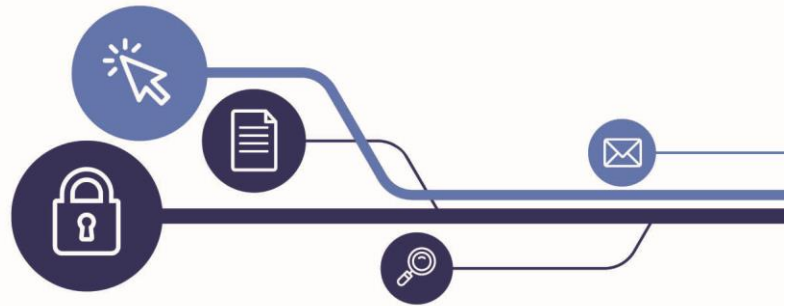Internet Society's
Online Trust Alliance
Supplement to Online Trust Audit –
2020 Presidential Campaigns

Supplement to Online Trust Audit –
2020 Presidential Campaigns

On 7 October 2019, the Internet Society's Online Trust Alliance (OTA) released the Online Trust Audit for 2020 U.S. Presidential Campaigns.[1] Overall, 30% of the campaigns made the Honor Roll, and 70% had a failure, mainly related to scores for their privacy statements. As part of this process, OTA reached out to the campaigns, offering to explain their specific Audit scores and ways to improve them. The campaigns were also told that they would be rescored in mid-November and the updated results would be published in early December. As a result, several campaigns contacted us to understand the methodology and scoring, and several of them made improvements.

Rescoring of all elements of the Audit was completed on 25 November, and the table below shows the updated results since release of the original Audit. Several campaigns have been suspended since early October (Messam, O'Rourke, Ryan, and Sanford, as well as Bullock and Sestak in early December). Campaigns shown in **bold** in the Honor Roll column made enough improvements to earn passing scores for their privacy statements and thereby achieve Honor Roll status. Campaigns shown in *italics* at the bottom of the table are new entrants since the Audit was released. **Based on this updated list of 20 campaigns, 10 made the Honor Roll while 10 had a failure in one or more areas, creating a 50/50 split.**

ONLINE TRUST AUDIT SUPPLEMENT – 2020 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS	
Honor Roll	Had a Failure
Pete Buttigieg (D)	Michael Bennet (D)
Julian Castro (D)	Joe Biden (D)
John Delaney (D)	Cory Booker (D)
Kamala Harris (D)	Tulsi Gabbard (D)
Amy Klobuchar (D)	Tom Steyer (D)
Bernie Sanders (I)	Joe Walsh (R)
Donald Trump (R)	Bill Weld (R)
Elizabeth Warren (D)	Andrew Yang (D)
Marianne Williamson (D)	
Deval Patrick (D)	*Michael Bloomberg (D)*
	Roque De La Fuente (R)

Figure 1 – 2020 Presidential Campaign Audit Supplement Results

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[1] Online Trust Audit for 2020 U.S. Presidential Campaigns https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/ota/2019/online-trust-audit-2020-u-s-presidential-campaigns/
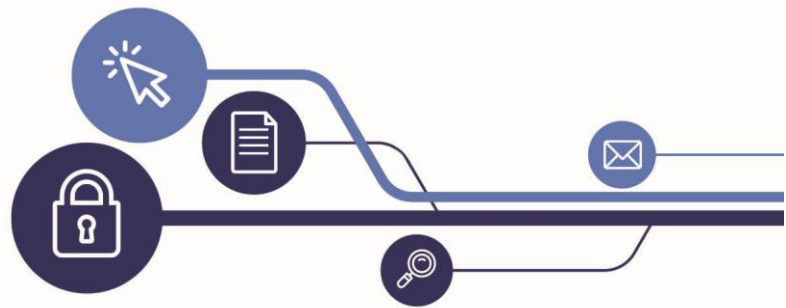
Privacy Practice Updates

Three campaigns updated their privacy statements, and all three made changes that caused them to pass in the privacy area (a score of 60 or more) and achieve Honor Roll status. However, these were minor changes (added a date stamp, addressed children's use of the site, layered the statement to make it easier to navigate) – none addressed the core data sharing issues highlighted in the original Audit.

For the new entrants, one had no privacy statement (De La Fuente), one had a privacy statement with a score below 60 (Bloomberg), and one had a privacy statement with a passing score that directly addressed the data sharing issues (Patrick).

Site Security Updates

Minor changes were noted in the site security aspects of the Audit, and none were substantial enough to cause a change in Honor Roll status. Two campaigns now have outdated software (lowering their score), and one added support for TLS 1.3.

Site security scores for the new entrants were strong, which is in line with other campaigns, and all of them support "always on SSL" or fully encrypted web sessions.

Consumer Protection Updates

A few changes were noted in the existing campaigns – one added support for DNSSEC, and one added DMARC support with a reject policy (the recommended email security best practice). These improved the campaigns' scores, but did not affect their Honor Roll status. The two campaigns that originally had failures due to email authentication have been suspended so are no longer on the list.

