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Why Vote - A Digital Media Campaign

King County, WA

Submitted by:

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Abstract

In 2017, King County Elections partnered with Mammoth, a local marketing agency, to create a compelling public affairs media campaign designed to inspire registered voters in King County to vote.

The “Why Vote” campaign was the product of an intense, collaborative process and was anchored by two custom videos: “Multiplier Effect” and “The Struggle,” showing in King County from Oct. 23 through Nov. 7, 2017. Combined, the two videos resulted in more than two million impressions via targeted placements online, on TV, and in movie theaters.

Background

This campaign sought to further the King County Elections mission to make voting easy and open to all, regardless of ethnicity or income level. The messaging for it was derived from recent qualitative research to help inspire and enable every eligible King County voter to regularly cast a ballot. This research showed that major impediments to voter engagement are a lack of awareness of elections and the issues, along with being unaware of how easy it is to register to vote, while motivating factors include making one’s voice heard, believing each vote makes a difference, and participating in the democratic process.

Due to this research, the focus of the campaign was to share positive and informative messages that raise awareness about elections, explain how to find information about the issues, outline how to register and emphasize the new tools available to voters that make voting easy and convenient.

The campaign targeted increasing awareness and voter turnout surrounding the Primary Election on Aug. 1, 2017 and the General Election on Nov. 7, 2017.

Campaign Launched

Multiplier Effect

The first video, “Multiplier Effect,” is an animated spot designed to answer the question: Why vote? In a time when many voters feel disenfranchised or discouraged, this video uses an optimistic tone to remind viewers how their vote makes a difference. Local artist and Grammy nominated singer Hollis Wong-Wear provided the voice-over for it.

To effectively deliver more than one million video ad impressions in King County, a variety of digital ad platforms were used. These ads appeared on desktop computers, tablets, mobile devices and connected TVs.



King County Elections “Multiplier Effect”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=chm8kO1FY2U

- To ensure the video reached a broad audience, it ran on both news and lifestyle websites. These ads were contextually integrated so spots would run in alignment with news articles. The video also ran on YouTube and generated more than 50,000 views.
- Voter file data analysis shows that infrequent voters skew younger, so emphasis was placed on reaching the 18-34 age demographic via widely used media such as connected TVs and YouTube. Connected TV includes news content that appeared on Roku, Xbox, Apple TV and others. YouTube promotion focused on this demographic and was geotargeted to King County.
- Video ads were linked to the “What would happen if everyone voted?” site at www.KingCounty.gov/Elections, where voters can access information about voting, tracking their ballot and more.

The Struggle

“The Struggle” is a more somber and dramatic video, using historical images and footage to convey how the right to vote in America has, and continues to be, a hard-fought struggle. It ran as a 60-second TV spot on targeted cable and broadcast TV, as well as in movie theatres throughout King County.



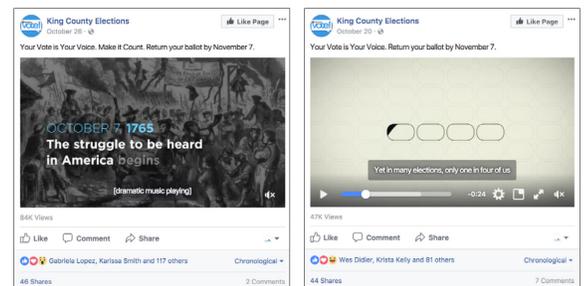
King County Elections “The Struggle”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=o68w9WbRdlI

- Cable television advertising targeted potential voters across the county on news, lifestyle and sports channels selected for high rating points and wide demographic appeal. This also included Comedy Central and Adult Swim for younger audiences and BET, the leading African American network.
- Cable zones were restricted to King County, and in areas of the county where voter turnout has been historically low, ad saturation was increased, reaching 499,558 households total.
- The video ran during Saturday Night Live on Nov. 4, 2017 targeting the Seattle Designated Market Area, which includes King County. It aired live on prime time at 8 p.m. and again at 11:30 p.m. The last episode before the election, it had high viewership, a 3.6 season rating and visibility to 118,000 adults.
- The video also played in the lobby and on the big screen in 11 theatres around King County.

Social Media

Both videos ran on Facebook. Ads were targeted to King County Facebook users who were interested in news and politics, as well as registered voters via programmatic advertising, with an emphasis on lower turnout voters. The campaign led to more than 150,000 views on Facebook and more than 200 people sharing the videos. They also received more than 500 reactions and were commented on 70 times.

The videos were also organically discussed and shared on a variety of social networks, including Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit. They were shared by local organizations, politicians, and voters alike, with the online reaction to the videos being overwhelmingly positive.



Facebook video ads were widely viewed.

Facebook results for these videos were highly successful considering this campaign was the first of its kind to engage with King County voters at this magnitude and about these topics.

Accolades

The campaign garnered news mentions and generated discussion and excitement online. It was praised by various media outlets, including the NW Daily Marker and Seattle Weekly.

The campaign and videos were nationally recognized by the American Association of Political Consultants, receiving three prestigious Pollie Awards. The campaign won gold for *Best Digital or Internet Campaign*, while “The Struggle” won silver in *Best Statewide/Local Public Affairs/Issue Advocacy Television Spot* and “The Multiplier Effect” won bronze in *Best Statewide Public Affairs/Issue Advocacy Web Video*.

