



## **SEO Report on Presidential Campaign Websites – October 2007**

This report examines the use of SEO and social media in the 2008 presidential campaigns using HubSpot's Website Grader free SEO tool, HubSpot's Keyword Grader, and by manually examining the candidates' websites. The report looks at the campaign websites for presidential candidates Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, John Edwards, Rudy Giuliani, John McCain, and Mitt Romney.

### **Key findings include:**

- **Overall, the candidates are optimizing their websites, scoring in the high 90s according to our Website Grader.**
- **The Democrats hold a slight edge in terms of SEO measures such as Alexa rank, inbound links, and del.icio.us saves.**
- **All candidates rank well in search engines for their name but not for other relevant keywords, such as those connected to their key campaign issues.**
- **All candidates utilize social media but do not go far enough to connect with voters via the Internet, for example, by contributing to their own campaign blogs, currently updated by campaign staffers for the most part.**

\* Website Grader and Keyword Grader data as of 10/24/2007

## Candidate Website Grade

	Website grade	Google PageRank	Alexa Rank	Technorati Rank	Inbound Links	Del.icio.us Saved Count	Google Indexed Pages	Link to Full Report
Hillaryclinton.com	99	6	34,425	Not ranked	49,404	361	2,620	<a href="#">Full report for hillaryclinton.com</a>
Barackobama.com	99	7	22,556	45	55,557	864	940	<a href="#">Full report for barackobama.com</a>
Johnedwards.com	93	6	66,643	Not ranked	58,904	187	43,500	<a href="#">Full report for johnedwards.com</a>
Joinrudy2008.com	99	6	118,870	1,559	32,107	78	1,600	<a href="#">Full report for joinrudy2008.com</a>
Johnmccain.com	96	5	151,150	2,012	9,634	58	3,670	<a href="#">Full report for johnmccain.com</a>
Mittromney.com	97	6	78,797	556	30,330	101	3,450	<a href="#">Full report for mittromney.com</a>

### Key findings:

- All the candidates' websites rank in the high 90s, showing their websites are achieving high visibility on the web.
- The Democrats are a step ahead of the Republicans in terms of Alexa rank (an overall measure of a website's popularity on the web), number of inbound links (search engines' primary measure of a website's importance, with each link acting as a "vote" for that website), and count of del.icio.us saves (number of saves on the social bookmarking site del.icio.us).
- Barack Obama ranks the highest in most of the categories, including Technorati rank, in which he ranks much better than the other candidates, showing he is miles ahead in terms of visibility in the blogosphere.

## Ranking on “president” and related keywords

	Clinton rank	Obama rank	Edwards rank	Guiliani rank	McCain rank	Romney rank
President	82	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+
Presidential election	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+
Election 2008	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+
Presidential candidate	100+	45	29	100+	35	100+
Presidential campaign	35	16	18	23	32	20
President 2008	100+	48	57	20	15	14
Republican presidential candidate	100+	100+	100+	100+	19	46
Presidential candidate issues	100+	100+	100+	100+	92	100+
2008 presidential candidate	100+	22	75	42	100+	77
Democratic presidential candidate	100+	100+	21	100+	100+	100+
Best presidential candidate	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+	100+

### Key findings:

- None of the candidates rank on the first page for “president” or related keywords.
- For the keyword “president,” which has the most monthly searches of this group, only Clinton makes it into the top 100 results. However, Clinton is the only candidate that does not make it into the top 100 for the keyword phrase “president 2008.” Most candidates (all excluding Clinton and McCain) rank for “2008 presidential candidate.”
- None of the candidates rank in the top 100 results for “presidential election,” “election 2008,” or “best presidential candidate.”

## Ranking on campaign issue related keywords

All candidates rank in the top one or two organic search engine results, but what about keywords around their primary campaign issues?

	Top Campaign Issues	Monthly searches	Rank
<b>Hillaryclinton.com</b>	Strengthen middle class	Low	1
	Affordable accessible health care	Low	3
	End war in Iraq	Low	9
<b>Barackobama.com</b>	Strengthen America overseas	Low	1
	End Iraq war	Low	7
	Health care system that works	Low	1
<b>Johnedwards.com</b>	Health care	High	22
	Iraq	High	100+
	Energy/environment	Low	100+
<b>Joinrudy2008.com</b>	Fiscal discipline	Low	15
	Cut taxes	Low	44
	Win war on terror	Low	100+
<b>Johnmccain.com</b>	Economic prosperity	Low	30
	Sanctity of life	Medium	60
	Ethics reform	Low	58
<b>Mittromney.com</b>	Defeat jihadists	Low	4
	Compete with Asia	Low	100+
	Taxes	High	29

### Key findings:

- Many of the candidates' top campaign issues use keywords that are rarely searched, so even if they rank on them, they get very little traffic. Some of the candidates still do not rank on these very specific terms (for example, Mitt Romney does not rank for "compete with Asia" even though this is not a competitive term).
- Alternatively, some candidates use very general headings such as "health care" or "Iraq" which are both non-descriptive and harder to rank on in search engines. John Edwards does manage to rank among the top 30 results for the competitive term "health care."

## Candidates' use of social media

Social media is becoming an important way to connect with voters. Candidates have all created accounts on MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, and Flickr, but some campaigns, such as the Edwards campaign, include countless other social networks on their site.

	<b>Links to social networking sites</b>	<b>Campaign blog</b>	<b>RSS feed</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Hillaryclinton.com</b>	MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, Eons, YouTube	Yes, written by campaign staffers	No	
<b>Barackobama.com</b>	MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn, Eventfull, Twitter	Yes, written by campaign staffers	Yes	Mobile text messaging service for messages on campaign issues
<b>Johnedwards.com</b>	MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, 43Things, del.icio.us, essembly, gather, partybuilder, ning, metacafe, revver, Yahoo! 360°, blip.tv, CHBN, vSocial, tagworld, collectivex, bebo, care2, hi5, xanga, livejournal	Yes, both John Edwards' and family members' blogs, updated infrequently	Yes	Links for embedding campaign-approved images into your email, website, blog, etc.
<b>Joinrudy2008.com</b>	MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, Eons, YouTube, LinkedIn, blip.tv, gather, digg	Yes, combination of news clippings and updates from campaigners	Yes	Widget to show your support on your personal blog
<b>Johnmccain.com</b>	MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, eventful	Yes, written by campaign staffers, and personal blog of McCain's wife updated infrequently	Yes	"McCain Space", his own branded social network, allows people to put up their own sites within a McCain community
<b>Mittromney.com</b>	MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube	Yes, written by the whole Romney family	Yes	

### **Key findings:**

- Clinton is the only candidate not using RSS feeds on her site.
- Use of twitter and del.icio.us is sparse. When the campaigns do use del.icio.us, they use it as a news clippings repository but don't add their own analysis of the coverage. This leaves a major opportunity to add thought leadership or rebut certain claims.
- All candidates have a blog but it is mostly just the voice of the campaign or one particular campaign staffer. The exception is the Romney campaign – his sons and wife regularly post about their experiences on the campaign trail and Mitt himself has made a few posts as well. Edwards has something similar but not as well executed.
- The Edwards campaign integrates the most social media using 23 different media to connect with voters.