Democracy by design: Ensuring voter intent in our communications

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Impact

The world is a better place because FOCE happened.
The key method

Understanding users’ needs through qualitative research like usability testing
Usability testing is simple

Something to test
Someone to test it
Somewhere to meet and talk
What to watch for

Questions asked

Comments

Emotions and body language
What to do

Moderators: skim through the script, and when the participant is ready, use it to conduct the session

Participants: use the instructions to make the origami shape
How’d that go?

What was it like to be a participant?
What happened?
Language.

It’s not enough to just use short words. They have to be meaningful words to help people take the right action.
California Bill of Rights

VOTER BILL OF RIGHTS

YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS:

1. The right to vote if you are a registered voter.
   - You are eligible to vote if you are:
     - a U.S. citizen living in California
     - at least 18 years old
     - registered where you currently live
     - not in prison or on parole for a felony

2. The right to vote if your name is not on the voter list.
   - Even if your name is not on the list, you can still vote. Your vote will be counted if election officials determine that you are eligible to vote.

3. The right to vote if you are of the voting age.
   - You are eligible to vote if you are at least 18 years old.

4. The right to cast a secret ballot.
   - Only you know how you have voted.

5. The right to get a new ballot if you have made a mistake.
   - If you have not already cast your ballot, you can:
     - Ask an elections official at a polling place for a new ballot,
     - Exchange your vote-by-mail ballot for a new one at an election office, or at your polling place,
     - Vote using a provisional ballot, if you do not have your original vote-by-mail ballot.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE BEEN DENIED ANY OF THESE RIGHTS, CALL THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S CONFIDENTIAL TOLL-FREE VOTER HOTLINE AT (800) 345-VOTE (8683).
What challenges do voters face in becoming informed?

Civics literacy
System of voting is invisible
### Spectrum of information needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connect to community</th>
<th>Connect daily life to issues and candidates</th>
<th>Connect to the democratic process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alejandra</td>
<td>Rakheem</td>
<td>Ari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr &amp; Mrs Li</td>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>Kim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rosa</td>
<td>Steve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Civics literacy</td>
<td>• Simple and clear information about</td>
<td>• Complete voter guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candidates and issues</td>
<td>• Information about becoming a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Justify the value of voting: “Your</td>
<td>poll worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vote means a voice for your</td>
<td>• Encouragement to be a role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community</td>
<td>model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Plain language</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In-language materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Top 5 pages

**Quick Reference Guide:** Clear formatting, short chunks of text

**Candidates Overview:** Photos show they are candidates, groups of information, easy to scan

**Election Dates:** Calendar format says "dates" with few words

**4 Ways to Vote:** Tidy layout, made choices clear

**How to Vote:** Visual instructions, overview followed by detail
Covers
Nevada, Santa Cruz, and Fresno
Ways to vote

Madera, San Diego, and San Mateo counties
Instructions for voting
Nevada, Santa Barbara, and Madera counties
Measures and candidate statements
Santa Cruz, Orange, and Yuba counties
Counties using the template or other materials in the June 2016 Primary Election

- Counties fully adopting the new design
- Counties adopting elements of the design
- Counties including the Voter Bill of Rights or other pages from the state guide
Best Practices Manual for Official Voter Information Guides Released

February 25, 2015

In the November 2014 election, only 31% of eligible Californians voted and young people and people of color continued to be underrepresented. Although many factors contribute to low voter turnout, we believe that voter information is an important tool to engage and expand the electorate.

To help make voter information more effective, more inviting, and more useful, we have released our Best Practices Manual for Official Voter Information Guides. This manual was specifically developed as an easy-to-use resource for election officials and community groups working to enfranchise and educate California voters.

* Download the Manual
* View a prototype voter guide
* View a sample Voter Bill of Rights written in plain language
View Our Voter Guide Best Practices Webinars!

April 6, 2015

To help implement the voter guide recommendations from the Best Practices Manual for Official Voter Information Guides, a series of four webinars were presented on April 27 and May 1, 2015.

YouTube links to each of the webinars is below or you can view all of the webinars through a LWVCEF YouTube playlist.

"What are the Best Practices for Developing and Reviewing Voter Guides?"
Monday, April 27
11:00am-12:00pm
Learn how voters get information and how to implement the best practices for voter guides to raise voter confidence and increase participation. This is the first of four webinars based on the recommendations in the Best Practices Manual for Official Voter Information Guides. We will present an overview of the project, including an introduction of the main themes in the manual: layout and visual presentation, civic literacy, and plain language.
Download the presentation.
To view the webinar: http://bit.ly/1bYaTMM

"How to Use Layout and Visual Presentation in Voter Guides"
Monday, April 27
1:30pm-2:30pm
This is the second of four webinars based on the recommendations in the Best Practices Manual for Official Voter Information Guides. We will provide the types of layout, visual images, and typography that should be used that raise voter confidence and increase participation.
Download the presentation.
To view the webinar: http://bit.ly/1KbuWP
Who is on the ballot for this election?

In the November General Election, all voters receive the same ballot, no matter what political party you are registered with, or if you have no party preference. The address where you are registered to vote determines which contests are on your ballot.

In the June Primary Election, all Californians were able to vote to decide which candidates for federal and state offices moved on to the November General Election. Candidates for local county offices in June received enough votes to be elected without having to be in a run-off in November.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presidential Nominated by party</th>
<th>California Top-Two Primary Nominated by voters</th>
<th>Local Nonpartisan candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• President and Vice President</td>
<td>• U.S. Senator</td>
<td>• School District Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• U.S. Representative</td>
<td>• U.S. Representative</td>
<td>• Special District Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State Senator</td>
<td>• State Senator</td>
<td>• Municipal Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State Assembly Member</td>
<td>• State Assembly Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The candidates nominated by each political party are on the ballot.

