To: Interested Parties
From: Empower Project
Date: February 1, 2023
RE: Nevada Paid Relational Persuasion Analysis Segment

Note: This document provides analysis on the persuasion segment of the research project. In the coming weeks we will have an analysis on the turnout segment of the project.

Executive Summary

- Empower Project tested the persuasion effects of paid relational organizing with a randomized controlled trial experiment in Nevada in 2022, and found a **2.7 percentage point persuasion effect** on vote choice in the race for Governor.
  - This effect size is more than double that of the best-performing midterm tactic studied by the Analyst Institute.
  - Among self-reported Trump voters, outreach increased the rate of voting for the Democratic candidate for governor by **5.0 percentage points**.
- The program reached a very large scale — 262,000 relational conversations with 160,000 people or 1 in 12 eligible voters in Nevada. The day before Election Day we tracked an average of one conversation per second.
- Persuasion outcomes were measured via text-to-web and phone surveys.

Program Implementation

Relational Organizing involves asking people to make lists of friends, family, and coworkers to engage in conversation multiple times during a campaign. The technique is able to leverage the power of personal relationships while also reaching people and communities not typically reachable through other campaign tactics.

In this experiment[1], relational outreach was conducted by Community Mobilizers (CMs) who were compensated for their time. Each CM was asked to add 75 contacts to their list using the Empower app. In practice, this resulted in CMs adding an average of 59 contacts. Contacts were automatically assigned to treatment or control groups as soon as they were added, with 22% being randomly assigned to the control group and 78% to the treatment group. CMs were asked not to reach out to contacts assigned to the control group. Within the app, control group contacts were placed in a "Do Not Contact" list and the app gave a warning message when CMs clicked on in-app links to contact them.

CMs were asked to reach out to their contacts across four different calls to action, beginning in September 2022 and ending on Election Day, 8 November 2022. These calls to action included sharing information regarding voter registration, absentee ballot access, messaging about the

---

[1] Data from Organizing Empowerment Fund and Organizing Empowerment PAC's paid relational programs have been aggregated for the purposes of this research paper's analysis

candidates, polling place information, and other helpful election day resources. 2,600 CMs built lists totalling 160,000 people to engage, resulting in 262,000 tracked relational conversations.

Survey Methodology

We used surveys fielded post-election to measure persuasion outcomes. To increase response rate, we layered a phone survey on top of a text-to-web survey. The text-to-web survey was conducted by Survey 160 from November 13th to November 18th. The phone survey was conducted by AMM Political Strategies from November 19th - 20th with a second wave on November 25th. The survey had five questions - 2022 US Senate vote, 2022 Nevada Governor vote, 2020 Presidential vote, race, and income. The survey firms did not take any steps to verify the identity of the individuals responding to the survey. We assumed the majority of people responding would be the intended individual because phone numbers used for the survey were the same numbers CMs had entered into Empower as the contact number for that individual. Also, we expected that verifying identity by asking for names or other personal information would reduce response rates and make it impossible to achieve acceptable statistical power.

Results

Regression results are displayed in the tables below. In all cases, the outcome variable was a binary variable coded 1 if the individual reported voting for the Democratic candidate and coded 0 for all other responses. Regression results for the top row of each table ("All respondents") are from a model with two independent variables, one measuring treatment, and the other being self-reported 2020 vote (the third question in the survey, measured immediately after US Senate and Nevada Governor vote). Results for other rows in the tables represent analyses among contacts with different responses to the 2020 vote question. The regression models in these rows only had one independent variable – treatment vs control.

	Nevada Governor Vote - Regression Results				
	Effect on % voting for Democrat (percentage points)	Standard Error	90% Confidence Interval - Lower Bound	90% Confidence Interval - Upper Bound	N size
All respondents	2.7%	0.0112	0.9%	4.5%	5329
Biden voters	3.3%	0.0186	0.2%	6.3%	2329
Trump voters	5.0%	0.0199	1.7%	8.3%	1100
2020 nonvoters	0.3%	0.0253	-3.9%	4.5%	866

US Senate Vote - Regression Results					
	Effect (percentage points)	Standard Error	90% Confidence Interval - Lower Bound	90% Confidence Interval - Upper Bound	N size
All respondents	1.5%	0.0103	-0.2%	3.2%	6469
Biden voters	3.3%	0.0176	0.4%	6.2%	2329
Trump voters	5.6%	0.0209	2.1%	9.0%	1100
2020 nonvoters	-5.1%	0.0266	-9.5%	-0.7%	866

