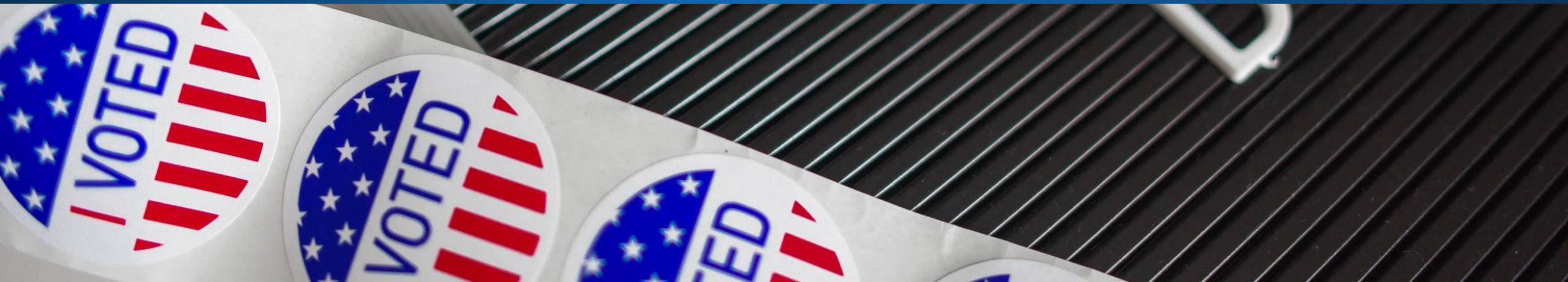
Insider best practices for elevating your 2020 election coverage with BLOX CMS

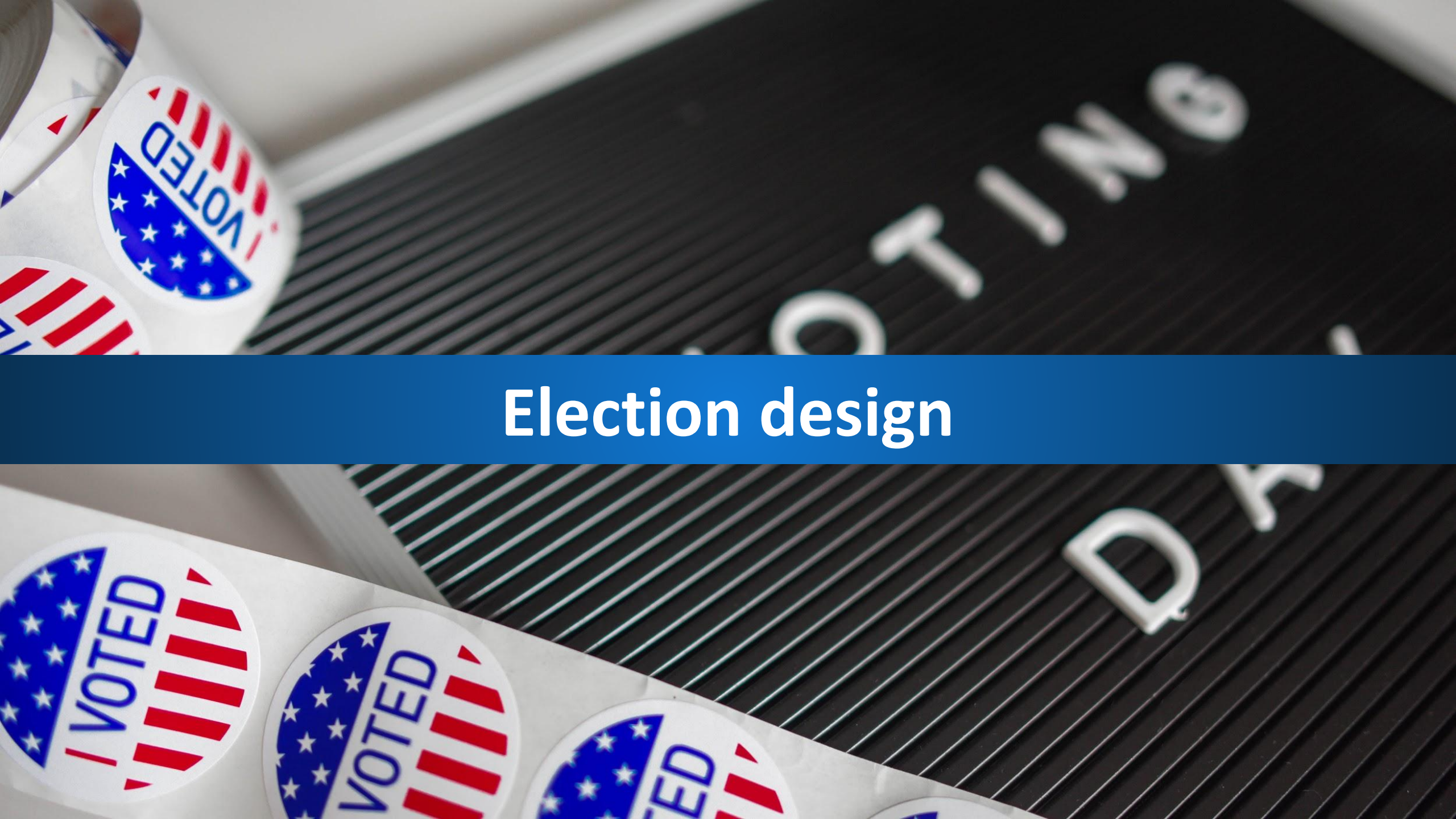
Thursday, September 10th, 2020

TownNews



Today's agenda

- Easily updating tabular data throughout election night.
- Displaying interactive maps and graphs with embeddable widgets.
- Using TownNews Content Exchange articles, images, and videos to supplement your homegrown election coverage.
- Keeping your visitors engaged with push notifications—even when they aren't on your site.
- Showcasing fast-changing news and data with Update blocks.
- . . . and much more!