The top two candidates—the ones with the most votes in June—are on your ballot.

There is no write-in for these offices.

The candidates’ party preference (or “None”) is listed with their name.

Candidates may be nominated by more than one party.

Candidates for nonpartisan offices do not have a party preference listed on the ballot.
Voter guide prototype
Piloted in Shasta, Santa Cruz, and Orange counties
Growing design maturity
Voter’s Choice

Vote-by-mail
Vote center materials
Notices and forms
Beautiful, usable vote-by-mail
Poll workers and election integrity
"Placemats"
Role-based, task-oriented, wearable checklists
Vote Center Survival Guide

Flashcards to help you through most situations at the vote center:

- Voters and vote center workers
- Technology
- Operations

Operations

The building needs to be evacuated

1. Call 911 if necessary.
2. Tell them you are at a vote center.
3. Announce that the vote center is being evacuated.
4. Electron workers should escort members of the public out of the building.
5. Electron workers gather at a meeting point.
6. Make sure all election workers are present.
7. If it is safe, evacuate the ballot box and supervisor notebook.
8. Call the hotline.

Technology

An EVBO 103 error message (not flashing) appears on an eVote.

This error message indicates something is wrong with the communication between the power box and the EVBO driver.

1. Make sure that the power box has been plugged into a wall outlet.
2. Make sure that the button on the power box is placed in "ON".
3. Check that the power box is properly aligned with the power box lid.
4. Make sure the black power cord is securely connected to the black power chord.
5. Make sure the black power cord is securely connected to the black power chord.
6. Make sure the black power cord is securely connected to the black power chord.
7. Make sure that the eVote is located properly in the eVote.
8. If these steps do not resolve the issue, close the lid to the eVote.
9. If this issue persists, you will need to contact the eVote Center Coordinator.

Vote center survival guide
Conditional voter registration

### Where should I register and vote after the deadline?
During the 14-day period up to and including Election Day, you must go to an official Elections Office or designated location to register and vote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you:</th>
<th>You can go to:</th>
<th>How you vote:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered to vote before the 15-day deadline (Mar 21, 2018)</td>
<td>Any early voting location or your polling place</td>
<td>Vote a regular ballot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not registered to vote</td>
<td>Your county elections office or designated location</td>
<td>Complete a voter registration form. Vote a CVR provisional ballot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are registered in another county</td>
<td>Your county elections office (or designated location) where you now live</td>
<td>Complete a voter registration form. Vote a CVR provisional ballot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have moved within the county where you are registered to vote</td>
<td>The polling place for your new address or your county elections office</td>
<td>Complete a voter registration form. Vote a provisional ballot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Missed the voter registration deadline?
You can still register and vote on the same day!

Go to your county Elections Office up to and including Election Day.

1. **You register to vote.**
2. **You vote.**
3. **You seal your ballot in a special envelope and sign it.**

This is called Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) or Same Day Registration.

Contact your county Elections Office:
www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/counties-elections-offices/
Voter notification card
What you need to know about provisional voting

You got this notice because you voted using a pink Provisional Ballot envelope. This was because:

- You already received a vote-by-mail envelope and the provisional ballot is a second ballot.
- You are a new voter in Santa Cruz County and did not have the right identification.

We need time to find out if you are eligible to vote and if we can count your ballot.

How do I find out if my ballot counted?

Contact the Santa Cruz elections office in the week following the election. We can tell you if your ballot was counted or answer any questions.

You will have to provide your full name and birth date.

What happens next?

If you are not registered to vote in Santa Cruz County, we will send you a voter registration card. To vote in future elections, complete and return this card, or register online at http://registertovote.ca.gov/

What is the law about provisional ballots?

The federal Help America Vote Act gives you the right to cast a provisional ballot and find out if it was counted (and if not, why).

The California Elections Code section 14310(c) says that provisional ballots are counted only if:

- Election officials determine that you have the right to vote the ballot.
- A superior court orders the ballot to count.

You may seek a court order that your ballot is counted. You must do this before the official canvass period ends – within 28 days after the election. The court will prioritize your request over other civil matters.
Everyone over here was very impressed with these materials, and we'd be pleased to use the templates for our SB450 training material. The clean look, easy organization, and ability to quickly get information were all elements we were pleased with.

— Bay Area election official
Next steps

- Testing the templates
- Pilot testing in vote centers
- A tool kit
The California Toolkit
List of links to tools and templates
Role based checklists for election workers on election day

A tool to help election workers know what to do and when.

The checklist templates take election workers through an election from start to finish. Broken down into each part of the day, election workers can know what they need to do and when. Each worker has their own checklist.

Adapt templates to fit the needs of your polling place or vote center.

These checklists can be bound with rings, spiral bindings, or attached to a lanyard. Quick access is key.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Clerk</th>
<th>Setting up the vote center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set-up and plug in the laptop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Adapt templates to fit the needs of your polling place or vote center.

These checklists can be bound with rings, spiral bindings, or attached to a clipboard. Quick access is key.

Registration Clerk
Livio de Paula Labate

[Checklist template]

Download
How to
Credits and versions
Open source design

Basic designs that are
• tested
• best practice
• customizable
• free
Because democracy is a design problem.
Get in touch!

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@danachis

civicdesign.org
@civicdesign
Thank you.