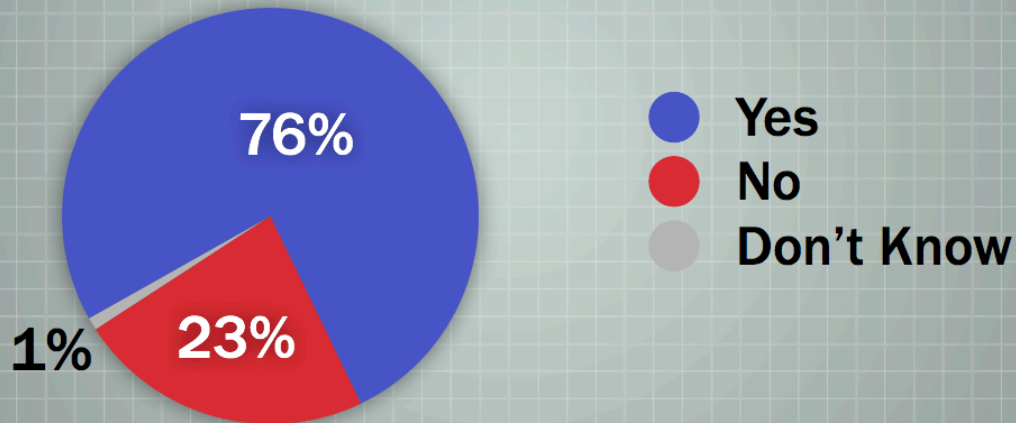


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of 17 January 2014*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

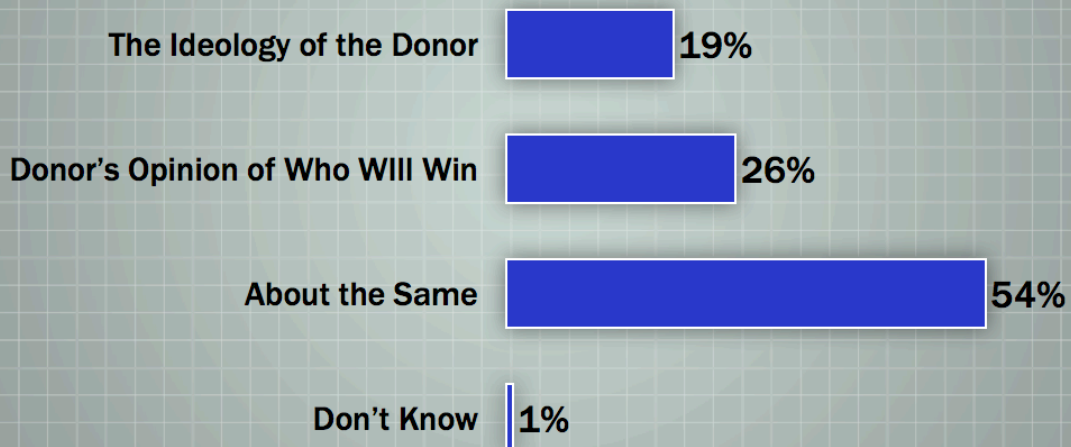
Are campaign reports a good measure of strength?



Inside Intelligence is an informal survey of political and government insiders in Texas and is not meant to measure public opinion.

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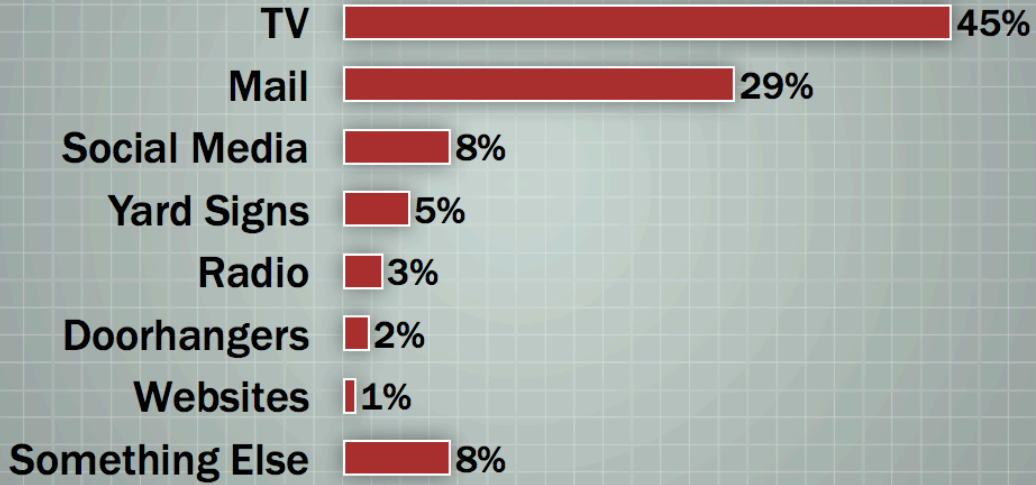
Which is most true: Campaign contributions generally reflect...



