

PR in Politics

A quick, example filled
guide



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Introduction

Making an organized effort to influence the decision-making process within a specific group in favor of your client. Seems quite simple, doesn't it?

But PR in politics is everything but simple. It is based on countless hours of research, strategizing, networking, creating the most appropriate messaging, and putting out fires daily. Every day can be a crisis day in political PR. And you need to be prepared.

This ebook will take you through the key steps you should take in PR in politics, political crisis prevention with media monitoring, principles you should follow before measuring PR, metrics you should track and election campaign ideas. We'll observe these topics through the prism of the US midterm elections.



Key PR steps in a political campaign

• When does a political PR campaign start?



In PR, your campaign starts the moment you are hired for the job. And in reality, campaigning never stops in a politician's life. Whether it's the first time your client is running or not, every moment in their lives should be placed under a magnifying glass. Because there is nothing that an opponent loves more than digging out some dirt from the past.

A good PR professional handling a political campaign should primarily nurture relationships with the media and create press releases and newsworthy content around the campaign. The ultimate goal is to amplify the media coverage and get your client's message across as many channels as possible. In this process, it's important to foresee possible pitfalls and have control during a crisis.

How can PR make or break your political campaign? Let's explore the key steps in a political campaign.



Key PR steps in a political campaign

Understand your audience

The first rule of PR 101 is **Know thy audience**. The reason is quite logical – only in this way you'll be able to connect with the target audience and provoke a positive response and action in your favor.

Getting to know the target audience is much like determining your buyer persona. You'd want to find out who they are, where they live, what kind of lifestyle they lead, what drives them, and maybe most importantly – what are their beliefs and concerns. All of this should shape your client's communication strategy and determine the tone of their public appearances.

After all, finding a comprehensive way to state a political mission that solves the issues and supports beliefs is the backbone of any political PR strategy. Media monitoring can be a valuable asset when researching and composing campaign messaging because it refers to tracking publicly available information on a certain topic in online and offline media. It is very simple to get unbiased opinions about certain topics, people, trends, and news through media monitoring tools. What is more, you can draw out the exact expressions people use and reuse them when creating communication strategies for the campaign.



Key PR steps in a political campaign

Collect and organize valuable media contacts

What do all PR professionals have in common?

All of them probably own a large contact list of media contacts. One may argue – when it comes to PR in politics, you can never have too many. This is why an integral part of every PR professional is working towards an even greater outreach ability. You can collect contact details manually or with the help of a media database like Vuelio.

When creating your personal database, add as much information as possible on the contacts (like geographical data, focus, media outlets, etc). This will make it easier for you to target the right people when it comes to sending out your press releases during the campaign. Also, it is important to target media outlets that your target audience consumes. You can expect that the media outlets that share views closer to your opponents won't maybe draw the same picture about your client as you'd like to.



Key PR steps in a political campaign

Prepare a crisis communication strategy

When it comes to PR in politics, the first step in creating a crisis communication strategy is always to try and foresee what type of crisis can hit you. In politics, there's a potential crisis lurking every day. It's all about reputation management – and when the stakes are as high as winning the election, you can imagine that all your opponents will be working really hard to dig out some dirty laundry from the past.

In general, when preparing a crisis communication strategy in political PR, it's important to:

- Focus on the positives, not just negatives or problems
- Take control over the narrative and keep your messaging on track
- Connect with your audience in a variety of positive ways
- Steer the conversation in the direction that it answers questions and quiets the outrage
- Make sure to cover all communication channels (media outlets, social media platforms, etc.)



Key PR steps in a political campaign

Work on creating an impressive public appearance

PR in politics involves a lot of public speaking and press conferences. In these situations, one thing always saves the day – great preparation. You can never be ready for all possible questions, but just as with crisis communication – you can foresee a lot of the topics your candidate will have to tackle in their speeches and prepare a strategy. There are several tactics in political PR when we talk about public speaking:

• Spinning

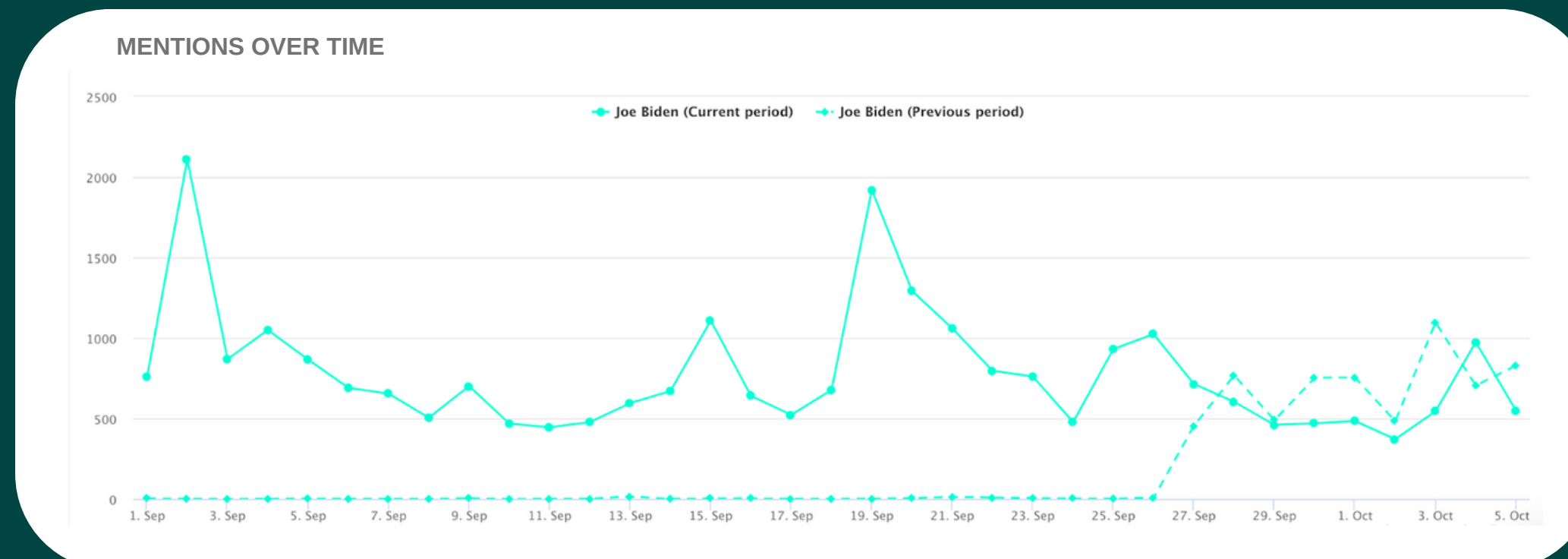
A spin is a common PR tactic in politics that involves presenting particular facts in a way that supports the candidate's position. Spinning is often used to discredit an opponent or to downplay a mistake.

A rather recent political spin performed by Joe Biden provoked a lot of controversies. Faced with an increase in inflation and higher prices, Biden and the White House have tried to pivot the messaging – and warned that the economy was about to slow down and that it was, in fact, a good thing. This message isn't completely wrong. But it's not all of the truth either.

Platform messaging

A platform, in this sense, is a set of beliefs that a candidate has and the goals they want to achieve. This platform is actually the starting point for all campaign messaging and the baseline of the PR communication strategy. It is often repeated at campaign events so voters can hear the same message on the same platform.

To go back to Joe Biden – his main message throughout the whole campaign was based on communicating the message of unity. But with Midterms coming and the trends not going in his party's favor, he decided to make a twist – and openly attack MAGA (Make America Great Again) Republicans beginning of September. This ruffled quite a lot of feathers on both sides and signified a different strategy.



Mentions over time for Joe Biden in Determ

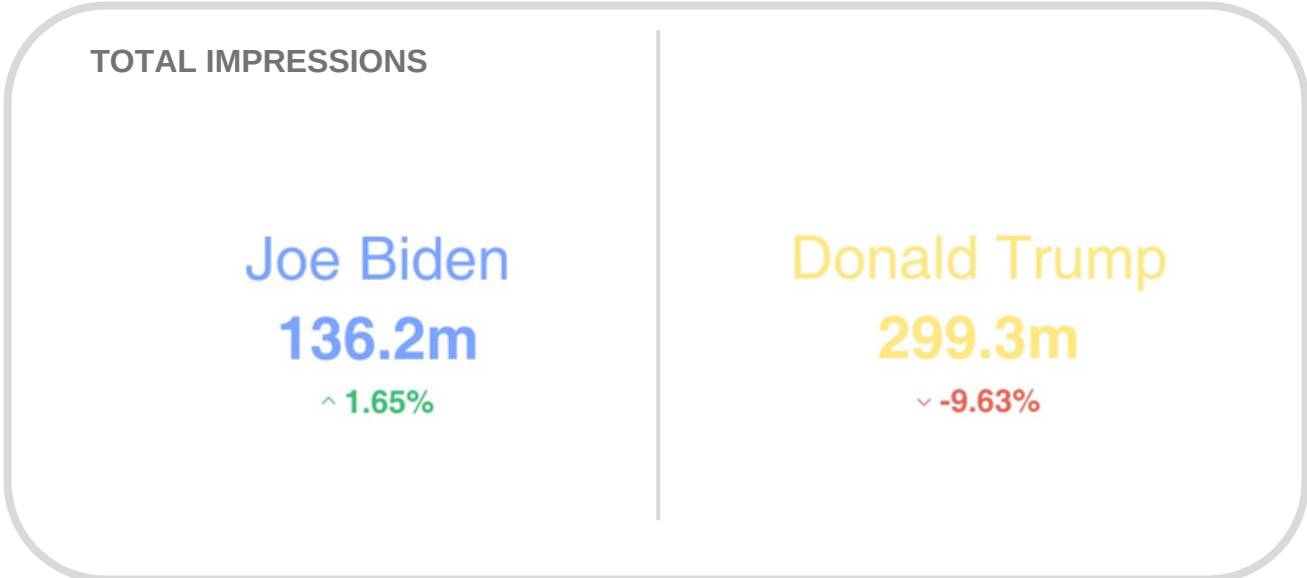


Key PR steps in a political campaign

Use media monitoring tools to track political matters, news and competitors

When we talk about PR in politics, it's crucial to get the right information on time. A delay in reacting to a negative statement, a scandal, or a matter of common interest may signify the end of a political career. This is why media monitoring tools present a valuable asset in any PR agency working on a political campaign.

