Reentry ID tool: Helping Rehabilitated Citizens Regain Their Government Issued Identification

Ju Young Park

Presenter's Bio: Ju Young Park

2007-2012 Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

2012-2014 Master of Interactive Telecommunication, New York University, USA

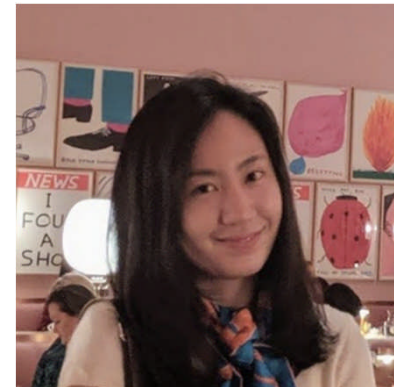2014-2015 Data Specialist at NASA, Jet Population Laboratory, USA

2015-2017 Front-End Developer at IBM, USA

2017~ Present UX Engineer, Front-End development at Google, USA

2020 ~ Present Part-time Law student at Santa Clara University, USA

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Introduction - Team of Reentry ID tool

Ju Young Park - Technical Program Manager, Full-time UX Engineer at Google, Part-time law school student at Santa Clara University

Prof. Colleen Chien - Founder and Director, Professor at Law at Santa Clara University

Navid Shaghaghi - Project Manager, Lecturer, and researcher in the departments of Computer Science & Engineering at Santa Clara University

Jay Kanakiya - Lead developer, graduate student in Computer Science at Santa Clara University

Martin Rios-Cardenas - Front-end developer, undergraduate student at Santa Clara University

Max Calcoen - Junior developer, a high school student

Introduction - Paper Prisons Research

The Paper Prisons Initiative of Santa Clara University in California, United States, conducts research to draw attention to the tens of millions of Americans stuck in paper prisons - unable to access employment, housing, voting, resentencing opportunities available under the law - due to their past contact with the criminal justice system. The lack of an ID upon reentry, and the difficult processes which prevent access to IDs, also stand as a critical barrier to the housing, employment, and social services needed to successfully reenter society.

PAPER PRISONS

Problem

Every year, more than 650,000 individuals are released from prison in the US.

The very first hurdle encountered by most released individuals is that their state issued ids such as Driver's License have expired while they were in prison and for many, the process of obtaining identification has significantly changed due to the advents of technologies such as the internet and smartphones.

While various Checklists, Guides, and ID programs around the country have attempted to address this issue by disseminating information about the steps needed to obtain a government issued ID, they have proven to be either too rudimentary to be useful or too complex to navigate.
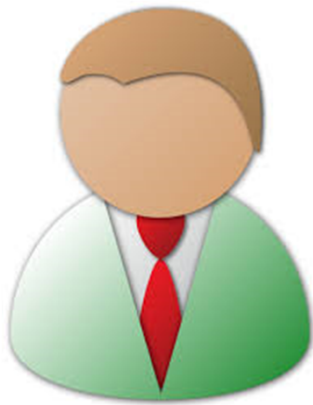
Story of People: Paper Prisons Diary
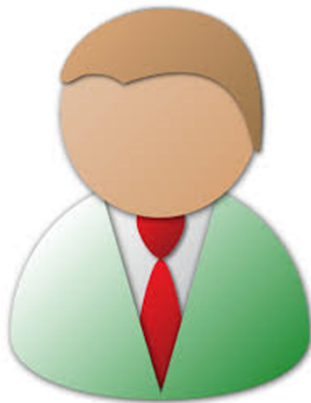
https://paperprisons.org/diary.html

user scenario example 1

John, a U.S. citizen who is recently released from prison in U.S., seeks to apply for a state ID in California.

