



## CASE STUDY

# VoteAmerica

**Increasing voter turnout and achieving seamless voter registration through autocomplete**

## Challenge

The voting process in the United States hinges heavily on a citizen's physical home address, but messy aggregate data caused VoteAmerica costly delays in accurately registering voters.

## Solution

Implementing Smarty's US Address Autocomplete product would help solve the problem by suggesting only validated addresses near the user in as little as one keystroke.

## Results

VoteAmerica saw increased voter turnout and voter registration as autocomplete streamlined and fact-checked the process, reducing false negatives by 23.6%.

### PRODUCTS USED

 US Address Verification

**smarty**

## The client: VoteAmerica

VoteAmerica is a nonprofit organization that provides “everything you need to vote.” They are committed to providing tools for U.S. citizens to vote, including voter registration, absentee ballot requests, and polling place lookups. Their goal is to focus on how to increase voter turnout, and they do this by making voting more accessible to all Americans. VoteAmerica ensures people can easily check their voter registration status and find accurate, real-time voting information based on their location.

Founded by Debra Cleaver, VoteAmerica operates remotely with a dedicated team of full-time employees and consultants. The organization serves millions of voters annually, especially during critical periods like National Voter Registration Day.

### **The challenge: Address standardization and false voter registration matches**

Ensuring accurate address data is a cornerstone of VoteAmerica’s operations, as most voting tools require eligible voters to input a home address to verify their registration or request a ballot.

VoteAmerica was doing everything they could to increase voting opportunities for Americans during elections, but they began to notice unsettling trends in the voting process:

- **High false-negative rates:** VoteAmerica’s previous vendor didn’t standardize addresses per the USPS format, so legitimate addresses entered in non-USPS formats wouldn’t match official voter registration records.
- **Complex workflows:** The organization used multiple APIs for address validation and geolocation of the voter’s IP address, which increased costs and created unnecessary complexity.
- **Non-USPS addresses:** Voters must register a physical address, even if it’s one the USPS doesn’t deliver to. VoteAmerica needed a way to verify those addresses.





All of these issues were inhibiting their goal to increase voter turnout.

Debra Cleaver, founder and CEO, stated, "With voting, everything is tied to your home address. But there are entire towns, like Idyllwild, California, where none of those addresses are in the USPS database. So, how do you validate those? Voting is nothing but edge cases masquerading as a cohesive system. We needed something to support non-USPS addresses and other unique cases in our

## **The solution: Smarty's address autocomplete API**

VoteAmerica had tried the address autocomplete services of Mapbox and Google but turned to Smarty's US Address Autocomplete API for improved capabilities, such as built-in IP geocoding and validation of non-USPS addresses.

Address autocomplete is a utility that organizations can add to forms. It automatically predicts and suggests standardized, valid addresses as soon as users begin typing their addresses. Thanks to IP geolocation, usually within 5 or 6 keystrokes, the user will see their address in a drop-down list of options. Entering their correct address then becomes a simple point-and-click. By making form completion faster and more efficient, VoteAmerica aimed to improve accuracy, reduce false negatives in voter registration matches, simplify the user experience, and improve form conversion rates.

VoteAmerica has integrated Smarty's address autocomplete into all of their voter-facing tools, including tools that enable voters to check their voter registration, register to vote, request a ballot, and look up their polling place.

When Debra came to us with VoteAmerica's goals, we knew we could help. Smarty's solution offered:

- **USPS-compliant address standardization:** Ensuring that all addresses entered by eligible voters match the CASS-certified (Coding Accuracy Support System) standard, also used by state government voter registration databases.
- **Built-in IP geolocation:** Automatically detected users' geolocation of their IP address, providing users with nearby suggestions first without the need for (and cost of) a separate geolocation API.
- **User-friendly autocomplete:** Reduced errors by allowing voters to easily select a valid, standardized address from a list of suggestions. These suggestions also included non-USPS addresses for a more inclusive view of address possibilities. This improves form completion rates.
- **Non-USPS addresses:** Smarty includes 20 million non-USPS addresses in its database, yielding more matches to legitimate addresses.

