SmartVote

Problem that We Addressed

Citizens are not as informed about local government. There is no well-known resource for providing timely, concise, and informative information about local government

There are too many negative campaign ads and people have to spend time to find the most trustworthy source, which often times is a subjective rather than objective decision

To

Current State & Opportunity

- Currently no well-known digital platform that allows for all-in-one: people to learn about candidates & representatives, interact with them, and exercise their interests and passions
- In Champaign County, only 20,000 citizens out of the 140,000 vote in local elections--The County Clerk said people feel like "Deer in the headlights in the voting booth". County Clerk's website = big 'laundry list' of candidates.

"There's an election in 4 weeks and nobody knows about it" - Gordy Hulten, Champaign County Clerk

To

In-Depth Look at the Features: What Users can Do on the SmartVote site

- **View calendar of events filtered by category**
    - Users can see what meetings/townhall/community opportunities are upcoming
    - Option to subscribe to updates for topics and specific events
- **View Candidate Info**
    - During election season, include bios and stances for candidates. The bios will be self-written by the candidates to reduce bias and negativity from other candidates. During non-election seasons, the page will have up-to-date on the current representative's activity, views, and overall approval
- **Representative-Citizen Interaction**
    - Enter your address to find who your local and state representatives are
    - Enter your topics of interest (i.e. environment, taxes, education, etc.) and see which reps coincide your areas of interest. During election season, users can do the same thing and find out which candidates have the most views/interests in common
    - See when these reps have town halls
    - Reach out directly via message or phone call to the representatives through our interface

Target Users

- Candidates running for local offices
- Current representatives at the local government level
- Young people + new voters
- Citizens passionate about causes
- Citizens looking to become active in the community
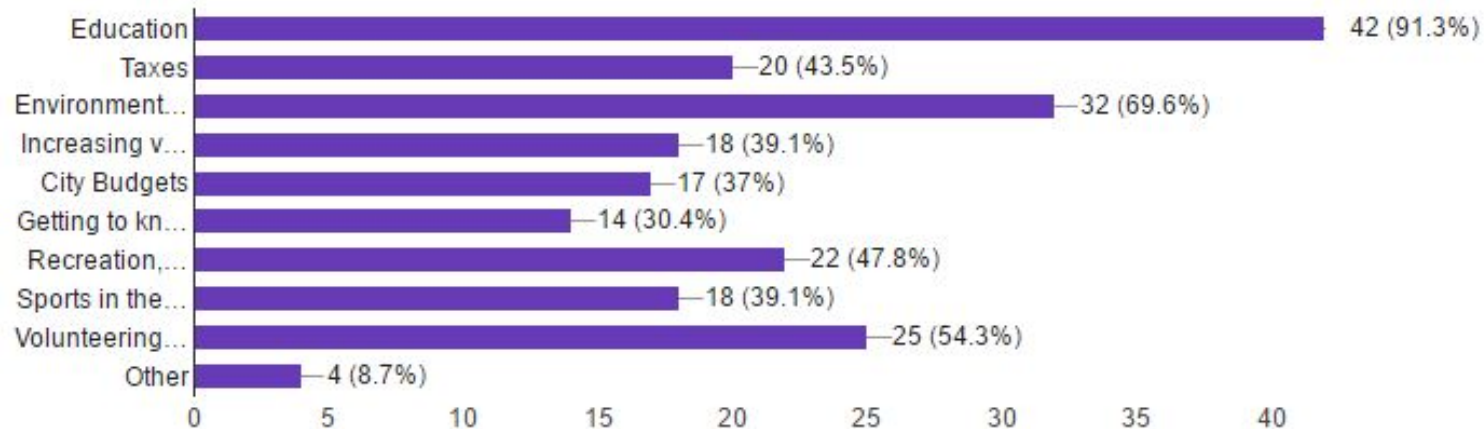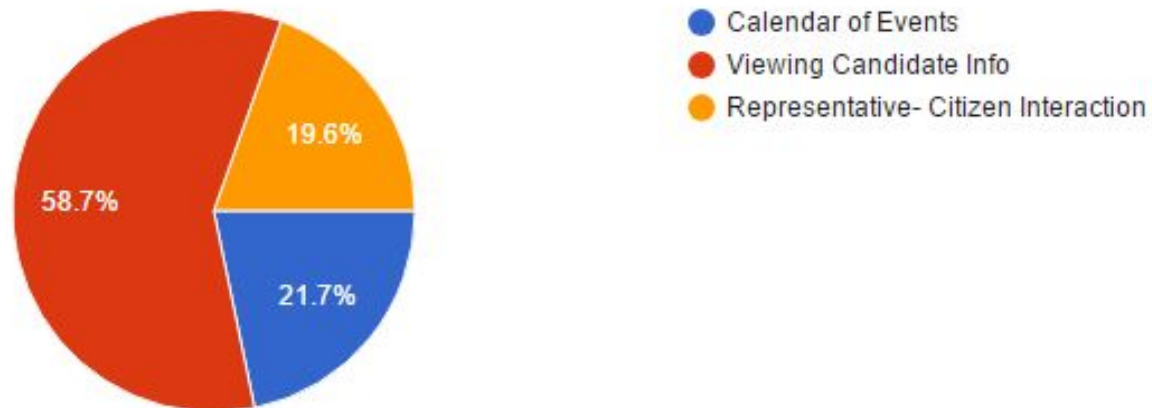- People of any age

