POV & HMW

The Legal System

Lauren Kim, Alyssa Landa, Nicole Nguyen, Alexis Young

CS 147 A2

INTRO – TEAM MEMBERS

Team

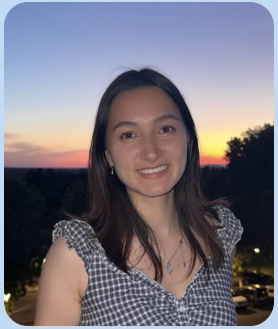


Lauren Kim

Major: Computer Science

Year: 2028

Favorite app & why: Google Maps because I love to organize places w/ lists while traveling!



Alyssa Landa

Major: Symbolic Systems

Year: 2027

Favorite app & why: Beli because it's fun and useful to keep track of where you've eaten!



Nicole Nguyen

Major: Symbolic Systems

Year: 2027

Favorite app & why: Duolingo because the gamification and scary owl actually works!



Alexis Young

Major: Computer Science

Year: 2027

Favorite app & why: Spotify because I'm always listening to music!

Focused Domain

LAST WEEK'S MAIN INSIGHT

"Whether or not people have an attorney, there is need at the level of the individual, including their emotional state, confidence, and ability."

Litigants





Key Context: What is serving?

FROM CALIFORNIA COURTS WEBSITE

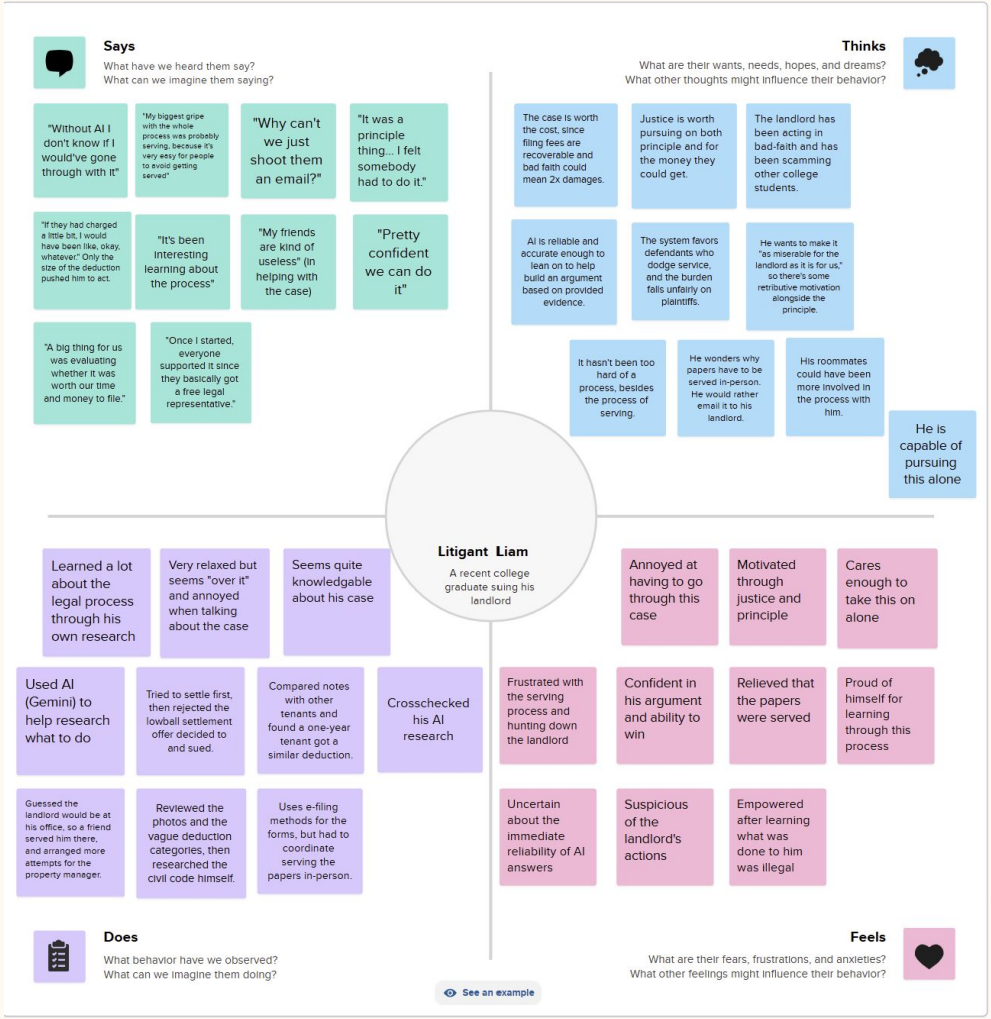
“Serving court papers is an important and required part of the legal process. If you don’t do it correctly, your case can’t move forward.”

