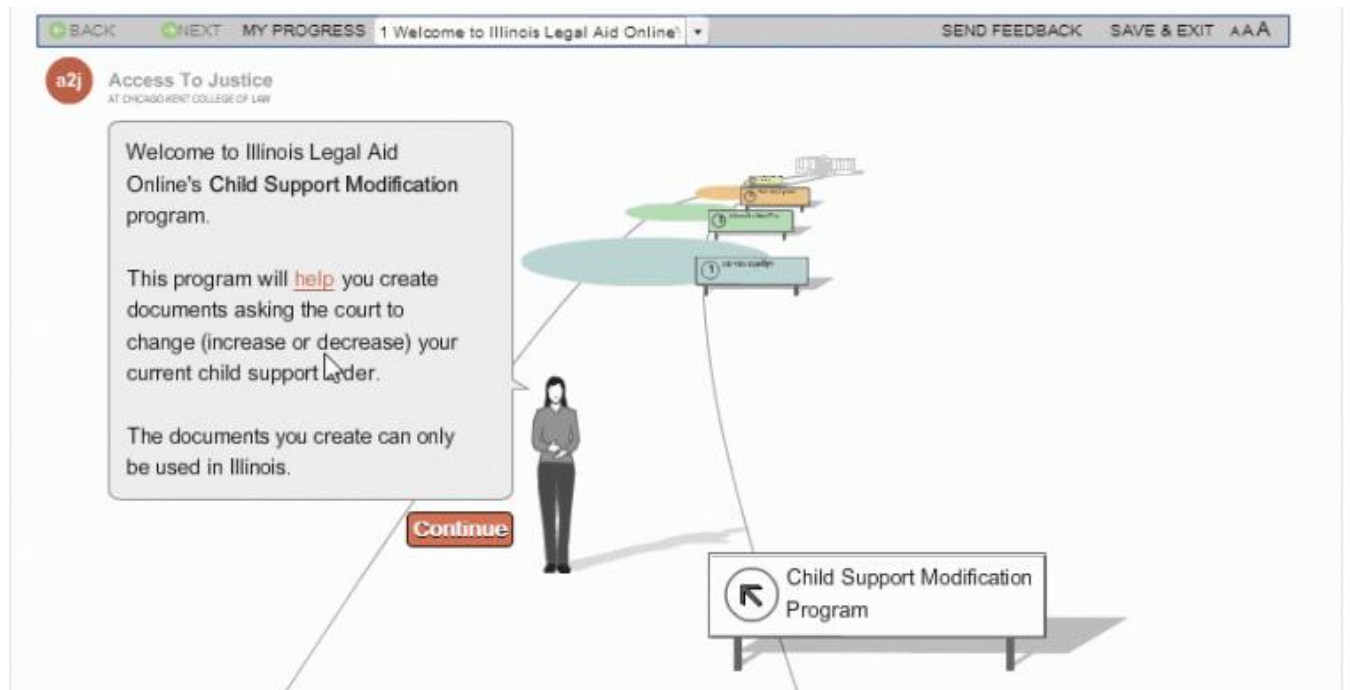
4.1 Where is it used?

A2J Author software is freely available to any non-profit organizations, such as CLEO. It aims at improving access to justice for SRLs, but may also be used by legal professionals, such as lawyers or court staff. A2J Author is largely used in United States, by over 40 states, and now in Canada.

4.2 How does it work?

A2J Author works as an interactive interview. Users are asked a series of questions to help them complete their court forms correctly. Each question includes legal information explained in plain language, so that users can understand it and answer the next question. Every time users are completing a step, they move closer to the courthouse. When completed, the answers are used to generate all the relevant forms, at once. Thus, users need to enter only once the required information, which is used to generate several personalized forms. CLEO's FLGP also generates a next steps checklist, tailored to the user's situation.

Image 1. A2J Author Guided Interview Design⁶



⁶ Ibid.

4.3 Is it Compatible with Other Systems?

Yes. In most States, A2J Guided Interview is uploaded to the Law Help Interactive (LHI)⁷ server and combined with HotDocs form to create an interactive interview for court forms. Some states have even integrated A2J Author into the court system, with e-filing and case management systems.

Image 2. A2J Author Compatibility with the Other Servers⁸



Image 3. E-Filing with A2J Author⁹



⁷ "Law Help Interactive", online: <<https://lawhelpinteractive.org/>>.