Process: Original Design Idea → Final Prototype

1. Thought about a pressing problem that could be addressed through a technological platform
2. Researched existing solutions and the potential to have an impact with our idea
3. Created a low fidelity paper prototype & analyzed feedback on this prototype as well as initial project proposal
4. Conducted user research (46 respondents!) on what would be the most useful aspects of the website
   a. These learnings influenced the design. Discussed on next slide
5. Created interactive prototype in Axure & got feedback on improving the design

Ta 6. Created high fidelity interactive prototype

Learnings that Shaped the Implementation

Many of these takeaways come from our User Research questionnaire:

1. Axure is very tedious to work with!
2. The discussion forum (and online interaction in general) is not valued by potential users
3. Information overload -hence, we kept it simple
4. #1 Problem with current solutions = difficult to navigate, scattered information, and bad UI
   a. We solved this.

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Pie chart legend:
- Calendar of Events
- Viewing Candidate Info
- Representative- Citizen Interaction

Pie chart values: 58.7%, 19.6%, 21.7%

Bar chart:
Category	Value
Education	42 (91.3%)
Taxes	20 (43.5%)
Environment...	32 (69.6%)
Increasing v...	18 (39.1%)
City Budgets	17 (37%)
Getting to kn...	14 (30.4%)
Recreation,...	22 (47.8%)
Sports in the...	18 (39.1%)
Volunteering...	25 (54.3%)
Other	4 (8.7%)

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Live Demo that Shows User's Tasks

http://wq37sh.axshare.com/homepage.html

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Next Steps

1. Introduce logic into the application
2. More comprehensive- step away from Axure (limited offering of features)
3. Mobile version + responsive features
4. Subscription capabilities
5. Add filtering capabilities in the Calendar of Events
6. User evaluations
7. Candidates/current representatives will receive a follow up email for them to provide additional proof of ID before signing up on our site
8. Incentivization

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Revised Interface

Based on the User Evaluation Results doc, we revised Points 1, 3, 4, 7. See the doc for a thorough explanation. Overall, our user tasks were clear so we did not make major changes to those aspects of the interface.

Point 1-Continue the minimalistic design, but make the color scheme less clashing and more simple- got rid of the orange background on all the pages, got rid of unnecessary blank space

Point 3- Improved font and font size- "less childish"- revised all the pages' fonts to be smaller, consistent, and more user-friendly. Revised the font & placement of text on the homepage

Point 4- Consistency in positioning of buttons- standardized the positions and hyperlinks for all the buttons on all the pages. Got rid of duplicate Login button on homepage as well as non-intuitive "arrow" button

Point 7- Search bar for Candidate List and Incumbent List- added a search bar to all the List of Incumbents and List of Candidates pages