#Fail: The Misuse of Social Media in the 2012 US Presidential Campaign

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May 2012

socialsphere™

Overview 1

Politics and Technology - The Early Days 2

The Development of the Social Web 3

Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010 4

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Overview

#Fail: The Misuse of Social Media in the 2012 US Presidential Campaign

- **US Politics Has Been a Driving Force Behind the Adoption of Communication Technology Innovation**
  - Many of the most important marketing techniques and technologies were tested and adopted in US Politics long before they were in other fields. Resources and hard metrics have led to an environment that is ripe for innovation.
- **Adoption of These Technologies Often Causes Growing Pains**
  - New technologies often cause legacy and frictional adoption problems. Applying old mentalities to new technologies has historically hampered their pace of adoption.

Overview

#Fail: The Misuse of Social Media in the 2012 US Presidential Campaign

- **We Are in the Midst of a Fundamental Shift in Both Technology and Communications**
  - The importance of social media to communications and public life should not be understated. It is **the most fundamental communication shift that has occurred in our (my) lifetime.**
- **Some Campaigns "Get It" - Those That Don't Might be Doing Themselves More Harm Than Good**
  - This fundamental shift - one that gives voters and real people real voices - severely problematizes many of the techniques of traditional communications operations.

Overview

#Fail: The Misuse of Social Media in the 2012 US Presidential Campaign

- **Failure To Understand How to Use These Technologies Results in Negative Consequences**
  - Every new technology and method of communication has rules, protocols, and norms. Failure to follow these norms can cause more harm than good - particularly in high risk situations like politics.
- **Lessons From the US Can Inform Campaigns (And Marketing Abroad) - But There are Unique Challenges**
  - US political campaigns are unique - and applying their lessons to other countries requires the recognition of key similarities and key differentiators.

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JFK: The First Irish President... And More

#ShamelessPandering

- **JFK's Political Career Coincided with Another Media Revolution**
  - JFK's harnessing of the transition from a newspaper based communications model to a "mass media environment" was a fundamental part of his success.

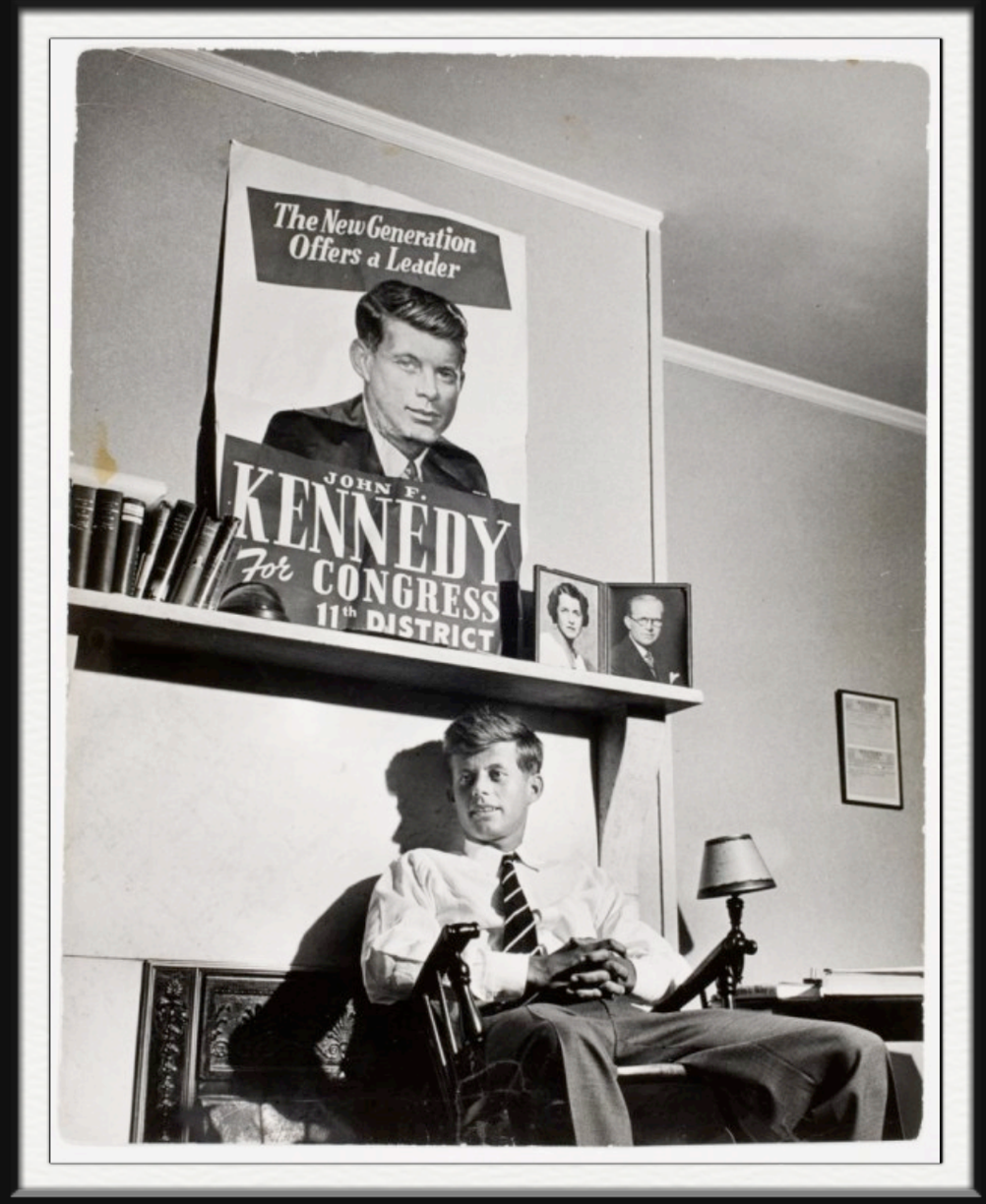
JFK: The First Irish President... And More

