We’re Filled In – Are You?

Clay County, Florida
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Situation Analysis
With 120,070 registered voters in Clay County at the beginning of the 2010 gubernatorial election year, the Clay County Supervisor of Elections office faced the challenge of transitioning to a new optical-scan ballot tabulation system. Voters had become accustomed to placing their vote by connecting the arrows on the ballot. With the new DS200 system, voters simply fill in the oval next to their selection. Without proper public education of this infrequent change, voter confusion, apathy and longer lines at polling places could all threaten the success of Clay County elections.

Since unfamiliarity of the process can sometimes be associated with the difficulty of voting or be used as an excuse not to participate, the Clay County elections office needed to launch an educational campaign to increase voter awareness of the new process. The upcoming elections and the interest generated by these elections presented the opportunity for the elections office to infiltrate an already-engaged Clay County with this message.

Research
Qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to assess target audiences, shape the overall message and guide the execution and tactics of the campaign.

- Reviewed previous election data to determine voting demographic trends and benchmarks.
  1. The 2008 general election showed that the participation of the 18-27 age group significantly increased as a result of embracing technology and social networking. This age group had the lowest turnout in prior elections.
  2. Clay County voter turnout in the 2006 gubernatorial elections was 46%.
- Solicited input from staff, poll workers and other interested parties to identify the best way to transition voters to this new process.
- Sought suggestions from local leaders for recommendations of groups, clubs and civic organizations in which the elections office could conduct equipment demonstrations.

The research showed that the campaign’s target demographic was all Clay County residents of voting age. However, with such a diverse population, the campaign needed to target each group using different outlets or techniques. For instance, with the involvement of the 18-27 age group in the 2008 elections, technology and social media should be a main tactical component of this campaign to best reach this age group. The campaign will need to continue through the 2012 general election. Since turnout is considerably lower during a gubernatorial election, not all voters had the opportunity to use the equipment in 2010.

Planning
The Clay County Supervisor of Elections office had to effectively reach all of Clay County voters to educate them of the new DS200 voting process and create awareness of the benefits of this new equipment.

Goal: To generate awareness of the new voting process and educate all Clay County voters on how to mark their ballots using the DS200 system.

Objective: Successfully ensure that Clay County voters are familiar with the new equipment prior to voting on Election Day.

Target Audience: All Clay County residents of voting age

Timeline:
- Planning: July 2009 – December 2010
- Execution: January 2010 – November 2012
- Evaluation: Ongoing with final evaluation in December 2012
Budget: With exception of staff time and the website production costs, the costs associated with this campaign are costs that the office would already incur during a normal general election cycle. The majority of this campaign was completed in-house in an effort to reduce costs.

Strategies:
- Integrate the “We’re Filled in – Are You?” message into all communication from the Clay County elections office.
- Communicate the message consistently year-round with a media and communications blitz near each election.

Execution
- Created the message “We’re Filled in – Are You?” to explain the voting process in the shortest number of words. This message says that we are not only “filled in” to the process, but also implies that we vote by filling in the oval.
- Joe Pickens (former Florida House of Representatives member and current president of St. John’s River State College), the band Molly Hatchet and Shannon Miller (U.S. Olympic gymnast) acted as spokespersons for the campaign.
- Launched www.areyoufilledin.com with a demonstration video, a sample ballot, more information on the DS200, voter registration and voter status information.
- Initiated a comprehensive communications plan – including but not limited to press releases, commercials, printed advertisements, direct mail, social networking and newsletters.
- Fully integrated the “We’re Filled in – Are You?” message into every aspect of communication.
- Conducted equipment demonstrations at local festivals, fairs, group/club meetings, high schools, churches, businesses, civic association meetings, political party meetings and homeowner’s association meetings.
- Utilized nontraditional communication outlets, such as homeowner’s association newsletters and utility bill inserts.

Evaluation
Evaluation for the “We’re Filled in – Are You?” campaign has been ongoing throughout the implementation process and will conclude following the 2012 general election.

The approximate cost of the campaign, as of September 2011, is $23,000.00 This total includes an estimate of $4,000.00 for staff time, $17,300.00 for two direct mailings (including postage), $335.00 for promotional magnets, and $1000.00 for commercial and website production.

The Clay County Supervisor of Elections office completed seven equipment demonstrations in 2009, 41 in 2010 and 32 in 2011, with 14 demonstrations already scheduled for the remainder of the year. Multiple newspaper articles have been published regarding the campaign and the transition to the new equipment.