Discussion

- There was a positive overall effect on governor vote – and this was substantially larger than the average persuasion effects found for non-relational modes of contact in midterm elections in Analyst Institute meta-analysis. They found the most effective outreach mode for midterms - non-social pressure mail - had a 1.95 percentage point impact on Democratic vote margin. Given that our 2.7% figure represents raw percentage voting for the Democrat and not vote margin, this means that our program showed more than double the effect of the Analyst Institute's average mail program effect.
- The overall effect on Senate vote was not statistically significant, but if the point estimate of 1.5% is accurate, it would also be larger than the average effects found by Analyst Institute for any mode of contact in a midterm election.
- There were especially large persuasion effects for 2020 Trump voters. Further research is needed to know whether this effect replicates; if it does, then paid relational organizing targeting this group could have a dramatic effect in the future.
- There was a large negative effect of treatment on US Senate vote for 2020 nonvoters. Similar to the effect for the 2020 Trump voters subgroup, this may be due to something specific to the 2020 nonvoters reached by this program. It seems possible some in this group may have voted for Catherine Cortez Masto if they did not receive outreach, but the specific outreach given by CMs made them less enthusiastic. This counterintuitive effect may also be a result of statistical noise - something made more likely by the smaller size of this subgroup.

APPENDIX

We recruited 2,600 Community Mobilizers in less than 7 weeks. While we are working with Catalist to re-match all of our data after the voter file updates, preliminary matching tells us that our Community Mobilizers were high opportunity voters.
- 70% had a turnout score of less than 70
- 70% had a partisanship score of 70+
- They were diverse in both age and race.
  - Age
    - 13% → 18-24 year olds
    - 21% → 25-34 year olds
    - 32% → 35-49 year olds
    - 22% → 50-64 year olds
    - 11% → 65+
  - Race
    - 45% → White
    - 29% → Black
    - 12% → Latino
    - 2% → AAPI
    - 11% → unknown

We asked our Community Mobilizers to add 75 contacts to their list using our app Empower. On average, CMs added 59. Preliminary matching tells us:
- Contacts were diverse in age and race, with only 50% listed as "white"
- 32% of contacts were not registered as "active" on the voterfile (thus, potentially people not reached by other programs.)
  - 32% were not "Registered Active" Voters
    - Dropped Voters → 12%
    - Registered Inactive Voters → 11%
    - UnRegistered → 8%
  - Race
    - 50% → White
    - 23% → Black
    - 15% → Latino
    - 4% → AAPI
    - 8% → unknow
  - Age
    - 9% → 18-24 year olds
    - 20% → 25-34 year olds
    - 29% → 35-49 year olds
    - 23% → 50-64 year olds

- ■ 15% → 65+

Duplicate Contacts

We considered a contact a duplicate of another contact if they matched on any of the following criteria:
- Combination of first name and phone number
- Combination of first name and last name
- Phone number
- VAN ID
- Address

We handled these a couple of different ways, each of which results in similar findings:
- 1. Exclude duplicates: we removed all contacts that showed up in the dataset more than once. This only resulted in the removal of 46 contacts.
- 2a. Collapse duplicates: instead of removing all duplicate contacts, we collapsed each set of duplicate contacts down to one contact, and used inverse probability weights to account for the fact that these duplicate contacts (assuming they were actually the same individual) had two or more chances to be assigned to the treatment group. In other words, if three contacts matched on one of the criteria, we retained one of them (chosen randomly), removed the other two from the analysis, and weighted the remaining contact appropriately. If any of the contacts in the set of duplicates was assigned to the treatment group, we counted that contact as being in the treatment group for the analysis.
- 2b. Same as 2a except with a more generous definition of 'duplicate': we also counted as duplicates any contacts that had the same first name and no last name. Although we suspect most of these are not actually duplicates (for example, several contacts were entered as e.g. first name "Dad" or "Mom" or "Ben" and no last name), out of an abundance of caution we wanted to check whether results were similar in the worst-case scenario that they were all duplicates.

In the regression analyses in this document, we removed all contacts who matched on one or more of these criteria from the analysis (i.e. method 1 in the list above). This resulted in the removal of a total of 46 contacts.

Control Group Details

We discovered that a number of contacts assigned to the control group had been tagged by mobilizers as having been reached out to. We have several potential theories for how this may have occurred:
- Community Mobilizers did not notice which contacts were in the "Do not contact list", and reached out to contacts outside of the app, and thus did not trigger the app's inbuilt error message warning people not to contact the "Do not contact" list.

- Community Mobilizers noticed the "Do not contact" label or warning notice, but mistakenly thought they had to contact all contacts anyway in order to get paid.
- Community Mobilizers did not actually contact all contacts, but logged them as having been contacted.

