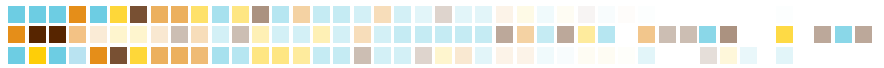


# PERSPECTIVES



A monthly look at what's happening in the ever-changing digital world and beyond.

## From the Editor

The interconnection of politics and technology is a long and winding road. Every so often there's a distinct bend in this road where a new technology arises and has an unexpected impact on the political campaigns of the day. You can go all the way from the invention of movable type up to the surprising, to some, impact of social media on the 2008 presidential election. Since we're in the midst of a presidential election cycle, this month the Dii crew takes a look at our hometown industry of politics, and explores the technologies that will have an impact on the 2012 elections.



We hope to explore some unexpected territory that will not only give you insights into American politics, but will also give ideas for your own brands and campaigns. First-time contributor from our Account Management team Nina Baliga brings us *Lessons the Candidates Can Learn from "Occupy Wall Street."* Rebecca Johnson gives us a look into the future of digital political advertising in her article, *Online Advertising Heats Up for 2012 Election Cycle*. We all know TV and video are important in the election campaigns, so Remy Wainfeld has penned *A One-Stop Shop for Political Content on YouTube*. We also look into the etiquette of social media and politics in Robert Chedid's piece, *Politically Correct: Discussing Politics in Social Media*, and I take a peek at mobile fundraising in my article, *Will Mobile Payments Transform Political Fundraising in 2012?*. Last but not least, you're going to see our first-ever two-page Perspective from Sara Weiner and Ruth Lim. In this deeper dive, they begin an ongoing study into the intersection of social media, politics and fashion in their report *Politics and Fashion: Social Media Commentary*.

### Carlen Lea Lesser

VP/Director, Digital Integration & Innovation

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Photo Credit: League of Women Voters of California. Used by CC-A permissions.









In our preliminary research we have identified that voters place more emphasis on a female politician's fashion than her male counterpart's, and even more emphasis on female spouses than on male officials. Additionally, we see comments suggesting that male politicians' fashion faux pas are excusable, but female politicians' are not. User posts characterize Barack Obama's "sloppy" casual attire as "just one of the guys," while Michele Bachmann is criticized for her "horrible shoes," Sarah Palin for her "hooker shoes," and Hillary Clinton for her "crappy outfit."

Scrutiny is not reserved only for women running for office. Our findings showed that the expectation for Michelle Obama far exceeds that of any female presidential candidate, and social media comments about her outfits are some of the easiest to come by.

A scan through the demographics of online commenters shows that an overwhelming majority of fashion-related comments are made by women. With this, we identified a paradox: Female commenters repeatedly emphasize that being stylish and competent are not qualities that should be considered one and the same, yet they continue to comment on a candidate's attire as if it matters to them (and we're guessing it does, more than they will admit).

We also found there to be greater negative scrutiny regarding the sartorial choices of candidates who are running for office compared to politicians who are already in office. Our preliminary findings further suggest that once in office, there is less critique of what a politician wears.

## Implications

Fashion undeniably plays a big part in politics. While our research is qualitative and aggregates individual comments, we can't help but notice that society has not moved very far away from the same outlook as the 1800s. It's worth noting that the majority of the political fashion critiques are coming from women, who by any other score, would likely be female political candidates' biggest supporters.

This makes us wonder: Do women hold politicians to a higher standard, a standard that includes appearance in addition to political capability? Do they know they do this? And if so, *is* political fashion important in deciding an election outcome? Initial findings, as indicated by social media commentary, point to yes, yes, and yes. Over the course of the 2012 elections, it will be interesting to follow and evaluate this trend and to measure the extent to which political fashion matters. Further research is planned to expand these insights.

The SoundByte™ is a proprietary approach to qualitative research that uncovers consumer sentiment, insights and hidden opportunities by exploring the natural conversation on the social Web. Unlike a listening platform, the SoundByte™ qualifies the people included in the study to ensure they meet your criteria. If you only want to know what women age 45-65 who live in the United States think, we can do that. We can even vet for various affinities and disease states. Next time you are considering a focus group, consider SoundByte™ instead. It's fast, detailed and surprisingly cost efficient.

### Comment on Sarah Palin's Attire:

Big "miss." Don't get me wrong; I LOVE a good leopard print shoe... when it's a GOOD leopard print. These just look cheap and tacky.

