

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

SENIOR PROJECT - APPROVAL

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College: Communications Department: Advertising

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sally McMillan

PROJECT TITLE: John Doe for Sheriff

A Political Advertising Campaign

I have reviewed this completed senior honors thesis with this student and certify that it is a project commensurate with honors level undergraduate research in this field.

Signed: Sally J. McMillan, Faculty Mentor

Date: 6 May 2002

Comments (Optional):

John Doe

for Sheriff

A Political Advertising Campaign

Kevin Cook

University of Tennessee





Executive Summary

To: John Doe
From: Kevin Cook
Date: May 9, 2002
Re: Campaign for Sheriff

You asked for a campaign, but it couldn't be ordinary or overused. It had to be fresh and new, and it had to show the residents of Anderson County who you are and what you stand for. And most importantly, it had to be successful. Mr. Doe, your campaign has arrived.

What I am handing you is a campaign built not on conventional misgivings, but on the ideas and views of those you seek to serve, the residents of Anderson County. How did I find out what they wanted? Simply put, I asked. To get it right, I surveyed 120 residents, asking questions regarding what they were looking for in a sheriff and what they wanted to see a sheriff do.

That knowledge alone wasn't enough on which to build a campaign, but rather became a starting point for the creative processes that were soon to follow. Using the primary research data, four concepts were developed and tested. Each concept portrayed one main idea that Anderson County residents had earlier identified as being extremely important in choosing a sheriff. Results of the testing showed that one concept in particular stood out as striking a cord with the people of Anderson County. This concept was based on the notion of honesty and integrity from the position of sheriff.

Having chosen the appropriate message, the challenge now became to transform that message into a set of creative executions to position you as the best candidate for the job. Using the aforementioned basis of honesty and integrity, three executions were crafted. While each is different in its own right, the newspaper, billboard, and placard advertisements all serve the same ultimate purpose. These executions are simple yet coercive, traditional yet appealing. Each acts on the feelings and emotions of Anderson County residents, giving you the best chance to spread your views.

I have cracked open the door that leads to political success, but now you must knock it down. You must take this campaign and run with it. Run with it until every resident knows your name and what you stand for. The ball is in your court, Mr. Doe. Make your move.



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Situation Analysis

Anderson County at a Glance

(All data from 2000 census)

Area: 598 square miles

School facilities: 17

Public school enrollment: 6,975

Population: 71,330

Oak Ridge	27,387
Clinton	9,409
Lake City	1,888
Norris	1,446

Registered voters: 42,093

Housing Units: 32,451

Median household income: \$36,006

Per capita income (individual): \$25,181

Median Age: 39.9

Labor force: 37,520

Unemployment rate: 4.7%

Figure 1





Situation Analysis

History of Anderson County

While settlement of the area actually began in the 1400's, it wasn't until 1790, when a treaty was signed with the Cherokee Indians, that the region began to grow. Originally part of Knox County, Anderson County had enough people by 1801 to warrant the establishment of a new county. That same year, Clinton, the county seat, was established on the north side of the Clinch River.

Like most of East Tennessee, the terrain did not lend itself to large plantation style farming, which relied extensively on slave labor. When the issue of slavery pulled the nation apart, Anderson Countians found themselves bitterly divided. The county suffered through the Civil War years but in the decades following, agriculture resumed and prospered.

One of the greatest changes for Anderson County occurred in 1934 when the Tennessee Valley Authority, one of President FDR's New Deal agencies, moved into a site near Coal Creek for construction of its first major dam. The project provided thousands of jobs and kept the county prosperous during the middle of the depression. The dam, finished in 1936, not only provided a

source of cheap electricity for the region, but also brought control over the Clinch River, which had regularly brought damaging floods.

Also in 1936, the town of Coal Creek changed its name to Lake City and the town of Norris was established.



Another drastic change came to Anderson County in 1942 with the establishment of the city of Oak Ridge. The city, originally a secret wartime project, employed thousands of construction workers, technicians, and nuclear physicists. Three nuclear plants were built, along with administrative buildings, barracks, houses, churches and the other facilities needed to accommodate the 75,000 people employed at the height of the project. It was not until the dropping of atomic bombs in 1945 that inhabitants learned what they had actually been working on.



After the war, the plants stayed in operation as research and nuclear production centers. In 1955, the federal government sold the residential and commercial



Situation Analysis

sections of the city to private hands and in 1959, the town was incorporated.

The People of Anderson County

Simple, hardworking, honest. All are appropriate descriptions of the people of Anderson County. Life does seem to move a little slower in this largely rural county. Though only minutes away from Knoxville, one of the largest and most densely populated cities in Tennessee, Anderson County remains very different, as do its citizens.



Anderson County residents are both community and family minded. Life centers around neighborhoods, churches, schools, and sports.

But who exactly are the people of Anderson County?

