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IAB

# 2012 Elections and Digital Political Ad Campaigns

Sept. 2012

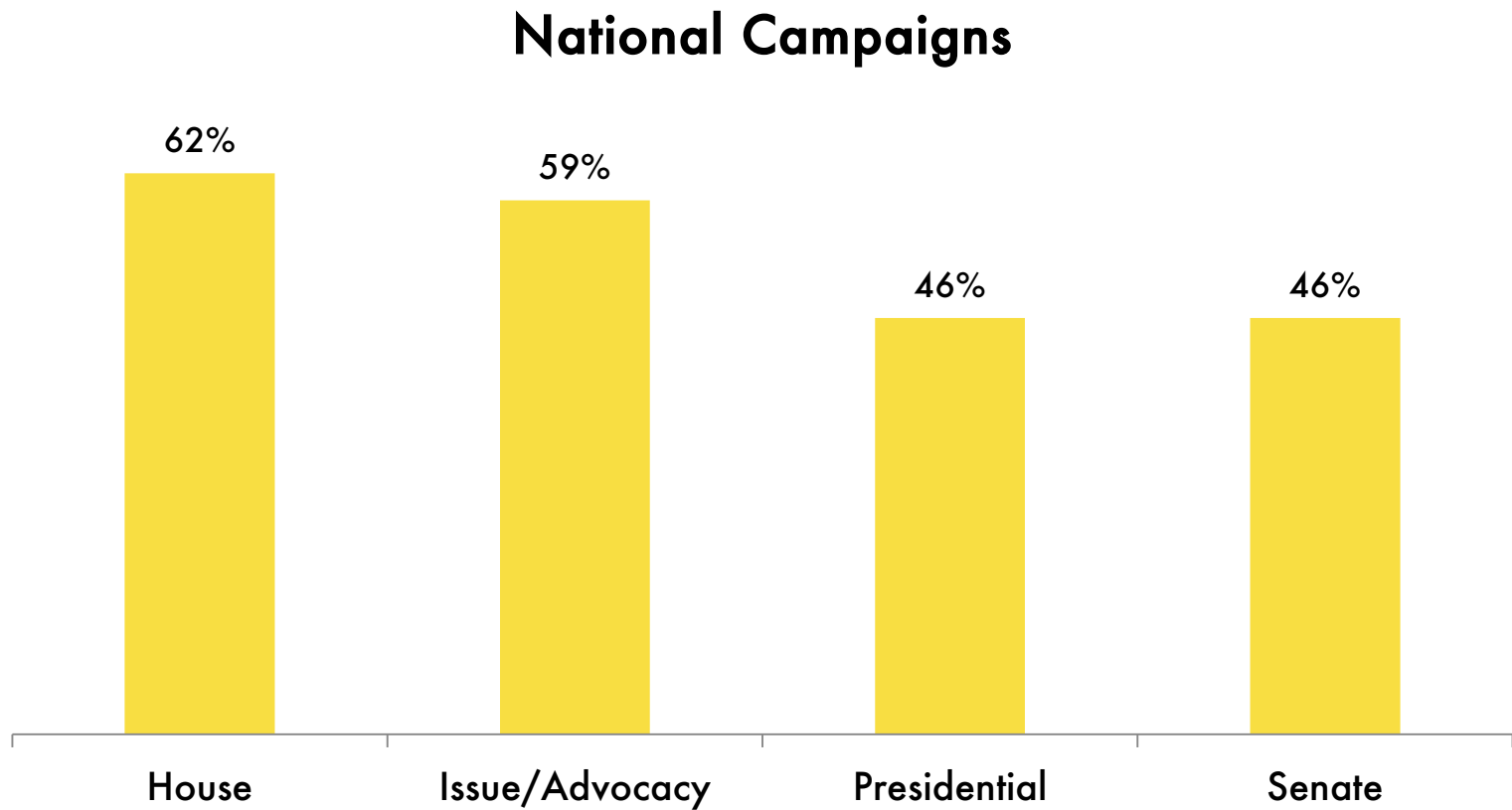
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# Methodology

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The IAB partnered with Campaigns and Elections magazine to solicit respondents to a survey of national political campaign consultants and strategists in the U.S. Understanding that this professional circle includes a highly limited number, the organizations strove to attract as many respondents as possible through three email blasts sent directly to subscribers to Campaigns and Elections magazine between July and September, 2012. Out of 131 respondents to the survey, 44 individuals were currently involved in at least one national campaign. The survey further qualified respondents through a series of questions on awareness and involvement in campaign media allocation and spend decisions. Much of the information reported comes from analyses of verbatims provided by the respondents.