These tools can notify you in real-time when something of your interest is mentioned. They track the outreach of your campaigns and speeches, your press releases, and the general sentiment that the audience has towards your candidate or party. In addition, you can filter the data by language, source, and influence score, giving you additional information you can use to better understand the influence of your efforts.



Total impressions comparison between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, in Determ

Political reputation management



A politician's electoral success often depends on the amount of publicity they get from the media. After all, it determines the circle of people their message will reach. But just as much as the media can increase your visibility, they also expose you to public scrutiny and comments, which aren't always pleasant. Once your voice is out there, it is laid to both praise and criticism. And as much as it can go to your advantage, it can endanger your reputation to various extents.

Political reputation management refers to efforts to secure a positive sentiment towards a political candidate or party. These efforts include various PR tactics like crafting specific messaging, interactions with an audience online and offline, resolving crises, nurturing relationships with the media, etc.

The ultimate goal of all of these practices is to influence how people feel. Therefore, sentiment is one of the most important metrics to follow within political reputation management. This can quickly be done with the help of media monitoring tools, like Determ.



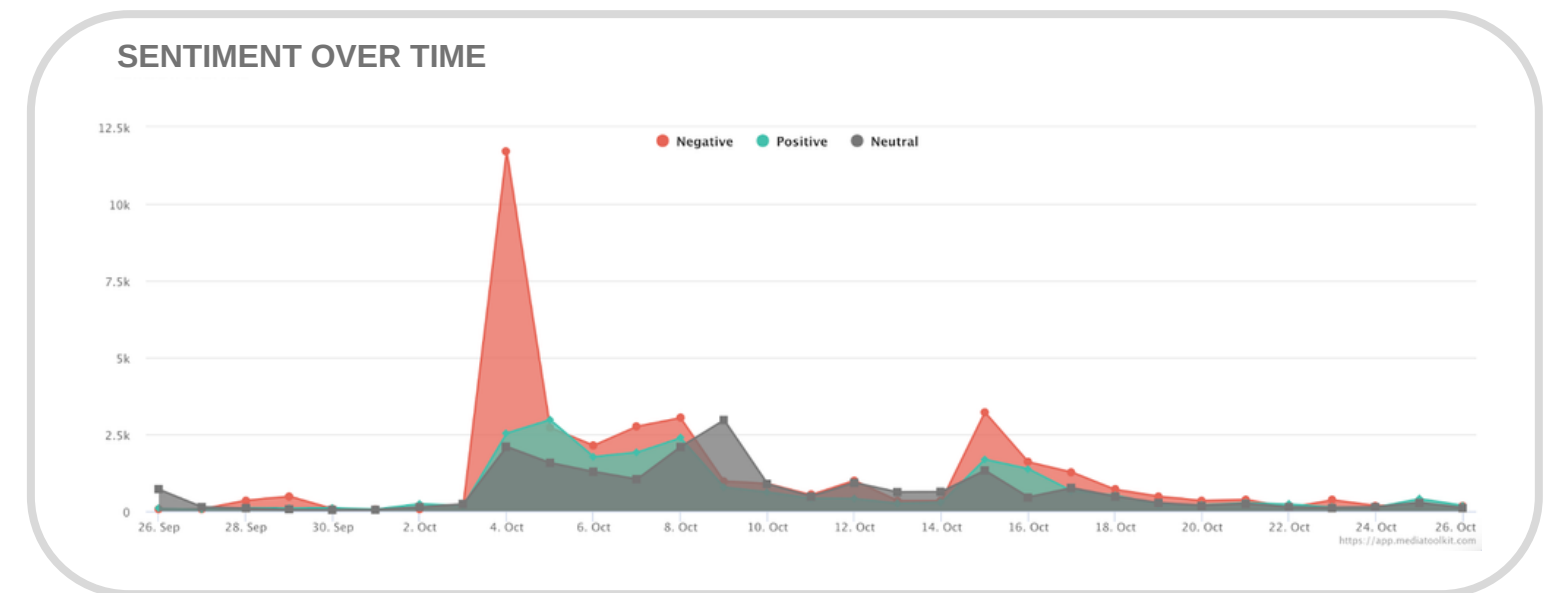
5 ways media monitoring can help in political reputation management

Use market research to prepare a crisis communication plan

Well planned is half done, right? This especially goes for dealing with crises. You can't predict all the troubles heading your way. But you can group possible crises into topical clusters and have a designated plan for every single one of them.

What kind of topical clusters are we talking about?

Let's take Herschel Walker, for example. American Senate candidate in Georgia, with pro-life and conservative views, got tangled in a scandal when the information got out that he paid for her ex-girlfriend's abortion some time ago. As seen on the graph, there was a considerable increase in negative mentions online. This ruined his reputation and pointed out the discrepancies between his views and what he had done.



Sentiment over time for Herschel Walker in Determ

5 ways media monitoring can help in political reputation management

Use real-time alerts to react on time

When it comes to preserving one's reputation, there is nothing more important than a timely reaction. Suppose you tackle an issue on time before the frustration, fake news, or something else potentially harming spreads like wildfire. In that case, you can consider your political reputation management techniques very successful.

One media monitoring feature that is very important in providing time is real-time alerts. You can get notifications on your email or through Slack the very second your keyword is mentioned somewhere online. In this way, you can check immediately if the mention has the potential to turn into a crisis and plan your communication accordingly.

Real-time alerts also increase your team's productivity and save you money. Traditionally, PR specialists searched for mentions manually. You can imagine how time-consuming that might have been. With real-time alerts, your team can easily drift their focus to something more important within the campaign.



5 ways media monitoring can help in political reputation management

Communicate with your voters

Political communication is far from what is used to be in the past. It was a one-way street, with the candidates giving speeches on how they would make the world better, and everyone just listening. With the rise in media literacy and a massive increase of alternative platforms where people interact (such as various social media), it has become necessary to adapt and be present where your voters expect you to be.

Not only will this give you extra visibility, but it will also bring you closer to your voters. And it's not only private candidates' social media channels we're talking about. With media monitoring, you can join conversations on forums and public social media pages when your candidate's name is mentioned. This allows you to explain the candidate's stand and shed and present them in a positive light.

And how communicating with voters online can have an extremely positive impact is best shown by the example of Andrew Yang in the 2020 US elections. Very few had known his name before he announced his presidential run. But by using social media and talking about contemporary issues, like how technology is changing American society, he managed to reach out to a younger audience, not so interested in politics. In fact, out of all voters naming him the first choice, 71% were younger than 45.



5 ways media monitoring can help in political reputation management

Track what your competition is doing

Knowing the strategies your competitors are using can help your campaign immensely. With the help of media monitoring, you can:

- Find out which aspect of their campaign resonates better with the audience
- Learn how they deal with crises
- Find out which PR techniques they rely on the most and check immediate results.

In addition to all this data you can get, you can conduct a competitive analysis and see your campaign compared to your competitors. You can compare the number of mentions, the overall impressions, share of voice, sentiment, mentions per channel, etc. A particularly high number of mentions, a much higher number of mentions on a specific channel, and a much more negative sentiment towards your candidate than the opposing ones could signal a crisis brewing.



