The College of Wooster

Open Works

Media and Politics TV ads   Political Science

5-7-2012

John Maglio 2012

Ben Heavenrich

Scott Blair

Follow this and additional works at: https://openworks.wooster.edu/political_science_tv_ads

Ben Heavenrich/ Scott Blair
4/2/2012
Media and Politics

Draft Communication Plan

About the race

Our race pits 30 year old GOP incumbent, Ron Amstutz, against 24 year old, fresh out of undergraduate school democrat John Maglio, running in a district that is historically conservative. Maglio is running for the 1st house district seat in the Ohio State House of Representatives against Amstutz. The district consists of Wooster, Orville and the entirety of Wayne County. In this district there are approximately seventy-thousand registered voters. Wayne county is traditionally a swing country in many elections, the Ohio State House of Representatives however has remained in Republican Control for many years. The boundaries of the district have changed for the 2012 election year. In the past the district would have been the 3rd house district.

John is a recent graduate of the University of Akron with a Bachelors Degree in Political Science and has previously served under the experienced Ohio politician Charlie Wilson. His time spent with Wilson was vital for John's growing knowledge of Ohio politics and the needs of the many Ohioans of the 1st house district. The last Democratic candidate to represent this district was John Johnson who left office in 1980 after holding on to it for nearly a decade. This has been greatly capitalized on in our communication plan for John. Part of the strategy is that he has a "New vision for a stronger Wayne county" as opposed to the unchanging, stagnant, Republican leadership.

We will begin by reviewing the background of both candidates. First, our candidate; Maglio has lived all his life in Wayne County, after graduation he interned with State Sen. Wilson, and then proceeded to be an assistant on a mayoral campaign. John is a strong advocate for the middle class, the average American. From a young age, a desire to help others was instilled deep within John, now culminating into a desire to serve in public office. John's political concerns begin with the middle class. He has noticed, over time, the struggles of the average American and the inability of the average politician to right the wrongs. Issue 2 of last fall's referendum voting becomes highly relevant in this campaign, as John strongly opposed the referendum and his opponent strongly supported it. Education issues are a primary concern of John and our campaign, whether it be funding related, curriculum related, or ability of education to prepare for various vocations. John noted that his opponent has put Wooster Schools at risk. Amstutz holds a degree in government communication from Capital University, and began his vocational life as a journalist with the Daily Record. After leaving the Record, Amstutz ran for and was elected Mayor of Orville. After serving one term, he chose to run for State Representative, and held the position until 2000, when term limits came into affect. He then ran successfully for state Senator, and after 8 years returned to

the House of Reps and is now chairman of the finance committee. Ron has steadily pushed a traditionally conservative agenda.

Broad strategies

The campaign strategy will feature two key elements, the field campaign, and the technological campaign. First we will discuss the field campaign. With John being a fairly unknown candidate, field campaigning will be critical. The first aspect of the field campaign is to recruit volunteers for a variety of tasks which need to be done. Our plan calls for high levels of volunteer participation, and we hope to employ a large number of students from the College of Wooster. First, by utilizing the volunteer requirements of the Greek community at Wooster. With each individual within each group required to complete 12 hours of volunteer service per semester, we expect this to be a good source of manpower. Collaborating with Greek groups could further represent a good chance for campus wide publicity. Furthermore, groups such as the Wooster Volunteer Network and Circle K provide volunteer forces that could also be used. Within the general Wooster community, youth may present a minor labor force, presented with the incentive of campaign experience. Additionally, calling upon motivated democrats who ideally are anxious to see political change in their community could likely provide some amount of a volunteer base.