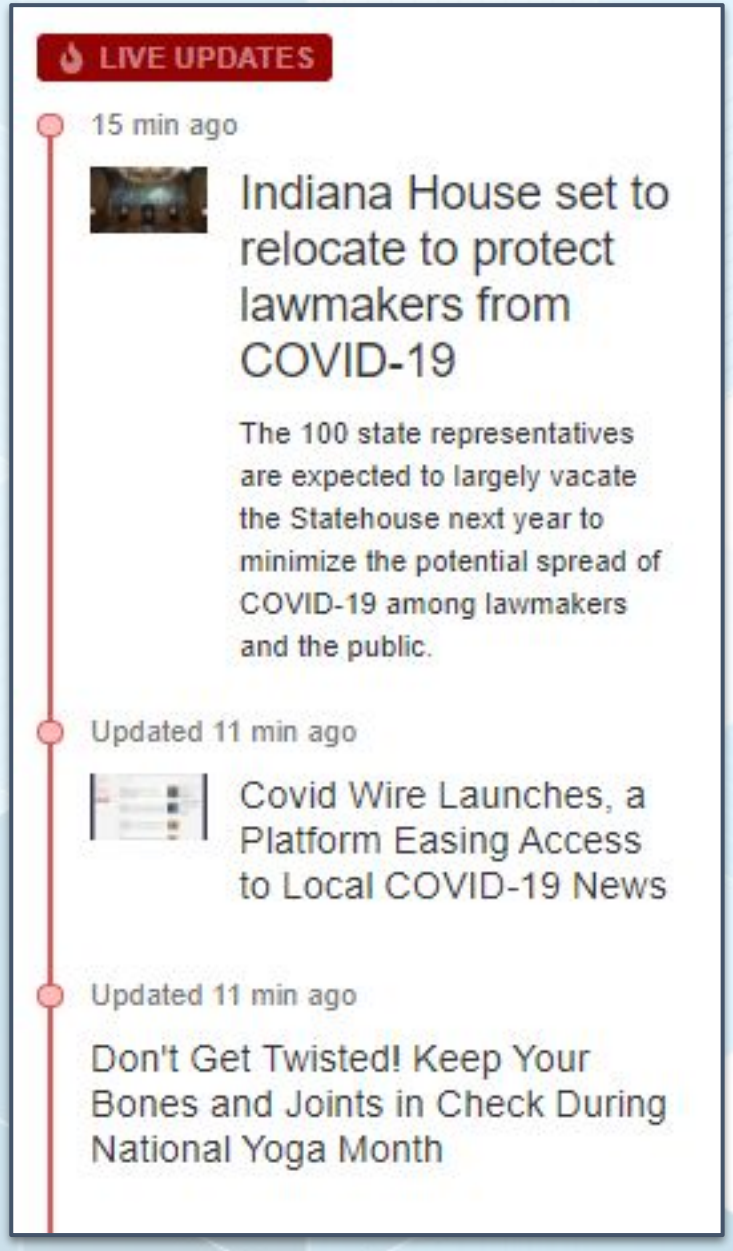
Election design

Create dedicated homepage

- Use schedules
- Place blocks on homepage and deactivate them until needed
- Use an image block to create a unified topic header
- Create a big impact presentation with “Editorial: Full Article” block

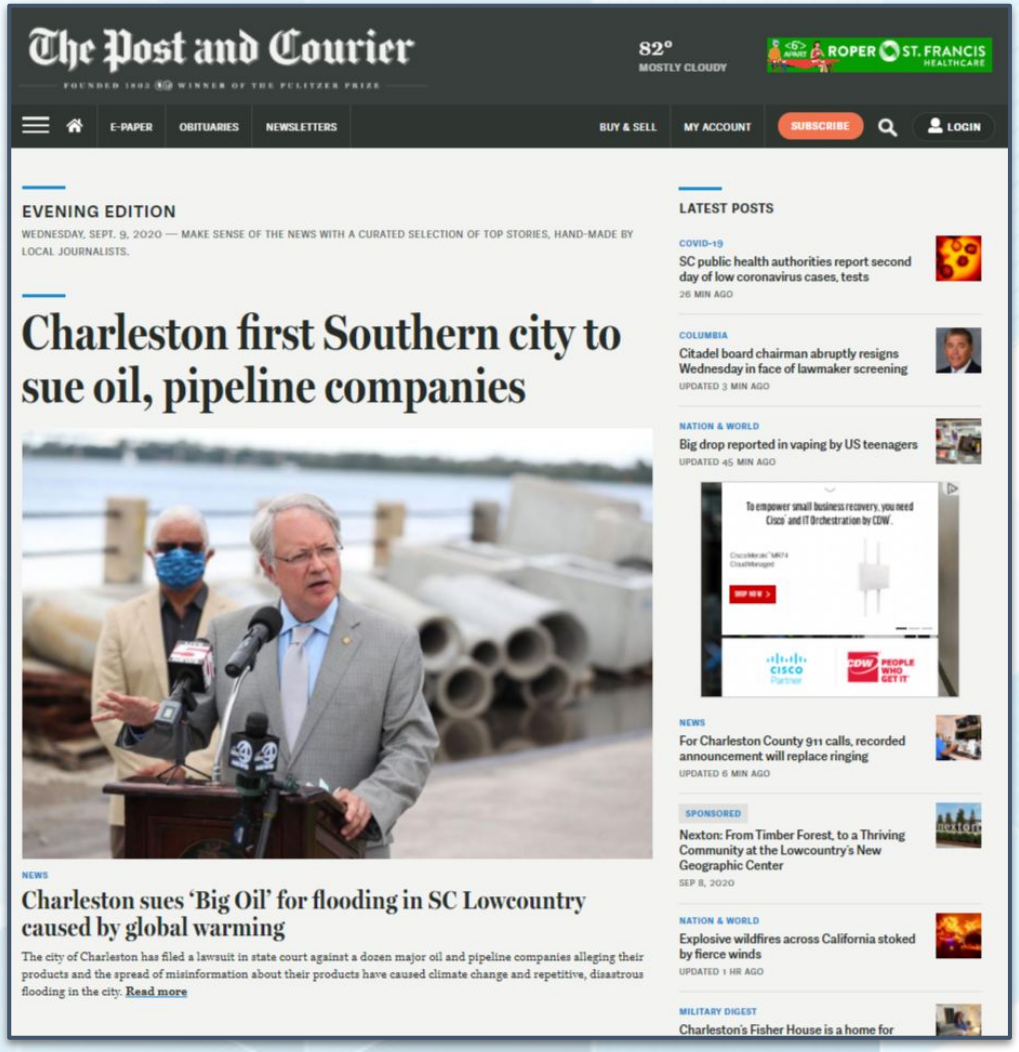
Card: Updates block

- Can be used to showcase breaking election news updates
- When additional news is posted, it notifies the reader, who can refresh the block without reloading the page
- Use an “overline” to create a colorful title with eye-catching icon



Breaking news fast cache

- Blocks that use a “breaking news” flag on homepage break cache faster
- Ensures website visitors see the latest news

