

Online Document Assembly in Clinical Settings

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Technology Initiative Grants Conference

Austin Texas

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Clinical Settings

Large group setting where a specific task is achieved

Training and doing and often review of work product

Generally pre-screened to ascertain ability to follow instructions or level of support needed, and area of law



Clinics using document assembly

Triage/pre screening

Space and method to review one on one documents, review can be procedural, informational or substantive or both

Terminals that SRLs can use with proctor for the whole group, proctor does not need to be attorney

Use of statewide website for referrals info both at hotline and SHCs and public libraries or law libraries and other resources on site (social worker or agencies) or videos to view



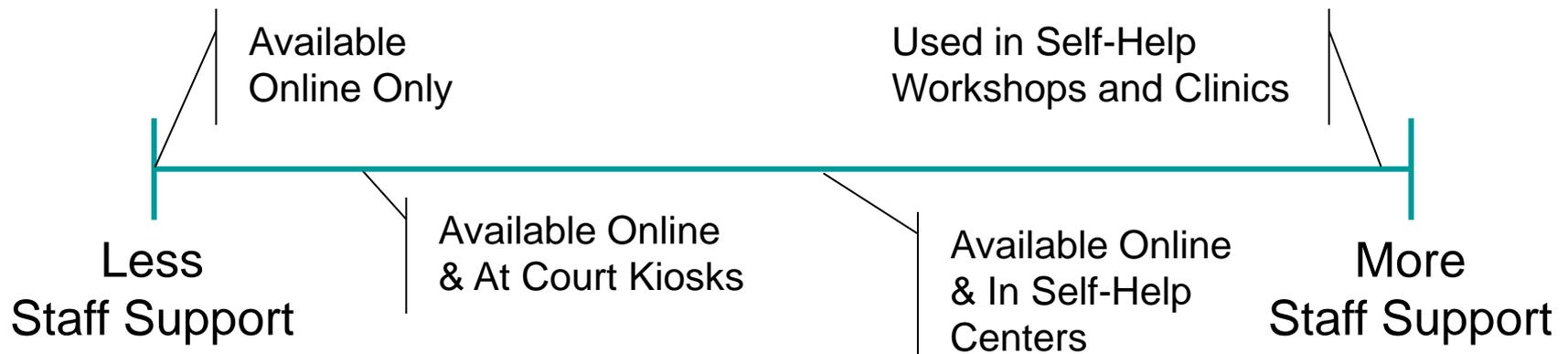
Document Assembly

NPADO is used by many courts, including

- Idaho
- California
- New York
- Montana
- Minnesota
- Washington DC



How Do Courts Use Document Assembly?