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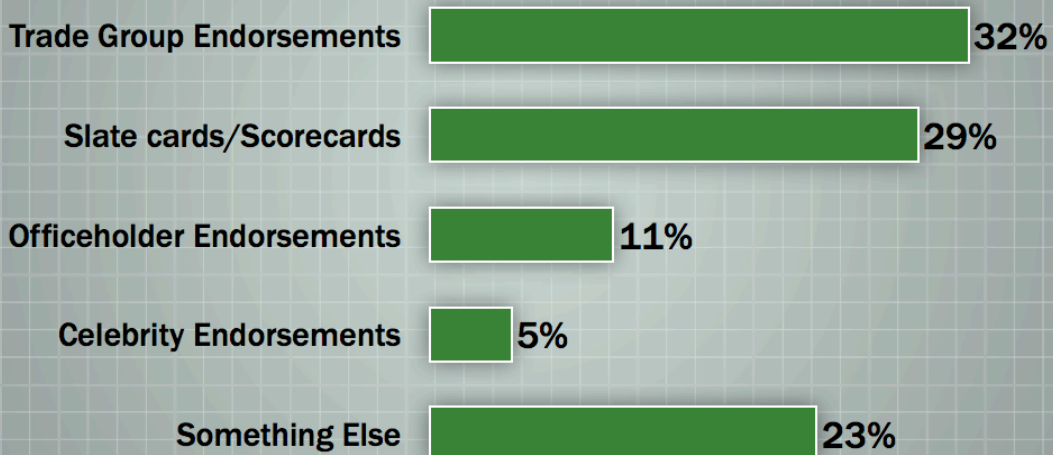
Best advertising medium in primaries?



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Best testimonials in primaries?



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Are contribution totals in campaign finance reports a good measure of a campaign's relative strength?

- "The campaign totals best reflect the ability of candidate to cover the media and compete, but doesn't reflect the strength of campaign with the voters."
- "The number of supporters and their prominence in the community is much more important."
- "Sure. But there are a lot of games to be played, too. And never underestimate the ability of big money to come in late (and its impact on the race)."
- "But they aren't the only number to look at PAC and individual breakdowns are informative too."
- "It's A factor, but not THE factor. We all know that without money you can't reach voters, but a total amount at this stage cuts both ways. How many overall donors? What percentage are Texas donors vs. out of state donors (looking at you, Wendy Davis)? High dollar vs. low dollar (looking at you, Greg Abbott)? And don't forget about the ability of a candidate to loan his/her campaign a huge sum of money down the stretch (or secure a massive contribute down the stretch)--that money is there and ready to be used, but it might not show up on an early finance report which could counter any perception of it being a weak campaign."
- "It is if the money is raised, not so much if it's a personal loan or contribution."
- "A good measure, but not a great measure. As we all know it's important but only half the battle."

Have to show some leg on both fronts. There's the money, then there is the ground game."

- "It provides a snapshot at what a campaign can and cannot do (i.e. media buys, direct mail, GOTV program, etc.)"
- "In most cases . . ."
- "Relative strength is right. If it's your own money, or money from people who can't vote for you or one HUGE check from someone then things are not that strong."
- "I particularly analyze the number of individual contributors. And, in non-statewide races, the amount of local support a candidate receives. \$100 from a potential constituent is worth about \$1000 from a PAC or outside-the-district supporter in terms of actually producing votes."
- "Subject to debts (that will actually have to be paid back v. a candidate pissing money away) and burn rate of expenditures"
- "Yes, if strength is defined as money instead of competence, vision, and leadership."
- "But not universally a solid rule."
- "Yes, it's one indicator. The biggest indicator is grassroots involvement."
- "However, it's important to separate contributions and loans from candidates to their own campaigns. Consultants may love a self-funded

candidate but that's less true of voters."

