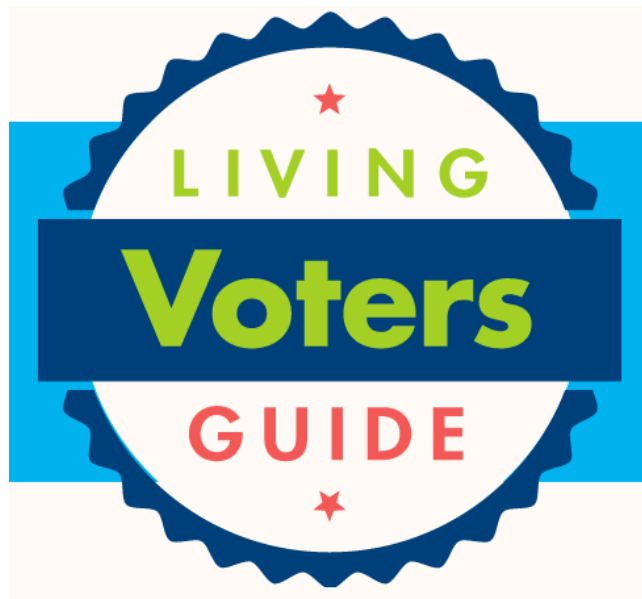# Final Report

Charmander Inc.

Livingvotersguide.org

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Executive Summary

Our team of student researchers from the University of Washington conducted an illuminating usability test on the Living Voters Guide website. Testing was completed in the LUTE Lab on the university campus with four participants of varied political affiliation. A structured testing protocol was created, which quantitatively and qualitatively measured users' ability to successfully complete tasks on the Living Voters Guide website. Data regarding overall satisfaction with the website was also collected.

The following report details the findings of the study as well as the collection and analysis of participant data. After identifying problem areas through observation and user feedback, we have formulated representative design suggestions that will improve the platform in a way that aligns with user needs as well as Seattle CityClub's mission to inform voting decisions and inspire public trust.

Data was analyzed through affinity diagramming and yielded results that reflect five core research questions:
1. is the website **effective**?
2. is the website **efficient**?
3. is the website **engaging**?
4. is the website **easy to learn**?
5. is the website **error tolerant**?

Recommendations aim to improve the Living Voters Guide website in these areas. Most importantly, we recommend search engine optimization (SEO) to help users find the website's homepage more efficiently. Attention should also be given to additional navigation tools. Adding a search bar or repurposing the four step banner on the homepage would make navigation more intuitive to users. Finally, we maintain that enlarging the filter options on the graph page and moving them to the center of the screen will prevent users from passing over a well thought of feature.

While several of the findings from the study are of high importance, the difficulty of each fix remains minimal. As a result, executing the recommendations outlined in this report will serve to improve user experience, increase site participation and advance the goals of Seattle CityClub for minimum cost and effort.

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1. Study Objective

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the usability of the Living Voters Guide website. By identifying problem areas through observation and user feedback, we were able to formulate representative design suggestions that will improve the platform in a way that aligns with user needs as well as Seattle CityClub's mission to inform voting decisions and inspire public trust.

1.1 Product Description

After a thorough analysis of the test product, our team has identified the Living Voters Guide as a civic engagement tool for the residents of Washington State. The site caters to a variety of user goals, which fall into four primary categories:

1. **Learn** about your ballot
2. **Decide** how you will vote
3. **Share** your opinions
4. **Join** the contributors

There are numerous tools and interactions that users encounter on the Living Voters Guide website. However, following the natural narrative of the site, the focal points of the Living Voters Guide were identified as:

1. A user login and registration page
2. A pros and cons chart for forming opinions
3. A graph visualization, which shows users how they relate to the rest of the community

1.2 Benefits of Usability Testing

The principles of human-centered design indicate that, when designing a product, developer goals and behaviors do not necessarily mirror those of different user groups. Therefore, to ensure that user satisfaction and product success is maximised, it is important to set aside assumptions and look directly at the experiences of representative users.

To this purpose, our usability team created a structured testing protocol, which quantitatively and qualitatively measured users' ability to successfully complete tasks on the Living Voters Guide website. We also collected data regarding users' overall satisfaction with the website. Dissatisfied users are likely to leave and not return to an online environment. As a result, directly observing how users perceive a website better prepares developers and designers to make fruitful adjustments to the product.

1.3 Research Questions

Our team chose to use Whitney Quesenbery's 5Es of usability (effective, efficient, engaging, error tolerant and easy to learn) as a framework for determining the strengths and weaknesses of LivingVotersGuide.org. The 5Es are both memorable for their alliteration and highly regarded

as a comprehensive list of the dimensions of usability. We measured adherence to these five traits through the following research questions.

1. Was the site effective?
    a. Were users able to log into the site?
    b. Were users able to find the site's participation rules?
    c. Were users able to find descriptions of current measures?
    d. Were users able to create a pros/cons list?
    e. Were users able to comment on another user's post?
    f. Did the interactions provided on the site allow users to accomplish their personal goals?

2. Was the site efficient?
    a. Were users able to complete each task quickly? (Within a few seconds to a few minutes depending on the task)
    b. Were users able to quickly return to the home page after completing tasks?
    c. Were users able to select the appropriate links in one try? Usability Test Plan of Living Voter's Guide 2
    d. What interactions (if any) did most new users struggle with while using the site?

3. Was the site engaging?
    a. Did users find their overall experience on the site satisfying?
    b. Did the site add value to the user's everyday life?
    c. Were users interested in learning more about ballot measures after working with the political tools on the site?
    d. What about this site (if anything) was interesting to users?

4. Was the site error tolerant?
    a. Did the site give detailed error messages if a mistake is made?
    b. Were users able to backtrack without using the browser's back button?
    c. Did users ever get stuck trying to complete tasks?

5. Was the site easy to learn?
    a. Were users able to quickly understand the purpose of the site?
    b. Did the site explain how to operate various tools as users encounter them?
    c. Did users feel confident in their ability to use various tools properly?
    d. Were users able to remember how to get to different sections of the site?
    e. Did users consider anything on the site to be confusing?

2. Method

To acquire participant's for our tests, our team sent out a recruitment screener survey through personal social media networks (Facebook) and matched respondents to our target user groups. Potential participants were asked to answer questions that were used to categorized them into either "users with firm political opinions," "users who are politically undecided/forming an opinion," or "not in the scope of our project." We also asked questions regarding demographics for later analysis. Because of limited time and space, we conducted tests with a total of four participants; two participants from each of our user groups of interest. This prevented our results from becoming biased towards a single group.

Before conducting the first study, our team conducted a cognitive walkthrough of the materials and made final revisions to the protocol. A pilot test was also conducted to ensure that the study would run smoothly. However, no substantive adjustments were needed to be made following the pilot study. As a result, our pilot participant was included as participant one, minimizing the time and resources that were required to complete the study.

During the study, we used a moderated, in-person lab testing approach. One team member facilitated the study by giving instructions to participants. The other three team members served as either a dedicated note-taker, tech manager, or project manager. After participants were given an overview of the study and signed our consent form, they worked to complete a series of navigation tasks and post-task surveys. After all tasks were completed, a post-test survey and debriefing questions gathered overall satisfaction levels and marked the end of a participant's contribution to the study.

The participant's actions were primarily monitored by the note taker, who documented number of clicks, backtracking, time spent on task, facial expressions and points of confusion. However, the project manager and tech manager also took supplemental notes when finished with their own duties. Each study was observed as well as recorded for future reference using Morae recording software. By gathering data in this way, we were able to analyze the participant's ability to navigate the site and discover how to help them reach their goals in a standardized and efficient manner.

After we took the necessary notes during each participant's usability research session, each team member was assigned to rewatch a participant's video and take qualitative and quantitative notes about that participant. We then created an extensive table with about 15 significant findings for each participant. Once we compiled our findings, we sought to narrow that down further and come up with our top ten findings that resonated with the majority of the participants. We proceeded to conglomerate our data and findings by creating tables and charts to see if there were significant trends across participants.

2.1 Usability Testing Roles

For the purposes of this study, our team members rotated roles after each usability test. This allowed each member to experience the full range of perspectives. We conducted tests with four participants, for which our roles were as follows:

Participant	Facilitator	Note-taker	Tech Manager	Project Manager
P1	Jennifer	Amy	Long	Megan
P2	Megan	Long	Amy	Jennifer
P3	Long	Megan	Jennifer	Amy
P4	Amy	Jennifer	Megan	Long

*During each usability test, the tech manager and project manager also took on the role of additional note-taker.

