

2024 Political Marketing Tops \$18 Billion says The Myers Report

Ad Spend Equals \$12 billion; Grassroots and Field Operations plus Direct Mail Experience Significant Growth



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-- Reported media plus typically unreported political marketing investments are estimated to equal \$18.2 billion, according to an analysis conducted by [The Myers Report](#) for the non-profit MediaVillage Education Foundation. The 2024 cycle's projected \$12.0 billion in reported media political ad spending surpasses the \$9 billion spent in the 2020 cycle and the \$8.9 billion in the 2022 midterms, indicating a consistent upward trajectory in election-related advertising investments. Included in The Myers report data but not included in typical published estimates are the significant investments in grassroots efforts, direct mail, out-of-home, and influencer marketing, which represent an incremental investment of \$6.2 billion.

The 2024 election cycle underscores a pivotal shift in political advertising strategies. While traditional media like broadcast television continues to command significant investment, the surge in digital and CTV spending reflects a broader trend towards diversified media consumption. The increased emphasis on grassroots and field operations plus direct mail are experiencing significant growth.

Total Political Advertising Expenditure

According to The Myers Report, political ad spending for the 2023-2024 election cycle is projected to hit a record-breaking \$12.0 billion, marking a 33% increase over the 2019-2020 presidential cycle's total of \$9.02 billion.

Spending by Media Category

- **Broadcast Television:** Maintaining its dominance, broadcast TV is projected to receive \$6.1 billion, accounting for just over 50% of total advertising spending.
- **Grassroots and Field Operations:** Investments of an estimated \$4.1 billion in grassroots efforts, including door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, and local events, are typically categorized separately from media advertising budgets. While specific spending figures are scarce, reports

indicate significant investments in these areas. For example, the Democratic National Committee announced a nearly \$2.5 billion allocation across every state Democratic party to bolster down-ballot races, emphasizing grassroots mobilization. Similarly, the Republican National Committee (RNC) has prioritized grassroots strategies, focusing on field operations in key battleground states.

- **Connected and Streaming TV:** Spending on CTV is projected to reach \$1.8 billion, reflecting the growing importance of streaming platforms in political advertising.
- **Cable Television:** Cable TV is expected to see \$1.6 billion in spending, representing about 13% of the total.
- **Digital Media:** Digital platforms, including social media and online advertising, are anticipated to attract \$1.6 billion, highlighting a strategic shift towards online engagement. An analysis by the Brennan Center for Justice, OpenSecrets, and the Wesleyan Media Project reveals that, as of August 2024, advertisers spent over \$619 million on Google and Meta platforms, with pro-Democratic spending more than three times that of pro-Republican spending.
- **Out-of-Home Advertising:** Spending on billboards, transit ads, and other outdoor media formats might not be fully accounted for in traditional reports but The Myers Report estimates are \$1.1 billion based on 10% increases over 2020 spending.
- **Direct Mail Campaigns:** The United States Postal Service (USPS) reported that political mail volume increased from 2.9 billion pieces during the 2018 midterms to 3.9 billion in 2022, with spending rising from \$575 million to \$826 million over the same period. For the 2024 political period, The Myers Report estimates an incremental 14% increase in 2024 over 2022 levels, representing estimated spending of \$950 million.
- **Radio/Audio:** Radio/audio advertising is projected at \$440 million, maintaining a steady presence in the media mix.
- **National Network Cable:** This category is expected to receive \$350 million, indicating targeted national campaigns.
- **Satellite:** Spending on satellite platforms is projected at \$110 million.
- **Influencer Partnerships:** Payments to social media influencers for endorsements or content creation, which The Myers Report estimates at \$2.5 billion, are not disclosed in standard advertising reports and there are limited public disclosures. The Democratic political action committee (PAC) "NextGen America" allocated \$1 million to a "creator" program, enlisting 150 influencers to post on social media during the 2024 election cycle. Reports indicate that Republican campaigns have also engaged influencers, particularly on platforms like TikTok.

The 2024 election cycle's record-breaking political ad spending highlights the evolving landscape of media consumption and the strategic adaptations of political campaigns.

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