

COLUMNS

## How political ad campaigns should be positioned

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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

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If the 2008 presidential race was the first social media election, 2016 will be our first mobile election. Smartphones have become the screen of choice for a majority of American adults a trend that is only gaining momentum.

In 2011, as President Obama was gearing up for his re-election campaign, approximately one in three U.S. adults owned a smartphone. Just four years later, that number has doubled.

According to Pew Research, the percentage of registered voters using smartphones to keep up with politics is up from 13 percent in 2010 to 28 percent in 2014.

Television viewership, the traditional medium for political advertising, continues to fall every year, while digital ad spending is on the rise (Moffet Nathanson Research, September).

Just as the digital advertising industry makes adjustments to keep up with shrinking screens, political advertising must do the same.

Political ad spending is expected to be the highest in 2016 that it has ever been, at \$11.4 billion, with digital media breaking the \$1 billion mark for the first time, according to Borrell Associates.

The mobile surge in recent years has changed the dynamic of American politics, and next year's presidential candidates will need to take advantage of mobile advertising to win.

Here are the elements of mobile that are going to have a direct effect on how political advertising campaigns should be positioned.

### 1. Geo-targeting

Advertising on mobile comes with a powerful feature that surpasses what TV and desktops can offer GPS technology.

Campaigns can take advantage of customized messaging with mobile advertising by tailoring content to align with voter interest trends in different geographic locations.

Geo-targeting can get as granular as sending a personalized ad to all members attending a specific rally.

## 2. Collection of Big Data

As users increasingly look to their smartphones for news, campaigns will use browsing, purchase and location data to targeting specific voting groups with relevant content.

Mobile ads have the capacity to be customized in a way that will make them more cost effective and efficient.

## 3. Measurability

Mobile advertising offers many measurability advantages beyond the social media of past elections.

While social media played an undeniably integral role in 2008's election, most of the focus was on social listening and conversation. Most social ad tools had yet to be invented.

Measurement tools on mobile have evolved in recent years, and 2016's candidates will be able to track ad performance and optimize their campaigns on the fly.

## 4. Intimacy

Studies have shown that users feel more personally connected to brands they interact with on their smartphones than on desktops and laptops. This is especially true with younger voters.

According to Google, millennials are twice as likely to feel a sense of personal connection to mobile ads than TV ads.

Candidates must take full advantage of this by heavying up on mobile advertising to establish a relationship with their voters.

According to Pew Research, being connected to a campaign through mobile translates to increased political activity. These users are more likely to encourage their friends to vote or attend an event than users who follow campaigns in other ways.

TWO PREVIOUS presidential campaigns are remembered as revolutionizing American politics through their use of new mediums: John F. Kennedy with television in 1960 and President Obama with the Internet.

Next year's presidential candidates will not be able to win by sticking to the same tactics that worked in in the past.

Our next president will be the candidate who most effectively recognizes and leverages the power of mobile.

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