### Comment on Mitt Romney's Attire:

It boggles the mind that the richest candidate in the race — an executive, a successful guy — has officially become that schlubby man who gave up on his hair, his clothes, and maybe even his workouts. No, these aren't the things the race is really about. But it is about perceived power, and he looks pretty damn weak.

## Online Advertising Heats Up for 2012 Election Cycle

**Summary:** In political advertising, the majority of a candidate's advertising budget is usually spent on TV. While this will not change in the 2012 presidential campaign, the total amount spent on online media will increase by 354% from the 2008 presidential campaign. So in the 2012 presidential campaign, expect political marketers to focus their online efforts heavily on online video, as it is a consumer-friendly, interactive and persuasive format for their campaign messages.

**Rebecca Johnson, Strategist**  
Digital Integration and Innovation

Tradigital marketer. Social media junkie.  
DC Locavore. Native NYCer. Soccer enthusiast. Aspiring urban homesteader.  
NPR fiend. @digibec

### Key Information:

In the 2010 mid-term election, political campaigns spent approximately \$78 million on online media, a \$50 million increase from the 2008 presidential election. This spike can be attributed to shifts in U.S. voter media consumption and the intensely contentious and "too close to call" election match-ups. Another key difference is that the 2008 online ads focused heavily on fundraising and sign-ups, while 2010 online advertising centered on swaying voters to be for/against candidates, or on enhancing a candidate's platform. This shift was essentially one from direct call-to-action messaging ("support us now" or "get out and vote") to messaging that was brand or candidate centered.

For the 2012 presidential campaigns, expect the same two trends (increase in online advertising spend and candidate-centered messaging) to continue. However, 2012 online media campaigns will have one major shift from their 2010 mid-term election counterparts: a heavy emphasis on online video ads in an attempt to influence voters and incorporate immediate calls-to-action.

In 2012, with approximately 30% of the U.S. population not watching live TV—preferring either DVR programs in order to skip through the commercial breaks or watching TV programming online or via their mobile devices—getting in front of this audience is critical for the success of political marketing campaigns. To do this, marketers will utilize online video ads, be it pre-roll advertisements or videos embedded in Flash/rich media banners. Political marketers will look to expand the reach of their video ads by streaming before/during/after content on YouTube, Hulu, news sites, inside banner ads, through ad networks and beyond in order to reach this target audience and to supplement the reach and messaging of their television spots.

**Implications and Action Items:** While it's impossible to see the future, the 2008 and 2010 political campaigns offer key insights into where 2012 online advertising may be headed.

- **Don't put your eggs in one basket.** While a fair chunk of the U.S. population isn't watching live TV, this doesn't mean you can get to them online, because approximately 100 million Americans are not reachable via online media, owing to a lack of Internet access. The challenge here is to figure what, if any, media they are consuming and how to best message them via that media.
- **More persuasion ads.** Video ads, be they on TV or online, are what's going to persuade voters: 2010 political campaigns realized this and for 2012 they use the interactivity that online video allows to up the ante in their efforts to motivate specific behaviors and actions.
- **Extreme targeting.** With campaigns focused on getting tailored messages to specific slices of the electorate, they will turn to online media buys and ad networks that can empower that type of micro-targeting. Look for heavier online display in key geographic areas in the last few days before voting.
- **Media sell-out.** Candidates will buy online advertising, in specific geographic and demographic hotspots, earlier in the year than previously. Scarcity or even sell-outs of display advertising is real and could have serious impacts on election outcomes.

## A One-Stop Shop for Political Content on YouTube

**Summary:** YouTube is home to countless historical events captured on video and uploaded by individual users and organizations. At the beginning of October, it launched the YouTube Politics channel, dedicated to sharing political videos with an emphasis on the 2012 presidential campaign. With its innate social media power and wide-reaching audience, YouTube has the power to influence the way citizens access and digest political information.

**Remy Wainfeld, Intern**  
Digital Integration & Innovation

DC Hoya in a New York state of mind.  
Entertainment enthusiast. Food lover. Pysch nerd. Spanish wannabe.

### Key Information:

During the 2008 presidential election, a group of researchers investigated YouTube as a source of political information, and found that while entertainment provides the primary motivation for watching videos on YouTube, people also actively sought political content with the purpose of keeping up-to-date.<sup>1</sup> YouTube Politics (<http://www.youtube.com/politics>), which has entered the political arena just in time for the 2012 presidential election, aggregates and organizes relevant campaign materials on YouTube into one easy-to-use, all-encompassing and politically neutral platform. The channel includes official campaign videos from the candidates' own YouTube channels, videos of speeches and public appearances uploaded by news sources and other organizations, in addition to traditional user-generated content. The channel tracks the "Top 5 Hot Political Videos," as well as the "Top 5 Most Viewed" videos featuring the 2012 presidential candidates.

