Ohio Voice of the Customer Landscape Workshop III
December 1, 2017
Executive Summary

- Of the 800 respondents, **58% had used the Internet to search for legal help**
- **Costs and confusion** about the legal system were by far the biggest access hurdles
- Certain groups in particular perceived themselves as being highly susceptible to these legal barriers:
  1. Ohioans with a family income of $30k/year or lower
  2. Urban residents
  3. Ohioans with less than a bachelor’s degree

- **Support for a legal access portal was strong (68%)**
- **Target strategies to support portal success/adoPTION:**
  - **Directness and simplicity** – eliminating “the use of legal mumbo jumbo.”
  - **Cost-savings** – (ex. 35% could not afford any limited scope representation) giving users valuable, contextualized information
  - **Security protection** – moderate hesitancy existed for portal concepts, and respondents desired to see a reputable, trustworthy website
Qualtrics leveraged for survey responses

Leveraging State Partners

Fielded through:
- Distribution through Legal Aid Societies
- Corporation for Appalachian Development 5%

Fielded through:
- Preexisting, Qualtrics-specific survey pool
- Conventional advertising techniques (e.g. Facebook, online shopping) 95%

Respondent requirements:
- At least 50% making $30k/year or less
- At least 15% self-classified rural respondents, 40% minimum urban
Demographics mostly mirror OH population

- **51%** makes $30k or less per year (family income)
- **75/88** counties represented
- **Mean age** = 45.5 years old
- **26%** of all Ohioans have a bachelor's degree or higher
- **~6%** identified as Latina/o, Asian, and/or Native American

### Income/year

- $100k+ 11%
- $75 - $100k 6%
- $60 - $75k 6%
- $50 - $60k 7%
- $40 - $50k 10%
- $30 - $40k 10%
- $20 - $30k 20%
- $10 - $20k 17%
- Less than $10k 14%

### Geography

- Rural 17%
- Suburban 41%
- Urban 42%

### Age

- 18-21 5%
- 22-34 25%
- 35-44 19%
- 45-64 38%
- 65 or older 14%

### Education

- Less than high school 3%
- High school diploma or GED 28%
- Some college (includes associate degree) 38%
- Bachelor degree or more 31%

### Race

- White (non-Hispanic) 78%
- Black / AA 16%
- Native American 2%
- Latina/o, Asian, and/or Native American 6%

Note: OH life expectancy (77.8) used for upward range for 65+
A majority of demographic groups have searched for legal help

“Have you ever used the Internet to look for help about a legal problem, either for yourself or for someone else?”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Top legal searches predictively dealt with family, consumer, traffic, and housing

[If yes to having searched for legal problem]
“What kind of legal problem(s) was it? Write up to three responses.”

Other common responses included property issues, employment issues, accidents, and drug offenses

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Costs and confusion dominate legal access hurdles

“Have you experienced any of the following challenges when dealing with a legal problem, either for yourself or for someone else? Select all that apply.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>N = 798</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can't afford an attorney</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court fees</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion about court</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time off work</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of transportation</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability limitations</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for my safety</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language barriers</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration concerns</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affordability, Court Fees, and Transportation reporting 10% higher for those <$30K household income

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Note: Respondents choosing “I have never dealt with a legal problem” and/or “I don’t know / Not sure” were excluded.
Costs were overwhelmingly cited as the most common legal challenge

“I believe the legal system is a money game. If you have money, you can buy your way out of legal issues. If you don’t, you suffer.”

“The legal system favors large corporations who can afford expensive lawyers.”

“When looking for legal help, you have to pay for something even for simple questions answered.”

“Court fees are outrageous.”

“We filed bankruptcy. The only challenge we really had was finding the money to pay for the attorney. Especially since we were broke.”

“You have to pay exorbitant amounts of money, and even getting to be heard in court takes longer sometimes than just riding out the problem naturally.”

“Trying to find a lawyer that would not charge hour fees just to find out they could not help.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
61% saw a need for more legal education

“It would help my family to have a better understanding of the legal system and how the court works.”

“It’s just so complicated. It’s hard to even know where to start, let alone find what your specific needs are. I think they do that on purpose.”

“I need lots of help to navigate through [legal challenges].”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
With lower income again signaling more support for increased legal education

“It would help my family to have a better understanding of the legal system and how the court works.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
And those with less education also desiring more legal education

“It would help my family to have a better understanding of the legal system and how the court works.”


Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Confusion on the legal system’s complexity was widespread

“Dealing with the confusing rules of the legal system and courts cause significant, often debilitating, anxiety.”

“I couldn’t understand the legal stuff on the website, ended up going to a lawyer through my husband’s union.”

“I don’t understand legal talk.”

“It was hard to understand how to plead when I received my driving ticket. It confused me why I had to plead the way I did to make the charges and fee less.”

“Knowing how to even start! Afraid of my lack of knowledge. To trust myself to make any choices or decisions needed to move forward in what to do next…”

“The number one problem is not understanding it. There are a lot of questions, but when reading things or trying to research things I do not understand them.”

