



Sex and the Voting Booth: What Do We Know About Women Voters?

**E-Voter Institute 2008 Research Findings
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Top 10 Characteristics of Women in Each Age Group

Women 18-24

- 92% use email
- 85% expect candidates to have web sites
- 74% make online purchases
- 73% are social network members
- 68% expect candidates to post their television ads on the official site
- 60% say word of mouth is the best way to get their attention
- 43% searched online for info about politics
- 43% say web sites are the most trusted news source
- 30% say television has the most impact on their decisions about candidates
- 26% say Internet information has the most impact on decisions about candidates

Women 25-34

- 90% use email
- 89% expect candidates to have web sites
- 79% make online purchases
- 70% forward links and email to friends and family
- 69% expect candidates to post their television ads on the official site
- 62% say television or cable ads are the best way to get their attention
- 46% say local television is the most trusted news source
- 38% searched online for info about politics
- 34% say television has the most impact on their decisions about candidates
- 22% say Internet information has the most impact on decisions about candidates

Women 35-54

- 95% use email
- 87% expect candidates to have web sites
- 81% make online purchases
- 74% forward links and email to friends and family
- 67% expect candidates to post their television ads on the official site
- 65% say television or cable ads are the best way to get their attention
- 52% say local television is the most trusted news source
- 38% visited a candidate web site
- 37% say television has the most impact on their decisions about candidates
- 17% say Internet information has the most impact on decisions about candidates

Women 55-64

- 96% use email
- 86% expect candidates to have web sites
- 81% make online purchases
- 75% forward links and email to friends and family
- 68% say television or cable ads are the best way to get their attention
- 64% expect candidates to post their television ads on the official site
- 54% say local television and newspapers are the most trusted news sources
- 44% say television has the most impact on their decisions about candidates
- 40% received email from a friend or family about politics
- 12% say Internet information has the most impact on decisions about candidates

Women 65-74

- 95% use email
- 82% expect candidates to have web sites
- 76% make online purchases
- 71% forward links and email to friends and family
- 71% expect candidates to post their television ads on the official site
- 71% say television or cable ads are the best way to get their attention
- 62% say newspapers are the most trusted news sources
- 40% say television has the most impact on their decisions about candidates
- 38% viewed online videos about candidates
- 12% say newspaper editorials have the most impact on decisions about candidates

Women 75+

- 89% use email
- 84% expect candidates to have web sites
- 63% expect candidates to post their television ads on the official site
- 63% say network television is the most trusted news source
- 58% say television and cable ads as well as debates are the best ways to get their attention
- 53% make online purchases
- 53% forward links and email to friends and family
- 32% received email from a friend or family about politics
- 26% say newspaper editorials have the most impact on decisions about candidates
- 21% say television has the most impact on their decisions about candidates

Top 13 Characteristics of Women Self-Identified as Democrats and Republicans

Women Self-Identified as Democrats

- 94% use email
- 89% expect candidates to have a web site
- 81% make online purchases
- 73% forward links and email to friends and family
- 71% expect candidates to do online fundraising
- 70% expect candidate television ads to be on the official site
- 69% say television or cable ads are amongst the best ways to get their attention
- 65% expect candidates to use online ads and webcasts of events
- 61% say debates are among the best ways to get their attention
- 50% say local television is the most trusted news source
- 44% have visited a candidate web site
- 42% have viewed online video about candidates
- 40% say their family most influences who they vote for

Women Self-Identified as Republicans

- 94% use email
- 87% expect candidates to have a web site
- 81% make online purchases
- 73% forward links and email to friends and family
- 68% expect candidate television ads to be on the official site
- 66% expect candidates to do online fundraising
- 64% expect candidates to use online ads
- 63% say television or cable ads are amongst the best ways to get their attention
- 55% say debates are among the best ways to get their attention
- 49% say local television is the most trusted news source
- 37% searched online for information about politics
- 36% have visited a candidate web site
- 33% say their family most influences who they vote for

Women Self-Identified as Independents

- 94% use email
- 87% expect candidates to have a web site
- 81% make online purchases
- 75% forward links and email to friends and family
- 67% expect candidate television ads to be on the official site
- 68% expect candidates to do online fundraising
- 61% expect candidates to use online ads
- 59% say television or cable ads are amongst the best ways to get their attention
- 57% say debates are among the best ways to get their attention
- 49% say local television is the most trusted news source
- 36% searched online for information about politics
- 35% have visited a candidate web site
- 34% say their family most influences who they vote for

**Seven Top Characteristics About Women
Who Are Members of a Social Network**

- 97% use email
- 92% expect candidates to have official web sites
- 88% make online purchases
- 83% forward links and email to friends and family
- 77% read newspapers or magazines online
- 60% say the official web site is a good way to get their attention
- 49% have visited a candidate web site

INTRODUCTION

E-Voter Institute began studying voters in 2006 when there was ample evidence that the online world was representative of all voters. We realized that our original focus on the political consultants was only telling part of the story and there was need to further probe the changes in the political landscape.