The second key element of the campaign will be the utilization of technology. The first, and arguably most critical element of the technological campaign is the website. Through John's website, several goals need to be accomplished. First, the website must successfully inform voters to the ideological standpoints of John. This is critical as potential voters could visit the website at any moment, and it will be impossible to sway on the fence voters without providing policy standpoints. The website also provides opportunity for John to better inform potential voters to his personal background. I sense that to a lot of voters in this community, small things, such as the fact that John grew up in Wayne County, may likely make a difference. Second, the website must provide opportunities for some range of interaction. This need not be anything particularly fancy, however having the ability to contact the candidate through the website is a fantastic element, particularly if the politician actually responds to inquiries. Lastly, the website must also provide the ability to donate funds to the campaign, as for some seeking to donate this may be convenient, and you never know when someone will impulsively decide to be generous. We ultimately expect the website to be a tool for mobilization, as people viewing the website are likely to express their interest in the candidate as well as being active for the candidate in the campaign (Margolis P. 591). Another critical element of the technology campaign will be utilization of social media, to which there will be links on the website. Facebook is a fantastic tool for mobilization, as individuals can spread political opinions instantaneously, and often times information is more trusted when from a friend, family member, or other acquaintance (Graf). Furthermore, it contains easy to use event creation elements. This will be particularly useful when communicating with any

younger or collegiate based volunteer networks. Twitter will also be critical to provide further chances for interaction and a good outlet for current events surrounding the campaign. Amongst the final aspects of the technological campaign is the utilization of digital images. John's team has come up with a fantastic logo, which will be implemented in all aspects of his campaign, and converges with the field campaign in the aspect of distributing signs, shirts, and posters. Ideally, the logo will be very widely dispersed. The final stage of the technology campaign is advertising. Here, there are opportunities to manipulate both television and the internet, as online ads will be posted to Youtube. The power of Youtube has become humbling in recent years, and in Obama's 2008 campaign, his Youtube videos had over 42 million views (however must also be aired on television, as Youtube's most capable users are highly educated and generally have high incomes (Gulati and Williams), slightly outside of John's key demographic.

Specific strategies

The activities of the volunteers will vary throughout the campaign. Perhaps the most critical of all field activities is canvasing, which John will often partake in himself and we will utilize in several ways. First, canvassing will be utilized to get John's name out. Masses of volunteers will be divided amongst local neighborhoods and will proceed to go door to door, simply informing constituents of John and his policy positions, potentially getting information regarding political preferences and voter registration status from potential voters. The next phase of canvassing, will be voter registration. Once again volunteers will be divided into neighborhoods and, utilizing information received from demographics and previous canvasses, will go door to door registering potential Maglio voters. One of the key strategies here is to begin conversation by discovering the ideology of the individual you are talking to. If they are likely not a potential Maglio voter, there is no need to mention that you are registering voters. If, however, they are a potential supporter and they happen to be unregistered, it is critical to register them to vote. A key demographic for voter registration is people who have turned 18 within the past several years, as they likely have not yet been registered to vote. Lastly, the final aspect of canvassing is "get out the vote" efforts. In this final, last push, canvassing is conducted as before, however the emphasis shifts to motivating everyone who may potentially vote for John to indeed get out and vote on election day. In a world of increasing technology, impersonality can be a major flaw of campaign strategies, recent research has in fact proven that personal contact within campaigns can in fact lead to increased voter turnout (Gurber and Green P. 653). This is not to say our campaign won't utilize some traditionally less personal strategies. Outside of canvassing, volunteers will be highly active in participating phone banks and preparing mailers, which will reach out not only to constituents who were not in canvassed areas, but to those who have likely been canvassed as well. Getting Johns name out will only help. Furthermore, enthusiastic volunteers will be mobilized to attend local campaign events of Amstutz, who according to John can be somewhat social awkward and often makes mistakes when in front of large audiences. With the

extensive reach of youtube, many campaigns are now videotaping all public appearances and publishing anything that could cost them voters (Gueorguiev). A minor slip up, misquote, or out lash can potentially swing the entire fate of a local election, US house rep. Meril Cook (R-Ca.) exemplified this when an argument between he and a fellow republican made widespread news sources, and a district that had virtually always been conservative elected a democrat (Jalonick P. 28).

