How to Use Layout and Visual Presentation

Webinar 2
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Welcome

Introduction of Trainers

To better serve California’s diverse voters, voter information must be more accessible in design and delivery.

• Aim to make voter information more effective and inviting.
• Provide trainings, webinars, and other technical assistance in implementing recommendations.
• Identify impediments to adopt best practices including regulatory, legislative, and financial barriers.
"To raise voter confidence and increase participation, we must learn how voters get information and how to implement best practices for voter guides."
In today's webinar...

Top tips for employing design and layout to make voter information guides easy to use:

Layout and navigation
   Building a road map, and guiding readers along the way

Icons and illustration
   Making information easy to recognize, identify, and use

Typography
   Making text as legible and easy-to-read as possible
Layout and navigation

Give the reader a roadmap, and guide them along the way
Be consistent

- Year-to-year consistency builds familiarity and trust
- Consistency in layout and use of design elements assists in ease-of-use and clarity
Use layout to convey content

- Layout can communicate the type of content on a page
- Layout can differentiate page types from one another
Help readers find their way

What’s in this guide?

- 3 ways to vote
- Voter Bill of Rights
- How to vote by mail
- How to vote early in person
- How to vote in person at the polls
- Accessibility and language voting assistance

What’s on the ballot for this election?

- Who are the candidates?
- Local ballot measures: E
- Local ballot measures: F
- Paid candidate statements
- Practice ballot

- A clear and concise table of contents acts as a roadmap for the guide
- Organize information in an easy-to-follow path
Use a clear, easy-to-read heading for each page
Use running headings to connect parts of a section
Use design to guide the voter

3 ways to vote

Vote by mail:
Request a vote-by-mail ballot by October 29.
Return it by mail, drop it off at one of the secure ballot drop-off locations, or deliver it on November 6 to any polling place.

Vote-by-mail ballots must be received at the elections office or a polling place by 8 pm on November 6.
For more details, see Page 4.

Vote early in person:
You may vote at the elections office, or at any early voting centers listed on page 5.
October 7 until November 5
Monday – Friday, 8am to 8pm
Franklin County Elections Department
4324 Franklin Avenue
Franklin, CA
For more details, see Page 5.

Vote at the polling place:
Polling places are open on Election Day: November 6, from 7am to 8pm.
The location of your polling place is printed on the back cover of this guide.

You can look up your polling place:
- On the web: www.franklinvotes.org
- Using the automated phone service: 1-222-555-1216
For more details, see Page 6.
Include a practice ballot

- Present a sample ballot in a way that voters easily understand what it is and how to use it
Questions?
Icons and illustrations

Make information easy to recognize, identify, and use
Make the information visual

- Visual elements help guide readers through the content
- Icons or other images signal the type of content next to them

Icons and illustrations; http://civicdesign.org/projects/how-voters-get-information/
Make the information visual

- Useful images and icons are precise and relevant to the content, not decorative.
Use accurate instructional illustrations

- Visual instructions help low-literacy and general-population voters
- Illustrations must be accurate in their details to avoid misleading voters
- Photo images are not recommended
Questions?
Typography

Make text as legible and easy-to-read as possible
Make the text big enough

- Pages with small, tightly packed text are difficult to read

- Readers are more likely to read sections in larger type, and read the text more accurately

- In print, try to make the text size at least 12 points
Use upper- and lowercase letters

- Lowercase letters are more legible than all capital letters because they are easier to recognize.
Avoid centered type

- Left-aligned type is more legible than centered type, which forces the eye to stop reading in order to find the start of the next line
Pick one sans-serif font

- Switching between fonts can require the eye to stop reading and adjust, or can unintentionally imply a change in content.

- Sans-serif fonts are easier to read for shorter-length content like a voter information guide.
Pick one sans-serif font

The prototype guide uses ClearView ADA from Terminal Design

- Helvetica: Official Voter Guide
- Arial: Official Voter Guide
- Univers: Official Voter Guide
- Verdana: Official Voter Guide
- ClearView: Official Voter Guide

http://www.terminaldesign.com/fonts/clearviewada-complete-family/
Questions?
Resources
To help you create or revise your voter guides
See all the webinars

1. **What are the Best Practices for Developing and Reviewing Voter Guides?**  
   Monday, April 27, 11:00am-12:00pm

2. **How to Use Layout and Visual Presentation in Voter Guides**  
   Monday, April 27, 1:30pm-2:30pm

3. **How to Use Voter Guides to Close the Civic Literacy Gap**  
   Friday, May 1, 11:00am-12:00pm

4. **How to Use Plain Language in Voter Guides**  
   Friday, May 1, 1:30pm-2:30pm

Sign up or view the archived webinars: [http://cavotes.org/](http://cavotes.org/)
Download the manual from https://cavotes.org/download-best-practices-manual
Use the checklist

Ask yourself these questions when creating or revising your voter guide, so it has the answers voters need.

VOTER GUIDE RECOMMENDATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist of our recommendations when creating or reviewing a voter guide.

Include the right information at the appropriate level of detail

☐ Is the information organized by activity or task?
☐ Does the cover page include the following information?
  • County name and seal (or other official insignia)
  • Name or type of election
  • Date of election day and times the polls are open
  • Polling place information
  • How to contact the election office
  • Languages offered
☐ Is it clear how the county and state guides are different and connected?
☐ Are the headings written as questions or active instructions?
☐ Are the plain language principles incorporated? This includes
  • Writing short sentences
  • Using short, simple, everyday words
  • Writing in active voice and writing in the positive
  • Keeping paragraphs short
  • Separating paragraphs by a space, so that each one stands out on the page
☐ Are there definitions and descriptions for election terms and processes?

Organize information in an easy-to-follow path

☐ Is there a table of contents?
☐ Are there questions, quasi-questions, or instructions as headings?
☐ Does each page have a clear topic?
☐ Are there visual elements to make each section easy to see?
☐ Is the voter information organized to include both an overview and details?
Download additional materials

Report and recommendations
- Sample voter guide pages illustrating the recommendations
- Icons and illustrations from the prototype voter guide

Preliminary reports and presentations
- Landscape analysis from the 2014 primary election

Research protocol materials
- Voter demographic questionnaire forms
- Sample pages and prototypes tested

http://civicdesign.org/projects/how-voters-get-information/
League of Women Voters of California Education Fund
cavotes.org | easyvoterguide.org | smartvoter.org

Center for Civic Design
civicdesign.org | @civicdesign
civicdesign.org/projects/how-voters-get-information/

How Voters Get Information
Best Practices Manual for Official Voter Information Guides in California
https://cavotes.org/download-best-practices-manual