⁸ note 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*

5. A2J Guided Interviews in United States

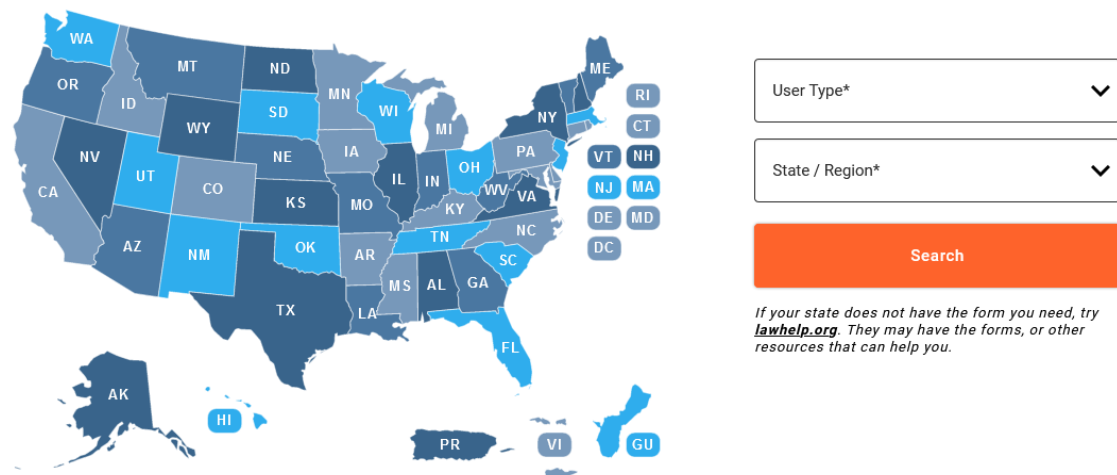
5.1 How to Find A2J Guided Interviews?

A2J Guided Interviews are made available over the internet through court and statewide websites. In United States, most are hosted on LHI¹⁰ or LawHelp.org¹¹.

Image 4. Find Legal Forms in United States¹²

Find Forms

To find a form, click on your state on the map below or select your state from the dropdown menu. If LHI forms are available in your state, you will be taken to a trusted-partner site that can help you with the forms or provide other helpful information.



User Type* ▼

State / Region* ▼

Search

*If your state does not have the form you need, try **lawhelp.org**. They may have the forms, or other resources that can help you.*

¹⁰ note 7.

¹¹ "LawHelp.org", online: <<https://www.lawhelp.org/>>.

¹² note 7.

Table 1: Current Live A2J Guided Interviews in United States

* Legend: This table includes all States using A2J Guided Interviews, listed by A2J Author¹³. However, some A2J Guided Interviews are no longer available (NA). Others use a different interface design than A2J Author (DI). This table was last updated in June 2021.

USA STATES	FEATURES	A2J Guided Interviews (click the link to run)	EVALUATION	RESULTS
ALABAMA	English Progress Bar	Fee Waiver Application DAT Trademark Guide NA: Identity Theft	Open Feedback (users)	NA
ALASKA	English Progress Bar	Protective Orders Curated Experience Divorce Curated Experience Protective Order Divorce Trademark Guide ALSC's online probate interview for Alaska Native Veterans Allotment Program	Open Feedback & Survey (users)	NA
ARIZONA	English Progress Bar	Legal assistance Trademark Guide	Survey (users)	NA
ARKANSAS	English & Spanish (for some forms) Progress Bar	Trademark Guide Answer by Defendant Answer and Objection for Unlawful Detainer Child Support Termination Collection Agency Stop Contact Letter Cover and Disposition Sheets Debt Validation Request to Collection Agency Debt Validation Request to Original Creditor Divorce Divorce (Spanish) Domestic Abuse – Order of Protection Domestic Abuse – Order of Protection (Spanish) Guardianship for Minor Identity Theft – Letter Reporting ID Theft to Credit Bureau Identity Theft – Letter to Creditor Identity Theft – Letter to Debt Collector In Forma Pauperis (Fees Waiver) Living Will - All Means Living Will - Do Not Resuscitate Name Change for Adult Power of Attorney for Minor Power of Attorney for Minor (Spanish) Revocation of Power of Attorney for Minor Reasonable Accommodation Sealing Criminal Records Security Deposit Demand Letter Service Visitation Schedule Packet	Open Feedback, Surveys, Tracking court files (users)	85% of divorces without property or support came from Arkansas' automated documents. ¹⁴
CALIFORNIA	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide DI: Name change	---	---
CAROLINA (NORTH)	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide	Feedback (users)	NA

¹³ "A2J.org", online: <<https://a2j.org/>>.

¹⁴ John M Greacen, Amy Dunn Johnson & Vincent Morris, "From Market Failure to 100% Access: Toward a Civil Justice Continuum" (2015) 37:4 University of Arkansas at Little Rock Law Review 551–572.

		<p>Family</p> <p>Simple Uncontested Divorce (A2) Author only</p> <p>Simple Uncontested Divorce (Hot Docs)</p> <p>WNS Pro Se Custody Interview-Grandparents</p> <p>LANC Pro Se Custody Video Interview (Parent)-MDA version</p> <p>LANC Pro Se Custody Video Interview (Non-Parent) (MDA)</p> <p>WNS Pro Se Custody Interview-Parent</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Small Claims Action for Improper Car Repairs</p> <p>Appealing Your NC Eviction</p> <p>Dept & Money</p> <p>Small Claims Petition - Return of Security Deposit (Hot Docs DA)</p> <p>Other</p> <p>Appeal Small Claims to District Court (Hot Docs DA) (In progress)</p> <p>Appeal Small Claims to District Court (A2) Re-working</p> <p>Summary Ejectment Appeal</p> <p>Petition to Proceed as Indigent (AG 106)</p> <p>Petition to Proceed as Indigent (CV-226 and 106 combined with branching)</p> <p>Expunction Guided Interview Beta (Simplified)</p> <p>NA: How to file for custody without a lawyer -- for parents ; Custody Packet</p> <p>Trademark Guide</p>		
SOUTH CAROLINA	English & Spanish (for some forms) Progress Bar	<p>Family</p> <p>Divorce</p> <p>Child Support Modification</p> <p>Child Visitation</p> <p>Order of Protection</p> <p>NA: Identity Theft</p>	Survey (users)	NA
COLORADO	English Progress Bar	<p>Trademark Guide</p> <p>Fee Waiver Request</p> <p>Adult Name Change</p> <p>NA: Unconteste Divorce (no children)</p>	Open feedback, survey (users)	NA
CONNETICUT	English	<p>Trademark Guide</p> <p>Legal Aid Application</p>	Survey (users)	NA
DAKOTA (NORTH)	English Progress Bar	<p>Trademark Guide</p> <p>DI: Legal Services Assisstance – Apply Online</p>	---	---
DAKOTA (SOUTH)	English Progress Bar	<p>Trademark Guide</p> <p>DI: Online Forms</p>		
DELAWARE	English	<p>Trademark Guide</p> <p>Trespass Action</p> <p>Landlord Tenant Summary Possession</p> <p>Return of Security Deposit</p> <p>Security Deposit Return</p> <p>Replevin Action</p>	Open feedback, survey (users)	NA
FLORIDA	English	Trademark Guide	Feedback, survey (users)	NA

