

CASE STUDY · POLITICAL DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

Digital Campaign for Christine Houk

How a multi-platform paid media strategy built name recognition and voter engagement for a mayoral candidate in Grove City, Ohio — on a moderate \$8,000 budget.

184K Voters reached on Facebook	93K YouTube video views	842K+ Total paid-media impressions
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AT A GLANCE

CLIENT	Christine Houk — Mayoral candidate, Grove City, Ohio
AGENCY	The Growth Maverick
ROLE	Marketing Analyst & Campaign Manager
TIMELINE	October 1 – November 7, 2023 (~5 weeks, through Election Day)
BUDGET	\$8,000 total across paid digital
PLATFORMS	Facebook · Instagram · Google Search · YouTube
FOCUS	Multi-platform awareness build, name recognition, and voter engagement

01 · SECTION

The Candidate

Christine Houk ran for Mayor of Grove City, Ohio — a suburb of Columbus with roughly 42,000 residents. As a local candidate campaigning against an established field, Christine needed to introduce herself to voters, communicate her platform on the issues residents cared about most, and do it fast enough to matter before Election Day on November 7, 2023.

The Growth Maverick was brought in to design and manage the paid digital arm of the campaign, working across Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Google Search to drive awareness and turn attention into engagement.

02 · SECTION

The Challenge

Local political campaigns face constraints that most consumer brands never encounter. Three of them shaped the strategy from day one.

A hard deadline, five weeks out.

Unlike a brand campaign, there was no option to keep learning past Election Day. Every test, every learning, every optimization had to compound quickly enough to matter before November 7. That ruled out slow-burn strategies and forced a bias toward tactics with immediate reach.

A moderate budget against broad reach goals.

\$8,000 is a meaningful budget for a local race, but it had to stretch across the full voting population of Grove City. Every dollar needed to be traceable to reach, engagement, or intent — not vanity metrics.

Low baseline name recognition.

The campaign started with limited paid-media presence and low general awareness. The priority wasn't persuasion — it was introduction. Voters needed to know who Christine was and what she stood for before persuasion was even possible.

03 · SECTION

The Approach

The strategy was built around a simple thesis: at this budget and timeline, the best return would come from combining broad-reach video with targeted issue-based social ads and search intent capture — three platforms doing three different jobs.

YouTube for cheap, high-volume awareness

YouTube video ads were used to drive maximum unique reach at low cost per view. Six video ad groups were built around distinct message pillars — community growth, communication with residents, responsible growth, candidate introduction, public safety, and civic engagement — so message fatigue was distributed across creative variants rather than concentrated on a single ad.

Facebook and Instagram for issue-based engagement

Meta placements carried the campaign's core narrative: three sequenced campaigns moved audiences from broad name-recognition, into issue awareness (Local Issues, Future Plans and Solutions), and finally into a Get-Out-The-Vote push in the final week. Audiences included demographic-based targeting, lookalike audiences of engaged supporters, and interest-based segments aligned to the platform priorities.

Google Search for capturing voter intent

A tightly scoped Search campaign — 'Capture Voter Intent' — targeted high-intent queries from voters actively researching the race, candidates, and Grove City ballot. The campaign ran on a Maximize Clicks strategy, prioritizing volume of qualified traffic to the campaign site during the decision window.

Continuous monitoring and reallocation

Because the timeline was so compressed, spend was reviewed daily. Underperforming creatives and audiences were paused within days rather than weeks, and budget was shifted toward the message pillars and creative variants pulling the strongest engagement.

04 · SECTION

The Work

Below is a look at the actual campaign performance across the three platforms.

Facebook & Instagram

FACEBOOK

Overall Campaign Performance (1st October 2023 - 7th of November 2023):

Reach: 184,091
 Frequency: 3.72 (Overall)
 CPR: -
 Total ad spent till now: \$1,892.54
 Impressions: 684,618
 Link clicks: 642
 All clicks: 1,371
 CTR: 0.20%
 CPC: \$1.38

Campaigns											
Christine Houk for Mayor (219381961...)											
Updated just now											
Search and filter											
Oct 1, 2023 - Nov 6, 2023											
Columns: Performance and clicks											
Off / On	Campaign	Delivery	Attribution setting	Results	Reach	Frequency	Cost per result	Budget	Amount spent	Ends	Impres
	Rising Our Talent/Video Views_02Nov2023	Completed	-	30,380 Reach	30,380	1.04	\$3.07 Per 1,000 People Re...	Using ad set bu...	\$16.44	Nov 6, 2023	
	Local Issues Awareness	Completed	7-day click or ...	121,390 Reach	121,390	2.33	\$6.90 Per 1,000 People Re...	Using ad set bu...	\$836.11	Nov 6, 2023	
	Build Name Recognition	Completed	7-day click or ...	84,874 Reach	84,874	6.34	\$11.26 Per 1,000 People Re...	Using ad set bu...	\$955.99	Nov 6, 2023	
	Results from 3 campaigns		7-day click or ...	184,991 Reach	184,991	3.72	\$16.28 Per 1,000 People Re...		\$1,892.54 Total Spent		

