WINNING YOUNG VOTERS
Targeting and Turning Out America’s Largest Voting Bloc

WWW.ROCKTHEVOTE.COM
"The truth of the matter is that every four years – as sure as a sunset – stories appear about a surge of interest among younger voters . . . typically predicting a jump in turn-out that will benefit one campaign or another. It rarely turns out to be true."


“They appear to be terminally stoned on apathy”

AND WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE THINKING

1. Young people don’t vote.

2. They are too hard to find.

3. If I do find them and they vote, they won’t vote for me.
BUT YOUNG VOTERS ARE WORTH THE INVESTMENT

• By 2012, more than 60 percent of the 95 million-strong Millennial generation will be of voting age. That’s 57 million young voters!
• By the end of this decade, Millennials will account for more than one-third (36 percent) of US adults.

IT’S A MYTH THAT YOUNG PEOPLE DON’T VOTE
YOUNG PEOPLE VOTE!

In 2008…

• More people under the age of 30 voted than those over the age of 65.

• 83% of registered 18- to 24-year olds voted.

[Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and CIRCLE]
AND PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG VOTERS IS ON THE RISE...

[Source: Chris Kennedy]
• In 2004, 120 million people voted in the presidential election…
  Young people accounted for 17% of the electorate with 20.4 million voters.

• In 2008, 130 million people voted in the presidential election…
  Young people accounted for 18% of the electorate with 23.4 million voters.

THAT’S 10 MILLION NEW VOTERS IN ONE ELECTION CYCLE – 3 MILLION OF WHICH WERE YOUNG VOTERS.
IT’S A MYTH THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE HARD TO FIND
WE KNOW WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE

- Young people congregate in large numbers in person in high schools, on college campuses, at concerts and cultural events, and in urban neighborhoods.
- They are online and on their mobile devices.
AND FURTHER...
WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE:

VOTER REGISTRATION

- Only 59% of eligible voters aged 18-24 are registered.

[Sources: U.S. Census Bureau]
IT’S A MYTH THAT YOUNG PEOPLE WON’T VOTE FOR YOU
YOUNG PEOPLE WILL VOTE FOR YOU...

IF YOU REACH OUT!

Young people are receptive to voter contact:

- Door-to-door canvassing
- Vote pledges
- Phone calls
- Text messaging

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OUR GOAL
TURN A CYCLE OF MUTUAL NEGLECT

Candidates don’t target young voters.

Fewer young people vote.

INTO A CYCLE OF MULTIPLE RE-ELECTS

Candidates target young voters.

More young people vote.
OUR APPROACH:

• Prioritize Voter Registration Efforts
• Go Where Young People Go
• Make Politics (and campaigns) Relevant
VOTER REGISTRATION IS KEY

• Voter registration remains the largest barrier to youth participation

• But statistics prove that if they are registered, young people vote!

You can expand your base by registering new young voters and collecting information in real-time.
VOTER REGISTRATION IN YOUTH-DENSE AREAS

- Find young people and run drives in youth-dense and high-traffic areas like bars, clubs, theaters, transit centers, barber shops, churches, fairs, malls, festivals, concerts, outdoor movies, dorms, classrooms, and sporting events.
ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION

Registering voters online should be a major piece of any voter registration efforts as well.

**Learn more and sign up for Rock the Vote’s FREE online voter registration tool at: www.rockthevote.com/partner**
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ONLINE AND USE SOCIAL MEDIA

- 95% of 18- to 34-year olds are online
- 86% of users are active in social networks
- More than half of young users of Facebook check it daily or multiple times a day. For Twitter, one-third of users check daily or several times each day.