The project manager ensured that the entire team met in the testing facility to review and setup equipment one hour prior to each study. The tech manager was in charge of acquiring equipment, turning on the laptop, starting the recording software, and returning to a blank home screen. The project facilitator welcomed the participant upon arrival, pointed out the nearest restrooms, supplied them with a water bottle, and ran through an overview of the project. After signing a consent form, the participant was given a task list and guided through a think aloud process by the facilitator. Meanwhile, the note taker took detailed notes on number of clicks, time spent on task, facial expressions, points of confusion, and participant comments throughout the study. The tech manager and project manager also took supplementary notes when not busy with technical malfunctions or other hiccups. After the participants finished their assigned tasks, the facilitator presented them with a post-test survey. When the survey was completed, all team members (led by the facilitator) thanked the participant for their time and escorted them to the exit. After each interview, the team debriefed about the strengths and weaknesses of the session. If another participant was scheduled, the tech manager would reset the recording software. Otherwise, equipment was shut down and returned for the day.

2.2 Test Environment, Equipment and Related Logistics

Usability testing was conducted in the LUTE Lab at the University of Washington. The LUTE Lab is a small, yet functional space that proved a quiet, and well-lit room for interviews. The lab has a dividing wall that allows notetakers to watch the study from a hidden monitor. As a result, we were able to have our entire team present for interviews without risking the disruption or discomfort of the participant.

Specific equipment included:

- 1 LUTE Lab testing space
- 1 participant desktop computer
- 1 note-taker desktop computer
- 2 personal laptops (for additional note taking)
- Backup note taking materials (notebooks and pencils)
- 1 pen (for the participant to sign a consent form)
- 1 water bottle (per participant) as a testing courtesy
- 1 bowl of wrapped candy (for participants)
- 1 sample ballot
- Printed copies of questionnaires
- Printed task cards

Participants were not required to bring anything to the study. However, they were asked to request either a Mac or PC for use during the study based on their personal preferences. We wanted the usability concerns that appeared during our study to come from problems with the site rather than from a participant's unfamiliarity with the equipment's operating system.

2.3 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by searching for similar patterns across participants. Qualitative data was open coded to parse out dominating themes. We then conducted two rounds of focused coding: one with the organically generated themes and another that specifically categorized data based on its relevance to effectiveness, efficiency, engagement, ease of use and error tolerance. By coding our notes in an unbiased manner, we were be able to comprehensively express the common issues in the site. The analysis prepared us to address both our specific research questions involving the 5E's of usability, as well as related factors that were not anticipated within the scope of our research framework. In other words, while we were primarily interested in answering our specific research questions, we were open to additional discoveries.

Quantitative metrics including time and number of clicks were used to further support many of the themes that we parse out through qualitative coding. For example, if a user stated that it took too long to complete a task, our team will averaged overall time for that task across participants. This allowed us to support our findings with additional concrete evidence (in this case abnormal task completion length) and create actionable design recommendations by indicating how to cut time by a satisfactory amount. Quantitative data also stands out on its own. We ran simple statistics on survey responses across participants. Outliers indicated potential problem areas and are discussed in the findings section of this report.

3. Participants

3.1 Description of Participant Groups

Seattle CityClub defines their audience as "the people of Washington State." Accordingly, our team choose to focus on two specific groups within this population based on their underlying purpose for using the website. These two groups fall on either extreme of the average voting population. As a result, their goals and needs were more likely to be underrepresented in the design of the website. We were interested in seeing if these groups use the site differently to achieve their end goals and if they are able to do so effectively and efficiently.

User Groups:
1. Users with firm political opinions (likely to share their own opinions with others)
2. Users who are politically undecided/ forming an opinion (likely to draw from the opinions of others)

In order to operationalize the process of identifying members of these two subgroups, we screened participants based on their involvement in related political activities. Under the scope of each user group, we welcomed participants of all ethnicities and genders. We did, however, instate a minimum threshold on age. The minimum voting age in the United States is 18; therefore, respondents needed to be at least 18 years old in order to participate.

Our screener survey screened and categorized potential participants based on the following requirements:

1. Politically decided:
    a. Is 18 years or older
    b. Voted in the last election
    c. Has volunteered in the political community within the last year
    d. Identifies with a single political party
    e. Self-reports that their support of a single political party is strong
    f. Self-reports that they are very familiar with recent ballot measures

2. Politically undecided:
    a. Is 18 years or older
    b. Did not vote in the last election
    c. Has never volunteered in the political community
    d. Does not identify with a single political party
    e. Self-reports that they are undecided in their political affiliation
    f. Self-reports that they are not very familiar with recent ballot measures

3.2 Screener Results

After sending out our screener survey to the public, four respondents that most closely matched our target user groups were contacted to participate in the study. Two of our participants had more firm political opinions and political affiliations while the other two were undecided in their political affiliation. A summary of participant profiles and screener results are as follows:

Participant 1

This participant's political affiliation was undecided. When asked how strongly she felt about her political opinions on a scale of 1-5, she answered with a 4 (somewhat strongly) on the screener survey. However, on the pre-test survey she identified as neutral. Participant 1 is a 21 year old, asian female with moderate experience using computers to browse the internet. She had never used the Living Voters Guide site before.

Participant 2

This participant's political affiliation was democratic. When asked how strongly she felt about her political opinions on a scale of 1-5, she answered with a 4 (somewhat strongly). Participant 2 is a 20 year old, white female with a lot of experience using computers to browse the internet. She had never used the Living Voters Guide site before.

Participant 3

This participant's political affiliation was undecided. When asked how strongly she felt about her political opinions on a scale of 1-5, she answered with a 4 (somewhat strongly). Participant 3 is a 26 year old, hispanic female with moderate experience using computers to browse the internet. She had never used the Living Voters Guide site before.

Participant 4

This participant's political affiliation was democratic When asked how strongly she felt about her political opinions on a scale of 1-5, she answered with a 4 (somewhat strongly). Participant 4 is a 26 year old, white female with a lot of experience using computers to browse the internet. She had never used the Living Voters Guide site before.

Table 1: Screener Survey Results

#	Question	Answers
1	Age	P1- 21 P2- 20 P3- 26 P4- 26
2	What is your race?	P1- Asian P2- White or Caucasian P3- Hispanic/ Latino P4- White or Caucasian
3	Gender	P1- Female P2- Female P3- Female P4- Female
4	Did you vote in the November 2014 General Election?	P1- No P2- No P3- No P4- Yes
5	What is your political affiliation?	P1- Undecided P2- Democrat P3- Undecided P4- Democrat
6	Have you ever volunteered for a political campaign?	P1- No P2- No P3- No P4- No
7	Are you familiar with the I-1351 measure to modify K-12 funding?	P1- Not at all familiar P2- Very familiar P3- Not at all familiar P4- Somewhat familiar
8	How often do you watch or read the news?	P1- Sometimes P2- Every day P3- Sometimes P4- Almost never

9	How strongly do you feel about your political opinions?	P1- 4, somewhat strongly P2- 4, somewhat strongly P3- 4, somewhat strongly P4- 4, somewhat strongly
10	Have you ever worked for or been affiliated with Seattle CityClub in any way?	P1- No P2- No P3- No P4- No
11	Which websites (if any) do you use to learn about political information?	P1- CNN, NY Times, BBC P2- CNN P3- CNN, Google, Facebook P4- BBC News, New York Times, Washington Post, Al Jazeera America, King 5 for local
12	What is your preferred operating system?	P1- Windows P2- Windows P3- OS X P4- Windows

3.3 Pre-test Questionnaire Results

A pre-test questionnaire was administered at the beginning of each testing session and can be reviewed in the results table below. The first two questions repeated content from the screener to ensure that participants answered questions consistently. The remaining questions gathered information about what users expect from a political website and what platforms they already use. CNN, BBC, and the NY Times were among the most common news sources used by participants.

Participants were also asked to imagine a website that would allow them to form and share political opinions. The majority of users voiced that they would expect such a site to either be full of like minded viewpoints or riddled with conflict. As one participant put it, "people just say the same thing or they just yell at each other without trying to listen." These sentiments indicated a general dissatisfaction with the environment of existing political forums. Incidentally, with its balanced presentation of information and mediation of disrespectful conduct, the Living Voters Guide has the potential to become highly desirable to its user base. To this end, the findings and recommendations presented in the next section of this report will outline how the user experience and overall success of the site can be maximized.