Ethnicity

Of the more than 71,000 who call Anderson County home, 93.4% are white. The largest minority group in Anderson County is African-Americans, who make up 3.9% of the population. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin make up 1.1% of the population and American Indian/Alaska Native and Asian persons represents 0.3% and 0.8% of the population, respectively.

Education

Of the 46,000 Anderson County residents who are 25 years and older, nearly 6,700 have less than a 9th grade education. Another 6,000 have a 9th to 12th grade education, but no high school diploma. 14,700 Anderson County residents, 31.8%, have earned at least a high school diploma. Over 7,000 have either an associate's or bachelor's degree and 3,500 have a graduate or professional degree.





Situation Analysis

Economy of Anderson County

There is almost no way to measure the enormous impact that a few companies have had on the Anderson County economy. Large industrial giants like Bechtel Jacobs, BWXT, and Lockheed have helped keep the economy strong and alive. In 1997 alone, manufacturer's shipments from Anderson County totaled more than \$1.3 billion. Other large employers include Methodist Medical Center, The University of Tennessee, and the Anderson County government itself.

There has also been a strong shift away from a rural economy in Anderson County. From 1990-1999,

2001 Expenditures

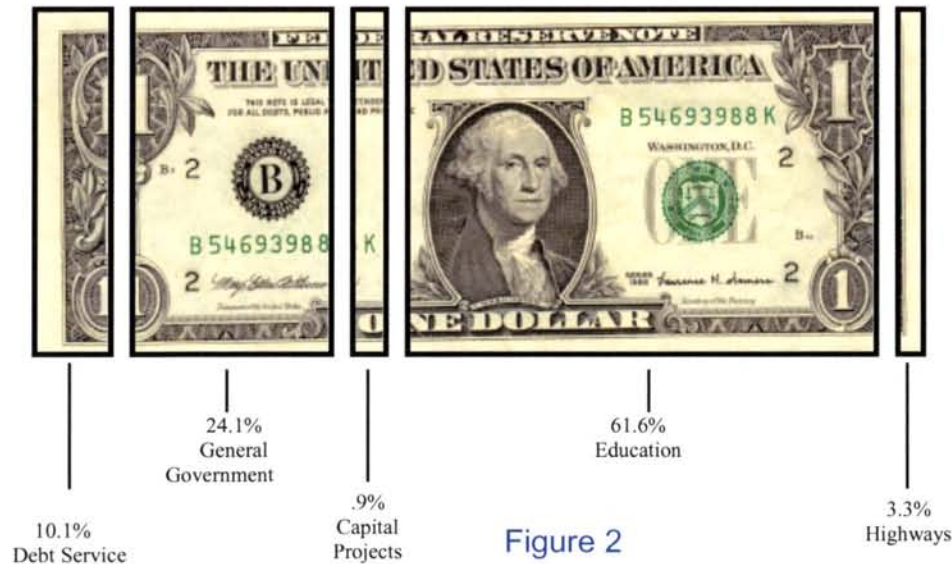


Figure 2

2001 Revenues

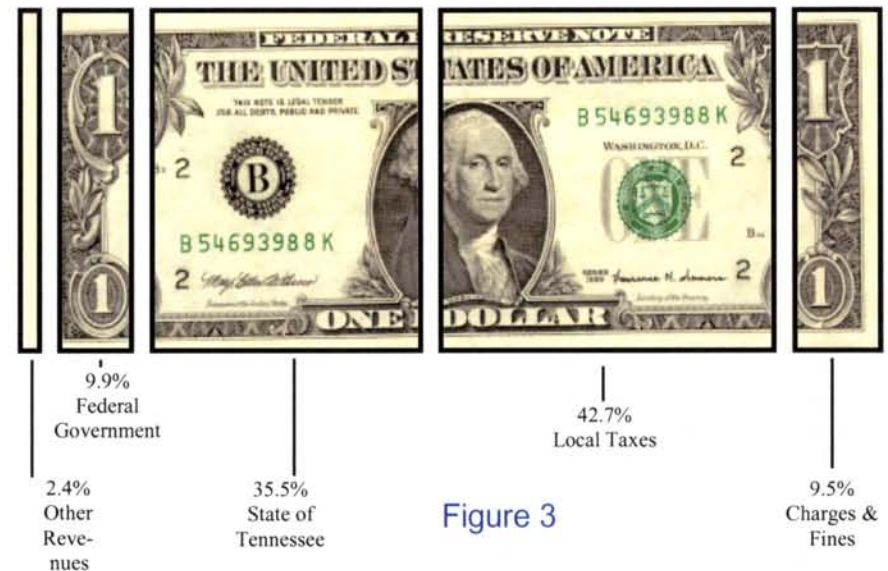


Figure 3

there was a 19.3% increase in non-farm employment in Anderson County. Retail sales have also been climbing in the county, reaching \$700 million in 1997.

