2016 Presidential Election

Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan
2016 Presidential Election
Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan

Presentation Outline

Part I
- Vision/Mission/Values/Communication Statement
- Legal Requirements
- Our Approach and Role
- Your Time, Your Voice, Your Vote!
- Communication Goals for the 2016 Presidential Election
- Message and Materials

Part II
- Direct Mail and Advertising
- Media Relations
- Internet and Social Media
- Community Outreach

Part III
- Launch Event
Vision

On behalf of the people of Montgomery County, Maryland, we proudly conduct elections with accuracy, integrity and dignity.

Mission

Our mission is to:

☑ Provide the opportunity and the means for participation in the election process;
☑ Be effective, efficient and responsive to customer needs through continuous improvement;
☑ Achieve open communication through teamwork and a spirit of goodwill;
☑ Support educational and training opportunities to produce quality work;
☑ Ensure legal requirements are met and applied consistently; and
☑ Work together to pursue and achieve excellence.
We demonstrate and support the following values:

- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Accuracy
- Respect for All
- Ethical Conduct
- Commitment to Customer Service
- Efficiency
Communication Statement

The members and staff of the Montgomery County Board of Elections are dedicated to providing every voter with a quality voting experience.

When a voter walks in the door to an Early Voting Center or a polling place on Election Day, we make sure that they are greeted by a team of dedicated citizens who have been trained to provide outstanding customer service.

Throughout the year, we are passionate about educating voters about where, when and how they may register to vote and cast their ballot. Our core team of 28 full-time employees relies on dozens of temporary employees, hundreds of Future Vote students, thousands of Election Judges, county government employees, and on candidates, campaign workers, and opinion leaders throughout the county to assist us in spreading the word about voting laws and opportunities to more than 1 million residents of Montgomery County.
A. Plan Development. The State Administrator shall develop a public education program to ensure that the community understands the new system.

B. Minimum Components; Scope.

(1) The program shall include:
   (a) Preelection mailing to all households, with both written and graphic instructions on how to use the system; and
   (b) Instructions in each polling place of how to use the system to vote.

(2) The program shall also be directed at:
   (a) Candidates;
   (b) Campaign groups;
   (c) Schools; and
   (d) News media.
C. Local Implementation and Funding. The local board shall implement and provide the required funding for the public education plan developed by the State Administrator. [emphasis added]

D. Reports.
(1) When requested by the State Administrator, the local board shall report in writing to the State Administrator on the conduct of the public education plan.
(2) The election director shall report to the local board the status of the implementation of the public education plan.
State legal authority

Maryland Code §9-102 (i) (2) requires the State Board of Elections to:

“specify the procedures necessary to assure...a public information program by the local board, at the time of introduction of a new voting system, to be directed to all voters, candidates, campaign groups, schools, and news media in the county”
Our Role in Addressing Voter Turnout

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Election administrators CAN:
- Make the bureaucracy work
- Educate voters about their options to register online, vote early, vote by mail, etc.

Election administrators CAN’T:
- Influence opinions about candidates
- Influence opinions about issues
- Spend lots of $$$

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Americans top reasons for not voting in 2014
"Which of the following was the main reason you did not vote?" Results based on registered voters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too busy</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness/disability</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of town</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgot to vote</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disliked candidates/issues</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration problems</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenient polling place</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation problems</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad weather conditions</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reason</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know or refused</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Bureau
Why don’t Americans vote? We’re “too busy.” The Fix, Scott Clement, July 17, 2015
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Your Time, Your Voice, Your Vote!

This is a continuing theme for the Montgomery County Board of Elections, emphasizing that we are dedicated to serving YOU.

YOU have one vote, which you may choose to cast:

- By mail;
- At one of our Early Voting Centers;
- In person at the Board of Elections; or
- At your polling place on Election Day.

YOU choose when you vote on YOUR TIME.

