ELECTION CENTER

National Association of Election Officials

**25th Annual
National Conference
San Diego, California**

2009 Professional Practices Program

ELECTIONS 2.0:
Using New Media as a Tool to Enhance Election Transparency

Los Angeles County, CA

Submitted by:

Dean Logan
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650
562-462-2716
dlogan@rrcc.lacounty.gov
www.lavote.net

Elections 2.0: Using New Media as a Tool to Enhance Election Transparency

Our Goal:

With respect to efforts to make elections more participatory and transparent, it is the goal of the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) that elections be a collaborative process between election administrators and the citizenry, and that voter education and engagement is part of its core responsibilities. Why use New Media as a communication tool? The answer can be summed up in six words…Increased transparency, communication and educational outreach. The RR/CC approach to conducting elections is one of working in partnership with the community and of making every effort to make election information as accessible as possible for all voters.

Background:

The RR/CC has worked toward greater voter involvement in the election process and has incorporated New Media outlets to reach the targeted audience – Los Angeles County Residents. As referenced in a Pew Trust Research Study, "As the online political news audience has grown. the importance of the internet has increased relative to other news sources."[1] The use of New Media is increasingly becoming a frequent means of communication for multiple generations.   In an effort to adapt to the changing modes of communication introduced by New Media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, the RR/CC recently launched a New Media initiative to establish a presence and a new platform by which to provide information and engage voters in the voting process.

To provide a perspective of the voluminous scale of users reached by various New Media outlets, statistics reflect, as provided by Pew Research that, "some 74% of internet users--representing 55% of the entire adult population--went online in 2008 to get involved in the political process or to get news and information about the election."[2] According to statistics provided by Facebook, there are currently about 31 million active users and an estimated 100,000 new users that have registered daily since January of 2007. Forrester Research provided that over 40 percent of Facebook users are over age 35, as well as projecting that, over the next five years, the number of US baby boomers who use the Internet at least once a month will grow by more than 5 million. Additional research also shows, according to statistics provided by YouTube, the YouTube site has reached 100 million viewers since inception and visitors viewed 14.8 billion online videos in January 2009 alone.   Finally, a May 2009 Quantcast study reveals Twitter is currently reaching over 23 million people monthly.

RR/CC New Media Strategy – May 2009:

The RR/CC realized that New Media technologies offered an excellent opportunity for communicating information about upcoming elections through increasingly popular and accessible formats. The expectation is that, as the use of New Media outlets continues to grow, they will also produce efficiencies and enhanced service by reducing the volume of calls for basic information from the public. More importantly, the New Media outlets offer transparency, voter information and educational opportunities at no added cost to the RR/CC.

---

[1]; [2] Pew Research: The Internet's Role in Campaign 2008

The specific New Media outlets chosen by the RR/CC showed the greatest potential for:

- Reaching large numbers of targeted audiences

- Reaching a broad range of demographics

- Providing updates in real-time

- Educating viewers virally

- Allowing user versatility as to "where and when" they get information

- Providing RR/CC the flexibility to control and update site content

Cyber Tools That Worked:

New Media outlets implemented by the RR/CC were useful as auxillary tools for users to easily navigate the voting process and obtain real-time information, while providing versatility and mobility.

Video Blog Featured RR/CC Dean Logan providing real-time election video blog updates and behind the scenes information about the administration of elections in Los Angeles County. Other video blogs posted on the RR/CC website and YouTube Channel provided the viewer a transparent look into the election process from pre-Election activities through the Canvass process.

Twitter Provided real-time, brief (140 characters) updates regarding election day procedures, statistics and results. Twitter was useful too in sending reminders to voters and to news media about specific election related deadlines.

YouTube Utilized by the RR/CC as an outreach and educational portal for users to view election specific videos, instructional voter information vignettes and to view RR/CC Dean Logan's election day video blogs.

RSS Feeds Allowed automatic and instantaneous distribution of press releases to media and public through subscription service.

Facebook Used as an outreach and educational tool by allowing RR/CC to download photos, instructional videos, and election related updates, while allowing actual interface with Los Angeles County residents.

Summary

The various New Media outlets chosen by the RR/CC enabled a greater capacity and scope for educating voters about the election process and environment. Voters can now visualize and follow their ballot from the voting booth to the tally room, to becoming a part of an historical statistic. These New Media tools provide increased opportunities for voter engagement and open communication, improving dialogue and understanding of the election. Thus, taking away much of the mystery and fear associated with misinformation or lack of information on the voting process. All New Media outlets are available through links on the RR/CC website lavote.net.

2009 Professional Practices Submission

Los Angeles County

Elections 2.0: Using New Media as a Tool to Enhance Election Transparency

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk – Website Press Room (New Media Links Located at Bottom of Page)

http://www.lavote.net/GENERAL/Press_Room.cfm

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Google | Search · | Bookmarks· | Check · | AutoFill · | Sign In ·

Press Room | Page · | Tools ·

Los Angeles County
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

County Home | Department Home | About Us | Contact Us   SEARCH   Font Size: A A

County Clerk Operations

Voter & Election Information

Recorder Operations

General Information

Press Room
- Press Release
- Media Kits / Fact Sheets
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Board Correspondence
- Awards
- Election Results
- Statement of Votes Cast
- Election Calendar & Measure Information
- Candidate Filing
- Survey Results
- Calendar of Events
- Links

PRESS ROOM

The Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) Media Information & Support Services Section is committed to providing members of the public and news media with timely and clear information regarding the RR/CC. The RR/CC Press Room includes press releases, statistical information, media kits, fact sheets, survey analysis reports, calendar of events and election information.