#ShamelessPandering

- **Kennedy for Congress: The Most Innovative Campaign of 1946 (and 1952)**

  - Kennedy's earliest entries into politics were marked by a fundamental understanding of his "new" media environment:

  - Image was important;
  - Blanketing the airwaves was to be done at all costs, and;
  - Getting to know voters was more important than influencing party bosses.



JFK in ’60

JFK’s 1960 Campaign Redefined What It Meant to Run For President

Connecting With Voters

Unlike previous Presidential Candidates, who relied on party bosses to win the nomination, JFK participated in primaries and connected with voters - always with the camera rolling.

Harnessing the Power of TV

Nixon - and many other candidates - thought of TV as “radio with images.” JFK understood it to be a distinct medium with unique powers and rules for best use.

Conducting “Market Research”

JFK hired Louis Harris to conduct public opinion research throughout his 1960 campaign. Using this data, he effectively allocated resources, and used it to win a close election.

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Social Media: A Brief History

- **The Modern Era of Social Media Did Not Just Suddenly Happen**
  - For the past 20 years, technology has developed rapidly. While an explosion of social computing occurred in the middle part of the past decade, events from the early 1990s were an integral part of the social media revolution.
- **The Millennial Generation and Their Relationship with Technology Has Shaped the World - And Politics**
  - The Millennial Generation has been the driving force behind much of the technology revolutionizing politics. We have had an interesting - and close - relationship with technology through the years.

Social Media: A Brief History

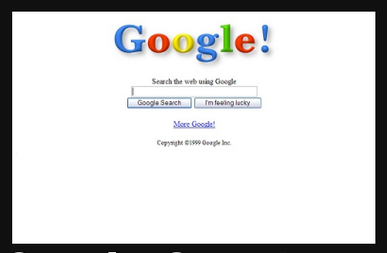
Timeline

1991 — Computers Bring Fun to the Classroom

1993 — Home Computing Takes Off

1996 — AIM Changes Everything

1998 — Google, Search and Information at Your Fingertips



1999 — Napster Unleashes Content

2001 — The iPod Unplugs the User

2003 — MySpace Introduces Millions to Social Networks

2004 — Facebook Launches in A Dorm room

2006 — Twitter Makes Translates the Web to Realtime

2009 — The iPhone Redefines “Mobile Computing”

Social Media: A Brief History

Lessons Learned...

- **To Understand How to Use a New Technology, You Must Understand Why It Came To Be**
  - Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platform tried to fill needs that directly related to shortcomings that their developers - Millennials - had come to see in other technology products.
- **Technology Shapes the Way We Live, But The Way We Live Also Shapes Technology**
  - Developers are people too. They use technology, and develop products with specific purposes in mind.

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The Fundamental Question:

Why are some campaigns better at using social media, and what lessons can be learned from their successes?