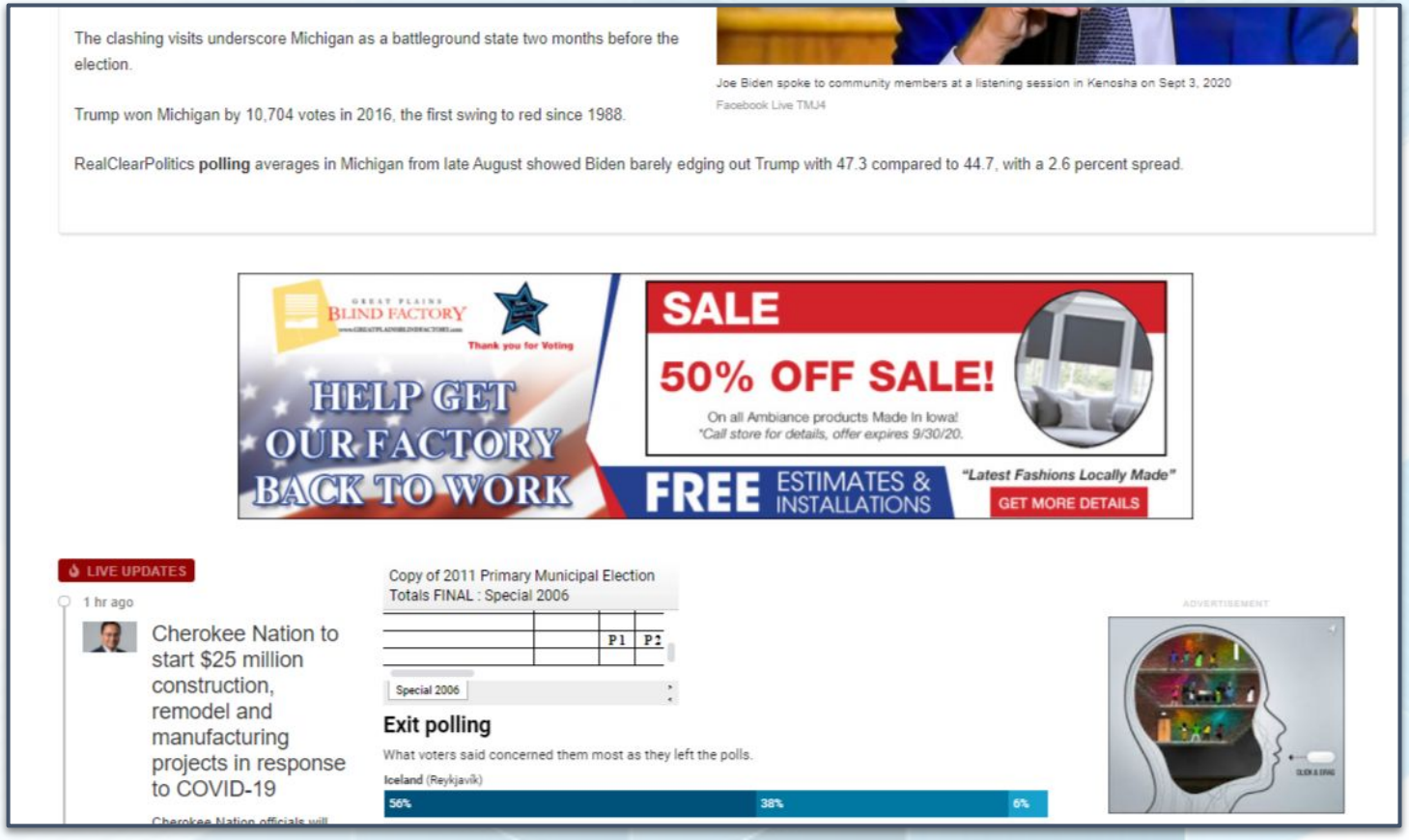


Create a special URL

- Helps consolidate and aggregate election data
- Promote coverage on social media, on broadcasts and in print
- Create a consistent #hashtag
- Use a specialized search box that is limited to election content
- Also on BLOX Now App

Insert ad positions

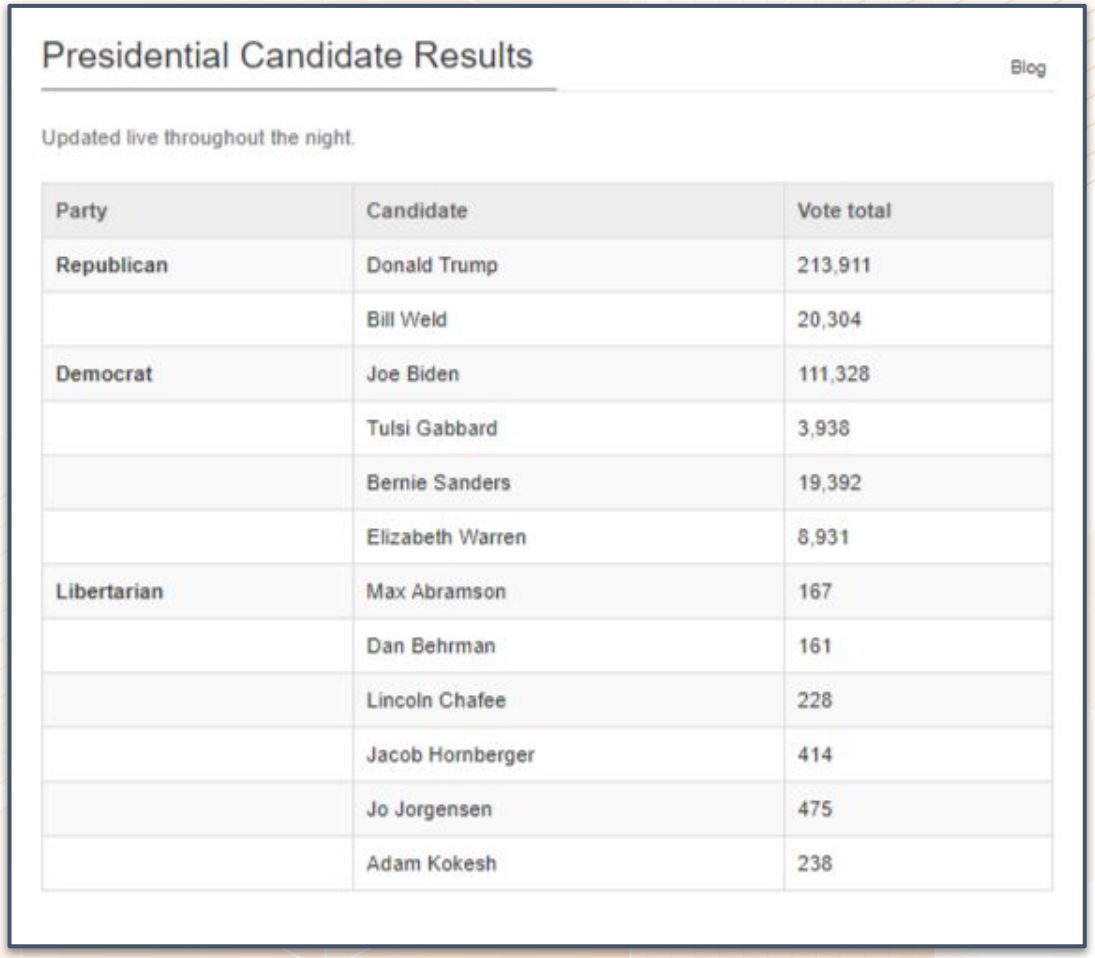
- Add new ad blocks
- Ensure monetization is interspersed throughout content
- Especially on mobile



News coverage

Updating table data

- Use table assets to display tabular data
- Results can be updated throughout the night in one table
- Multiple tables for multiple races
- Upload a CSV file



