

3 STEPS TO SUCCESS

PROPOSAL 2: 2018 MEDIA CASE STUDY

BACKGROUND

Alper Strategies & Media (ASM) provided general consulting, strategy and media consulting services to a newly formed, non-partisan grassroots movement seeking to end gerrymandering in Michigan. Voters Not Politicians received well-deserved [national recognition](#) for their unique nature and extraordinary victory. Proposal 2 passed with 61%, raising an outstanding \$13.96 million.

STEP 1: SPOT ON RESEARCH TO NAIL THE MESSAGE

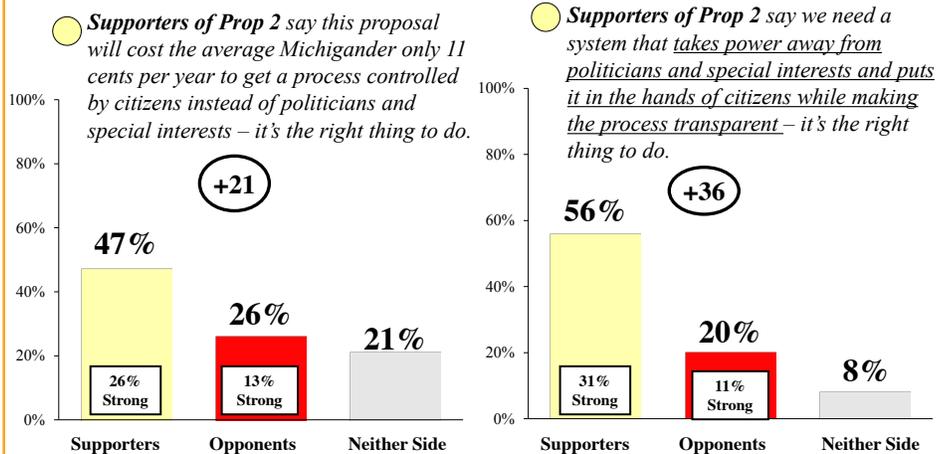
Research by The Mellman Group (TMG) cracked the code, identifying the best message and favorable positioning: Proposal 2 would end gerrymandering by taking power away from special interests and lobbyists and give it back to voters.

This message trumped one that would highlight the details of an independent citizens' redistricting commission. Ironically, voters believed politicians were better to handle redistricting because the process seems so complicated. Therefore, it was critical to instead communicate that power needed to be taken away from the special interests and the lobbyists.

Taking Power Away From Bad Guys & Giving It To Citizens, Plus Transparency Proves Strong

Regardless of how you plan to vote, who do you think is more persuasive or don't you think either side of this particular argument is persuasive:

● Opponents of Prop 2 say it will cost taxpayers too much. Commissioners get \$44,000 each for these part time jobs which costs taxpayers 5.5 million dollars – & the measure mandates whatever additional funding they need.



THE MELLMAN Group

RESEARCH
BASED
STRATEGY

42

STEP 2: INNOVATIVE & TESTED CREATIVE

ASM wrote and produced 13 ads that were researched via various forms of web-based ad testing. This intense exercise allowed the campaign to identify the best ad style, language, and visuals – and to learn how each spot performed among the electorate. This rigorous testing allowed us to pinpoint necessary edits and particular creative to target to key audiences across platforms.

We discovered that voters favored the whiteboard style, as it appeared non-partisan and informational. Our ads' unique style cut through the clutter, creating a seamless and identifiable look and feel for Proposal 2 amid a jam-packed advertising landscape. The imagery within each spot built upon and reinforced the others, while simultaneously advancing the positive argument, identifying the villains, and inoculating against the attacks to come. ["Broken"](#) and ["Rigged"](#) defined the problem, ["Typewriter"](#) presented the issue in an "unbiased" fashion with maps and a checklist, and ["Happy Closer"](#) sent

17000 Kercheval Ave.
Suite 211
Grosse Pointe, MI 48230
info@alperstrategies.com

STEP 2: Innovative & Tested Creative...

validation to voters to trust Proposal 2. Our response ads, ["Squad"](#) and ["Radio,"](#) playfully tagged the opposition as Pinocchios with visuals and facts.