Moreover, the Politics channel compares the 2012 candidates in terms of video views and subscriptions, and presents that information in an interactive graph. Users can choose which candidates to compare, and even select the time period of comparison. Further down on the page, in the Meet the Candidates section, users can watch each candidate's most recent, most viewed and most shared campaign videos, as well as view statistics about the candidate's official YouTube channel, such as number of video views and shares, searches and subscribers, and the fluctuation within the past day or week.

### Implications and Action Items:

The YouTube Politics channel presents candidates with a unique opportunity to leverage the social power of the video-sharing website as a platform for communication. Candidates ought to consider the following implications:

- **Leverage the platform as a way to reach a wider audience.** With over 100 million Americans accessing YouTube each month,<sup>2</sup> YouTube Politics provides candidates with a unique opportunity to share information with a wider and potentially more diverse audience. YouTube Politics provides an educational resource within the digital space. Candidates can now reach citizens who may not access information through traditional political news sources.
- **Maintain an interactive social-media presence.** YouTube reports that nearly 17 million people have linked their YouTube account to at least one social network, and over 12 million of those people auto-share content.<sup>3</sup> Candidates should engage the electorate on various social media platforms and share video material to build popularity and support. This popularity and support will translate to the YouTube Politics popularity tracking mechanisms.
- **Give people what they want.** The 2008 study concluded that most people accessed political content from traditional news programs. Candidates should post interviews, appearances, and other news clips in which they are featured to their YouTube pages. These videos will appear on the Politics channel and help build candidates' popularity.
- **Utilize YouTube Politics to gauge the popularity of issues.** Candidates should follow the most-viewed and most-shared videos, as well as the comments on the discussion board, to track which issues most captivate the electorate's attention. Candidates can then address these concerns and clarify their positions in future campaign materials.

<sup>1</sup> Electronic News, "Differing Uses of YouTube During the 2008 U.S. Presidential Primary Election." March 2011. <http://enx.sagepub.com/content/5/1/1.full.pdf+html>

<sup>2</sup> comScore, "YouTube Surpasses 100 Million U.S. Viewers for the First Time." <http://bit.ly/11Xxcu>

<sup>3</sup> YouTube, "Statistics." [http://www.youtube.com/t/press\\_statistics](http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics)

## Politically Correct: Discussing Politics in Social Media

**Summary:** As the political discourse around the 2012 election begins to heat up, Facebook and Twitter are once again popular outlets for expression of political opinions. Discussing politics in social media should be approached with the same civility and consideration as discussing politics at a cocktail party or professional event. One should always be mindful of the audience and how the message may be received.

**Robert Chedid, Analyst**  
Strategy & Insights

Fascinated by people and what motivates them.  
Insatiable appetite for info. And Lebanese food.  
Night owl, blogger, Jersey boy & proud Hoya.

### Key Information:

It used to be considered impolite to discuss these three topics at dinner: sex, religion and politics. Now, though, these themes are openly discussed without reservation not only around the dinner table but in all forms of digital media. As a former Washington, D.C., resident and graduate of a university with a school dedicated to the study of Foreign Service, my friends are particularly hyper-engaged in domestic and international politics, and often take to Facebook and Twitter to share links to political articles, op-eds and video clips. Usually these links are accompanied by colorful commentary that can range anywhere from a blurb to a short dissertation in length, and inevitably, a chain of comments or flurry of “Likes” follows.

### Implications and Action Items:

My friend base of politics junkies might be an extreme case, but this situation is not entirely unique; most everyone has experienced a political debate or seen politics at play in status updates and tweets. The etiquette of political posts can be just as tricky for brands as it is for individuals. I’d like to propose a few guidelines to keeping things “civil” online:

#### For Individuals

- **Facilitate dialogue.** Expressing your opinion online is your prerogative, but others will comment and express opposing viewpoints. Respond thoughtfully.
- **Focus on the issues.** Keep the conversation centered on the topic at hand. Debate the ideas posed and avoid attacking individuals.
- **Be mindful of tone.** As in all other text-based communication, the absence of the nuances of speech can affect how your words are interpreted. When personal beliefs are involved, prepare for others to be on the defensive.
- **Control your audience.** With Facebook’s new privacy settings that let you control who sees individual status updates and the ability to protect your tweets, you can keep your beliefs in the sphere of your personal life. Consider whether it is appropriate to reveal your political views to employers, potential employers or coworkers.
- **Keep it sparse.** If you find that your profile is beginning to look like the CNN.com homepage, it may be time to create a separate Twitter account or begin a blog.

