

Campaign Planning Advice

'Backwards' plan your expenditures. Figure out what you will absolutely need the week before the election? Then work backwards to now from there. These are suggested minimums, do more if you can. But always skew your spending to the last 10-30 days. Voters don't have memories or loyalties, they react to the last good pitch they heard. Be that pitch! And keep your message simple, straightforward, and direct.

I suggest you plan on spending at least 2/3 of your budget during the last 10 days before the election. Voters aren't paying attention until then. Money spent before that is largely wasted. Everything else you do before then is just preparation or 'fore-play'. The only 'milk' that matters is what goes into the pail on election day.

Plan on placing at least one ad in the paper Sunday November 4th, it's their last publication before the election and voters will be paying attention. But everyone else will have their ad there also, so be bold. Spend more during these last days – if you have it.

Next plan on at least one mailing to hit the voter's house Thursday or Friday November 1st or 2nd. Mailing is probably your best investment ad-wise. You can target just the people who are in your district and maybe even zero it in tighter, but be careful of being too 'smart'. VoteBuilder can give you deceptive results since voters can register the day they vote, and they can change their minds at the last minute. I advise you be a bit loose in your targeting, include all addresses – not just the registered 'D's' or even just the known voters. I like those 5 ½ by 8 inch post cards. They stand out, have ample room for your message, and are relatively inexpensive.

Stay away from TV ads as they are too expensive and cover everyone from Utah to Montana. Spend your money more carefully, and more accurately. Use Radio very carefully, and then only in the final week to 10 days of the campaign if you have the budget. Spend your campaign money carefully and wisely, but remember no one ever counted the bullets a soldier brings back from a battle. Use every weapon you have but concentrate it's use into that final period.

Signage is a tempting option at the early stages of your campaign. But other than ordering a few to display at your rallies and maybe a couple of banners. Yard signs, etc., are not effective until the first of October. Signs put up before then are like Christmas lights in July, everyone will just ignore them – and by Christmas they will be invisible! Better to take names of supporters who want them and then put them out as a 'splash' event. If your district suddenly sprouts your signs everywhere the voters will pay attention. (And if you have taken names of supporters who want them, you will have an idea of how many to buy.)

Assume all property is private property and that you need permission to post your signs. Canal banks are private property but in the past, the general rule has been that if the canal company allows one political sign they have given permission to all. City public areas, parks, roadways, etc., are likewise private

property and generally, permission has not been granted. The general rule is to ask first, no one has a 'Right' to post signs. Always, be respectful. In the past, the city tried to limit political yard signs to a short period before elections, but that was thrown out. But as I have said too much exposure works against the candidate.

Also, candidates are required to remove their signs promptly after an election. Failure to do so is publicly embarrassing. So you will want to keep track of where you placed them, if not on a supporter's own property.

Your first expenditure will probably be for palm cards. These you can build yourself. Don't make too many ahead as you will want to 'update' them as the campaign proceeds. You may want to hire a designer to layout the card for you, but make sure they give you computer files that you, or a supporter, can then print yourself.

Before you design a palm card, you need to develop your four word theme for your campaign. Then from that base build your 10 second 'elevator' pitch, extrapolate that into a 2 minute speech. Then expand it to your 10 minute campaign speech. Learn those mantras by heart to the point you wake up at night repeating them to yourself. That way, whenever you are trapped with an impromptu opportunity to speak to your voters you will sound professional, poised, and 'in charge'.

Your message is YOUR sales pitch. You have to sell the voter to change what they did in the past and buy your line instead. And you have to say it again and again and again and again. You are never done, even when the voter can recite your speeches themselves in the voting booth.

- Start by telling the voter **WHY** they need a change in Boise.
- Then tell them **WHAT** changes you will bring to the Legislature.
- Explain to them **HOW** these changes will improve their lives.
- And finally, ask for their support, and **ASK FOR THEIR VOTE!!!**