“The way they speak isn’t even English! The whole system seems to be designed to confuse lay people.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Price sensitivity for limited scope representation

“Many people can’t afford a lawyer to take their entire case. What is the most that you would pay to talk to a lawyer for help only about how to represent yourself?”

“[It’s a challenge] to find someone knowledgeable enough to answer a single obscure legal question, but nothing that merits a retainer or a $300 fee.”

“I couldn’t afford the hourly rate of it all.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
68% see the need for a portal that provides relevant information and tools

“There is a need for a website in Ohio with useful information and tools about legal problems.”

60%+ support seen across all demographic groups, including those with bachelor degrees and those making over $100k/year

Example [For Illinois Legal Aid Online]: In 2015 alone, there were 3 million visitors to the website.
Certain groups perceived this need with more intensity

“There is a need for a website in Ohio with useful information and tools about legal problems.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Close to half believe the portal should mostly target low-income people

“The focus of such a website should be people with low income.”

“86% of the civil legal problems reported by low-income Americans in the past year received inadequate or no legal help.”

-LSC 2017 Justice Gap Study
Low-income people believed this more strongly

“The focus of such a website should be people with low income.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
In addition to those with less education...

“The focus of such a website should be people with low income.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Urban respondents also favored a low-income focus as well

“The focus of such a website should be people with low income.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Google is the main legal entry point; result multiplicity can exacerbate confusion

[If yes to having searched for legal problem]
“Where did you search for help on the Internet? Select all that apply.”

- Google: 396
- Legal Aid website(s): 167
- Government websites: 134
- Free Legal Answers: 96
- General information websites: 79
- Bar websites: 53
- Legalzoom.com: 51
- Social media: 39
- Avvo: 13

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Lawyer availability and legal information were most sought after

[If yes to having searched for legal problem] “What did you search for on the Internet? Select all that apply.”

- Legal information and/or advice: 346
- Lawyers in my area: 162
- Legal Aid in my area: 127
- Forms: 108
- Information about lawyer costs: 85
- Other court information (ex. directions, fees): 75
- Information on how courtrooms work: 48

67% of those searching for “Legal Aid in my area” made $30k/year or lower

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Clear consensus: an effective portal would be a major step in reducing these access gaps

“Such a website, especially if for a nominal fee, [where] we could discuss issues with a lawyer, would be a benefit to society. I'm for it.”

“When getting divorced, I couldn't afford an attorney so I tried to use a kit found at Office Max. Several years after a felony conviction, I cannot find information or assistance to have my personal record expunged.”

“It can be ambiguous and hard for the individual to understand. It seems like the law system is not made for the small person.”

“They use too many big words + it's rigged against us.”

“I want a website that is written by lawyers…and verified that information is 100% correct. I've seen too much contradictory information online. Also, use simpler language and shorter explanations. Hard to understand and so overwhelming.”

“Because of my low income, and never having used a lawyer, I didn’t know what to expect when going before the court.”

“The biggest issue aside from money was the lack of knowledge of my own rights. I have had…pro bono attorneys who weren’t helpful in showing me my rights and how to address things in a more informed manner.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Furthermore, there is general acceptance for portal concepts (with some ambiguity)

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Transparency and a solid reputation will be key to earning user trust

“If the website referred you to a lawyer, would you trust the referral?”
Answer: “I don’t know/ Not sure (optional- please explain why)”

“Because most referrals usually are because the lawyer has given them incentive to refer them.”

“Depends on the source of the website and its funding.”

“I would probably look into this person's ratings etc. first if available.”

“I would want to know how the website goes about making its decisions on referrals.”

“If just one I would suspect this was an ad but if several in area I would consider”

“It depends on the pool from which they chose and transparency in selection process of lawyers/offices to refer to.”

“Want to make sure the person is not biased. Has a good work reputation.”

“Only if the lawyer had been previously vetted and the website only had lawyers who they trusted.”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Privacy concerns a potential barrier

“If a legal resource website collected additional information from you, it could potentially provide more help for your legal problem. Please check each box containing information that you would NOT be willing to share?”

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
And full mobile capabilities will also be essential to ensuring a broad reach.

“How do you usually get on the internet?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>$30/k or less per year</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Has searched for legal help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-personal computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Computer</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example [For Illinois Legal Aid Online]: Nearly half of their 2015 traffic came through mobile devices, and that percentage is only expected to increase.

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017; LSC
### Top easy-to-use websites (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Number of Mentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahoo</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bing</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LegalZoom</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtube</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avvo</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebay</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Voice of the Customer Study, 2017
Central lessons to take from the VOC survey

- Top barriers: legal costs, confusion about the legal system, and transportation
- Strong support for portal, especially among groups in need of the most aid
- Target principles for the portal according to respondents:
  - Digestible to the general public
  - Reputable (e.g. with lawyer referrals, third-party sourcing)
  - Secure and accessible platform (including confidentiality standards)