

Presented by



ClickZ

About ClickZ

ClickZ is the largest resource of interactive marketing news, information, commentary, advice, opinion, research, and reference in the world, online or off-. From search to social, technology to trends, our coverage is expert, exclusive, and in-depth.

ClickZ Politics & Advocacy

ClickZ Politics & Advocacy covers the latest news on how political campaigns, nonprofits, advocacy groups, and other organizations use online advertising, social media, and other digital platforms to spread their messages, persuade voters, influence legislators, get out the vote, and - of course - raise money.

Follow us on Twitter: [@ClickZPolitics](https://twitter.com/ClickZPolitics)

About the Author, Kate Kaye

Few people can say they've followed digital political campaigns since 2002, but Kate Kaye is one. Kate is a trusted source on the topic, discussing it at conferences and in interviews for television, radio, print, and digital media outlets. She is the author of "Campaign '08: A Turning Point for Digital Media," and in her role as senior news editor at ClickZ, Kate created the publication's Politics & Advocacy section, dedicated to covering digital political and advocacy campaigns.



Follow Kate on Twitter: [@lowbrowkate](https://twitter.com/lowbrowkate)

Digital Political Campaigns 201: Video Advertising

by Kate Kaye

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3** The Rise of Political Video Advertising
- 4** Think Outside the Web-as-ATM Box
- 5** Video Persuades, and Much More
- 7** Video Ad Formats and What They're Good for
- 8** How Much Does This Stuff Cost?
- 9** Video Ad Glossary
- 10** Key Video Ad Metrics Terms
- 10** Video Ad Format Standards
- 11** Political Video Ad Case Studies
- 14** Video Ad Networks
- 16** Other Video Ad Technologies

THE RISE OF POLITICAL VIDEO ADVERTISING

Political campaigns have begun to recognize the value of video. Not only can they use it to persuade voters through emotive sound and imagery, they can combine influential messages with immediate calls to action, and extend the reach of their television spots.

Use of online video advertising already is growing by leaps and bounds among corporate brands. The Interactive Advertising Bureau reported that digital video ad spending rose more than 42 percent to \$891 million in the first six months of this year; that momentum should continue as people increase video consumption online, on their phones, and on tablet devices.

Now, political advertisers are catching on. From Republicans Dino Rossi and Roy Blunt to Democrats Dan Malloy and President Barack Obama—political campaigns use video ads to educate and sway voters, and to tailor messages to important primary and battleground state voters.

GOP presidential hopeful Michele Bachmann was among the earliest online video advertisers in the 2012 cycle: Her campaign ran pre-roll video ads to help push supporters to the Iowa Straw Poll. She won.

Online video advertising as a key component of sophisticated electoral campaigns really gained steam during the midterms. In the weeks leading into the 2010 elections, candidates including Wisconsin Republican Ron Johnson and Democrat Tom Barrett ran in-banner video ads. And Ohio Republican John Kasich and Washington state tax advocacy group Defeat 1098 used in-stream video ads, often referred to as pre-roll ads.

Digital consulting firm Targeted Victory, for example, said its political clients had spent between 65 and 75 percent of their 2010 online budgets on video ads, and some campaigns spent as much as

85 percent of their online budgets on them. In fact, the number of candidate campaigns and advocacy groups running in-stream ad campaigns on YouTube doubled between October and November 2010, according to site owner Google.

“If done right, an online video ad buy is similar to a cable buy—and you have a lot more information about your impressions than cable,” said Josh Koster, partner at Democratic digital consulting firm Chong and Koster.

While there are several reasons political campaigns are buying more video advertising, data is a big one. Though few if any digital media consultants would suggest replacing TV advertising with video advertising, when it comes to message testing and tracking—and just plain understanding audience response better—video ads have TV beat.

“Now we’re gaining information rather than just pushing out a TV message,” explained JB Britten, digital media director at Smart Media Group, who handled online ads for Meg Whitman’s 2010 California Gubernatorial bid. Whitman’s camp spent \$3 million on digital ads including video advertising.

In many cases, political advertisers see buying video ads as a way to extend television buys, particularly when there are limited GRPs available in an important market, or to reach elusive voter demographics who spend little time watching live TV.

Television advertising is integral to what’s taking place in online video. As election day nears, more money flows towards online video ads, since desirable TV inventory runs out, particularly in areas where several election races are taking place. Political advertisers move their television ads online, streaming them before and during video content on YouTube, through ad networks, on news sites, and inside banner ads.