Presidential Candidate Results

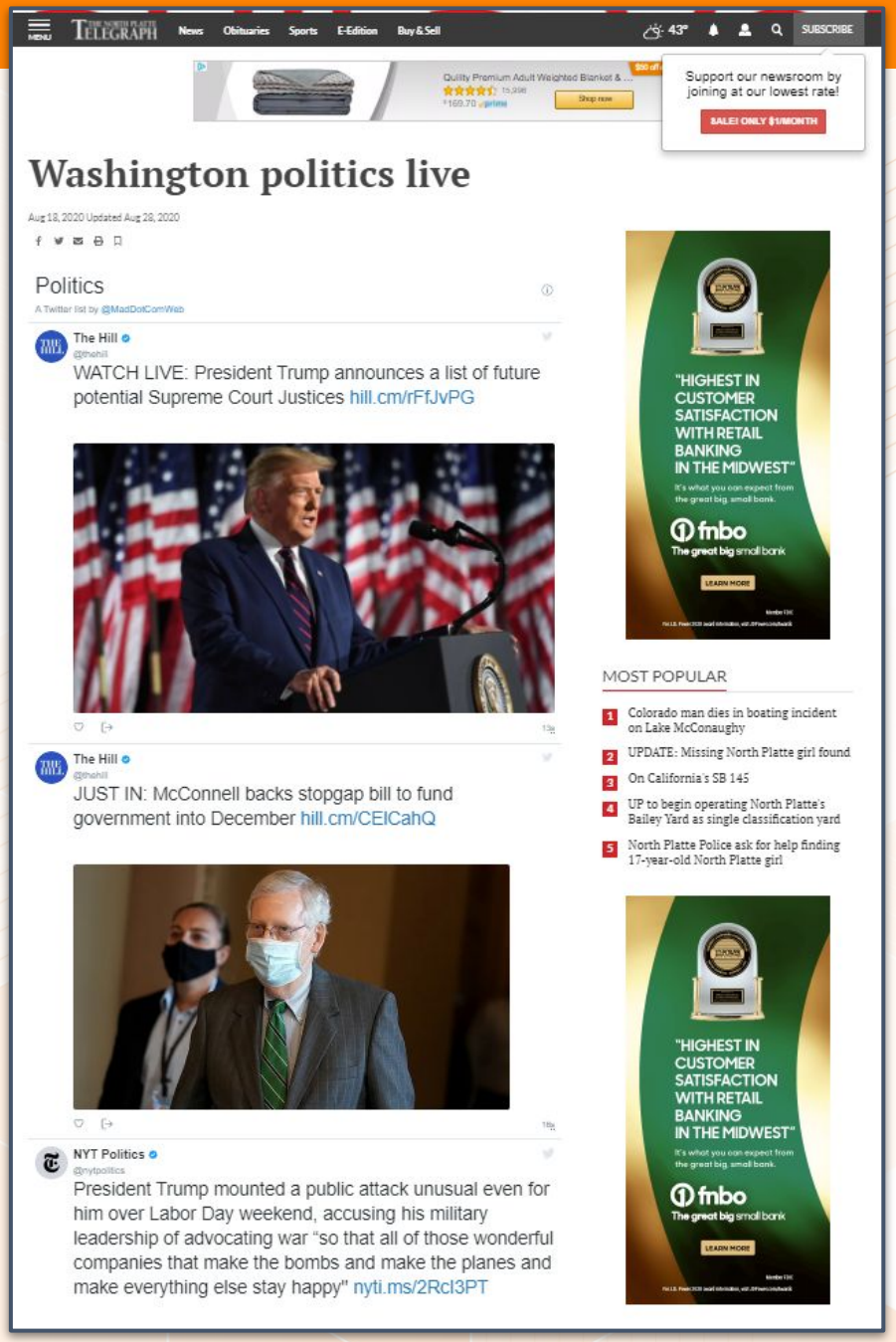
Blog

Updated live throughout the night.

Party	Candidate	Vote total
Republican	Donald Trump	213,911
	Bill Weld	20,304
Democrat	Joe Biden	111,328
	Tulsi Gabbard	3,938
	Bernie Sanders	19,392
	Elizabeth Warren	8,931
Libertarian	Max Abramson	167
	Dan Behrman	161
	Lincoln Chafee	228
	Jacob Hornberger	414
	Jo Jorgensen	475
	Adam Kokesh	238

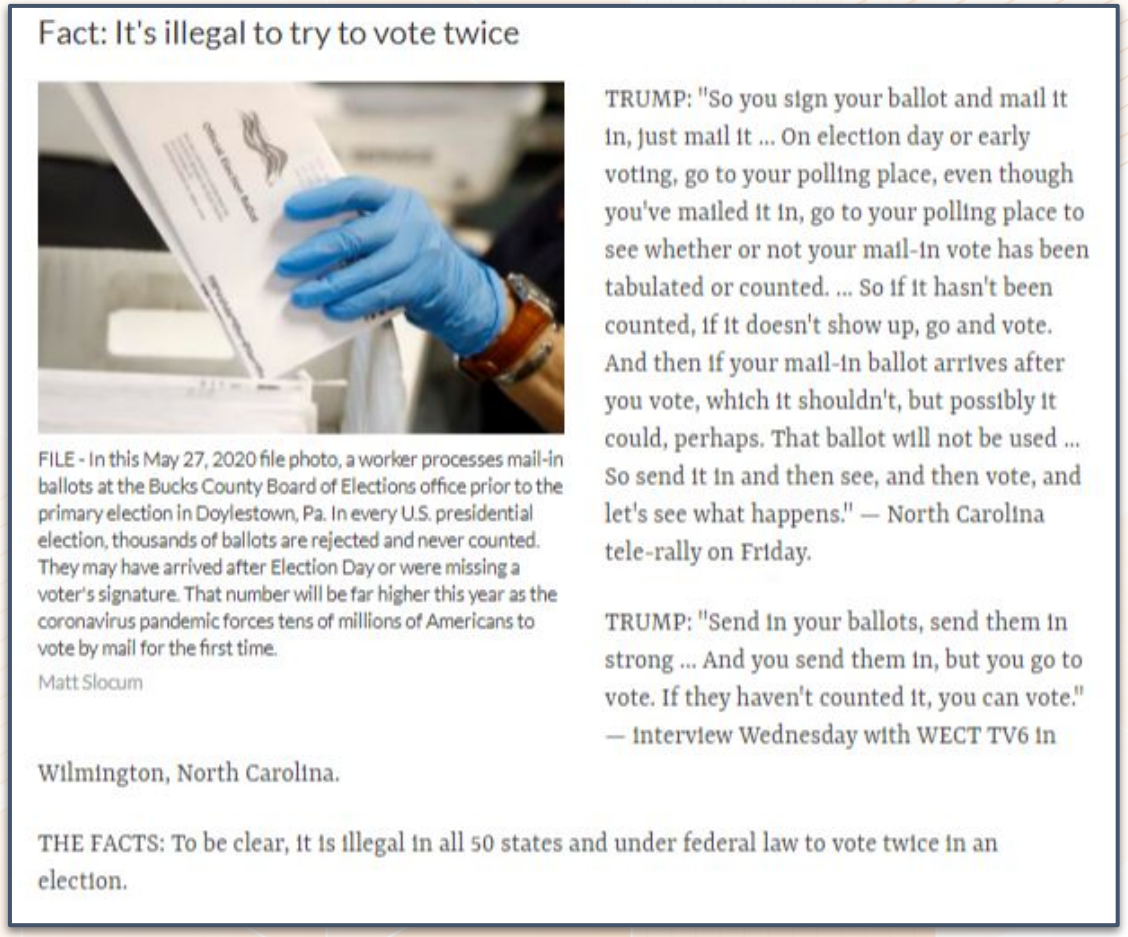
Twitter lists

- Embed in articles or a standalone feature
- Show aggregated news from approved news sources automatically
- Appropriate for news before, during and after Election Day



Fact checks & roundups

- Fact check articles based on AP material but supplemented by local resources
- Daily roundups of local / national news can be pulled together as a collection and embedded in other news articles



Fact: It's illegal to try to vote twice

FILE - In this May 27, 2020 file photo, a worker processes mail-in ballots at the Bucks County Board of Elections office prior to the primary election in Doylestown, Pa. In every U.S. presidential election, thousands of ballots are rejected and never counted. They may have arrived after Election Day or were missing a voter's signature. That number will be far higher this year as the coronavirus pandemic forces tens of millions of Americans to vote by mail for the first time.