#### For Brands and Marketers

- **Ask yourself: Should we post?** Think through whether it makes sense from a positioning and targeting standpoint for your brand to discuss divisive topics or take a public stance.
- **Know what you’re talking about.** If you do choose to post, remember that the only thing worse than a stubborn, closed-minded commenter is a blatantly ignorant one. Before tweeting or posting for your brand, be well versed in the subject matter. Avoid PR blunders by doing your due diligence and reading through full articles and considering how people may respond to sensitive issues before sharing.
- **Don’t forget your brand.** As with all others types of messaging, be consistent. Approach politics with the same brand personality and tone as you approach any other communications. Companies such as Manhattan Storage are famous for their witty, consistently left-leaning advertisements.





# Will Mobile Payments Transform Political Fundraising in 2012?

**Summary:** Now that digital and social media are core parts of the political campaign toolkit – what can we expect in 2012? In the 2012 elections we expect to see mobile being the big story. With the rise of mobile payments and digital wallets, we can expect to see mobile fundraising as a potential game changer for political campaigning.

**Carlen Lea Lesser, VP/Director**  
Digital Integration & Innovation

Connector of people, ideas and info. Marketer, geek, blogger, baker, tea drinker, and artist.  
@carlenlea

## Key Information:

In the 2008 election, much was made of the power of the Obama campaign to fundraise via social media. The 2004 elections had proven the power of social media to organize, and in 2008 it showed the power of digital and social for fundraising. Those little text messages, emails, and tweets added up to about \$500 million in donations.<sup>1</sup> According to the Blue State Digital case study on the campaign, the average online donation was around \$80. Social fundraising is now old news. You see every political and non-profit fundraising campaign engaging in the same tactics.

So what will be the game changer for the 2012 election? I believe a tiny little device called Square and other simple mobile payment tools have the potential to create as large a shake-up in digital fundraising as social media did in 2008. Square is a free device that plugs into any iOS or Android smartphone and turns it into a credit card reader. There's also a host of other mobile payment solutions making news these days, such as Google's and PayPal's NFC enhanced mobile wallet. But most of the solutions are too high-tech for political campaigns going door to door. Square fits in a perfect sweet spot for turning legions of campaign volunteers into a credit card-taking machine. The size and simplicity make it easy for any volunteer to carry it and take donations during door-to-door efforts. Since it's just a credit card reader, even the least tech-savvy donor will be able to take advantage of it and feel comfortable doing so.



## Implications and Action Items:

With nearly 50% of people between 23 and 45 having smartphones, according to the latest data from Forrester,<sup>2</sup> mobile is the new frontier. Mobile payment systems like Square have the potential not only to increase the volume of donors for door-to-door and community fundraising events, but the value of each donation. Additionally, we can also expect if this does take off as a key tool of the campaign that it will increase general consumer comfort with mobile payments.

- **Commerce:** As tools like Square become mainstream, people will assume that they can shop and pay via their mobile devices. The time to explore how you will enable mobile commerce is now.
- **Web:** Mobile-optimized sites are a must. Just because you *can* view websites on smartphones, doesn't mean it's a good experience. This is why so many people just use apps. Take the time to determine what your customers want to see and do online and provide only those services on your mobile site.
- **Communications:** Like the Web, it's also important to optimize your email communications for mobile devices. Start checking analytics to see how many people are viewing emails on mobile phones and consider simplifying designs to improve the mobile experience.
- **Click-through:** Ensure if you are using mobile-optimized emails that the destination you direct someone to is also mobile optimized.

<sup>1</sup> Obama for America Case Study by Blue State Digital

<sup>2</sup> The State of Consumers and Technology: Benchmark 2011, US. Forrester Research. November 2011.

## Lessons the Campaigns Can Learn from “Occupy Wall Street”

**Summary:** The “Occupy Wall Street” protests rapidly expanded into a movement, spurring protests about social and economic inequality around the world. Here as with many of the most successful movements of the modern age, digital media played a critical role in engaging individuals in many different ways. As we approach the 2012 presidential elections, the candidates can learn some key tactics to create a movement of their own.