The information communicated in our campaign will primarily be framed towards lower and middle class citizens. Ultimately we wish to "prime" citizens, or temporarily activate and enhance accessibility of concepts and considerations in memory. Cognitions that have been primed through recent mention in the campaign will be, easily accessed from memory, and will therefore be far more likely to influence opinion than unprimed, inaccessible cognition (Nelson and Oxley P. 1042) middle class and the impoverished. One of the major issues of the funding that Amstutz supported was that it was strongly tied to tax base (Richard). Wealthier neighborhoods with greater tax income had higher quality educational resources. The uproar for reform called for more equitable funding, an issue which in recent years has come to potentially impact Wooster, as some schools have been at risk of closing.

Mailings will be a critical aspect of our campaign plan. Canvasing is a critical prerequisite to sending out mailings, as it most important to target citizens who have been determined to be sympathetic to the candidate's position (Godwin). With that considered we will have several mailings proposed. The initial mailing provides a personal introduction of the campaign from John, something which is somewhat necessary considering John lacks name recognition. It will be critical to John's success that citizens know the proper pronunciation of his name, as recognition between hearing a name and seeing it on paper is critical (Iyengar and McGrady P. 190) The initial mailing will feature a phonetic spelling of his last name, Mal-E-oh. The mailing will need to focus on the potential successes of John in office, as he has no direct political experience or accomplishments of past to cite. It will go into some generalized details of his platform, specifically mentioning workers rights, expanding the middle class, and providing accessible education. The mailing will feature great emphasis on the need to transition to new political balance, as Amstutz has been active in the area for over 30 years. While it is critical to send out this mailing in the general mail, it will also be critical for Maglio to hand distribute the mailings and personally introduce himself as a candidate to several critical groups of constituents in Wayne County. First, is the Wooster City School Board. Next, the Wayne County Fair Board, and perhaps the Wooster Chamber of Commerce Board. Each of these boards of directors feature highly engaged citizens in the Wayne County area, most of whom are connected and trusted by many local residents. Appealing to each board serves a specific purpose. The school board gives John a chance to promote his education platform to those directly in decision-making positions. In discussions with the community, having educators validate Maglio's standpoint would be a great boost. The Chamber of Commerce gives Maglio the chance to present his platform on economic issues to representatives from

many of Wooster's locally owned business. Support of the business class is critical to Maglio's campaign, as it focuses on the hardships of many of these individuals. Lastly, appealing to the Wayne County Fair Board is critical as the Fair represents easily the biggest annual happening in the County each year. Appealing to the organizers of the largest social event of the year can be very beneficial to Maglio's campaign.

The second mailings will be more specifically issue based. The first of which will focus on economic issues. The biggest highlight of this mailing will be the relations between the GOP and support of Issue 2. As the campaign is intended to be strictly positive, this is where framing is very critical. Information must be presented which shows how Amstutz failed, without saying anything remotely close to that verbatim. In this mailing, connections must be made between the current state of politics and the current state of the economy. Discussing non-partisan matters such as Issue 2, will likely be advantageous for Maglio, considering he can never win this election promoting strictly liberal values. Focus on non-partisan issues continues with the second issue-based mailing, which will focus on education. This mailing essentially has the same objectives and obstacles as the previous. Again it must highlight the numerous shortcomings of Amstutz, without directly being critical. Essentially, both mailings will be very similar in generalized content and would be ideal for something on a stock card of roughly 7 in. x 5 in. double sided. On the first side the issue can be presented, as well as how past policy decisions have helped the issue persist. On the back, Maglio's plan for action will be described in brief, featuring actual policy change possibilities.

