Vision and Scope Document
for
PolitiMap

PolitiMap Team

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1 Revision History

2 Business Requirements

Ultimate value of the product: Encourage political involvement in local government. This benefits the users by enabling them to better take advantage of the

republic in which they live. This can also benefit activist groups by enabling them to get more eyes on the causes they care about.

2.1 Background

Voter turnout is a problem for the United States as a whole, with a study from Pew Research stating that the US ranks 31st among the 35 countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, most of whose members are highly developed, democratic states. [2] Voter turnout for local elections in large cities is even worse, with a 2014 study from Governing showing that turnout in Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and LA ranged from 20% to 42% in the most recent election shown in the study. [3] Turnout in San Luis Obispo county for the most recent general election in 2014 was 58.42% of registered voters. [1]

2.2 Business Opportunity

Given that 62,434 registered voters did not vote in the most recent general election, there is an opportunity to significantly increase voter turnout in San Luis Obispo county. Further, judging from the low turnout for elections, it seems reasonable that people who do not vote likely are not following the progress of local bills. PolitiMap will seek to increase the awareness of local voters regarding local bills.

2.3 Business Objectives and Success Criteria

Business Objectives	Metric
BO-1 Have active users	**SC-1** 100 calls made by voters to their representatives in local government.

2.4 Customer or Market Needs

TBD

2.5 Business Risks

Risk Level	Description	Mitigation
Occurred	**RI-1** Competitor exists	Gain clear understanding of competitor's positioning and either provide a better product or a different product
High	**RI-2** Server hosting may become expensive after our free year on AWS	Make plans to shut down system after one year or to have long-term funding
Low	**RI-3** A server breakin may allow information to be changed	Proper server security
Low	**RI-4** A server breakin may allow misuse of the server	Proper server security

3 Vision of Solution

3.1 Vision Statement

PolitiMap seeks to increase the involvement of ordinary citizens in local government.

3.2 Major Features

Feature	Description
FE-1	Display of local, state, and federal bills
FE-2	Easy way to call representative

3.3 Assumptions and Dependencies

Assumption	Description
AS-1	More involvement with local politics is beneficial
AS-2	Voters lack information in order to be more involved with local politics
AS-3	Voter involvement with local politics is limited[1]

Dependency	Description
DE-1	Ability to get data on bills in a machine-parsable format (even if that is initially plaintext with custom code to parse it)

4 Scope and Limitations

4.1 Scope of Initial Release

Initially, the application will only provide a way of viewing current bills in the San Luis Obispo City Council.

4.2 Scope of Subsequent Releases

Following a successful initial release, the next releases would be expected to add the ability to display current bills in the San Luis Obispo County Supervisors, followed by the California State Legislature and the US Congress. Push notifications would be added to notify people when a new bill comes up.

Further expansion to cover more geographical locations would be possible.

4.3 Limitations and Exclusions

We do not plan to implement any functionality regarding candidates in elections in the first versions of the application. Such a feature might be possible in the long term, but not within the first few releases.

5 Business Context

5.1 Stakeholder Profiles

Stakeholder	Major Value	Attitudes	Major Interests	Constraints
Local Voters	Makes activity in local government easier	Likely indifference, given apparent current attitude toward local government	Ways in which policies and elections will impact their everyday lives	Ease of use: information must be available quickly
Local activist groups	Make bills affecting their causes more widely known	Depending on the influence of the application, hopefully interest	Passing and electing officials that represent their points of activism	May or may not be direct users; competition
Local government officials	Will receive more calls from voters if the application succeeds.	Currently unknown.	Properly and accurately serving their constituents	Not direct users of the application

5.2 Project Priorities

TBD

5.3 Operating Environment

This project will be run as an iPhone mobile application aimed at users across the United States. Since our initial target audience is limited to a domestic one,

the geographic distribution wont be such that servers at many unique locations will be necessary. Our server(s) will be running a database with MySQL as the DBMS, and utilize PHP code on server-side to query the database and communicate with the iPhone app using requests and JSON data. Using Rest API calls to a backend database as the data management system is common practice in mobile application development.

At this stage, we have not explored revenue streams for our business model besides advertising. At present, allowing user access for free somewhat reduces the risk incurred by a major service outage on our app since the degree of pressure involved when users pay for access to the application is significant. PolitiMap is not a tool we expect to be used more than once or twice a day by customers, and an outage of up to a full 24 hours should not be a major burden.

Our MySQL server should be secured to prevent injection and manipulation of our data, but none of the data hosted on it is expected to be sensitive.

References

[1] URL: `http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/CR/Elections/PDFs/Voter+turnout.pdf`.

[2] Drew Desilver. *U.S. voter turnout trails most developed countries*. URL: `http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/08/02/u-s-voter-turnout-trails-most-developed-countries`.

[3] Mike Maciag. *Voter Turnout Plummeting in Local Elections*. Oct. 2014. URL: `http://www.governing.com/topics/politics/gov-voter-turnout-municipal-elections.html`.