		NA: Parenting Plan, Reasonable Accommodation Letter Eviction Answer, Forms and Letters for Military Members and Families DI: Temporary Custody by Extended Family Member, FEMA Appeals Letter and File Request		
GEORGIA	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide	Survey (users)	NA
		Trademark Guide		
GUAM	English Progress Bar Audio	Family & Safety Uncontested Divorce with No Minor Children Guardianship of a Child (Parent Petitioner) Guardianship of a Child (Guardian Petitioner) Guardianship of a Disabled Adult Name change Order of Protection or Restraining Order Contempt for Order of Protection or Contempt for Restraining Order	Open feedback (users)	NA
		Trademark Guide		
		Family Guardianship of a Minor Motion and Declaration for Post Decree Relief Appearance and Waiver Power of Attorney Statement of Mailing Exhibits "1" and "2" Money & Dept Money Damages for Illegal Utilities Shut Off Cease Contact Letter Garnishee Order Housing (Problems with landlord, home or apartment) Eviction Counterclaim Form Letter and TRO for Illegal Utilities Shut Off Money Damages for Illegal Lockout Form Letter and TRO for Illegal Lockout Money Damages for Illegal Utilities Shut Off		
HAWAII	English Progress Bar	Money Damages for Illegal Utilities Shut Off Public Benefits (State Welfare) DHS Fair Hearing Request Other (Individual Rights, Court Costs) Relief from District Court Costs Motion to Set Aside Statement of Claim Motion for Service by Mail Security Deposit Demand Letter Ex Parte Motion and Declaration to Advance or Expedite Hearing Hawaii Island (Third Circuit) Statement of Claim, Security Deposit Divorce without Children Proposed Parenting Plan Answer for Complaint for Divorce Ohau (First Circuit) Statement of Claim, Security Deposit	---	---

		Petition for Paternity or for Custody, Visitation, and Support Orders Asset and Debt Statement Divorce without Children Guardianship of an Incapacitated Adult (Seniors) Motion and Affidavit to Waive Filing Fees Temporary Restraining Order (Abuse & Harassment) Paternity Modification Part 1 Paternity Modification Part 2 Maui (Second Circuit) Statement of Claim, Security Deposit Divorce without Children Petition for Paternity or for Custody, Visitation, Support Orders after VEP Motion and Declaration for Post Decree Relief Kauai (Fifth Circuit) Statement of Claim, Security Deposit		
IDAHO	English	Trademark Guide DI: Family Law (Divorce, Custody) Domestic Violence (Civil Protection Order Petition) Landlord/Tenant (Notice for Repairs, Eviction, Respond to Eviction, etc.) Name Change (Adult and Minor) Small Claims (Filing, Finalizing, Rescheduling, etc.)	Webiste metrics Survey (users)	As of late 2007, had completed twenty-nine (29) of A2J interviews including, divorce, landlord/tenant, name change and small claims packets. Idaho's A2J Guided Interviews received over 58,000 hits in September 2007 alone. ¹⁵
ILLINOIS	English Progress Bar	Rideshare LLC Interview Demand Letter to Landlord for Repairs #2 Trademark Guide Family & Safety Divorce Parenting plan Request to change child support Petition for rule to show cause - Family law cases Short term guardian appointment Minor guardianship discharge Name change for an adult Name change for a child Request to change child support Financial affidavit House & Apartment Lease termination notice - Cook County Evict a tenant - Cook County End illegal lockout demand Extend time of eviction Lease termination notice - Cook County Respond to a mortgage foreclosure complaint Delay a foreclosure sale Vacate default judgment of foreclosure Security deposit complaint Security deposit demand letter	Feedback, Survey (users)	As of September 2007, twenty-nine (29) A2J Guided Interviews have been made available to the public on Illinois Legal Aid Online and another nine (9) are in the final stages of review. ¹⁶

¹⁵ "Demonstrated Capabilities | A2J Author", online: <<https://www.a2jauthor.org/content/demonstrated-capabilities>>; See also: Richard Zorza, "An Overview of Self-Represented Litigation Innovation, Its Impact, and an Approach for the Future: An Invitation to Dialogue" (2009) 43:3 Family Law Quarterly 519–543.