- "Because we don't know about how much PAC and independent expenditures are being made on behalf of candidates,"
- "Unless your personally wealthy and then it makes no difference."
- "Tony Sanchez and David Dewhurst have shown that the answer has to be 'no.' Not having any money is obviously crippling. But once a campaign has 'enough' it is competitive and the money differential is less important. For example, in the AG primary Branch's opponents will have enough and therefore Dan is likely to lose in a runoff."
- "More so now than the olden days when a group would drop \$100,000 in a House race during the 8 Day reporting period. It's still done, but not like in the past."
- "If they are gifts and not personal loans."
- "If you don't have money, you're generally in trouble, so yes."
- "Candidates loaning money to themselves can skew how much 'support' the candidate actually has."
- "Contribution totals shouldn't be the sole determiner; however, they tell

observers of one's ability to rattle the mailbox and talk pretty on TV."

- "It depends on whether these are contributions, loans or personal money. If the contributions are high, this indicates support and the donors have heard the candidate and believe he or she will get the job done."
- "One of three yardsticks, with others being 2) candidate and 3) breadth of endorsements."
- "It is just as important to know the source. Totals do not tell the full story."
- "A campaign's strength relative to the competition is cash on hand."
- "Generally, I agree but contribution totals don't report on the ground game."
- "Unless the total amount comes from just a handful of people. There is something to be said for having a breadth of support as well. Especially in a primary race."
- "Friendly incumbent rule distorts giving."
- "Money for organization is important less for TV"
- "Used to be; but with the rise of the Tea Party, the variables are more numerous."

Which of the following statements do you think is most true?

- "Depends on the crowd. Some are ideological donors (especially the smaller dollar donors), while others are practical (like lobby money)."

- "Personal relationship matter too"
- "Grassroots money = donor ideology. Lobby money = likely win."
- "For most folks, it reflects their ideology--see for example Tea Partiers and union members. For some folks, those who stand to gain or lose stature or access (see lobbyists, trade associations, and most businesses), it's about picking winners."
- "If there was more individual PACs contributing to the candidate than individuals then I would have to say it's the opinion over ideology."
- "It is always advantageous for an insider to be on the winning team when roaming the capitol halls for a living."
- "Clarification . . . individuals frequently contribute based upon ideology. Those of us in the 'special interest world' invest in the candidates we expect to win. Obviously there are exceptions."
- "Everyone likes to say they were with the winner...."
- "Depends on who the donor is! Lobby = bet on a winning horse. Non-lobby = ideology or personal connection."
- "Contributions reflect passion. Some are passionate for a cause and some are passionate about making money via law or the public trough."
- "Campaigns are more ideological than horse races."
- "And there are those that give to support their political or business agenda"
- "The answer is different for lobby donors versus other donors. For the lobby it seems like 1) who are your friends and 2) who is going to win. The order is important, i.e., you don't give to someone who is not your friend (or wanna be friend) even if they are going to win. For general donors it seems like 1) ideology and then 2) are they going to win."
- "Contribution reflect who the incumbent is."
- "The first statement is most true for the individual donors, but the second statement is most true of PACs"
- "In one instance, the donor may really believe in the candidate; in another, they may just want to quit being hounded and a check is an easy way to quiet the phone."
- "I am not certain of the relative values of either, but both are significant in determining an individual donor's motivation."
- "In my opinion, about half of contributors are motivated by ideology, while the other half (particularly large donors) are motivated by wanting to be on the side of the winner, but I have no empirical data to support this opinion."
- "Depends if you're contributing for future influence or as a voter. I think that one is easy enough to figure out."
- "Small to medium size contributions are a reflection of ideological

alignment with that candidate. Substantive contributions are more likely to be a reflection of power alignment while mega contributions are usually driven by ideological purity."

- "Depends on the donor. Lobby money usually follows the winner; partisans and widows give on issues"

Which kind of advertising is most important in a primary race?

- "I see social media as becoming increasingly important to capture the under 40 vote, especially in statewide races. The press the flesh and signage still is most important in some districts; however, in metro areas seems radio & TV are essential."

- "A great deal depends on the level of the race. High profile 'top of the ticket' races need TV while down ballot, low visibility contests are better suited to direct mail and direct voter contact."

- "TV in statewide races no doubt. For local races TV combined with an aggressive block walking and neighborhood group meetings strategy."