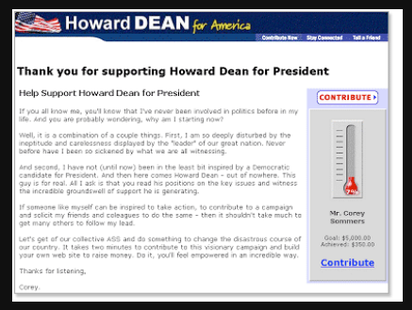
Politics and The Internet: 2000-2010

- Just Like Analyzing The Current State of Social Media Requires Understanding the History of Social Media, Analyzing the Use of Social Media in the 2012 Campaign Requires Understanding the Use of the Internet in Politics.
- To Understand the 2012 Campaign, It's Important To Understand the Development of the Political Web Since 2000

Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010

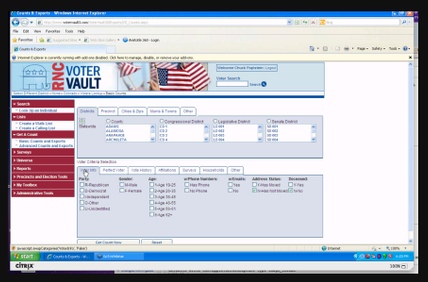
McCain and Email

Dean For America



"His Voters Look Like Facebook"

2000 2002 2004 2006 2008 2010 2012



Rove, The RNC and Voter Vault

Deval Patrick: Together We Can

GOP Beating Democrats with Social Media for Midterm Elections

by Anthony Calabrese, October 25, 2010

Tagged: data visualization, election coverage, facebook groups, political reporting, politicalshift 2010, republicans, twitter

The GOP Tweets Back

Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010

McCain and Email

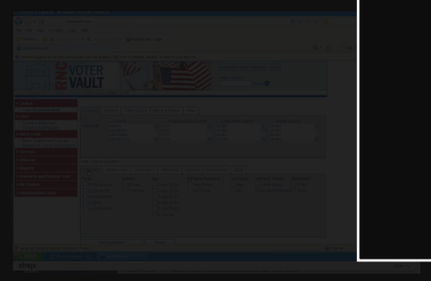
2000

2002

2012

McCain and Email

- In 2000, John McCain and his campaign pioneered the use of email as a fundraising tool. As of May 29, 2000, 25% of the total he had raised (over $10M) had come from email donations.
- McCain understood that the web could be used for a specific campaign function and not just for marketing. He used personalized emails to try to establish (what now look like primitive) "relationships" with voters.



Rove, The RNC and Voter Vault

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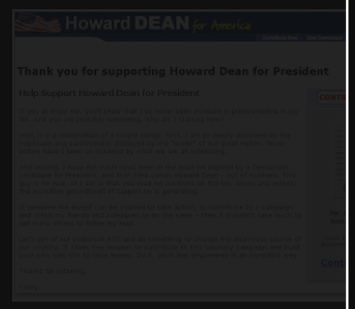

2000

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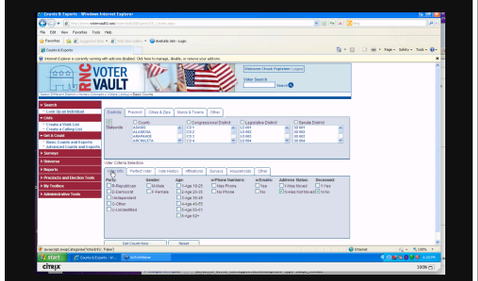


Rove, The RNC and Voter Vault

- **Rove, The RNC and Voter Vault**
  - Beginning in 2002, and into 2004, Karl Rove and the Republican National Committee Pioneered the use of "Microtargeting" using their Voter Vault database.
  - The database measured everything about voters, targeted messages to them, and helped the GOP gain seats in a Midterm election, rare for a President's party.