¹⁶ note 15.

[Housing discrimination complaint - IDHR](#)
[Seal record of eviction - landlord in foreclosure](#)
[Transfer on death instrument or TOD!](#)

Money & Dept
[Collection proof letter](#)
[Stop wage assignment letter](#)
[Federal court complaint - Northern District of Illinois](#)
[Citation to discover assets to debtor](#)
[Collect a judgment from debtor's bank or employer](#)
[Request return of property - Cook County](#)

Health & Benefits
[Unemployment benefits appeal after a hearing](#)
[Small estate affidavit](#)
[Transfer on death instrument or TOD!](#)
[Power of attorney for property](#)
[Power of attorney - Agent resign letter](#)

Crime & Traffic
[Order of protection](#)
[Stalking no contact order request](#)
[Civil no contact order request](#)
[Expunge juvenile records](#)
[Expungement due to criminal identity theft - Cook County](#)

Forms for lawyers
[SNAP benefits calculator for lawyers](#)
[Powers of attorney and advance directives packet for lawyers](#)

Court & Hearings
[Motion](#)
[Respond to a lawsuit](#)
[Motion to continue or extend time](#)
[Vacate default judgment within 30 days](#)
[Federal court complaint - Northern District of Illinois](#)
[Unemployment benefits appeal after a hearing](#)
[E-filing exemption - Circuit Court](#)
[E-filing exemption - Appellate Court](#)
[E-filing exemption - Supreme Court](#)
[Fee waiver](#)
[Criminal Court fee waiver](#)
[Fee waiver - Appellate Court](#)
[Federal fee waiver - Northern District of Illinois](#)

INDIANA	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide	---	---
---------	-------------------------	---------------------------------	-----	-----

IOWA	English Progress Bar	IOWA LEGAL AID ONLINE INTAKE Trademark Guide Name Change Request Defer Payment of Costs Small Claims Actions Divorce with no Children Initial Filing for a Divorce Response to a Petition Financial Affidavit	---	---
------	-------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----	-----

KANSAS	English (and Spanish for triage) Progress Bar Live Chat Lawyer review	Settlement Agreement Request for Relief Trademark Guide Kansas Legal Services: the First Step to Getting Help (Not a full online application - initial basic triage, redirected to DI) Family Law Divorce Reply no children Divorce Petition with minor children Divorce Reply Final Divorce Order Notice of Family Law Action Child Support Worksheet Request to Waive Filing Fee Parenting Plan Modification of Child Support motion Change of Address Form Adult Name Change in Kansas Form to File Paternity Action Reply to Paternity Action Final Orders in Paternity Action Identity Theft Letter to Creditor – Identity Theft Letter to Debt Collector – Identity Theft Letter to Credit Bureau – Identity Theft Other Expungement of Criminal Records Protection from Abuse form Small Claims Security Deposit Form Request to Waive Filing Fee Employment Authorization Form	Survey (users)	NA
		Trademark Guide NA: Security Deposit Demand Letter Small Claims Identity Theft Debt Collection Veteran's Application for Compensation and/or Pension Name change Wills Court Fees Criminal record expungement Earned Income Tax Credits Domestic Violence Petition		
		Trademark Guide National Disaster Legal Aid Interactive FEMA Appeals DI: Consumer Debt Problems and Debt Collection Lawsuit Responses		
KENTUCKY	English & Spanish	Trademark Guide NA: Security Deposit Demand Letter Small Claims Identity Theft Debt Collection Veteran's Application for Compensation and/or Pension Name change Wills Court Fees Criminal record expungement Earned Income Tax Credits Domestic Violence Petition	Testing, Open feedback, Survey, Interviews (users, court staff, legal community – lawyers, clerks, judges)	Program being accessed over 800 times in 2009; 15 forms for Divorce without children and 14 forms for Divorce with children; expanded it to 10 additional jurisdictions, since each of Kentucky's 57 judicial districts. ¹⁷
LOUISIANA	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide National Disaster Legal Aid Interactive FEMA Appeals DI: Consumer Debt Problems and Debt Collection Lawsuit Responses	Open feedback, survey (users)	NA

¹⁷ Margaret, "Document assembly tools to automatically create forms", (28 June 2016), online: *Justice Innovation* <<https://justiceinnovation.law.stanford.edu/document-assembly-tools-to-automatically-create-forms/>>.