“Buying video advertising should be thought of as if you’re buying a few extra GRPs with your Internet ad,” said Eli Kaplan, founding partner at Rising Tide Interactive, a Democratic digital media strategy firm.

As political advertisers boost their interest in online video advertising, providers continue to

introduce new capabilities specially designed for the political market. For instance, CampaignGrid, which employs several data sets including the Republican National Committee’s voter data to target voters online, recently partnered with video ad network TidalTV to enable multi-sourced targeting for in-stream and in-banner video advertising.

THINK OUTSIDE THE WEB-AS-ATM BOX

Internet advertising is for fundraising, right?

Well, sure, some forms of online advertising—think search and standard display or banner ads—work very well when it comes to generating donations. Yet, video ads should not necessarily be thought of as fundraising tools; they are much more akin to television and radio advertising—but with interactivity, tracking capabilities, and in many cases, superior targeting.

“Think of it like you think of TV and radio and start from there, rather than starting with online as a fundraising medium,” said Jeff Jacobs, president and creative director

at NextGen Persuasion, a democratic political consulting firm.

“Think of video as another TV out there,” he added. “It turns on its head what most people think of online advertising.”

What makes video advertising unique is its ability to incorporate calls to action and enable supporters to easily respond. So, not only can campaigns target a persuasive message to voters, they can fulfill secondary goals like generating email sign-ups, helping voters find polling places—and, yes—raising cash.



VIDEO PERSUADES, AND MUCH MORE

Political digital consultants from both sides of the aisle interviewed for this resource expressed a wide array of opinions about what types of video ad formats work best, and how best to buy them. But they tend to agree on one thing. NextGen's Jacobs put it simply:

"At this point in time and probably through 2012, online video is best used for persuasion or GOTV."

Persuasion and Improving Message Impact

We've already discussed the benefit of online video ads when it comes to extending a TV buy. Just like television ads, video ads are typically used by political advertisers for persuasion. Corporate brand advertisers already get it, and a Nielsen IAG study showing that commercial video ads improve the impact of TV ad campaigns can be applied to political advertisers.

"Specifically, online video ads help to reinforce and strengthen the impact of a traditional TV campaign. Including online video advertising in the media mix and synchronizing with TV greatly improves all key brand metrics, especially message recall," noted the company in its 2010 study measuring the impact of video ads shown during full online episodes of television programs.

When comparing a television-only ad campaign to a TV plus premium online video campaign, Nielsen found that general ad recall rose 18 percent for the TV/web campaign—from 44 percent TV-only to 52 percent TV/web combined. Message recall was also lifted 53 percent from 19 to 29 percent.

"Video ads run during online full-episode TV programs yield deeper brand impact than corresponding on-air TV ads, with the difference most pronounced among younger viewers age 13-34," stated Nielsen.

GOTV

Campaigns often use video advertising for Get-Out-The-Vote efforts in the final days of an election.

The day before the 2010 midterms, the Democratic National Committee spent \$2.5 million to aim highly-targeted online GOTV ads to key groups the party needed to come out strong for Democratic candidates. Included in its online ad mix were 30-second in-stream video spots placed on sites like Hulu. They featured a motivational message from President Obama, and were accompanied by display ads telling viewers to "Find your polling location and vote on November 2."

Traditionally, campaigns don't do GOTV until the last few weeks or even days. But what if they took advantage of the web's targeting power to keep base supporters engaged and active throughout the long campaign season?

The focus on persuading undecided voters can sometimes alienate the all-important yet sometimes neglected base. "Those are your donors and volunteers," said Jacobs. To keep them fired up, he suggested, campaigns can target supporters based on age and location with video ads earlier in the race.