5 ways media monitoring can help in political reputation management

Check what specific channels are saying about your candidate

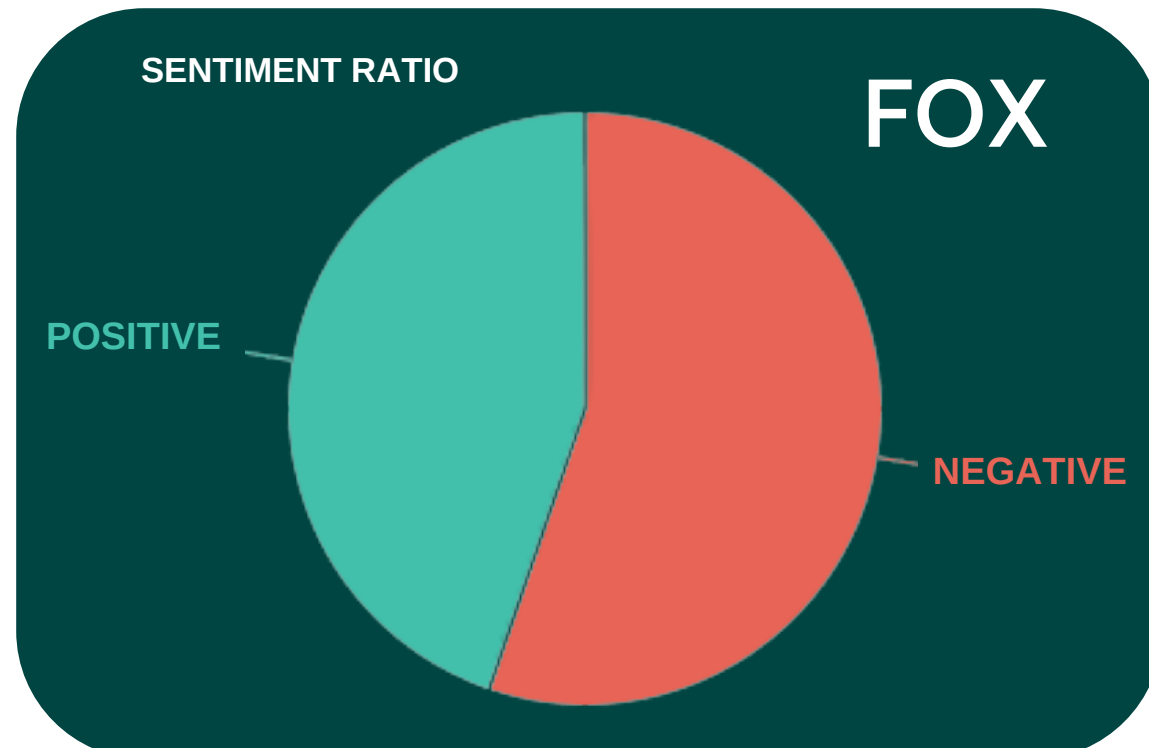
Media are an integral part of any political campaign. But it's essential to track how these media are following your efforts. You can expect that media outlets that share similar views to your opponents might not report on your campaign the way you'd like.

Take, for example, CNN and FOX news and their reporting on Donald Trump. In the same period, CNN, a predominantly liberal media outlet, reported more negatively on Mr. Trump than FOX news, a more conservative platform.

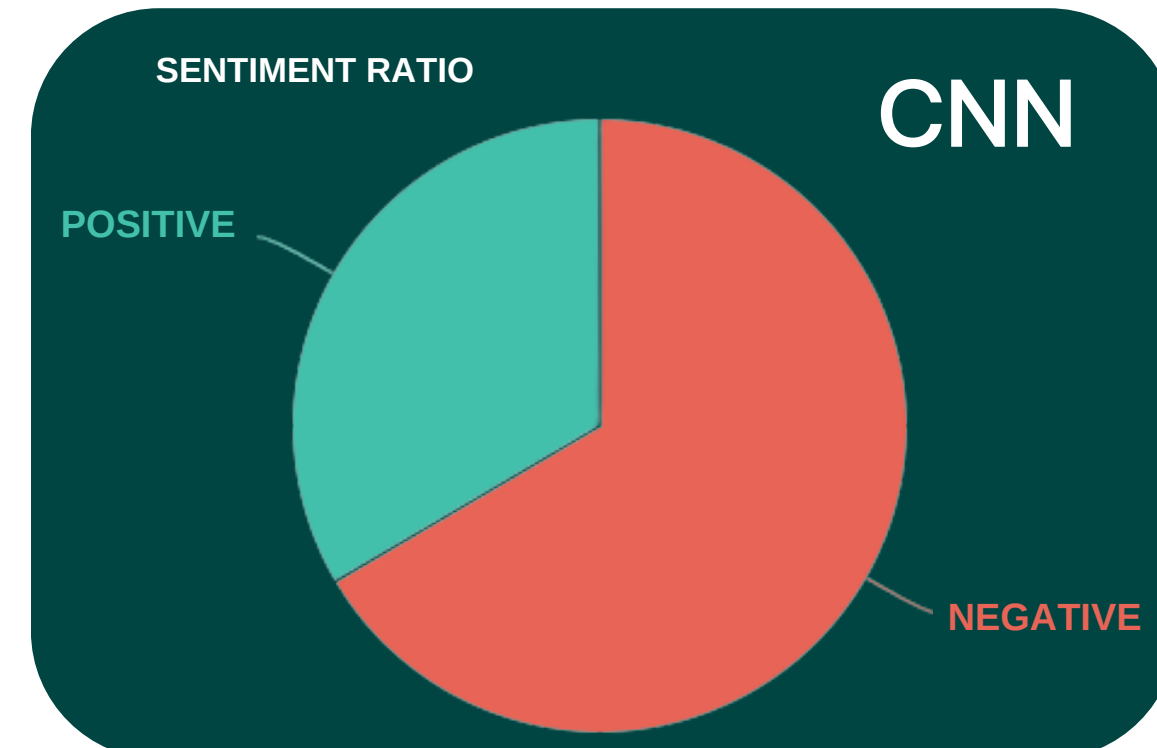
Seeing your campaign altered to fit certain media, is also a great source of information for your campaign. You can:

- use this info to prepare your crisis communication plans
- predict easily the questions coming from these media
- learn more about the voters following specific media – what makes them happy or mad and which matters they find extremely important.





Sentiment of mentions containing Donald Trump on FOX;
Source: Determ



Sentiment of mentions containing Donald Trump on CNN;
Source: Determ



Monitoring political PR metrics

- Barcelona principles

The Barcelona Principles, which represent an industry-wide consensus on the subject, lay out the fundamental ideas behind PR and communication measurement.

They show proof of performance as well as how to encourage further development. The Principles serve as a manual for practitioners to merge the constantly changing media world into an open, trustworthy, and consistent framework.



Barcelona principles

Set goals

"Setting goals is an absolute prerequisite to communications planning, measurement and evaluation."

Our starting point is the established theme: **set goals**. Make sure to create quantifiable objectives for your PR campaign. It's important to understand goals and their significance for long-term success. You want to affect change here, not just achieve a set of KPIs. Adhere to the core "who, what, how much, and when" questions.

- **Who** are you attempting to reach?
- **Why** are you speaking to them?
- **How much** of a change are you attempting?
- **When** do you want everything to occur?

When it's time to assess your performance, solely compare it to the objectives you set before the campaign. Why? If your goals are realistic, the presence of side effects is not a sign of success. Imagine an article having a massive increase in views but poor participation. Regardless of vanity metrics, if you aimed to boost interaction, it failed.



Barcelona principles

Think about the impact, not only outputs and outcomes

"Measurement and evaluation should identify outputs, outcomes, and potential impact."

The idea that communications have an influence is not new, but differentiating 'impact' from 'result' is. It might reflect a generational tendency to be more concerned about the broader effects of their decisions, according to a 2008 study.

According to the study, people give a lot of thought to the mission and sincerity of the people they support in addition to making random point-of-sale donations or taking part in charity runs. That's why it's vital to consider the impact your campaign will have, as this will serve to create opinions.

However, there is no one appropriate technique to measure the organizational and social impacts you wish to measure.



Barcelona principles

Define hypotheses for investors, society, and the party

"Outcomes and impact should be Identified for stakeholders, society, & the organization."

Reach, reputation, etc., are outcomes for investors. Outcomes for the organization (political party) are far more complex, and impacts on society outweigh those of the other two. You should approach these measurements scientifically. Create a **hypothesis** for the broader effects of your campaign. What consequences will your campaign have for X? What will Y do?

When evaluating, remember your hypothesis and take into account your findings. You want to evaluate based on the hypothesis you come up with, similar to your goals.

Let's look at an illustration. Say you are tracking the evolution of a political party's reputation. It's highly improbable that you can pinpoint your efforts as the reason for any change if you run a significant marketing campaign simultaneously with your communications.

It would be best if you considered narrower measurement techniques to test your theory against to make adjustments, such as asking pointed questions during an interview regarding certain communications.



Consider qualitative and quantitative analysis

"Communication measurement and evaluation should include both qualitative and quantitative analysis."

Views, bounce rates, reach, and likes have all been used quantitatively to date when making decisions based on statistics. However, big data still makes it challenging to extract qualities. This doesn't defy the fact they're both crucial.

Attempt to respond to three questions:

- How did your messaging reach your target audience?
- Did you do it via the intended method or strategy?
- What were their conclusions?

By dissecting these, we can see that each calls for some combination of **qualitative** and **quantitative** measurements.



• Quantitative

For cross-channel research:

- Reach or impressions
- Competitive share of voice
- Engagement with earned/owned/paid content across channels
- Sharing of earned/owned/paid content across channels

• Qualitative

For cross-channel research:

- Sentiment responses
- Third-party endorsements/mentions across media outlets
- Influence score of mentions

So, measure outcomes and development, not just success; measure often to monitor trends; and utilize a good balance of qualitative and quantitative indicators to drive your evaluation.



Barcelona principles

Forget about advertising value equivalent

"AVEs are not the value of communication."

