

# **Visual Advocacy - Project Report**

A report presented to the Department of Information Systems  
University of Cape Town

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# Contents

<b>Introduction and Background</b>	2
<b>Situation of Concern/Problem Definition</b>	2
<b>Business Objectives</b>	3
<b>Assumptions and Constraints</b>	3
<b>Stakeholder Analysis (context diagram)</b>	4
<b>Possible Solutions</b>	4
<b>Recommended Solution</b>	6
<b>Prototyping</b>	8
<b>Outputs/exhibits</b>	11
<b>Challenges and Limitations</b>	11

# Part I: Business Case & Project Outcomes

## 1. Introduction and Background

The Observatory Civic is a local area administration based entity with 12 sub-groups, and described as the “umbilical cord between municipality and the community”. It’s aim is to make sure the people have a say in changes that occur in the Observatory area and to serve as a voice for the community at a municipal level. The Visual Advocacy Project aims to help the Observatory Civic develop better ways to connect with the people, and encourage interaction between the civic and the people regarding various issues, while also increasing awareness of Observatory’s heritage and history.

One particular area of concern is the fact that recently the Observatory area has seen an increase in pressure for development. The civic is seeking to improve the way in which it communicates with the community in order to keep them informed and incorporate community feedback on changes that are being made in the area.

## 2. Situation of Concern/Problem Definition

Currently Observatory residents are not aware of the fact that by communicating with the Civic, their word can make a difference in large-scale issues such as the approval or rejection of high-rise developments. The Civic wishes to preserve the cultural heritage in the area in its current state, but cannot do so effectively without the help of the community. The civic has also found that the majority of people interacting with them are the elderly and retired members of the community, hence would like to find ways to effectively reach the younger generation too.

With the support of the community, the Civic would be able to preserve the heritage of the area with its historical landmarks, and the community would feel empowered knowing that their decisions matter.

### **3. Business Objectives**

This describes on what the civic expects to accomplish through its functions. To mention the following:

- To serve the Observatory community in the areas of Architecture and Heritage, Large Development Group, Culture and Sport, Social Issues / Liquor and Noise, Sanitation and Transport.
- Provide the Observatory community with information and opportunity to have a say regarding changes occurring in Observatory.
- Increase awareness of Observatory's history and its importance.
- To ensure responsible use of funds and resources in its pursuit to serve the community.

### **4. Assumptions and Constraints**

Constraints:

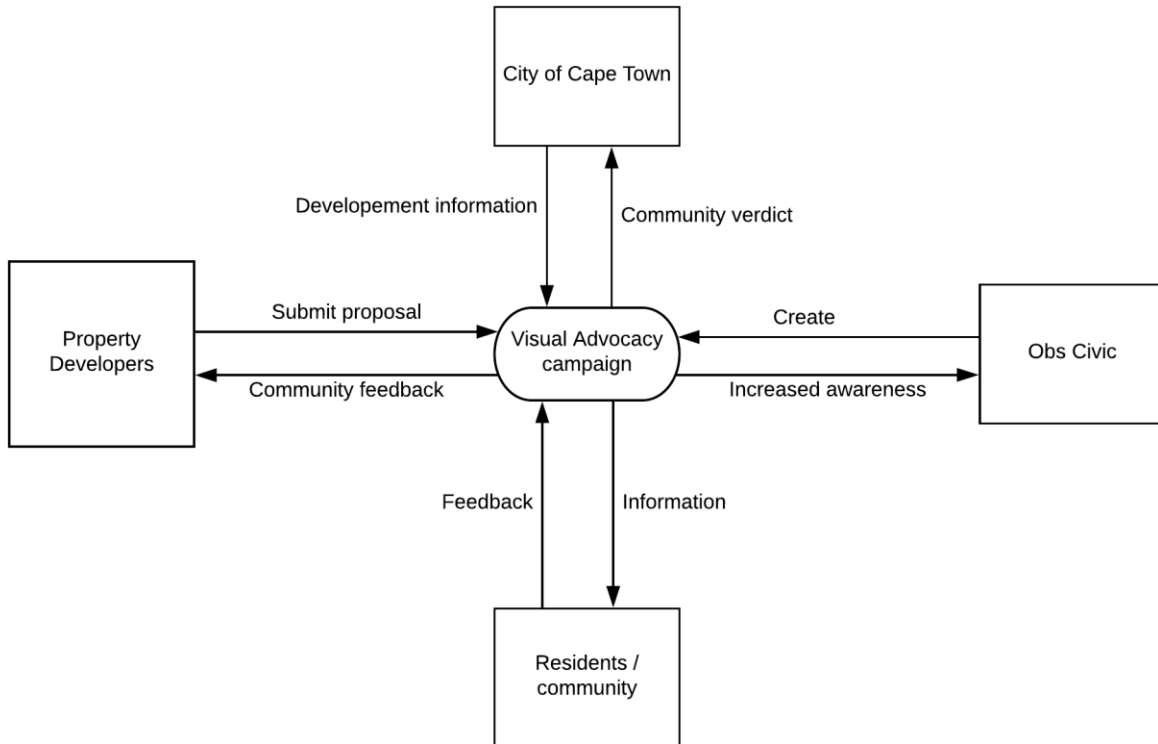
- Not everyone in the community uses or has access to social media / internet.
- Not everyone is computer-literate or proficient in using internet browsers and social media.
- The Civic has a limited budget as it is mostly made up of volunteers.