All of this leads to a healthy economy in which residents are slightly better off than in the rest of the state. According to 2000 US Census data, the median household income for Anderson County residents was \$36,000, almost \$4,000 more than the Tennessee average. The unemployment rate of 3.8% is also lower the Tennessee average.



Situation Analysis

The Competition

Name: David Beams
Party: Democratic

54 year old David Beams has worked with the Oak Ridge police department since 1970 and has been its chief since 1993. Beams also served four years as a sergeant in the Air Force and graduated from the FBI national academy.

Beams has built his campaign built around the notion that he has the qualifications to:



1. Protect and serve
2. Manage resources responsibly
3. Restore integrity

"It's very important to me that we have professional, experience, mature leadership in the sheriff's office."

Name: David King
Party: Democratic

David King is a 63-year-old retired lieutenant from the Tennessee Highway Patrol. King spent 31 years with the THP before retiring in 1996. He spent the following four years serving as a bailiff in the Anderson County Courthouse system.

King's campaign is based on three principles:

1. Crime prevention and the punishment of the criminals
2. Service to communities and access to the Sheriff
3. Mature, experienced leadership and rigid budget control

"I intend to be a workhorse as sheriff by always being on the job providing leadership and supervision, offering support to the employees and enforcing discipline when needed."





Situation Analysis

The Competition

Name: Randy Myers
Party: Republican

Only 35 years old, Randy Myers is the youngest candidate in the race for the sheriff's position. Myers is a former Anderson County deputy and has been in law enforcement since 1990. Myers has a degree in political science and is a graduate of the West Virginia State Police Academy.

Myers has vowed to get "tough on crime" and said that pledge includes "many factors, including responsiveness and respect to and for the public, cooperation with agencies and organizations and accountability to the taxpayers."

If elected Myers plans to:

1. Improve the sheriff's department's K-9 units
2. Boost morale
3. Increase patrols
4. Restart Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)



Name: Scott Manning
Party: Republican

The incumbent in this race for sheriff is Scott Manning, who is seeking his third term as Anderson County sheriff. Manning has 17 years of law enforcement experience, is a commissioned U.S. Customs Agent and an investigator with the U.S. Department of Justice's Terrorism Task Force. Although he is the incumbent, Manning's recent stay in the office has been marred by controversy over improper use of department resources.

"Though not perfect, I have tried to do the right thing, even if it meant stepping on toes and not siding with the status quo. I have not been a puppet for the courthouse, nor will I ever be."

Manning emphasizes his efforts to keep illicit drugs "away from our children and off our streets." Since

1994, he states his efforts have resulted in 1,351 drug charges and more than \$1 million in drug seizures.



Situation Analysis

The Competition

Name: Donovan Thompson
Party: Republican

Though he has worked for only two years at the Oak Ridge Police Department, 41 year old Thompson believes he is the right man for the job. "I'm a proven leader who promotes teamwork and professionalism."

During his 20-year military career, Thompson became a Navy Law Enforcement Master at Arms and was the police chief of a 75-person department in La Maddalana, Italy. He was then transferred to the Pentagon in Washington, where he was responsible for the Navy's law enforcement program worldwide and oversaw a \$3.5 million annual budget.

Thompson pledges to take care of Anderson County citizens through:

1. Dedication and knowledge
2. Accountability
3. Proven leadership



Name: Bill White
Party: Republican

At 55-years old, Bill White claims to have the experience and maturity to serve as sheriff. White worked in the Oak Ridge Police Department for 28 years, rising from the rank of patrol officer to supervisor to detective sergeant. He also spent more than three years in the Air Force's military police and six months as an officer with the Tennessee Department of Corrections. From June 2000 to January 2001, White also served as the assistant chief deputy in the



Anderson County Sheriff's department. In his campaign, White is calling for:

1. Reorganization of the sheriff's department
2. Revival of the DARE program
3. Increased patrols in the county



Situation Analysis

The Competition

Name: Paul White
Party: Democratic

47-year old Paul White has been in law enforcement for 27 years, including 22 years with the Anderson County Sheriff's Department. White is a graduate of the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy and has worked extensively with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Customs and the Federal Aviation Administration.



As sheriff, White says he would like to:

1. Make burglaries a high priority issue
2. Boost patrols
3. Foster close relations between the sheriff's department and neighborhood watch groups
4. Work closely with school officials



Primary Research

Given the challenge of designing a political advertising campaign, further insight was needed into what Anderson County residents wanted from a sheriff. For that reason, 120 surveys were administered to Anderson County residents. All surveys were delivered in person and were conducted on site. To get a sufficient amount of respondents from each of the four Anderson County cities, intercepts were used at local retail stores in each city. In addition to the intercepts,

surveys were distributed by selected family members and associates to coworkers and acquaintances.