Deval Patrick: Together We Can

Back

Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010

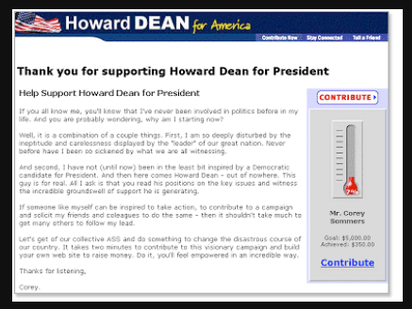
McCain and Email

2000

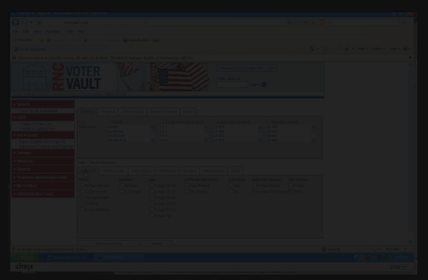
2002

Dean For America

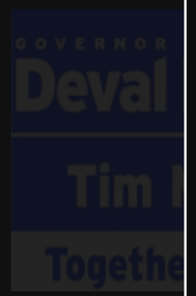
2004



- Howard Dean's campaign was the first in US History to be almost entirely fueled by (at least initially) the Internet. By reaching out into the "netroots," doing live chats with voters, and writing his own blog posts, he established real connection with voters, and for a time was the favorite to win the Democratic nomination.
- Dean's ultimate demise showed that turning online action into offline results can be **hard work**.



Rove, The RNC and Voter Vault



Deval Patrick: Together We Can

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Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010

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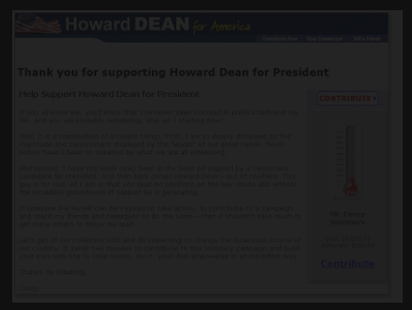
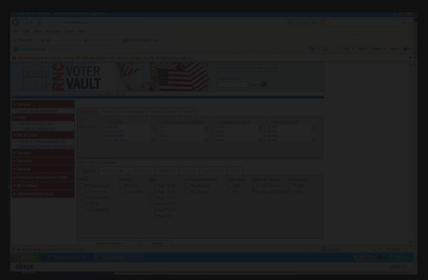


"His Vote Like Fac

2000 | 2002 | 2004 | 2006 | 20



Rove, The RNC and Voter Vault

2006

Deval Patrick: Together We Can

Deval Patrick: Together We Can

- Current Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick pulled off one of the greatest political upsets in US history in 2006, going from 1% Name ID to winning in a landslide.
- His campaign understood that giving voters real power was key, and that data is a powerful commodity.

Back

Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010

"His Voters Look Like Facebook"

- President Obama is known as the most successful user of social media in politics, but there were doubters along the way. A rival's chief strategist said after an Obama speech that while his rival's candidate's supporters, looked like voters, Obama's "look like Facebook.

- While Obama was savvy about all things digital, his use of social data to empower voters online and off was a key to victory.

"His Voters Look Like Facebook"

2008

2010

2012

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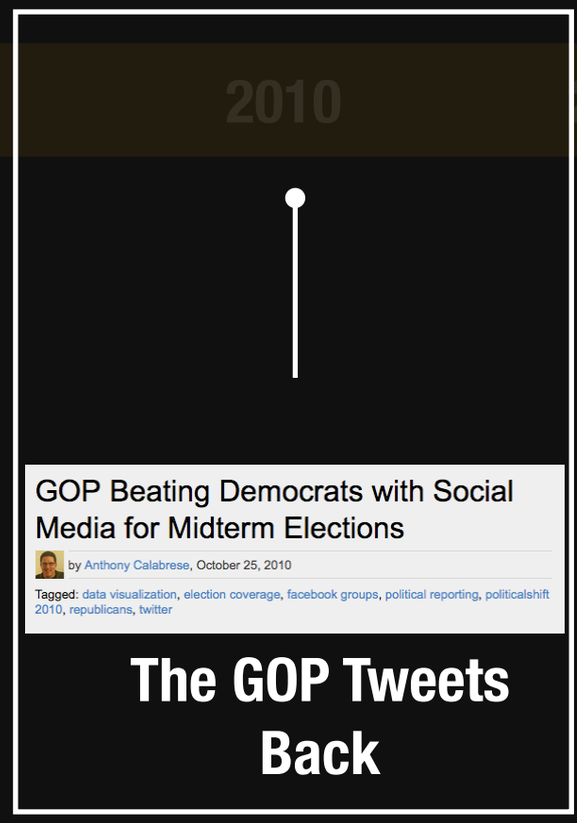
The GOP Tweets Back

Politics and the Internet: 2000-2010

The GOP Tweets Back

- While younger voters in recent years have been more likely to vote for Democrats than Republicans, Republicans have found a way to effectively use social media.
- In the 2010 campaign, GOP members were much more effective than Democrats at using Twitter, significantly outpacing them in both activity and social engagement - helping to fuel the fires of the Tea Party Movement by creating voter relationships.