The E-Voter Institute's **3rd Annual Survey of Voter Expectations** reveals that there are notable differences between genders when it comes to use of the Internet. The Internet has become a mass medium for some voters and a way to dig deep into relevant information for others. This report will investigate women voters and their Internet behavior, as well as what influences women as they make decisions about candidates and ballot initiatives.

Understanding the universe of voters who are online should provide consultants and media strategists with a better sense of how women are changing in their media habits, sense of entitlement, and interest in participating in the political process. This research reveals defining characteristics of women who are most active online.

These findings are intended to raise questions about the ways in which campaigns are spending money to reach all voters and to help candidates, campaign managers, political consultants, media advisors, fundraisers, pollsters, campaign solution providers, web publishers, online ad networks, academics and journalists better understand the impact of the Internet in the campaign process.

Thanks to HCD Research for their help in recruiting a large sample of those 18+ and to those bloggers and social network activists who helped spread the word about the research.

E-Voter Institute is a non-partisan trade association whose mission is to help accelerate the use of the Internet for politics and advocacy to support a more robust democracy. Karen Jagoda is president and co-founder of the Institute. Previous research is available from <http://e-voterinstitute.com> and in the book *Crossing the River: The Coming of Age of the Internet in Politics and Advocacy*, Karen A.B. Jagoda, editor (Xlibris, 2005). Karen is the host of a weekly Internet radio show, **Digital Politics**, on <http://signonradio.com>.

HCD Research is a marketing and communications research company that was founded in 1991. HCD Research focuses solely on providing traditional and e-based marketing and communications research services. The company's web-based research combines classical and sophisticated research techniques with innovative on-line applications that enable HCD Research to obtain comprehensive, meaningful data for customers.

A pioneer in Internet marketing and communications research, HCD Research has designed and implemented research studies for numerous large and mid-sized companies in the pharmaceutical, financial services and publishing industries, among others. HCD Research is also the developer of readmylipz.com, a political ad testing web site for the 2004 Presidential campaign. Rich Berke is vice president, Kendall Anderson was the project manager and Michelle Nappa the research analyst for these surveys. For more information, please visit <http://www.hcdi.net>.

Christopher Borick is the Director of the **Muhlenberg College, Institute of Public Opinion**, a state of the art public opinion research center that conducts scientific-based survey research projects of public policy and political issues throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. For more information, visit <http://www.muhlenberg.edu/studorgs/polling/>

METHODOLOGY

To recruit respondents for the **3rd Annual Survey of Voter Expectations**, participating organization ran online ad banners and text links on their websites to attract respondents. Additionally, emails were sent to membership lists and HCD’s online panel. The survey ran from May 8, 2008 to May 28, 2008. No survey respondents were paid.

Respondents to the voter survey were randomly selected from a panel of over 250,000 people who opted-in and agreed to participate in research. Potential panelists were selected via a random sample obtained through postal mailings directed to individuals on voter registration lists and registrants from websites representing lifestyle, politics, and news organizations.

HCD Research adheres to the highest panel recruitment and management standards. Members are enrolled using online recruitment methods (email requests, online banners and blog ads), exclusively using permission-based techniques. The surveys were hosted on the HCD server. HCD Research maintained privacy, all answers have been stripped of any identifying information and no emails were collected from survey respondents.

There were a total of **4,801** survey respondents in the sample. Of that total **3,373** were women.

- 43% of the women in the sample are members of a social network
- 45 % of the women self-identified as Democrats
- 25% of the women self-identified as Republicans
- 21% of the women self-identified as Independents
- 1% of the women self-identified as Libertarians

Age Distribution of Women	% of Sample of Women
18-24	8%
25-34	25%
35-54	52%
55-64	13%
65-74	2%
75+	1%

Self-Described Level of Technology Competence	% of Sample of Women
Power User - Staying on the leading edge of the Internet	19%
Advanced - Maintaining awareness of changes in online technology	46%
Competent - Satisfied with basic online technology to get the job done	32%
Novice - Limited ability to take advantage of all online technology	3%

FINDINGS

Finding 1: Women and men use the Internet in similar ways, although there are some distinct differences.

