2011 Professional Practices Program

Mapping the Ballot

Allen County, Indiana

Submitted by:
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Mapping the Ballot  
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With over 300 precincts and 250 different ballot styles, sample ballot delivery presented a challenge for our four person office. Traditional manual delivery (taking phone calls, recording names and addresses, finding the correct ballot, printing each ballot and mailing to the interested party) was repeated hundreds of times for each election.

When the office developed a website, attempts to automate sample ballot delivery resulted in a complicated process. The sample ballot files were delivered by precincts, but most voters did not know the precinct they lived in. This meant voters were required to navigate a confusing five step process - including visiting other websites - to determine the correct ballot. As a result, many voters who were directed to the website quickly become discouraged and returned to the phone to call the Election Board for sample ballots.

In early 2010, the County Treasurer’s office developed a GIS interface for delivering property tax information based on owner names and addresses. When Election Board staff saw the site, they immediately recognized the potential of the interface to create a one stop site for voter information, including delivery of the sample ballots. Working with the Allen County GIS Department, already an important and integral partner in delivering election information, Election Board staff added elected officials, sample ballots and polling location data to their mapping databases. The GIS department modified the property tax website to display the election data.

The resulting website allows voters to enter their name, address or precinct which displays their polling locations with photos and directions from their address, sample ballots, elected officials connected to the address, how-to videos and links to other election related sites. Voters can now get the information they need easily and quickly. In addition, the site was developed as a modification to the Treasurer’s site at no additional cost to taxpayers.

Very positive press helped to publicize the website for the launch right before the 2010 primary. Both major political parties promoted the site as voters called their organizations requesting information. Our office received a letter from one voter who returned to the polls after several years because of the confidence she gained navigating the new site.

On the day before the 2010 General Election, the site recorded 2,497 hits, the highest number of any county web application to that point. Based on the overwhelming acceptance of the site, our office will continue to update it with each new election.
1. Voter enters address, name or precinct information
2. Voting location address and precinct information
3. Sample Ballot – voter clicks on thumbnail to bring up larger image
4. Links to videos on how to vote an absentee ballot and using voting machines
5. Photo of voting and property locations
6. Map of address and voting locations with visual directions
7. Voters can click on tabs to retrieve lists of elected officials serving that location
County unveils vote-info Web site

Maps polling place, displays ballot

Amanda Jones
The Journal Gazette

Allen County voters have a new tool to help them find their polling locations next month.

The Allen County Election Board announced a website Wednesday that uses the county’s Geographic Information System's mapping software to locate polling sites, view sample ballots for a voter's precinct and list a list of current elected officials serving that voter.

The site also provides directions to polling locations, plus district maps for local, county, State and federal offices.

ON THE WEB
To find your polling site, go to www.ajc.com/apps/guide, then select the county you live in. Use the alphabetical listing of polling sites under the “Find It” tab. Click on the link to add the site to your map, and then click on the map to display directions.

Users can search by address or property parcel to find the same information for other properties.

A county election board website for voting information

A county election board website revamp is making crucial election information available with just a few keystrokes.

The Allen County Election Board’s website is getting an extra mileage out of the easy-to-use interface that county technology staff designed for the Allen County Treasurer to make complicated property tax information simple and easy to find.

The new site is expected to help reduce the number of calls, said Alicia Jones, elections-boarder and look at “what’s new” section for information about the new tools and a link to the online voter information database.

The INMap database was developed by the county’s Geographic Information System and Information Technology departments with the help of the county’s IT consultant, Alex Origin.

It allows users to type in an address and learn where they are supposed to vote, including the precinct number, polling location address and a picture of the building.

To confirm voter registration, citizens can go to www.indianavoters.com.

Location and address and a picture of the building.

Residents should go to www.alenncounty.gov/elections-board and look at the “what’s new” section for information about the new tools and a link to the online voter information database.

School, township, city, county, state and federal offices.

A minor drawback is that the site is not linked with Allen County Voter Registration.

Residents still need to turn to Voter Registration to confirm that they are registered to vote. But that can easily be done by visiting www.indianavoters.com.
Mapping Website Statistics
Election Morning – November 2, 2010

Select Date: □ Last 7 Days □ or □ Oct □ 26 2010 □ - Nov □ 02 2010
Select Date: ✓ Show Page Loads ✓ Show Unique Visitors ✓ Show Returning Visitors
Select Graph: □ Bar Graph □ Area Graph □ No Graph

Submit □ Save As Default

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From: Tracy Ripplinger  
Sent: Tuesday, February 01, 2011 8:11 AM  
To: Beth Dlug  
Subject: ACEB Website

I would like to commend whomever was responsible for creating the “sample ballots” and precinct information availability on the web. My Mom had not voted since her New Haven precinct had gone to the electronic voting. She was concerned that she would get there and be overwhelmed by the whole process. When we heard about the information available via the web, I was able to print out all her information and the list of candidates that would be on her ballot, she did her research and was prepared when she walked in to cast her vote. She has now regained her confidence and is once again a dedicated voter.

Thanks,
Tracy Ripplinger