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FEDERAL ELECTION ONLINE AD TESTING



Testing Political Ads

Political ads serve two key purposes; they can motivate the sponsor party's supporters to vote and they can persuade target voters to vote for the sponsor party. Ads accomplish these goals through two mechanisms; they can "prime" or raise awareness of something people already know or feel that gives the sponsor party an advantage over its competitors or the ads can "persuade" by providing new information or framing existing information in a new light to change how people feel about the sponsor party and/or its opponents.

Do political ads really work? Answering that question involves addressing two key challenges:

- You need to examine reactions according to voters' initial views. The views voters hold before they see an ad influence how voters see that ad. Generally the supporters of a party are predisposed to like that party's ads and not to like the ads of parties they oppose. Unaligned voters may be open to several parties. To assess the effectiveness of ads, you need to control for voters' initial attitudes.
- Whether people say they like an ad or not really doesn't matter. What does matter is if the ad moves the numbers. However, if people have already seen the ads, the effect of the ad will already be factored in to initial attitudes. So we need to find people who have not already seen the ad and see how they respond.

We will use the following approach to test political ads throughout the campaign:

- First, we will identify the respondents initial views including Party Identification, their current vote and how respondents feel about the leaders and time for a change. These are our pre questions.
- We will show them an ad.
- We will ask if they have seen the ad before and what they feel about that ad. We call these diagnostic questions.
- We will re-ask their vote preference and how respondents feel about the leaders and time for a change. These are our post questions.
- We will show several others ads and ask if they have seen the ad before and what they feel about that ad to increase the sample size for the diagnostic questions.

The key test is whether people who are seeing the ad for the first time change their responses on the pre/post test. Does the ad "move the numbers". We then use the diagnostic questions to understand why the numbers are moving.

It is important to understand that an ad can make a positive difference to a campaign even if people say they don't like it. For instance, people may say they don't like an ad that provides negative information about another party, but if they feel the information is credible and informative, it can still move the numbers.

Methodology

- This report is part of INNOVATIVE's ongoing research to test election ads during the 2015 federal election campaign.
- The results in this report are from the fourth wave of our ad testing survey among 800 randomly-selected Canadian citizens or permanent residents 18 years or older, between August 31st and September 3rd.
- Respondents were shown 3 ads in a random order and answered diagnostic questions about each one. For the first ad a respondent saw a pre-post test on vote, leader attributes, and a "time for a change" attitude was also administered.
- In total 3800 respondents have been surveyed since July 28th, with each respondent seeing 3 ads out of the 19 ads tested to date.
- *The sample has been weighted using Statistics Canada's 2011 Census data to reflect actual demographic breakdown of the Canadian population.*
- The goal of the survey was to see if the ads "moved the numbers". We use T-tests to measure whether the post-test values improved from the pre-test measures.

Note: *Graphs and tables may not always total 100% due to rounding values rather than any error in data. Sums are added before rounding numbers.*

Measuring Impact: Significance testing through T-tests

What is a T-test?

A paired-sample “t-test” is a statistical test that compares the means of two variables across the whole sample. In this instance, we are comparing the means between the pre- and post-campaign agreement for each of the key attitudes including social permission.

T-tests are used in this study to determine whether a change in response to the same questions asked at two different times (e.g. assessment of key performance attributes) are statistically significant. In other words, we are trying to determine whether a change in opinion is caused by chance sampling variation or is likely to exist in the population.

In terms of formal testing, a significance value of 0.05 or 0.1 is generally used to determine whether or not there is a relationship between variables. At 0.05, the relationship is significant at a confidence level of 95% or 19 times out of 20 and a 0.1 level of significance is at a confidence level of 90% or 9 times out of 10.

Impact of Ads on vote. These results shows the change from before seeing each ad to afterwards in the combined vote share for each main party.