- After filing certain forms, you must give a copy to the other party.
- But you can’t hand them the papers yourself, you have to follow a specific process called service.
- To properly serve your court papers, a third party (someone not involved in the case) has to physically hand them to the other party. This person is called a “server”
- Rules differ by court and by type of case, but the most common method is personal service, where the server hands the papers directly to the other party. If many attempts have been made, mail or public notice, are other options.

Litigant Liam

Empathy Map

[LINK HERE]



INTERVIEW RESULTS – CONTRADICTIONS AND INSIGHT

Litigant Liam

Insight

Insights

The **pain point is logistical** (serving and finding addresses), not the forms or the law.

Even the average person, like a recent college graduate, has a **strong sense of justice** .

Say

"It was a principle thing... I felt somebody had to do it."

"My biggest gripe with the whole process was probably serving, because it's very easy for people to avoid getting served"

Think

AI is reliable and accurate enough to lean on to help build an argument based on provided evidence.

Feel

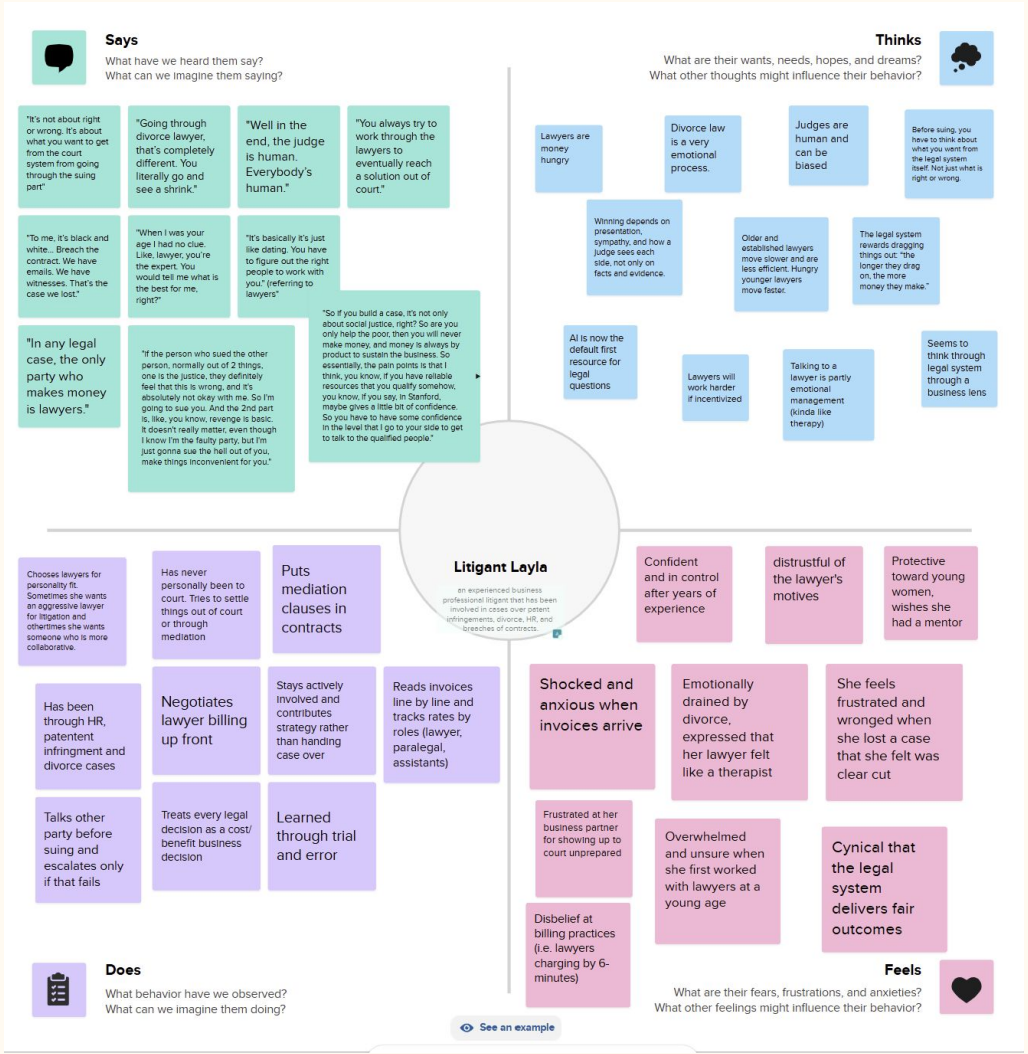
Frustrated with the serving process and hunting down the landlord

INTERVIEW RESULTS – OBSERVATIONS

Litigant Layla

Empathy

LINK HERE



Litigant Layla

Insight

Insight

Litigants expect court decisions to be based on who's right, but outcomes can depend on costs, presentation, and judges' personal judgments. Many only realize this after losing significant money, time, or even their case.

