

## Gubernatorial Advertising Up Dramatically This Year

**Overall Volume is Double 2006 Level; Outside Group Advertising Has Tripled;  
California, Florida, Wisconsin, Ohio Inundated by Ads**

(MIDDLETOWN, CT --) The volume of advertising in the 37 states holding gubernatorial races this November is up dramatically over the volume of advertising aired up to this point in 2006. A Wesleyan Media Project analysis of gubernatorial race airings between September 1 and October 7, 2010, finds that almost 300,000 ads have been aired across the country in gubernatorial races, double the volume aired in 2006. Candidates accounted for 72 percent of those ads, while parties accounted for another 16.2 percent. Independent groups financed almost 12 percent of the ads, an increase from the 7.4 percent that they financed in 2006.

**Table 1: Advertising in Gubernatorial Races 9/1-10/7\***

Year		Candidate	Party	Interest Group	Total
2006	Ads Aired	111,307	20,352	10,562	142,221
	Row %	78.3%	14.3%	7.4%	
	Cost	\$89,859,720	\$21,784,310	\$14,257,000	\$125,901,030
2010	Ads Aired	211,091	47,574	34,502	293,167
	Row %	72.00%	16.23%	11.77%	
	Cost	\$111,609,040	\$22,629,520	\$27,928,410	\$162,166,970
% volume increase		89.7%	133.8%	226.7%	106.1%
% spending increase		24.2%	3.9%	95.9%	28.8%

\* Table does not show spending on a small number of ads coordinated between parties and candidates.

\*\*Totals include Democratic, Republican and third-party candidates.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA IN ALL TABLES AS:

Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project

“One big story this year is the role that outside groups are playing in gubernatorial races. These groups have more than tripled their involvement in terms of the number of ads they have aired on behalf of candidates running for governor,” said Travis Ridout, associate professor of political science at Washington State University and co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project.

What explains the more than doubling of advertising this election season from 2006? “In part, this is a reflection of the extremely competitive environment this year,” said Michael Franz, associate professor of government at Bowdoin College and co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. “A third of the races for governor are legitimate tossups,” he added.

Table 2 shows that the state that has seen the most gubernatorial ads is California, where an estimated \$35 million was spent on 51,519 ad spots in the September 1 to October 7 time period. (Figures in this table include all candidate-, party- and independent group-sponsored ads). Most of the California ads were paid for by the candidates themselves, though the Republican ad advantage is not as large as one might expect given Republican candidate Meg Whitman’s

proven ability to self-finance her campaign. During all of 2010, Whitman’s campaign aired just under 175,000 spots in California. Floridians have also been hit hard by television advertising, with over 44,000 spots being aired in the state during the post-September 1 period. Two Midwestern states with close gubernatorial races, Wisconsin and Ohio, each saw over 19,000 ad airings worth an estimated \$8 million in each state.

**Table 2: Ad Airings in Top 25 Gubernatorial Races, by State\***

<b>State</b>	<b>Total Spots</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Pro-Dem</b>	<b>Pro-GOP</b>
CA	51,519	\$34,955,020	22,549	28,970
FL	44,272	\$23,064,460	15,299	28,973
TX	16,033	\$13,638,210	9553	6480
MA	7243	\$8,385,560	1963	3363
OH	19,056	\$8,191,560	11,359	7697
WI	19,620	\$8,159,230	7844	11,776
NY	12,931	\$7,005,040	12,020	911
PA	9588	\$7,002,260	3863	5725
MI	13,121	\$6,139,130	8832	4289
GA	14,488	\$5,798,640	9552	4936
IL	6518	\$5,693,950	4249	2209
MD	4795	\$5,402,780	2771	2024
CT	3081	\$3,096,040	1148	1933
MN	3934	\$2,664,460	2149	1466
NM	5661	\$2,457,210	2948	2713
OR	9531	\$2,059,740	3190	6341
IA	6346	\$1,824,070	914	5432
TN	4329	\$1,743,080	141	4188
SC	6337	\$1,712,050	2883	3442
NV	4442	\$1,684,920	2939	1503
ME	4364	\$1,546,080	2392	1276
RI	2925	\$1,285,050	1817	111
OK	2523	\$1,239,070	514	2009
AL	4238	\$1,203,710	918	3320
VT	2295	\$1,046,170	921	1374

\*Party totals do not always add up to overall total due to the presence of third party candidates.

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Across all races, there were just slightly more pro-Republicans ads than pro-Democratic ads aired, with pro-Republican ads accounting for 50.3 percent of the total ad airings. (Information on gubernatorial advertising in additional states is available on the project website at: <http://election-ad.research.wesleyan.edu/2010/10/21/gov-ad-update/>). Among the states that saw at least 100 ad airings, Republicans held the greatest advantage in terms of percentage of total ads aired in Tennessee, South Dakota, Iowa, Oklahoma and Alabama. Democrats held the

greatest percentage advantage in total ad airings in Arkansas, Colorado, Alaska, Rhode Island and New York.

“Sometimes lost amidst the focus on Citizens United and control of Congress this year is the fact that key battlegrounds in gubernatorial races may fundamentally shape the political landscape on important policy issues, not to mention redistricting,” said Erika Franklin Fowler, assistant professor of government at Wesleyan University and co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. “The sheer volume of advertising is one prime indication that both sides understand how high the stakes are.”

The Wesleyan Media Project provides real-time tracking and analysis of all political television advertising in real-time. Housed in Wesleyan’s Quantitative Analysis Center – part of the Allbritton Center for the Study of Public Life – the Wesleyan Media Project is the successor to the Wisconsin Advertising Project, which disbanded in 2009. It is directed by Erika Franklin Fowler, assistant professor of government at Wesleyan University; Michael M. Franz, associate professor of government at Bowdoin College and Travis N. Ridout, associate professor of political science at Washington State University.

The Wesleyan Media Project is supported by grants from John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Sunlight Foundation, Wesleyan University, and its partner institutions, Bowdoin College and Washington State University. Data are provided by Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project using Academicclip, a web-based coding tool. All spending numbers are estimates.

The Wesleyan Media Project’s website can be found here:  
<http://election-ad.research.wesleyan.edu/>

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