**Nina Baliga, Account Supervisor**  
Account Management

Communications junky, political campaign survivor, proud owner of two rescued Border Collies, hopeful Redskins fan, foodie (and Yelp Elitist), and self-professed nerd.

### Key Information:

The “Occupy Wall Street” protests origins didn’t begin in a bar, a shop or any kind of brick-and-mortar space. They began with a single blog post.<sup>1</sup> The post by “Culture Jammers HQ,” posted on *Adbusters*, called for 20,000 people to set up a peaceful protest in lower Manhattan and bring attention to the current economic situation with a call for “Democracy not Corporatocracy.”<sup>2</sup> The Twitter hashtag #occupywallstreet was also created. It wasn’t long before word spread via Twitter, and protestors uploaded their videos on YouTube. In less than a month from the original demonstration, rallies were held in more than 900 cities around the world, including in Europe, Africa and Asia.<sup>3</sup>



Social media and digital technology played a key role in bringing people together. Individuals in Australia inspired by “Occupy Wall Street” began a Facebook group to organize “Occupy Melbourne” protests in City Square. Celebrities leveraged their influence to spread the message via Twitter and YouTube. Organizers used Skype and various chat services to coordinate events and tackle logistical issues. Individuals who couldn’t participate directly in the protests were able to donate money via mobile payment site WePay or provide other services such as designing protest signs or infographics via OccupyDesign. Most importantly, a grassroots movement took shape via individuals connecting through numerous digital channels.

### Implications and Action Items:

As we enter the 2012 campaign season, the candidates and their campaign managers should keep a close eye on how a movement began from just an idea on a blog.

- **Power of the hashtag.** Define your hashtags and empower your people. Hashtags provide a way to define your message and own the idea. So, broadcast them. Use them everywhere, including buttons, posters, e-mail signatures, etc. Through the hashtag, you can aggregate the conversation. However, be ready to lose control of it.
- **Listen in new ways.** You may already know *what* the conversation is through social media, but now you can see *where* the conversations are happening. People are now geotagging their tweets, Facebook posts and Flickr images. You can use this to see where your message is catching on, and where it is not. Deploy resources to strategically get your message out to specific cities or states.
- **Go mobile.** Use all the mobile tools that are available to you. Understand that many of the people you’re looking to engage are doing so via their phones, and they want to know that you are too. For example, Instagram can give the campaign a professional yet human touch. Make sure that you’re incorporating a strategy that is mobile accessible and mobile optimized to allow people to feel they are part of the movement.

<sup>1</sup>NPR.com, “Occupy Wall Street: From a Blog Post to a Movement” October 20, 2011.

<sup>2</sup>Adbusters.org, “#Occupy Wall Street” July 13, 2011

<sup>3</sup>WashingtonPost.com, “Occupy Wall Street Protests Go Global” October 15, 2011.

Photo Credit: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/edenpictures>. Used with permission from Creative Commons.

## About RTCRM

RTC Relationship Marketing (RTCRM) is a full-service direct marketing and relationship marketing agency based in Washington, D.C., in the heart of Georgetown, with an additional office in New York. RTCRM boasts more than 40 years' worth of innovative, targeted solutions that grow its clients' brands and help them forge lasting, valuable relationships with their customers. What distinguishes RTCRM is its unique ability to analyze data and research on both a rational and emotional level. RTCRM's clients include major brands in the telecom, technology, pharmaceutical, and other business sectors such as AARP, BlackRock, Eli Lilly, and Novo Nordisk.

To learn more about RTCRM, please visit [www.rtcrm.com](http://www.rtcrm.com) or follow the Twitter feed @rtcrm.

## About the Digital Integration and Innovation Team

The RTCRM Digital Integration and Innovation team is tasked with keeping track and making sense of the ever-changing digital world. It's our job to understand the nuances of how and why different types of people use technology and what that tells us about them. More importantly, it's our job to help our clients apply this knowledge to better communicate with their customers. We help clients translate business goals into marketing campaigns that build relationships with customers. In the 21st century, understanding how and why someone uses technology is as important as understanding where they live, what gender they are, and how old they are. That's where we come in. From ensuring that technographics are considered in the research phase, to tactical plans that align digital, print and broadcast tactics, we work with clients and internal partners to make sure it all works.

It's not about what's cool. It's about what's smart.

**Treffpunkt**, Digital Integration and Innovation Team Blog: <http://rtctreffpunkt.blogspot.com>

