

WHAT	The OSET Foundation and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania are teaming to research, develop, and publish in July 2016 a comprehensive global industry analysis of the election technology market.		
HOW	The team is comprised of two principal investigators (PIs): Dr. Lorin Hitt of Wharton and Gregory Miller of the OSET Foundation, leading six (6) Wharton students, administered by Andrew Coopersmith of the Penn Wharton Public Policy Initiative, with support by a Wall Street analyst and industry audit experts from PWC.		
WEB SITES	osetfoundation.org www.wharton.upenn.edu Project Site TBA		
WHY	To provide the third of three studies focused on the state of elections administration and related technology, systems, and processes; the first one was the Presidential Commission on Elections Administration Report (www.supportthevoter.gov), and the second is the Brennan Law Center’s study on the voting machine crisis (bit.ly/BrennanStudy).		
SPONSORS	To be announced.		
SUMMARY	<p>Much is being published and discussed with intentions of informing public policy and assisting elections officials in addressing an impending voting machine crisis. This is different than prior “crises” government has braced for—such as the Y2K bug—which never substantially materialized. In this case the machinery on which the U.S. depends for the operational continuity of our elections is reaching the end of its life—<i>literally</i>. The underlying computer hardware federally certified for use in elections is no longer manufactured—relying on spare parts through online auction sites. And the operating system on which many voting systems are based is no longer supported—relying on patches from independent developers with lessening interest in maintaining it.</p> <p>This research project is intended to fill a gap in information necessary to inform policy makers, investors, philanthropists, industry participants, and elections administrators on the outlook and options going forward. That gap is in understanding the industry itself: its structure, forecast, and outlook. This study will strictly examine the business, financial fundamentals, intellectual property and regulatory issues of the global election technology industry.</p> <p>OSET Foundation’s mission is predicated, to a certain extent, on a thesis about where the industry is, where its going, and what is the likely disruption required to bring innovation to the technology of elections administration that can [1] increase confidence in elections and their outcomes, [2] increase citizen participation, [3] ensure the level of integrity in the system essential to preserving the operational continuity of this critical democracy infrastructure; and [4] do so at a far lower cost and more transparent manner than possible today. In short, the Foundation believes the market is malformed and dysfunctional. It further asserts that the technology this market is supposed to provide is too critical to the function of democracy to be privatized black-box and proprietary, but should be public infrastructure, publicly owned, with the commercial market adapting, deploying, and servicing finished systems. This Study, among many other things, should either validate or debunk the Foundation’s thesis on how to rejuvenate this industry.</p>		
RESULTS	Results include: [1] a comprehensive study to be published in July between the respective party national conventions; [2] a catalyst for conversation on how America votes (not with regard to their tendency of choice, but to the means by which they choose); and [3] a tool for informing all stakeholders in how to improve this vital component of U.S. democracy, and democracies around the world.		
CONTACT	<table><tr><td>Gregory Miller — OSET 503.703.5150 gam@osetfoundation.org</td><td>Dr. Andrew Coopersmith — Penn Wharton PPI 215.688.0247 ascooper@wharton.upenn.edu</td></tr></table>	Gregory Miller — OSET 503.703.5150 gam@osetfoundation.org	Dr. Andrew Coopersmith — Penn Wharton PPI 215.688.0247 ascooper@wharton.upenn.edu
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