- "GRASSROOTS - you have got to touch people - mail to the home is the best way. Most people now 'tune out' the campaign ads."

- "If you're in an affordable TV market, that is the way to go -- but in most primaries, it's all about the mail."

- "Statewide? Legislative? Congressional? All completely different races."

- "This depends entirely on the characteristics of the district. What

works best in one district may not be the best option in another district."

- "Good God, if anyone says it's yard signs they should have their Inside Intelligence membership revoked."

- "Generally speaking, TV. But for local races or in a primary with relatively few voters, personal connections are more important. IE- if it's possible for the candidate to meet all of the voters in his/her primary, that would be more important than a TV buy. That's obviously not possible statewide."

- "All the above... depends on the race! Statewide TV, Mail, etc. House race Mail, Door hangers, Yard signs, Block walking---All are important given # of voters to be contacted."

- "It depends what type of race you are talking about: Block Walking for someone running for state representative; Mail for someone running for state senate; and TV (cable) for someone running statewide."

- "I really don't know . . . suppose it depends on the district and the candidate. All are important, but I'm pretty tired of stuff hanging on my door, regardless of the source."

- "It's always been about the TV"
- "Depends on the size of the race and where it is. In some rural areas newspaper ads can be important. Doorhangers are usually not important unless the candidate is out hanging them on doors and gets to meet people. Radio can be good in rural areas where there's little satellite radio penetration."
- "Nothing moves voters like TV."
- "The grassroots work more through social media, thus making it a better indicator than even money in the bank."
- "At least for Republicans old fashioned, cluttered, single spaced, double sided, blah blah is still the mindset. Rs need to get with the tech movement that started a while back. Even my mother in law who is 71 uses texting and other social media."
- "Billboards, if sufficiently numerous or well-placed, are the most inescapable medium. There's no mute button, no 'off' button, no escaping the message."
- "I can't pick just one. A combination of these is important in a primary. A primary is very different than a general election as you are speaking the 'church' faithful. TV makes money for the consultants but is not really a good expenditure unless you are in a market reaching 70% of your target voters. Websites, mail and yard signs are critical when communicating with the faithful, and a good dose of old-fashioned shoe leather."
- "I would say TV for statewide races versus radio with lots of signage for the local primaries. With TV so very expensive, a combination of social media and a strong grassroots sign campaign would be the most efficient and effective use of dollars raised."
- "All are important as it is about contacting voters. So for different votes the correct contact point is what that particular voter will pay attention too"
- "The most cost effective option for that race is the most important."
- "TV will always be the best if one can afford enough of it."
- "TV tells the world who you are; a yard sign (or bumper sticker) says who supports you publicly."
- "Legislative races, good direct mail is king."
- "Mail can be targeted to a particular primary race audience, but other types can be important. TV becomes more so in larger races or urban areas. You can never discount the importance of block walking and face-to-face contact also."
- "Depends on rural vs. urban district"
- "Unless ted Cruz for u in R primary"
- "Really depends on level of race from statewide to district"
- "Personal contact."
- "Direct contact, ground operation, complemented with radio and TV ads help to turnout the highest number of voters especially during the primaries when so few voters turnout to vote. Phone banking coupled with

canvassing will yield the highest number of voters in targeted communities."

- "In the general election, I believe social media will play a major role in the statewide campaigns."
- "In rural areas, newspapers are still the best advertisement."
- "The most important advertising is the medium your campaign consultant is selling."
- "All of the above plus shoe leather."

- "Depends on the race."
- "Paying Tea Party 'leaders' in GOP. Runners for Democrats."
- "TV is statewide, congressional & senate races. Mail in state rep and county races."
- "Depends on the race - statewide or local; high profile or low salience"
- "TV is still the king, but social media is chipping away at its dynasty."

Which kind of testimonial is most helpful in a primary campaign?

