The 21st Century Transmission Line From Election Administrators to Voters

Voting Information Project

- The Voting Information Project (VIP) is an innovative and proven service that uses the latest technology to provide voters with the information they need to cast a ballot – when they need and where they are most likely to look for it.

- The Pew Center on the States partnered with leading technology companies and local and state election offices to establish VIP in 2008.

- A poll in 2011 of registered voters showed that 46 percent of voters would go to search engines to find information about voting.

THE PEW CENTER ON THE STATES

How Is It Used?

Voters

Use search engines, social media, mobile apps and online news sites to get answers to questions about the voting process:

- Where do I vote?
- What candidates and issues are on the ballot?
- Do I need to bring an ID?
- How do I register?
- Is the polling place accessible?
- How do I vote if I am overseas or serving in the military?
- Who do I contact for help?

How Is It Used?

Election Administrators

- More than two-thirds of the states are partnering with VIP and distributing ***ACCURATE*** information through channels voters depend on in our increasingly mobile society.

- This allows administrators to spend ***LESS TIME*** fielding last-minute phone calls and ***MORE TIME*** making sure the voting process goes smoothly, ***SAVING TAXPAYER FUNDS*** at a time when every dollar counts.

How Is It Used?

Media, Civic Organizations & Candidates

Place VIP gadgets on their websites to inform the public and encourage participation.

Technology Innovators

Develop new apps to provide enhanced features and increase voter engagement through embeddable gadgets, mobile device apps and tools for military and overseas voting.

How VIP Works

- VIP shapes the information provided by state and local election offices into a standard, open format.
- With the help of companies such as Google and Microsoft, VIP organizes the data for quick retrieval by voters.
- Organizations like Facebook, AT&T, ABC News, and get-out-the-vote groups use VIP's open platform to funnel voting information through the channels where voters will find it online.

Use of VIP in 2010

- A Google polling place locator using VIP was featured on more than 300 websites and helped more than 6 million voters find out where to vote with a customized map to their polling location.
- VIP feeds were used to build a tool to streamline military and overseas voting.
- FourSquare developed an online “I Voted” badge for people checking in at their polling place.
- On Election Day, Facebook prompted its 150 million users to look up their polling places using VIP data.
- Mobile Communications distributed VIP data in customized text messages.

Use of VIP in 2012

- More than 500 websites are expected to offer VIP's free, embeddable polling place locator.
- A tool for military and overseas voters to provide information on deadlines and procedures and automatically fill in data on a federal emergency ballot from anywhere in the world based on the voter's US address.
- An iPhone app that provides information about a voter's polling place and ballot, including real-time directions from the user's current location.
- A translation app that will help Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Korean, Hindi, and other language speakers access VIP information.
- A SDK to allow news media and campaigns to easily build VIP's tools into their smartphone apps.

Use of VIP in the Future

- Earlier this year, the Sunlight Foundation hosted TransparencyCamp in Arlington, VA to bring everyone together to share their knowledge about how to use new technologies and policies to make our government really work for the people – and to help our people work smarter with our government.
- On the last day, over 50 individuals attended a Hackathon on VIP.
- Given access to VIP GitHub and Microsoft's API documentation.
- Teams worked on projects like:
  - A crowd-sourced polling place wait time app using geofencing.
  - Address specific get-out-the-vote posters in multiple languages.
  - A Twitter bot that searches for people who express confusion about voting and offers assistance.

More Information

- For more information about the Voting Information Project or how to get involved, visit the following sites:
    - votinginfoproject.org
    - pewstates.org/vipvideo

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