VOTERS OPTING OUT OF LIVE TV

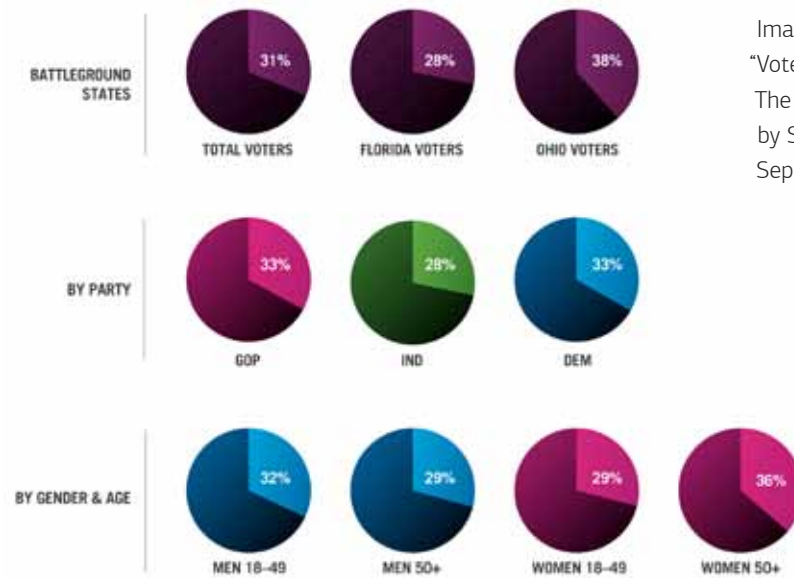


Image from
 “Voters Going Off
 The Grid,” published
 by Say Media,
 September 2011

Message Testing and Tracking

Unlike TV, online video ads allow campaigns to garner valuable information about how key audiences respond to their ads. Smart Media Group’s Britten has used campaign sites or Facebook pages to post multiple video ad creatives, then track the number of times each ad has been shared in order to gauge popularity of each message.

In the past, he said, that’s led to real video ad buys. “I’ve seen campaigns then say, ‘OK, we’re willing to pay to run that video ad online.’”

Live TV Use Is Dwindling Among Voters Across Age Groups and Parties

As media consumption patterns shift, TV could lose its place as the main forum for persuasive political ads. According to a September 2011 bipartisan study, 31 percent of all likely voters don’t watch live TV. Instead, they watch programs on DVR during which they may skip through commercial

breaks, or they watch TV programming online or in mobile environments.

The same is true of likely voters in important battleground states and demographic groups, said the study. The research was conducted by video ad firm Say Media and co-authored by Republican digital agency Targeted Victory and Democratic digital agency Chong and Koster, along with pollsters on both sides of the aisle. In Florida, 28 percent of likely voters surveyed said they don’t watch live television. And in the state of Ohio, 38 percent of likely voters aren’t consuming live TV.

A third of both Republicans and Democrats surveyed said they don’t watch live television, as did 28 percent of Independents. The “Voters Going Off The Grid” study also showed that nearly 90 percent of those surveyed regularly skip ads when watching on their DVRs. The study relies on data gathered on 800 likely voters and an additional 300 in Ohio and Florida.

VIDEO AD FORMATS AND WHAT THEY'RE GOOD FOR

Video ads essentially come in two formats: in-stream and in-banner. In-stream ads typically come in the form of 15- or 30-second spots that appear before or during video content as pre-roll or mid-roll ads. In-banner ads are display ads that feature video content that either plays automatically or is user-initiated; they come in standard display ad sizes or as expandable ad units.

Republican digital agency Targeted Victory often uses pre-roll and expandable ads to push out campaign messages to voters who need to be persuaded.

“Our basic belief is that the base and persuasion audiences consume information in very different ways,” said the company’s founder Michael Beach. The base tends to be more proactive and easier to reach via the campaign site, Facebook page, email, Promoted Videos on YouTube, or through ads on relevant news and opinion sites. However, he explained, “The persuasion audience is not as proactive and they require that we take the message to them in order to get their attention.”

Both formats “allow us to syndicate this message out across thousands of sites and programs, and lowers the barrier to entry to consuming our content,” he continued. “That is the other important issue that I think that people miss online. Persuadable voters don’t want to click around your web site looking for content. We need to put the

message directly in front of them and then allow them to go on with their normal day.”

Eric Frenchman, chief Internet strategist at Republican consulting firm Connell Donatelli, uses pre-roll ads throughout election campaigns. He did so recently to target ads for Michele Bachmann to Iowa Republicans leading up to the Straw Poll. But when it comes to mobilizing voters, he adds in-banner to the mix. “I would and do use in-banner video ads for GOTV activity,” he said, noting that he often runs in-banner video ads on local news sites towards the last week of a campaign when he believes voters are seeking information about candidates.

Smart Media Group’s Britten has used in-banner video ads to display several videos in one ad unit. “It was five or six videos, and users were actually able to scroll through them and choose the videos they wanted to watch,” he said.