Politics and The Internet: 2000-2010

Lessons Learned...

- **Successful Uses of The Internet and Politics Have Done Three Things:**
  - They have treated each new tool “on its own terms” - using it for it’s best use, not just using it because it’s the newest tool
  - They have translate action online into votes and donations offline.
  - They have kept data and analytics front and center, and used the Internet to both generate data and harness the data they already have.

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#Fail: The 2012 Campaign Thus Far

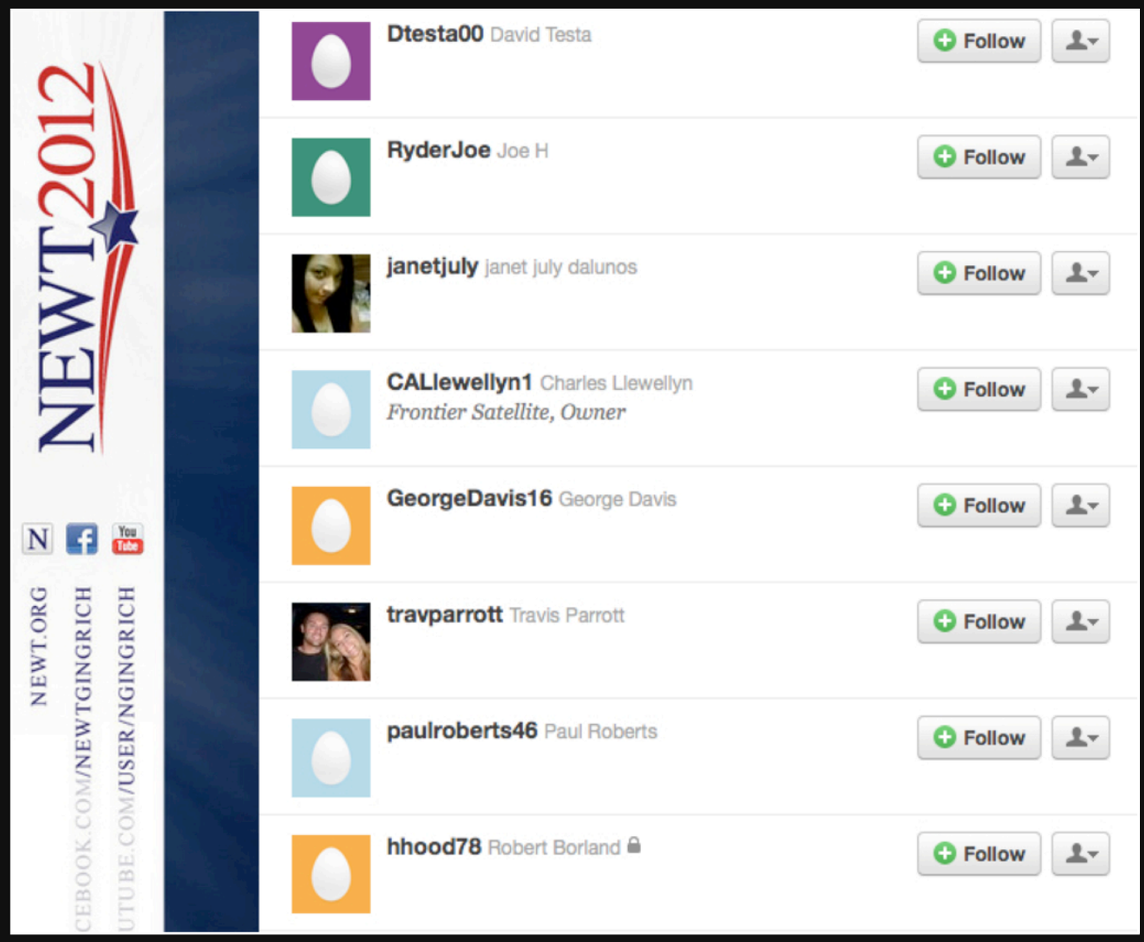
- 2011 and Early 2012 Saw a Hotly-Contested GOP Primary. Each Major Candidate Attempted to Use Social Media Effectively.
- They All Failed.
- ...and Thus Far, So Has President Obama.

#Fail: Newt Gingrich and the Curious Case of 1.4 Million Twitter Followers.