[Sources: Pew Research Center 2010; eMarketer]
INTERNET USAGE AND DEPENDENCE

US Social Network Users Ages 18-34, 2010-2013
millions and % of internet users ages 18-34

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Social Network Users</th>
<th>% of Internet Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>89%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Internet users ages 18-34 who use social networks via any device at least once per month
Source: eMarketer, Feb 2011

Personal Engagement with Social Networking According to US Social Network Users, by Generation, Spring 2010
index*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I don't access my social network sites, I feel like I'm out of touch</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking is an important part of my everyday life</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Interactions on social network sites are as meaningful as those that are in person</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Among those who visited a social network site in the past 30 days;
index basis=100 and represents the average social network visitor
Source: GfK MRI, “Survey of the American Consumer” as cited in press release, Feb 1, 2011

www.eMarketer.com
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ONLINE AND USE SOCIAL MEDIA

– Young people spend an average of 7 or 8 hours a day with media, but only 3 minutes are spent reading newspapers, half of what it was in 2004.

– The majority of all young smart phone owners use their devices to get news and 46% use Twitter.

[Source: Pew Research Center 2010]
YOUNG PEOPLE USE THEIR MOBILE PHONES

• 96% of Americans have a mobile phones, and 50% have smart phones
• Highest mobile phone and mobile web usage is among Millennials
• 18-24 year olds send an average of 1,640 texts per month

[Sources: eMarketer; Q1 2011 Nielsen Report on Teen Media Usage]
In 2010 the Internet passed TV as the main news source for those under 30: 64% say the Internet is their main news source, up from just 34% in 2007.

Only a third of young people get their news from cable TV, and that number is dropping every year. Even fewer watch broadcast news.

[Source: Pew Research Center 2010]
YOU HAVE A CHOICE FOR VOTER CONTACT!
(A) Long-time voter: doesn’t need to register to vote because he’s lived in the same house for decades, checks his mail regularly, watches the local news, has missed a few midterm elections but no major national elections, and has voted for candidates of the same party since the first or second time he voted.

OR

(B) New voter: just moved to a new address, needs to be registered to vote, streams TV on his computer, gets his news online, spends a big part of his day on his cell phone, needs to know where to vote, open to persuasion.
YOUR CHOICE FOR VOTER CONTACT

Option A: Change the mind of a long-time voter with paid TV and mail.

Option B: Register and do voter contact using phones, canvasses, text messages and online ads.
IF YOU PRIORITIZE B...

Then, you will see that marginal effort and outreach will have exponential effects.

For example, the increase in young turnout from 2004-2008 was 2 percentage points.

When you look at the raw numbers of the increase, the impact of the youth vote is clear.
WE HAVE SOME HELPFUL TIPS TO MAKE YOUR CAMPAIGN EVEN MORE SUCCESSFUL WITH YOUNG VOTERS!
EMBRACE SOCIAL MEDIA

• The point is to interact, so become part of the online community. You have to feed the networks – give, don’t just ask.
• Tweet and update your Facebook status regularly. Ask questions, post interesting thoughts and links, show your human side.
USE FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

• Retweet – and reply to – young people. Follow and friend them. “Like” local teams.
• Use #hashtags and post pictures.
FOCUS PAID MEDIA ON TELEVISION, RADIO, AND ONLINE

• Run ads where young voters will hear and see them – increasingly that’s online
• 84% of Millennial internet users watch online video on a monthly basis
• 63% of Millennial internet users watch on a weekly basis
TAILOR TRADITIONAL TACTICS FOR THE DEMOGRAPHIC

1. Door-to-door canvassing
2. Vote pledges
3. Phone calls
4. Text messaging

They work, when done right!
Door-to-door canvassing can boost turnout 7 to 12 percentage points among young voters.

[Sources: Green, Gerber and Nickerson 2003; Green and Gerber 2004; Nickerson, Friedrichs, and King 2006 Michelson 2006-07]
TIPS FOR DOOR-TO-DOOR CANVASSING

• Keep young voters on your walk list!

• Match your canvassers with your targets. Make sure it is peer-to-peer.

• Use door hangers, especially in youth-dense precincts where voters may have moved.
Reminding people of their pledge to vote can boost turnout by 10 to 14 percentage points.