MAINE	English	Trademark Guide NA: Identity Theft DI: Family Law (Divorce, Child Support), Fee Waiver, Small Claims , Guide to Legal Help	Open feedback (users)	NA
MARYLAND	English	Trademark Guide Application for Termination of Stay and Notice to Defendant NA: Family law (custody, visitation, contempt, modifications, and answers)	Feedback (users)	NA
MASSACHUSETTS	English	Trademark Guide NA (updating): Family law (Child support)	---	---
MICHIGAN	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide Family law Divorce Answer and Counterclaim for Divorce Judgment of Divorce Divorce Dismissal Quitclaim Deed (after Divorce) Custody Case (Unmarried Parents) Answer and Counterclaim for Custody Motion to Change or Get Child Support Motion to Change Parenting Time Response to Motion Regarding Parenting Time Delegation of Parental Authority (Short-Term Parental Power of Attorney) Name Change Stepparent Adoption Revoke Paternity Established by Marriage Emancipation Motion to Change Domicile/Residence Motion to Manage Child Support Debt Money & Dept Small Claims Suit Objection to Garnishment Motion for Installment Payment Plan Motion to Set Aside Default (Consumer Debt) Civil Answer Housing Answer to Eviction Complaint Motion to Set Aside Default (Eviction) Letter to Landlord (Repairs) Letter to Landlord (Security Deposit) Eviction Moratorium Declaration Form Public Assistance MDHHS Hearing Request Food Stamp (FAP) Calculator Motion for Payment of Second COVID-19 Stimulus Check	Open feedback, interviews, survey (users)	7 automated interviews were created that help users complete 17 different forms. As of June 2014, website users accessed these interviews to compile 2700 sets of organized legal documents. SRLs using the tool were as successful as those represented by attorney and more efficacy in achieving divorce than other SRLs. "Success" defined as reaching a judgement in reasonable time frame. Not enough users survey rate participation. ¹⁸

¹⁸ Kerry Sheldon, "Michigan Legal Help Evaluation Report: An examination of the efficacy of the Michigan Legal Help website in helping self-represented litigants successfully navigate the divorce process", (January 2015), online: <<https://www.srln.org/node/450/evaluation-michigan-legal-help-evaluation-report-michigan-2015>>.

Safety
[Personal Protection Order](#)
[Motion to Modify, Extend, or Terminate a Personal Protection Order](#)
[Motion to Enforce PPO after Violation](#)

Crime
[Expungement \(Adult Conviction\)](#)
[Expungement \(Juvenile Adjudication\)](#)
[Letter to a Credit Bureau after ID Theft](#)
[Letter to a Creditor after ID Theft](#)
[Letter to Debt Collector after ID Theft](#)

Will & Life Planning
[Settling a Small Estate](#)
[Will](#)

Going to Court
[Fee Waiver](#)
[Request for Accommodations](#)
[Request for Interpreter](#)

[Trademark Guide](#)

Family law
[Delegation of Parental Authority](#)
[Name Change Application](#)

Housing
[Eviction Expungement](#)
[Security Deposit Demand Letter](#)
[Foreclosure Sale Postponement](#)

Consumer & Dept
[Credit Report Request](#)
[Security Deposit Demand Letter](#)
[Foreclosure Sale Postponement](#)
[Stop Contact Letter](#)
[Answer to a Debt Collection Lawsuit](#)

Crime
[Identity Theft Letter to Debt Collector](#)
[Identity Theft Letter to Credit Bureau](#)
 NA: [Identity Theft Letter to Creditor](#)

Other:
[Power of Attorney](#)
[Revocation of Power of Attorney](#)
[Health Care Directives](#)
[Court Fee Waiver \(IFP\)](#)

DI: [Harassment Restraining Order](#)

[Trademark Guide](#)

DI: [Free Legal Answers](#), [Online Requestion for Legal Help](#)

[Trademark Guide](#)

DI: [SRLs Forms and Information](#), [Electronic Self-Representation \(bankruptcy\)](#)

Survey (users)

NA

Survey (users)

NA

Survey (users),
Court statistics

Less favorable case outcomes for SRLs in some case categories (family, consumer-finance and individual

MINNESOTA

English
Progreess
Bar
Audio
instructions

MISSISSIPPI

English
Progress Bar

MISSOURI
(Federal Court,
as part of E-
Pro Se)

English
Bar Progress

				rights), but SRLs are not at a greater risk of “losing their case” than parties represented by attorney. Substantial number of SRLs are associated with consumer-finance and housing cases, but currently helpful resources are available only for SRLs on family cases. ¹⁹
		Trademark Guide		
		Housing Answer to Eviction Notice of Intent to Move Letter to Landlord Requesting Repairs Security Deposit Demand Letter		
		Family Petition for Dissolution of Marriage Petition for Parenting Plan Registration of a Foreign Order Petition for Guardianship of a Minor Petition for Name Change - Adult, Minor, or Sealed	Feedback, Survey, Website Statistics (users)	219 A2J interviews have been completed with 39 full assemblies downloaded, a conversion rate of 21% (includes some testing use). ²⁰
MONTANA	English Progress Bar	NA: Interactive Application for VA Disability Compensation and/or Pension DI: Montana Legal Services Association Online Intake Application ; Petition for Temporary Order of Protection ; Consumer Law Interactive Forms for Veterans ; Upsolve Bankruptcy Forms ; Will-in-a-Box ; Benefits Screening Tool for Vets and Military Members		
		Trademark Guide A2J Forms Developed Divorce (with and without children) Criminal Set Aside (felonies, misdemeanor) Protection Order Harassment Order	Website statistics (users)	January-March 2012: 42% of the A2J interviews accessed resulted in documents. In six weeks the automated library of automated forms was used 1,461 times; Processing time reduced by 50%. ²¹
		DI: Online Help		
		Trademark Guide		
NEVADA	English Progress Bar	DI: Record Sealing Forms	---	---
		Trademark Guide DI: Legal Aid Online Intake	Survey (users)	NA
NEW HAMPSHIRE	English Progress Bar			

¹⁹ *Self-Represented Litigants and Civil Case Dispositions in Missouri: An Impact Analysis*, Court Review, by Anne Dannerbeck Janku & Joseph A Vradenburg, Court Review (Missouri: Missouri Court State System, 2011).