What Gingrich Did

- Newt Gingrich promised to run a "different kind of campaign," one based on big ideas. As part of this campaign, Gingrich focused on trying to connect with grassroots voters.

- One metric Gingrich touted was the fact that he had - by far - the most Twitter followers of any GOP candidate with well over 1.4M followers.



Why Gingrich Failed

- Gingrich focused on simply boosting his number of followers. Most of his followers were bots (over 66% followed no one else), and never translated his followers into action or engagement. He paid firms to get him followers, whomever they may be.

- Gingrich took an old media mentality and applied it to new media.

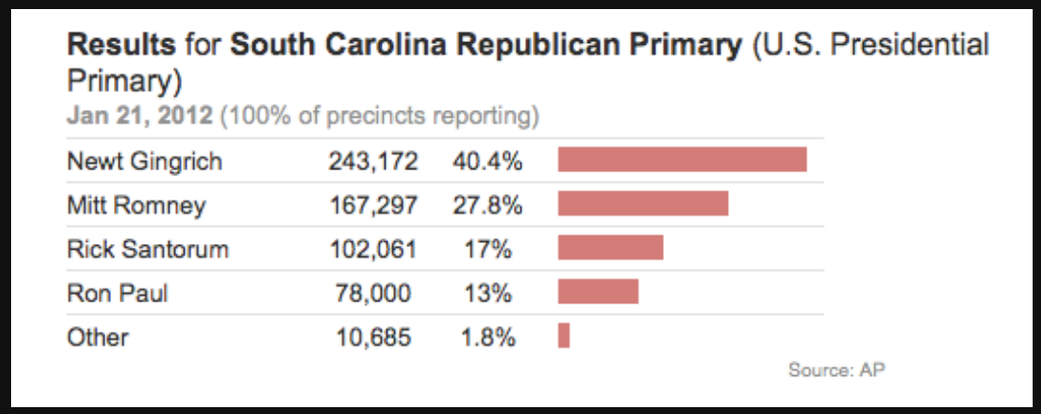
#Fail: Ron Paul and Why You Should (Almost) Never Trust An Internet Poll

What Paul Did

- Like Howard Dean before him, Ron Paul has effectively become the candidate of people active online.
- During the campaign, Paul effectively made use of "money bombs" to fund his campaign, and was almost always the most mentioned candidate on Twitter.

Why Paul Failed

- A small group of active, committed donors and voters cannot translate energy into action without effective infrastructure and data. Paul's campaign has never lived up to it's online metrics because it has never shown the ability to understand the relationship between online activity and offline action. Simply put #TweetsArentVotes.

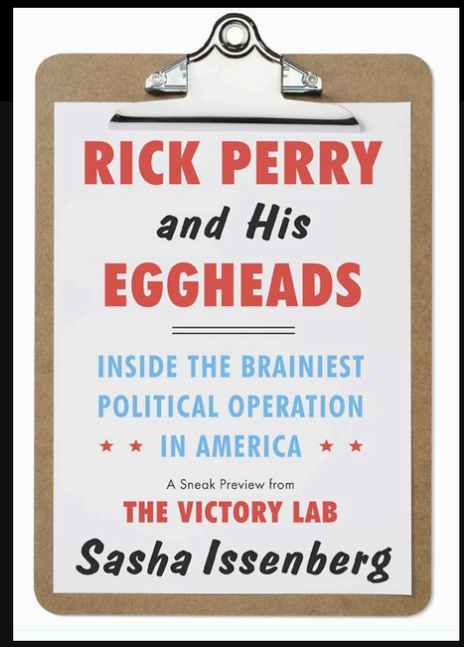


#Fail: Rick Perry and The Outdated Influencer Model

What Perry Did

- Coming into the 2012 campaign, Rick Perry's staff in many political circles was known as "the brainiest operation in America."

- Having run rigorous experiments in his 2006 Gubernatorial campaign, his team thought traditional media did not have a high ROI, and influencing influential social media bloggers and personalities was a better strategy.



Why Perry Failed

- For 3 Reasons:

  - His inability to establish real trust with grassroots voters;
  - His failure to use Presidential data correctly.
  - I can't remember the 3rd reason. #Oops.

#Fail: Mitt Romney And Why Authenticity Matters Online

What Romney Is Doing

- The Romney campaign is doing everything that campaigns are "supposed" to do online. He is tweeting regularly. He has a Facebook page. He has sophisticated micro-targeting.