In-banner video “can definitely be a good way to supplement your buy,” said RisingTide’s Kaplan, particularly when targeted pre-roll inventory runs out. However, he and others warn that, unlike with pre-roll ads, people may not activate sound in in-banner video. “There’s a good chance the user isn’t necessarily going to click to get sound,” said Kaplan, suggesting that the video ad creative itself should be designed to draw attention without audio.

HOW MUCH DOES THIS STUFF COST?

Video ad prices vary greatly depending on factors such as inventory availability and degree of targeting. In general, they're cheaper than TV but pricier than your standard animated display ad.

According to discussions with sources who buy video ads, pre-roll spots on YouTube typically run around \$10 CPM, or cost-per-thousand impressions. Pre-roll impressions in ad networks can go from around \$8 CPM to \$15, or higher. Typically, buying direct from website publishers will cost the most—sometimes \$30 CPM or higher.

Remember: the cost goes up as more targeting is layered on. In other words, running a pre-roll ad in the entire state of Wisconsin will cost less than targeting specific ad creative to specific targets in the state. Also, because the number of impressions is reduced as targeting is enhanced, reach and frequency decreases as more targeting is added.

"If you're paying more than \$10-15 dollars per thousand, you're getting fleeced," said one political ad buyer. "The places you go to spend your TV money might not always be the best places to buy video ads," suggested the source.

Keep in mind some online ad buyers are more focused on getting the most bang for the fewest

bucks possible, rather than on the quality of content their ads show up next to. Those cost-conscious buyers tend towards targeting audiences through ad networks, while content-concerned buyers are more willing to buy direct and possibly pay more to ensure they show up in premium places against quality content.

"Even though it's more expensive you get exactly the content you want and exactly the audience you want. There's just less room for views getting out on sites that are not of use to you," said Smart Media Group's Britten. When buying direct on a local news site, for instance, "You know you're going to get the best inventory in the correct section," rather than have your ads relegated to community calendar pages or other content sections publishers offer up to ad networks because they are difficult to sell direct.

A campaign could get started with a pre-roll video buy for as little as \$1,000, said Targeted Victory's Beach.

Video ads can be purchased on an impression basis, but also are increasingly available on a cost-per-view or cost-per-engagement basis.

VIDEO AD GLOSSARY

Here's a brief overview of terms you'll need to understand when discussing online video advertising:

Companion Ad

Display or skin ads that are served alongside a video advertisement at the same time for the same advertiser. Though some video ad formats do enable click-through and other interactivity, this is among the most standard means of allowing users to click while watching a video ad online. They typically appear within a video player environment.

In-Banner

These units—typically standard IAB ad sizes—enable users to view videos directly within the ad itself. Often video and audio begins playing only when initiated by the user, but some ad networks and sites automate audio and video.

Mid-Roll

An in-stream video ad that plays at a set point during video content play. It is typically 5- to 30-seconds in length.

Post-Roll

An in-stream video ad that plays after video content ends. It is typically 5- to 30-seconds in length.

Pre-Roll

An in-stream video ad that plays before video content begins. It is typically 5- to 30-seconds in length.

Overlay Ad

Ads that are displayed in the bottom portion of a video player. These clickable ads often appear briefly during a video play, then disappear so as not to disrupt the video entirely. They can be text-based or appear as small banners over video content, and are sometimes used by political advertisers to make their own web video content clickable to a donation or sign-up page.

KEY VIDEO AD METRICS TERMS

Completed Plays

The number of times a video is watched in its entirety when played at normal speed.

GRPs

The jury is still out on whether online video should be measured in Gross Ratings Points, much less how. Several video ad sellers and digital media consultants use proprietary methods for translating traditional TV GRPs to online video ad campaigns.

Time Spent

The amount of seconds, minutes, and hours video is viewed. This metric typically is used to measure the amount of time people watch video on a particular website or ad network.

Unique View

The number of times a video is watched by one individual user.

Video Ad Impression

Like a display ad impression, the number of impressions reflects the number of times a video ad has been served.

Video Completion Rate

Also called view-through rate, this is the average percentage of video ad play time.

VIDEO AD FORMAT STANDARDS

For detailed guidelines, standards, specs, and submission recommendations for video ad formats, download the Interactive Advertising Bureau's Video Ad Format Standards paper in .pdf form here:

<http://www.iab.net/media/file/IAB-Video-Ad-Format-Standards.pdf>

POLITICAL VIDEO AD CASE STUDIES

Campaign:
Dino Rossi for U.S. Senate, 2010

Digital ad agency:
Targeted Victory

Goal:
Persuasion—convince voters that the incumbent was too focused on Washington, D.C.