Looking at the sample of voters by gender there are a few surprises about online behavior.

- Women are 22% more likely than men to forward links and email to friends and family
- Women are 11 % more likely to play online games than men
- Women are 19% less likely than men to download video or audio from the Internet but equally likely to upload video or audio

Online Behavior	Gender	
	Male	Female
Use email	89%	94%
Make online purchases	76%	80%
Forward links and email to friends/family	60%	73%
Have broadband access to the Internet at home	76%	72%
Read newspapers or magazines online	67%	66%
Play online games	53%	59%
Have wireless capability	59%	50%
Download video and/or audio	62%	50%
Post ratings or comments online	44%	47%
Are social network members	44%	43%
Listen to online radio	49%	42%
Upload video and/or audio	33%	33%
Post to other blogs	26%	29%
Maintain a blog or their own web site	20%	18%
Use widgets	23%	17%
Subscribe to RSS feeds	23%	16%
Use Twitter or other micro-blogging sites	8%	4%

While women across all ages have taken to email, there are marked differences on how they otherwise use email. The likelihood of a woman age 55-64 forwarding on an email or link to friends or family is 17% greater than for a woman 18-24. Social networks seem to be the preferred medium for communicating with friends by those women 18-34.

Posting ratings or comments is popular with women, as half of those ages 18-54 do so. Older women as well show an interest in posting comments. Reading newspapers online seems to be most popular with women ages 35-54.

Video online is a clear differentiating point, as those women ages 18-24 are twice as likely to download and upload video than those women 55+ years old.

Online purchasing has come of age. We see even 53% of those over 75 years of age make online purchases. Those who make online purchases the most are women ages 35-64, which is not surprising given that those are the top money making and spending years. While they are not busy spending money online, 42% of those women 75+ years old are playing online games. While nearly 2 out of 3 women ages 25-34 play online games, at least 50% of the remaining age groups also play.

Online Behavior	Women by Age					
	18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Use email	92%	90%	95%	96%	95%	89%
Are social network members	73%	59%	39%	21%	14%	5%
Maintain a blog or their own web site	27%	28%	16%	8%	0%	5%
Post to other blogs	29%	36%	30%	19%	5%	0%
Post ratings or comments online	48%	53%	48%	35%	28%	11%
Subscribe to RSS feeds	16%	18%	17%	9%	5%	5%
Download video and/or audio	64%	58%	49%	33%	23%	16%
Use widgets	28%	20%	16%	11%	0%	0%
Upload video and/or audio	37%	40%	34%	17%	17%	0%
Listen to online radio	48%	49%	41%	28%	21%	21%
Forward links and email to friends/family	64%	70%	74%	75%	71%	53%
Play online games	55%	64%	57%	58%	59%	42%
Make online purchases	74%	79%	81%	81%	76%	53%
Use Twitter or other micro-blogging sites	5%	7%	4%	1%	1%	0%
Read newspapers or magazines online	59%	66%	68%	63%	51%	53%
Have broadband access to the Internet at home	71%	72%	74%	68%	56%	63%
Have wireless capability	56%	55%	51%	39%	13%	37%

Viewing women voters across party lines shows some remarkable consistency. Equal numbers of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents are using email, forwarding links and email to friends and family, making online purchases and reading newspapers or magazines online. It does appear that Democratic and Independent women are equally engaged with social networks and playing online games, more so than their Republican peers.

Online Behavior	Women by Political Affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Use email	94%	94%	94%
Are social network members	46%	39%	45%
Maintain a blog or their own web site	19%	16%	22%
Post to other blogs	30%	28%	32%
Post ratings or comments online	48%	45%	52%
Subscribe to RSS feeds	17%	14%	17%
Download video and/or audio	53%	48%	49%
Use widgets	17%	16%	18%
Upload video and/or audio	34%	33%	33%
Listen to online radio	43%	39%	44%
Forward links and email to friends/family	73%	73%	75%
Play online games	61%	53%	62%
Make online purchases	81%	81%	81%
Use Twitter or other micro-blogging sites	5%	4%	3%
Read newspapers or magazines online	69%	62%	67%
Have broadband access to the Internet at home	72%	75%	73%
Have wireless capability	49%	52%	52%

To get a better sense of the differences of the online behavior of women, we separated the group into those who are members of a social network and those who are not. In every case, those who are members show a greater interest in other elements of the Internet than those who are not members.