YOU choose to speak up and make YOUR VOICE heard.
Message Goals

- Embrace our role in fostering voter participation
- Earn voter confidence in the process and the certified election results
- Adapt messages for a diverse community
- Inform voters about new choices
  - Ballots now “look different” at early voting and on Election Day
  - Minimize lines, confusion and delays
- Counter false beliefs
  - Maryland does NOT have Election-Day Registration
  - Bar code on printed ballot does NOT contain personal data
- Explain closed primary
  - Reduce provisional ballots from unaffiliated voters that we can’t count
  - Voters cannot change party, despite same-day registration
- Meet—and manage—expectations for election night reporting
Message Strategy

- Hone message working with SBE
  - State approval required
  - Communications Working Group
  - Unique Spanish language requirement in Montgomery County
- Focus groups to test messages
  - Election Judges
  - Other targeted audiences
- Develop materials using Election Judge branding template
  - Unique to Montgomery County
- Key materials:
  - ‘Montgomery County Votes’ brochure (in development)
  - Website, FAQs, handouts
  - Sample ballot with information on early voting, new voting equipment
## 2016 Presidential Election

### Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ✔ Voter Registration  
  - Don’t wait to register  
  - Closed primary |
| ✔ 21 Days of Voting/  
  4 Ways to Vote |
| ✔ Different messages for:  
  - Early voting  
    - Nine sites (where and when)  
    - ExpressVote  
    - One-stop registration  
  - Vote by mail  
  - In person at the Board’s office  
  - Election Day  
    - Paper ballot |

Continue voting next side
# Communication and Outreach Plan

## 2016 Presidential Election

### Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Dependencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message</td>
<td>21 Days of Voting</td>
<td>SBE content/</td>
<td>21 Days of Voting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VR, early voting, one-stop registration, etc.</td>
<td>approval</td>
<td>VR, early voting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct-to-Public</td>
<td>Direct mail</td>
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<td>Direct mail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>Funding</td>
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<td>Media Relations</td>
<td>Media advisories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Free media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Email</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web/Blog/Social Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Outreach</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Election Judges</td>
<td>Needed</td>
<td>Election Judges</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future Vote</td>
<td></td>
<td>Future Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Sample ballot mailing
- Last drop a week before the voter registration deadline

Brochure to all households
- February 29 - March 4
- Funds for an additional postcard mailing were requested but not approved
  - State will mail postcard to potentially eligible voters

Existing mailings
- Voter Notification Card
- Polling place change notification
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Paid Advertising

The Board requested $130,000 for paid advertising, but received $20,000 as in years past. Current funds support advertising on:

- Comcast
- CBS Radio El-Zol
- Univision
- Washington Post
- Ride On Buses

This year, using funds previously spent on advertising in the Gazette, Board staff propose to purchase targeted advertising on Facebook and Google.
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Money Talks: Who Voters Hear

Campaign media spending—$$billions$$

Election official media spending—thousands

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What were we expecting?

On June 23, the Maryland Board of Public Works rejected a $1.8 million contract with Alex+Tom, partnering with A. Bright Idea, Equals Three Communications and CBS, to provide:

- Market research, analysis and message development;
- Design, production and placement of advertising and PSAs;
- Use of CBS television and radio studios;
- Use of CBS talent and presence at events such as Ravens and Orioles games;
- Strategic media planning and buying;
- Public relations talent to address negative media and any potential crises;
- Communications focused on multicultural and underserved communities;
- In-house usability testing; and
- Award-winning digital talent.
## 2016 Presidential Election

### Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan

**What do we expect?**

State Board personnel are developing:

- Public Education Program Plan
- Outreach Planning Guide
- Communications and Social Media Toolkit

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#MDvotes2016

**COMING SOON!**

Maryland’s new voting system

*This is how Maryland votes.*

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Money Talks: Who Voters Hear

Campaign media spending—$\text{billions}$

Election official media spending—thousands

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Influence the influencers

Campaign media spending—$$billions$$

Election official media spending—thousands

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next side
# 2016 Presidential Election

## Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan

### Media Relations

- **News advisories**
  - Recurring content; dates align with election calendar
  - English and Spanish
  - Modify for strategic messages
  - Measure our reach with GovDelivery