Table 2: Pre-Task Questionnaire Results

#	Question	Answers
1	What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Republican, Undecided or Other P1- Undecided P2- Democrat P3- Undecided P4- Democrat
2	How strongly do you feel about your political opinions?	Very Strongly to Not Very Strongly (1-5) P1- 3, neutral P2- 2, somewhat strongly, P3- 2, somewhat strongly P4- 2, somewhat strongly
3	How would you rank your experience using computers to browse the internet.	No Experience to a Lot of Experience (1-4) P1- 3, Moderate Experience P2- 4, A Lot of Experience P3- 3, Moderate Experience P4- 4, A lot of Experience
4	Where do you go to learn about the latest political issues?	Open Ended P1- CNN, NY Times, BBC P2- CNN, Komo/King, MSNBC, Friends/parents P3- CNN, google, facebook P4- BBC, NY Times, LGC, America
5	Imagine a website that allows you to form and share political opinions. What do you think it would be like?	Open Ended P1- Blog post where political people talk about their opinions, google filters out opposing political opinions P2- Board where she will see people with poor grammar and people arguing petty issues. Feels that unless there is a mediator that points out ridiculous items, online forums are pointless. P3- People around my age with similar opinions P4- Content or looks? Forums, reddit - avoid political ones because its a mess. People just say the same thing or they just yell at each other without trying to listen.

4. Findings and Recommendations

4.1 Summaries of Results

After analyzing user feedback, our team was presented with numerous insights regarding the design, functionality, and content of the website. Overall, the site was well received by users. As can be seen in Figure 1, in the post-test questionnaire, participants ranked the presence of five usability dimensions within the site. On average, participants responded that they moderately agree the site provides helpful error messages (is error tolerant). Users somewhat agree that the sight is engaging, and easy to learn. Efficiency falls into the range of neutral to somewhat agree, and the average user perceived ease of use neutrally. While, these results reveal much room for improvement, user perception of the site remains in the positive across all categories.

Figure 1: Perceived Usability of Living Voters Guide Website
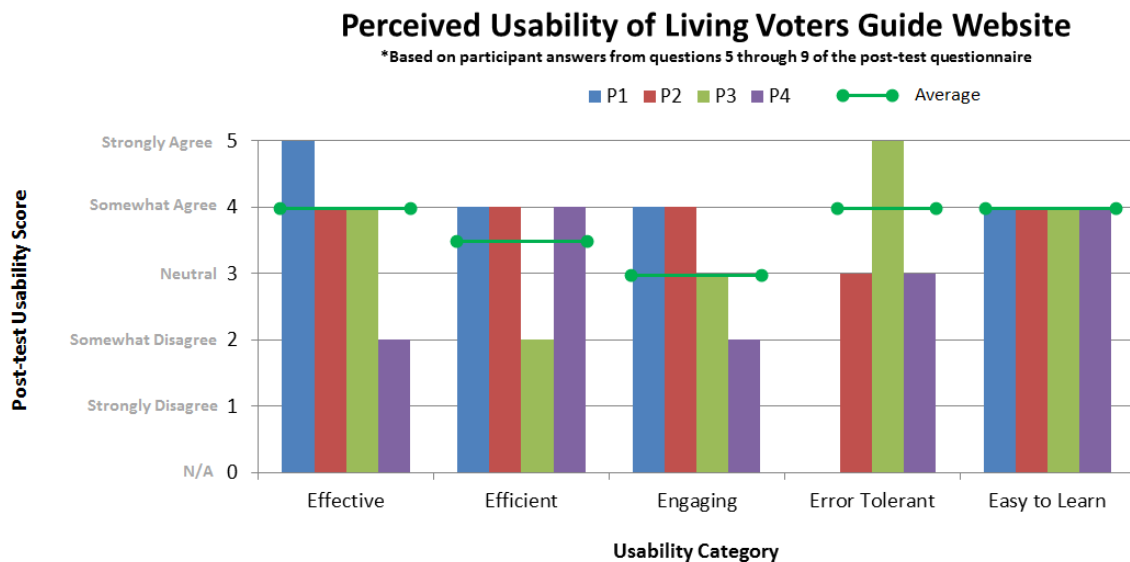
Though a lack of consistency makes results less conclusive, Table 4 indicates a similarly positive trend in overall satisfaction levels. Only one out of four participants was dissatisfied after interacting with the website. This resulted in an average satisfaction level of 3.5 (neutral to somewhat positive).

Figure 2: Overall Satisfaction Levels

Overal Satisfaction Levels
*Based on participant answers to question 3 of the post-test questionnaire
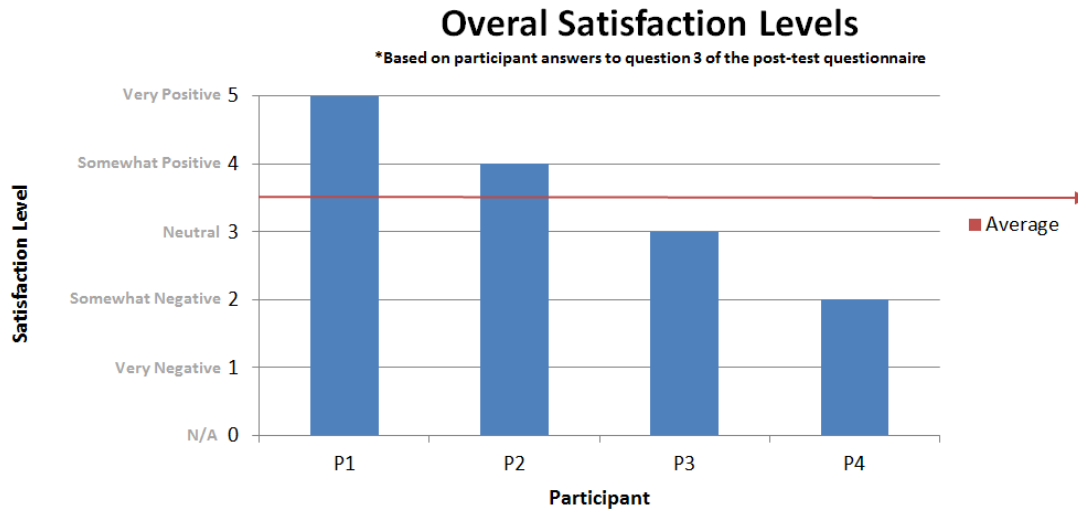
Among other things, participants noted that they enjoyed the graphical representation of the pros/cons chart and like the ability to easily change their submitted opinion. Participant 2 explained that, "it is a good graphical representation rather than data in percentages."

Participants also stated that the site creates a welcoming and relaxing environment. The presence of data visualizations struck users as less intimidating than traditional political forums and made the space more engaging. As participant 3 put it "voting is an overwhelming word". Nonetheless, "the site is more welcoming, it doesn't make it stressful." According to users, the site does well at turning a daunting task into something enjoyable.

In regards to content, participants noted that the purpose of the website is very clear, the site's participation rules are clearly communicated, and the short summaries provided for each measure were extremely helpful. Participant 3 said that the measure summaries are "easy to maneuver and its not so overwhelming." In general, informed voting often requires taking in a great deal of information. Some voters find the process is stressful, excessive or unappealing. When participant 1 was confronted with the full text for a measure she exclaimed "oh no, not gonna read that." However, she found the short synopsis as well as the brief pros and cons displayed on the site to be agreeable. Overall, the Living Voters guide excels in its ability to make politics accessible by putting a balanced variety of information in one place.

Alternatively, we uncovered several challenges that users face when interacting with the site. Our top ten findings and recommendations are summarized in the chart below and elaborated upon in the following section of the report. Findings are prioritized based upon the total number of participants affected by the problem, paired with the importance of the fix as listed in Table 1.

Table 3: Summary of Top 10 Findings and Recommendations

Finding #	Finding	Participants Affected	Recommendation	Importance of fix
1	Users have difficulty locating the site's homepage.	4	Improve SEO rankings.	Critical
2	Users would benefit from additional navigation tools.	3	Add a search bar. Make banner on the homepage links.	High importance
3	Users do not immediately notice the filter options on the right of the graph page, especially users who support a measure.	3	Move display options to the center of the screen. Draw more attention to the options.	High importance
4	Users do not identify the slider as an interactive tool.	4	Add a tag line such as "use the slider to indicate your opinion." Keep the subcategories on the slider visible at all times. Create tutorials for tools.	High importance
5	Users are hesitant to create an account.	3	Add a caption on the login page, which tells users what their information will be used for. Make clear what features you can use with and without an account.	Moderate importance
6	Users are uncertain about what exactly the graph visualization represents.	1	Add a small label that explains the purpose of the graph. Label all columns on the graph.	Moderate importance
7	Users didn't immediately notice the drag and drop feature for the pros and cons.	2	Make drag and drop feature stand out more.	Moderate importance
8	Users are uncomfortable submitting their own pro or con and want to be able to edit their comments after they submit.	3	Make editing option clear. Add option to refrain from sharing personal pros/cons with the public when using the tool to form an opinion.	Moderate importance

| 9 | Users are uncomfortable displaying their full names on the site. | 1 | Add option to create username. OR Only display first names on the graph. | Low importance |
| 10 | Users prefer consistency and expect a drop down menu for "About" link. | 1 | Add a drop down menu on the about tab. | Low importance |

4.2 Detailed Description of Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1

Users had difficulty locating the site's homepage.