Assumptions:

- All the members of the community are able to engage are willing.
- The observatory civic has the skills required to fulfil the various parts of the solution. i.e. the IT skills for website maintenance and update, and social media updates.
- We assume that the general public will be interested in the heritage and history of Observatory and find it valuable.

## 5. Stakeholder Analysis (context diagram)

Refers to the process of the assessing a decision's impact between existing external stakeholders, the Observatory civic, City of Cape Town, residents, and property developers. The information is then used to assess how the interests of the mentioned stakeholders should be addressed in a project plan, policy, program, or other action.



## 6. Possible Solutions

As our problem definition has highlighted the importance of exposure and community engagement, we propose a media-oriented campaign to boost awareness of the Civic and make community engagement as seamless and accessible as possible. There are 4 distinct groups the Civic must represent - students, families, retirees and migrant workers.

From this we must identify key communication channels to expose for each group to minimize cost but maximize effect.

## **Electronic Media**

### ***Website:***

Currently the Civic has a website that caters primarily to an audience interested in reading about academic studies relating to Observatory. To better utilize the web platform, the website can be adapted to cater to the general community stakeholders and communicate the information the Civic would like to communicate to them.

We envision the website being the backbone of community engagement, providing a source of information from each of the committees, and allowing residents to post their comments on each discussion directly to the Civic, for processing and passing to the municipality. Since this will be the backbone and largest engagement surface, it should be developed with accessibility and ease of use from the start. Everyone from tech-savvy students to pensioners will interact with the site, and so it should cater accordingly

### ***Social Media:***

The Civic has existing Facebook and Twitter pages however these have been neglected and are not used to their full potential. The Civic can interact with users for free on these platforms and also pay to sponsor their content in order to ensure that they reach relevant stakeholders. The social media campaign would be focused on generating content aimed at younger generations, as they will be the majority group interacting with it. The campaign would include video tours of local heritage sites, promotional videos for cultural events hosted within Observatory, and calls to comment on new developments. This campaign will include the development of a comprehensive social media strategy specific to the civic and their aims. It would also be used to link users to recent posts on the website, for further reading and engagement.

### ***Newsletter:***

The Civic has an existing e-newsletter however community engagement is low, approximately 20-30 replies per newsletter. We would propose a revamped newsletter linked heavily to the website, highlighting key events and developments in the area for the recent period, perhaps renaming it to "This week in Obs". This would need to be targeted towards all members of the community, as such it must be modern enough to appeal to younger stakeholders, but accessible to older residents as well. Signing up to this newsletter would be encouraged on all other platforms.

### ***Bulk SMS:***

Seeing that some community members do not have access to social media either due to lifestyle choices or lack of internet access, bulk SMS solutions can be used to communicate with Stakeholders. This would be useful for event coordination and reminders, and should be targeted to those with less access to technology, such as migrant workers and pensioners.