²⁰ Montana Legal Services Association, “TIG Final Evaluation Report”, (28 June 2017), online: <https://www.lsc.gov/sites/default/files/attach/2018/08/TIG_14009_LSC_Approved_Final_Report.pdf> at 2.

²¹ James E Cabral et al, “Using Technology to Enhance Access to Justice” (2012) 26:1 84.

Trademark Guide				
NEW JERSEY	English Progress Bar Audio	Crime: Interactive Application for Victims of Crime Compensation Clearing Your Record Online	---	---
DI: Hotline Web Application				
NEW MEXICO	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide DI: Application for Legal Services ; ODR for Dept & Money Cases	Survey (users)	NA
Certificate of Incorporation (Attorney Version) Trademark Guide Bylaws Interview (Attorney Version) Civil Rights Complaint for Non Prisoner				
NEW YORK	English & Spanish (for some forms) Progress Bar	Family Uncontested Divorce Custody/Visitation Enforcement Petition Custody/Visitation Modification Petition Support Enforcement/Violation Petition Guardianship Article 17A Petition Paternity Petition Child Name Change Petition Adult Name Change Petition Support Modification and Enforcement/Violation Small Estate Affidavit	Feedback, Survey, Website statistics (users, court staff, experts)	NY lead in number of assemblies in 2015 on LHI server. Among most popular are divorce DIY forms. Main positive comments are about : empowerment, and time saver (96%). ²²
		Consumer Vacate Default Judgment in a Consumer Debt Dealing with a consumer debt case (Answer, Unfreeze Bank Account Letter, Improper Garnishment Letter, or Motion to Dismiss)		
		Housing Foreclosure Answer HP Action Case Forms to Get Housing Repairs and Stop Harassment (NYC) Licensee Holdover Petition Squatter Holdover Petition Tenant Vacate Default Judgment Tenant Affidavit to Restore Case to Calendar		
		Will & Estates Small Estate Affidavit		
NA: Identity Theft ; Public Benefits				
OHIO	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide NA: Legal Aid Legal Aid Society of Columbus DI: Poverty Affidavit ; SNAP Application ; Eviction Moratorium Declaration Form	Survey (users)	NA
Trademark Guide				
OKLAHOMA	English Progress Bar	Housing Affidavit of Surviving Joint Tenant	Feedback, Survey (users)	NA
Other FEMA Appeals				

²² Rochelle Klemptner, "The Case for Court-Based Document Assembly Programs: A Review of the New York State Court System's 'DIY' Forms" (2014) 41:4 Fordham Urban Law Journal 1189-1226; "DIY User Testimonials - NYA2J", online: <<http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/nya2j/diytestimonials.shtml>>.

		NA: Stop or Lower a Garnishment ; Guardianship of a Minor ; Guardians' Yearly Reports to the Court ; Request to Enforce Non-Custodial Parent Visitation ; Identity Theft ; SCRA Screening and Resource Finder ; Auto Lease Termination Packet ; Cell Phone Service Contract Termination DI: Legal Aid Check Up for Military and Veteran Families		
OREGON	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide NA: Identity Theft - Self Help Form Letters DI: Oregon Circuit Court Interactive Forms (iForms)	---	---
PENNSYLVANIA	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide Ejectment NA: Identity Theft DI: Interactive Forms	Feedback (users)	NA
PUERTO RICO	Spanish (only) Progress Bar	Trademark Guide Violencia doméstica (domestic violence) Declaratoria de herederos (declaration of heirs) Mitigación de pérdidas (mitigation des pertes) Desahucio (eviction) Titularidad ante FEMA (declaration of FEMA – federal agency for assistance)	Survey (users)	NA
RODE ISLAND	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide	---	---
TENNESSEE	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide Family Divorce Forms - No Children NA: Request to Make Payments - Slow Pay Motion DI: Divorce Forms - Families with Children ; Uniform Affidavit of Indigency ; Workers' Compensation Forms	Feedback (users)	NA
TEXAS	English Progress Bar	BENEFITS (COVID-19 Emergency) LSLA COVID Eviction Interview v 3.4 ENG LSLA COVID Foreclosure Interview 1.2 ENG LSLA COVID Benefits Interview v 1.3 Funeral Assistance Interview V 1.0 TAXES Texas Disclosures Assistance Interview V 1.1.3 ENG DI: Guided Forms ; Disaster Assistance	---	---
UTAH	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide NA: Identity Theft DI: Online Eligibility Screening	---	---
VERMONT	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide		
VIRGINIA	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide Family Divorce Dept & Money	Feedback, Survey (users)	NA