Worker's rights and economic issues are important to push for several reasons. One, it's an issue that has an enormous amount of national significance. This is for several reasons. First, Ohio is considered to be a major swing state. This naturally makes the outcome of the vote relevant. Additionally, with public employee union rights a key issue being debated across the country, it is critical to address as a key point within the campaign. The significance of Issue 2 in Ohio is further exemplified by presence of national political agencies running advertisements in Ohio last fall during mid-term elections. The law was designed to prohibit strikes by all of Ohio's 350,000 government workers, limit collective bargaining in the public sector, require all public employees to pay at least 15 per cent of their healthcare premiums and 10 per cent of their salaries to pension contributions, and force more meritocratic calculations on pay and job cuts (Weitzman).

Education is yet another critical issue to focus on for a variety of reasons. First, Amstutz helped support a method of public education financing that the State Supreme Court has previously considered unconstitutional (Richard). Second, with education being an issue that has numerous times gotten the attention of the state Supreme Court, it has statewide implications. Lastly, the issue of education ties directly into John's concern for the poor and middle class. Through accurate issue representation, connections can quite effortless by tied between the struggling economy and perceived failures of public education.

A third and less featured issue of John's campaign, is hydraulic fracturing, or fracing (Fraq-ing), in which naturally gas is retrieved from rock layers below earth's surface. Many regions, including Wayne County have been targeted for fracing, however it is an incredibly dangerous and exploitive process. Amongst the biggest damages caused by fracing are decrease in property value, contamination of drinking water, environmental damage, emotional harm, and physical harm are related to the complicated technological risks and shortcomings of fracing (Gilbert). John has committed to not only increasing awareness surrounding fracing, but also to protect all of Wayne county against it.

Already having the support from John's campaign, he will be featured in the advertisement we prepare, and his camp made it clear they would appreciate our advertisement strictly being positive. Our ad, as well as our campaign, will be issue based, as we feel this gives John the highest chance of success. This is in opposition to the other common basis of campaigns, Image, which focuses on the politicians experience and character, or Party, which focuses on building strong identification between the candidate and the party which he/she runs for (Bimber and Davis P. 44). With respect to image basis, John is incredibly young and simply hasn't had the time to gain significant political or vocational experience, therefore there is little fact based evidence we can use to promote his image, which is very humble. With respect to party basis, Wayne County is a traditionally republican area, and therefore it would not be recommendable to promote the fact that John is a democrat, rather than highlight his party, we will use terms that highlight more positive attributes and use words with deeper connotation than democrat or liberal. In our advertisement John will appear modestly dressed in order to appeal to his ideal constituency, middle class America. While this is certainly an emotional appeal, we must limit the amount of emotional appeals, considering the fact that our emotional content will be limited to enthusiasm as opposed to fear, and enthusiastic ads do best when there is high correlation between ideology of viewers and candidate (Brader P. 170). Depending on his progress in his campaign and what John's desires are, the content of the ad may be adjusted accordingly. One of the advantages to having such high access to John's campaign is our ability to modify our work to better accompany his desires; if he has three ads detailing educational failures in the district, there is no reason for us to make a fourth.

As aforementioned, our video advertisement will primarily be issue based, featuring the core matters of John's campaign, the economy and the middle class. Just because our ad is issue based doesn't mean we aren't concerned with his image. We would like to see him dressed casually, avoiding the white-collar appearance that many politicians present. The ad will feature John talking about his vision for the economy and how he proposes we stimulate it. How exactly we will display is not yet certain. It is possible we will simply provide relatively candid footage of him in discussions about a particular issue, or we could have him in a relative setting, for example discussing the economic issues while pumping gas. These details will all be finalized with his

campaign staff, as John will be the centerpiece of our ad. Narration may not be needed in large quantity with audio/video from John accounting for a majority of the content.

All in all, we plan to run a positive campaign, utilized volunteer turnout and technology. Despite a great challenge in defeating a long time incumbent, there are numerous facts that we can use to our advantage, for example the declining state of economy, and the fact that the incumbent voted to pass Issue 2. We will do nothing to attack the character of the incumbent, however we do intend to note economic trends during his tenure. Ultimately, the campaign can only go as far as to provide the dots, citizens must take it into their hands to make connections on their own. In an area such as Wayne County, this should be a challenging campaign, but with affective strategizing, John will have a chance.