Importance of Fix: Critical   Number of Participants Affected: 4

Each participant attempted a Google search of the Living Voters Guide and opened a series of websites that appeared higher in the search results before getting to the correct site. As it happens, the link to The Living Voters Guide website is all the way down at the bottom of the results page. Additionally, this link is not redirect to the homepage. Instead, it takes users to an outdated section of the site. Participant 4 added, "Well I probably wouldn't have clicked it initially because it was so far down. If it's something popular it would be higher at the top." The average amount of time it took participants to get to the site was about a minute (Table 4). This is a critical fix because if users are not able to find the sight they will not use it.

We recommend that more keywords be added to the site's metadata for search engine optimization. This will help bring the site's homepage to the top of the results list.

Finding 2

Users would benefit from additional navigation tools.

Importance of Fix: High Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 3

The site allows users to click on a measure that they want to learn more about. However, this was difficult for users who generally rely on a search bar. It took participants an average of 2 minutes to find measure I-1351 when it was already at the top of the homepage. Participant 4 asked "There's no way to search is there?" and added that she was "not really sure how to find it, honestly." In attempt to navigate the site, 3 out of the 4 participants clicked on each of the three words on the green homepage banner, expecting it to take them where they want to go.

The wording on the banner already aligns well with user goals and explains what the site has to offer. Therefore, we recommend actually making the banner interactive. For example, the banner keyword "Decide" would be turned into a button that takes users to the pros/cons chart page of the site. This would be more intuitive for users than the four step process that is currently required to access the chart. In addition to the banner interaction, adding a simple search bar would make it easier for users to quickly search for key terms.

Finding 3

Users do not immediately notice the filter options on the right of the graph page, especially users who support a measure.

Importance of Fix: High Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 3

Three out of the four participants did not notice the filter options without a nudge from the facilitator. When we asked if participant 3 noticed the filter options, she said "No, it's too small…" and "It's only on the opposing side. So I feel like it's their opinion and since I'm more supporting this [measure] why would I look at that side?" This particular participant uncovers an important issue of information hierarchy on the page. The placement of the filtering options make it seem like they are under the opposer's side. Users consider the filtering options to be useful. Participant 4, for example, mentioned that "It's interesting how you can choose what kind of opinion you can see. That's good." Nonetheless, this potential goes to waste if users do not notice the tool to begin with.

For this problem, we recommend enlarging the filter options and moving them to the center of the page, underneath the opinion chart. This way, all users will easily see the filter options regardless of their political interests.

Finding 4

Users do not identify the slider as an interactive tool.

Importance of Fix: High Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 4

Most participants thought that by adding pros or cons, the slider bar would adjust on its own. Participant 3 said "no it was not apparent, I thought it was going to move by itself." On average, it took participants 4 minutes and 5 seconds to figure out that the slider bar could be used to indicate their opinion during task 9 (Table 4). Considering the simplicity of the tool, this task completion time is excessive. As one of the main purposes of the site, users should be able to indicate the status their opinions in a matter of seconds.

To fix this problem, we suggest adding an instructional tagline such as "move the slider from side to side to indicate your opinion." Keep the subcategories on the slider visible at all times, would likewise provide users with helpful signals. If time and resources are available, creating a

tutorial that shows users each tool on the site and how to use it would reduce confusion for all sections of the Living Voters Guide.

Finding 5

Users are hesitant to create an account.

Importance of Fix: Moderate Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 3

The majority of participants were hesitant when we asked them to create an account. Rational included not wanting to receive spam through email or FaceBook and not wanting to be charged a fee. Participant 1 repeatedly asked, "I have to create an account?" presenting registration as a hassle. Participant 2 said that "requiring to login may limit people" and that she probably would have gone to another website instead of creating an account.

We recommend adding a caption on the login page that tells users what their information will be used for and assures them that they will not receive spam or unwanted social media posts. Additionally, we recommend adding a caption that clarifies what features users can and can't use without making an account. This would inform users that the site can still be useful to them even if they do not want to share their information.

Finding 6

Users are uncertain about what exactly the graph visualization represents.

Importance of Fix: Moderate Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 1

The meaning and purpose of graphs and other visual data should be immediately evident to users. However, participant 3 stated, "I don't understand why its divided by columns...what are the spaces for?" She also pointed to the graph and said, "These are the people who are supporting the law and these are the people who are opposing the law...or maybe it's when they change their opinion? I guess I would have to click on it…" From this instance of confusion, it can be seen that the opinion graph would benefit from further clarification.

We recommend adding a descriptive label that explains the purpose of the graph and how to read it. Labeling all columns of the graph would also add clarity.

Finding 7

Users didn't immediately notice the drag and drop feature for the pros and cons.

Importance of Fix: Moderate Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 2

Like the slide bar tool, the ability to drag and drop pros and cons into an opinion chart is a central feature of the site. Unfortunately, it took an average of about 6 minutes and 32 seconds

for participants to figure out where the feature was and how to use it. When participants were asked to show how you would form and share an opinion with the community (task 7), two completely overlooked the drag and drop tool. Even when the facilitator attempted to guide them towards the tool, it took some time for them to notice it, if at all. Participant 2 was unable to identify the interaction on her own. Our facilitator eventually showed her the tool and explained what it could do. Directed again to explore the tool, participant 2 tried to drag and drop a pro, by clicking and holding on the user icons stacked next to the pro, not the pro itself. The struggle continued until the correct section of the pro was clicked through trial and error.

We recommend making the drag and drop features stand out more on the opinion chart. For example, highlighting the instructions for the drag and drop bubble with different fonts and colors would quickly catch a user's eye. Also, adding an instructive tool tip (a tip that appears when a mouse cursor hovers over an element) to pros and cons would help users identify where to click when they want to drag and drop an item.

Finding 8

Users are uncomfortable submitting their own pro or con and they want to be able to edit their comments after they submit.

Importance of Fix: Moderate Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 3

The majority of our participants wanted the assurance that what they submitted would not be final. Participant 1 told us, "I don't feel comfortable writing a comment" and asked us if she could edit it. Participant 3 said, "I'm glad that you are able to change this because I would want to read the whole thing more thoroughly." From this, we can see that users would be more likely to contribute to the site if those contributions could be easily reviewed and edited.

We recommend making it clear whether or not comments can be edited after they are submitted. A simple line such as "create a pro, you can always edit it later" would do. Additionally, giving users the options not to share their personal pros/cons with the public when using the opinion chart would encourage more timid users to continue using the feature.

Finding 9

Users are uncomfortable displaying their full names on the site.

Importance of Fix: Low Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 1

After users save and submit their opinion, their full name along with their picture is displayed on the chart. Participant 3 said, "I don't like my name being in there. Now people are going to know who I am." This particular participant was concerned about privacy and didn't want to display her full name publically. Nonetheless, she was open to the idea of only displaying her first name. As it happens, several contributors to the site have only provided their first name despite the fact that the login asks for first and last.

We suggest that stakeholders actively consider the rational of their original design. If full names are crucial to maintaining accountability on the site, then we recommend further encouraging users to share their opinions without fear of backlash or judgment. However, if full names are not critical, we recommend changing the login from "first and last name" to simply "name" to

give users the option of partial anonymity. Another way to increase perceived anonymity would be to remove names from the opinion graph.

Finding 10

Users prefer consistency and expect a drop down menu for "About" link.

Importance of Fix: Low Importance   Number of Participants Affected: 1

To get to the participant rules section, users first have to click the "About" tab. In response to this, participant 4 said, "A lot of websites have pull down menus so I was expecting it to pull down, but now it's a two step process [to get to the rules]." Getting the users to their destination in the fewest steps possible would increase efficiency.

We recommend adding a drop down menu on the "About" tab for easier navigation. This will mirror the drop down that appears for the "Log in" tab and create consistency.