Say

"if the person who sued the other person, normally out of 2 things, one is the justice, they definitely feel that this is wrong, and it's absolutely not okay with me. So I'm going to sue you. And the 2nd part is, like, you know, revenge is basic. It doesn't really matter, even though I know I'm the faulty party, but I'm just gonna sue the hell out of you, make things inconvenient for you."

Think

Before suing, you have to think about what you want from the legal system itself. Not just what is right or wrong.

The legal system rewards dragging things out: "the longer they drag on, the more money they make."

Feel

She feels frustrated and wronged when she lost a case that she felt was clear cut

Litigant Liam POV

WE MET …

Litigant Liam, a recent college graduate, who is suing his ex-landlord in a small claims case for withholding the deposit of his and his roommates' college apartment.

WE WERE SURPRISED TO LEARN …

That he felt the research process has been overall not too difficult and is confident in his case, but that the biggest pain point was serving the papers to the other party.

WE WONDER IF THESE MEANS …

People easily have access to knowledge about the legal system, it's the physical processes that it requires that are very cumbersome.

IT WOULD BE GAME CHANGING TO …

Facilitate the physical, logistical processes of the legal system into a more convenient and accessible experience.

Litigant Layla POV

WE MET …

Litigant Layla, an experienced business professional with a background in engineering that has been involved in cases over patent infringements, divorce, HR, and breaches of contracts.

WE WERE SURPRISED TO LEARN …

Courtroom outcomes can be highly subjective based on costs, presentations, personal judgments.

WE WONDER IF THESE MEANS …

Litigants who know how to present themselves well/who can afford lawyers who do have an advantage that has little to do with the facts of their case

IT WOULD BE GAME CHANGING TO …

Help people stand on “equal ground” in a courtroom no matter their resources.

Litigant Bob POV

WE MET ...

Litigant Bob, a real estate professional who is suing for rights over land he bought in an auction 3 years ago.

WE WERE SURPRISED TO LEARN ...

Bob feels confident in his case, the only reason why it is still ongoing is because he is waiting to be heard in court.

WE WONDER IF THESE MEANS ...

Passionate litigants are more likely to get justice.

IT WOULD BE GAME CHANGING TO ...

Incite more confidence and sense of justice to those potentially entering legal battles.

Top 3 HMWs

#1

Physical Process

How might we make the physical processes more comfortable, convenient, and accessible?

#2

Community Support

How might we leverage community to place less responsibility on the individual?

#3

Personalized Guidance

How might we empower individuals by providing personalized legal guidance?

HMWs → Solutions

#1

Physical Process

A one-tap app that starts a service attempt and automatically logs the time and location, then fills out the proof of service form. If an attempt fails, it saves the record as evidence of a diligent attempt, which can matter if the court asks for proof.

#2

Community Support

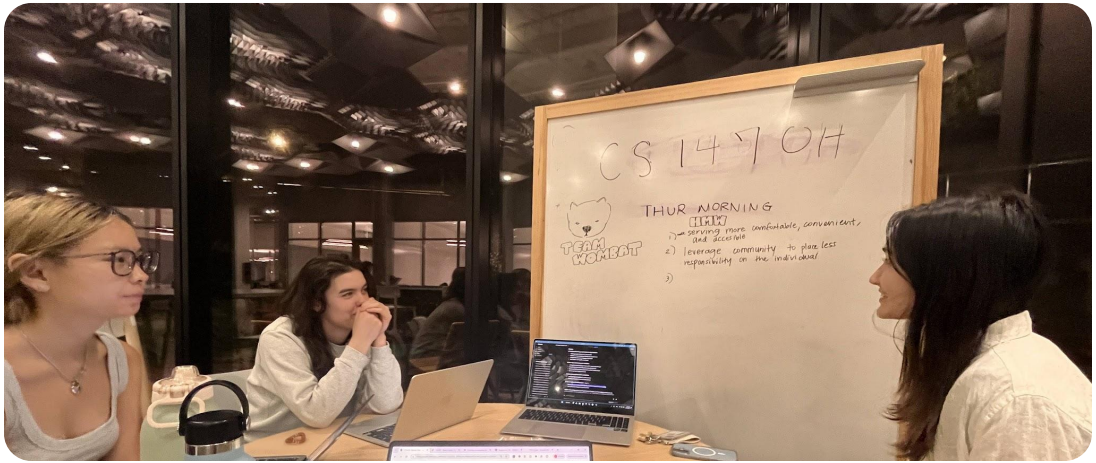
A peer-support system that pairs people going through similar cases. They can vent, share what they've learned, and navigate the process together.