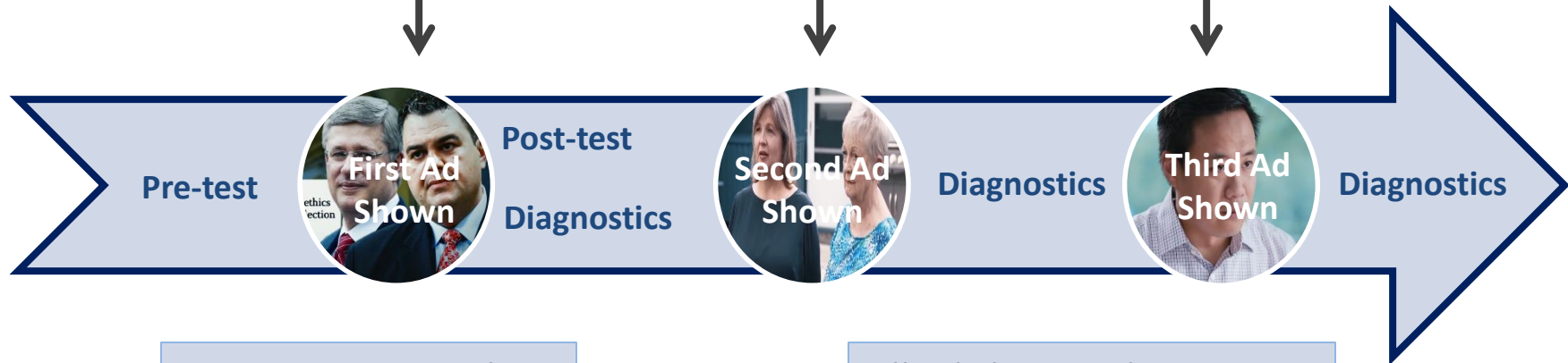
Impact of Ads on “time for a change”. These results shows the change from before seeing each ad to afterwards in the net level of agreement with the “time for a change” attitude.

Impact of Ads on leader attributes. These results shows the change from before seeing each ad to afterwards in the percentage of respondents who pick each leader on each leadership attribute.

Note: Pre-Post changes in red are significantly different from 0 at a 95% confidence level. Net support in blue are significantly different from 0 at a 90% confidence level.

Measuring Impact: Significance testing through T-tests

Ad Pool



Pre-post test results have a sample size of 200 as this test is asked only on the first ad shown.

All ads have a diagnostic sample size of up to 600 as each respondent provides diagnostics for each ad they view.

AD 3 (TV) – CPC
“Justin on TFSAs”

AD 2 (TV) – NDP
“I’m Ready”

AD 4 (TV) – CPC
“Depend on Him”



Ads
Tested

AD 1 (TV) - NDP
“Friends”

Summary of Diagnostic Results

All respondents

Summary – Diagnostics

		*(net scores)			
		Ad 1 NDP <i>Friends</i>	Ad 2 NDP <i>I'm ready</i>	Ad 3 CPC <i>Justin on TFSAs</i>	Ad 4 CPC <i>Depend on him</i>
Diagnostics					
Impression		-9%	+61%	-30%	+4%
Credibility		+50%	+68%	-2%	+5%
Interesting information		+32%	+54%	-11%	0%
Someone like me		+10%	+35%	-21%	-7%
Total net diagnostic score		+83	+218	-64	+2
Perceived Vote impact					
	Liberal	+6%	-7%	-1%	+3%
	Conservative	-26%	-21%	-21%	-11%
	NDP	+3%	+30%	+8%	+3%
Exposure					
	% who have seen/heard ad	14%	25%	72%	17%

Pre-Post Summary

Respondents who haven't seen the ad

Note: Pre-Post changes **in red** are significantly different from 0 at a 95% confidence level. Changes **in blue** are significantly different from 0 at a 90% confidence level.





Vote Summary

by those who haven't seen the ad



If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for?

In order to understand how ads affect voter decision, combined vote was asked of 200 respondents before and after watching/listening to the ad. The net change in vote preference ID is shown below, with statistically significant results highlighted in blue and red.

Change in Combined Vote (post minus pre)								
	Ad 1 NDP <i>Friends</i>	Ad 2 NDP <i>I'm ready</i>	Ad 3 CPC <i>Justin on TFSAs</i>	Ad 4 CPC <i>Depend on him</i>				
Conservative	-2	-2	+4	+2				
Liberal	-1	-1	-8	-2				
NDP	+1	+4	0	-1				
Undecided/WNV	+2	0	0	+2				
Impact on Agree: Time-for-Change (post minus pre)	0	+1	+2	-5				

Note: Pre-Post changes in red are significantly different from 0 at a 95% confidence level. Changes in blue are significantly different from 0 at a 90% confidence level.

