

Rep Honda Crowd-Sources Redesign of Website

Written by Mike Honda

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WASHINGTON D.C. – Today, Rep. Michael Honda (CA-17) officially announced the launch of an innovative project to further improve civic engagement with Congress. The Congressman is redesigning his website once again – using a technique called crowd-sourcing – to help make his website more accessible his constituents.

[Launched this week on CrowdSpring.com](#) , designers will mock up multiple images and formats for consideration by Rep Honda. California's 17th District constituents will then vote on the designs and the final design will be chosen based on constituent votes, design functionality, and office criteria vis-à-vis usability.

Rep. Honda has always been in the front of web trends, paving the way. The Congressman's current website was crowd-sourced -- the first-ever use of the technique in Congress -- using a similar method. His websites have been consistently recognized for their outstanding designs, having won 4 Gold and 2 Silver Mouse Awards by the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF). Rep. Honda is the only Member of the House of Representatives to be chosen for a website award from CMF each time it was awarded.

“Our first crowdsourcing project,” said Rep. Honda “ushered in a new era of government transparency. Since then, many other entities within the federal government, and here in Congress, have followed suit with their own crowdsourcing initiatives. This time, we're taking it a step further, involving constituents in the decision-making process about the exact features they want on the site. It is my hope that this initiative further democratizes the way we interact with the public, interfacing not only with our constituents, but with the design community in general.”

The purpose of Rep. Honda's website redesign/crowd-sourcing is to continue his goal of ushering in Government 2.0, where the public's ability to access and provide advice to Members of Congress is enhanced by new technology and new online participation. “Congress must take advantage of Web 2.0 technologies,” said Rep. Honda, “to transform the relationship between citizens and government. Instead of viewing the public as a customer for services, I believe that we should empower citizens to become our partners in shaping the future of our nation.”

As the Representative covering the heart of Silicon Valley, Rep. Honda has been on the front lines of pushing technological innovation as a means for better citizen engagement – from acting as founding co-Chair of the Democratic Caucus New Media Working, which was designed to promote use of technology in Congress, to pushing for access to bulk legislative data.

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