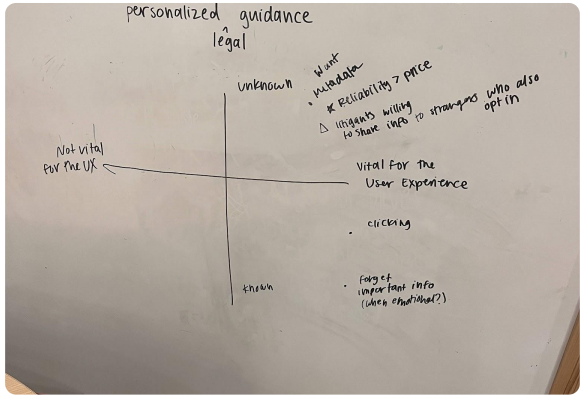
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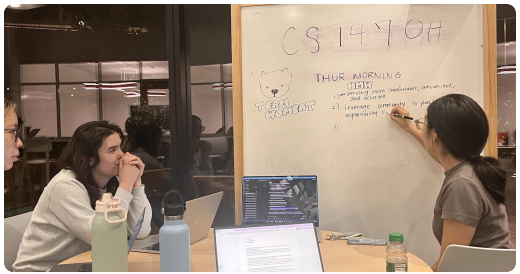
Personalized Guidance

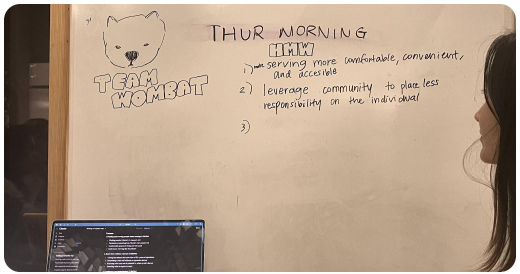
A marketplace for finding process servers, with reliability ratings and verified credentials, so litigants can choose someone dependable.

HMWs → Solutions









Assumption quadrants :
We chose the assumptions to test by seeing which ones were vital for user experience & unknown!!

#1 Automated Service Attempt Tracking and Documentation

Assumption: Servers struggle to accurately recall time-related details after a service attempt which can lead to errors in their Proof of Service documentation.

EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPE

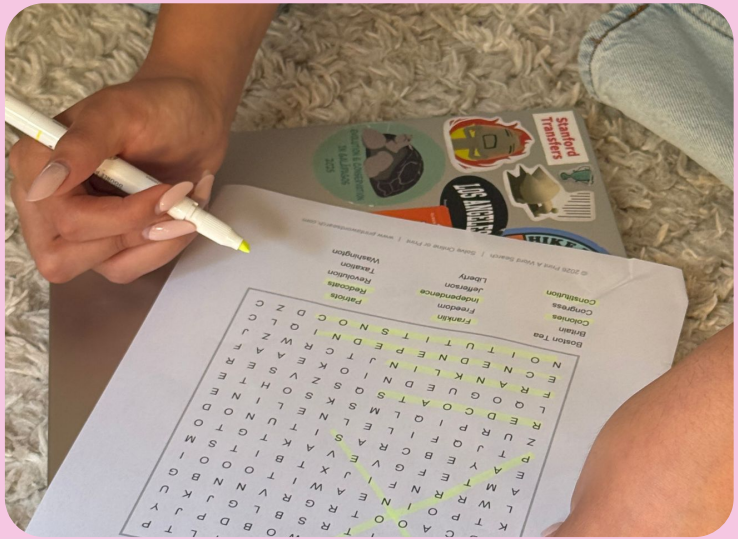
Artifact: Paper, trashcan, crossword puzzle, notepad, timestamps.

Roles & Why Relevant: Two participants simulated serving documents while timing was recorded.

Task: Walked outside to dispose paper, then solved a crossword puzzle indoors.

Why it works: Distraction and delayed recall simulate real-world memory decay after tasks

Recruited through random outreach @ Kimball Hall Warm Bev Wednesday



Participant #1 completing 2nd task – a crossword.



Participant #2 completing 1st task – going outside to throw away a piece of paper.

#1 Automated Service Attempt Tracking and Documentation

Assumption: Servers struggle to accurately recall time-related details after a service attempt which can lead to errors in their Proof of Service documentation.

WHAT WE LEARNED

What didn't work:

The task was simpler than actual legal service, and we couldn't test how stress or interactions with recipients affect memory.

What worked:

Both participants inaccurately estimated the task's duration (actual: 3 minutes), despite reporting moderate to high confidence (3/5 and 4/5).

IMPLICATIONS & VALIDITY

What this means for solution:

Automatic timestamps could reduce reliance on memory, improve documentation accuracy, and simplify completing Proof of Service forms.