Leadership Attributes Summary- Election 2

by those who haven't seen the ad



Now we would like to read you a list of different words or phrases that describe some political leaders. For each word or phrase, please indicate who it BEST describes. [values shown as a percentage point change between pre-and post test]

Note: Cares: "Cares about people like me", For the middle class: "Will stand up for the middle class"



*Numbers shown depict change from pre to post test

		Ad 1 NDP "Friends"	Ad 2 NDP "I'm ready"	Ad 3 CPC "Justin on TFSAs"	Ad 4 CPC "Depend on Him"
Harper	Cares	+3	-1	+4	+2
	Competent	-2	-5	-4	0
	For the middle class	+1	+1	2	+6
Trudeau	Cares	0	-4	0	0
	Competent	0	+1	-3	-2
	For the middle class	-4	-3	0	-4
Mulcair	Cares	-1	+13	-6	-1
	Competent	+3	+9	+3	+2
	For the middle class	+1	+6	-14	-1

Note: Pre-Post changes in red are significantly different from 0 at a 95% confidence level. Changes in blue are significantly different from 0 at a 90% confidence level.

Vote Impact by Party ID

All respondents

Vote impacts by party ID: NDP – “Friends”

Q

Perceived vote impact: Did the ad leave you feeling more or less likely to vote for...? [Asked for all ads seen]

Ad 1 NDP: “Friends”

Party ID



Conservative

Liberal

NDP

Unaligned

Conservative

+36%

-63%

-60%

-33%

Liberal

-40%

+58%

-3%

+4%

New Democrat

-46%

+21%

+61%

-2%

Perceived
vote impact
(Net scores)

Vote impacts by party ID: NDP- I'm Ready

Q

Perceived vote impact: Did the ad leave you feeling more or less likely to vote for...? [Asked for all ads seen; n=600]

Ad 2 NDP: "I'm Ready"

Party ID



Conservative

Liberal

NDP

Unaligned

Conservative

+40%

-48%

-66%

-17%

Liberal

-21%

+29%

-34%

-11%

New Democrat

-6%

+42%

+77%

+19%

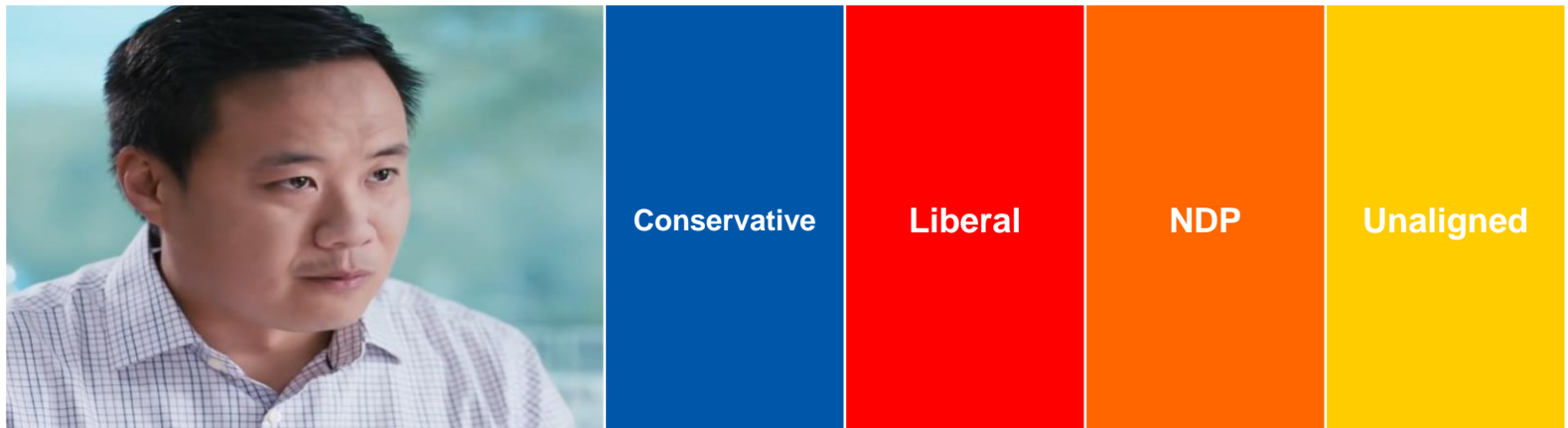
Perceived
vote impact
(Net scores)

Vote impacts by party ID: CPC- Justin on TFSAs

Q **Perceived vote impact:** Did the ad leave you feeling more or less likely to vote for...? [Asked for all ads seen]

Ad 3 CPC: "Justin on TFSAs"

