



Fenton GOTV Communicator Toolkit

Research: Audience Mobilization

Finding Your Audiences Online

Transitioning traditional, in-person tactics over to digital was one of the first things campaigns, nonprofits and progressive organizations did once the COVID-19 pandemic hit. This wasn't an easy feat, and many still are playing catch up to achieve the level of engagement and connection that in-person tactics receive.

For the California Community Foundation and their 2020 Census project, Fenton immediately and successfully transitioned all in-person tactics and community based events to be fully online. By optimizing your audience targeting, testing your messaging and communicating on the right channels, you'll be able to effectively reach and engage your audience up until election day.

Top Tactics/Message Frameworks

- **Digital Targeting for Ads:** Digital advertising has come a long way, and there are now hundreds of ways to target different audiences based on demographics, interest areas and location. Create personas based on which audiences you want to receive your ad, some sample questions to get you started are:
 - What age range am I trying to reach?
 - Where is my audience located?
 - Is English the best language to reach my audience?
 - What is my audience interested in?
 - Which organizations/people does my target audience follow?
 - What keywords/topics are my target audience searching for?
- **Digital Targeting for Ads:** Even without a paid budget, it's still important you know who you're communicating to and the overall goals of each audience you're trying to reach. Use Google Analytics for your website, Twitter analytics and Facebook Page and Instagram insights to learn about your audiences and what content is the most popular on your page.

After that, make sure you're crafting your digital tactics so they're useful for your target audiences and will be positively received on the platform you use to promote them. For example, if your Twitter audience skews more towards older community members, perhaps use that purely for important updates and information regarding the election, perhaps in a toolkit form. If your Instagram audience is more Gen Z/Millennial, you might want to use fun graphics that are easy to share with their groups of friends. And remember: always follow where the data leads you!

Social Pressure

Tap into FOMO. In your GOTV messaging, applying a good amount of social pressure will be necessary to get the job done and see an impact in voter turnout. [A 2017 study](#) found that the more social pressure GOTV campaign communication exerted, the higher voter turnout was in the following primary election. In this study, highly effective "Neighbor mailers" were sent out which included the voting records of the recipient household compared to their neighbors on the block and promised a follow up mailer post-election to show updated voter turnout.



Research: Audience Mobilization Continued

Strong language works, but you might want to shy away from shaming tactics. Sure, they work in the short term, but with a potential cost in the long term. We should all be using social pressure to encourage audiences to make informed voting a lifelong behavior.

Top Tactics/Message Frameworks

- Neighbor mailers/emails showing their voting record
- Thank you notes, thanking the recipient for voting in previous elections
- “Everyone is doing it” messages emphasizing that many people do vote

Make a Plan

President Trump is now threatening the U.S. Postal Service by opposing election aid to states and a postal service bailout. It's clearer with every passing day that voters need to make a plan to early vote by mail or safely go to the polls during early voting or on election day.

A [2010 study](#) shows that when voters create a plan, it can increase turnout by 9.1 percentage points. We know this tactic works, so incorporate “make a plan” tactics, messaging and CTAs wherever you can in your communication plan — and remember to keep up the pressure until election day.

Top Tactics/Message Frameworks

- **Social Media:** Leverage social media to act as a persuasion tool to encourage your audience to make a plan. Bring your audience on a journey by promoting vote-by-mail information, general voter education tools and “make a plan” style content and landing pages. With every post, you'll want to include a visual or link to keep your audience engaged!
- **Advanced Communication Tools:** Use communication tools such as SMS outreach and email programs to harness more engagement from your audience. Email and text are used widely across the U.S., so these are proven to be great tools when encouraging your audience to make a plan to vote.
- **Messaging**
 - How will you vote: by mail or in person?
 - Are you registered to vote at your current address?
 - Do you know how vote-by-mail works?
 - If you are voting by mail, do you know the deadline to postmark your ballot?
 - What is my audience interested in?
- **Call-to-actions:**
 - Check your voter registration
 - Check your vote-by-mail guidelines in your state
 - Make a voting plan – share this with 3 friends that you want to help hold you accountable!
 - Apply for your mail-in ballot!
 - Share voter education materials with 3 friends or family members to keep up to date on the latest election information

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