The Clay County Supervisor of Elections staff has noticed a significant decline in the number of people who have not used the DS200 when asked at voter outreach events, such as fairs, festivals, schools and club or group meetings. The office also received numerous comments from voters that he or she had tried the equipment at previous demonstrations when asked if they would like to test the new equipment.

Clay County had a 53% turnout during the 2010 general election, a seven percent increase over the 2006 general election. Please note that gubernatorial elections are held during non-presidential years in the state of Florida. Data was used from the 2006 gubernatorial election for comparison of the 2010 election. The data compiled from the 2012 election will be compared with the 2008 presidential election information for future evaluation.
“WE’RE FILLED IN ARE YOU?!”

These voters are filled in about the new state of the art voting machines in Clay County. How about you?

- **ALERTS VOTER TO MISTAKES**
  Allows voter to correct “Blank” or “Over” voted errors before casting ballot

- **BALLOT ON DEMAND TECHNOLOGY**
  During Early Voting, Ballot on Demand prints voter specific ballot. Eliminates over production, reducing overhead and the possibility of errors.

- **FILL IN OVAL WITH ANY DEVICE**
  Elimination of Patented Felt Marker reduces costly overbead & gives voter flexibility to use any writing instrument to FILL IN THE OVAL.

CHRIS H. CHAMBLES
CLAY COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

WWW.AREYOUFILLEDIN.COM
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No more Arrows To Connect

FILL IN THE OVAL
WE'RE FILLED IN
ARE YOU?

STATE OF THE ART
DS200 VOTING MACHINES
HAVE ARRIVED.
No more Arrows To Connect

FILL IN THE OVAL

ALERTS VOTER TO MISTAKES
allows voter to connect "blank" or "over" voted errors before casting ballot

BALLOT ON DEMAND TECHNOLOGY
during early voting, ballot on demand prints voter's specific ballot; eliminates over production, reducing overhead and the possibility of errors

FILL IN BUBBLE WITH ANY DEVICE
elimination of patented felt marker reduces costly overhead & gives voter flexibility to use any writing instrument to fill in the oval

"I'M FILLED IN ARE YOU?"

CHRIS H. CHAMBLESS
CLAY COUNTY
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS
Chambless campaign includes Miller, Pickens

By Randy Lefko
Correspondent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS -- Olympic gold medal gymnast and two-time world champion Shannon Miller, country rock band Molly Hatchet leader Bobby Ingram and the president of St. Johns River Community College, Joe Pickens, all have, in one man's opinion, something very special in common.

"All three have their own star power in what they do, but, more importantly, all three are very compassionate about being active in their communities," said Clay County Supervisor of Elections Chris Chambless. "We will be starting our campaign called, "We're Filled In, Are You?" at the Clay County Fair this year with hopes of creating voter awareness of the upcoming elections in August."

Chambless, who is in his second year as elections supervisor, has a significant goal intertwined with his "We're Filled In, Are You?" campaign which includes media information, public service announcements and radio and TV advertisements. The "We're Filled In, Are You?" campaign which includes upcoming videos and print ads with Chambless' three star partners will be conducted partly because of newly-designed voting machines that go back to filling in ovals rather than connecting arrows and also a get out and vote initiative.

"In 2006, Clay County had an 80 percent voter turnout and historically had a very significant amount of voter participation, mainly ages 45 and up," said Chambless. "When most people hear that statistic though, they ask about the other 20 percent. To me, that means we have 20 percent more to go in our campaign to create awareness of the political process. We think our star power can influence a younger voter bloc."

With his three stars; Miller, Ingram and Pickens, on board, Chambless is, as he called it, orchestrating a plan of action to energize more voters in the August primary elections.

"What has been amazing and, quite humbling, is the passion that all three individuals answered, "Yes," to our request for their participation," said Chambless. "Shannon Miller, a seven-time gold medalist, Bobby Ingram, a rock superstar and Mr. Pickens, a renowned state legislature known for his education initiatives. We had a lot of candidates to choose and ask, but wanted people who had no political gain from to get."

For Chambless, voting is the most precious right of any American and he attacks his objective of a 100 percent voter turn-out with as much fervor as his Olympic gymnast counterpart.

"To me, the right to vote comes from a lot of blood, sweat and tears of many men and women who have fought and died to give us that right," said Chambless. "My job is not necessarily to give my opinion on the actual election, but to give the voters every piece of information available in the process from candidates to election schedules and locations to overseas accessibility to registration verification so that there is utmost accuracy and transparency in the process. Clay County has always been a trendsetter in voter information..."
We’re Filled In – Are You? Website
www.areyoufilledin.com