

How voters get information

Project Update

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Interviews and workshops with California election stakeholders: election officials, advocates, LWVC

Kickoff Meeting: Cathy Darling Allen (Shasta ROV), Caroline Bruister (CA Forward), Doug Chapin and Astrid Garcia (FOCE), Catherine Hazelton (Irvine Foundation), Rosalind Gold (NALEO), Bill Hershon and Fred Nisen (DRC), Gail Pellerin (Santa Cruz ROV), Michelle Romero (Greenlining).

FOCE Conference: Approximately 25 attendees from the conference, including a mix of voters, advocates, researchers, and election officials.

Interviews: Cathy Darling Allen (Shasta ROV), Kim Alexander (CA Voter Fdn), Raquel Beltran (LWVC-LA), Thea Brodtkin (LWVC) Susan Stuart Clark (Easy Voter Guide) Kathay Feng (Common Cause), Jill Fox & Barbara Carr (San Francisco ROV), Neal Kelley (Orange ROV), Dean Logan (LA ROV), Fred Nisen (DRC), Debbie O'Donoghue & Nicole Winger (Secretary of State), Michelle Romero (Greenlining), Kathy Sousa & Mony Flores-Bauer (LWVC), Mac Taylor, Brian Brown & Jason Sisney (California Legislative Affairs Office), Ernie Ting (Smart Voter Guide), Kari Verjil, Rebecca Spencer & Art Tinoco (Riverside ROV), Michael Vu (San Diego ROV).

Interviews with 53 people: non-voters to regular voters



How we conducted the interviews



Locations likely to have demographic variety

Asked people if they would spend 20 minutes talking to us

Translators when needed

Talked about;

- Voting history
- Sources of information
- Sample pages from voter guides around the state



Intercept recruiting led to a good balance of gender, age, race/ethnicity and voting habits

| Age | Range | % |
|------------|----------|-----|
| Silent | 69+ | 6% |
| Boomers | 50 to 68 | 15% |
| Gen X | 34 to 49 | 28% |
| Millennial | 24 to 33 | 28% |
| Student | 18-23 | 23% |

| Race/Ethnicity | CA % | % |
|----------------|------|-----|
| Hispanic | 38% | 38% |
| Asian | 13% | 19% |
| Black | 6% | 9% |
| White | 40% | 21% |
| Mixed/Other | N/A | 13% |

| Voting Habits | Last Election | Number | % |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------|-----|
| Regular voters | 2013 | 12 | 23% |
| Presidential voters | 2012 | 18 | 34% |
| Infrequent voters | 2011 or earlier | 10 | 19% |
| Non-voters | Don't know/never voted | 12 | 23% |

Three big challenge areas

Information

Knowledge, literacy, problem-solving ability, language

Reach

Where, when, how and from who

Experience

Practical issues and emotional reactions

Challenge areas from the voters perspectives

Information: the Goldilocks phenomenon

It's a lot of information...but don't leave anything out.

Reach: the source of the information

It's hard to find unbiased sources. Who is talking to me?

Experience: getting ready to vote

Help me be ready, so I know what will happen and what I have to do.

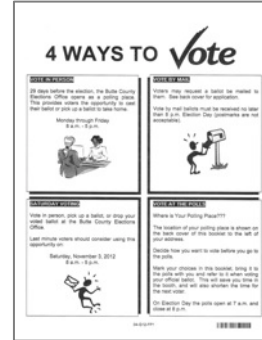
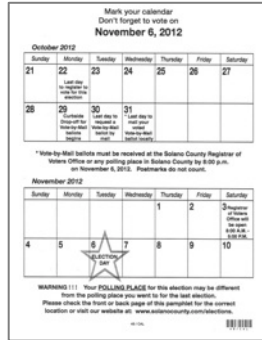
Themes from the stakeholders

- Voting seems like a big deal
- It can be hard to find easy answers to routine questions
- It's hard to do outreach to people you don't know about
- You need many forms of communication to meet voters where they are
- Voters can receive both too much information and too little
- It is hard to know what works

Themes from the voter interviews

- Make it clear and simple
- Use of election information sources mostly echoes general expectations
- Voters value information that uses visual layout to signal content
- The top sample pages echo top questions about elections
- Experience with elections makes a difference in the type of information voters want in the voter information pamphlet

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

Getting from "voting illiterate" to "voting fluent"

For each persona

- How do we move from where they are to the next level?
- What information does each need to move forward one step?

Presentations

Next steps

Prototype voter guides based on the research

Usability testing of voter guides in July

Norwalk

LA

Berkeley/Oakland

Modesto

Thank you!

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