

US Election 2008 Web Monitor Wins Social Media Category of the Austrian National Award for Multimedia and e-Business

(Vienna, 23-09-2008). The US Election 2008 Web Monitor has been awarded the First Prize in the category *'Online Communities, Web 2.0 and Social Networks'* of the Austrian National Award for Multimedia and e-Business. After tracking candidate performance during the primaries and continuously refining the analyses, the development team took this opportunity to re-launch the Web site at www.ecoresearch.net/election2008. The project now focuses on the presidential candidates and their running mates, supplements the analytical tools with semantic and geospatial interfaces, and includes two social media applications built upon the Facebook platform.

Prof. Arno Scharl of MODUL University Vienna's Department of New Media Technology outlines how the US Election 2008 Web Monitor uses the two Facebook applications to gain new scientific insights: "The first application lets users vote for and track their preferred candidates. The second application called *'Sentiment Quiz'* follows the tradition of *games with a purpose* by inviting Facebook users and their network of online friends to evaluate whether quotes from an archive of election-related documents express positive or negative sentiment. Besides improving algorithms for automated sentiment detection, the system analyzes information diffusion in social networks and leverages the *wisdom of the crowds* for investigating individual perceptions of Web documents with political content."

The US Election 2008 Web Monitor embraces the influential role of social media in the US presidential elections and analyzes the online coverage by different stakeholders. For this purpose, it captures the Web sites of international media, the Fortune 1000 (the biggest US companies in terms of revenue), as well as 1000 popular blogs on political issues. For each candidate, the system automatically extracts media attention, sentiment, and associated keywords from a repository of 800,000 Web documents.

The award-winning media monitoring application is part of IDIOM (www.idiom.at), a two-year research project funded by the FIT-IT Semantic Systems program (www.fit-it.at) of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology in cooperation with the Austrian Research Promotion Agency. The project is jointly pursued by MODUL University Vienna, the Vienna University of Economics & Business Administration, Graz University of Technology and three industry partners (Gentics, Austria.info and Prisma Solutions). Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook Inc., which provides a development system that allows building social applications and interacting with its more than 100 million active users.

Web Site: www.ecoresearch.net/election2008
Award Photos: www.ecoresearch.net/election2008/download

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