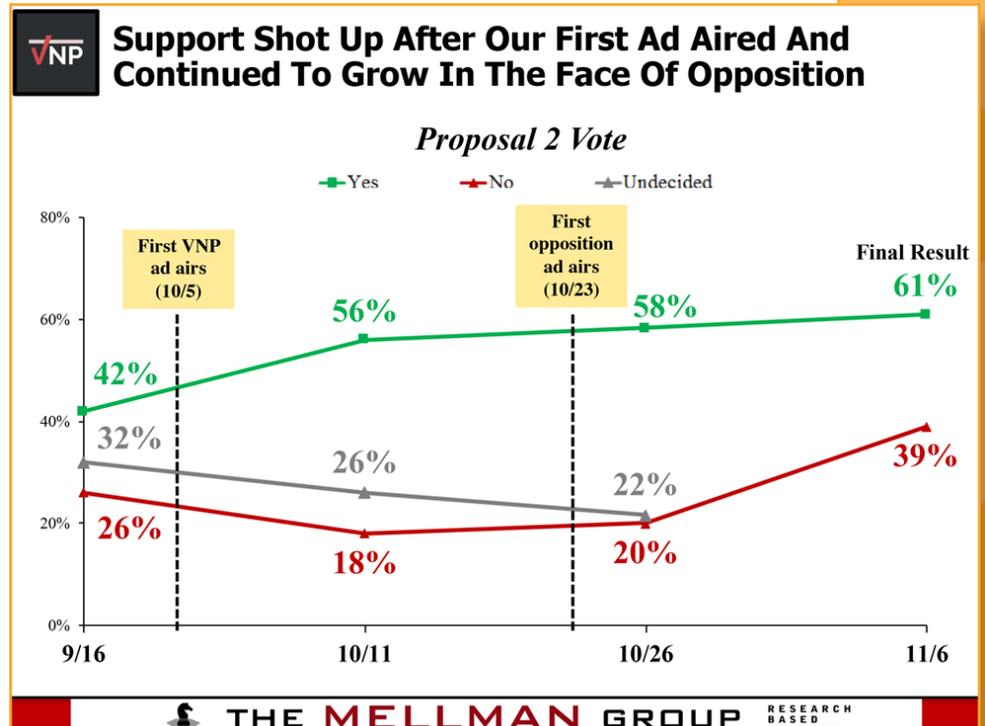
The impact of the ads were immediate. An early tracking poll by TMG showed voters were more likely to believe districts would be drawn more fairly (up 7 points) and the process would be more open (up 6) after our first two TV spots aired ("Broken" and "Rigged").

Momentum continued to grow as our response and closing TV ads fended off attacks, while still bringing voters to our side. In the face of a million dollars in "no" spending, we gained another 3-points from October 26th to Election Day.

ASM also produced state-wide radio to underscore the TV campaign. The radio spots served to educate voters on the current system -- ["Whose Call"](#) using analogies to demonstrate why districts are rigged -- and why Proposal 2 was for them -- [Reverend Dr. Wendell Anthony](#) served as a trusted validator in urban markets.

STEP 3: INTEGRATED STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

We successfully developed an integrated media campaign around the message, producing the TV and radio, and coordinating the targeting and creative amongst the team of staff and consultants for digital, mail, phones and field materials. Given that we scaled from an approximate \$8M to a \$14M+ budget in late September, we diversified the creative at the speed-of-light. Our tracking polls directed us to emphasize the message for women, younger voters, and African American voters. Our daily and weekly management flows enabled us to once again adjust and perfect the targeting and creative for each cohort.



"That's what happens [the biggest shift in support across MI ballot initiatives] when you do the advertising that they [Voters Not Politicians] started doing. They have managed to simplify their messaging on a very complicated issue."

– Bernie Porn, President of EPIC/MRA
(*Detroit Free Press*, 10/26/18)

"They figured out how to put some good ads on the air that were easy to understand. It simplified it for people. People knew exactly what they were voting for."

– Chuck Stokes, WXYZ Detroit
(*Off the Record*, 12/21/18)

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Suite 211
Grosse Pointe, MI 48230
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313.886.4850