Work Area



A2J/HD Document Assembly



Los Angeles Superior Court



Los Angeles Superior Court



Meeting With A Pro Bono Lawyer



LASC Self Help Center located in Downtown LA

21 Family Law courtrooms, up to 300 litigants per day

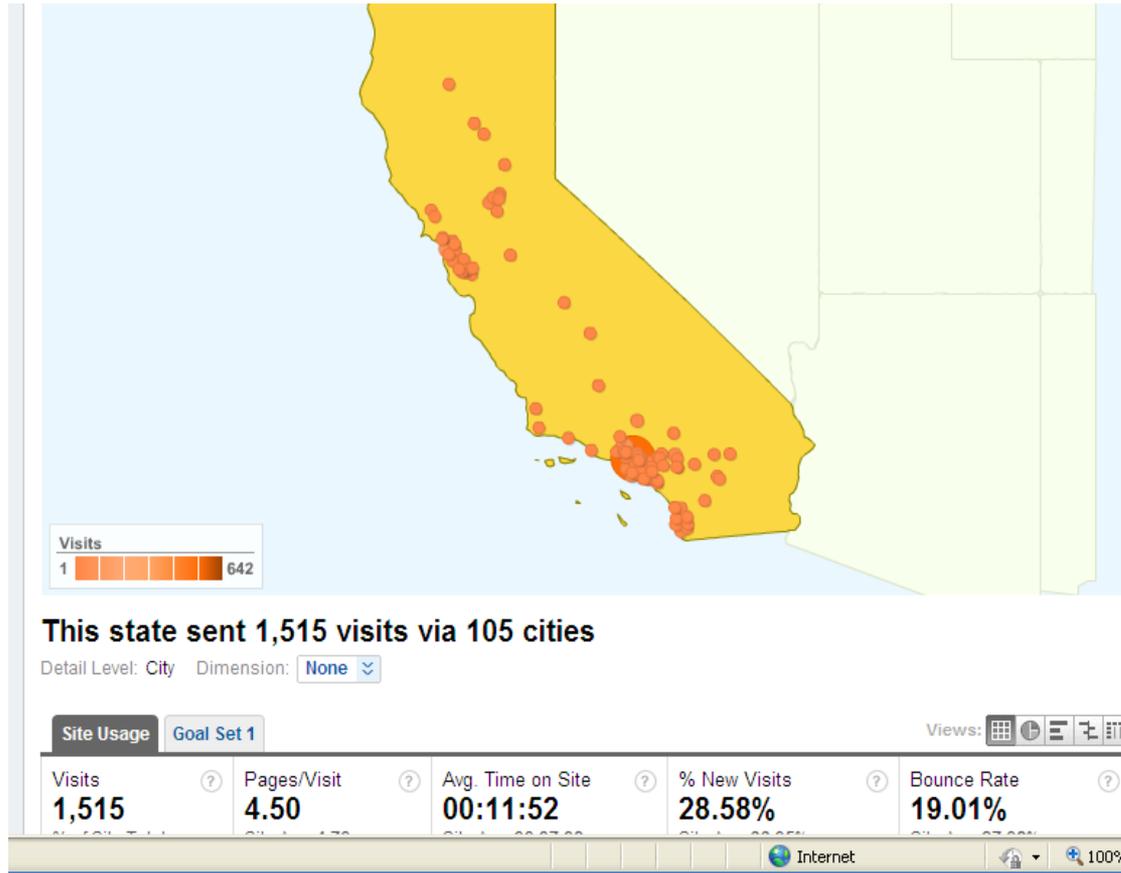
Service delivery model: Workshops & Clinics

90 Workshops/Clinics per month using 17 HotDocs

Programs developed for all stages of divorce, paternity, guardianship, and civil harassment



LHI use in CA since 12/14



LHI use in CA since 12/14

This state sent 1,515 visits via 105 cities

Detail Level: City Dimension: **None** ▾

Site Usage **Goal Set 1** Views:    

Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate
1,515 % of Site Total: 9.64%	4.50 Site Avg: 4.79 (-6.17%)	00:11:52 Site Avg: 00:07:08 (66.30%)	28.58% Site Avg: 66.05% (-56.73%)	19.01% Site Avg: 27.93% (-31.94%)

	Detail Level: City ▾	Visits ↓	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate
1.	Los Angeles	642	5.18	00:15:45	26.17%	17.13%
2.	Anaheim	152	4.32	00:17:32	7.24%	7.89%
3.	San Francisco	112	4.38	00:03:42	40.18%	22.32%
4.	Pacoima	98	2.91	00:05:13	7.14%	15.31%
5.	Santa Ana	71	4.52	00:18:01	16.90%	9.86%
6.	Buena Park	62	2.89	00:06:47	8.06%	22.58%
7.	San Bernardino	47	4.00	00:08:22	34.04%	12.77%
8.	Whittier	44	3.43	00:06:10	4.55%	13.64%
9.	Norwalk	28	3.82	00:10:34	7.14%	10.71%
10.	Lancaster	20	3.30	00:06:24	65.00%	10.00%

Filter City: **containing** **Go** **Advanced Filter** Go to: **1** Show rows: **10** **1 - 10 of 105**

Internet 100%



Introduction of Automated Forms Programs in Workshops

2006 Pilot Project: Develop and Implement Use of HotDocs Programs in LASC's Self Help Divorce Workshop Series

Collaboration of Los Angeles Superior Court and California Administrative Offices of the Court (AOC) (Harry Jacobs, Esq.)

(Pre-HotDocs) 3 Part Divorce Workshop Series from start to finish in default cases.

Workshop 1: Initial Filing of Summons and Petition

Workshop 2: Mandatory Financial Disclosure Forms

Workshop 3: Preparation of Default Judgment



Pre-HotDocs Dissolution Workshop Approach

Classroom style setting, 10-12 litigants

Litigants provided blank court forms.

