

Everyone Counts News

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EVERYONE COUNTS WORKS WITH INNOVATIVE SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL TO INITIATE WORLD'S FIRST 'VOTE ANYWHERE' MULTI-CHANNEL ELECTION

Accessibility, Service Levels and Voter Turnout Enhanced When Secure, Verifiable Internet & Telephone Voting Are Offered In Addition to Traditional Polling Options

London, UK (May 14, 2007) – In an extraordinary effort to deliver the most elaborate electoral modernization pilot in history, United Kingdom local elections authority Swindon Borough Council worked with the world's most experienced provider of secured online elections -- U.S.-based Everyone Counts -- to provide the first "Vote Anywhere" multi-channel Internet election in the world.

Former U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) Chairman and international elections expert Paul DeGregorio, who observed the e-voting in Swindon, England, said, "This was an election of historic proportions. Never before have voters been given so many choices to cast their ballots. Internet voting was a clear success; I applaud Everyone Counts for developing a system that is secure, trustworthy and voter-friendly."

In the historic election, which took place over an 8 day period earlier this month, Everyone Counts enabled Swindon voters to cast their ballots securely and successfully any time, anywhere via more options than ever before: on the Internet, by telephone, at previously-sanctioned early voting sites throughout the borough and in traditional and electronic Election Day polling stations.

Everyone Counts securely administered the historic election under intense scrutiny that resulted in an increase in voter turnout over previous elections.

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WORLD'S FIRST VOTE-ANYWHERE ELECTION SUCCESSFULLY HELD 2-2-2-2-2

"This was an exciting challenge which, despite extraordinary time pressures, was delivered on time to enable our electors to vote when and where they wanted. Many thousands of voters chose to take advantage of the opportunity and try out the new technology, said Swindon Deputy Returning Officer Alan Winchcombe. "We attracted over 4,500 extra voters compared to last year and got voting numbers up to the level of 15 years ago, reversing the trend of falling voter numbers in recent years," he said.

More than 48,000 individuals participated in the election, part of the U.K. Dept. of Constitutional Affairs' broad-brush effort to increase voter security and confidence in elections in the United Kingdom.

A variety of innovations ensuring security, accessibility and auditability were tested simultaneously in the pilot, including the assurance of uncompromising standards for election security. Amidst intense observation and skepticism, the critical components of the election were delivered problem-free, setting a standard for future national and international rollouts.

At the close of elections, Swindon's Alan Winchcombe received the auditable fully-encrypted, electronically-cast votes, which came to 24% of the total votes collected. The Everyone Counts technology supporting the election, eLect, allowed Mr. Winchcombe to decrypt and count the protected votes, integrating them with paper votes and ensuring that every vote equally counts.

Aside from traditional Election Day poll station voting, where electors could cast their paper and pencil ballots by making a trip to their designated polling stations, voters were given the opportunity to vote the week prior to Election Day in one of three ways:

First, for the seven days prior to traditional polling, Everyone Counts' innovative patent-pending **live voter register** allowed voters to be checked in to vote by trained poll workers in libraries throughout the borough where secured Internet access had been established. Citizens could then vote privately over the Internet on secured PCs. This helped Swindon in their efforts to bridge the digital divide by allowing voters of *all* socioeconomic backgrounds (and geographic locations) to enjoy the convenience and efficiencies of voting by Internet.

WORLD'S FIRST VOTE-ANYWHERE ELECTION SUCCESSFULLY HELD 3-3-3-3-3

To expand access to this borough's diverse population, while ensuring little room for ballot misinterpretation due to language barriers, the election was presented in the Borough's four most common languages: English, Bengali, Portuguese and Konkani. Everyone Counts' system runs elections in any language in the world.

Finally, to increase access for those unable to make it to the polls on election day, voters who pre-registered (much like those who choose to vote by mail) could vote remotely by either Internet or telephone from anywhere in the world. This benefits people with disabilities, enabling them to vote independently and securely from home, as well as travelers, the infirm and the elderly. This is the first time in history that remote voting was available through the end of traditional polling.

In addition, the "Vote Anywhere" model deployed in libraries for early voters was expanded to 64 traditional polling stations on Election Day. This allowed people to vote at any poll station in Swindon, rather than limiting them to their designated polling station - offering additional options - and access - for potential voters.

Everyone Counts helped election officials ensure a fraud-proof election by providing continually-updated, secure on-line poll lists that verify proper ballot assignments and prevent double voting. To increase voter confidence, Everyone Counts provided each on-line voter the ability to ensure that his or her ballot was counted -- and unmodified.

Everyone Counts is the only U.S.-based election technology to meet the rigorous testing standards required to be selected for the Department of Constitutional Affairs' framework of eVoting providers for not just one, but two of the six consortia chosen to provide electoral modernization projects over the coming four years. Tata Consultancy Services led the Swindon Consortium.

"The ability to ensure that people can vote securely anywhere, anytime is an important step toward making the voice of each person living in a democratic society around the world heard," said Lori Steele, CEO at Everyone Counts.

Everyone Counts (E1C) is a global, U.S.-based software company that has been bringing secure, transparent, reliable and verifiable data collection, polling and electoral solutions to governments, public agencies and private sector companies since 1996. Everyone Counts serves clients in the US, Australia, Canada, Latin America and Great Britain. It is the only company of its kind to offer an open, transparent software platform to allow for verification of data accuracy and integrity without sacrificing security – or the anonymity of voters. More information is available at www.everyonecounts.com.

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