AVE is no longer as widely used as it once was. AVE means “advertising value equivalent,” and this would suggest measuring the amount of space a communication took up in print media, radio, or TV.

So why don't we widely use AVE? It's impossible to boil down communications to just one metric. There are too many variables, too many audiences to comprehend, and too many possible effects to consider. You cannot measure effective communication in terms of money.



Barcelona principles

Analyze all relevant online and offline channels

“Holistic communication measurement and evaluation includes all relevant online and offline channels.”

In 2010, when the Barcelona principles were first introduced, the principle said, “social media can and should be measured.” Then in 2015, the principle said, “social media can and should be measured consistently with other media channels.”

Fast forward to 2022. everybody’s fully aware that social media is essential. However, it’s not the only platform. Radio and television are still viable media formats, and organic search is still the primary traffic source for most informational content. Additionally, email has also seen usage increases.

Keeping this in mind, every channel has its peculiarities. Your objectives, hypotheses, metrics, and final evaluations should consider the platform’s distinctiveness.



Barcelona principles

Don't sacrifice integrity and transparency

“Communication measurement and evaluation are rooted in integrity and transparency to drive learning and insights.”

In other words, integrity and transparency shouldn't be sacrificed. Data privacy is crucial, and you must consider GDPR guidelines while using analytics techniques. You can collect useful information without breaking any rules, and the recipients of your communications deserve to have their privacy respected.

Internally, you should be honest in your evaluations as well. All biases should be eliminated, and you should be truthful while discussing failures.

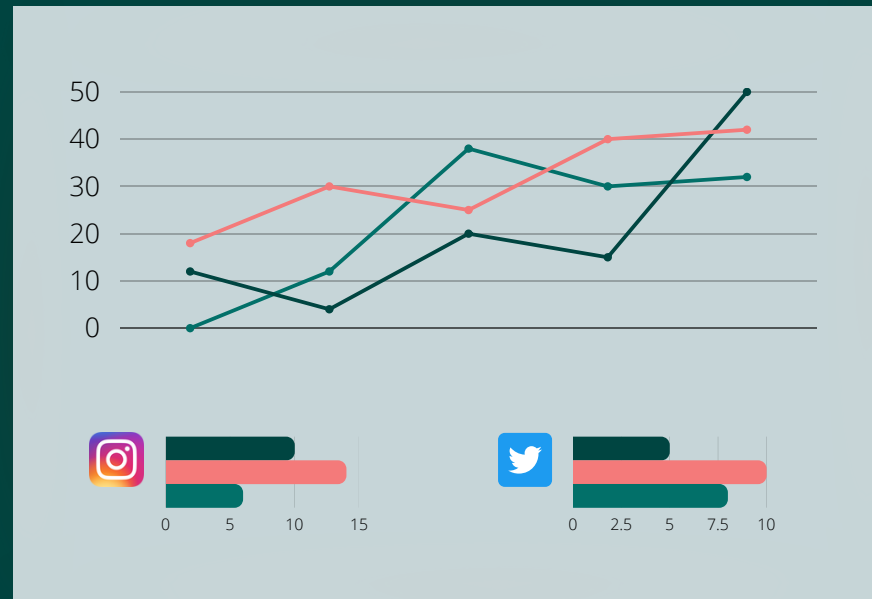


Monitoring political PR metrics

Political PR metrics that matter

Whether it's your first or fifth campaign, political PR campaign metrics are critical data points that you must have. They inform you of your progress and areas for improvement. They assist you in setting achievable, realistic goals for your campaign that will produce measurable outcomes.

We've covered all the steps you should consider before focusing on specific metrics with the Barcelona principles chapter. Now let's look at metrics you can use to get an overview of your PR and communication efforts.



Political PR metrics that matter

Share of voice

Political share of voice (PSOV) measures the proportion of online political talks that belong to a specific person or political party. In other words, it counts the number of times a politician's name or viewpoint emerges in online political debates.

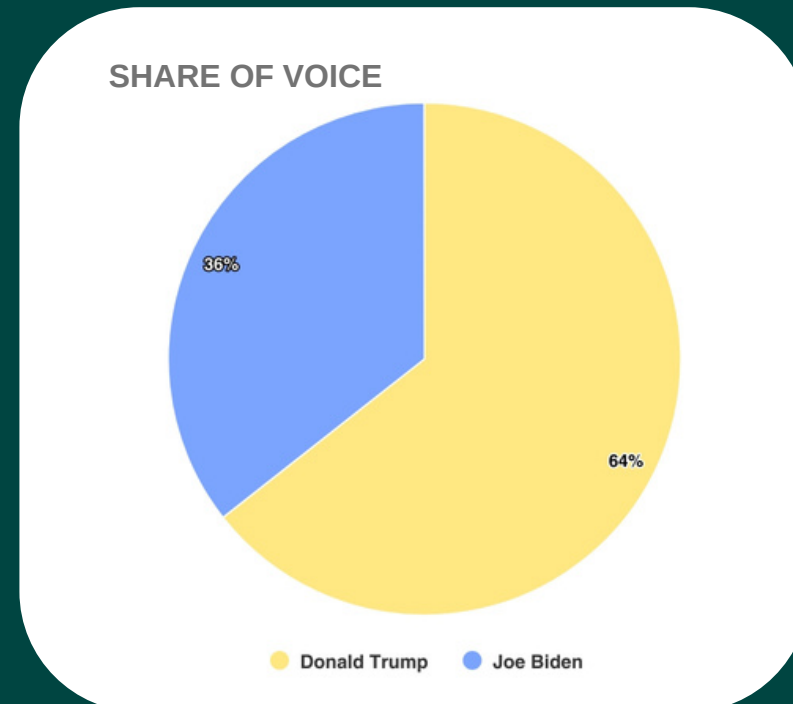
PSOV can be calculated using real-time social media monitoring tools that follow online conversations, like Determ. Among all political PR metrics, this one can help you draw insights into which subjects are discussed most frequently, who is talking about them, and where these conversations are occurring.

Assisting campaigns in modifying their plan is one of the main advantages of tracking PSOV. A campaign can immediately change its tactics if it notices that its rival garners more online attention. PSOV can be used to monitor the effectiveness of particular campaign strategies.

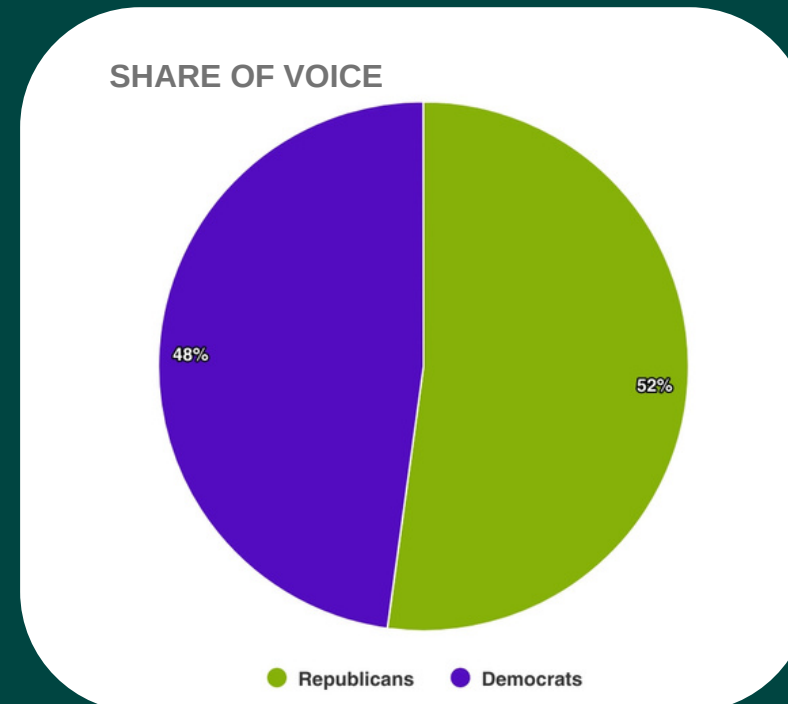
For instance, a campaign will know it was effective if it starts a new social media campaign and PSOV increases. It is a valuable metric since it enables campaigns to monitor and assess their online presence compared to their rivals.