To ensure the validity and usefulness of the information gathered, every effort was made to match the survey respondents with the Anderson County population. As seen in Figures 4 and X, the survey respondents dif-

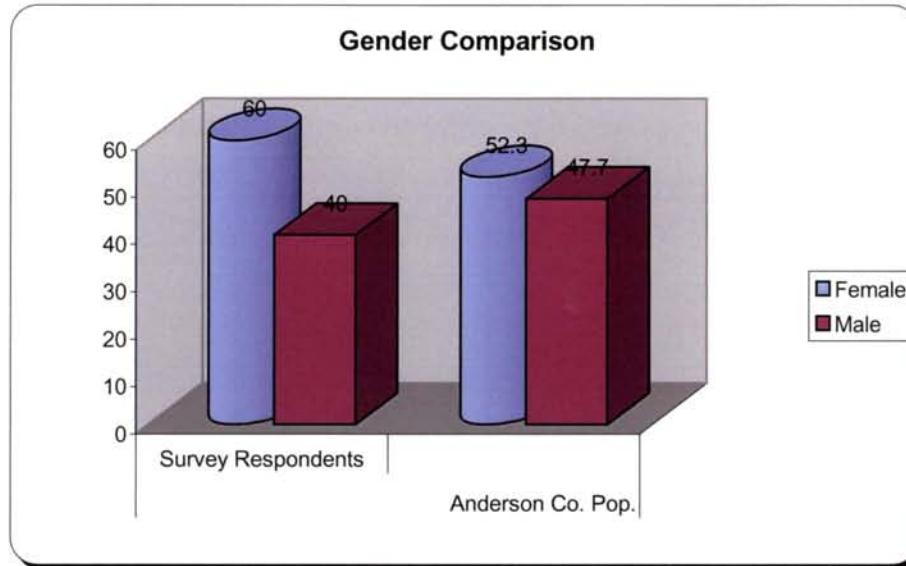


Figure 4

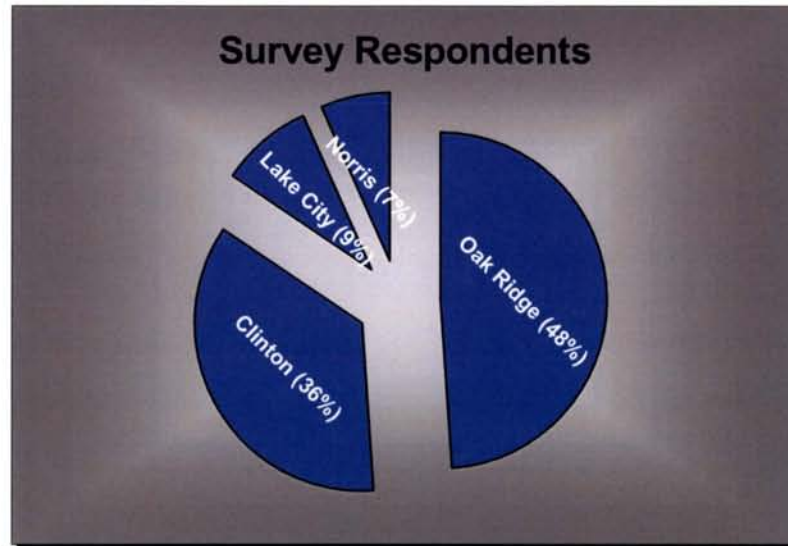


Figure 5

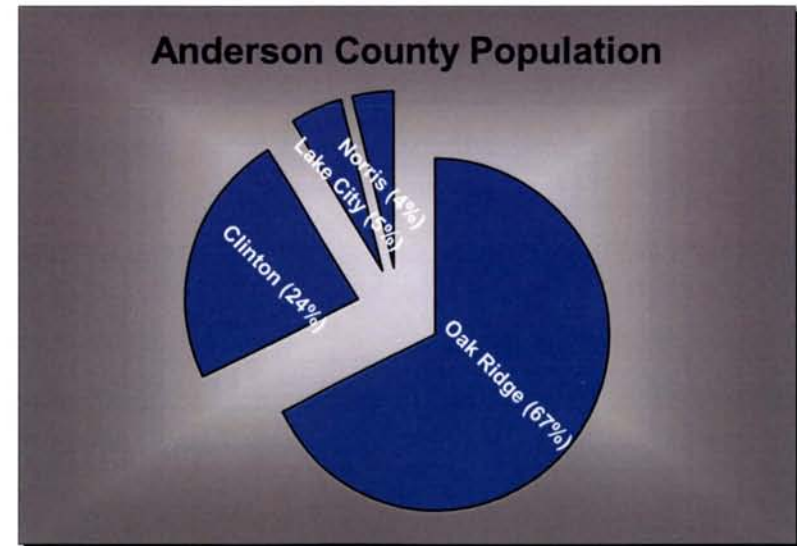


Figure 6



Primary Research

Political Views

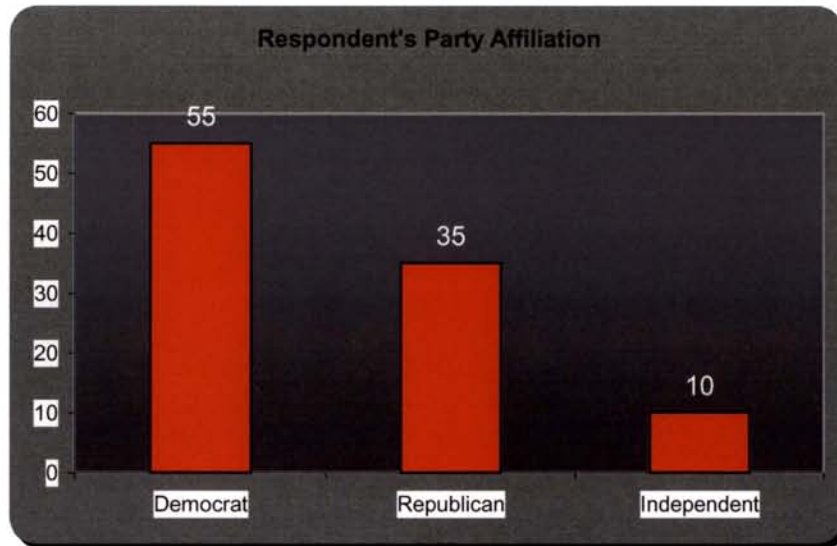


Figure 7

ferred only slightly from the actual Anderson County population. These are small differences and should not affect the any results derived from the data.