***Wikipedia:***

**Print Media:**

***Community Newspaper:***

Closer work with the Observatory Community Newspaper would allow information to be added to ensure that stakeholders who still use print-media are reached.

***Posters:***

To reach Stakeholders in the area, especially those marginalized from most engagement channels, public posters can be designed and put up in the area to inform the residents about upcoming events hosted by the Civic, featured heritage sites, and new proposals that need community feedback. They would also provide links to other channels, such as the website, social media, or mailing lists.

***Brochures:***

Much like posters, brochures can be designed and handed out or dropped off in social spaces in the community where community members can access them.

## **7. Recommended Solution**

With regard to the information gathered from the civic, community and analysis of problem statement, we propose a 3-phase approach to drastically increase awareness and engagement within the Observatory region.

### **Phase 1 - Website**

A well-designed website is any community group's biggest asset. It facilitates all information access and allows an extremely streamlined channel of gaining members' comments on all manner of discussions. Currently the [Civic website](#) allows admins to post

new articles and sign up for the newsletter. In the attached Exhibits we have provided proposed wireframes. We aim to give the intended users a good first entrance onto the website, and smooth experience throughout the website.

## Phase 2 - Social media

The civic aims to improve its reach towards the younger public and we believe strengthening of their online presence will help them achieve this. This phase will involve the provision of a comprehensive social media strategy, to offer specific steps the civic can take to effectively make use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to achieve their specific goals of increasing awareness and encouraging interaction. There is currently a Facebook page that is linked to the twitter account, though is not effectively utilized by civic. We feel that we can offer a beneficial perspective as we ourselves are part of the younger generation the civic is aiming to reach.

## Phase 3 - On the Ground Campaign

We expect the previously defined phases to increase the number of people getting involved with the Civic. With this phase, we propose an increased, more targeted 'boots on the ground' campaign to bring information and communication channels to those groups that do not have access to the online platforms.

This would include putting up of posters, questionnaires, promoting online channels, manned information points at key locations and community outreach.