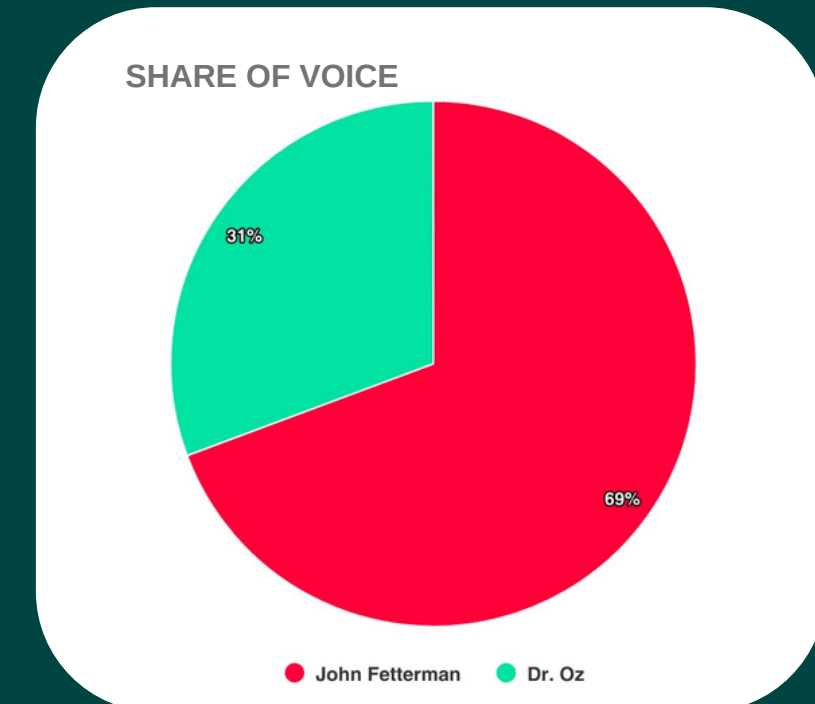
- Examples of Share of voice chart in Determ reports



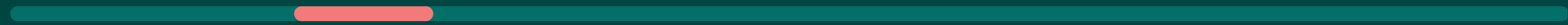
Donald Trump vs Joe Biden



Republicans vs Democrats



John Fetterman vs Dr. Oz



Political PR metrics that matter

Sentiment

In today's environment, where public opinion is continuously shifting, sentiment listening is an even more accurate predictor of voter action than public opinion polls reveal what voters believe before casting their ballots. That's why sentiment is one of the most important political PR metrics.

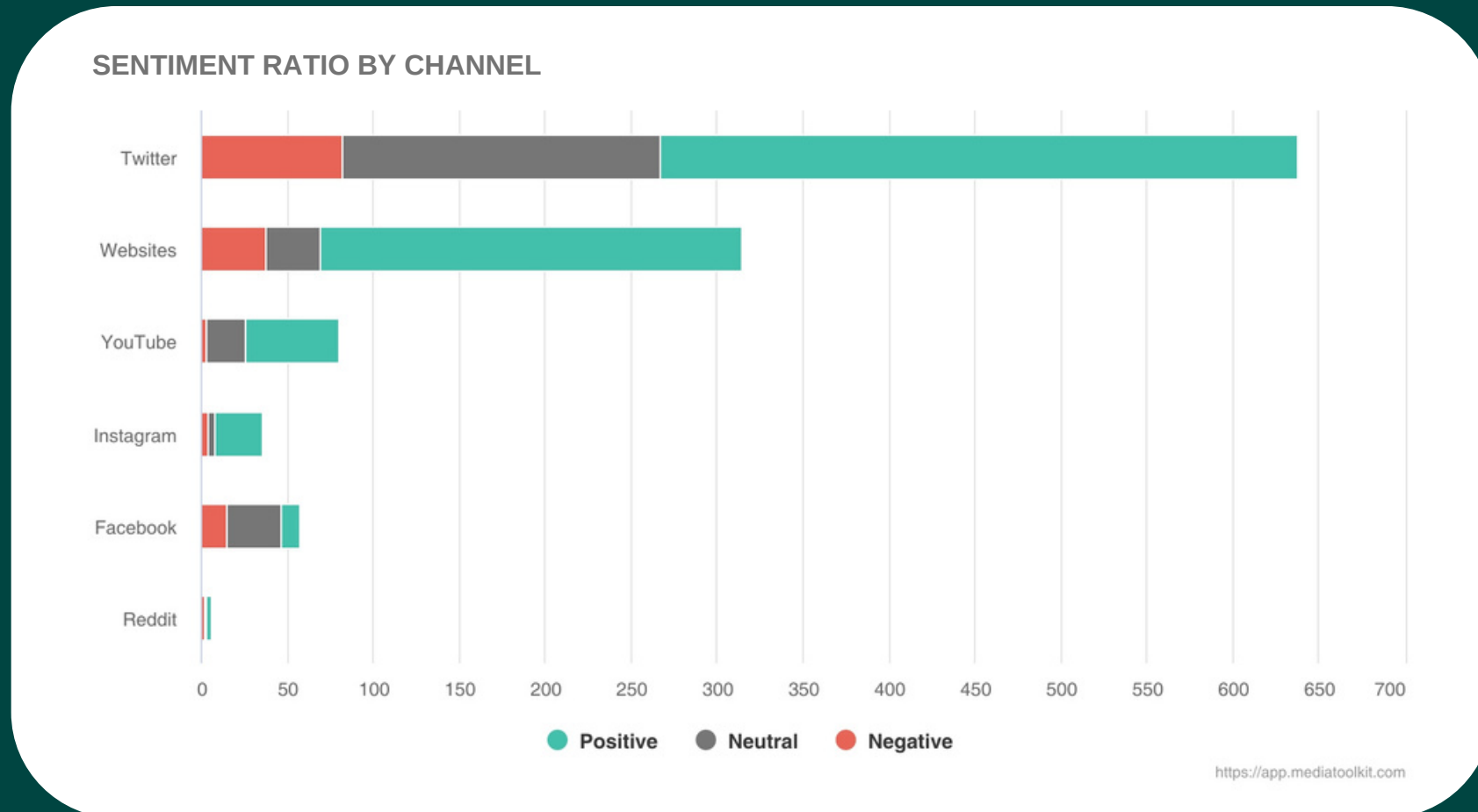
Voters' moods can change at any point in the campaign, and it isn't always clear what has happened. Determ, for example, provides you with real-time sentiment analysis and even alerts you when there is an increasing buzz around your client's brand.

Sentiment analysis allows you to:

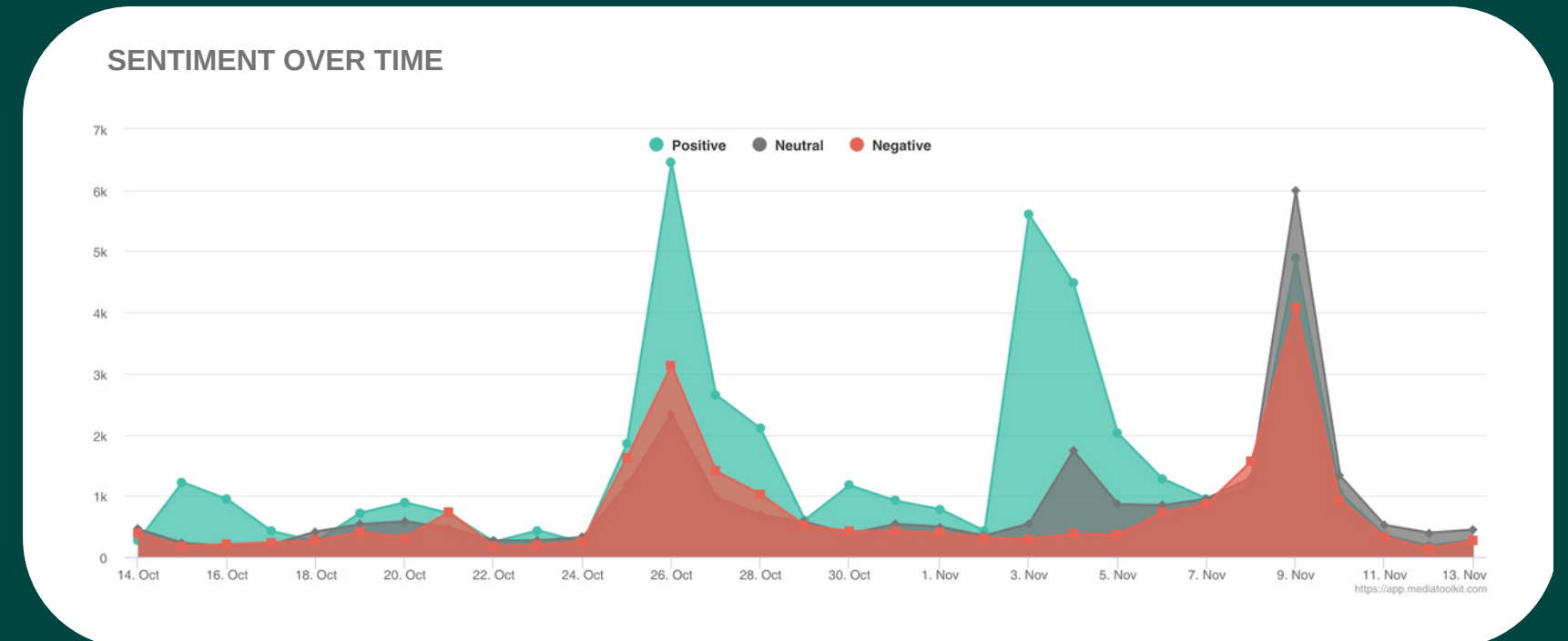
- Learn more about the voters
- Analyze the online reputation of your political party and its key people
- Measure the public opinion about a particular topic
- Detect crisis
- Track the success of political campaigns