Opening questions in the survey sought to identify respondents' views on the process of voting and seriously they took voting.

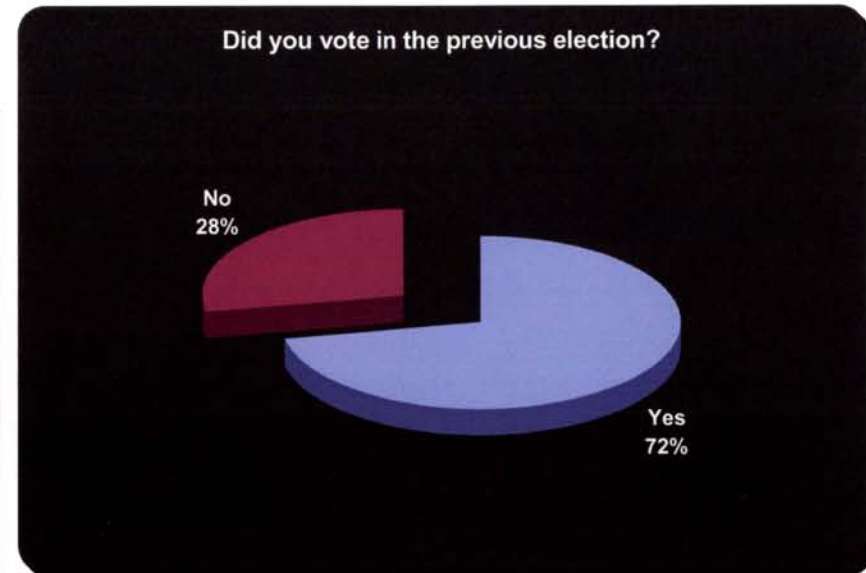


Figure 8

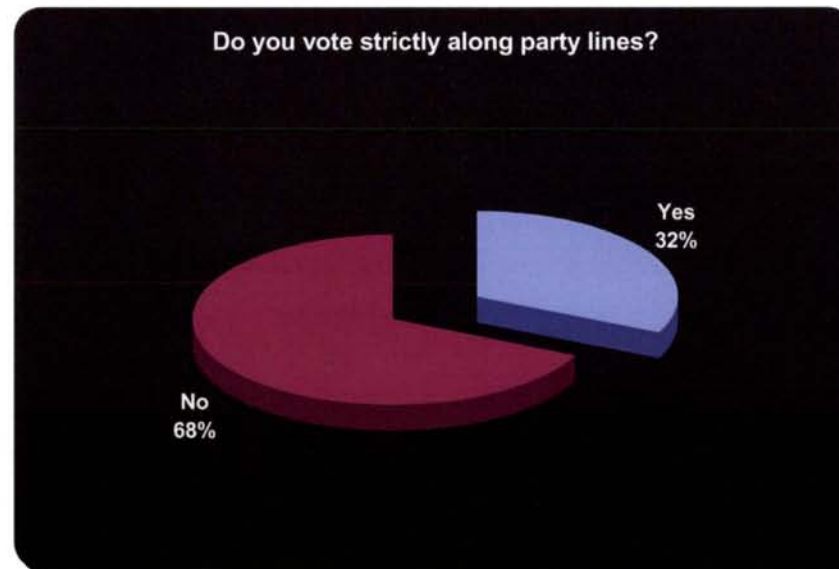


Figure 9

Much of the information obtained from primary research centered around Anderson County residents' political views. This information gives a clearer understanding of the typical resident's mindframe and how they will view political candidates. This information is crucial to any and all communication attempts with Anderson County residents.