Table 4: Participation Task Completion Times and Average

Task	P1	P2	P3	P4	Average
1. Look over the ballot in front of you and select a topic that you would like to learn more about. Then, use the computer provided to research your selected topic.	5 min 30 sec	2 min 20 sec	3 min 50 sec	2 min	3 min 25 sec
2. You have heard that another source of information is the Living Voters Guide. Try to access the Living Voters Guide website.	1 min	1 min 22 sec	1 min 20 sec	32 sec	1 min 4 sec
3. You discover that you cannot remain anonymous if you want to access certain features of the website. Find a way to register with the website using your personal information.	1 min 50 sec	1 min 32 sec	2 min 2 sec	2 min 10 sec	1 min 54 sec
4. You wonder if there is anything important that you should know before you begin engaging with other users. Look to see if there are any set guidelines for using the website.	12 sec	1 min 10 sec	1 min 50 sec	7 sec	50 sec
5. Locate the description for measure I-1351 and explain what it is about.	10 sec	2 min	1 min 40 sec	1 min 3 sec	2 mins
6. You are not sure that you know what all of the benefits and drawbacks are for measure I-1351. Show me how you would find out more about what the community thinks of the measure.	1 min 34 sec	1 min 30 sec	1 min 57 sec	10 sec	1 min 18 sec
7. Show me how you would go about forming an opinion on the measure	12 min 15 sec	6 min 23 sec	45 sec	1 min 54 sec	6 min 32 sec

and sharing that opinion with the rest of the community.					
8. Create your own pro or con and add it to your chart.	4 min 20 sec	1 min	4 min 26 sec	5 sec	2 min 28 sec
9. Where do you currently stand on measure I-1351? Show me how you would manipulate the tool to indicate your current opinion.	1 min 40 sec	2 min 3 sec	1 min 35 sec	3 sec	4 min 5 sec
10. Find out where your opinion falls in relation to the rest of the community.	3 min 20 sec	2 min 10 sec	15 sec	1 min	1 min 41 sec

4.3 Limitations

Overall, the study ran smoothly and gleamed numerous insights. Even so, there were limitations related to a small sample size that may have skewed results.

Limitation 1 - *Our participants were not as extremely opinionated as we had anticipated.*
We initially wanted data from a set of two groups; those who have strong political opinions versus those who are undecided or forming an opinion. Unfortunately, time restrictions required that we recruit two participants who only partially fit our strongly opinionated criteria. These participants had not volunteered on a political campaign and only considered themselves somewhat strongly opinionated on a scale from not very strongly to very strongly. Additionally, one of these participants did not vote in the November general election. However, this was due to a late address change rather than disinterest.

Limitation 2 - *Lack of demographic diversity (gender, age, race).*
All of our participants were female candidates in the age range of 20-26 years old. In future usability tests, it would be beneficial to include data from a wider spectrum of ages and genders. Minority groups should also be included.

Limitation 3 - *Participant 3 felt uncomfortable with the study.*
The data collected through participant 3 included valuable feedback. However, results from parts of the session may be skewed as the participant did not fully accept that she was testing the product rather than being tested herself. When asked if there was anything she did not enjoy about the sight, no suggestions were given. Conversely, her answers to the post-test questionnaire reflect overall dissatisfaction with the site.

Limitation 4 - *All New Users.*
All of our participants were novice users of the site. Returning users may have had different insights on the usability of the website.

Limitation 5 - *All reside in the Seattle area (King County)*
With the scope of this project, we were only able to test those who reside in the Seattle area (King County). It is possible that users from different countries have face unique usability issues when interacting with the site. Seattleites may also have more motivation to use the site as Living Voters Guide is maintained by Seattle City Club and fact checked by the Seattle Public Library.

5. Next Steps

If we were to conduct this usability study again, we would aim to recruit a more diverse group of participants. In order to do this, we would devote more time to recruitment and send out a screener through multiple platforms including political interest groups. By sending out our screener to a wide range of people, we would likely have been able to recruit strongly opinionated users who were eager to share their opinions with others. Using stratified sampling, we would also recruit a racially diverse group of participants, covering a wide age range, and reflecting both male and female viewpoints.

In a future follow up study, another area that could be explored is additional research equipment. Specifically, our team is interested in integrating an eye tracker into our study. Using this technology would reveal interesting data about what users are drawn to and the path they take while looking at a web page. With this information, we can see whether or not the website hierarchy is effective and can pinpoint the sections that need improvement. We can also see which features are seen, what content is overlooked and when a particular feature captures the participant's attention. By comparing hot across all participants, we can find recurring patterns.

After testing the usability of the Living Voters Guide website, our team is interested to study how people keep in touch with political developments on the go. Without a mobile application, the Living Voters Guide may lose appeal amongst a younger generation of users who access information through mobile devices. A similar study directed towards the Living Voters Guide's mobile platform has the potential to reveal a new spectrum of insites. Design recommendations could be made to improve the Living Voters Guide across all platforms and make the tool accessible to all users, anytime, anywhere.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Screener Survey Data
Appendix 2: Pre-Test Questionnaire Data
Appendix 3: Post-Task Questionnaire Data
Appendix 4: Post-Test Questionnaire Data
Appendix 5: Debriefing Question Data
Appendix 6: Usability Test Kit

6.1 Survey Data

Appendix 1
Screener Survey

#	Question	Answers
1	Age	P1- 21 P2- 20 P3- 26 P4- 26
2	What is your race?	P1- Asian P2- White or Caucasian P3- Hispanic/ Latino P4- White or Caucasian
3	Gender	P1- Female P2- Female P3- Female P4- Female
4	Did you vote in the November 2014 General Election?	P1- No P2- No P3- No P4- Yes
5	What is your political affiliation?	P1- Undecided P2- Democrat P3- Undecided P4- Democrat

6	Have you ever volunteered for a political campaign?	P1- No P2- No P3- No P4- No
7	Are you familiar with the I-1351 measure to modify K-12 funding?	P1- Not at all familiar P2- Very familiar P3- Not at all familiar P4- Somewhat familiar
7	How often do you watch or read the news?	P1- Sometimes P2- Every day P3- Sometimes P4- Almost never
8	Have you ever worked for or been affiliated with Seattle CityClub in any way?	P1- No P2- No P3- No P4- No
10	Which websites (if any) do you use to learn about political information?	P1- CNN, NY Times, BBC P2- CNN P3- CNN, Google, Facebook P4- BBC News, New York Times, Washington Post, Al Jazeera America, King 5 for local
11	What is your preferred operating system?	P1- Windows P2- Windows P3- OS X P4- Windows

Appendix 2
Pre-Task Questionnaire Table

#	Question	Answers
1	What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Republican, Undecided or Other P1- Undecided P2- Democrat P3- Undecided P4- Democrat
2	How strongly do you feel about your political opinions?	Very Strongly to Not Very Strongly (1-5) P1- 3.5 P2- 4 P3- 2 P4- 2
3	How would you rank your experience using computers to browse the internet.	No Experience to a Lot of Experience (1-4) P1- 3, Moderate Experience P2- 4, A Lot of Experience P3- 3, Moderate Experience P4- 4, A lot of Experience
4	Where do you go to learn about the latest political issues?	Open Ended P1- CNN, NY Times, BBC P2- CNN, Komo/King, MSNBC, Friends/parents P3- CNN, google, facebook P4- BBC, NY Times, LGC, America
5	Imagine a website that allows you to form and share political opinions. What do you think it would be like?	Open Ended P1- Blog post where political people talk about their opinions, google filters out opposing political opinions P2- Board where she will see people with poor grammar and people arguing petty issues. Feels that unless there is a mediator that points out ridiculous items, online forums are pointless. P3- People around my age with similar opinions P4- Content or looks? Forums, reddit - avoid political ones because its a mess. People just say the same thing or they just yell at each other without trying to listen.

Appendix 3

Post-Task Questionnaire Table for Task 3

#	Question	Answers
1	Rate the difficulty of performing this task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 1, extremely easy P2- 1, extremely easy P3- 3, neutral P4- 2, moderately easy
2	Rate the time it took to complete this task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 1, extremely short P2- 1, extremely short P3- 5, extremely long P4- 3, neutral
3	Rate the likelihood that you would use this feature/task in real life	Scale of (1-5) P1- 3, once a month P2- 2, once a year P3- 1, never P4- 3, once a month
4	Rate the usefulness of the content explored during the task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 3, neutral P2- 4, somewhat useful P3- 3, neutral P4- 3, neutral
5	Do you have any other thoughts or opinions about this feature of the site?	Open Ended P1- not yet P2- requiring a login limits # of users P3- why would you need an account if I just want to find info P4- Many sites have a register button/option from the homepage. In this case, I had to click "log in" to get to registration.

Post-Task Questionnaire Table for Task 7

#	Question	Answers
1	Rate the difficulty of performing this task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 1, extremely easy P2- 2, moderately easy P3- 4, moderately difficult P4- 1, moderately easy
2	Rate the time it took to complete this task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 3, neutral P2- 2, moderately short P3- 4, moderately long P4- 2, moderately short
3	Rate the likelihood that you would use this feature/task in real life	Scale of (1-5) P1- 3, once a month P2- 2, once a year P3- P4- 1, never
4	Rate the usefulness of the content explored during the task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 4, somewhat useful P2- 2, somewhat useful P3- 1, never P4- 1, not useful
5	Do you have any other thoughts or opinions about this feature of the site?	Open Ended P1- Cool, never seen anything like this before P2- Better when site allowed new comments P3- Make the happy face clear P4- I don't feel that this format encourages people to post informative, well-thought-out opinions. Most opinions were just a few sentences. If I am unsure how to vote, I want to find reasons why I should vote that way. Opinions of the masses aren't necessarily informative in this way.