John is not technically savvy.
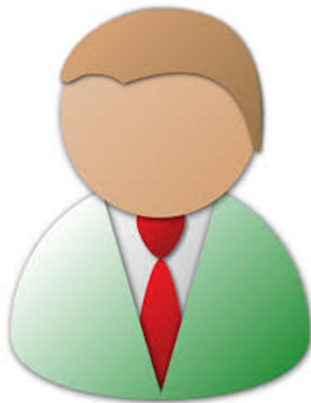
user scenario example 1

John wants to know how to apply for an ID in California. John goes California DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) website to find out a list of required documents for his application.

user scenario example 1

After navigating 3-4 steps, John landed a page with a list of required documents. John finds out that he needs to prepare ONE proof of identity.

REAL ID Checklist

Proof of Identity *

To apply for a REAL ID card, you must present ONE proof of identity document from the list below. The document must includes your date of birth and your full name (first, middle, and last).
Any legal name changes will require legal name change documents

Which document below will you use as your proof of identity?

○ Valid U.S. passport or passport card (Preferred)

○ Original or Certified copy of U.S birth certificate (issued by a city, county, or state vital statistics office). "Abbreviated" or "Abstract" certificates are NOT accepted.

○ Valid Permanent Resident Card

○ Foreign passport with valid U.S. Visa and approved I-94 form

user scenario example 1

John doesn't have any of the following documents that are accepted as proof of identity in California.

-   Valid U.S. passport or passport card (Preferred)
-   Original or Certified copy of U.S. birth certificate (issued by a a city, county, or state vital statistics office).
-   Valid Permanent Resident Card
-   Foreign passport with valid U.S. Visa and approved I-94 form.
-   ...

By the way, where can he apply for a passport? Is is something he can do at the DMV website?

Well, John is already tired after navigating through CA DMV site, so he gives up.
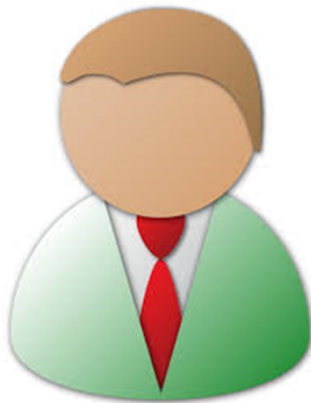
user scenario example 2
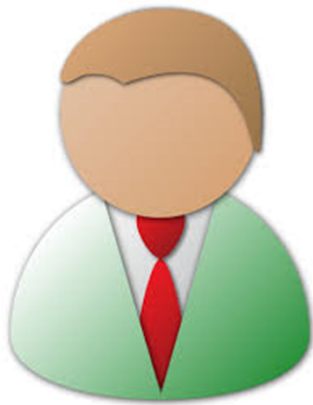
John, a non-U.S. citizen who is recently released from prison in U.S., seeks to apply for a state ID in California. He used to be a permanent resident in California, but his permanent resident card is expired.
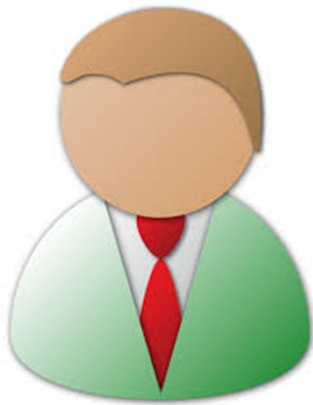
John is not technically savvy.

user scenario example 2

John wants to know how to apply for an ID in California. John goes California DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) website to find out a list of required documents for his application.

user scenario example 2

After navigating 3-4 steps, John landed a page with a list of required documents. John finds out that he needs to prepare ONE proof of identity.

REAL ID Checklist

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○ Foreign passport with valid U.S. Visa and approved I-94 form

user scenario example 2

John doesn't have any of the following documents that are accepted as proof of identity in California.

- Valid U.S. passport or passport card (Preferred)
- Original or Certified copy of U.S. birth certificate (issued by a a city, county, or state vital statistics office).
- **Valid Permanent Resident Card**
- Foreign passport with valid U.S. Visa and approved I-94 form.
- …

Can he bring it as a proof of identity? What does it mean by "Valid"? Is Resident Card presumed to be always valid whether it is expired or not?