Matt Slocum

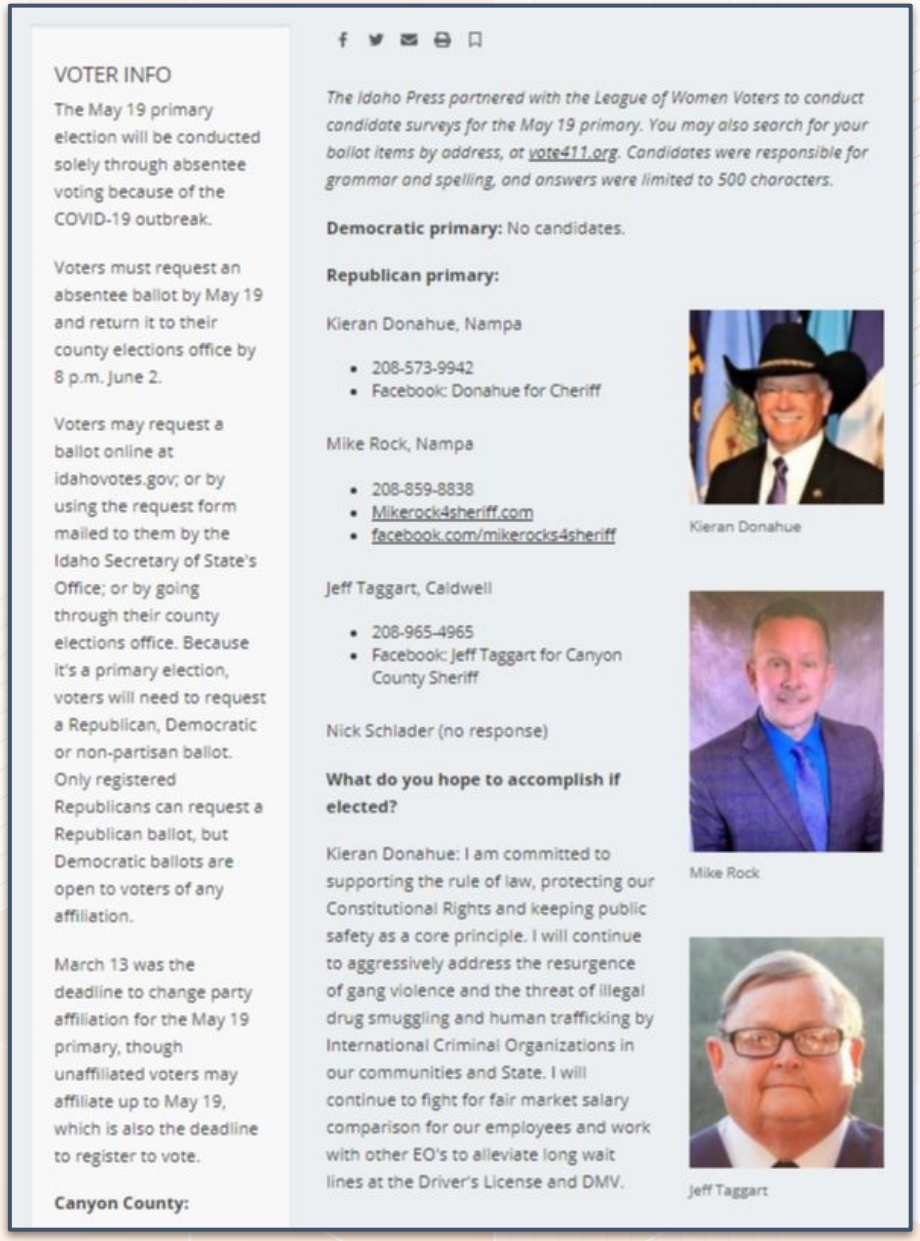
TRUMP: "So you sign your ballot and mail it in, just mail it ... On election day or early voting, go to your polling place, even though you've mailed it in, go to your polling place to see whether or not your mail-in vote has been tabulated or counted. ... So if it hasn't been counted, if it doesn't show up, go and vote. And then if your mail-in ballot arrives after you vote, which it shouldn't, but possibly it could, perhaps. That ballot will not be used ... So send it in and then see, and then vote, and let's see what happens." — North Carolina tele-rally on Friday.

TRUMP: "Send in your ballots, send them in strong ... And you send them in, but you go to vote. If they haven't counted it, you can vote." — Interview Wednesday with WECT TV6 in Wilmington, North Carolina.

THE FACTS: To be clear, it is illegal in all 50 states and under federal law to vote twice in an election.

Surveys & races

- Create a survey for local candidates with informational questions
- Each race can be a news article with profiles & answers of the candidates
- Include voter information and resources as a sidebar



VOTER INFO

The May 19 primary election will be conducted solely through absentee voting because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Voters must request an absentee ballot by May 19 and return it to their county elections office by 8 p.m. June 2.

Voters may request a ballot online at idahovotes.gov; or by using the request form mailed to them by the Idaho Secretary of State's Office; or by going through their county elections office. Because it's a primary election, voters will need to request a Republican, Democratic or non-partisan ballot. Only registered Republicans can request a Republican ballot, but Democratic ballots are open to voters of any affiliation.

March 13 was the deadline to change party affiliation for the May 19 primary, though unaffiliated voters may affiliate up to May 19, which is also the deadline to register to vote.

Canyon County:

The Idaho Press partnered with the League of Women Voters to conduct candidate surveys for the May 19 primary. You may also search for your ballot items by address, at vote411.org. Candidates were responsible for grammar and spelling, and answers were limited to 500 characters.

Democratic primary: No candidates.

Republican primary:

Kieran Donahue, Nampa

- 208-573-9942
- Facebook: Donahue for Cheriff

Mike Rock, Nampa

- 208-859-8838
- Mikerock4sheriff.com
- facebook.com/mikerocks4sheriff

Jeff Taggart, Caldwell

- 208-965-4965
- Facebook: Jeff Taggart for Canyon County Sheriff

Nick Schlader (no response)

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

Kieran Donahue: I am committed to supporting the rule of law, protecting our Constitutional Rights and keeping public safety as a core principle. I will continue to aggressively address the resurgence of gang violence and the threat of illegal drug smuggling and human trafficking by International Criminal Organizations in our communities and State. I will continue to fight for fair market salary comparison for our employees and work with other EO's to alleviate long wait lines at the Driver's License and DMV.