Validity of Assumption:

* **Valid:** Both participants demonstrated difficulty accurately recalling time-related details after a delay
* **Limits:** Only two participants were tested and the experiment didn't evaluate location recall or real legal service conditions.

#2 Device clicker to track information about events

Assumption: Servers will remember to press start and stop on their own, without reminders, while focused on something else.

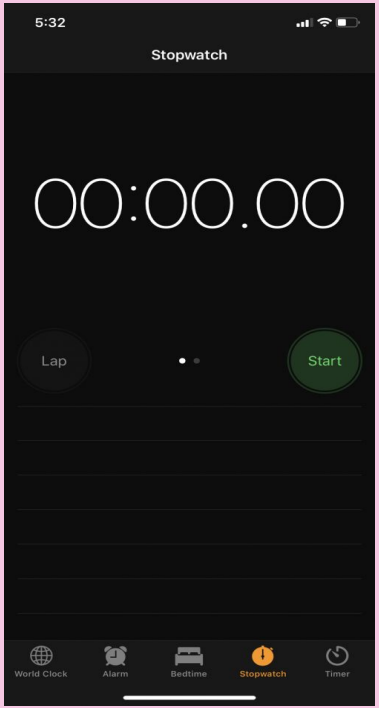
EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPE

Artifact: iPhone stopwatch timer

Roles & Why Relevant: Friend at dinner told to press start and stop on a stopwatch at the beginning and end of a meal. Meant to replicate main event being something distracting and other than pressing the button.

Environment: Lakeside dining hall. I had her use her own phone and put it away after pressing start. Did not give any reminders during the meal.

Why it works: Participant must remember to physically press button so that information can be recorded. The environment is meant to simulate the normal activities a person encounters while remembering something not as relevant.



#2 Device clicker to track information about events

Assumption: Servers forget important information about filling out information (like time signed etc.) leading to issues in paperwork.

WHAT WE LEARNED

What didn't work:

She remembered only by repeatedly reminding herself. Because she did not want to forget, the task stayed on her mind for the whole meal and interfered with normal conversation and her train of thought.

What worked:

Participant successfully remembered to press button.

IMPLICATIONS & VALIDITY

What this means for solution:

* The solution should not rely on the user's memory. It could use context to prompt them instead, such as detecting arrival at the dining hall and suggesting they start, then detecting that they are leaving and reminding them to stop, so the user feels no pressure to remember.
* This is a new assumption to test: a notification may turn out to be a different kind of interruption.

Validity of Assumption:

* **Valid:** People will remember to press the button.
* **Limits:** Remembering is effortless. We measured whether she pressed it, when the real cost was what it took to remember.

#3 Experience Prototype for Case-buddy matching app

Assumption: Litigants are willing to share personal details about their case with a stranger.

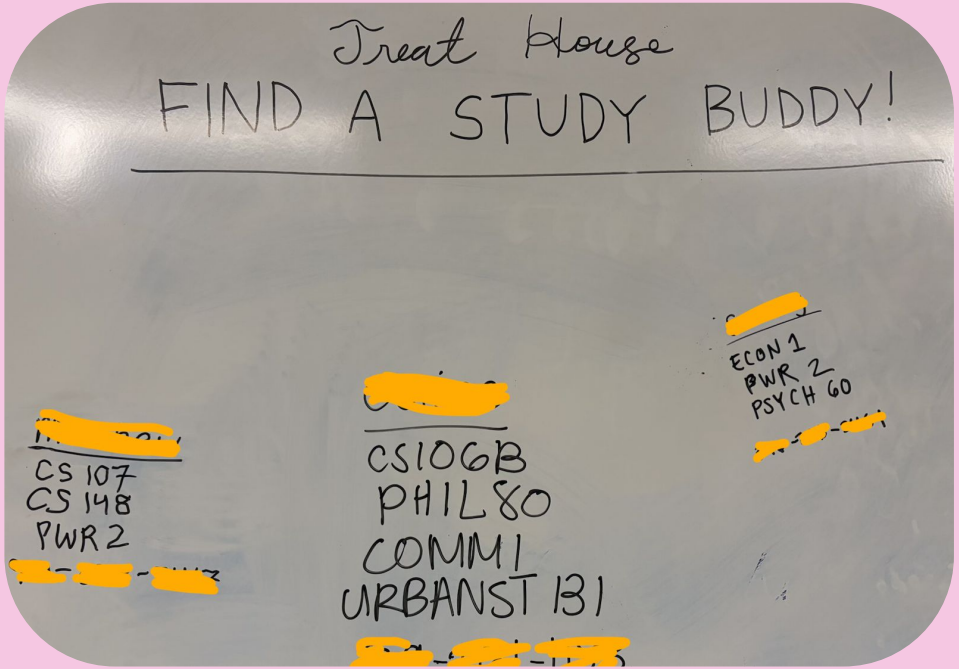
EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPE

Artifact: Sign-up board at Treat House framed as “Find a Study Buddy” (name, classes, phone).