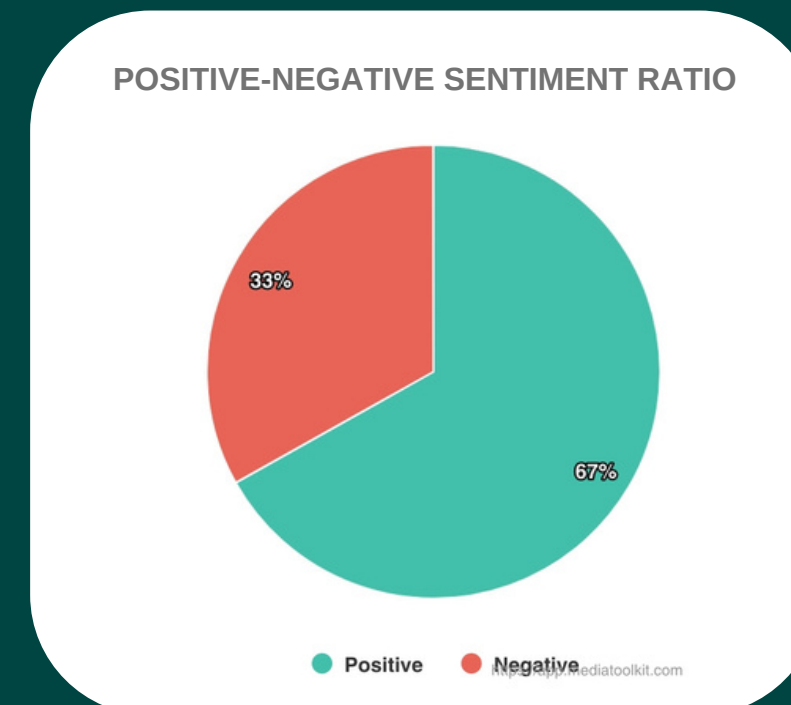
Examples of Sentiment chart in Determ reports



Sentiment ratio by channel for John Fetterman



Sentiment over time for John Fetterman



Positive negative sentiment ratio for John Fetterman

Read more about social media sentiment analysis in politics [here](#).

Political PR metrics that matter

Word associations/Word cloud

Media monitoring software work in a way that collects all the information where you or any keyword that you're tracking gets mentioned. This means thousands and thousands of raw data.

In Determ's reports, you can have a quick overview of all the words that have been mentioned in correlation with the tracked keyword. This means all these mentions get converted into word clouds to help visualize the rhetoric of, for example, a political party. The font size of each word is relative to its frequency of use.

Moreover, you can draw out the exact expressions people use and reuse them when creating communication strategies for the campaign.



Political PR metrics that matter

Media outlets

When distributing press releases, it's a tedious task to keep track of each one that has been published. This means keeping an updated spreadsheet and manually finding all the articles on the websites you've reached out to.

Media monitoring tools, such as Determ, make this process much easier. In the tool, you could search for the name of your press release or any other information you've used to differentiate this specific press release. All these sources get tracked down automatically via the tool, and you get a complete list of all the mentions. Aside from this, you get other metrics that could benefit you—le, reach and shares, virality assessment, sources, etc.



Examples of Top media outlets (influencers) chart

TOP INFLUENCERS BY SOURCE

Websites		Twitter		YouTube		Reddit	
NEWSBREAK.COM	9.98k	@APACHEPATRIOT	688	VOICE OF MP NEWS CHANNEL	623	AUTOMODERATOR	598
HEADTOPICS.COM	6.82k	@DETOUR_RIGHT	305	CNN-NEWS18	202	MASTERYEETZ	83
VNEXPLORER.NET	4.07k	@BUZZERLYAPP	299	FOX NEWS	188	MAXIMUMEFFORT433	69
USABREAKINGNEWS.NET	2.45k	@DSTRZALKA_DIANA	273	FORBES BREAKING NEWS	159	MALAIX	48
THEMILLENNIALPRESS.COM	1.65k	@EMMAWARD2550	272	FOX BUSINESS	152	RANDOMOUSITY	45
GOODWORDNEWS.COM	1.34k	@MICAHBABCOCK4	256	BONGSIM [PSYCHOTHERAPIST]	133	THE_GREAT_CROCODILE	45
DNYUZ.COM	1.2k	@MRTACHILLES	200	MSNBC	131	2201992	43
USSANEWS.COM	1.19k	@ORT_BROD	187	THE MAJORITY REPORT W/ SAM SEDER	123	I_AM_A_SMARTY	42
DAILYMAGAZINE.NEWS	1.18k	@ALL435REPS	185	THE HILL	108	YASHEMA	40
AW-JOURNAL.COM	1.09k	@WALLY_WESTS	180	THE VISIBLE HUMAN TARGET	97	DISSIDENTPEN	38

Top influencers by source for Donald Trump

TOP INFLUENCERS BY NUMBER OF MENTIONS

NEWSBREAK.COM	9.98k
HEADTOPICS.COM	6.82k
VNEXPLORER.NET	4.07k
USABREAKINGNEWS.NET	2.45k
THEMILLENNIALPRESS.COM	1.65k
GOODWORDNEWS.COM	1.34k
DNYUZ.COM	1.2k
USSANEWS.COM	1.19k
DAILYMAGAZINE.NEWS	1.18k

Top influencers by number of mentions for Donald Trump



Political PR metrics that matter

Sources

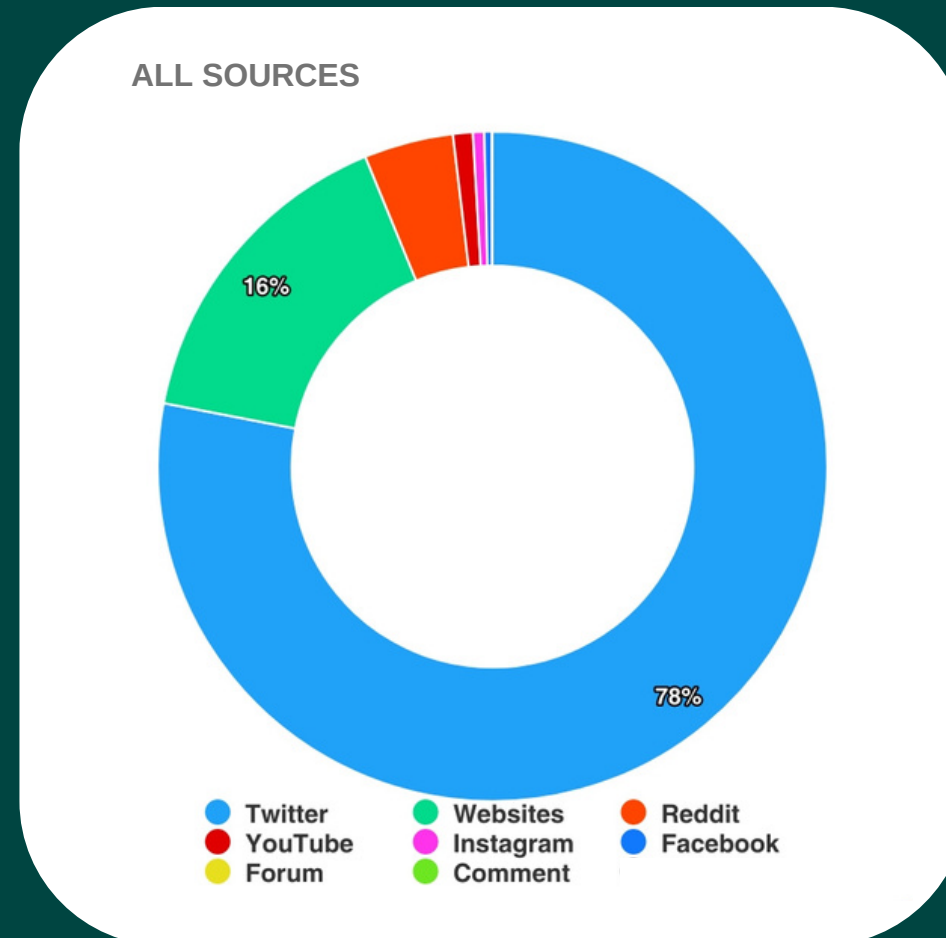
This knowledge makes it simple to identify the platforms where your target audience is most engaged. Therefore, these sites are probably the most significant places to carry out your upcoming campaign initiatives and grab more attention.

Furthermore, it can help you identify which sources you're lacking and where you need to improve. If you want to reach as many people that share your views, it's incredibly relevant to be present across different platforms. Determ provides this information inside its reporting tab.