- In spite of the fact that he has over 1.6M "likes" on Facebook, he gets less engagement on many of his posts than candidates with 1/10 the number of "likes: that he has.

What Romney Can Improve Upon

- Romney has yet to use his social media to show voters who he - most of his posts at this point are simply posts of his daily events and "top down" communication instead of engaged interactions. To improve, Romney can focus on engagement and establishing relationships with voters.

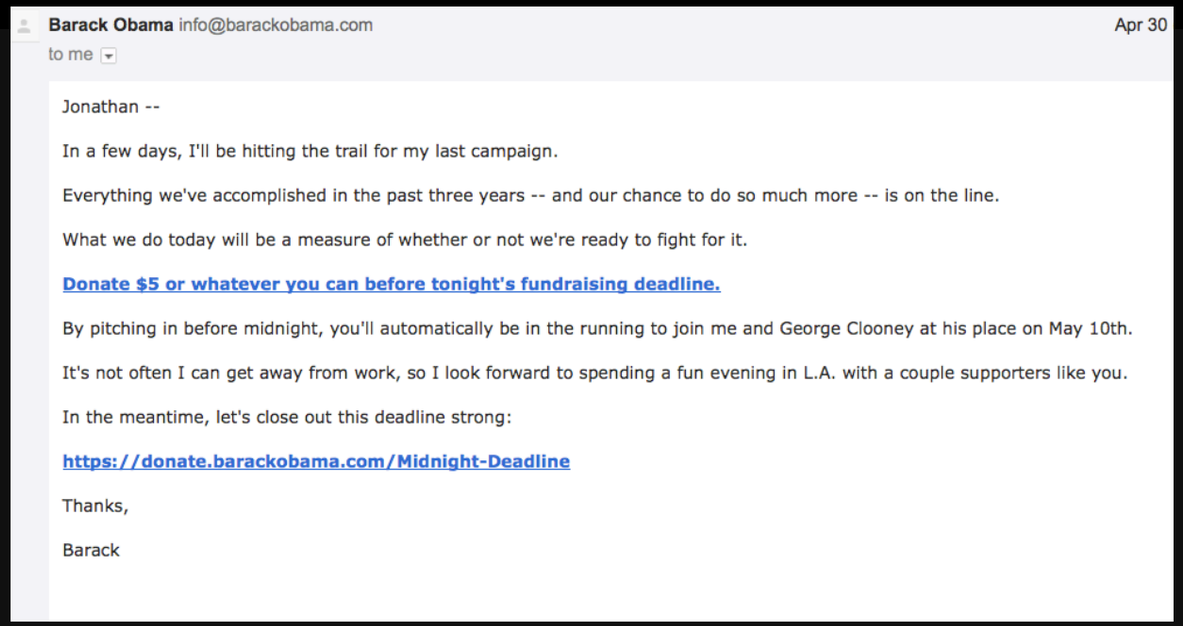
#Fail: Barack Obama and Why I Dread The End of The Month

What Obama Is Doing

- The Obama campaign has thus far spent most of its time rebuilding the infrastructure necessary to build a national campaign.
- The most common form of communications that has come from the Obama campaign thus far has been email solicitations for donations. Sometimes up to 3 in a single day.

What Obama Can Improve Upon

- Obama's 2008 campaign used online tools to let his campaign connect to voters - and allowed voters to connect with their own friends effectively. As the Obama campaign swings into full gear, putting voter connections at the center of his voter strategy can potentially get back some of the excitement that he may have lost.



Barack Obama info@barackobama.com Apr 30
to me

Jonathan --

In a few days, I'll be hitting the trail for my last campaign.

Everything we've accomplished in the past three years -- and our chance to do so much more -- is on the line.

What we do today will be a measure of whether or not we're ready to fight for it.

Donate $5 or whatever you can before tonight's fundraising deadline.

By pitching in before midnight, you'll automatically be in the running to join me and George Clooney at his place on May 10th.

