



## Responding to Coronavirus: For Political Advertisers



The novel coronavirus outbreak, also known as COVID-19, has severely affected every facet of society, and politics are no different. Every level of government, from the presidential election to state and local government has been impacted regarding election postponement, rally and event cancellations and disruptions in funding. Many political advertisers may be pressed with questions regarding where to allocate budget, what messaging to use during this time, and what channels are finding the most success.

Managing expectations of citizens has become even more important during this period of uncertainty. Digilant is committed to closely monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on voter behavior in to provide the best digital advertising recommendations to advertisers during this time.

In this guide, you'll find five recommendations to consider to stay connected to voters and to prepare for economic recovery during this challenging time.



FACEBOOK

# 01. DISRUPTIONS ARE INEVITABLE

"Campaigning is not what it was before, and nobody quite knows what exactly it's going to be."

- Jean Sinzdak, Associate Director of the Center for American Women and Politics

Many of the traditional forms of advertising and promotion as a political contender have been altered due to the spread of the coronavirus. Think campaign rallies, public speaking opportunities, out-of-home advertisements, and door-to-door canvassing. However, as the changes come, opportunities also arise.

Now is the time to be creative, make changes quickly and think on your feet. In-person events might be cancelled but there are great digital alternatives. Digital ads needs to be timely and thoughtful and you may need to do more with less when it comes to your budget.

## QUICK STAT

95% of Americans are under stay at home orders.

source: Business Insider

## QUICK STAT

64% of Americans would feel uncomfortable going to a polling place to vote at this time.

source: Pew Research Center

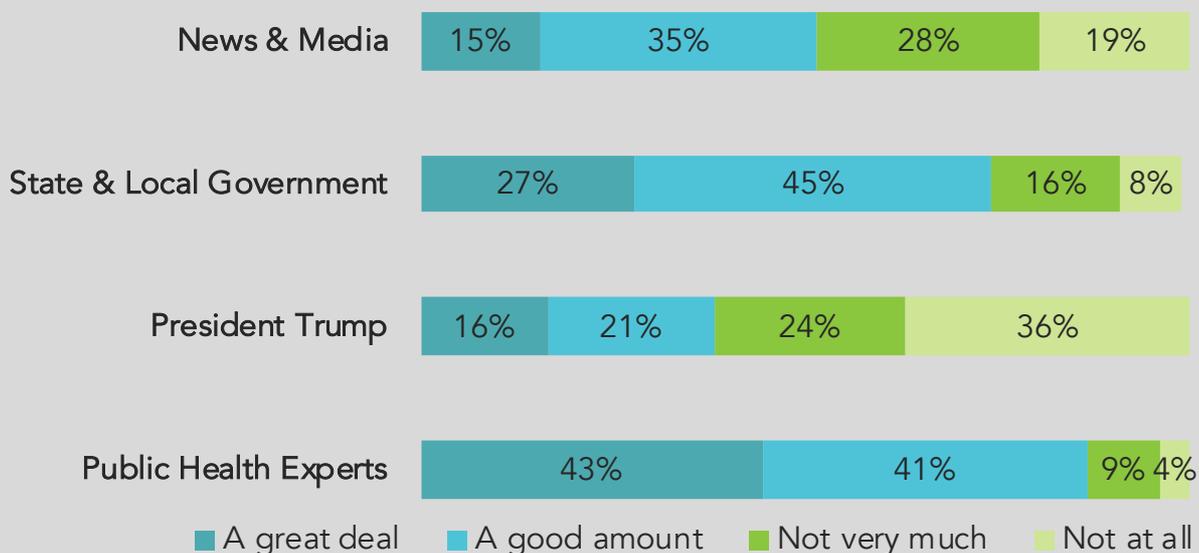
## 02. YOUR VOICE IS POWERFUL

As updates and changes to the coronavirus continue to be announced, people will look to government leaders and candidates for answers to burning questions. A recent study by NPR reported that state and local governments are the second most trusted resource for coronavirus information. So, now is the time to stay in step with updates from public health experts on the local and national level and share them with the people in your town, city, state, etc.

Capture voter attention with messages that include truthful, informative, and helpful information instead of purely pushing forward your unique agenda.

In the next few sections, we'll outline effective channels to share and spread your message through social media, search and if budget allows, television.