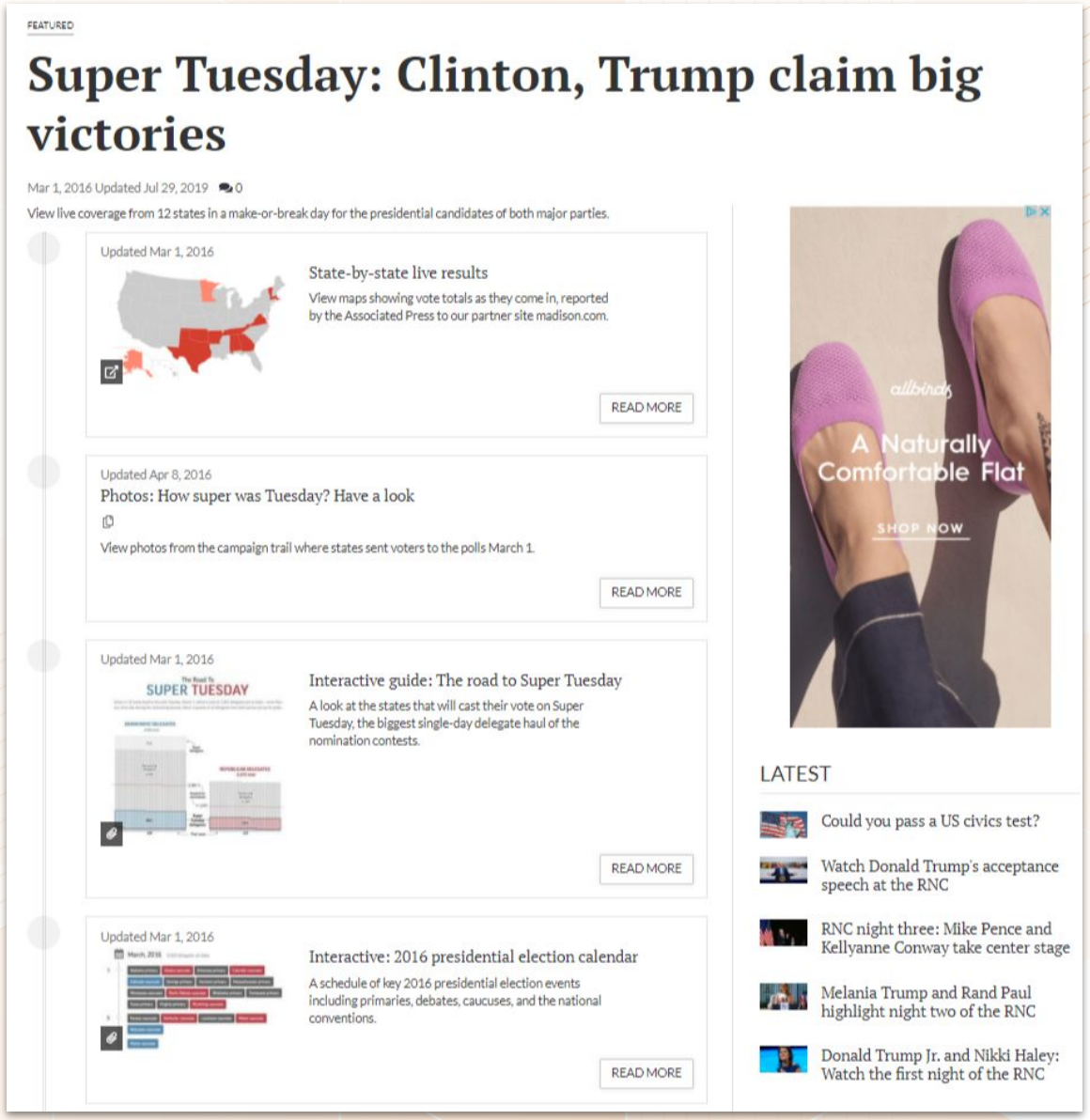
Kieran Donahue

Mike Rock

Jeff Taggart

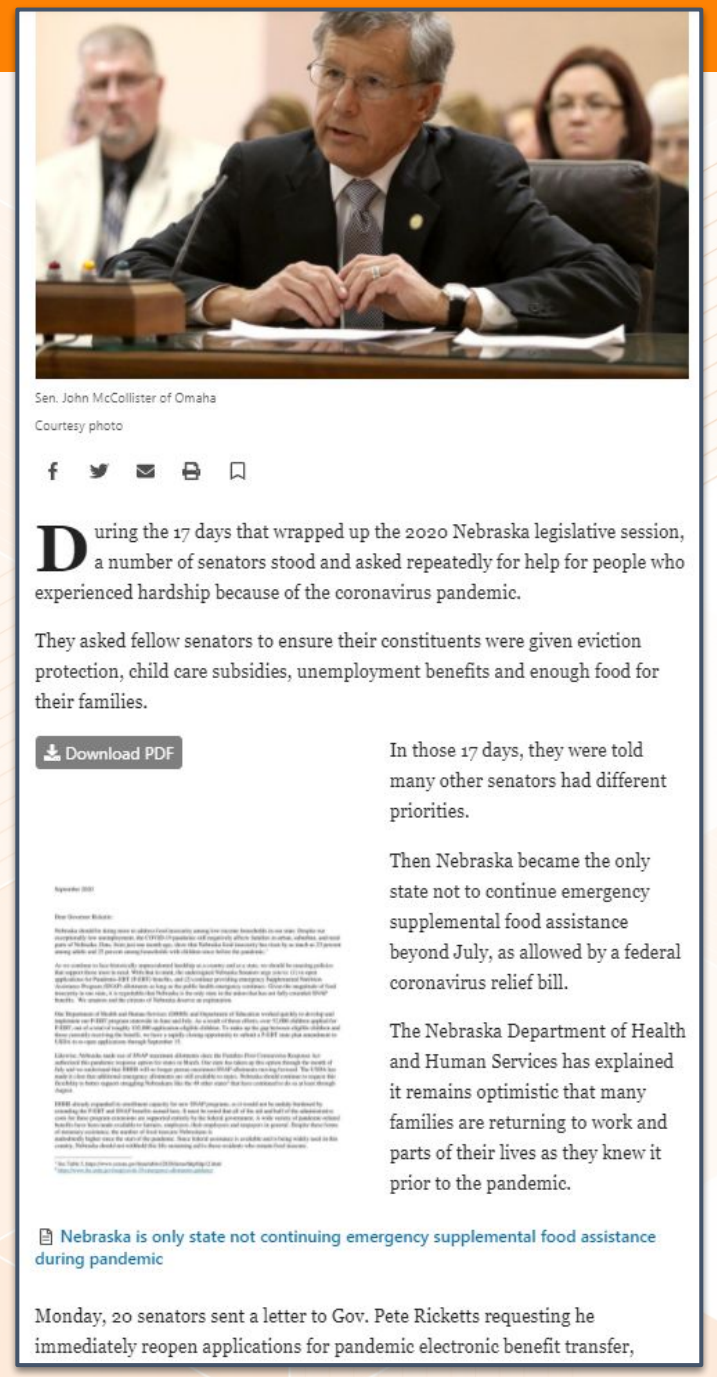
Series & collections

- Use a “series” collection to highlight election stories from the week
- Create photo galleries of images from the campaign trail
- Use poll assets to ask readers to engage on a specific topic
- Push notifications



Embed, links & related

- Embedded assets create engagement opportunities
- Use the new “inline links” feature to link directly to additional articles in BLOX
- Info boxes and other related content types can add useful information for readers



Sen. John McCollister of Omaha

Courtesy photo

During the 17 days that wrapped up the 2020 Nebraska legislative session, a number of senators stood and asked repeatedly for help for people who experienced hardship because of the coronavirus pandemic.

They asked fellow senators to ensure their constituents were given eviction protection, child care subsidies, unemployment benefits and enough food for their families.

Download PDF

In those 17 days, they were told many other senators had different priorities.

Then Nebraska became the only state not to continue emergency supplemental food assistance beyond July, as allowed by a federal coronavirus relief bill.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services has explained it remains optimistic that many families are returning to work and parts of their lives as they knew it prior to the pandemic.

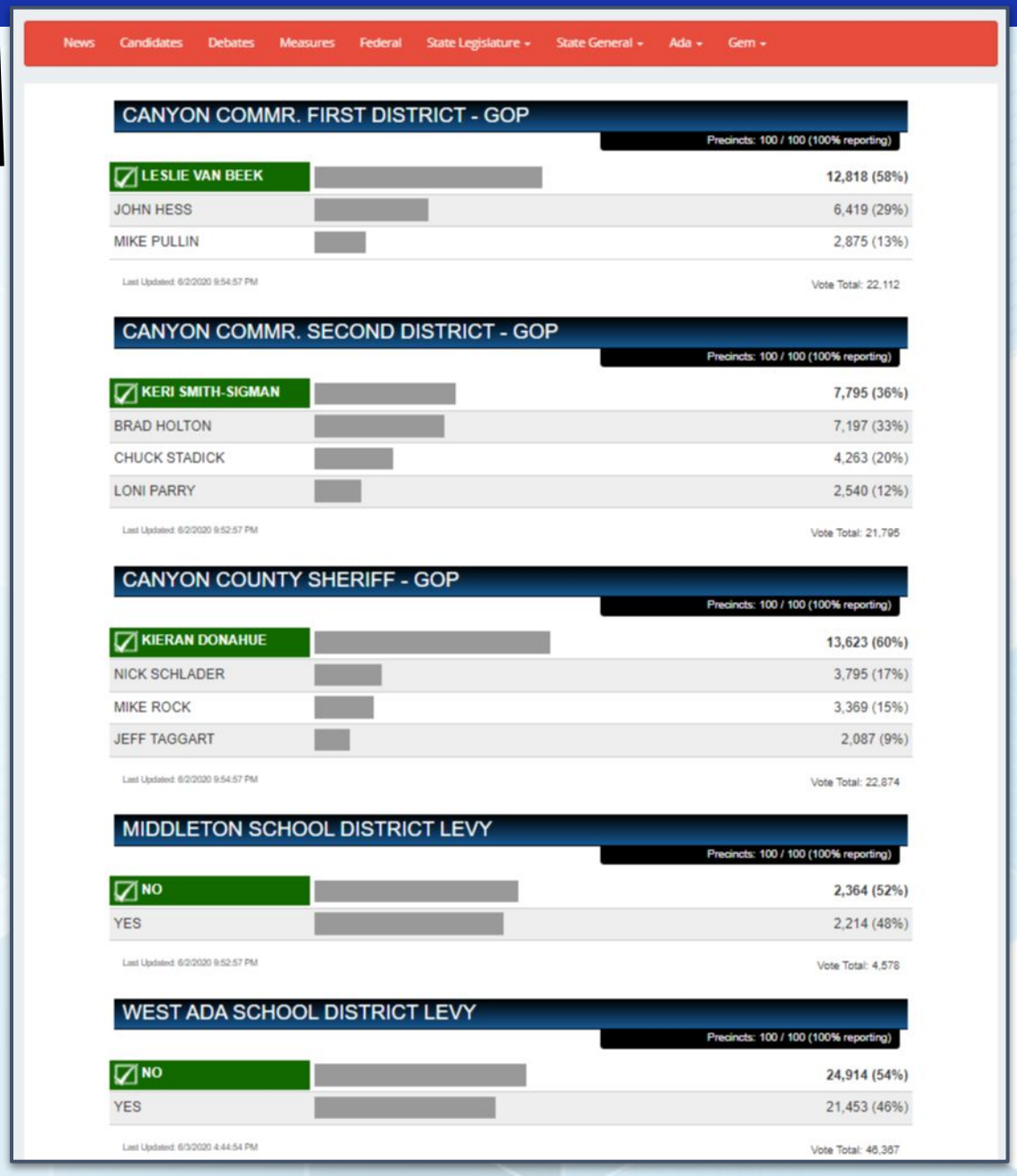
Nebraska is only state not continuing emergency supplemental food assistance during pandemic