Campaigns											
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Columns: Performance and clicks											
Off / On	Campaign	Ends	Impressions	CPM (cost per 1,000 impressions)	Link clicks	CPC (cost per link click)	CTR (link click-through rate)	Clicks (all)	CTR (all)	CPC (all)	
	Rising Our Talent/Video Views_02Nov2023	144 Nov 6, 2023	33,318	\$2.95	9	\$19.94	0.03%	107	0.32%	\$0.90	
	Local Issues Awareness	111 Nov 6, 2023	282,893	\$2.96	330	\$2.54	0.12%	522	0.19%	\$1.61	
	Build Name Recognition	199 Nov 6, 2023	268,657	\$2.59	303	\$3.16	0.08%	742	0.29%	\$1.29	
	Results from 3 campaigns	2.84 Spent	684,618 Total	\$2.76 Per 1,000 Impressions	642 Total	\$2.95 Per Click	0.09% Per Impressions	1,371 Total	0.20% Per Impressions	\$1.38 Per Click	

Ads											
Christine Houk for Mayor (219381961...)											
Updated just now											
Search and filter											
Oct 1, 2023 - Nov 6, 2023											
Columns: Performance and clicks											
Off / On	Ad	Delivery	Attribution setting	Results	Reach	Frequency	Cost per result	Budget	Ad set	Amount spent	Ends
	Video Ad	Completed	7-day click or ...	32,080 Reach	32,080	1.04	\$3.07 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$193.00	Daily	\$80.44	Nov 6, 2023
	Lookalike Audience	Completed	7-day click or ...	32,917 Reach	32,917	3.99	\$9.91 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$26.00	Daily	\$313.08	Nov 6, 2023
	Demographic Based Targeting	Completed	7-day click or ...	44,431 Reach	44,431	3.04	\$7.46 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$30.00	Daily	\$331.66	Nov 6, 2023
	Future Plans and Solutions	Completed	7-day click or ...	69,813 Reach	69,813	5.99	\$4.06 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$93.00	Daily	\$281.28	Nov 6, 2023
	Demographic Targeting Audience	Completed	7-day click or ...	30,499 Reach	30,499	3.70	\$13.24 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$26.00	Daily	\$311.33	Nov 6, 2023
	Local Issues Awareness	Completed	7-day click or ...	65,031 Reach	65,031	5.41	\$4.29 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$93.00	Daily	\$276.63	Nov 6, 2023
	Lookalike Audience	Completed	7-day click or ...	65,798 Reach	65,798	5.43	\$4.23 Per 1,000 People Re...	\$93.00	Daily	\$276.08	Nov 6, 2023
	Results from 7 ads		7-day click or ...	384,881 Reach	384,881	3.72				\$1,892.54 Total Spent	

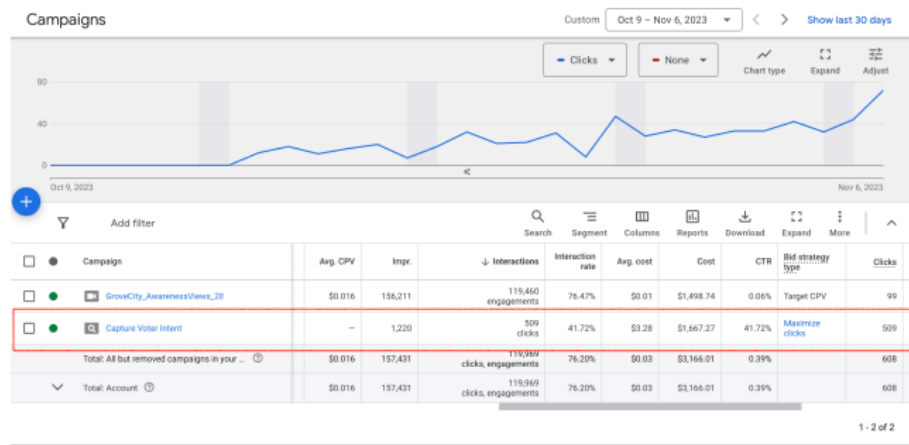
Facebook Ads Manager: overall campaign performance and ad-level breakdown, Oct 1 – Nov 7, 2023.