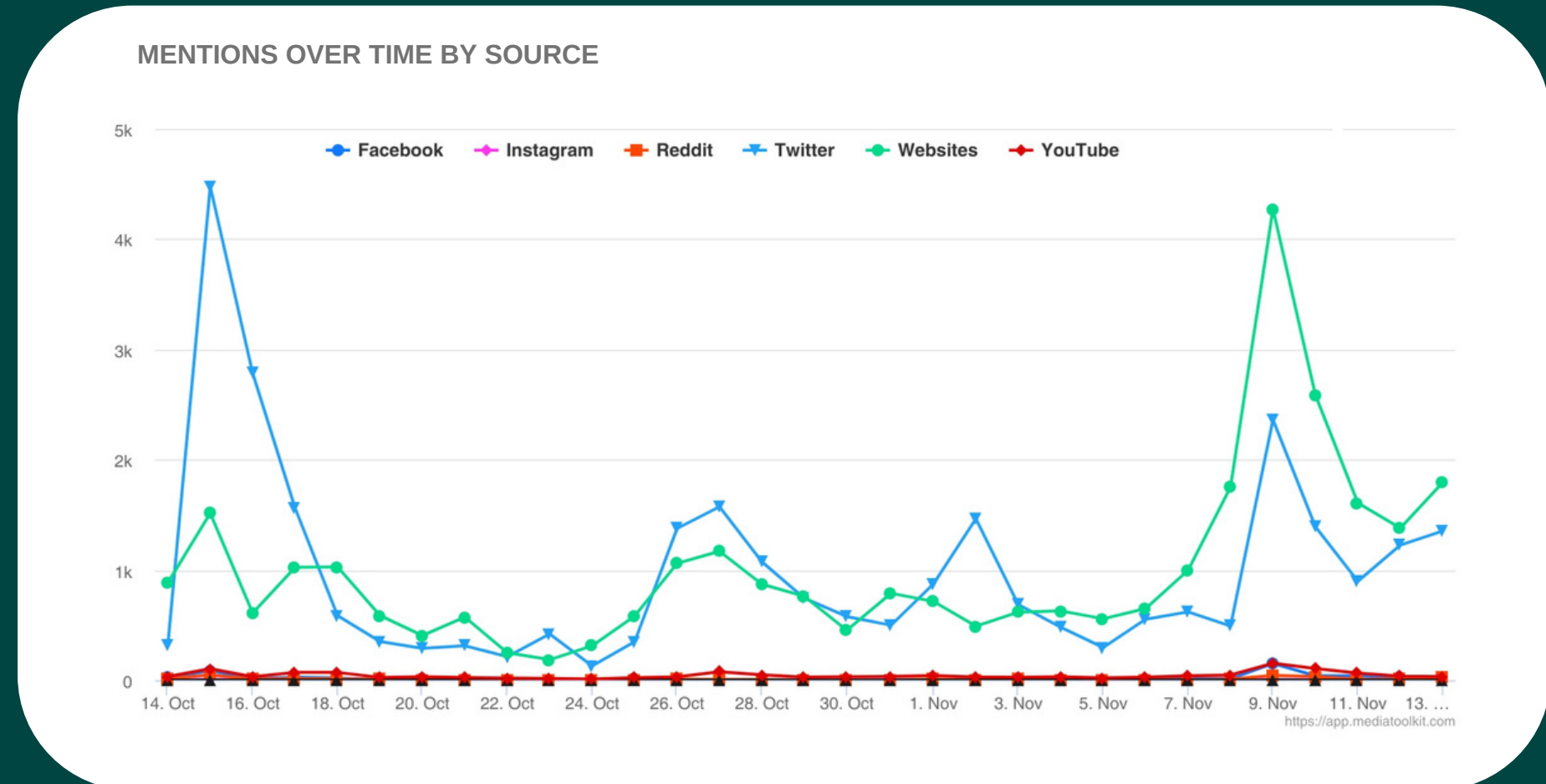
The tool also provides an overview of the mentions across sources over time. This way, you can identify which topics raised conversations on which platforms and might help you shape future content.



- Examples of Sources charts in Determ reports



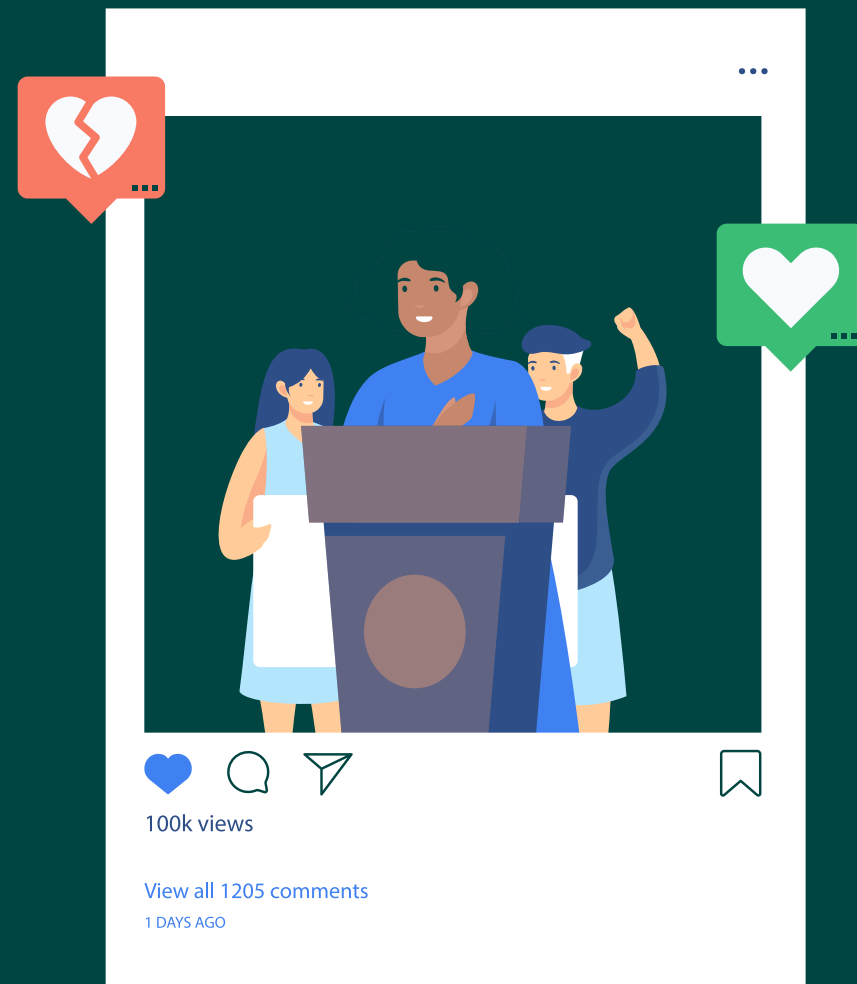
All sources of mentions for Democrats



Mentions over time by source for Herschel Walker



Election campaign ideas



There are so many campaign election ideas out there. But the question arises, which ones are the most effective?

As the election day draws near, political campaigns look for ways to get in touch with their supporters. Here, successful campaigning can be extremely important in winning over voters' hearts and establishing an emotional bond.

Modern political campaigns operate differently now, thanks to the growth of social networks and mobile devices. We'll look at the best election campaign ideas to help you reach voters in the most effective way possible.



Election campaign ideas

Engage with the public via social media and live video

Political social media is now dominated by **live video**. Social media video allows politicians to break their own news and engage in real-time dialogues with citizens, acting as a substitute for traditional newscasts.

For instance, many politicians now regularly stream live on **Facebook** and **Instagram** to engage with voters and non-voters. Live video enables meaningful and engaging conversations rather than just talking to voters.

Live social video is particularly effective for smaller, local politicians who need to address issues that might not get big news coverage. Florida House Representative Anna Eskamani has used Facebook Live to tell people about unemployment benefits and other issues throughout the COVID-19 scenario. [Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez](#) uses Instagram live's regularly address topics and to inform her voters.

Live video is perhaps one of the most intriguing social media elements that politicians should utilize, from behind-the-scenes footage to virtual town halls.



Election campaign ideas

Ask and answer questions

On social media, a way to increase engagement is to ask for questions.

And **Q&As** are the mainstay of political accounts. Asking your followers relevant questions is a quick approach to promote some back-and-forth communication. It also demonstrates your willingness to hear what your supporters have to say.

You can review your questions privately and post the responses to your followers using tools like **Instagram Stories**. This enables you to publish more insightful comments and provide something voters can refer to later.

Another way to do Q&A's is via social media live's. Anna Eskamani is doing weekly live Q&A's via the platform to communicate with the people regularly, followed by the hashtag #AskAnna. These Q&A segments can be held in person, or even facilitated by the media.



Election campaign ideas

Influencers

During an election campaign, endorsements from famous people or other powerful figures can increase a candidate's visibility and legitimacy. A well-known celebrity or someone with a sizable fan base might support a candidate in various ways, including by making public pronouncements, showing up in campaign commercials, or even raising money on the candidate's behalf.

Obama's "Yes, we can" was one of the most unusual campaign advertisements to date, and it was only accessible online. The Black Eyed Peas' Will.i.am and Bob Dylan's son, Jesse Dylan, produced an advertisement that set music to Obama's concession address in the New Hampshire primary (after he lost the state to Hilary Clinton).

It has a run of more than 30 famous singers singing his lyrics. When the film was first uploaded to YouTube, it quickly became popular, receiving over 26 million views in a matter of days. It resulted in an online fundraising boom and a fresh wave of energy for Obama's campaign. 68 percent of the electoral votes went to Obama, who defeated John McCain of the Republican party.



Election campaign ideas

Create a website for your electoral campaign

Building a campaign website is one of the first and most crucial things that every candidate does before an election. The value of having a quality website is enormous and may be the difference between success and failure for some. It frequently serves as the electorate's initial impression of the candidate, so it must be written to appeal to them.

A good campaign website should be user-friendly yet complex simultaneously, simple but informative, and engaging. It shouldn't appear hastily put together but shouldn't be extremely intricate or cluttered. It ought to function as soon as possible. While some politicians choose to market themselves on social media and other channels, many politicians stick to their campaign websites.