Monday, 20 senators sent a letter to Gov. Pete Ricketts requesting he immediately reopen applications for pandemic electronic benefit transfer,

External sources

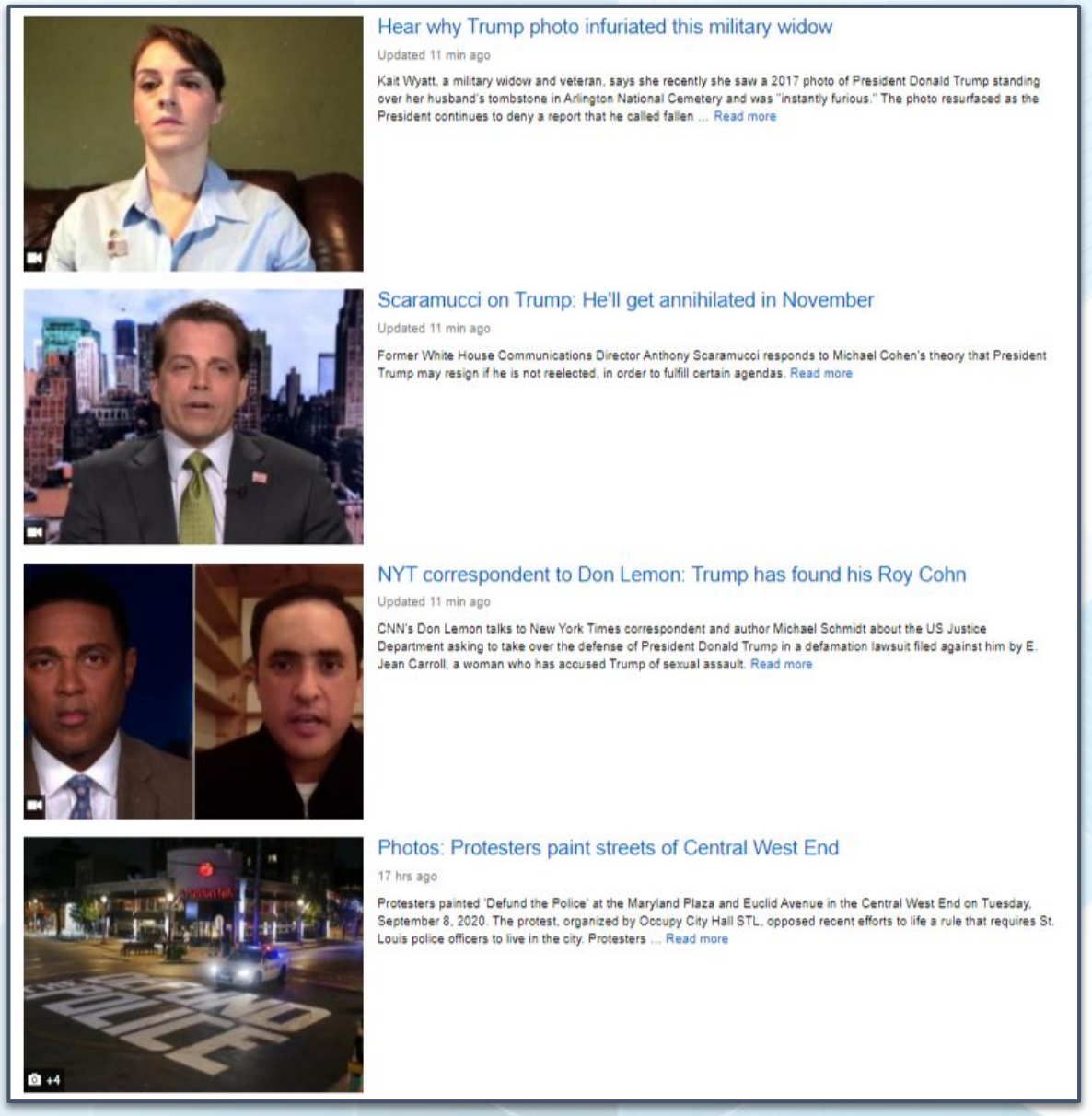
Iframe election numbers

- Check with local county or state election boards on how they are publishing data
- Ask if their election results can be iframed onto your site