# Types of National Campaigns



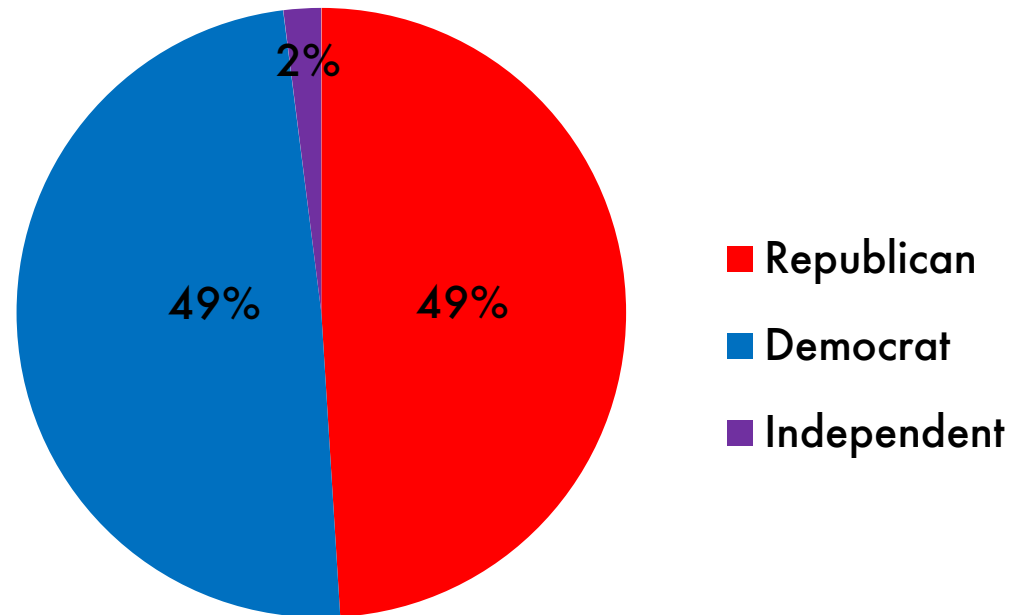
Which of the following types of national campaigns are you involved in?

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# Political Affiliation of Campaigns

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National Campaigns



Please specify the party affiliation(s) of the campaigns you are working on.

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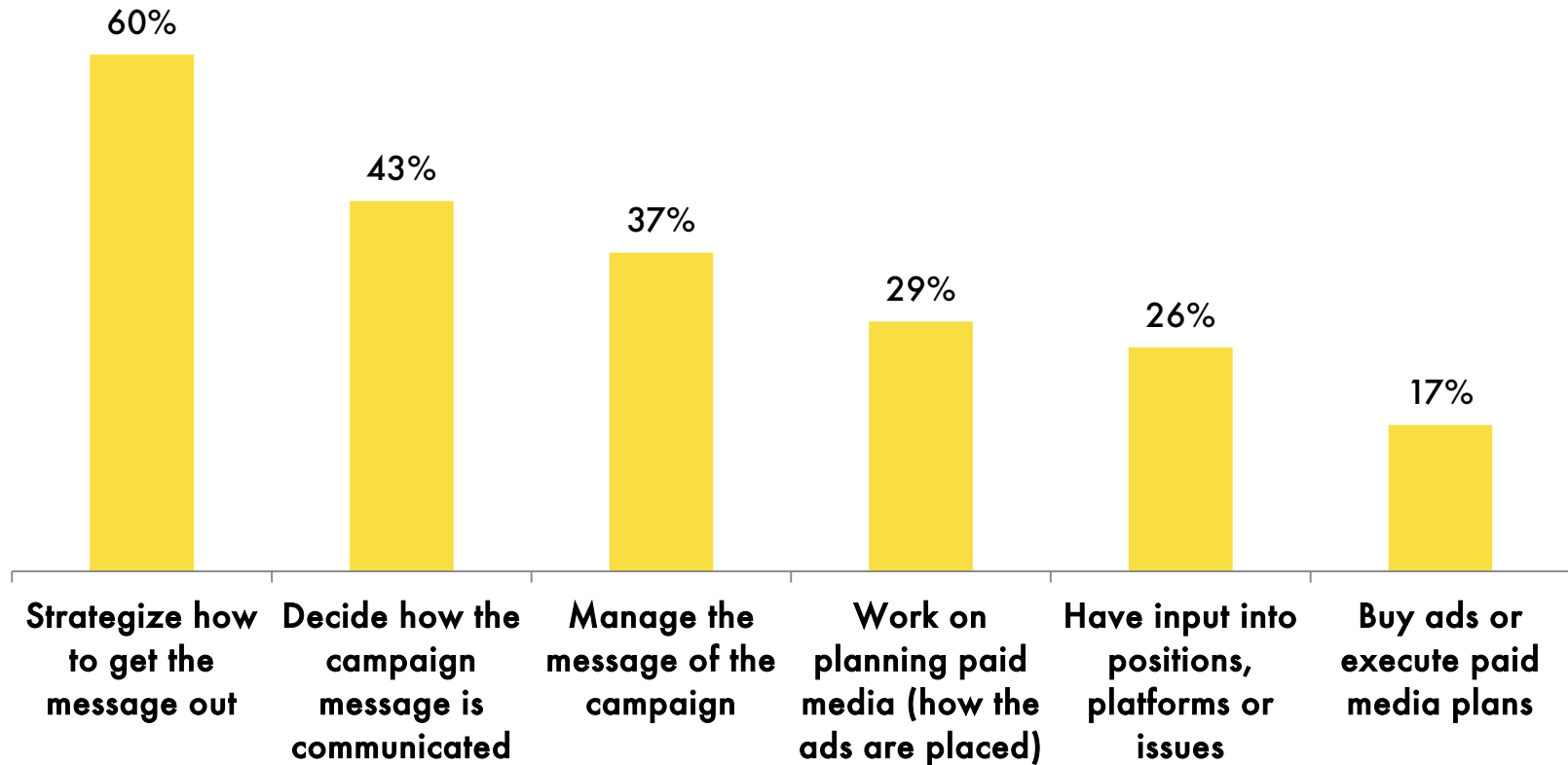
# Job Title