## **The process: Easily implemented with immediately realized results**

By integrating Smarty's autocomplete API into their tools, Debra and her team continue to increase voter turnout for everything from national presidential elections to local city and school board races. Despite the crunch-time pressure of the upcoming election for 2024, VoteAmerica buckled down to implement Smarty's tools before the September 17 National Voter Registration Day. Civic participation depended on a timely integration into their systems.

Although skeptical she could answer the quick integration call, Emily Behlmann, Senior Software Engineer at



VoteAmerica, stated this about the implementation process:

"It was very easy. Actually, I was expecting it to take longer than it did. The documentation was quite straightforward, and I was able to look at the sample code to speed the process along. Any questions I had were answered pretty quickly by the support team."

## **The results: Immediate improvements in accuracy, user experience, and form conversion rates**

After implementing Smarty's address autocomplete API, VoteAmerica saw significant improvements, encouraging voter participation.

False-negative matches on voter registrations dropped 23.6%, a meaningful reduction that improved the accuracy of their verification tools.

"Within 1 day of going live with Smarty, we already saw improvements in match rates," said Debra Cleaver.

Users were also in love with the new process, finding it easier to complete forms with the autocomplete tools, resulting in fewer abandoned registrations and a more seamless voter experience.

Debra Cleaver continued, "Having autocomplete absolutely increases form submissions. We saw an instant increase in form conversion rates."

That's not all. VoteAmerica was also able to eliminate the use of a separate API for IP geolocation, streamlining their workflow and reducing operational costs significantly. Smarty's API did a better job for a



**Within 1 day of going live with Smarty, we already saw improvements in match rates.**



**Debra Cleaver**  
Founder & CEO  
VoteAmerica

better price. The combined improvements in data accuracy and process efficiency quickly resulted in a positive return on investment for VoteAmerica.

In only a few short months following Smarty's implementation, VoteAmerica processed over 4.2 million address lookups using Smarty's tools, ensuring that eligible voters were accurately matched with their state registration databases.

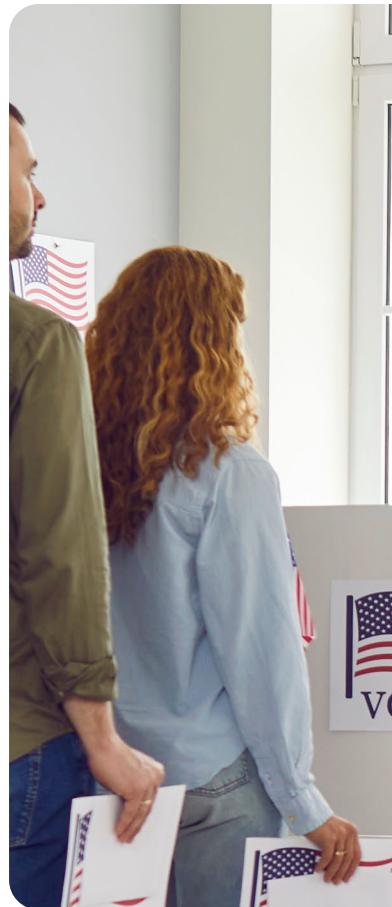
Debra Cleaver emphasized the impact of Smarty's technology, saying, "We're confident that we've made our voter verification tool as accurate as possible. Any remaining issues are due to how states store their data, not our address matching. We love Smarty."

We love VoteAmerica, too, Debra.

## Conclusion

VoteAmerica's partnership with Smarty has enhanced their ability to deliver accurate, real-time voter information. By streamlining address entry, reducing matching errors, and improving data accuracy, VoteAmerica has ensured that millions of Americans can easily participate in elections. Their ongoing collaboration with Smarty ensures that they'll continue offering the best possible service to voters nationwide.

Smarty helped VoteAmerica achieve their goal of increasing voter turnout through more accurate, simplified address data entry.



## Questions?

Learn more at [Smarty.com](https://Smarty.com)

**smarty**