Target Audience:
Non-supporters

In October 2010, Republican Dino Rossi, candidate for U.S. Senate from Washington, ran expandable video ads targeting key voter segments. The campaign aimed persuasive video ads at audiences outside the typical supporter groups who might be receptive to the message.

The campaign hoped to convince non-supporters that the opponent, Democratic incumbent Patty Murray, did more for Washington, D.C. than the state of Washington.

"We're not targeting a base audience here," explained Targeted Victory's Beach. Political campaigns often aim fundraising and list-building ads at likely supporters. Here, the idea was to persuade people outside the base to vote for Rossi.

"If you're running on RedState in October, you've probably got bigger issues," said Zac Moffatt, then a partner with Targeted Victory, alluding to Republican campaigns running ads on the conservative news site late in an election season.



Campaign:

No on 8 Ballot Initiative, 2010

Digital ad agency:

Chong and Koster

Goal:

Persuasion—Prevent Florida's Amendment 8, involving school class size, from passing.

Target Audience:

Older voters in Broward and Dade counties

In a low-information election in which neither side ran TV spots, No on 8 ran pre-roll video ads in conjunction with Facebook ads, search ads, and other display advertising, as well as direct mail and robocalls. The campaign used contextual and keyword targeting indicating an interest in news, layering on demographic targeting.

According to Koster, No on 8 spent around the same amount of money on each online ad format buy, running 75 million Facebook ad impressions, 10.5 million animated display ad impressions, and 1.7 million 15-second pre-roll video ad impressions. The video ads reached around one in four Internet users in Broward and Dade, which Chong and Koster translates to around 200 GRPs based on reach and exposure.

Only Broward and Dade saw the ads because, "We didn't want to water down impressions too much, so we decided it was more cost-effective to target voters in those counties," said Koster.

While the video ads told the story through a high-impact ad format, the others reinforced the message, he added.

In the end, No on 8 achieved its goal of keeping the amendment under the 60 percent needed to pass. The only two counties in Florida that broke in No on 8's favor were the two in which it ran these paid voter communications.

Campaign:

Dan Malloy for Connecticut Governor, 2010

Digital ad agency:

Global Strategy Group

Goal:

Persuasion, Education, GOTV

Target Audience:

Connecticut voters

Throughout the 2010 primary and general election season, Connecticut Democrat Dan Malloy used video and other types of online ads to educate and persuade voters. In the final days before the election, the campaign's persuasive messaging transitioned to include "Vote Tomorrow" and "Vote Today" calls-to-action.

In those last few days, a renewable energy message dominated Malloy's online ads. "As Governor, I'll invest in green energy to create jobs. I believe Connecticut can take the lead on this new technology," stated Malloy in a video that played inside display units.

According to Michael Bassik, SVP, digital at Global Strategy Group, that video message ran "on more than 50 percent of the campaign's display ad inventory," leading up to election day. More than half of the online video inventory was in-banner, according to Bassik, who said pre-roll also ran on YouTube.

The campaign also used television, direct mail, and radio ads, but Malloy was poised to experiment with online persuasion, rather than focus on more standard online goals of fundraising and sign-ups. Because the candidate qualified for the state's Citizens' Election Program, he was required to abide by certain rules limiting contributions and expenditures, thus limiting his fundraising efforts.

"This is not a token ad buy," said Bassik of the online effort at the time. "This is an ad buy that is part of the campaign's integrated strategy."

VIDEO AD NETWORKS

Adap.tv lets advertisers run video in any ad format, and allows them to choose which sites to run on. The platform can filter publisher types by video quality, content type, and whether or not ads are auto-initiated or user-initiated.

AOL offers in-banner and in-stream video across its own properties as well as throughout its large Advertising.com network. The company's StudioNow service connects advertisers with a network of freelance videographers, and AOL can layer on voter data to target voters by location, voting habits, and other criteria.

BrightRoll provides in-stream, in-banner, and custom video ads for online and mobile environments. The company offers full site disclosure and interactive pre-roll capabilities through a partnership with Innovid.