Most notably, social network members are:

- More than twice as likely to post ratings or comments online
- 133% more likely to upload video or audio
- 89% more likely to download video or audio
- 35% more likely to read newspapers or magazines online
- 28% more likely to forward links to friends and family

Online Behavior	Women by Social Network Member	
	No	Yes
Are social network members	0%	100%
Use email	91%	97%
Make online purchases of consumer goods, travel or subscriptions	74%	88%
Forward links and email to friends/family	65%	83%
Have broadband access to the Internet at home	64%	82%
Read newspapers or magazines online	57%	77%
Play online games	50%	69%
Download video and/or audio	36%	68%
Post ratings or comments online	33%	65%
Have wireless capability	41%	62%
Listen to online radio	32%	53%
Upload video and/or audio	21%	49%
Post to other blogs	15%	47%
Maintain a blog or their own web site	6%	34%
Use widgets	9%	28%
Subscribe to RSS feeds	9%	25%
Use Twitter or other micro-blogging sites	1%	9%

Finding 2: Women have higher expectations than men for Internet use by candidates.

Men and women agree that the candidate’s official web site is essential, although men do seem to have higher expectations for how candidates should use the Internet in general.

Expectations of Candidates (by gender)	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
Official web site	87%	87%	87%
Fund raising	70%	75%	68%
Television ads on the official web site	68%	71%	67%
Online ads	65%	68%	63%
Webcasts of events	62%	64%	62%
E-mail	60%	65%	58%
Campaign web video on other sites	60%	63%	58%
Blogs and podcasts	55%	59%	53%
Participation in social networking sites	38%	45%	36%

The story becomes more interesting when we look at women by age. Here we see that:

- 41% of those women ages 18-24, and more than one-quarter of women 65+ years, expect candidates to participate in social networks.
- Expectations for webcasts seem to increase with age, as do expectations for online fundraising

Expectations of Candidates	Total Women	Women by Age					
		18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Official web site	87%	85%	89%	87%	86%	82%	84%
Fund raising	68%	66%	68%	66%	72%	79%	58%
E-mail	58%	58%	63%	56%	58%	59%	68%
Online ads	63%	65%	65%	63%	61%	60%	58%
Webcasts of events	62%	53%	60%	65%	61%	59%	47%
Blogs and podcasts	53%	47%	56%	53%	50%	62%	26%
Television ads on the official web site	67%	68%	69%	67%	64%	71%	63%
Campaign web video on other sites	58%	57%	61%	58%	56%	59%	47%
Participation in social networking sites	36%	41%	41%	34%	30%	27%	26%

Some interesting differences do seem to exist between women from different political parties with Democrats having higher expectations across many Internet activities.

Generally, all women expect candidates to have an official web site, but there is a marked difference between Democrats and Republicans when it comes to:

- Social networks, which Democrats are 33% more likely to expect candidates to participate in
- Blogs and podcasts, which Democrats are 14% more likely to expect candidates to maintain
- Email, which Democrats are 10% more likely to expect candidates to send

Expectations of Candidates by Women

Expectations of Candidates	Women By Political Affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Official web site	89%	87%	87%
Fund raising	71%	66%	68%
E-mail	63%	53%	57%
Online ads	65%	64%	61%
Webcasts of events	65%	60%	61%
Blogs and podcasts	56%	49%	55%
Television ads on the official web site	70%	68%	67%
Campaign web video on other sites	61%	56%	58%
Participation in social networking sites	40%	30%	34%

Looking further at those women who are members of social networks, we see that those who are more involved with the Internet have higher expectations of candidates. Most noteworthy is the fact that:

- Women who are social network members are 30% more likely to expect a candidate blog or podcast
- Women who are social network members are 23% more likely than non-members to expect campaign video on other sites than the official site

Expectations of Candidates	Women by Social Network Member	
	No	Yes
Official web site	84%	92%
Fund raising	64%	72%
E-mail	55%	62%
Online ads	60%	67%
Webcasts of events	58%	67%
Blogs and podcasts	47%	61%
Television ads on official web site	63%	73%
Campaign web video on other sites	53%	65%
Participation in social networking sites	27%	47%

Finding 3: Women are politically active online primarily through email and viewing information and video on websites.