- "Community / Business leader endorsements."
- "Information about the candidate."
- "The value of endorsements depend entirely on the dynamics of the particular race. Most of the time, they don't matter much at all."
- "I think there is more and more power in constituent testimonials; especially on issues that are being discussed / debated in the election."
- "I believe that locally known and trusted persons within the community offer the best endorsements."
- "Depends on the trade group and race, but they're usually spot on. For example, I care more about what the Farm Bureau says about the Ag Commissioner candidates than what the teachers do."
- "Credible family and friends testimonials."
- "They may all help to some degree"
- "Paid to the order of _____ is the most important testimonial."
- "Local Activists and local electeds for those running for State Representative; Both local and state officeholder endorsements for those running for State Senate; Trade Group endorsements for statewide."
- "As a representative for a trade association, how could I possibly pick anything else?"
- "Hard core primary voters in both parties want to know who their groups are endorsing. Right to lifers follow theirs and Annie's listers follow theirs. Business vs. labor...etc."
- "Slate cards and newspaper endorsement slates are the most important. Nobody cares about officeholder endorsements."

- "Depends on the race and who/what are the most important opinion leaders in that community."
- "Dirt, mud, and innuendo."
- "Who the officeholder is very important."
- "Worthy endorsements line up with scorecards."
- "Trade groups are also important but slates can be critical in primaries. People look to the organizations they believe in to help them decide on the lower profile races. I don't personally think any of these carry much credit in races like the one for Lt. Governor."
- "Local, respected and wealthy community or statewide leaders."
- "Because slates especially when the voter gets the slates reasoning can then make an intelligent decision"
- "Someone else's positives are not transferable, only negatives."
- "Slate cards and score cards, which is why Aycock's Tribune column was so important. He is saying that some groups have changed the scorecards into just another form of propaganda instead of a factual report of what happened in the session. In my opinion to call that a scorecard is dishonest, so TFR and TRL are actively misleading voters and those groups may face political damage at some point if they continue manipulating the result."
- "For a House race, local folk and officeholders."
- "District residents."
- "Local opinion leaders"
- "Trade groups can go a long way in helping; voters have been known to punch the ballot for the person who is most likely going to create jobs, positive economy; the flip side is someone is likely not going to care for that trade..."
- "Endorsements of Women -- Republican Women."
- "Whoever is the most well know and well liked person in a district"
- "Money, money, money."
- "Leaders respected by targeted voters are the most effective testimonials for turnout."
- "If the officeholder is of some substance, an endorsement can be helpful, especially for fundraising. It does not, however, substitute for a sound and viable candidate."
- "Endorsements are way overrated. What matters most are the attitudes and opinions of the people closest to you whom you know and respect."
- "Sarah Palin has been the only 'endorsement' that has moved polling numbers. They are more for appearance and organization of campaigns."
- "All of the above help inform voters at some level but personal / face-time with primary voter groups helps push your message for you."
- "Depends on the race"
- "GOTV is really all that matters."

- "Civic and community leaders from the candidates district (precinct judges, neighborhood leaders, civic club types, local business owners, etc.)"

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Jenny Aghamalian, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Jay Arnold, Charles Bailey, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Hugh Brady, Chris Britton, Blaine Bull, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Thure Cannon, Snapper Carr, Janis Carter, Corbin Casteel, William Chapman, Elna Christopher, Harold Cook, Beth Cubriel, Randy Cubriel, Denise Davis, Hector De Leon, June Deadrick, Nora Del Bosque, Glenn Deshields, Holly DeShields, Tom Duffy, David Dunn, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Jack Erskine, John Esparza, Wil Galloway, Norman Garza, Dominic Giarratani, Bruce Gibson, Stephanie Gibson, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, Jim Grace, John Greytok, Clint Hackney, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Richard Hardy, Susan Hays, John Heasley, Ken Hodges, Steve Holzheuser, Deborah Ingersoll, Jason Johnson, Marti Johnson, Bill Jones, Mark Jones, Robert Jones, Lisa Kaufman, Robert Kepple, Tom Kleinworth, Dale Laine, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Bill Lauderback, James LeBas, Donald Lee, Luke Legate, Ruben Longoria, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, J. McCartt, Dan McClung, Mike McKinney, Kathy Miller, Robert Miller, Steve Minick, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Richard Murray, Nelson Nease, Keats Norfleet, Pat Nugent, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Jerod Patterson, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Richard Pineda, Allen Place, Royce Poinsett, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Jay Propes, Ted Melina Raab, Tim Reeves, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Carl Richie, Grant Ruckel, Jason Sabo, Luis Saenz, Andy Sansom, Jim Sartwelle, Barbara Schlieff, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Christopher Shields, Nancy Sims, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Todd Smith, Larry Soward, Dennis Speight, Bill Stevens, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Sherry Sylvester, Gerard Torres, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Ware Wendell, Ken Whalen, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.