Hulu offers in-stream, in-banner, pre-content sponsorship messages, branded skins, and interactive in-stream ad formats including ad selection units allowing users to choose which ad they'd like to watch. The network provides content from a wide variety of broadcast and cable TV partners including ABC, NBC, Fox News, HGTV, and more.

Say Media offers video formats including fixed placement, expandable video, full page takeovers, display units with video and rich media components, and mobile and tablet units for iOS and Android platforms. The company sells ads on a cost-per-engagement model, has an in-house creative studio, and requires no rich media serving fees.

SpotXchange sells in-stream, in-banner, and mobile video ads across its network. The company also enables interaction including location search and social media sharing inside in-stream video formats. It sells based on a variety of models including cost-per-engagement, and offers automated video ad optimization.

TidalTV partners with CampaignGrid to enable multi-sourced targeting for in-stream and in-banner video advertising. CampaignGrid matches voter data from the RNC and other sources—along with consumer data showing income, purchase behavior, or other information—with the registration data gathered from its partners. It then strips out personally identifiable information to create segments of likely voters that can be targeted through online ads. Now, it can enable that sophisticated form of targeting for video ads through the TidalTV partnership.

Tremor Video offers a variety of in-banner and in-stream video ad options, including formats for iOS, Android, and BlackBerry mobile platforms. The firm pre-scans videos to ensure ads are served against quality content. Tremor is opening its self-serve measurement platform to all advertisers to gauge video campaign metrics including brand lift across network buys, even when they aren't running ads through Tremor.

ValueClick Media provides in-banner, pre-roll, mobile video, and in-text video formats. The company allows advertisers to retarget video ad viewers who did not take a video ad action through display ads in its network, and can target ads based on real-time favorability data.

YouTube offers in-stream video ad units, and allows campaigns to include interactive overlays on their video content to enable interactivity. Advertisers can choose which videos, channels, or categories they want to run ads against. The company's TrueView product lets viewers choose to continue watching ad content after 5 seconds of play, and advertisers pay only when viewers watch an entire ad, or 30 seconds of an ad. YouTube also offers in-slate ads that play before long-form video content, and allow users to choose to watch either a longer ad before the content, or four 15-second spots intermittently within the content.

YuMe offers in-stream video units and video overlays that allow for a variety of interactivity, simultaneous display ads, branded players skins, and more. Mobile video formats are also available.

OTHER VIDEO AD TECHNOLOGIES

Call2Action offers sharable video units that let people click to "get involved," submit contact information to receive email updates, and share content via Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Blogger, and other platforms. The units can be delivered as standard display ads, shared in a Facebook news feed, and can be updated dynamically across all impressions.

EyeWonder offers in-stream, in-banner, expandable banner ads with video, and custom video ads that incorporate rich media elements. The system also enables interactive overlays and mobile capabilities.

Innovid allows advertisers to integrate interactive elements in their in-stream video ads across several video ad networks and website publishers including Tremor, YuMe, SpotXchange, NBC, Lifetime, Facebook, and many others.

Jivox technology enables interactive video, widgets, and social sharing that can be delivered as in-stream, in-banner, and mobile or tablet units across operating systems and platforms.

Mixpo provides interactive video ads in in-stream, in-banner, and mobile environments including tablets and apps. Campaigns can include sign-up forms to build supporter lists, poll voters about issues, enable video sharing on Facebook and Twitter, and run several spots in a single online unit to test or sequence a set of messages. The company offers media buying and placement services tailored to the political market.

SocialVibe serves shareable video-enabled ad units featuring interactivity such as polls in social networks, apps, and social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Zynga.

Engage Voters with Mixpo SmartVideo™

The Comprehensive Video Advertising Solution

- ▶ **Simple:** Turn your tv ads into online video ads in minutes—it's easy.
- ▶ **Engaging:** Use interactive elements to register volunteers, drive donations and more.
- ▶ **Relevant:** Deliver messages specific to voters by city, zip, gender, etc.
- ▶ **Flexible:** Publish your ads once and they work anywhere online— mobile, tablet and PC.
- ▶ **Insightful:** Get real-time data to gauge performance—just like poll results.



Mixpo SmartVideo for Advocacy + Political expands your campaign's reach and frequency while fostering direct voter interaction to increase awareness, favorability, donations, and votes. We can help you extend and empower your campaign online. We supported more than 70 political campaigns in the 2010 season alone.



Mixpo is a proud AAPC member, AAPC 2011 Pollie Award winner and IAB member.