John called DMV to find out, but usual wait time is 1~2 hrs, so he gives up.

user scenario example 3
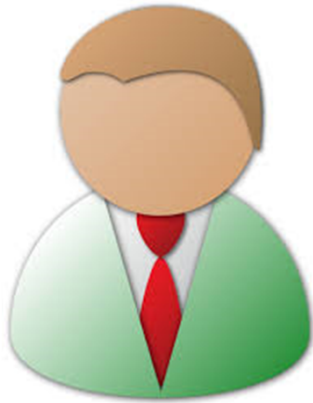
Same John from example 1 decides to get an ID in Delaware instead of California. Does he need to go to Delaware DMV website and go through the same complex process?

John gives up again.

Proposed Solution

Looking at such problems, our team proposed a solution by developing a tool that is **efficient yet simple** methodology for housing all required documents and guiding users to easily navigate through the **whole** process of applying for an ID within 2 steps.

One big challenge in proposing such a tool was the collection and manual databasing of complex information for all 50 states and paraphrasing of their terminology using **accessible everyday language.**

***Each state has different rules.**

Overview of Reentry ID tool

Reentry ID tool was designed to help guide users finding all necessary information they need for obtaining their state ID cards within 2 steps.

The tool warehouses various lists of all eligible proof of identity and residency documents approved by each of the 50 US states' Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

Architecture
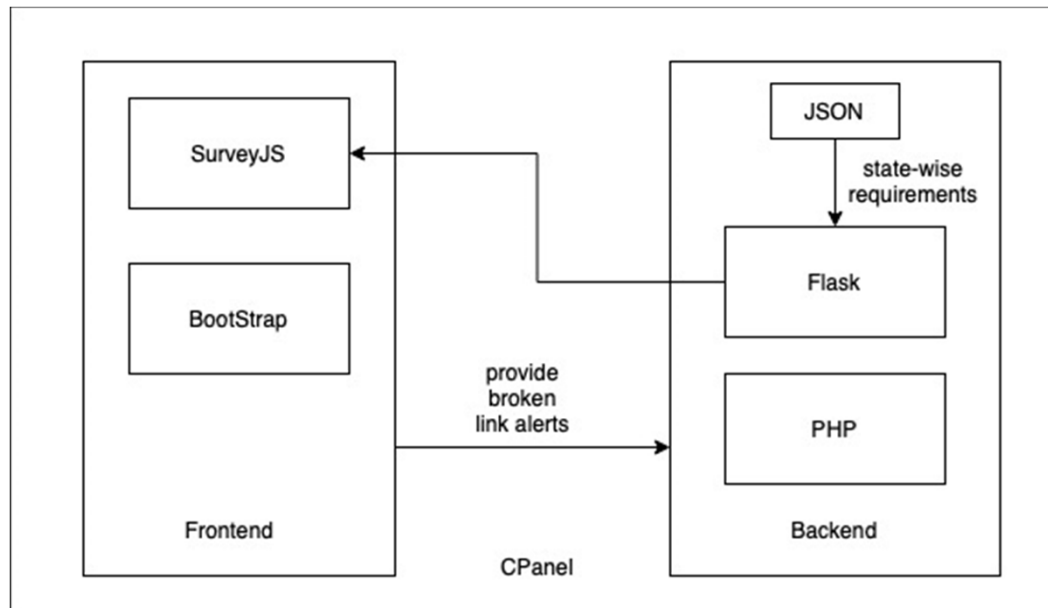
Example: Rendering Requirements for getting a DL

Uses SurveyJS
for rendering
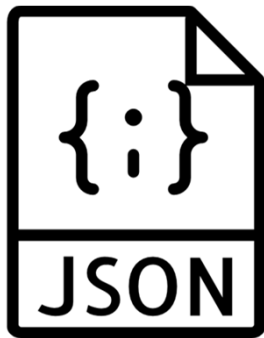
Hosted on Flask server; contains information about requirements for getting a driver's license for each state

4. Which State?

Delaware

One proof of identity/legal presence, one proof of SSN, two documents for proof of Deleware residency, proof of name change (if applicable)

5. Proof of Identity: Please select if you have any of the following

☐ Please provide ONE of the following proof of identity/legal presence documents: (This document must contain proof of full legal name, date of birth, and citizenship/legal presence in the United States to be eligible to obtain a federally compliant identification document.)

