

# Obama v. McCain – Online!

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Presidential politics has always dragged way behind business when it comes to understanding the Web. (As recently as 2004, **Dick Cheney couldn't even get his domain names straight.**) But 2008 might be the first election year in which the big players in politics have shown they've finally caught up. Not that they didn't have some help, of course: Barack Obama's campaign, for instance, hired Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes to lead its Web initiative.

Curious as to what Web site design tricks the top two presidential campaigns pulled off the best, we asked CBS Interactive Art Director Marc Mendell to click through the **Barack Obama** and **John McCain** campaign sites and analyze their effectiveness — from a business point of view, not a political one.

“An effective Web site design conveys brand and presents information with a clear hierarchy,” says Mendell, who has led several award-winning site redesigns, including BNET's. “A functional site creates intuitive access to all the content.” Here's Mendell's take on Obama v. McCain online.



## Gallery Contents

- [Smart Design Guides Eyes to the Most Important Content...](#)

- ...While Too Many Elements Confuse
- A Consistent Look Encourages Readers to Consume More Information...
- ...And an Inconsistent One Can Drive Them Away
- Subtle Visual Cues Can Reinforce the Brand...
- ...Or Confuse It Altogether
- Easy-to-Use Tools Encourage Participation...
- ...But Difficult Ones Inhibit
- Prominent Links to Social Networks Drive Viral Marketing...
- ...But Limited Options Kill the Potential

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