Men seem to be generally more interested in doing things related to politics online than women with the exception of two activities:

- Women are slightly more likely to receive email from friends and family about politics
- Women are also slightly more likely to forward links and email to friends and family about political issues

What Have They Done Online	Gender	
	Male	Female
Visited a candidate web site	47%	38%
Viewed online videos about candidates	47%	37%
Searched online for additional information about politics	42%	36%
Received email from friends or family about politics	32%	34%
Told a friend or family member to vote for a candidate or initiative	38%	32%
Forwarded links or email to friends/family about political issues	27%	29%
Read a blog about politics or candidates	32%	25%
Sent an email to a candidate or politician about their concerns	24%	22%
Participated in an online discussion about politics	21%	17%
Submitted an email address in order to receive candidate information	18%	17%
Clicked on an online political ad	23%	16%
Attended a political event	20%	14%
Donated to a candidate or cause online	17%	11%
Volunteered for a political campaign	12%	8%

This research dispels the myth that older voters are not using the Internet like younger voters. We see remarkable consistency across all ages of women related to their interest in viewing online videos about candidates. There is also just about the same level of activity across all ages for donating to candidates or causes online, with those women ages 55-64 the most likely to do so.

There are some distinct differences across ages. Most interesting:

- Women ages 55-64 are most likely to forward links or email to friends and family about political issues as well as receive email from friends and family about politics
- Women 65+ years are more than twice as likely as younger women to send an email to a candidate or politician about a concern
- Women 18-24 ages are twice as likely to visit a candidate web site as those over 65
- While 43% of women ages 18-24 use search engines to find out more information about politics, 35 % of those ages 35-64 also use search engines for this purpose.

What Have Women Done Online	Total Women	Women by Age					
		18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Visited a candidate web site	38%	41%	39%	38%	37%	23%	21%
Viewed online videos about candidates	37%	42%	36%	36%	39%	38%	26%
Searched online for additional information about politics	36%	43%	38%	35%	35%	24%	32%
Received email from friends or family about politics	34%	28%	31%	34%	40%	33%	32%
Told a friend or family member to vote for a candidate or initiative	32%	34%	34%	30%	35%	27%	32%
Forwarded links or email to friends/family about political issues	29%	23%	26%	29%	36%	35%	32%
Read a blog about politics or candidates	25%	28%	28%	24%	22%	14%	16%
Sent an email to a candidate or politician about their concerns	22%	13%	17%	23%	28%	32%	32%
Participated in an online discussion about politics	17%	15%	19%	17%	15%	10%	16%
Submitted an email address in order to receive candidate information	17%	17%	15%	16%	21%	21%	5%
Clicked on an online political ad	16%	17%	16%	15%	17%	19%	11%
Attended a political event	14%	15%	14%	14%	17%	13%	11%
Donated to a candidate or cause online	11%	10%	10%	11%	14%	12%	11%
Volunteered for a political campaign	8%	9%	8%	7%	13%	4%	21%

There is a distinct difference between women who identify themselves as Democrats and Republicans when it comes to:

- Submitting an email to get on a candidate’s mailing list, with Democrats 69% more likely to do so
- Clicking on an online political ad, with Democrats 67% more likely to do so
- Receiving email from friends and family about politics, with Republicans more likely to receive emails but equally likely to forward links and emails about political issues as women in other parties

What Have Women Done Online	Women By Political Affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Donated to a candidate or cause online	14%	9%	9%
Submitted an email address in order to receive candidate information	22%	13%	15%
Searched online for additional information about politics	40%	37%	36%
Clicked on an online political ad	20%	12%	14%
Attended a political event	17%	13%	11%
Volunteered for a political campaign	12%	6%	5%
Told a friend or family member to vote for a candidate or initiative	38%	32%	27%
Forwarded links or email to friends/family about political issues	30%	30%	27%
Participated in an online discussion about politics	19%	15%	18%
Visited a candidate web site	44%	36%	35%
Read a blog about politics or candidates	28%	22%	26%
Viewed online videos about candidates	42%	36%	35%
Received email from friends or family about politics	35%	37%	32%
Sent an email to a candidate or politician about their concerns	23%	20%	25%

Again we see that those women who are social network members are more likely to do things online related to politics.