### WHO PEOPLE TRUST HEARING INFORMATION ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS FROM MOST



# 03. HOLD A VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

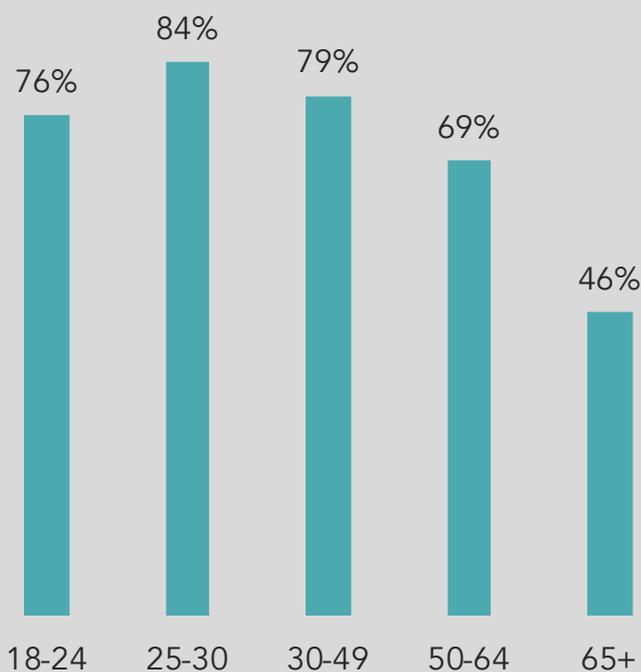
Due to social distancing, nearly all events have been postponed or cancelled. However, people have already started to switch these efforts to digital. For political advertisers, holding a virtual town hall or rally on Facebook Live is a great alternative. With over 221 million users in the United States – across different age groups, economic and educational background, and regions – Facebook is a great platform to reach voters in your area. Facebook Live allows viewers to post questions and comments throughout broadcasts, just like voters would expect at an in-person event.

## QUICK TIP

Use your other social media accounts - Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. - to spread awareness and promote your event. This gives you the opportunity to connect with younger Millennials and Gen Z voters who may not be Facebook users.

## FACEBOOK USAGE BY AGE

(percentages of people that use the app)



## QUICK STAT

About 7 in 10 US adults use Facebook

source: Pew Research Center

## QUICK STAT

51% of US adults say they use Facebook on a daily basis

source: Sprout Social

# 04. INCORPORATE CTV

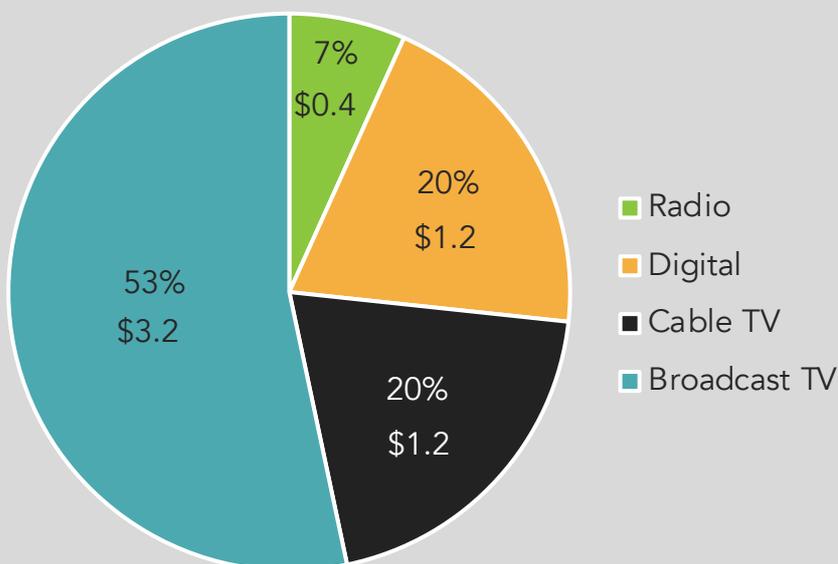
Come election season, voters are relatively acclimated to seeing political commercial breaks during their television shows of choice. However, as political budgets lean more towards cable and broadcast options, there is a growing segment of voters missing. A recent study found that the number of people without pay TV service aka “cord cutters” has risen to about 45 million in 2020. And, even those who do subscribe to pay services are now opting to add streaming services on top of their cable packages. Today, over 160 million Americans stream TV every month. There is no question that more and more Americans are opting for streaming services, whether its in place of or in addition to their cable subscriptions.

Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, more people are staying at home and streaming videos than ever before. Nielsen has reported that in March 2020, video streaming on TV was up 85% when compared to March 2019 — that’s over 400 billion minutes of time spent consuming streaming TV content.

If you aren’t already tapping into the segment of “cord-cutting” content streamers, the time has come for you test out CTV advertising. With performance reporting that includes viewability and completion rates and access to premium network inventory, you may find that CTV is just as if not more cost-effective than linear TV.