Post-Task Questionnaire Table for Task 10

#	Question	Answers
1	Rate the difficulty of performing this task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 1, extremely easy P2- 1, extremely easy P3- 1, extremely easy P4- 1, extremely easy
2	Rate the time it took to complete this task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 1, extremely short P2-1, extremely short P3- 3, neutral P4- 1, extremely short
3	Rate the likelihood that you would use this feature/task in real life	Scale of (1-5) P1- 3, once a month P2- 2, once a year P3- 2, once a year P4-2, once a year
4	Rate the usefulness of the content explored during the task	Scale of (1-5) P1- 5, extremely useful P2- 4, somewhat useful P3- 3, neutral P4- 2, somewhat useful
5	Do you have any other thoughts or opinions about this feature of the site?	Open Ended P1- smiley faces are cute, smile has graph spectrum P2- N/A P3- N/A P4- This could be interesting to see how a vote might turn out, but I might not use it very much because I'm not sure if site user actually represents a fair sampling of my community.

Appendix 4: *Post-Test Questionnaire*

#	Question	Answers
1	In general, how useful are online resources for forming political opinions?	Scale of (1-5) Usefulness P1- 3, neutral P2- 5, very useful P3- 2, somewhat unuseful P4- 5, very usefull
2	Are you interested in sharing your political opinions with other members of your community?	Nominal: yes or no P1- yes P2- yes P3- yes P4- no
3	How was your overall experience with the Living Voters Guide website?	Scale of (1-5) Negative/Positive P1- 5, very positive P2- 4, somewhat positive P3- 3, neutral P4- 2, somewhat negative
4	How would you rank the website's difficulty of use?	Scale of (1-5) Ease of Use P1- 4, somewhat easy P2- 4, somewhat easy P3- 5, very easy P4- 3, neutral
5	Would you use this website in real life?	Nominal: yes or no P1- yes P2- yes P3- yes P4- no
6	Would you recommend this site to someone?	Nominal: yes or no P1- yes P2- yes P3- yes P4- no

7	This website engaged my interest as a user	Scale of (1-5) Disagree/Agree P1- 4, somewhat agree P2- 4, somewhat agree P3- 3, neutral P4- 2, somewhat disagree
8	This website was effective in helping me reach my goals	Scale of (1-5) Disagree/Agree P1- 5, strongly agree P2- 4, somewhat agree P3- 4, somewhat agree P4- 2, somewhat disagree
9	I was able to complete tasks relatively quickly	Scale of (1-5) Disagree/Agree P1- 4, somewhat agree P2- 4, somewhat agree P3- 2, somewhat disagree P4- 4, somewhat agree
10	This website provides helpful error messages when I make mistakes	Scale of (1-5) Disagree/Agree P1- 0, don't know P2- 3, neutral P3- 5, strongly agree P4- 3, neutral
11	It was easy to learn how to use this website	Scale of (1-5) Disagree/Agree P1- 4, somewhat agree P2- 4, somewhat agree P3- 4, somewhat agree P4- 4, somewhat agree
12	What words would you use to describe this website? Please circle your top five from the table below and talk about the reasoning behind your choices.	Reaction Cards P1- accessible, collaborative, connected, creative, easy to use P2- comprehensive, convenient, efficient, organized, useful P3- approachable, clear, fun, not secure, straightforward P4- N/A

Appendix 5: *Debriefing Questions*

#	Question	Answers
1	What (if anything) did you not enjoy about of your experience with the website?	Open Ended P1- "I liked the website" just felt bad she was slow at using it, never seen something like it before, likes how they're both sides of the opinion" P2- She is not really strongly opposed to anything on site, she probably wouldn't look at the opinions chart, but it also doesn't really bother her. P3- N/A P4- "I thought that it was clunky trying to get to where I wanted to be (register or find out about community roles), two steps instead of a drop down menu or direct link from the website."
2	What (if anything) did you enjoy about of your experience with the website?	Open Ended P1- didn't want to make own account P2- liked that all the articles on the measures are in one place because it saves time. P3- "its not very overwhelming" "voting is an overwhelming word" "the site is more welcoming, it doesn't make it stressful" P4- Interesting to see how people in your area will vote in your area, but doesn't know if it is useful so doesn't know if she will use it. Different from reddit because it asks for opinions. There are short opinions while reddit encourages people to write paragraphs and if it's popular the comment gets pushed to the top. In reddit, you can ask the commenter about what their sources are and they can give you the links. Here, you don't have this kind of interactions as much, so you have to look up things on your own. <told her about library fact check> She still wants to go to other sites to learn more because of different perceptions of the facts.
3	Are there any changes that could be made to improve the usability of the website?	Open Ended P1- doesn't remember what she said during the experience and asked if facilitator remembered anything she said P2- She things it is perfect the way it is because the information that users could see without logging in are relevant. However, she would add a note on top of the page when you log

		in after submissions that you can't submit an opinion or certain features have been disabled. P3- "once you play around with it its ok" P4- "Is there a database for old bills?" Wants a search option. She just had to get used to the website. She thinks the bills should be bigger.
4	Is there anything else that you would like to share with us today?	Open Ended P1- first time in LUTE lab and conducting a usability test, that eye tracker looked intimidating P2- "Nope, pretty good." P3- "No" P4- "No"

6.2 Test Kit

Appendix 7: *Usability Test Kit*

Usability Test Kit

Charmander Inc.
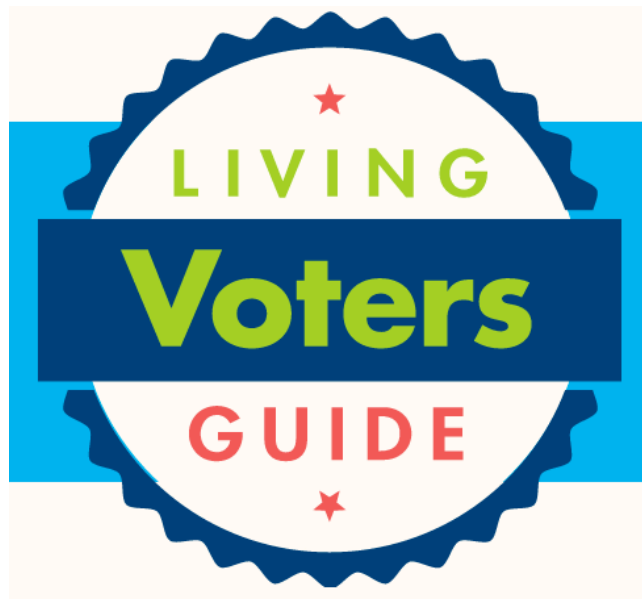
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Table of Contents

Facilitator Script

Introduction
* Introduce ourselves* Thank you for assisting us in our study. We are students in the HCDE 310 Usability Testing class at the University of Washington carrying out a research project. Please take a minute to read through the consent form and sign below if you agree to the terms of the study. The purpose of our study is to improve the usability of the Living Voter's Guide website. By assessing problem areas through user feedback, we hope to be able to formulate representative design suggestions that will improve the platform in a way that aligns with both user needs and the developer's mission to inform voting decisions and inspire public trust. Please note that this study will be video recorded. We will also be recording your eye movement using special eye tracking technology. You will receive no monetary compensation for participating in this study. However, you may help your self to the water and snacks provided.

Pre-test Questionnaire
Before we begin, we would like to ask you a couple more questions to confirm some of the answers you made during our screener survey. 1. What is your age? 2. Have you voted in the past year? 3. Did you vote in the November 2014 General Election? 4. What is your political affiliation? 5. Have you volunteered in the political community within the last two years? 6. What would you expect a political forum to be like? OK, great. We're done with the introductory questions, and now we can start looking at the product.

Tasks

Please think out loud so we know what you're thinking.

* Start from blank slate (computer is turned on but no browser has been opened)

1. Read through the paper consent form in front of you and sign your name at the bottom if you agree to participate in this study. Feel free to ask any questions that you may have (3 min)

Scenario: As a resident of Washington State, there are several new measures on the upcoming ballot that may directly affect you. Imagine that, earlier today, a friend of yours mentioned the 1-594 ballot measure (to increase background checks on gun purchases) and that you have decided to go online to check up on some of the facts. Whether you are confident in how you will vote, or still forming an opinion, we would like you to show us how you might go about finding information about the upcoming ballot measures and what types of information you might chose to look for.