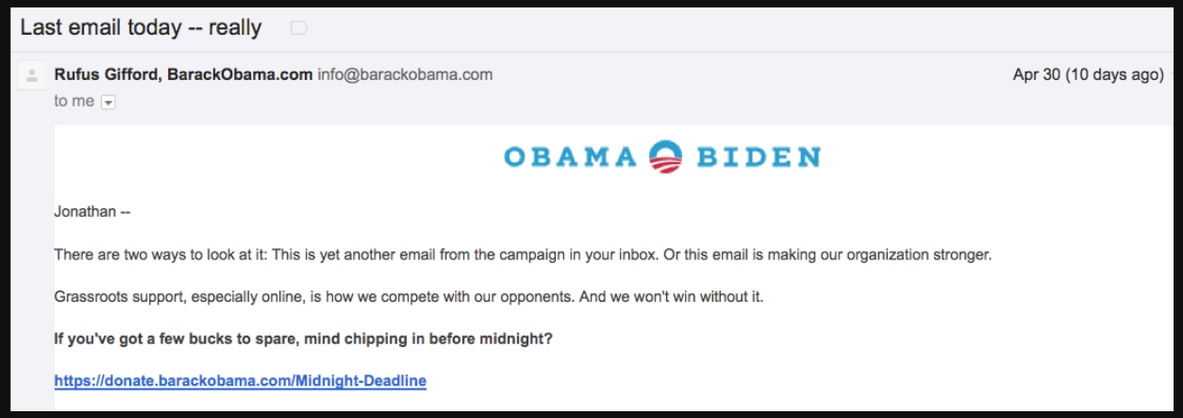
It's not often I can get away from work, so I look forward to spending a fun evening in L.A. with a couple supporters like you.

In the meantime, let's close out this deadline strong:

https://donate.barackobama.com/Midnight-Deadline

Thanks,

Barack



Last email today -- really

Rufus Gifford, BarackObama.com info@barackobama.com Apr 30 (10 days ago)
to me

OBAMA BIDEN

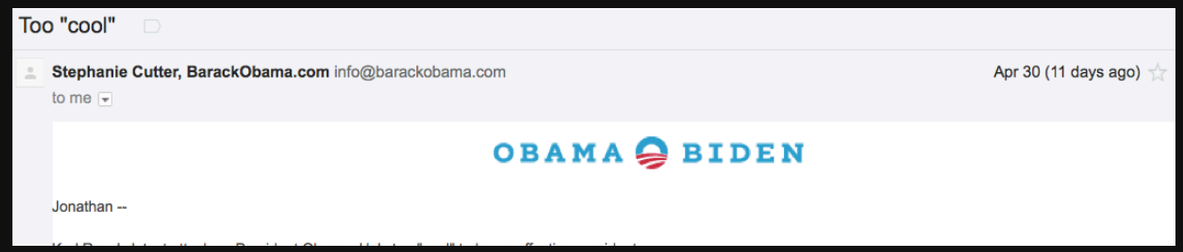
Jonathan --

There are two ways to look at it: This is yet another email from the campaign in your inbox. Or this email is making our organization stronger.

Grassroots support, especially online, is how we compete with our opponents. And we won't win without it.

If you've got a few bucks to spare, mind chipping in before midnight?

https://donate.barackobama.com/Midnight-Deadline



Too "cool"

Stephanie Cutter, BarackObama.com info@barackobama.com Apr 30 (11 days ago)
to me

OBAMA BIDEN

Jonathan --

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Conclusion: The SocialSphere Process

For Political Campaigns - And Marketing Initiatives - To Succeed, They Need To Follow the Process that We Believe is at the Heart of All Online Activity

- **Identify...**
  - ...your most passionate stakeholders, customers and supporters.
- **Empower...**
  - ...them with a combination of technology and respect.
- **Ask For More...**
  - ...because talking online and liking someone on Facebook is never enough.

Conclusion: The Lessons For US Politics

- **Identify...**
  - To be successful at using social media in politics (and in marketing, PR, any field), you must put relationships front and center and use social media to establish engagement, not just blast messages. To do that, you have to identify who your most important relationships are.
- **Empower...**
  - Only by harnessing and effectively using data can you put the right tools in the right people's hands. Capture data, structure it, leverage it.
- **Ask For More...**
  - In politics, asking for more means orienting your campaigns around offline activity. If something does not have a link to more votes, more donations, or more volunteers, it may be a bad use of time. Use social media to ask your most passionate advocates to translate that passion into action.

Implications: Why Europe is Different - And Why the SocialSphere Process is More Important Here

- US Elections Have Much More Time To Establish Relationships (Close to 2 Years)
- Identifying Influencers and Establishing Meaningful Relationships Cannot Happen Overnight. It Takes Time.
- The Only Way To Get That Time is To Constantly Work at Focusing Social Media Practices Around the Idea of Establishing Relationships, So That When The Time Has Come for Action, You Are Trusted and Can Have The Impact You Want To Have.

Contact Us

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www.twitter.com/jschavez