Task: Voluntarily offer information on board to be paired with someone going through a similar (difficult) situation.

Roles & Why Relevant: Dorm residents participated, which was a way of matching strangers in shared context.

Environment: Dorm space w/ strangers & acquaintances (inherent social risk).



#3 Experience Prototype for Case-buddy matching app

Assumption: Litigants are willing to share personal details about their case with a stranger.

WHAT WE LEARNED

What didn't work:

- People said they would want buddies for classes where they lacked existing friends (need drives willingness).
- Shared with a stranger only if that person had also posted on the board.

What worked:

Mutual opt-in is key. Both people must be actively searching to connect with someone.

IMPLICATIONS & VALIDITY

What this means for solution:

- Design matching as mutual opt-in
- Target people without existing support networks.
- Give users control over initial disclosure.

Validity of Assumption:

* **Valid:** Strangers share details when clear need, shared identities, and reciprocity exist.
* **Limits:** Dorm sign-up is lower stakes than legal cases. Next test needs higher-stakes scenario.

#4 Experience Prototype for Server-finding and rating app

Assumption: Reliability is more important than price when hiring a server.

EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPE

Artifact: Money = doing a plank, long journey to another dorm, short time limit

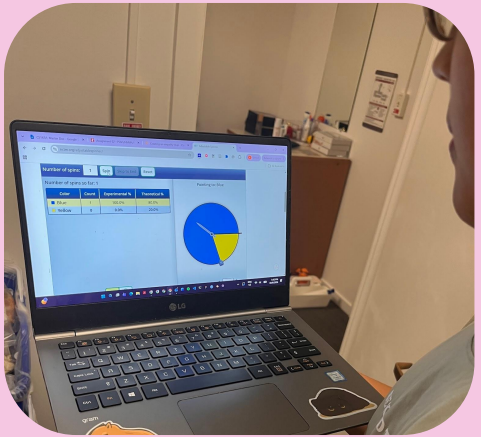
Task: Participant given a task to deliver something to a far away dorm within a time limit. He is given three options to do this: do it himself, hire a cheap semi reliable server, or hire an expensive super reliable server. If the task is failed they must pay. There are two rounds with the second round having doubled prices.

Roles & Why Relevant: Dormmate interested in law

Why it works: Mimics the physical hassle of serving, tests preference of paying more for reliable service



Participant "paying" for a server with a plank of 1 minute



Participant seeing if their server with an 80% chance of success succeeded in serving

#4 Experience Prototype for Server-finding and rating app

Assumption: Reliability is more important than price when hiring a server.

WHAT WE LEARNED

What didn't work:

* Was not entirely motivated, contemplated choosing himself and failing immediately to limit the total amount of planking

What worked:

* He paid for reliability over doing it himself
* Adjusted option based on his own capabilities

IMPLICATIONS & VALIDITY

What this means for solution:

* There is demand to offload the task
* Reliability has a price ceiling tied to the user's budget
* Different users have different budgets and tolerances

Validity of Assumption:

* **Valid:** Participant chose the most reliable party to do the task during the first round
* **Limits:** When prices increased participant chose another party but the less expensive, less reliable one (reliability is in demand, but not to an extreme degree)

Solution

We've decided to move forward with our 2nd solution: connecting litigants who are navigating similar legal experiences for peer support and shared guidance. We're currently exploring ways to emphasize in-person interactions and meaningful offline connections throughout the legal process.

Ethical Implications

Initial disclosure: Matching requires some info up front, so we have to decide the minimum needed. Case type and stage (e.g., "family court, awaiting hearing") is likely enough.