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Please select which function best describes your company/organization.

# Job Function



What is your function within your organization? (You may choose more than one response)

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# **Key Themes from Verbatims, Multiple Choice and Write-Ins**

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# **Digital Political Ad Spend Growth/Decline Across Platforms Since 2008**



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# Digital Political Ad Spend Has Grown Since 2008, Especially in Social Media

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- **All are Spending More in Digital Compared to 2008**
- **All are Spending More in Social Media**
- Most are Spending The Same or More in This Campaign Than in 2008 on:
  - **Mobile**
  - **Display**
  - **Video**
  - **Email**
  - **Audio**
- A Few Are Spending Less in **Search**

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# Most Beneficial Attributes of Digital Advertising...

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## Targeting Capabilities

All are using Microtargeting

**Immediacy of Responding to Negative Attacks -  
Especially via Social Media**

**Ability to Have a Conversation with Voters  
Through Social Media**

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# Challenges and Opportunities for Digital Political Campaigns

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# Digital Buys Are Difficult to Execute...

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'It is extremely difficult to execute interactive advertising media buys'

**But Worth It, Since Digital Provides Useful Metrics and Reaches the Right Audience**

'The metrics I get from digital ad campaigns are extremely useful'

'Digital media is the best place for messages to younger voters'

'Interactive political advertising reaches the right audience'

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# Biggest Obstacles to Digital and Changes Sought

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# The Biggest Obstacle to Buying Digital

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**is TV...**

“I am required to buy TV ads and have little budget left for other media”

“Other media, like TV reaches more voters”

“Interactive political advertising doesn't reach my targeted voters”

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# Political Consultants Want Proof That Digital Ads Work

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## They Seek Research and Data that Prove Effectiveness, ROI and Reach

*Changes the industry could make to increase digital political spend:*

**'Provide proof (i.e. data, research) to show campaign managers that digital political ads are equally/more effective than traditional political ads'**

**'Provide proof (i.e. data, research) that digital media reaches the right audience for the campaign'**

**'Show a clear and measureable return on investment (i.e. number of potential voters added to email list, fundraising goals met, etc.)'**

**'Make targeting tools (behavioral targeting, microtargeting) easier to use'**

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# Future Predictions on Digital Political Advertising



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# The Future of Digital Political Advertising Will Be...

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## More Targeted

“As web TV emerges... we will be able to target these voters per household”

“Mobile may surpass certain forms of digital advertising as the targeting capability will outshine other forms of digital ads like desktop banners.”

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# The Future of Digital Political Advertising Will Be...

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## More Interactive

“...campaigning landscape is going to be more collegiate, democratic and interactive where questions are not left to mainstream media alone to ask candidates. People across the spectrum can too pose their questions”

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# The Future of Digital Political Advertising Will Be...

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## Televised...

“...TV, radio, and direct mail will continue to dominate for at least another generation...”

“TV is so expensive and it's reach is quickly fading, but Digital still can't reach those older dependable voters.”

## ...but More Digital

“...the influence of online/digital media will perhaps increase with those who will be in their 40s and 50s.”

“...time for TV and newspaper viewership is decreasing... [Voters are] making up for "lost leisure time" with digital media”

“...TV will still command paid media budgets, but digital will come very close to equaling it on smarter campaigns.”

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# Other Wants

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## Targeting Beyond Digital

“Cable companies need to provide MORE AND BETTER DATA about their viewership”

## Customization and Personalization

“It has to be more customized.”

“ Campaigns need to invest more time in the earned media space online.”

“Digital advertising... needs to be broader than buying banner ads and having a Facebook page”