In total, 53% of control group contacts were logged by their CMs as having been contacted in at least one of the calls to action, and 80% of treatment group contacts were logged as contacted. Professor Donald P. Green from Columbia University advised us on how to run the analysis in light of these potentially tainted control contacts. His advice to get unbiased estimates of the intent-to-treat effect (ITT) was to compare the entire control group to the treatment group — we agreed, because this is a conservative approach that if anything would underestimate the true effect size. The results of that analysis are in the main 'Results' section above.

Balance Test

Additionally, we checked to see whether the tainted and untainted control group contacts seemed to vary systematically from each other. To test for balanced characteristics across tainted and untainted control group contacts, we regressed tainted vs untainted status on self-reported 2020 vote, race and income for the 942 respondents who answered all these questions. The omnibus F-statistic for this model was 0.6175 with 16 degrees of freedom and 925 residual degrees of freedom, and a non-significant p-value of 0.87. This indicates no significant overall deviation from balanced groups on the covariates included in the model. Output from this regression model is below. Coefficients for Biden vote 2020, White/Caucasian, and income of $50,000-74,999 are not shown because those are the reference categories that the other categories' effects are shown in comparison to.

BALANCE TEST				
Coefficient	Effect	Std. Error	t statistic	p value
Voted Trump 2020	-0.0008536	0.0404111	-0.021	0.983
Didn't vote in 2020	-0.0297364	0.0525417	-0.566	0.572
Voted other candidate 2020	-0.1221164	0.0850154	-1.436	0.151
Not sure who voted for 2020	-0.0474797	0.1799228	-0.264	0.792
Race - all of the above	0.2133728	0.2533311	0.842	0.400
Race - American Indian/Alaska Native	-0.0226058	0.1142404	-0.198	0.843

Race - Asian	-0.0199241	0.0879571	-0.227	0.821
Race - Black/African American	-0.0289826	0.0407801	-0.711	0.477
Race - Hispanic/Latino	-0.0520735	0.0588516	-0.885	0.376
Race - Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.1062847	0.1618903	0.657	0.512
Race - Other	-0.0128094	0.0669976	-0.191	0.848
Income less than 20k	0.0781824	0.0521487	1.499	0.134
Income 20,000-49,999	0.0184687	0.0538798	0.343	0.732
Income 75,000-99,999	0.0420690	0.0613371	0.686	0.493
Income 100,000-139,999	0.0314984	0.0614123	0.513	0.608
Income 140k or more	-0.0393151	0.0563183	-0.698	0.485

Summary of Responses Across Modes
(Including tainted control group respondents)

	Text-to-web survey	Phone survey	TOTAL
N of contacts with 10+ digit phone numbers on list sent to survey firm	115004	114188	127766
Total N of valid responses answering at least one question	1133	5398	6515
Total N of valid responses answering all five questions	759	2984	3732
Percent of original list responding to at least one question	1.0%	4.7%	5.1%
Percent of original list responding to all five questions	0.7%	2.6%	2.9%
Total N in control group	308	1352	1660

Total N in treatment group	825	4046	4855
Percent of sample in control group	27.2%	25.0%	25.5%
Percent of sample in treatment group	72.8%	75.0%	74.5%
N original list in control group	26919	26945	28059
N original list in treatment group	88085	87243	99707
Response rate within control group	1.1%	5.0%	5.9%
Response rate within treatment group	0.9%	4.6%	4.9%

Two Stage Least Squares Estimates of Complier Average Causal Effects
As before, the "all respondents" top row analyses in the tables below control for self-reported 2020 presidential vote choice.

One important point with this - the "All respondents" analyses specifically control for 2020 vote choice with "Missing response" coded as one of the options, so that we can simultaneously include everyone who answered the Senate or Governor questions, but who may have not responded to the 2020 vote question (which came after the 2022 vote questions in the survey).

Also important - only about two thirds of the sample responded to the 2020 vote question and said they voted for Biden, Trump, or did not vote. The other third of respondents either did not respond to the 2020 question, said they voted for another candidate, or said "I'm not sure". This helps explain the discrepancy in effects seen across the "all respondents" analyses and what we see in the rows representing Biden, Trump or 2020 nonvoters.

Nevada Governor Vote - Two Stage Least Squares Results				
	Effect on % voting for Democrat (percentage points)	Standard Error	p-value	N size
All respondents	10.5%	0.04	0.02	5329
Biden voters	13.4%	0.08	0.09	2329
Trump voters	17.8%	0.07	0.02	1100
2020 nonvoters	1.1%	0.10	0.91	866

US Senate Vote - Two Stage Least Squares Results				
	Effect on % voting for Democrat (percentage points)	Standard Error	p-value	N size
All respondents	5.8%	0.04	0.14	6469
Biden voters	13.6%	0.07	0.07	2329
Trump voters	19.8%	0.08	0.01	1100
2020 nonvoters	-20.0%	0.11	0.06	866