- **Earned media**
  - Launch event w/Leggett, Baker
  - Proactive—pitch news stories, add-on content for political news
  - Leverage opportunities (i.e., Rockville)
  - Teamwork—multiple spokespeople
  - National media as well as local, Spanish language and ethnic media
  - Coordinate with MD, DC, VA
  - Free advertising (Recreation Guide, PSAs)

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### 2014 General Election Media Advisories:

- Election Returns
- In Person Absentee Ballots Still Available
- Know Your Polling Place
- Absentee and Provisional Ballots Granted Follow-up Election
- Vote By Mail Deadline Approaching
- Early Voting Begins October 23
- Faxed Vote Rejection Form
- Check the Mail for Your Printed Sample Ballot
- D.C. Election Judges Needed
- Election Judges Still Needed
- Candidates and Media Briefing on October 23
- Your Turn—Vote Early
- Voter Registration Deadline Approaches
- National Voter Registration Day
- Now Recruiting Election Judges
- Public Testing of Voting Equipment
- Familiarize Yourself with the Touchscreen Voting System
- National Voter Registration Day in September 30
- Alternate Accessible Polling Places Available
- D.C. Election Judges Needed
- Board of Elections Seeks Student Volunteers
- September 30 is National Voter Registration Day
- Election Judge Needed
- Future Votes Program Student High School Juniors and Seniors to Serve as Poll Election Judges
- D.C. Voters Needed to Serve as Polls for the 2014 Subsequent General Election
- Board of Election Needs Student Volunteers
- Montgomery County to Hold Voter Registration Drive at Public Libraries
- Montgomery County Recording Voters to Work at the Polls on Election Day
- Board of Elections Launches Recruitment for the "Future Votes" Program
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#### Internet and Social Media

- **Social media**
  - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- **Measure our reach**
  - GovDelivery, HootSuite tools
- **MontgomeryVotes Blog**
  - Migrate Election Judge Newsletter to blog format
  - Expand content for a broader audience
- **Website**
  - FAQs, information
  - Outreach calendar
  - Early voting dashboard
  - Work with DTS, PIO on design
Community Outreach

- $35K in funding = 2080 hours (~500 events)
- 197 are already on the calendar
  - Festivals, fairs and expositions
  - Job fairs
  - Senior centers
  - Recreation centers
  - Libraries and schools
  - Civic associations and clubs
  - New citizen events

- Work with SBE Voter Outreach Coordinator
- Spread the word through partnerships, traditional and social media
- Measure our reach
  - Map of events and participation
Community Outreach

Support from Montgomery County
- Work with PIO, MCPL, REC, HHS, etc.
- Advisory Boards and Commissions
- Office of Community Partnerships
- HR liaisons, MCGEO, etc.

Election Judge Ambassadors
- Ongoing recruitment activities
- Email communication
- Special events and training

Future Vote Ambassadors
- 55K+ volunteer hours since 2004
- Distribute fliers, leaflets
- Parent relationships–PTAs, etc.
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Community Outreach

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Outreach Launch

- National Voter Registration Day – September 23 (11am?)

- Proposed Event for both Montgomery and Prince George’s Boards
  - Proposed calendar item for Leggett and Baker
  - Proposed location Riderwood Village (precinct for both counties)
    - Takoma Park, White Oak or Prince George’s alternatives

- Opportunity
  - Number of people, demonstrate paper and accessibility features
  - Local story for television, radio, print, Spanish language media
  - Tie into National Voter Registration Day

- Threat
  - Pope Francis visit to Washington, D.C., September 22-23
  - Yom Kippur September 23
  - Shifting dates for voting equipment

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Outreach Launch

- Also on National Voter Registration Day – September 23
  - Leaflet with MoCo brochure at Metro, MARC stations
  - Work with advocacy groups on ad in Washington Post Express
  - Media interview availability
  - Coordinate regional efforts in MD, DC, VA
- Voter outreach events
  - Postcards to households near event
  - Email to Election Judges about each event
  - Visit locations once September-December, again after January
  - High school voter registration November-December
  - Opportunity on website to sign up to request Demonstration Team at an event
- Encourage partners to launch efforts on September 23
END OF BALLOT

Be sure to review your ballot selections

Questions?