- Social network members are 62% more likely than non-members to search online for political information
- Social network members are 50% more likely than non-members to forward links and emails to friends and family and to read a blog about politics
- Social network members are 69 % more likely than non-members to submit an email to receive candidate information

What Have Women Done Online	Women by Social Net Social Network Member	
	No	Yes
Visited a candidate web site	30%	49%
Searched online for additional information about politics	29%	47%
Viewed online videos about candidates	30%	46%
Received email from friends or family about politics	28%	40%
Told a friend or family member to vote for a candidate or initiative	27%	38%
Forwarded links or email to friends/family about political issues	24%	36%
Read a blog about politics or candidates	17%	35%
Participated in an online discussion about politics	11%	25%
Sent an email to a candidate or politician about their concerns	19%	24%
Submitted an email address in order to receive candidate information	13%	22%
Clicked on an online political ad	12%	21%
Attended a political event	10%	19%
Donated to a candidate or cause online	8%	14%
Volunteered for a political campaign	7%	10%

Finding 4: While not as politically active as men online, the majority of women show their power by voting.

Women become more politically active as they age and are generally not engaged as often as men in political activities.

Self-described Level of Political Activism (by gender)	Gender	
	Male	Female
Very politically active	21%	11%
Occasionally active in politics	41%	37%
Not engaged in political activities other than voting	38%	52%

Self-described Level of Political Activism	Total Women	Women by Age					
		18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Very politically active	11%	10%	11%	11%	12%	13%	21%
Occasionally active in politics	37%	40%	40%	37%	31%	40%	26%
Not engaged in political activities other than voting	52%	50%	49%	52%	57%	47%	53%

Self-described online technology competence by women shows a decidedly modest appraisal of skill level. Nearly twice as many men call themselves power users while equal number of men and women think that they are maintaining awareness of changes in online technology. Nearly twice as many women than men think they are competent technology users satisfied with basic online technology.

The majority of women ages 18-54 call themselves at least advanced users of technology. Just over one-quarter of the women ages 18-34 self-identified as power users.

% of Voters Based on Online Technology Competence (by gender and by age)								
	Gender		TOTAL Women by Age					
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Power User - Staying on the leading edge of the Internet	35%	19%	27%	25%	18%	9%	4%	5%
Advanced - Maintaining awareness of changes in online technology	45%	46%	55%	54%	46%	31%	23%	21%
Competent - Satisfied with basic online technology to get the job done	18%	32%	17%	20%	34%	54%	58%	58%
Novice - Limited ability to take advantage of all online technology	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	6%	15%	16%

It appears that party affiliation is not an indicator of computer competence. Differences in the ways Democratic and Republican women use the Internet for political activities is more a question of personal motivation than their ability to use the tools.

Online Technology Competence	Women by Political affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Power User - Staying on the leading edge of the Internet	20%	18%	18%
Advanced - Maintaining awareness of changes in online technology	46%	47%	47%
Competent - Satisfied with basic online technology to get the job done	31%	33%	32%
Novice - Limited ability to take advantage of all online technology	3%	2%	3%

Not surprisingly, women who are members of a social network are twice as likely to call themselves power users who are staying on the leading edge of the Internet.

Online Technology Competence	Women by Social Network Member	
	No	Yes
Power User - Staying on the leading edge of the Internet	13%	27%
Advanced - Maintaining awareness of changes in online technology	42%	52%
Competent - Satisfied with basic online technology to get the job done	42%	20%
Novice - Limited ability to take advantage of all online technology	4%	1%

Finding 5: Most women prefer traditional media sources for their news.

Women rely less on Internet tools than men to get their news. While use of email is equal between the sexes, men are 31% more likely than women to rely on web sites, 25% more likely to use search engines and more than twice as likely to blog.

Voters' Most Relied Upon News Sources (% among their top 3) (by gender)	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
Local television	46%	37%	50%
Newspapers	45%	43%	45%
Network television	38%	36%	38%
Cable news	36%	39%	34%
Web sites	35%	42%	32%
Friends and family	20%	14%	23%
Radio	19%	22%	18%
Debates	12%	11%	13%
Candidate commercials	9%	7%	9%
E-mail	8%	8%	8%
Search engine	8%	10%	8%
Magazines	7%	7%	6%
People from work	5%	6%	5%
Blogs	6%	9%	4%
Online social networks	4%	5%	3%
Books	1%	2%	1%

Women ages 18-24 are most likely to trust web sites, search engines, and blogs over all other women. As expected, older women find traditional media, like local television, newspapers and network television, most trustworthy, with higher ratings than any other category of news source.