Primary Research

The most important questions in the survey allowed residents to respond in their own words. Residents were asked what was the most important issue, what qualities a sheriff should possess, and what they would like to see a sheriff do while in office. The answers to these questions spoke volumes about what type

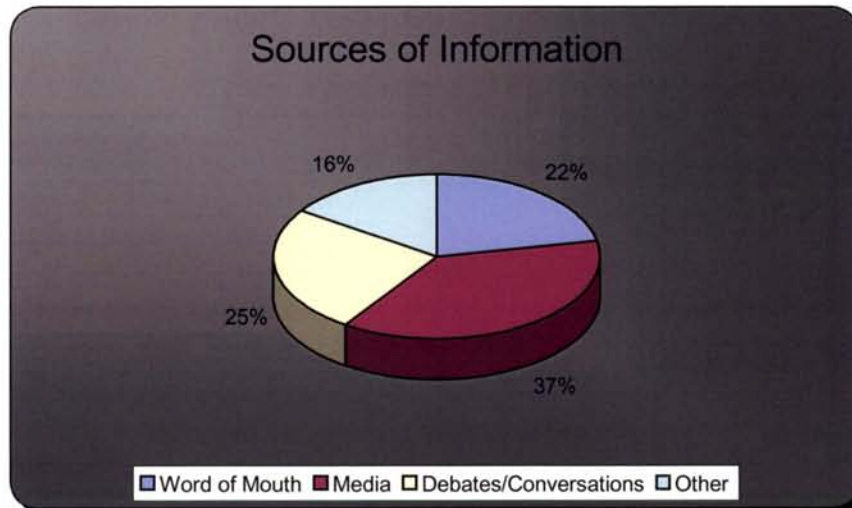


Figure 10 of campaign strategy would be most successful in this situation.

Perhaps the greatest finding of this research is the large percent of Anderson County residents who look for integrity in a candidate. 52% of respondents felt that integrity was more important than knowledge, leadership, or even a candidate's past record.

This coincided with data that showed restoring honesty and integrity to the office was the most important issue in the election.

Figure 11

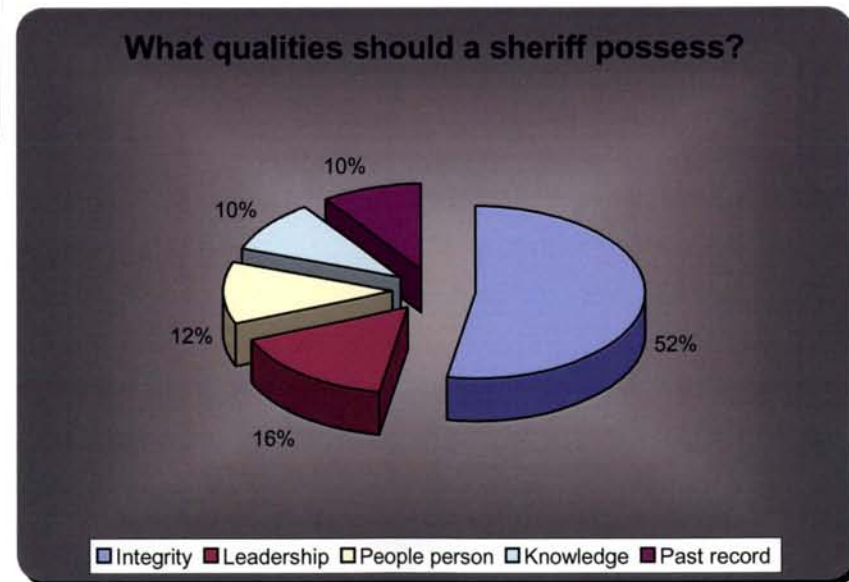
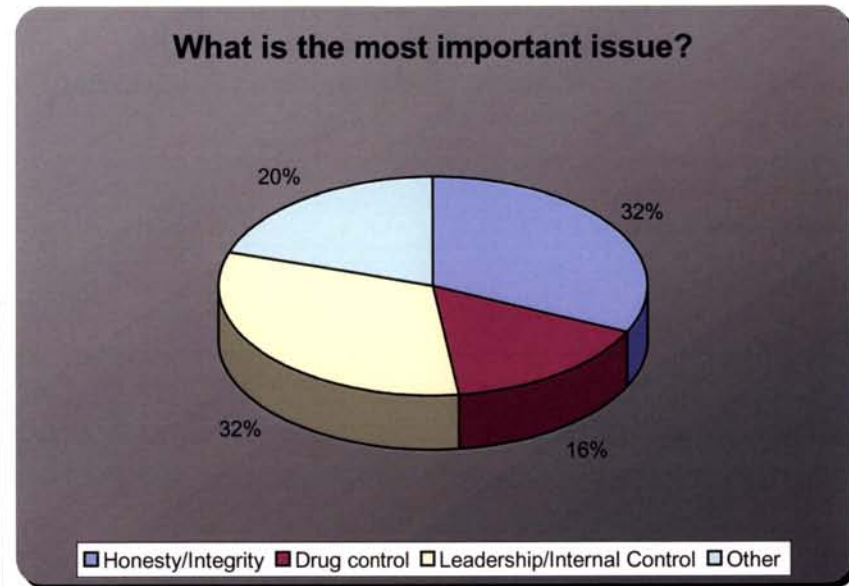