References

Brader, Ted. 2006. *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Emotional Appeals in Political Ads Work.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Bimber, Bruce & Richard Davis. 2003. Campaigning Online: The Internet in US Elections. New York: Oxford University Press.
http://eres.library.denison.edu/eres/download.aspx?docID=59876&shortname=bimber_and_davis_chapter_3.pdf

Boynton, G. R. " Going Viral – The Dynamics of Attentio."*Youtube and the 2008 election cycle in the United States*. (2009): 11. Web. 3 Apr. 2012.
<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=jitpc2009&sei-redir=1&referer=http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&q=campaign+video+advertisements&btnG=Search&as_sdt=0%2C36&as_ylo=2000&as_vis=0

Gerber, Alan and Donald P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. The American Political Science Review 94 (3), pp. 653-663.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2585837.pdf

Gilbert, Jesica. "Assessing the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing." *Missouri University Law School*. n. page. Print. <http://law.missouri.edu/jesl/wp-

Godwin, R. Kenneth. " The Structure, Content, and Use of Political Direct Mai." *Polity*. 20.3 (1988): n. page. Print.

Graf, Joseph. "New Media-The Cutting Edge of Campaign Communications." *Center for Politics*. n. page. Web. 3 Apr. 2012.
<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/downloads/Semiatin.CuttingEdgeCampaignComm.pdf>.

Gueorguieva Vassia, . "Voters, MySpace, and YouTube The Impact of Alternative Communication Channels on the 2006 Election Cycle and Beyond ." *Social Science Computer Research*. 26.3 (2008): n. page. Print.

Gulati, Girish, and Christine Williams. "Congressional Candidates' Use of YouTube in 2008: Its Frequency and Rationale ." *Youtube and the 2008 election cycle in the United States*. (2009): n. page. Web. 3 Apr. 2012.
<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=jit

pc2009&sei-
redir=1&referer=http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&q=campaign+video
+advertisements&btnG=Search&as_sdt=0%2C36&as_ylo=2000&as_vis=0

Iyengar, Shanto, and Jennifer McGrady. "Media Politics: A Citizens
Guide." *Campaigning Through the Media*. n. page. Web. 2 Apr. 2012.
<http://pcl.stanford.edu/common/docs/research/iyengar/2007/mp-
excerpt.pdf>.

Jalonick, Mary. 2001. How to 'Primary' an Incumbent. Campaigns and
Elections Vol. 22 Issue 3, P. 28.
http://yb7zk3sd3g.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-
2004&ctx_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-
8&rfr_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft_val_fmt=info:of
i/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=How+to+%22Prim
ary%22+an+Incumbent&rft.jtitle=Campaigns+and+Elections&rft.au
=Mary+Clare+Jalonick&rft.au=Ron+Faucheux&rft.date=2001-05-
01&rft.issn=0197-
0771&rft.volume=22&rft.issue=3&rft.spage=28&rft.externalDBID=I
CNE&rft.externalDocID=1332124921

Margolis, Michael
Campaigning Online: The Internet in U.S. Elections by Bruce Bimber;
Perspectives on Politics , Vol. 2, No. 3 (Sep., 2004), pp. 590-591
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3688843.pdf?acceptTC=true

Nelson, Thomas, and Zoe Oxley. " Issue Framing Effects on Belief
Importance and Opinio." *Journal of Politics*. 61.4 (1999): n. page.
Print.

Richard, Alan. "School Finance System Upheld By Ohio Court." *Education Week*. 21.2
(2001): n.   page. Print.

Weitzman, Hal. "Ohio showdown looms over worker rights." *Financial
Times*. (2011): n. page. Print.