Trusted News Sources	Total Women	Women by Age					
		18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Local television	50%	40%	46%	52%	54%	58%	47%
Newspapers	45%	33%	38%	48%	54%	62%	58%
Network television	38%	28%	32%	39%	48%	58%	63%
Cable news	34%	31%	33%	35%	40%	35%	32%
Web sites	32%	47%	39%	31%	22%	13%	11%
Friends and family	23%	37%	29%	21%	14%	10%	11%
Radio	18%	13%	19%	19%	18%	9%	37%
Debates	13%	10%	12%	14%	14%	15%	21%
Candidate commercials	9%	8%	7%	10%	13%	14%	11%
E-mail	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	10%	0%
Search engine	8%	11%	10%	7%	4%	3%	5%
Magazines	6%	11%	7%	5%	5%	4%	5%
People from work	5%	6%	8%	4%	2%	0%	0%
Blogs	4%	8%	5%	4%	2%	1%	0%
Online social networks	3%	6%	5%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Books	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Looking at women by party affiliation reveals many similarities in media use, with Internet tools showing identical value.

Trusted News Sources	Women by Political affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Newspapers	46%	45%	45%
Network television	41%	37%	37%
Local television	50%	49%	49%
E-mail	8%	8%	9%
Cable news	35%	37%	33%
Candidate commercials	11%	9%	9%
Search engine	7%	8%	8%
Online social networks	3%	3%	3%
Radio	17%	21%	17%
Friends and family	21%	25%	23%
Web sites	31%	31%	34%
Debates	14%	13%	13%
Magazines	6%	4%	8%
Blogs	4%	4%	5%
Books	1%	1%	1%
People from work	4%	5%	5%

Those women who are not members of social networks trust traditional news sources more. Internet tools, particularly web sites, are more favored by those who are members of social networks.

Trusted News Sources	Women by Social Network Member	
	No	Yes
Local television	52%	46%
Newspapers	49%	40%
Web sites	27%	39%
Network television	40%	37%
Cable news	35%	34%
Friends and family	21%	25%
Radio	19%	17%
Debates	13%	12%
Candidate commercials	9%	9%
E-mail	8%	9%
Search engine	7%	8%
Magazines	6%	6%
Blogs	3%	5%
Online social networks	2%	5%
People from work	5%	4%
Books	1%	0%

Finding 6 Television has the greatest effect on voting decisions of women, with twice the number of women saying Internet information has the most impact.

When voters were asked how they decide about candidates, in some cases there are no differences between genders. Women do seem to be significantly more influenced by television and less influenced by the Internet than men.

Most Impact on Decision of Voters (by gender)	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
Television	34%	29%	37%
Internet information	21%	27%	18%
Who family votes for	7%	6%	7%
Newspaper editorials	6%	6%	6%
Recommendations from political party	5%	6%	5%
Friends	5%	5%	5%
Endorsements	3%	3%	3%
Direct mail	2%	2%	2%
Phone calls from campaign volunteers	0%	0%	0%

Women ages 55-74 seem to be the most influenced by television. Women 18-24 are more than twice as likely to be influenced by the Internet as those 55+ years old.

Most Impact on Decision of Voters	Total Women	Women by Age					
		18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Television	37%	30%	34%	37%	44%	40%	21%
Internet information	18%	26%	22%	17%	12%	4%	11%
Who family votes for	7%	14%	10%	6%	3%	0%	5%
Newspaper editorials	6%	5%	6%	6%	8%	12%	26%
Recommendations from political party	5%	3%	6%	6%	3%	5%	5%
Friends	5%	6%	6%	4%	3%	3%	0%
Endorsements	3%	1%	3%	3%	3%	6%	5%
Direct mail	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	0%
Phone calls from campaign volunteers	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Independents are more likely to make decisions about candidates based on Internet information than women of either party. Compared to Democrats, Republican women show nearly twice the interest in recommendations from political parties but equal interest in traditional sources of information and opinions.

Most Impact on Decision of Voters	Women by Party Affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Who family votes for	40%	33%	34%
Internet information	18%	16%	21%
Television	15%	17%	20%
Newspaper editorials	7%	5%	7%
Recommendations from political party	6%	11%	6%
Friends	6%	8%	2%
Direct mail	4%	4%	5%
Phone calls from campaign volunteers	3%	3%	3%
Endorsements	2%	2%	2%

Once again those who are not members of a social network seem more drawn to traditional sources of information and opinions than women who are social network members. These social network members do favor recommendations from family and political parties a bit more than non-members.

Most Impact on Decision of Voters	Women by Social Network member	
	No	Yes
Television	40%	33%
Internet information	14%	24%
Who family votes for	7%	8%
Recommendations from political party	5%	6%
Newspaper editorials	7%	5%
Friends	5%	4%
Endorsements	3%	2%
Direct mail	3%	2%
Phone calls from campaign volunteers	0%	0%

Finding 7: Broadcast ads, debates, and candidate web sites are the best ways to get voters’ attention.