Figure 12



Primary Research



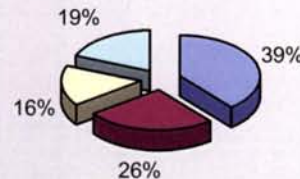
"Put Anderson County first and do the right thing for the people. I think Anderson County has had enough self agendas."



"Stay in office to be accountable to the public, to be an administrator for the department and see that the department is consistent to the public."

Figure 13

What do you want to see a sheriff do?



☒ Strength drug force/Reduce crime
 ☒ Restore trust/honesty
☒ Run department efficiently
 ☐ Other



"Set a good example so people could respect law enforcement once again."



"Keep a competent staff and reward the best man not the favorite. People should be rewarded for their efforts not on political promise or nepotism."

"Be more involved with the community by enacting programs to help repeat offenders and develop programs to reach kids at a young age."





Concept Testing

Using the information and insights from primary research, the next step was to find the best way to communicate with Anderson County residents. There were several different paths that could be taken, but to find the best route, further research was needed. This research came in the form of concept testing which would show what the most effective campaign approach would be.

Four concepts were developed, each based on a principle that Anderson County residents felt was important in choosing a county sheriff. Each concept was then shown to 25 different respondents, each an Anderson County resident. No respondent was shown more than one concept to insure validity of the information. After viewing the concept for one minute, the concept was removed and the respondent was asked to fill out a questionnaire detailing their thoughts and opinions of the concept.

Each concept was judged on the basis of believ-

	Believability	Similarity	Intent to vote	Personal relevance
Leadership	2.1	3.3	1.9	2
Integrity	2.1	2.5	1.8	2.8
Knowledge	2.6	2.5	2.7	4.6
Stop crime/drugs	3.4	5.4	4.7	3.3

Believability: 1-Very Believable, 7-Very Unbelievable
 Similarity to competition: 1-Very Different, 7-Very Similar
 Intent to vote: 1-Very Likely, 7-Very Unlikely
 Personal Relevance: 1-Very Relevant, 7-Very Irrelevant

ability, similarity to the competition, personal relevance, and respondents' intention to vote. In addition, respondents were asked to identify the main idea of the concept to determine whether the right message was being conveyed.

The four concepts which were tested are:

Concept 1- LEADERSHIP



Leadership

Integrity

Knowledge

Stop crime/drugs

Figure 14



Concept Testing

Concept 2– INTEGRITY



It came as no surprise that the concept which scored best was the Integrity concept. In fact, this concept scored best in three of the four categories and was second in the remaining category. This angle seems to have the greatest potential for affecting the most voters and appears to reflect the attitudes and views of Anderson County citizens. As noted earlier, the sheriff's department has been recently tarnished by accusations of dishonesty and misuse, causing many citizens to call for

Concept 3– KNOWLEDGE



the restoration of honor and dignity to the position. Also, the Leadership concept fared exceptionally well in the testing, finishing first in one category and tying for first in another. This important facet should not be overlooked and can easily be incorporated into a comprehensive creative strategy.

Concept 4– STOP CRIME/DRUGS





Creative Strategy & Executions

The groundwork has been laid, the foundation poured. Using the results of primary research and concept testing, a creative strategy has been developed which will position John Doe as a viable and able candidate for sheriff. But it couldn't be any strategy. It had to be different. Different from the traditional roadside signs that seem to be everywhere, yet also seem to disappear in the minds of Anderson County residents. But the strategy could not be too radical either. As mentioned earlier, the people of Anderson County are simple and could possibly be deterred by advertisements they perceive as too flashy or without substance. What was needed was a point in the middle, a point where new and exciting meets tried and true.

That point was found in combining visually simple layouts with the groundbreaking use of headlines and body copy not aimed solely at listing the candidate's qualifications. True, it's not reinventing the wheel, but it is reshaping the way Anderson County residents will evaluate and decide on political candidates.

In the first execution, a full-page newspaper advertisement, the use of black and white creates a sense of contrast and will help in grabbing the reader's attention. What is the most attention-grabbing about the advertisement is simply its use of a headline other than the candidate's name. Anderson County residents have become so accustomed to seeing the same political advertisement from different candidates

Full Page Newspaper Advertisement

It's as simple as right and wrong.

