

Access to Justice (ATJ) Web

“and justice for all” through technology

Project members:

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Special thanks to:

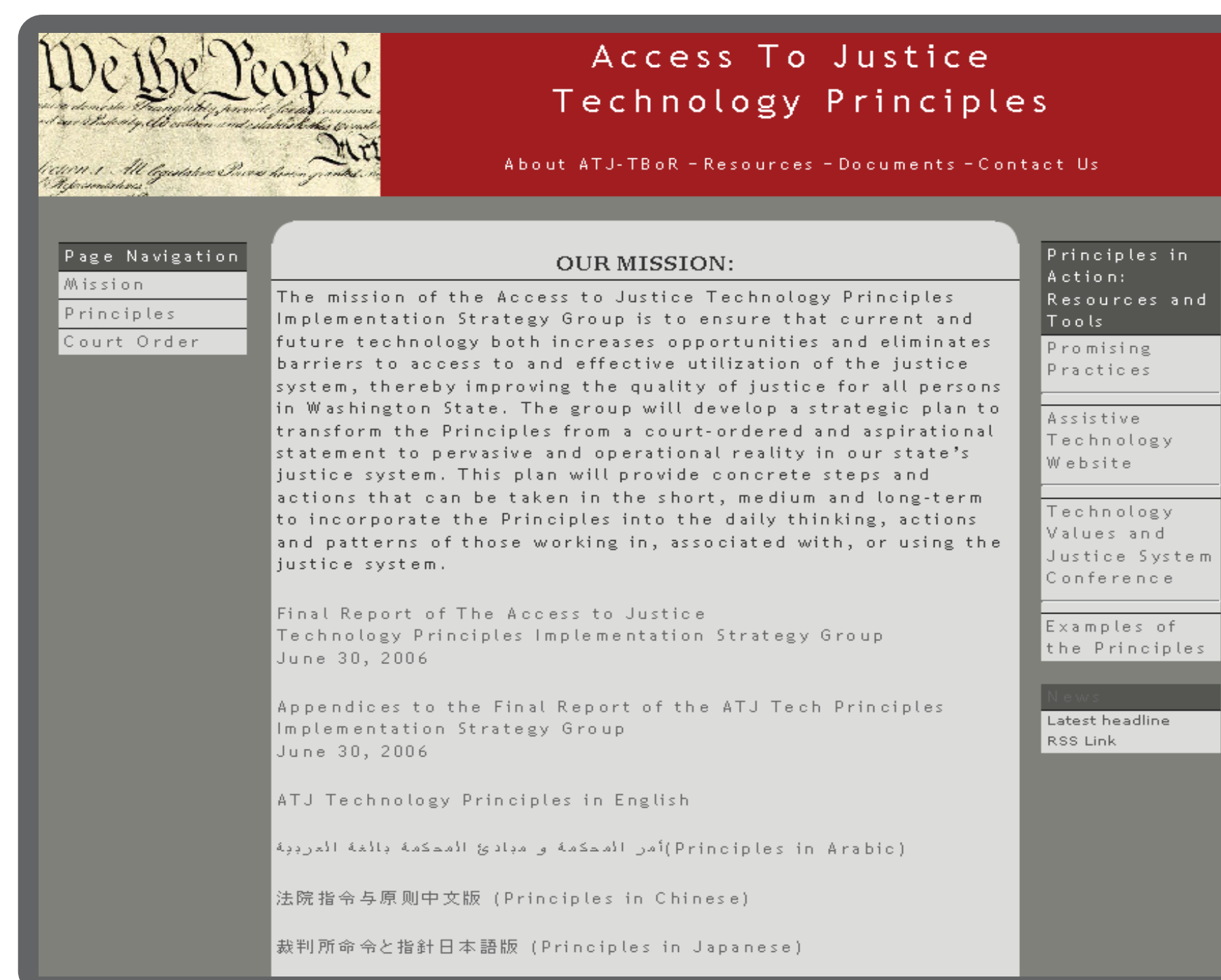
Brian Rowe, Don Horowitz, & the ATJ Board

1 Introduction

Access to Justice (ATJ) Web is part of an effort to ensure that technology is used in a way that makes the justice system more accessible to everyone. Technology offers new ways to improve the experience people have with the justice system. However, additional steps must be taken to ensure that technology serves all individuals equally in Washington State, including those facing physical, economic, or literacy barriers.

To help guide the use of technology in the state justice system, the Washington State Supreme Court has entered a court order to adopt and uphold a set of guidelines called the Access to Justice (ATJ) Technology Principles. The Principles define how technology should be used to increase access to the justice system for everyone. ATJ Web seeks to make these ATJ Technology Principles a pervasive and enduring reality in the justice system.

The original design: www.atjtechprinciples.org



ATJ Technology Principles

I. Requirement of Access to Justice: Use of technology must promote, and not reduce, equal access.

II. Technology and Just Results: The justice system must use technology to achieve the objective of a just result achieved through a just process and reject, minimize, or modify any use that impairs achieving it.

III. Openness and Privacy: Technology in the justice system should be designed and used to meet the dual responsibilities of being open to the public and protecting personal privacy.

IV. Assuring a Neutral Forum: The justice system must ensure the existence of neutral, accessible and transparent forums which are compatible with new technologies, and discourage and reduce the demand for the use of those which are not.

V. Maximizing Public Awareness and Use: The justice system should promote public knowledge and understanding of the tools afforded by technology to access justice.

VI. Best Practices: Those governed by the principles must use 'best practices' to guide their use of technology.

2 Problem

A website was created to house the ATJ Technology Principles and serve those charged with implementing them. This initial website fell short of its goals in several respects including:

- A The site was not kept up-to-date, so visitors weren't informed of news related to the ATJ Technology Principles
- B There was no mechanism for alerting users to important events or dates
- C The site consisted of several static pages; it was difficult to maintain
- D Helpful resources were scattered throughout the site; finding what was needed was difficult

3 Solution

After gathering detailed business requirements we designed a new website that would address the issues we identified. We also made sure that the site fulfilled the ATJ Technology Principles by using the ATJ Technology Integration checklist. Some of the features we implemented include:

- A A news blog that offers an RSS feed to help people stay current with recent events
- B A calendar that allows important events and dates to be displayed on the site
- C An easy-to-use content management system (CMS) to help the site's administrator edit and maintain the site
- D A centralized repository that allows keyword based browsing and searching for resources that help fulfill the ATJ Technology Principles

The redesign: www.atjweb.org