☐ Certificate of birth (U.S. issued). Must be original or certified copy, have a raised seal and be issued by the Office of Vital Statistics or State Board of Health. Please note that wallet cards, birth registration or hospital announcements/records are not accepted. (If under 18, birth certificate must include birth parent(s) names) **

☐ Consular report of birth abroad

Checkboxes containing Proof of Identity requirements for Deleware

Challenges

User Testing:

- Since our Persona is very specific (One who seeks to apply for an ID after getting released from prison), it has been difficult to conduct user testing.

Data Management:

- DMV websites do not provide APIs. Data we provide to the end user is manually collected from all 50 U.S. state's raw data on their DMV websites.
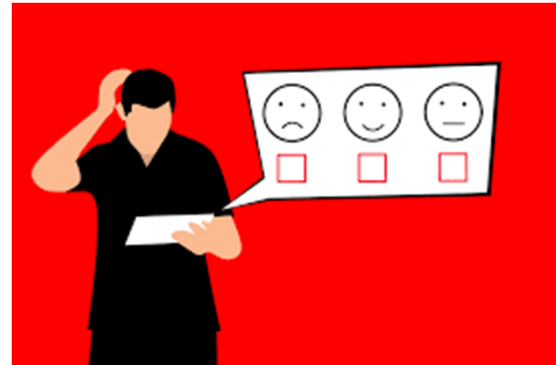
User Testing Feedback

- What if I cannot afford to get required documents even before applying for an ID?
    - For instance, average cost of getting a passport is $150 ~ $200.

- Where can I find out the list of all acceptable documents for proof of identity or proof of residency?
    - In general, housing-related documents such as utility bills suffice but what about those who do not have housing?

Responses to user feedback

After receiving user feedback, we conducted more extensive research to gather all alternatives that can be used.

Since these alternatives are not always listed on DMV sites, we had to gather information individually.

Live Demo

https://paperprisons.org/id/

Expectation from the tool

With the Reentry ID tool, we wanted to simplify the complicated process of getting an ID and help people to be released from not only the real prisons but also **paper prisons** in U.S.

We believe that getting an ID is a significant first step to reenter society, and we hope our Reentry ID tool supports many individuals' reentry into society.

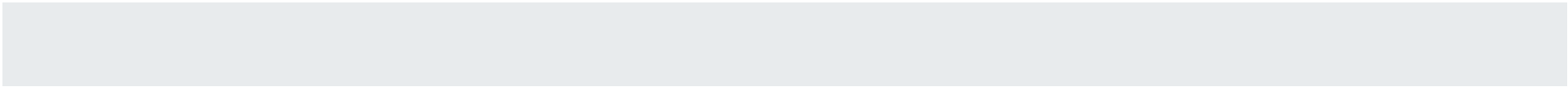We hope to promote general usage as well, especially during the election.
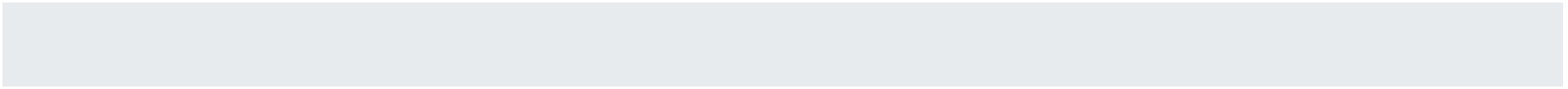
Future Steps

- Dynamic Approach:

  The current version of the tool manually retrieves each state's requirements and information in relation to getting an ID. For the future, this research plans to develop a dynamic approach to retrieve the latest requirements and information from each state's DMV website.

- More user testing:

  This research expects to run user testings with more target personas as this research partners with more related organizations.

Thank You

Q&A