Anderson County needs integrity. Anderson County needs John Doe.

Why do you need John Doe?

Because John doesn't believe in blurring the lines between right and wrong. As citizens, you deserve a sheriff working for you, not against you. You deserve a sheriff who will bring integrity back to the office of sheriff.

You deserve John Doe.



*Vote for Integrity
Vote for*

John Doe



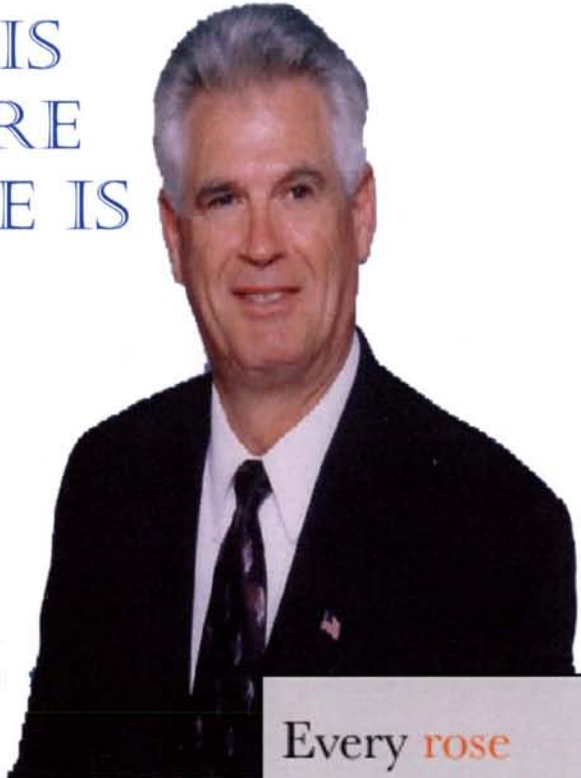
Creative Strategy & Executions

Billboard Advertisement

CHARACTER IS
WHO YOU ARE
WHEN NO ONE IS
AROUND.

VOTE FOR INTEGRITY.
VOTE FOR

JOHN DOE



that even the slightest of changes will result in a large amount of interest and readership. The copy goes on to further show the reader the contrast between John Doe and the typical candidate and helps to position John Doe as a candidate with integrity and honor.

Given the limited exposure time, the copy for the billboard advertisement was kept considerably shorter. Despite the lack of heavy copy, the ad still communicates the same message as the newspaper ad, stressing

John Doe's integrity.

Perhaps one of the most under-utilized resources in political campaigns such as this are roadside placards. Breaking from the traditional name and election date format, this placard says more in six words, than most candidates' print ads. The short headline is perfect for drive-by readings and still goes back to the notion of choosing a candidate that can not only do the job, but do it with fairness and equality.

Placard Advertisement

Every **rose**
doesn't have its **thorns**.

Vote for Integrity
Vote for John Doe



Works Cited

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CLINTON COURIER NEWS

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POPULAR ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

COMPREHENSIVE BUDGET REPORT

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WWW.ANDERSONCOUNTYCHAMBER.ORG

WWW.DBEAMS.COM

WWW.DONOVANFORSHERIFF.COM

WWW.BILLWHITEFORSHERIFF.COM



This survey is being conducted by a student at the University of Tennessee. Your answers will remain confidential. All questions regarding elections and/or candidates refer to the position of Anderson County sheriff.

Age:

Sex: Male Female

City: Clinton Lake City Norris Oak Ridge

Party Affiliation: Democrat Republican Independent Other _____

Do you vote strictly along party lines? Why or why not?

Did you vote in the previous election four years ago? Why or why not?

What sources of information influence your vote the most? Why?

Please rate how important political advertising is in deciding your vote:

Very Important							Very Unimportant
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	

What do you feel is the most important issue in this year's election? Why?

What would you most like to see a county sheriff do while in office? Why?



Appendix

What qualities do you feel a county sheriff should possess? Why?

Please rate from 1 to 5 how important the following are in your voting decision:

Candidate's personality_____

Candidate's education_____

Candidate's physical appearance_____

Candidate's ability to perform job_____

Candidate's work experience_____

Thank you for your time and cooperation.



All questions on this survey pertain to the concept you were just shown. All answers will be kept confidential and will be used only for the purposes of this report. Thank you for your time and participation.

What was the main idea of the concept?

Please rate how believable you feel the concept is.

Very Believable							Very Unbelievable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Please rate how similar to the competition you feel the concept is.

Very Different							Very Similar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Please rate how personally relevant you feel the concept is.

Very Relevant							Very Irrelevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Please rate the likelihood that you would vote for this candidate.

Very Likely							Very Unlikely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



Appe

What do you like most about the concept?

What do you like least about the concept?

Do you have any additional comments?