While men again display a more active interest in the Internet and feel that is a good way to get their attention, women and men are equally interested in candidate web sites. Women and men agree that the official web site, along with email and debates, are good ways to get their attention. Again we see less interest from women than men in other Internet activities, such as viral video and text messaging.

Best Ways to Get Voters Attention (by gender)	Gender	
	Male	Female
Television or cable ads	61%	64%
Debates	57%	57%
Official web site	50%	51%
Word of mouth	40%	39%
Direct mail	28%	33%
Newspaper ads	29%	30%
Radio ads	27%	26%
Online ads	28%	24%
E-mail from candidate or celebrity endorser	22%	22%
Yard signs and outdoor billboards	19%	20%
Webcasts	23%	19%
Independent blog posting	19%	15%
Social networking sites	18%	14%
Viral video about a candidate	20%	12%
Phone	10%	8%
Text messaging	7%	4%

Women ages 18-24 indicate that web sites are just about as effective as television/cable ads, debates, and word of mouth in getting their attention. Even 46% of women ages 55-64 say the official web site is a good way to get their attention. There is strong interest in debates across all age groups of women.

Best Ways to Get Voters' Attention	Total Women	Women by Age					
		18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Television or cable ads	64%	57%	62%	65%	68%	71%	58%
Direct mail	33%	28%	31%	32%	40%	47%	26%
Online ads	24%	30%	25%	23%	19%	18%	11%
E-mail from candidate or celebrity endorser	22%	22%	23%	22%	22%	32%	5%
Newspaper ads	30%	26%	27%	30%	34%	42%	32%
Social networking sites	14%	26%	20%	11%	8%	8%	5%
Phone	8%	8%	9%	8%	9%	18%	0%
Official web site	51%	56%	56%	51%	46%	38%	32%
Viral video about a candidate	12%	23%	13%	10%	9%	12%	11%
Radio ads	26%	26%	26%	26%	23%	22%	16%
Webcasts	19%	18%	18%	20%	17%	9%	11%
Debates	57%	56%	53%	57%	58%	67%	58%
Independent blog posting	15%	20%	18%	15%	9%	5%	0%
Text messaging	4%	5%	4%	4%	2%	0%	0%
Yard signs and outdoor billboards	20%	19%	22%	20%	18%	21%	11%
Word of mouth	39%	60%	47%	35%	28%	33%	0%

Women who identify as Democrats are 71% more likely to be interested in email from candidates or celebrity endorsers. Other Internet tools are also more likely to impact these women as compared to Republicans. Again we see strong interest in debates across all parties.

Best Ways to Get Women's Attention	Women by Political affiliation		
	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Television or cable ads	69%	63%	59%
Direct mail	38%	34%	29%
Online ads	26%	21%	23%
E-mail from candidate or celebrity endorser	29%	17%	19%
Newspaper ads	32%	28%	28%
Social networking sites	16%	9%	14%
Phone	11%	7%	6%
Official web site	56%	47%	49%
Viral video about a candidate	14%	9%	11%
Radio ads	28%	26%	21%
Webcasts	21%	16%	19%
Debates	61%	55%	57%
Independent blog posting	16%	12%	16%
Text messaging	4%	3%	2%
Yard signs and outdoor billboards	24%	19%	15%
Word of mouth	40%	35%	42%

Women who are social network members show a strong preference for Internet communications and very similar interest as non-members in traditional methods.

Best Ways to Get Women's Attention	Women by Social Networks Membership	
	No	Yes
Television or cable ads	64%	64%
Debates	54%	60%
Official web site	45%	60%
Word of mouth	33%	47%
Direct mail	32%	34%
Newspaper ads	30%	30%
Online ads	20%	28%
Radio ads	24%	28%
E-mail from candidate or celebrity endorser	19%	26%
Webcasts	14%	25%
Social networking sites	7%	23%
Yard signs and outdoor billboards	18%	23%
Independent blog posting	10%	21%
Viral video about a candidate	7%	18%
Phone	8%	9%
Text messaging	3%	5%

We predict that additional research on women voters as well as voters in general will help political consultants and campaign managers make better-informed decisions about spending campaign dollars.

E-Voter Institute will continue to refine survey questions to shed more light on the changing nature of political campaigns and how the Internet can be used effectively to meet campaign goals for raising funds, persuading voters and getting out the vote.