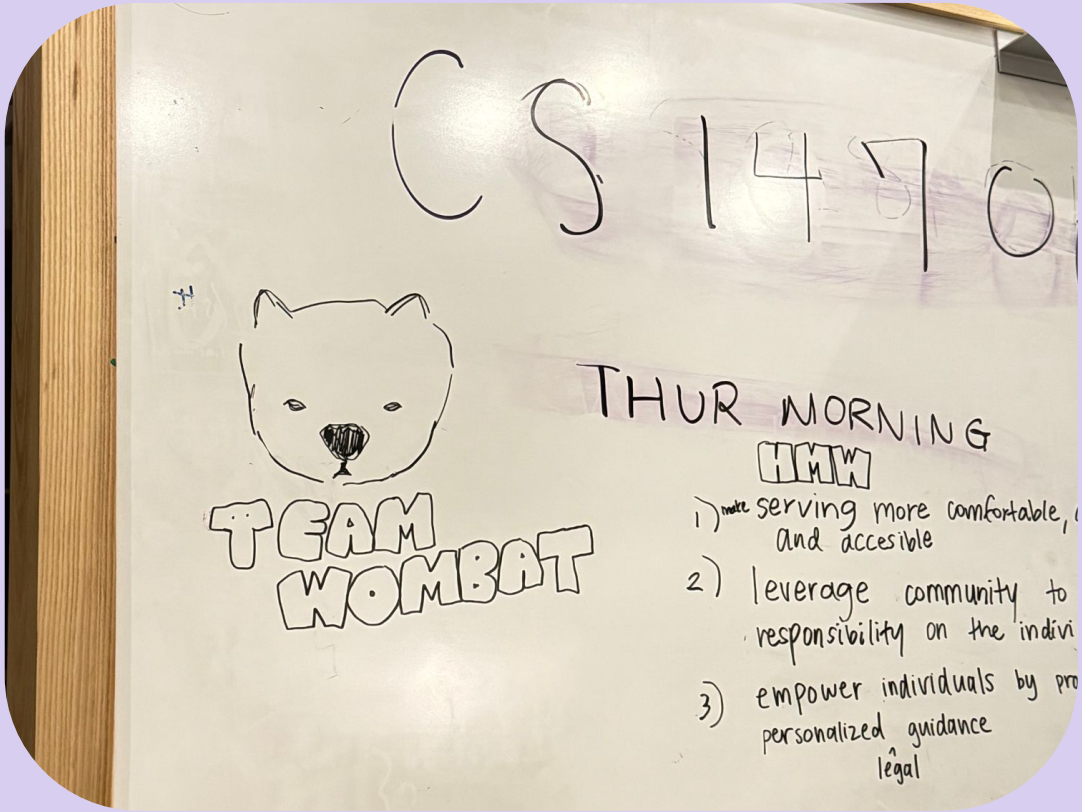
Unauthorized legal advice : Peers may start advising each other on strategy, which could harm someone's case.

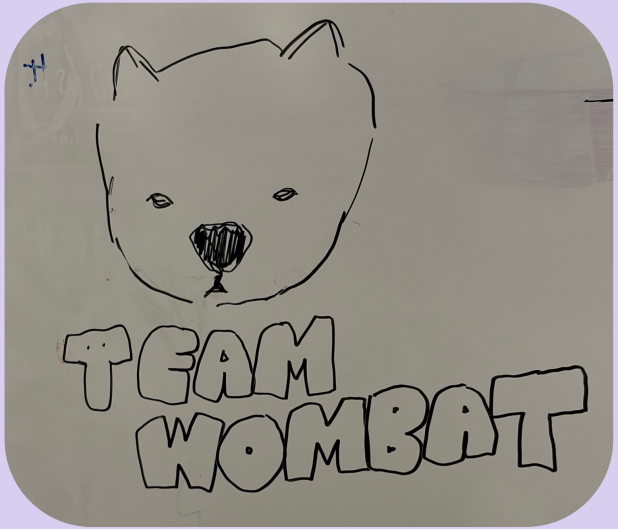
Emotional and personal safety : Vulnerable people may be paired with someone who is unsupportive, intrusive, or unsafe, and sharing phone numbers raises harassment risk.

Data privacy : Sign-up info needs secure storage, clear use limits, and a way to delete it.

It serves … litigants seeking emotional support and shared guidance from others navigating similar legal experiences. **It may leave out …** people with limited technology access, mobility or transportation barriers, or those uncomfortable sharing personal legal experiences with strangers.

Thank you!


CS 1470
TEAM WOMBAT
THUR MORNING
HMW
1) serving more comfortable,
and accesible
2) leverage community to
responsibility on the indivi
3) empower individuals by pro
personalized guidance
legal


TEAM WOMBAT

Appendix

Team Contract: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qd7TIlhoXo4ey32it5uwKsa2SBxyB6Xs9wgzAWhZrWo/edit?usp=sharing
Consent Form 1: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B-Fm081aGS6SGexiopMWOKzOexKl965f/view?usp=drive_link
Consent Form 2: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kHqM4UiGAHJ0ujV32IMY3p482pDLSUwM/view?usp=drive_link
Transcript 1: https://docs.google.com/document/d/15_IftzQjVQgf0nlTrpDHiEh7Q0So06TDfMvQ6d1Q_L4/edit?usp=sharing
Transcript 2: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dpAZ-86T36tkLn8y8j0klDEP9vhhWioyjQbavis6x8g/edit?usp=sharing
California Courts Self-Help Guide info: https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/court-basics/service#1
Detailed Descriptions of each Experience Prototype:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yn29GdUPJuNmdYvXbdr0I7S30h7UMt3FeDCDJKRyG4g/edit?usp=sharing