[Source: Green and CIRCLE, 2004; Michelson, Bedolla, McConnell 2009]
TIPS FOR VOTE PLEDGES

• Get people to commit to vote (for you!) and capture their information.

• Mail pledge cards filled out by the voter back to the voter prior to Election Day.

• Bonus: Helps update data that may not be right in the voter file.
Combining a pledge to vote – either in person or on the phone – with a follow-up GOTV call can increase turnout by 11 percentage points.
Live conversational phone banks can increase turnout by 2 to 5 percentage points.

[Sources: Green 2004; Nickerson 2005; Nickerson 2006; Nickerson, Friedrichs, and King 2006; Nickerson 2007; Gerber and Green 2008; Panagopolous 2008; Nickerson and Rogers 2009]
TIPS FOR PHONE CALLS

• No GOTV robocalls. Call young voters with real people.

• Timing is important. Most effective beginning 8 or 9 days before the election and running the last week before the election.
A: Hi, this is [name], a volunteer with [candidate]. Tomorrow is Election Day and our last chance to send [candidate] back to Congress to fight for [state]. We're counting on you to vote. [Candidate], too. The polls are open from 7 AM to 7 PM. **What time of the day are you planning to vote tomorrow?** [Pause for response] Great! Thanks for being a voter!
B: Hi, this is [name] with [campaign]. I’m calling because official records show that you voted in the 2008 election. We're expecting a lot of people to vote in this election, too, so it's critical that you vote to make your voice heard. Have you thought about when you are going to vote this year? [Pause for response] Great! Again, it's really important that you and your neighbors all vote this year.
PHONE CALLS
SAMPLE SCRIPT 3

C: Hi, this is [name] and I'm a volunteer here in [city] with [campaign]. I am calling because Official records show that you voted in a previous election. Since you are the kind of person who votes, we wanted to remind you about the election on Nov 2nd. We have been calling people in your neighborhood and it looks like a lot of people will be voting. Can we count on your vote for [candidate]? If Yes I have that your polling place is at [POLLING PLACE]. On Election Day, your polling place is open from 6:00 AM TO 6:00 PM.
PHONE CALL BEST PRACTICES

• Make sure you ask them to vote.
• Ask individuals to make a plan for getting to the polls.
• Give them information about where and when to vote.
• Remind voters of past commitment to vote for those who have pledged to vote.
• Remind them that voting records are public.
• Don’t do everything in one call!
GOTV text messages sent the day before the election increase turnout by 3 to 4 percentage points.

[Source: Kennedy and Mayorga 2008]
MOBILE BEST PRACTICES

• Create compelling, audience-relevant *prizing* for mobile contests.
• Look for data capture opportunities. Encourage fans to join mobile list for *exclusive* SMS content.
• Create fewer, well-constructed mobile campaigns rather than several smaller, insignificant activations.
• Promote mobile activities. **No promotion = no participation.**

[Source: Mozes, Inc.]
WARNING:

• Don’t use direct mail.
  – If you do use it, emphasize past vote history.
• Don’t buy email lists!
• Don’t use robocalls for GOTV.
• Don’t be phony. Just be yourself.

[Sources: Nickerson 2007; Gerber, Green, and Larimer 2008]
NEW VOTERS ARE GOOD VOTERS
SO KEEP THEM ON YOUR TARGET LISTS!

Most states’ new registrants voted at the same rate or higher than all registered voters in the 2008 election.

• If you are using only vote history to determine your walk and call lists, you will inadvertently cut out young and new voters, who not surprisingly don’t have voting track records.

• Also, vote propensity models put nearly all new registrants in the bottom half of the distribution, centered around a score of 25 out of 100.
YOUNG VOTERS = OPPORTUNITY

• 12,500 young people turn 18 every day in America

• Voters under the age of 30 will comprise 24% of the overall electorate in 2012.

It’s a missed opportunity if you don’t invest in young voters!

[Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and CIRCLE]
For more information, contact Rock the Vote:

202-719-9910

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