

Who passed, who failed? Websites of Canadian MPs compared in study

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A study of member of Parliament websites suggests most federally elected politicians have staked out a place to communicate with constituents online, but many aren't making full use of the web.

This summer, the non-profit Samara took a look at the websites for Canada's MPs and rated them based on how extensively they encouraged engagement with voters.

On the worst end of the scale, there were five MPs that seemed to have no web presence at all.

Seventeen MPs were highlighted for getting 11 or higher out of 14 based on the criteria Samara used for scoring, while the overall average score was seven out of 14. No MP managed a perfect score.

While 97 per cent of MP websites had what Samara called "the bare necessities," including contact information and biographies, just 15 per cent listed office hours for constituents to get in touch.

About 25 per cent of the websites had a space for citizens to sign or submit petitions and just one in 10 allowed visitors to post comments or participate in discussions.

Almost three in four MPs used their website to talk about their work on Parliament Hill and 60 per cent reported on issues in their riding.

A similar percentage updated a calendar of events they planned to attend.

MPs were more likely to encourage interaction on social media than by email. About 61 per cent linked to their social media accounts while just under half encouraged voters to sign up for an e-newsletter.