Cutting-edge websites with clean design that aim to stand apart usually succeed in their intentions.



Election campaign ideas

Fundraising

Raise funds to assist your election campaign—one of the most crucial things you must do when running for office. There are numerous approaches you might take, and each has advantages and disadvantages of its own.

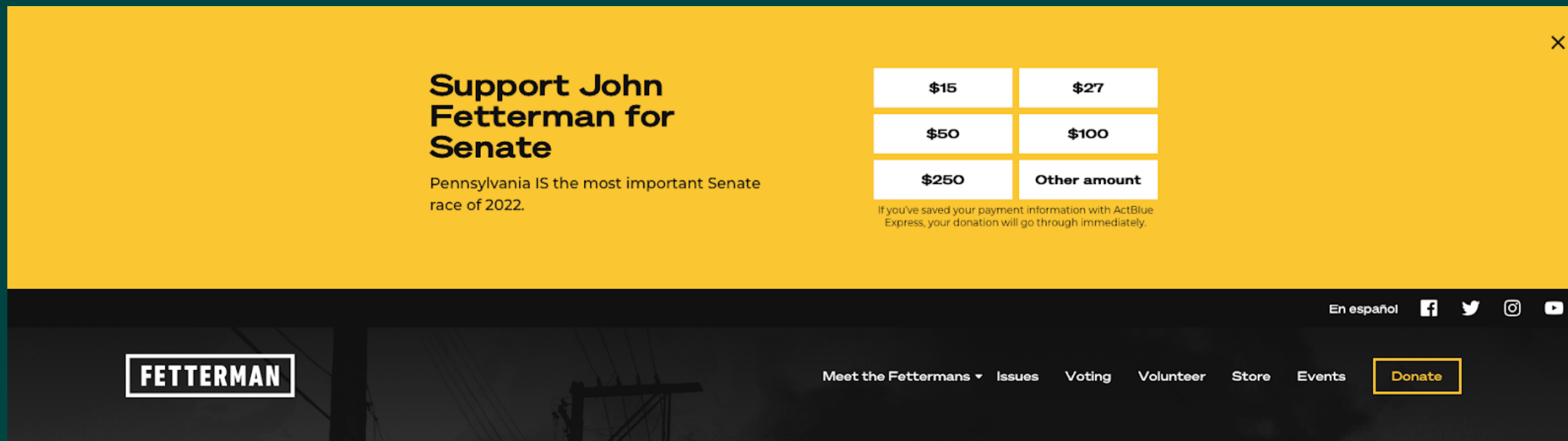
Holding fundraising events is a well-liked method of raising money. It may be something straightforward like a meal or party or a bigger event like a concert or auction. Whatever event you choose to host, make sure it is well-organized and that you have a solid marketing plan to spread the news.

Another choice is to ask people or companies for donations. You can do this by distributing letters or emails asking for funds or by creating a website where people can donate. Make careful to explain to potential donors how and what your campaign would benefit from their contributions.



Over the past three months, Pennsylvania Lt. Governor John Fetterman raised \$22 million for his Senate campaign, more than doubling his previous fundraising total.

The amount, which came from 330,000 separate donors (most of which were small) marks the Pennsylvania Democratic Senate nominee's highest fundraising quarter to date and raises his overall cash collection to more than \$48 million, according to Fetterman's campaign.



Candidates who create personal brands based on their distinctive backgrounds and interests are always successful. Sarah Crawford, a candidate for the North Carolina Senate who gained notoriety as an ardent runner, found it difficult to garner support while the COVID-19 pandemic was in effect. It just made sense to have a virtual 5k fun run! Small donations were accepted from Crawford's fans to sign up for the 5k, which offered runner medals and other benefits.

Creating a checklist for a political PR campaign

- Pre-campaign
- During
- Post-campaign

When starting a campaign, a good and thorough preparation is the key. The more information you have, the easier it will be for you to operate on any level. And if there is one asset that provides a large amount of information – it's media monitoring.

Here's our political campaign checklist – a set of tasks to keep in mind with tips on how media monitoring tools help.



Assemble the team

The starting point of any political campaign checklist is finding the right people. When assembling your PR team, it's essential to go back to the very aim of political PR. And that is, ultimately, to convey information in a specific way and to shape public opinion. It is a multi-layered job which combines reputation and crisis management, research, analysis and top-notch communication. In this context, PR professionals are here to create an understanding environment, mediating between politics, the media and the general public.

Therefore, doing PR for a political campaign requires a very special set of skills. Here are some of them:

- Communication and presentation skills
- Writing and research
- Knowledge of social media platforms
- Problem solving and crisis communication



Create campaign messages that appeal to voters

When you start a political PR campaign, one thing needs to be very clear – the messages that will be drawn throughout the whole campaign and on all channels. Drafting the right campaign messages starts from understanding your voters. So the first step when you start to think about campaign messaging is to learn as much as you can about the democratic majority. This includes their lifestyle, their issues and interests, pain points and concerns.

Why the trouble? Because the decision-making process of every single person is closely connected to their desires and perception. The key is in finding campaign messages that speak to your target audience. And by speak, we mean appeal to the core human needs and values.

Much like Obama did during his presidential campaign. He debuted his “Yes We Can” in 2008 and it resonated with the audience to the fullest. Why did it have such an effect? It enticed a strong sense of personal responsibility. And by doing so, it served as an inspiration for people to get involved in the whole election process and start creating a change.

Connect with the right media

Relationship with the media is one of the pillars of every political campaign. And one of main tasks of every PR professional is to nurture these relationships and engage with journalists and news sources on every occasion possible. This will ensure that they will cover important events, special news conferences and publish press releases.

When looking for the right media outlets, you can also take a look at the reports from media monitoring tools. Determ has a section dedicated to influencers – media outlets which have mentioned a specific topic the most. This can help you discover new media outlets or maybe pay special attention to the known ones that cover the topic the most.



Plan events

An additional aspect of PR that need to be considered before the elections is event management. Every electoral race is comprised of a series of events, be it public speeches, rallies, debates or press conferences. All of this with the prupose of transmitting the campaign message as firmly and as frequently as possible. So in order to stay on the right track it is necessary to create a timeline of events as soon as possible and to start preparing all aspects of the events at once. Make sure to share this timeline with the desired media outlets.



During

During the campaign the focus of the political campaign checklist should be on tracking constantly what is going on and how your candidate is performing. Apart from that, it is important to stay alert because of the possible crises and to track what the competitors are doing.

Mitigate crises

Crisis management is a day-to-day job during a political campaign. Being constantly in the spotlight gives a lot of space for potential mistakes, and this is where the PR team needs to be ready. With the opposing candidates constantly digging the dirt, it is extremely important to put out fires whenever there's a spark.

With media monitoring tools, you have the opportunity to receive real-time alerts, whenever the candidate's (or the party's) name is mentioned somewhere online. This is crucial in crisis situations because it gives you one valuable advantage – time. When you receive the news in real-time, you can work out the crisis communication plan immediately, battle fake news and give your client the chance to work out the messaging, gain confidence and be ready for all possible questions arising in the aftermath.



Analyze your competitors

During the campaign it is necessary to track constantly what the opposing candidates or parties are doing. While observing the competitors, you get a chance to learn more about their communication methods, observe how they are presented in the media, what the general public thinks and how they tackle crises. All of this can be used to boost your existing campaign – you can learn from their successes and mistakes, or even decide to implement some of the tactics which have a positive impact on the voters.

With Determ, for example, you have an option to conduct a competitive analysis. You can add a queries containing the names of your competitors and set the tracking in the media monitoring tool. As a result, you will get a report comparing the share of voice, sentiment per channels, number of mentions per channels, overall impressions and top media outlets covering each candidate. In this way you can easily notice in what way your competitors are performing better and work on your weaknesses throughout the campaign.



During

Track press releases

The already mentioned relationships with the media are truly put to the test during the campaign. In this sense, it is must to track how (and if) the media you're collaborating with follow and report about your candidate. You can do it manually, and it will require a lot of time and effort. But you can also do it with the help of media monitoring and track specific media and particular keywords you use in your press releases to be sure that you were published. This will show you the value of specific channels and help you determine whether the collaboration makes sense or not.



Post-campaign

Finally, the last part of the political campaign checklist is focused on measuring results.

Measure and analyze your outreach

After you've ticked off everything from your political campaign checklist, worked hard on implementing all your plans and finished the campaign, it's time to revisit the process and analyze. Next to social media analytics, you can use media monitoring reports to get a clearer picture of the course of the campaign. By analyzing this data you will see the overall media coverage you've received, the prevailing sentiment, you can observe in more detail how each public appearance went and measure how the public reacted.



About Determ

- An award-winning, user friendly online media monitoring software.
- Determ helps businesses of all sizes monitor and analyze online conversations.
- It tracks more than 100 million online sources in any language to help its users across the globe make better business decisions by delivering them relevant information from the media in real-time.

Determ User Ratings



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Social Media
Monitoring Average:
8.8



Quality of Support

Social Media
Monitoring Average:
8.8



Ease of Setup

Social Media
Monitoring Average:
8.7

Source: Independent reviews by G2 users



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