Solution Brainstorming

Solution Brainstorming

#1 HMW make the physical processes more comfortable, convenient, and accessible

- App for the server, to press start, which auto records time, place, and fills out the proof of service form. If unsuccessful, saves this info in case you need to show evidence of past attempt.
  - Assumptions:
    - People want to click something when they need to remember the time and place of a specific event (serving, taking medicine, etc.)
    - Servers will remember to press start
    - Servers forget important information/details
    - Metadata matters (time, and place logging) more than the message
  - Experience prototypes
    - Give people a task (touch your wrist), see if they remember to do it after task has been completed
    - Nicole Uyen-Nghi Nguyen Have them do one task, Make them do another task ,
      - then ask if they remember what time they completed the first task
      - Do you remember how long it took
      - If you don't remember, what is your best approximate
- Server-finding app, feature about reliability rating and credentials
  - Assumptions
    - Reliability is more important than price when thinking about who should be their server
    - Litigants understand what process server credentials are
    - Litigants would trust rating from previous clients
    - Process servers are willing to share their credentials or serving history publicly
  - Experience prototypes
    - Pushups and fake money to test if people do things to avoid inconvenience of walking in dorm hallways Alyssa Sinyue Landa
    - Does your uber driver's rating matter to you?
- Fitbit assistant for emotional stability during intense scenarios (ex: in the court, serving, etc.)
- Serving location finder to do serving in a safe space
- If we could do semi-illegal things, like use IP address to find the person to be served. The petitioner doesn't need to know the location, just the delivery person.
- VR serving practice before the real act
- Paper delivery system
- Serving notification/alert of incoming papers that will be served to them, scheduling a time for serving
- Virtual queue for filing papers at the office
- Courtroom etiquette, guidance, app, what to wear

#2 HMW leverage community to place less responsibility on the individual

- Paper delivery system
- Serving swap with people going through similar cases
- Co-plaintiff task board A shared checklist for multi-plaintiff cases that splits the work (serving, evidence gathering, forms, hearing prep) among everyone involved.
- When many tenants in the same complex are charged similar deductions, the tool lets them pool evidence, share one research effort, and file together. One person's legal research benefits everyone.
- Evidence library. Past litigants anonymously upload examples so newcomers can see what strong evidence looks like.
- Community members add plain-language notes on the confusing parts of court forms
- Litigants share the questions they asked an AI and the answers, and the community marks which were confirmed correct or wrong. =
- Peer "mock hearing" practice. Litigants rehearse their five-minute presentation in front of others who are also awaiting hearings, and give feedback.
- Courthouse companion. A volunteer or fellow litigant accompanies or virtually joins you on hearing day for moral support, logistics, and taking notes.
- Matching system for venting to other people going through the same thing, share what you know and learn (legal buddy, buddy system)
  - Assumptions
    - Litigants are willing to share personal details/info about their case to strangers
    - Shared identities make people more willing to engage
    - Litigants can distinguish between personal experiences and legal advice
    - Litigants are willing to provide emotional support/guidance to others while managing their own cases
    - People want others to rely on
  - Experience protoype
    - Board with study buddies, see how many people sign up, and those that did, if anybody reached out Lauren Young Kim

#3 HMW empower individuals by providing personalized legal guidance

- Intake quiz that produces a personalized roadmap: your steps, in order, with your deadlines
- Progress map showing where you are and what's next
- TurboTax-style form filler that asks plain questions and populates the court forms
- Legal jargon translator: point your camera at a document and get a plain-language explanation
- "What does this mean for me?" explainer for papers you've been served, including your response deadline
- Chatbot trained on your county's local rules that cites the self-help center's own pages
- Triage tool: can you do this yourself, or is this the point where you need a lawyer?
- Legal aid eligibility checker with warm handoff to a clinic or limited-scope attorney
- 15-minute micro-consults with a lawyer for one specific question
- Fee waiver eligibility checker and auto-filled waiver form
- Hearing prep coach: likely questions from the judge, practice answering out loud, feedback
- Evidence organizer that sorts your texts, photos, and documents into exhibits
- Decision tree for "what if" branches (they don't respond, they contest, you miss a deadline)
- Mistake detector that flags the errors that most often get filings rejected in your county
- Guidance tuned to the user: language, reading level, audio-first, or step-by-step video
- Cost and time estimator for your path
- Safety-aware mode for domestic violence situations (address confidentiality, discreet app icon, quick exit)
- Post-judgment guide: what the order requires of you and how to enforce or modify it