

## Political Advertising

### Message Points

- Outdoor helps create “buzz” for candidates and causes
- Outdoor ads can generate attention by the news media
- Outdoor is a strong tool for branding candidates, themes, slogans and website addresses

### Political Advertising

Political advertising is a growing segment of outdoor advertising. Typically, political campaigns are somewhat different than traditional businesses. Campaigns usually have finite life-expectancies, with ad budgets that tend to spike prior to elections. *“The broadest form of advertising is billboards. David Joyce, a media analyst at Miller Tabak + Co., recently upgraded his rating for Clear Channel Outdoor Holdings to a buy, in part because of the spillover effect of political spending.” Ad budgets could be squeezed out of radio and TV due to political demand and could come to outdoor,” he wrote.*”

### Create “Buzz,” Target Voters

Generally, political campaigns like attention. Billboards and other outdoor formats can generate press attention, known in political parlance as “free press” or “earned media,” as opposed to paid media. *Caution: the more controversy, the more buzz. Calculate your tolerance for controversy before posting advertising.*

Outdoor ads can be targeted to commuters (who are also voters), and presented in other languages.

Website addresses are increasingly important in politics for fundraising, grassroots organizing, and distribution of information. Political campaigns are time-limited, and look for effective ways to “brand” their websites quickly. Further, candidates use outdoor to increase their name identification with voters, and to introduce themselves in new areas after district lines have been re-drawn. Marketing case studies are available from OAAA.

### Know the Rules

Federal and state rules govern corporate participation in political campaigns; some jurisdictions ban corporate contributions or gifts. Typically, political ads must have

disclaimers regarding who paid for the ads. (See OAAA State Contribution and Disclosure chart)