These videos also won two Reed Awards from Campaign and Elections, an online magazine that honors the best campaigns of the political industry.



Supporting Documents: Online Reactions from the Public

Overall, the campaign was highly successful, engaging voters from a variety of demographics through multimedia that prompted action and emotion proving voter education to be especially rewarding.

King Co Elections @kcelections · Nov 1
The right to vote is a hard-fought struggle. Don't take it for granted. Return your ballot by November 7. #kcvotes

Peg Cheng @pegcheng · 10:43 AM · 7 Nov 2017
Such an awesome video! You go, @kcelections! 🙌🙌🙌

Pramila Jayapal @PramilaJayapal · 8:25 PM · 6 Nov 2017
Wow. If you haven't already voted, watch this. Then get to it!

22 Retweets 46 Likes

hollis wong-wear @hwongweezy · 10:18 AM · 7 Nov 2017
TODAY IS THE DAY TO VOTE !!!! thanks to @kcelections for letting me collaborate & add my voice to this PSA

3 Retweets 6 Likes

Zachary DeWolf for Seattle School Board shared King County Elections's video.
Yesterday at 11:24am

Incredibly powerful and moving ad from King County Elections. Please get out there and vote on November 7th.

43,155 Views
King County Elections · October 26 at 9:44am · Like Page
Your Vote is Your Voice. Make it Count. Return your ballot by November 7.

Ai-jen Poo @aijenpoo · 4:55 AM · 7 Nov 2017
It's Election Day. It's serious. Watch this 🗳️ & #vote.

7 Retweets 7 Likes

King County, WA @KingCountyWA · 11:45 AM · 25 Oct 2017
"There are more than 1M registered voters in King County. Yet, in many elections, only 1 in 4 of us vote." #kcvotes

2 Retweets 3 Likes

Emerge Washington @Emerge_WA · 1:28 PM · 25 Oct 2017
Only one in four of us are allowing their voices to be heard. #kcvotes #walex

THEAprilTheory says #EdgarHOF · 8:13 AM · 5 Nov 2017
Is your ballot still sitting on your kitchen counter? Watch this video #VOTE

Nicole @TreasureTriomp · 7:46 AM · 7 Nov 2017
I'm close to tears every time I watch this. Virginia, Washington (and NY, etc.): Please remember to vote today! #ElectionDay

2 Likes

Government King Co. Elections Ad. You don't have to risk your life to cast your ballot... (youtu.be) submitted 1 month ago by -Ernie
1 comment share save hide give gold report crosspost

melissajonas @melissajonas · 10:18 AM · 23 Oct 2017
@kcelections shares perspective on just how easy it is to vote in our state/our county. Powerful video--watch.

The Struggle
The right to vote in America has always been — and continues to be — a hard-fought struggle. This election, make your voice heard. Return your ballot by Nov...

all 1 comments
sorted by: best

[-] **nate077** 8 points 1 month ago
I really like this ad.
Not every election is super important or world changing, but people went through a lot to give us a chance to have a say in how our lives are governed, and I think it's great how this ad portrays the idea that something so simple as filling out a ballot and mailing it in can be an act of respect.
On another somewhat nit-picky note, I think it's better to write about the women's (or Native Americans, or whomever's) right to vote being acknowledged, rather than granted.
It was theirs all along, but they had been unfairly denied it.
permalink embed save report give gold reply

Supporting Documents: Online Reactions from Media



The screenshot shows the NW Daily Marker website. At the top, the logo reads "NW DAILY MARKER" with the tagline "Politics, Economy, Culture. The best conversations start here." Below the logo, navigation links include "Washington", "National", "Seattle-King Co", "World", and "Reviews". A large banner image depicts a historical scene with the text "OCTOBER 7, 1765" and "The struggle to be heard in". Below the banner, the article title is "King County Elections Did a Good Thing With a New Video About Voting Rights". The byline is "BY BRYAN MYRICK / ON OCTOBER 23, 2017 / IN WESTERN WA". The article text begins with "It's easy for Washington state conservatives to tee off on King County Elections, but a good thing should be called out when a good thing is done." A small video thumbnail shows Jenny Durkan with the text "JENNY DURKAN FOR MAYOR" and "PROGRESSIVE".



The screenshot shows the Seattle Weekly website. At the top, the logo reads "SEATTLE WEEKLY". A navigation menu and search icon are visible. A large banner image depicts a historical scene with the text "JUNE 2, 1924" and "Congress grants the right to vote to Native Americans". Below the banner, the article title is "Watch King County Election's Striking New Videos Prodding People to Vote". The sub-headline is "Two new videos aim to counter low turnout for municipal elections." The byline is "By Daniel Person" and the date is "Monday, October 23, 2017 6:10am". Below the byline are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Email, Print, and Comment. The article text begins with "It should come as a surprise to no one that municipal elections, like the one we have coming up on Nov. 7, don't draw the highest voter turnout." The text continues: "According to King County Elections, county-wide turnout hovers around 25 percent for local primaries, and the office expects to see less than 50 percent turnout for the upcoming general election. In an effort to bump those numbers up a bit, the elections department on Monday is rolling out a couple of striking ads that more or less try to guilt people into casting their ballots."