For the new entrants, one has insufficient email authentication (so fails in Consumer Protection as well as Privacy), and while the other two have strong SPF and DKIM protection, only one uses DMARC with a reject policy. One supports DNSSEC.

Conclusion

The engagement with several of the campaigns was constructive and led to improvements that helped them earn Honor Roll status. We find that for most organizations the issue is more about awareness of best practices and their impact on overall trust than a refusal to follow those best practices. However, the data sharing language in all but one of the privacy statements is concerning. For example, most of the campaigns had language that would allow them to share data with "like minded organizations." Language along these lines gives the campaigns broad discretion to share user data. We encourage campaigns (and the political parties they work with) to consider improvements to sharing language to increase transparency about how data is shared and give users more control over their data.
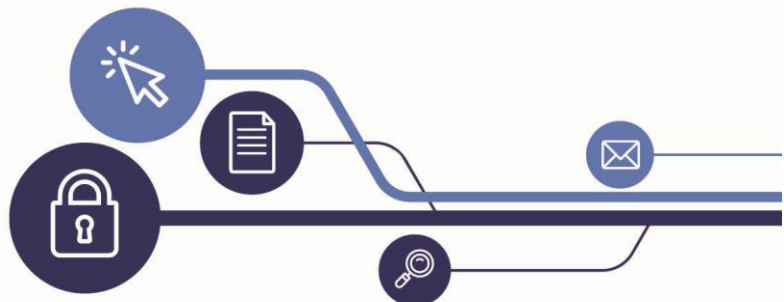
Campaign Sites and Privacy Statements

The following table lists the URLs for the rescored campaign sites and associated privacy statements.
Campaigns that are new since the original Audit are shown in *italics*.

Candidate	Campaign Website	Privacy Statement
Michael Bennet (D)	https://michaelbennet.com/	https://michaelbennet.com/privacy-policy/
Joe Biden (D)	https://joebiden.com/	https://joebiden.com/privacy-policy/
Michael Bloomberg (D)	*https://mikebloomberg.com/*	*https://www.mikebloomberg.com/privacy*
Cory Booker (D)	https://corybooker.com/	https://corybooker.com/privacy-policy/
Pete Buttigieg (D)	https://peteforamerica.com/	https://peteforamerica.com/privacy-policy/
Julian Castro (D)	https://www.julianforthefuture.com/	https://www.julianforthefuture.com/privacy-policy/
Roque De La Fuente (R)	*https://rocky101.com/*	*None found*
John Delaney (D)	https://www.johndelaney.com/	https://www.johndelaney.com/privacy-policy/
Tulsi Gabbard (D)	https://www.tulsi2020.com/	https://www.tulsi2020.com/privacy-policy
Kamala Harris (D)	https://kamalaharris.org/	https://kamalaharris.org/privacy-policy
Amy Klobuchar (D)	https://amyklobuchar.com/	https://amyklobuchar.com/privacy-policy/
Deval Patrick (D)	*https://devalpatrick2020.com/*	*https://devalpatrick2020.com/privacy-policy/*
Bernie Sanders (I)	https://berniesanders.com/	https://berniesanders.com/privacy-policy/
Tom Steyer (D)	https://www.tomsteyer.com/	https://www.tomsteyer.com/privacy-policy/
Donald Trump (R)	https://www.donaldjtrump.com/	https://www.donaldjtrump.com/privacy-policy/
Joe Walsh (R)	https://www.joewalsh.org	None found
Elizabeth Warren (D)	https://elizabethwarren.com/	https://elizabethwarren.com/privacy-policy
Bill Weld (R)	https://www.weld2020.org/	https://www.weld2020.org/privacy_policy
Marianne Williamson (D)	https://www.marianne2020.com/	https://www.marianne2020.com/privacy-policy
Andrew Yang (D)	https://www.yang2020.com/	https://www.yang2020.com/privacy_policy/
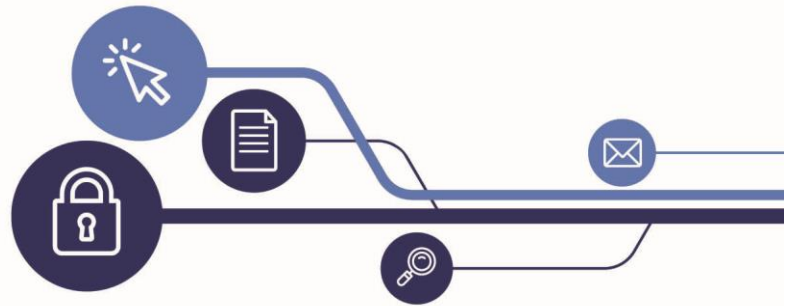
About the Internet Society's Online Trust Alliance (OTA)

The Internet Society's Online Trust Alliance (OTA) identifies and promotes security and privacy best practices that build consumer confidence in the Internet. Leading public and private organizations, vendors, researchers, and policymakers contribute to and follow OTA's guidance to help make online transactions safer and better protect users' data. The Internet Society is a global nonprofit dedicated to ensuring an open, globally connected, trustworthy, and secure Internet for everyone.

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