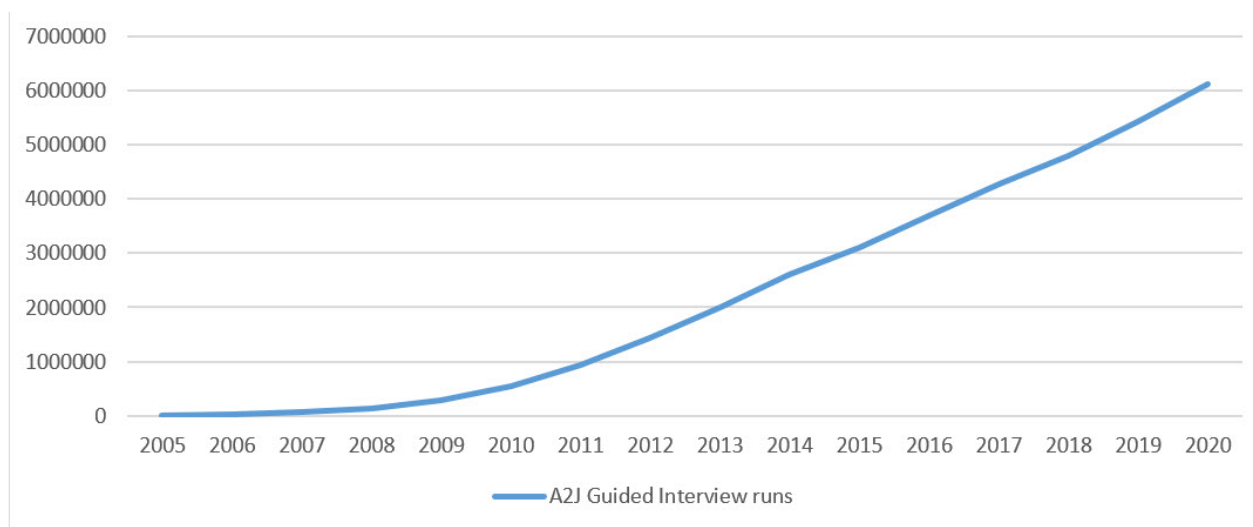
		Bankruptcy Housing Tenant's Assertion and Complaint Other Application for Termination of Stay and Notice to Defendant Court Fee Waiver NA: Identity Theft		
VIRGINIA (WEST)	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide DI: Guided Self-Help Forms	---	---
VIRGIN ISLANDS	English Progress Bar	Trademark Guide DI: Intake Forms	Website metrics, Case statistics (users)	893 intakes, 879 cases opened. Over 1000 people helped. ²³
		Trademark Guide Application for Termination of Stay and Notice to Defendant Housing Letter to Landlord for Return of a Security Deposit NA: Answer in a Residential Landlord-Tenant Case , Motion to Reinstate After Dismissal ; Motion to Vacate Default Judgment and Quash Writ DI: Do it Yourself Forms ; Custodial Power of Attorney	Feedback, survey (users)	NA
WASHINGTON (including District of Columbia)	English Bar Progress			
WISCONSIN	English Bar Progress	Trademark Guide	---	---
WYOMING	English Bar Progress	Trademark Guide Universal Triage System (in development) DI: Apply Online for Legal Aid	---	---
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS	English Bar Progress	Trademark Guide DI: Court Forms	---	---
AMERICAN SAMOA	English Bar Progress	Trademark Guide Testing iPhone browser issue , Illegal Lockout and Utility Shutoff DI: Filing Forms	---	---

²³ "Our 2019 Impact", online: *Legal Services of the Virgin Islands* <<https://lsvilaw.org/>>.

6. Evaluation

Chart 1: A2J Author Usage²⁴

A2J AUTHOR HITS 6,000,000 USAGES!



A2J Author has reached an impressive milestone. In the past 15 years, A2J Guided Interviews have been run more than 6 million times to help low income pro se litigants fill out over 3 million court forms.

6.1 Methods

Most common methods for assessing A2J Author platform are: testing, website metrics (page view, session time, statistics for completed forms, et.c) as well as users' feedback (open comments, surveys). Tracking files into the court system is less common, since it requires more investment in logistics and the collaboration of the courthouse.

6.2 Limitations

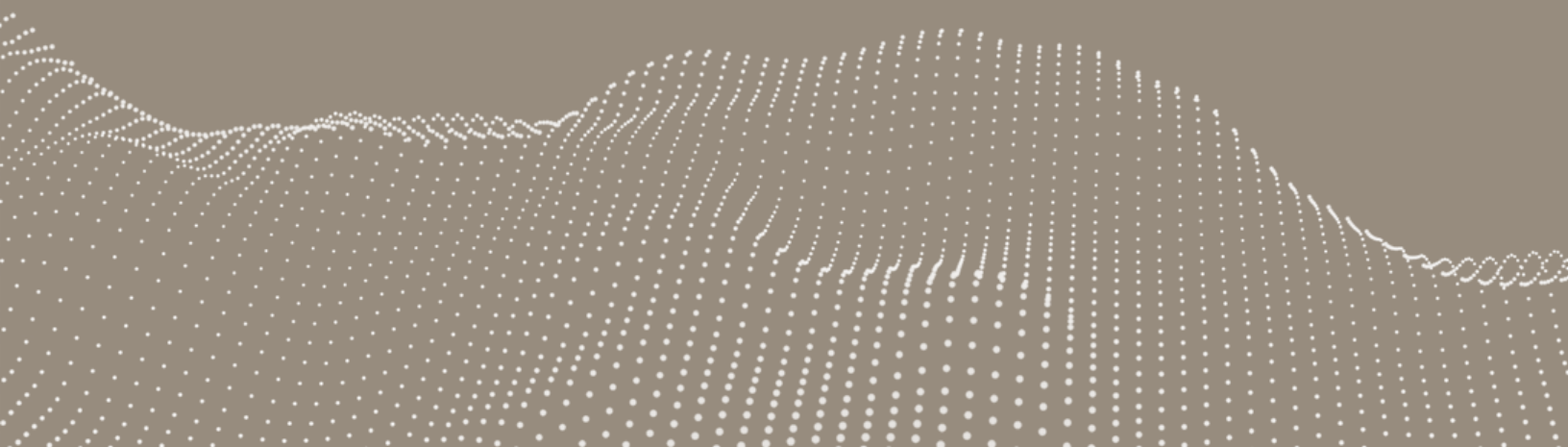
Evaluations mainly focus on efficiency, rather than outcomes or larger social impact. The typical questions asked when evaluating an A2J Author tool concern its implementation, such as usefulness, accessibility, and user satisfaction with the tool : Where did you find out about this tool? Was it hard or easy to use? Did you find the information you were looking for? Socio-demographics data is also collected via users accounts, so as to assess who is using the tool and for what type of legal problem. However, data collected is not always published or publicly available.