## US POLITICAL AD SPENDING, BY MEDIA, 2020

% of total in billions



### QUICK STAT

82% of US digital video ad spend is forecasted to be transacted in automated channels throughout 2020.

source: eMarketer

### QUICK STAT

COVID-19 could lead to a **60%+ increase** in the amount of TV we consume.

source: Nielsen

# 05. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF LOW CPMs

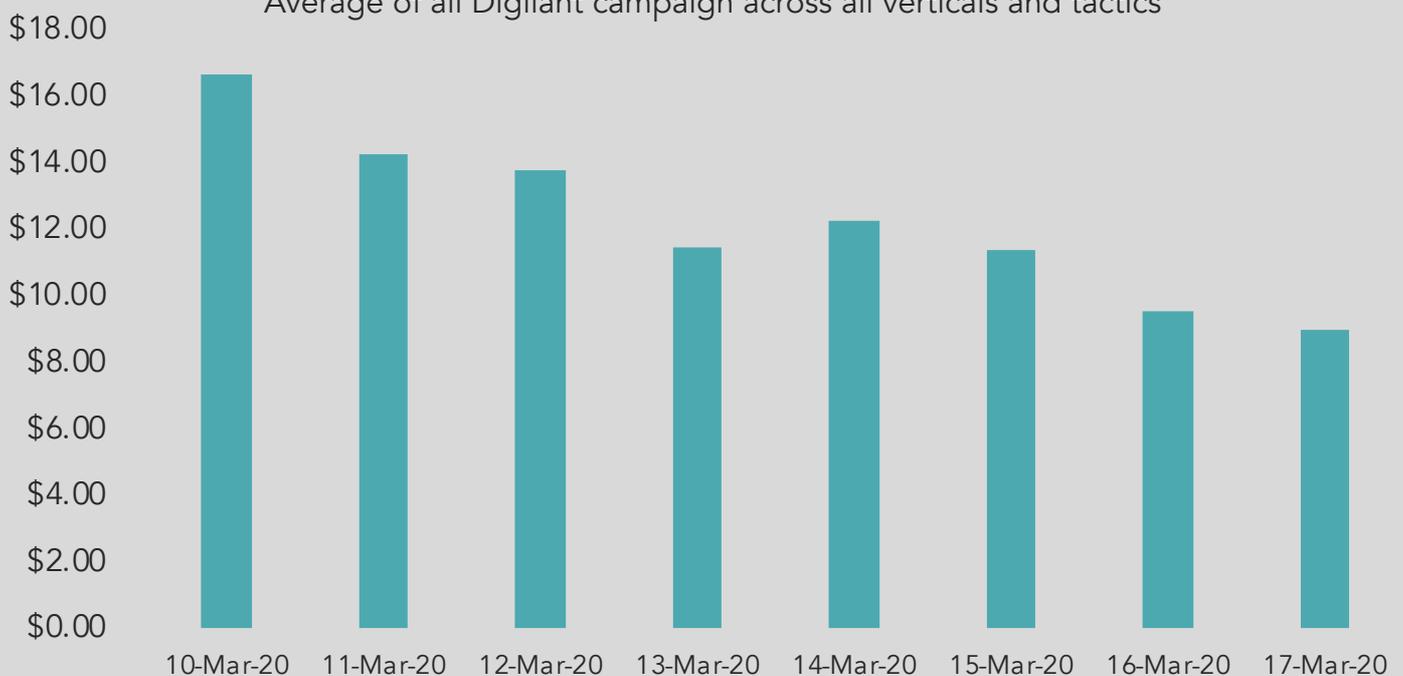
Advertisers across industries have cut back or paused digital advertising efforts due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 – as a result, CPMs have gone down. This creates a unique opportunity for political advertisers to reach more voters at a lower cost and to test new messaging with lower risks for wasted ad spend.

## A few Ideas:

- Consider a campaign that spreads positivity, shows empathy, and illustrates how you're helping those affected by the crisis.
- Thank healthcare professional, first responders, and essential workers on the front lines of the coronavirus spread, especially those local to you.
- Spread a public service announcement that points voters to where they can find reputable information and resources for COVID-19.

## Average CPM: March 10-17, 2020

Average of all Digilant campaign across all verticals and tactics





Questions?



There's a lot going on right now. Social distancing is impacting how we all do business and we know there is concern over the days ahead. Not only do you have to worry about your health and the health of your family, but you have to find the best path forward for pursuing your company's objectives for the year.

We are (and have always been) optimists and believe that we will get through this together.

We are with you for the long haul and will continue to provide relevant insights and guidance as you navigate this new normal. You can reach us with any questions or concerns at [digilant.com/contact](https://digilant.com/contact) or [info@digilant.com](mailto:info@digilant.com).