For members of the media requiring additional information please contact the Media Information Office at 562-462-2726 or 562-462-2648.

UPDATES

5/19 - May 19, 2009 Statewide Special And Consolidated Elections Wrap-Up
5/18 - Available Online Resources For The May 19, 2009 Statewide Special And Consolidated Elections
5/13 - May 19, 2009 Statewide Special And Consolidated Elections - Fact Sheet

Media Communications Arrangements
Media Communications Arrangements - May 19th Statewide Special and Consolidated Elections

2008 General Election Post Election Report
Post Election Report - 2008 General Election

RR/CC Op-Ed
9/3/08 Op-Ed Making Votes Count

Rules for Media Observing Election Procedures
Rules for Media Observing Election Procedures

Connect with us:
RS Feed - Press Releases (About RSS)
llow us on Twitter (About Twitter)
ailable Videos on Youtube

Press Releases

Photos/Images

Video Library

PSA's

Streaming Video

Audio

Blogs & Tweets

Facts
- 4,328,026 registered voters (as of 5/22/2009) view by party
- 3,057 Polling Places for May 19, Statewide Special and Consolidated Elections
- Historical Voter Turnout

Back to Top | Department Home | Contact Us | Privacy & Security Policy

Enriching lives through effective and caring service

Internet   75%

Press Room - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.lavote.net/General/Press_Room.cfm?section=blogs

Google

File   Edit   View   Favorites   Tools   Help

Google | Search | Bookmarks | Check | AutoFill | Sign In

Press Room

Page   Tools

Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

County Home | Department Home | About Us | Contact Us   SEARCH   Font Size: A A

County Clerk Operations

Voter & Election Information

Recorder Operations

General Information

Press Room

- Press Release
- Media Kits / Fact Sheets
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Board Correspondence
- Awards
- Election Results
- Statement of Votes Cast
- Election Calendar & Measure Information
- Candidate Filing
- Survey Results
- Calendar of Events
- Links

PRESS ROOM

Blogs

May 19, 2009 Statewide & Consolidated Election

Ballot Tabulation

Paused   01:40

- Ballot Inspection
- 9:30 PM Media Availability
- Red Box Scanning
- Sheriff Command Center
- 5 PM Vote By Mail
- 1 PM Report
- AM Media Availability (KFWB Radio)
- AM Media Availability (ABC 7 TV)
- 8 am Polls Operations
- Election Eve - Truck Yard Visit
- Election Simulation

Press Releases

Photos/Images

Video Library

PSA's

Streaming Video

Audio

Blogs & Tweets

Facts

- **4,328,026** registered voters (as of 5/22/2009)
  ⊞ view by party

- 3,057 Polling Places for May 19, Statewide Special and Consolidated Elections

- Historical Voter Turnout

Internet   100%

Start   Inbox - Microsoft Outlook   http://www.electioncent...   Press Room - Window...   2009 Professional Practic...   Blog page.doc - Microsof...   Blog page.pdf   4:47 PM

Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk – Twitter Page (Actual Tweets Viewing Page)

http://twitter.com/lacountyrrcc

Google

File   Edit   View   Favorites   Tools   Help

Google | Search ▾ | Bookmarks▾ | Check ▾ | AutoFill ▾ | Sign In ▾

LAVote.net (lacountyrrcc) on Twitter

Home ▾ | Page ▾ | Tools ▾

Hey there! lacountyrrcc is using Twitter.

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing? **Join today** to start receiving **lacountyrrcc's** updates.

Join today!

Already using Twitter from your phone? **Click here.**

lacountyrrcc

Updated results pending in LA County today; will Tweet as soon as they are posted. On deadline to complete canvass for 32nd Cong District.

38 minutes ago from web

@smcvote For clarification the figures in your Tweet reflect % returned of total registered voters. LA's return % of issued is 48.01.

about 4 hours ago from web in reply to smcvote

Canvass update: Preliminary estimate of ballots remaining to be counted is approx. 88,600. Figure is a projection only & subject to change.

10:07 AM May 21st from web

Canvass update: 753,242 ballots tallied on Election Night; 287,130 were vote by mail ballots. Next update 5/22 starting @ 2 p.m.

9:43 AM May 21st from web

Post-election canvass activity started today with the random drawing of precincts for the mandated 1% manual tally verification process.

1:09 PM May 20th from web

Next update of election results for L.A. County will be posted on

Name LAVote.net
Location Los Angeles County
Web http://www.lavote...
Bio Dean Logan, Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk -- VOTE...You Count!

13 following   **186** followers

Updates   **107**

Favorites

Following

RSS feed of lacountyrrcc's updates

Start | Inbox - Micro... | http://www.e... | Press Room - ... | LAVote.net ... | Press Room .... | 2009 Professi... | 2009 Professi... | Blog page.do... | Blog page.pdf | 2009 Professi...   5:14 PM