Party ID



	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Unaligned
Conservative	+52%	-65%	-62%	-25%
Liberal	-47%	+57%	0%	-12%
New Democrat	-21%	+12%	+51%	+5%

Perceived
vote impact
(Net scores)

Vote impacts by party ID: CPC- Depend on Him



Perceived vote impact: Did the ad leave you feeling more or less likely to vote for...? [Asked for all ads seen]

Ad 4 CPC: "Depend on Him"

Party ID



Conservative

Liberal

NDP

Unaligned

Conservative

+62%

-50%

-55%

-13%

Liberal

-44%

+58%

+5%

-7%

New Democrat

-46%

+18%

+61%

-1%

Perceived
vote impact
(Net scores)

Diagnostic Testing by Party ID

Diagnostic testing by party ID: NDP - Friends

Q

Impression: What was your overall impression of the ad?


Credibility: How credible was the information presented in the advertisement?

Interesting: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad contained interesting information.

Someone Like me: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad was made for someone like me.

Ad 1 NDP: "Friends"

Party ID

					
		Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Unaligned
Diagnostic Net Scores	Impression	-47%	+16%	+37%	-27%
	Credibility	+9%	+83%	+77%	+38%
	Interesting	-11%	+62%	+61%	+23%
	Someone Like Me	-27%	+36%	+40%	+3%
	Total Net Diagnostic Score	-76	+197	+215	+38

Diagnostic testing by party ID: NDP – I’m Ready



Impression: What was your overall impression of the ad?


Credibility: How credible was the information presented in the advertisement?

Interesting: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad contained interesting information.

Someone Like me: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad was made for someone like me.

Ad 2 NDP: “I’m Ready”

Party ID

		Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Unaligned
Diagnostic Net Scores	Impression	+37%	+73%	+89%	+50%
	Credibility	+45%	+80%	+94%	+62%
	Interesting	+28%	+68%	+87%	+42%
	Someone Like Me	+9%	+41%	+84%	+22%
Total Net Diagnostic Score		+120	+262	+354	+175

Diagnostic testing by party ID: CPC – Justin on TFSAs

Q

Impression: What was your overall impression of the ad?


Credibility: How credible was the information presented in the advertisement?

Interesting: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad contained interesting information.

Someone Like me: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad was made for someone like me.

Ad 3 CPC: "Justin on TFSAs"

Party ID

		Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Unaligned
Diagnostic Net Scores	Impression	+15%	-65%	-45%	-26%
	Credibility	+66%	-55%	-18%	-4%
	Interesting	+37%	-55%	-21%	-10%
	Someone Like Me	+27%	-56%	-30%	-29%
Total Net Diagnostic Score		+146	-231	-114	-70

Diagnostic testing by party ID: CPC – Depend on Him



Impression: What was your overall impression of the ad?

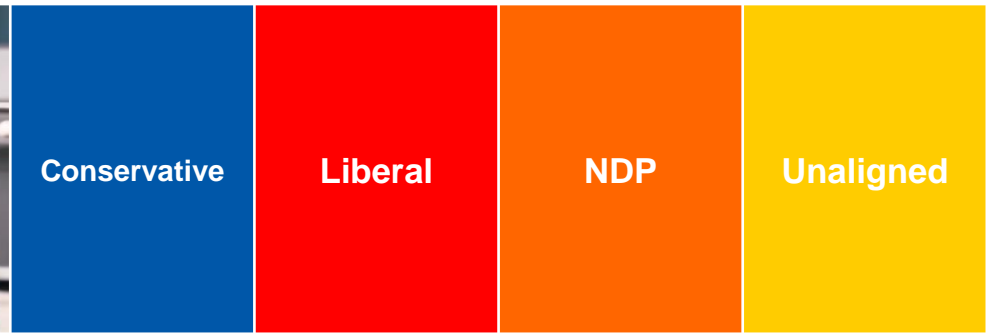
Credibility: How credible was the information presented in the advertisement?

Interesting: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad contained interesting information.

Someone Like me: Would you agree or disagree with the following statements: - This ad was made for someone like me.

Ad 4 CPC: “Depend on Him”

Party ID



Diagnostic
Net Scores

Impression	+64%	-16%	-34%	-9%
Credibility	+71%	-26%	-31%	-4%
Interesting	+59%	-23%	-33%	-15%
Someone Like Me	+53%	-35%	-47%	-13%
Total Net Diagnostic Score	+248	-100	-145	-41



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