

Jeremy Butler

The rationale behind the current sitemap for the future website for Elections Canada follows their guidelines in terms of the type of content and interactively they expressed interest in having. The overall feel was to be a combination of Rock the Vote and Myspace, while however keeping in mind this is Elections Canada, and as such there are several rules and policies that have to be followed throughout the design and implementation of the website.

The current design, see-attached sitemap for graphical representation, will be broken down by the three Archetypes of users, Power Users, Identity Seekers and Researchers. I will go through the different navigation and sections of the site while explaining what each section of the site has to offer to each of the three Archetypes.

1.0 Registration

While registering for a site might not seem like a big deal, indeed it may be a necessary evil for many, for Identity seekers it is one of the key attributes, because with registration comes a profile. While this section might not be of much interest to a researcher, creating a profile that doesn't provide details on where the user lives as to protect them, allows for a sense of staking claim to this section of the website. The Myspace feeling will be predominate in this section of the site. A cookie may be used to automatically log the user back into their account when they revisit the site, allowing them access to their profile and their personal settings instantly, which is something all three archetype can appreciate.

2.0 News

The News section of the site will undoubtedly interest both our power user and our researcher, with local news that comes from the regional zone you selected when creating your profile, or a drop down menu if not logged in to a world news this section will be the most update heavy. Elections Canada can't take sides in any election and as such the new articles will need to be screened before being posted to avoid any signs of favoritism. A section of this news area will include a customizable news page, wherein the users can select the types of news, the major headlines that will be available to them, so says CBC headlines as well as local weather. The power users will undoubtedly enjoy the ability to access their own personal news feed, while the researcher will enjoy it as well for the ability to find up to date news quickly.

3.0 Events

The events page will have something for anyone who is interested in elections, which will be hopefully all of our users. A listing of future, current and past events will be available sorted by date and region.

4.0 Blogs

Here we come to one of the core aspects of the site, the blog style message board. Ideally a celebrity or a political figure, will every month create a new blog entry, which will become the center of the message board. While all comments on the blog that are user posted will need to be screen before going through, once again this is Elections Canada, this section will allow users to express their views on the above subject and to discuss it with Moderators as well as the author of the blog. A listing of old blogs as well as a record of all the comment posts made by the user will be available. It will be necessary to log in to comment, but not necessary to read them. The identity seeker will enjoy the ability to talk and post his or her thoughts/feelings on a subject while a researcher might as for more detail and a power user might enjoy simply reading it through for enjoyment or up to date knowledge.

5.0 Media

Unlike the current Elections Canada website this site will have a decent collection of movies, pod-casts as well as Flash games. The reasoning for this is like the Rock the Vote website, interactive media such the ones listed above are 'cool' and interest youth. A collection of videos about Elections Canada put to music as well as pod-casts of speeches as well as a number of Flash games will give the website a hip feel as well as create something for people to link to their friends. The identity seeker might enjoy some of the pod-casts however this section is not predominantly aimed at them. The researcher likewise might enjoy the games but they will be more focused on the pod-casts most likely. The power user will likely enjoy all of the facets of his section if only because if he finds it first or early on he will have more material for discussing with others on forums and rising his social standing by providing up to date information and cool videos to others. The flash games I believe will have the greatest teaching opportunity, and the creation of a pair of games I believe will be very important. One could be a adventure style game were a player must overcome obstacles while getting to their voting booth on election day, while the other could be a large and detailed game were the user has to run a political campaign and try and become Prime Minister of Canada in the game.

6.0 Frequently Asked Questions, or FAQ

This section will house information on trouble shooting any of the above media as well as the rules and guidelines for policy with user the website as will be laid out by Elections Canada. Another part of his FAQ might as be an explanation form start to finish on how to vote in Canada when the users become old enough to vote. From registering to vote to getting to the elections booth on time the guide could cover it all. The other FAQ will deal with more technical issues, which will hopefully not arise, but if they do then the FAQ will hopefully solve any problems they have. A power user might even copy paste the FAQ as a reference if it is particularly well done.

7.0 Links

Links to outside websites from this one, such as Elections Canada, Myspace, Rock the Vote and other websites deemed acceptable from Elections Canada.

8.0 Online Store

Following the Rock the Vote example the online store will be available to sell Elections Canada swag such as t-shirts, underwear, posters, iPod cases, whatever is once again deemed acceptable by Elections Canada (which might rule out the Elections Canada thong) A online shopping cart will be necessary in this section, as for interest of the archetypes its difficult to say, some users collect items from sites such as this and other people might buy them for the sheer novelty value of them, after all Elections Canada thongs are something that hasn't really been offered before.

This sums up the current design and sitemap of the Elections Canada website, as you can see we try and appeal to all the archetypes in at least two different sections with the hope that they will become both interested in elections as well as interested in the 'cool' stuff we have on the website. This site however will not be a site that can be 'launched and forgotten' and indeed it will creature fairly frequent updates in order to keep any sort of crowd around, particularly at first launch. This is not to say that it will be needing daily updates however the first several months a bi-weekly update schedule or a weekly one would defiantly assist in creating and hopefully establishing the regular users who will be soon calling the website a home away from home.