Instructor leads litigants through each form, item by item, teaching necessary concepts of California law.

Litigants hand write all forms.

After classroom-style session, JusticeCorps volunteers work 1:1 with litigants to review forms.

Litigant given “ticket” to next workshop.



Problems with the Pre-HotDocs Workshop Approach

Length of Time of Workshop

Litigant Fatigue

Quality of Education

Legibility & Accuracy of Handwritten Forms

Clerical Errors Causing Rejections



Goals in Turning to Automated Forms

Decrease the length of time of the workshop.

Decrease the amount of hand writing for the litigant.

Increase the time available for teaching legal concepts.

Increase the time available for litigants to focus on key concepts and make informed decisions.

Improve the legibility & accuracy of forms.

Reduce rejections due to clerical errors.



Integrating HotDocs into Workshop Setting

HotDocs Programs designed to be used before the start of each workshop.

01/07: JusticeCorp volunteer opens HotDocs program, completes the interview for the litigant.

01/10: Litigant completes interview, JusticeCorps volunteers serve as room monitors.

The program generates partially completed PDF court forms.

During live presentation, the instructor teaches the legal concepts, and the litigant completes the forms.



Key Features of the HotDocs Program

Litigants are only asked a question once.

The programs fill in simple information (e.g. names in captions), but also do more complex work (checking boxes if certain facts are present).

The program uses information from earlier workshops to fill in \ information at later workshops.

Litigant information stored under workshop username and password for \ future reference.



Core Idea of This Approach

This approach has the computer do what it does best:

Remembering Information.

Applying rules consistently.

Putting Information in the right place on the paperwork.

People do what they do best:

Explain complex ideas.

Understand what litigants are trying to say.



Benefits of Automated Forms in the Workshop Setting

Length of time of workshops reduced.

Litigant fatigue reduced, increase in litigant's ability to focus on legal concepts and make informed decisions.

More time for focusing on teaching key legal concepts.

More time for 1:1 review and questions.

Legible, accurate documents.

Document review easier and faster.

Information stored for next step in case.



Impact on Workshop Curriculum

Presentations more focused on specific legal concepts.

Development of teaching tools:

Visual images of legal concepts

Worksheets

Plain language summaries of key code sections



HotDocs Template Development Process

Study of the current process.

Template Developer and Subject Matter Expert.

Programs designed to fit into the process with the fewest changes.

Review of programs by Court's Attorney Manager.

Testing of programs with actual program users.

On-going support and updates.



Challenges Overcome

Time & money for development of programs

Staff buy in

Litigant buy in

Initial and on going training

Expansion & collaboration with Legal Services



Collaborations with Legal Services

Collaborations between Los Angeles Superior Court, California AOC and Legal Service Providers.

Civil Harassment Program- LAFLA, NLS & LASC

Guardianship Program created by Harry Jacobs, Esq. (AOC) & Leslie Parrish, Esq. of Public Counsel.

Domestic Violence Program created by Harry Jacobs, Esq. & Diane Trunk, Esq. Self Help Domestic Violence Clinics, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles.



Remote Attorney Review

Remote Review: HotDocs PDFs and word documents may be e-mailed to off site reviewing attorneys.

Allows for geographical expansion of services across Los Angeles County.

Next Step: create pro bono panels to provide remote attorney review of documents before filing.



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Considerations/Protocols

Are records kept for the clinic attendees?

Optimal level of staffing between attorney and non attorneys?

Disclaimers to be provided upfront?

Scope of service? Information, advice, client or applicant? Referral to pro bono or not?

Will the staff does fill out forms or review paperwork?

Problem resolution/complaint system?



Questions? Ideas, Contacts?

Online Document Assembly, LawHelp Interactive
shared infrastructure: <http://www.probono.net/dasupport>

Self Help Information and Resources, Self Represented
Litigant Network, <http://www.selfhelpsupport.org>

More information about the Los Angeles Superior Court's online
document assembly workshop programs: Michelle Hopkins, Esq
MHopkins@LASuperiorCourt.org

More information about clinics using LHI and online
document assembly: Claudia Johnson, Pro Bono Net
cjohnson@probono.net, 509-396-7934