1. Using the computer provided, research the I-594 ballot measure to increase background checks on gun purchases. Write down two facts about the measure on the paper provided (5 min; 10 min max)
   a. *Task is complete if the user is able to write down two facts*
   b. *This task will be used to see if the site effectively communicates information in a way that is in line with participants' usual search habits*
2. Go to the website known as the Living Voters Guide (30 sec; 5 min max)
   a. *Task is complete when the link to the website is opened*
   b. *This task will help measure whether the site is easy to find and learn*
3. Out loud, explain your initial reaction to the site (2 min; 10 min max)
   a. *Task is complete when the participant has discussed their opinion*
   b. *This task will help measure whether the site is engaging and easy to learn*
4. Find and explain the purpose of the website (3 min; 10 min max)
   a. *Task is complete whenever the participant describes a purpose and supports their reasoning*
   b. *This task will help measure whether the site is easy to use*
5. Create an account (2 min; 8 min max)
   a. *Task is complete when participant clicks the send button, resulting in their account information appearing in the top right corner of the screen*
   b. *This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, easy to learn and error tolerant*
6. Locate the site's participation rules (30 sec; 5 min max)
   a. *Task is complete when the participant opens the participation rules link*
   b. *This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, and easy to learn Usability Test Plan of Living Voter's Guide 8*
7. Locate the description for measure I-1351 and explain what it is about (3 min; 5 min

max)

    a. Task is complete when the participant opens the description and indicates that the measure is about K-12 funding

    b. This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, and easy to learn

8. Locate the place on the site that allows for a discussion about the pros and cons of the measure. When you find it, add the provided pros and cons to your opinion chart as you see fit (5 min; 10 min max)

    a. Task is complete when participant has added at least one pro or con to their opinion chart and has stopped adding to it

    b. This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, engaging, easy to learn and error tolerant

9. Create your own pro or con and add it to your chart (3 min; 5 min max)

    a. Task is complete when a new pro or con appears in the chart

    b. This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, easy to learn and error tolerant

10. Assess your political opinion in regards to modifying K-12 funding. Change the blue indicator text at the top of the chart (the blue text just above the smiley face) to reflect your current political opinion. (1 min; 3 min max)

    a. Task is complete when the participant toggles the slider to their desired position

    b. This task will help measure whether the site is effective, easy to learn and engaging

11. Find out where your opinion falls in relation to the rest of the community (2 min, 4 min max)

    a. Task is complete when the participant submits their chart, resulting in a graph view of other users' opinions

    b. This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, and easy to learn

12. Tell us about your experience by completing the post-test survey (8 min)

    a. Task is complete when the participant turns in the survey

    b. This task will help measure nuanced details about each of our research questions

Post-test Questionnaire

I definitely learned a lot from watching you interact with the website. I have a couple more questions for you, and feel free to interact with the site as you answer.
 	
    ● How difficult was the whole experience of using this website?
    ● Was there anything on the website that did not act as you had expected it to?
    ● Was there anything on the site that you didn't like?
    ● Did you have any questions as you were completing the tasks?
    ● Is there any other feedback that you have?
 	
Thank you so much for testing the website. We really appreciate your help.

Consent Form

The purpose of our study is to improve the usability of the Living Voter's Guide website. By assessing problem areas through user feedback, we hope to be able to formulate representative design suggestions that will improve the platform in a way that aligns with both user needs and the developer's mission to inform voting decisions and inspire public trust.

In this test:

- You will be asked to access a website and create an account
- You will be asked to carry out certain tasks on that website
- You will be interviewed regarding the tasks you carried out

Participation in this test is voluntary and any information that you provide will remain confidential. You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

We will be video recording the session to capture usability data for analysis. If you feel that you need to stop the recording at any time, let the researcher know and they will will pause the recording software. The recording will be used for educational research purposes only.

Please sign below if you consent to the terms and conditions of the study.

_____   _____

Subject's Signature   Date

Are you over the age of 18? (Circle one)   Yes   No

Note taker Sheet

Date & Time:

Participant:

Location:

Background Questions:

- What is your age?
- Have you voted in the past year?
- What is your political affiliation?

1. Using the computer provided, research the I-594 ballot measure to increase background checks on gun purchases. Write down two facts about the measure on the paper provided (5 min; 10 min max)
    1.1. *Task is complete if the user is able to write down two facts*
    1.2. *This task will be used to see if the site effectively communicates information in a way that is in line with participants' usual search habits*

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

2. Go to the website known as the Living Voters Guide (30 sec; 5 min max)
    2.1. *Task is complete when the link to the website is opened*
    2.2. *This task will help measure whether the site is easy to find and learn*

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

3.   Out loud, explain your initial reaction to the site (2 min; 10 min max)
    3.1.   *Task is complete when the participant has discussed their opinion*
    3.2.   *This task will help measure whether the site is engaging and easy to learn*

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

4.   Find and explain the purpose of the website (3 min; 10 min max)
    4.1.   *Task is complete whenever the participant describes a purpose and supports their reasoning*
    4.2.   *This task will help measure whether the site is easy to use*

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

5.   Create an account (2 min; 8 min max)
    5.1.   *Task is complete when participant clicks the send button, resulting in their account information appearing in the top right corner of the screen*
    5.2.   *This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, easy to learn and error tolerant*

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

6. Locate the site's participation rules (30 sec; 5 min max)
   6.1   Task is complete when the participant opens the participation rules link
   6.2   This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, and easy to learn Usability Test Plan of Living Voter's Guide 8

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

7. Locate the description for measure I-1351 and explain what it is about (3 min; 5 min max)
   7.1   Task is complete when the participant opens the description and indicates that the measure is about K-12 funding
   7.2   This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, and easy to learn

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

8. Locate the place on the site that allows for a discussion about the pros and cons of the measure. When you find it, add the provided pros and cons to your opinion chart as you see fit (5 min; 10 min max)
   8.1   Task is complete when participant has added at least one pro or con to their opinion chart and has stopped adding to it

   8.2   This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, engaging, easy to learn and error tolerant

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

9. Create your own pro or con and add it to your chart (3 min; 5 min max)
    9.1   Task is complete when a new pro or con appears in the chart
    9.2   This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, easy to learn and error tolerant

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

10. Assess your political opinion in regards to modifying K-12 funding. Change the blue indicator text at the top of the chart (the blue text just above the smiley face) to reflect your current political opinion. (1 min; 3 min max)
    10.1   Task is complete when the participant toggles the slider to their desired position
    10.2   This task will help measure whether the site is effective, easy to learn and engaging

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

11. *Find out where your opinion falls in relation to the rest of the community (2 min, 4 min max)*
    11.1.   Task is complete when the participant submits their chart, resulting in a graph view of other users' opinions
    11.2.   This task will help measure whether the site is effective, efficient, and easy to learn

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

12. *Tell us about your experience by completing the post-test survey (8 min)*
    12.1. *Task is complete when the participant turns in the survey*
    12.2. *This task will help measure nuanced details about each of our research questions*

Success	Notes
0 Not completed 1 Completed with difficulty or help 2 Easily Completed	

After-test Questions:
- How difficult was the whole experience of using this website?
- Was there anything on the website that did not act as you had expected it to?
- Was there anything on the site that you didn't like?
- Did you have any questions as you were completing the tasks?
- Is there any other feedback that you have?

Notetaker Guide
What to take note of:
- what participants say (thinking out loud + answers to the moderator's questions)
- where participants first click
- behaviors (confidence, hesitations)
- blocking points
- participants' questions
- expectations
- decision making process (problem solving)

Moderator Checklist

*Personalized from <u>Usability Testing Essentials</u>

Before the participant arrives
- €   Make sure that the laptop is on and all browser windows are closed
- €   Make sure the participant's laptop is properly positioned
- €   Make sure the Silverback software is recording properly
- €   Make sure pen is on the desk for consent form and questionnaire completion

Welcome
- €   Introduce yourself, thank participant for having an interest in participating
- €   Escort participant to sit at the desk
- €   Sit across from the participant

Consent form, pre-test questionnaire, instructions
- €   Show participant the location of camera, computer, microphone
- €   Explain the purpose of the test
- €   Go over consent form, allow time to read and sign
- €   Explain that there are observers (other team members) who are very interested in learning from the participant about his/her experience
- €   Ask for questions, concerns
- €   Give pre-test questionnaire

Instructions
- €   Explain the task scenario
- €   Review how think-out-loud process works, with examples
- €   Demonstrate indication of completing each scenario
- €   Explain that, after each task, there will be a quick questionnaire to complete, then the next task

After each scenario, post-task questionnaire
- €   Offer plenty of reassurance, especially when tasks prove difficult
- €   Give feedback on the quality of the think out loud procedure; if necessary encourage more feedback from participant by reviewing the process again, with examples
- €   Ask participant to clarify any thoughts or actions as requested by team members
- €   Give post-task questionnaire
- €   Ensure that the participant is at the propper starting point for the next task

After completion, post—test questionnaire
- €   Give post questionnaire
- €   Introduce participant to observing team members; generously thank for experience
- €   Offer candy for participation