## 8. Prototyping

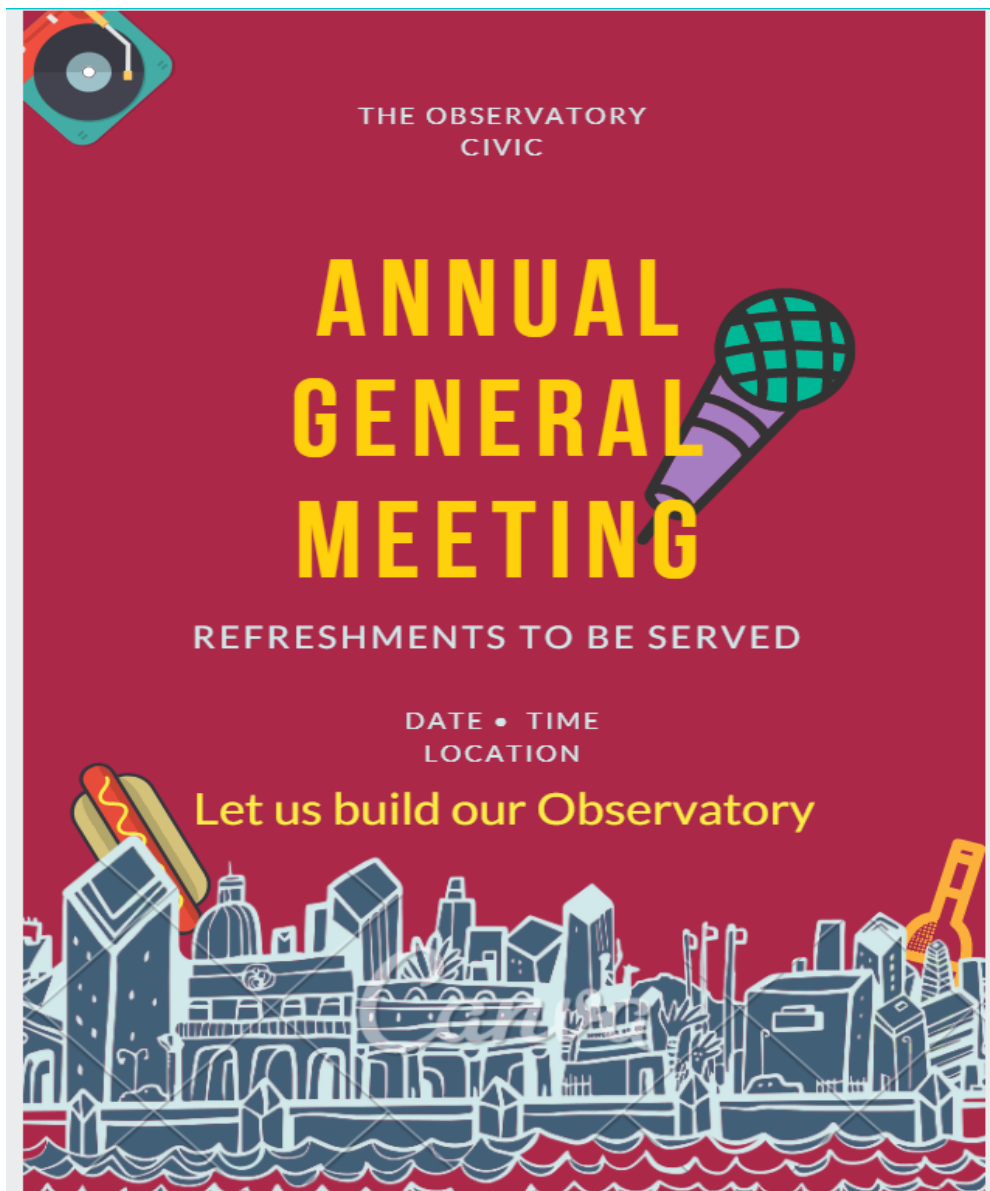
### Website Wireframes

Below is a screenshot of one of the website wireframes. A link to a prototype of the website can be found [here](#). The current civic website is more informative rather than an interactive website. With the created prototype, it allows two-way interaction, where users can give feedback on articles and posts. The website also has direct links to the civics' respective social media pages. With the website, we intend to give a good impression on users' fall page, when arriving from a search engine. Better yet, a quality website is outstanding and speak well on function reputation of the civic.



## Posters

The poster is aimed to support the on-ground campaign solution. Having bright a colour and bold writing increases the possibility of a person to notice the poster and consequently enticing to read on the poster. This goes hand in hand with the size of the poster. In addition to that, adding eye catching elements attract an individual to reading the poster, or interest to attending the suggested event (serving refreshment and adding entertainment elements). Which as result helps convey intended information from the civic. Example an AGM poster.



## Social Media Strategy

The civic aims to extend its reach towards the younger public and we believe improving their online presence will help them achieve that. This involves the provision of a comprehensive social media strategy, to offer specific steps the civic can take to effectively make use of social media platforms such as Instagram and improvements on Facebook and Twitter. This with the intention to achieve the goal of increasing awareness and encouraging interaction. With regard to marketing, social media platform has given low rates that allow pages to be advertised on timelines of customized selection of people. Facebook has a cost of \$0.27 cost per click, and cost \$7.19 per 1000 views; Instagram has a range of \$0.20 - \$2 cost per click and \$6.70 cost per 1000 views; Twitter has a range of \$0.50 - \$4 cost per engagement. Given the marketing cost and available resources, would suggest Instagram, Facebook and twitter respectively. The ugly truth is that the best way to catch the current generation's attention is through their social media pages. We feel that we can offer a beneficial perspective *as we are part of the younger generation the civic is aiming to reach*. Good attention to this strategy, with proper customization of people and location will have a high impact on public awareness and people participation.

### Sample of the new observatory civic Instagram Page:



## 9. Outputs/exhibits

The following are artefacts, and/or management practices that are implemented to meet each identified outcome by the project group to the civic:

- Problem definition
- Project Charter
- Risk Management and Analysis
- Time Management
- Prototyping and testing
- Work Plan (PBS, WBS, Gantt Chart)
- Stakeholder analysis (Internal and External)
- Project and Business Objectives
- Website Wireframes
- A social media strategy
- Poster designs

## 10. Challenges and Limitations

The project team is limited by time constraints and other individual commitments. In addition to that, there are budget constraints due to the civic being made up of mostly volunteers.