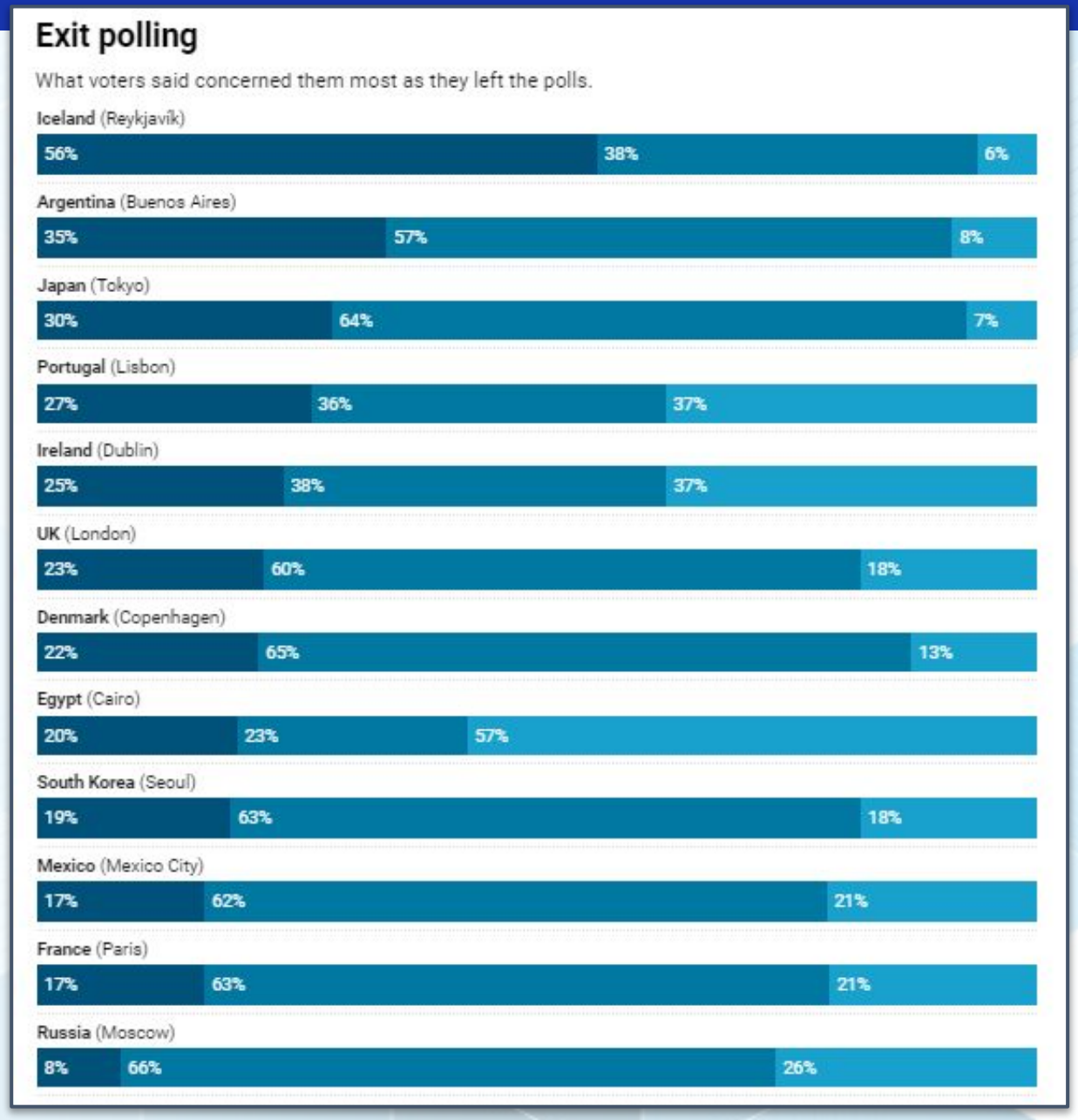
TN Content Exchange

- Look at the TownNews Content Exchange to flesh out local content
- Use the Content Exchange to add photos and video to local coverage, including:
    - CNN video
    - Real Clear Politics
    - TownNews network



Datawrapper embeds

- Datawrapper.de is a external service which creates maps out of uploaded data
- Maps and charts can be embedded
    - Section pages
    - Inside articles



RealClear Wire
VOTED
VOTED
VOTED
DAY

Background

- RealClearWire, a project of the RealClearFoundation, is a free syndication service offering high-quality content of civic importance to news outlets countrywide and worldwide.
- As part of its mission to fortify and elevate the public discourse, RealClearWire makes select original content from RealClearPolitics, RealClearInvestigations, and other RealClear websites available to republish free of charge with attribution to RealClearWire.
- Publications using TownNews' digital publishing platforms—BLOX CMS and Rayos—will have the ability to manually or automatically republish articles from the RealClearWire content stream.

Content Overview

- **RealClearPolitics —** Original reporting and opinion, including coverage of The White House and Capitol Hill, as well as RCP Polling Averages, coming soon
- **RealClearInvestigations —** Longform investigative journalism and shorter summary pieces
- **RealClear Policy, Markets, World, Defense, Energy, Health, Science, Religion, Education, History, Books and Public Affairs —** Original reporting and opinion in proven subject areas

Photos & Attribution

- Each RealClearWire article is accompanied by a public-domain image for your convenience, however we welcome editors to replace them with photos from your own databases
- Attribution to RealClearWire is automatically included

Please Say Hello Anytime

- For questions about RealClearWire, please contact Director of Syndication Nick Sanchez: wire@realclearfoundation.com
- I’m happy to answer any questions you may have about RealClearWire now or in the future

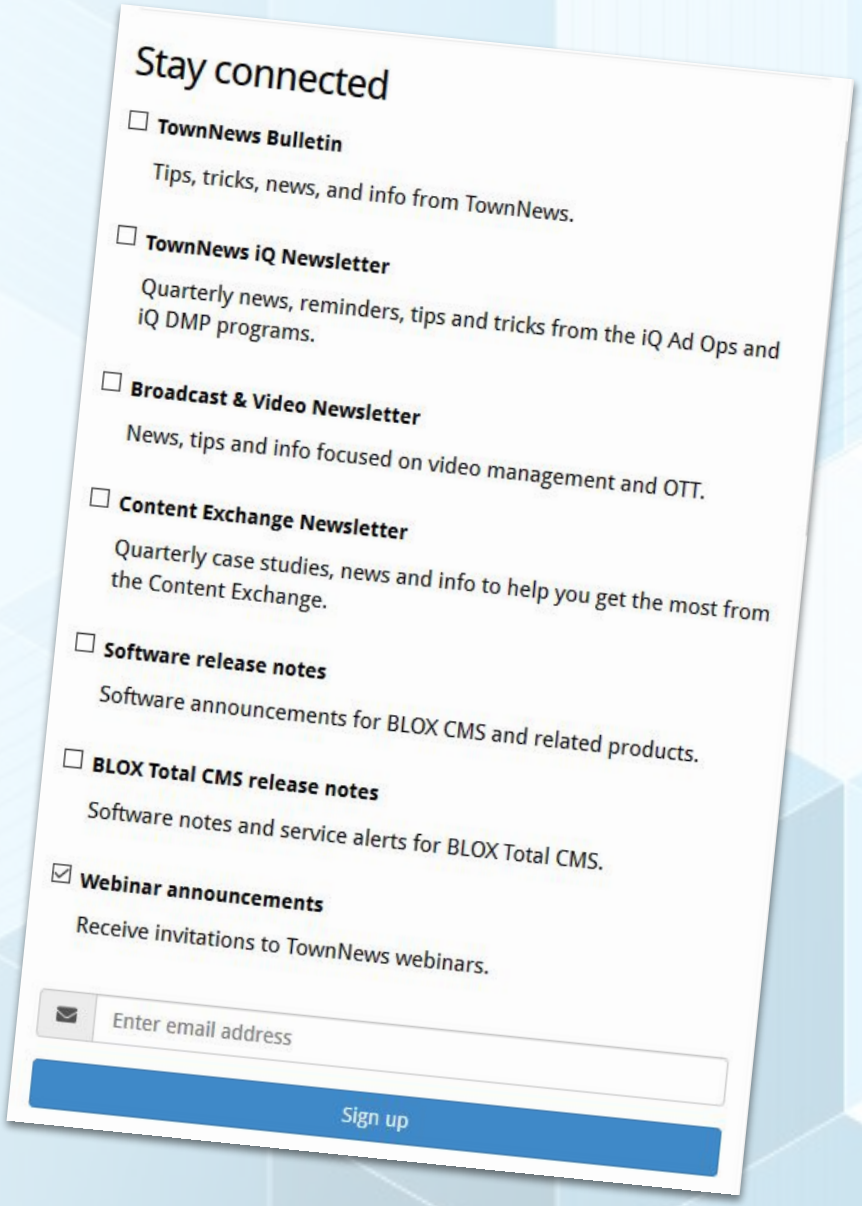
Adding RealClearWire

- If you want to add RealClearWire to your site, contact TownNews Customer Support to get started
- Must be part of the TownNews Content Exchange to get the feed, but signing up is FREE

Questions

Stay connected

- Documentation: help.TownNews.com
- Support: Call 800-293-9576 or visit support.TownNews.com
- Partner Community: community.TownNews.com
- Service Status: TownNews.status.io
- Follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube



Thank you!