Technician's Checklist

*Personalized from <u>Usability Testing Essentials</u>

Before each test/ Participant arrival
- €   Turn on equipment (laptop and eye tracker)
- €   Adjust cameras to proper settings of recording
- €   Set picture-in-picture setting for recording
- €   Check sound coming in and out of control room
- €   Label the video for the session
- €   Make sure the devices are charged
- €   Make sure internet connection is working
- €   Make sure browsers are up to date and working
- €   Make sure that the laptop starts on a blank home screen (no browser tabs open)

During each test session
- €   Synchronize starting times with the logger/ data recorder
- €   Adjust audio as needed
- €   Change picture-in-picture settings as needed

After the test participant leaves
- €   Finalize recording
- €   Save recording with label
- €   Prepare for next participant

At the end of last session
- €   Turn off equipment

Logger's Checklist

*Personalized from Usability Testing Essentials

Before the test
- €   Turn on logging computer
- €   Review logging codes in logging software/ form
- €   Enter new test information into logging software
- €   Request audio adjustments as necessary
- €   Test logging software/ form
- €   Check logger's monitor
- €   Change monitor views as necessary
- €   Do a test print from logging software; troubleshoot any problems
- €   Check data-saving device(s)/ method

After each participant
- €   Complete logging form
- €   Save logging form (if digital)
- €   Copy log file for team members
- €   Distribute copies to team members
- €   Place original in participant's folder
- €   Set up logging software for next participant

At end of day
- €   Back up logging software data files
- €   Set logging software for next day (if appropriate)
- €   Turn off computer
- €   Turn off any personal devices that were used

Screener Survey

A group of students at the University of Washington are seeking participants for a usability study. If you are interested in helping us test the usability of a website, please fill out the screening survey below. Respondents will be contacted based on their compatibility with the study's intended user groups.

Please note that this study is for educational purposes only. Participation will be voluntary and uncompensated. The test session will be video recorded. However, all personal information will remain confidential.

1. What is your name? _____

2. What is your age? _____

3. What is your race?
    a. American Indian or Alaska Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Hispanic/ Latino
    e. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    f. White or Caucasian

4. What is your gender?
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Other

5. Did you vote in the November 2014 General Election?
    a. yes
    b. no

6. What is your political affiliation?
    a. Democrat
    b. Republican
    c. Undecided
    d. Other: _____

7. Have you volunteered in the political community within the last two years?
    a. yes
    b. no

8. Are you familiar with the I-1351 measure to modify K-12 funding?
    a. not familiar at all

      b. somewhat familiar

      c. very familiar

9. Without looking up the answer, please summarize the goals of measure I-1351 to modify K-12 funding? Specifically, how does the measure propose to allocate funds. _____

10. Without looking up the answer, who is currently the Secretary of Defense in the United States of America? _____

11. How often do you watch the news?

      a. every day

      b. every week

      c. sometimes

      d. almost never

      e. never

12. How strongly do you feel about your political opinions?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Strongly				Not Very Strongly

13. Have you ever worked for or been affiliated with Seattle CityClub in any way?

      a. yes

      b. no

14. Have you ever worked for or been affiliated with the Washington Wilderness Coalition in any way?

      a. yes

      b. no

15. Have you ever worked for or been affiliated with the Seattle Foundation in any way?

      a. yes

      b. no

Participant's Task List

Scenario:

As a resident of Washington State, there are several new measures on the upcoming ballot that may directly affect you. Imagine that, earlier today, a friend of yours mentioned the 1-594 ballot measure (to increase background checks on gun purchases) and that you have decided to go online to check up on some of the facts. Whether you are confident in how you will vote, or still forming an opinion, we would like you to show us how you might go about finding information about the upcoming ballot measures and what types of information you might chose to look for.

please complete the following task list and inform the moderator when you feel that you have completed each task

1. Using the computer provided, research the I-594 ballot measure to increase background checks on gun purchases. Write down two facts about the measure on the paper provided.

2. Go to the website known as the Living Voters Guide.

3. Out loud, explain your initial reaction to the site.

4. Find and explain the purpose of the website.

5. Create an account.

6. Locate the site's participation rules.

7. Locate the description for measure I-1351 and explain what it is about.

8. Locate the place on the site that allows for a discussion about the pros and cons of the measure. When you find it, add the provided pros and cons to your opinion chart as you see fit.

9. Create your own pro or con and add it to your chart.

10. Assess your political opinion in regards to modifying K-12 funding. Change the blue indicator text at the top of the chart (the blue text just above the smiley face) to reflect your current political opinion.

11. Find out where your opinion falls in relation to the rest of the community.

12. Tell us about your experience by completing the post-test survey.

Pre-Test Questionnaire

1. What is your political affiliation?
    a. Democrat
    b. Republican
    c. Undecided
    d. Other: _____

2. How strongly do you feel about your political opinions?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Strongly				Not Very Strongly

3. How would you rank your experience with computers
    a. no experience (novice)
    b. a little experience
    c. moderate experience
    d. A lot of experience (expert)

4. Where do you go to learn about the latest political issues?

5. Do you consider yourself open minded when forming political opinions? Explain.

6. How useful are online political forums for forming political opinions?
    a. not at all useful
    b. not useful
    c. useful
    d. very useful

7. Are you interested in sharing your political opinions with other members of your community?

8. Imagine a website that allows you to form and share political opinions. What do you think it would be like?

Post-task Questionnaire

These questions will be asked in an interview format. However, a hard copy will be given to the participant as a reference.

1. Rate the difficulty of performing this task
   a. 1 - extremely easy
   b. 2 - moderately easy
   c. 3 - neutral
   d. 4 - moderately difficult
   e. 5 - extremely difficult

2. Rate the time it took to complete this task
   a. 1 - extremely short
   b. 2 - moderately short
   c. 3 - neutral
   d. 4 - moderately long
   e. 5 - extremely long

3. Rate the likelihood that you would use this feature/task in real life
   a. 1 - never
   b. 2 - once a year
   c. 3 - once a month
   d. 4 - once a week
   e. 5 - almost everyday

4. Rate the usefulness of the content explored during the task
   a. 1 - not useful
   b. 2 - somewhat useful
   c. 3 - neutral
   d. 4 - somewhat useful
   e. 5 - extremely useful

5. Do you have any other thoughts or opinions about this feature of the site?

Post-test Questionnaire

1. How was your overall experience with the website?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Negative				Very Positive

2. How would you rank the website's difficulty or use?

1	2	3	4	5
Extremely Difficult				Extremely Easy

3. Would you use this website in real life?
   a. yes
   b. no

4. Would you recommend this site to someone?
   a. yes
   b. no

5. This website engaged my interest as a user

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

6. This website was effective in helping me reach my goals

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

7. I was able to complete tasks relatively quickly

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

8. This website provides helpful error messages when I make mistakes

1	2	3	4	5

strongly disagree   strongly agree

9.   It was easy to learn how to use this website

              1   2   3   4   5

strongly disagree   strongly agree

7.   What words would you use to describe this website? (circle all that apply)

Accessible	Creative	Fast	Meaningful	Slow
Advanced	Customizable	Flexible	Motivating	Sophisticated
Annoying	Cutting edge	Fragile	Not secure	Stable
Appealing	Dated	Fresh	Not valuable	Sterile
Approachable	Desirable	Friendly	Novel	Stimulating
Attractive	Difficult	Frustrating	Old	Straightforward
Boring	Disconnected	Fun	Optimistic	Stressful
Businesslike	Disruptive	Gets in the way	Ordinary	Time consuming
Busy	Distracting	Hard to use	Organized	Time saving
Calm	Dull	Helpful	Overbearing	Too technical
Clean	Easy to use	High quality	Overwhelming	Trustworthy
Clear	Effective	Impersonal	Patronizing	Unapproachable
Collaborative	Efficient	Impressive	Personal	Unattractive
Comfortable	Effortless	Incomprehensible	Poor quality	Uncontrollable
Compatible	Empowering	Inconsistent	Powerful	Unconventional
Compelling	Energetic	Ineffective	Predictable	Understandable
Complex	Engaging	Innovative	Professional	Undesirable
Comprehensive	Entertaining	Inspiring	Relevant	Unpredictable
Confident	Enthusiastic	Integrated	Reliable	Unrefined
Confusing	Essential	Intimidating	Responsive	Usable
Connected	Exceptional	Intuitive	Rigid	Useful
Consistent	Exciting	Inviting	Satisfying	Valuable
Controllable	Expected	Irrelevant	Secure	
Convenient	Familiar	Low maintenance	Simplistic	

Debriefing Questions

1. What (if anything) did you not enjoy about of your experience with the website?

2. What (if anything) did you enjoy about your experience with the website?

3. Are there any changes that could be made to improve the usability of the website?

4. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us today?