²⁴ note 5.

Conclusion

There are many reasons for using A2J Author. The software is freely available to non-profit organizations. The interface is user-friendly. Privacy and security features are robust. And it has institutional support.

A2J Guided Interviews aim at improving access to justice for SRLs. How to assess its impact? We address this question in another report. We developed an evaluation model that builds on lessons learned from previous research, and that can be adapted to any tool development stage.



Team



Fabien Gélinas,

Team Leader, Sub-Project Head & Professor at McGill University

Professor Fabien Gélinas, Ad. E., teaches and conducts research in the areas of international dispute resolution, common law and civil law contracts, commercial law and legal theory. Professor Gélinas is a cofounder of the Montreal Cyberjustice Laboratory. He leads ACT Working Group II, and heads subproject 8 on Tools for SRLs.



Alexandra Pasca,

Research Assistant & Doctoral Candidate at McGill University

Ms Pasca conducts empirical research on reform of civil procedure and legal ethics.

References

- [1] Cabral, James E et al, “Using Technology to Enhance Access to Justice” (2012) 26:1 84.
- [2] Greacen, John M, Amy Dunn Johnson & Vincent Morris, “From Market Failure to 100% Access: Toward a Civil Justice Continuum” (2015) 37:4 University of Arkansas at Little Rock Law Review 551–572.
- [3] Klempner, Rochelle, “The Case for Court-Based Document Assembly Programs: A Review of the New York State Court System’s ‘DIY’ Forms” (2014) 41:4 Fordham Urban Law Journal 1189–1226.
- [4] Pasca, Alexandra et al, “A Step-by-Step Evaluation Model for Legal Tools” (2020) CLEO & Montreal Cyberjustice Laboratory.
- [5] Zorza, Richard, “An Overview of Self-Represented Litigation Innovation, Its Impact, and an Approach for the Future: An Invitation to Dialogue” (2009) 43:3 Family Law Quarterly 519–543.
- [6] CLEO, “About Guided Pathways”, online: <<https://stepstojustice.ca/guided-pathways/home>>.
- [7] Janku, Anne Dannerbeck & Joseph A Vradenburg, *Self-Represented Litigants and Civil Case Dispositions in Missouri: An Impact Analysis*, Court Review, by Anne Dannerbeck Janku & Joseph A Vradenburg, Court Review (Missouri: Missouri Court State System, 2011).
- [8] Margaret, “Document assembly tools to automatically create forms”, (28 June 2016), online: *Justice Innovation* <<https://justiceinnovation.law.stanford.edu/document-assembly-tools-to-automatically-create-forms/>>.
- [9] Montana Legal Services Association, “TIG Final Evaluation Report”, (28 June 2017), online: <https://www.lsc.gov/sites/default/files/attach/2018/08/TIG_14009_LSC_Approved_Final_Report.pdf>.
- [10] Sheldon, Kerry, “Michigan Legal Help Evaluation Report: An examination of the efficacy of the Michigan Legal Help website in helping self-represented litigants successfully navigate the divorce process”, (January 2015), online: <<https://www.srln.org/node/450/evaluation-michigan-legal-help-evaluation-report-michigan-2015>>.
- [11] “A2J Author”, online: <<https://www.a2jauthor.org/>>.
- [12] “A2J.org”, online: <<https://a2j.org/>>.
- [13] “Demonstrated Capabilities | A2J Author”, online: <<https://www.a2jauthor.org/content/demonstrated-capabilities>>.
- [14] “DIY User Testimonials - NYA2J”, online: <<http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/nya2j/diytestimonials.shtml>>.
- [15] “Law Help Interactive”, online: <<https://lawhelpinteractive.org/>>.
- [16] “LawHelp.org”, online: <<https://www.lawhelp.org/>>.
- [17] “Our 2019 Impact”, online: *Legal Services of the Virgin Islands* <<https://lsvilaw.org/>>.

ACT

AUTONOMY
THROUGH CYBERJUSTICE
TECHNOLOGIES

Contacts

Address

Laboratoire de cyberjustice
Centre de recherche en droit public
Faculté de droit
Université de Montréal
C.P. 6128, succ. Centre-ville
Montréal (Québec) Canada
H3C 3J7

Media

cyberjustice.ca
info@cyberjustice.ca