Google Search

GOOGLE

Overall Campaign Performance (1st October 2023 - 7th of November 2023):

Clicks on website: 509
 Total ad spent till now: \$1,667.27 USD
 Impressions: 1,220
 CPC: \$3.28
 CTR: 41.72%



Google Ads: 'Capture Voter Intent' search campaign performance, Oct 9 – Nov 6, 2023.

YouTube

YouTube

Overall Campaign Performance (1st October 2023 - 7th of November 2023):

Impressions: 156,211
 Views: 93,064
 Cost: \$1,498.74 USD
 Avg. CPV: \$0.016
 Clicks: 99

Oct 9, 2023								
Add filter								
Ad group	Status	Target CPV	Views	Avg. CPV	Ad group type	Impr.	Cost	
Growing our Grove City community_Videos_28/10	Not eligible Campaign ended	\$0.03	32,487	\$0.016	Responsive video ad	55,493	\$528.47	
Communication with Grove City residents_Videos_2023-10-28 #2	Not eligible Campaign ended	\$0.03	19,831	\$0.015	Responsive video ad	33,198	\$290.97	
Smart responsible growth for Grove City_Videos_28/10	Not eligible Campaign ended	\$0.03	15,418	\$0.016	Responsive video ad	25,754	\$249.46	
Christine Houk for Mayor of Grove City_Videos_28/10	Not eligible Campaign ended	\$0.03	15,261	\$0.015	Responsive video ad	24,109	\$231.93	
Safety in our Grove City community_Videos_28/10	Not eligible Campaign ended	\$0.03	9,252	\$0.020	Responsive video ad	16,169	\$180.46	
Raising Our Game Christine Houk_Videos_02/11	Not eligible Campaign ended	\$0.03	815	\$0.021	Responsive video ad	1,488	\$17.44	
Total: All but removed ad groups in your c...			93,064	\$0.016		156,211	\$1,498.74	
Total: Campaign			93,064	\$0.016		156,211	\$1,498.74	

YouTube: ad-group-level performance across six message pillars, Oct 1 – Nov 7, 2023.

05 · SECTION

The Results

Across the ~5-week campaign, the paid digital program delivered strong reach and engagement metrics on a lean budget.

Platform-level performance

Facebook & Instagram

Metric	Value
Reach	184,091 unique users
Impressions	684,618
Frequency	3.72
Link clicks	642
All clicks	1,371
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Metric	Value
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Google Search

Metric	Value
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Impressions	1,220
Clicks	509
CTR	41.72%
CPC	\$3.28
Total spend	\$1,667.27

The bigger picture

Combined across all three platforms, the campaign delivered roughly **842,000+ paid impressions**, **184,000+ unique voters reached** on Meta alone, and **93,000+ video views** on YouTube for less than \$0.02 per view. The Google Search campaign captured **509 high-intent clicks** from voters actively researching the race at a **41.72% click-through rate** — a strong signal of qualified voter interest during the decision window.

Just as importantly, the multi-platform structure meant no single channel was carrying the whole load. YouTube handled cheap awareness, Meta carried the issue narrative, and Google Search captured demand at the moment of highest intent. Each platform did the job it was best suited for.

06 · SECTION

Key Takeaways

Match the platform to the job.

YouTube for cheap reach, Meta for narrative and issue engagement, Search for intent capture. Trying to force any one platform to do all three would have wasted spend.

Compressed timelines demand daily discipline.

With only five weeks on the clock, weekly optimization cadences weren't fast enough. Daily reviews and rapid reallocation turned early signal into compounding results.

Distribute creative fatigue across pillars.

Six YouTube video ad groups aligned to distinct message pillars kept frequency low per creative and reach high per audience — the opposite of running one hero ad against the same voters over and over.

Intent capture is where budgets pay back hardest.

A 41.72% CTR on Search proved that voters actively looking for information about the race were highly convertible. Even modest Search budget punched well above its weight in delivering qualified attention.

Conclusion

Local political races are won and lost on attention. With a compressed timeline, a moderate budget, and a low starting baseline of name recognition, the Christine Houk campaign needed a paid media strategy that could introduce a candidate, communicate her platform, and capture voter intent — all in the same five-week window.

By assigning each platform to the job it does best and managing spend with daily discipline, the campaign turned \$5,058 in paid digital media into 842,000+ impressions and meaningful engagement across the electorate. The broader principle: in short-cycle campaigns, structure and platform choice matter more than budget size.