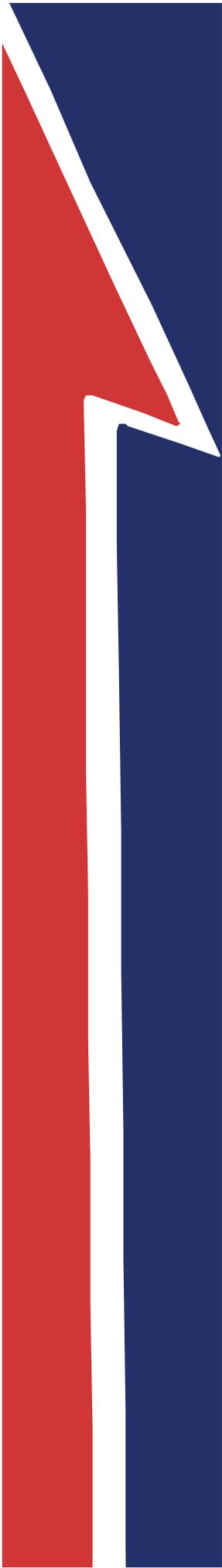


A graphic of a sign for Doug Burgum, the Governor of North Dakota. The sign is shaped like the state of North Dakota and is divided into two horizontal sections. The top section is blue with the text 'BURGUM' in large white letters and 'GOVERNOR' in smaller white letters below it. The bottom section is green with the text 'SANFORD' in large white letters and 'LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR' in smaller white letters below it.

**BURGUM**  
GOVERNOR

**SANFORD**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the page, consisting of a red section on the left and a dark blue section on the right, both with a white outline that forms a large upward-pointing arrow shape.

# Doug Burgum for ND

A Detailed Primary Case Study

## About Us

AdVictory is a digital ad management platform specializing in data optimization, targeting, and delivery. AdVictory provides clients with meticulously constructed proprietary audiences and cutting-edge data matching services for seamless placement integrations, allowing you to take digital marketing in politics to new levels.

## Burgum Background

Doug Burgum's campaign presented interesting challenges and serves as a fascinating case study for the role of digital and data in the 2016 election cycle.

Doug is a conservative business leader with a technology background -- a political outsider pitted against the party standard bearer -- a 40 year Republican elected official and current two term statewide office holder, who was victorious in his last two elections with almost 75 percent of the vote.

When Doug entered the race in February the campaign began at a 49 point polling deficit and was dealt a blow in April when Doug's opponent received the official endorsement and support of North Dakota's Republican Party.

North Dakota columnist and radio host Mike McFeeley framed the race nicely in a piece written just before Election Day. According to McFeeley, *"...if Burgum pulls the upset, it'd be a victory for the ages. It'd also be a defeat of epic proportions for Stenehjem, who'd be left to answer how he blew a 49-point lead."*

That is exactly what happened. Also, Burgum won by 19 points.

As most of us who follow this sport closely know, this election season has proven conventional wisdom stale for evaluating opportunities to connect with the electorate. However, hurdles similar to those in Burgum's battle for the nomination are not overcome by accident.

The Burgum campaign employed an aggressive, calculated, and coordinated voter contact effort across all fronts. Doug himself, along with his business inner circle, strategist and campaign manager committed to a campaign culture that fostered synchronization between voter data, political data, technology, and messaging distribution channels (both offline and on).

This culture was a good fit for our voter contact technology stack -- the same tool set we deployed to help achieve victories for Governor Rick Snyder, Congressman Curt Clawson, Congressman John Moolenaar, Senator Ben Sasse and this year with Jim Banks, IN-3's GOP congressional nominee, who won a similar come-from-behind victory to Burgum.

Each of these races provided opportunities to implement digital strategies pairing offline and online data for effective aggregation / analysis, modeling, message delivery, and GOTV programs. Similarly, Doug Burgum's victory provides new successes to analyze and new challenges to solve.

## How It Worked for Burgum

As with any campaign, message delivery channels need a winning message. Message development is often simplified by the strength of a candidate's personal narrative -- fortunately, this is the hand the campaign was dealt with Doug Burgum.

Early on, the campaign committed to highlighting Doug's background as a political outsider, a successful entrepreneur, and a conservative business leader with a history, connection, and commitment to North Dakota. The election was framed as a choice between a longtime elected official -- the status quo -- and a new type of leader for a changing economy in Doug Burgum.

For this effort we tailored our digital programs around a data-driven approach to accomplish the following objectives:

- Support and enhance traditional offline messaging programs via digital channels
- Organize data and messaging to communicate a unique storyline over digital channels with data tracking and aggregation tools.
- Leverage all past offline and online data to optimize efficiency during our final GOTV program.

## Offline Learned to Love Online

In digital circles the importance of this point is often overlooked by those pitting digital targeting and messaging against more traditional distribution channels like TV, mail and phones.

Yes, of course there are differences.

But rather than creating an environment where these tools are competing with digital for "air-in-the-room," smart campaigns are recognizing an opportunity to diminish inherent inefficiencies across channels by allowing digital to enhance other types of voter contact programs.

The first step in this process was entirely based on something that might seem very simple, but is often overlooked -- using the same data.

The campaign smartly invested in base data from i360 -- the leading provider of voter data and voter models. The campaign used this data to develop audiences for targeted TV, paid live phone, mail, and volunteer phone / door programs. Therefore, our digital ad management platform and technology stack, Advictory (currently beta), was employed to leverage integrations between actionable i360 audiences and ad delivery platforms.

Too often digital strategies lazily rely on targeting data inherent to ad platforms rather than taking the steps to synchronize data between offline and online programs. There are certainly reasons for using certain types of data in certain use cases, but from a base targeting level, pairing data sources is helpful to diminish inefficiency between online and offline voter programs.

To this end, AdVictory used various audience matching technologies to meticulously match micro-segments of voter universes for highly targeted digital delivery.

In this case we developed programs to:

- Deliver video creative over digital channels that paired TV messaging to actionable, micro-segmented i360 audiences.
  - It is an often said broad generalization that digital video creative should *always* be different from TV creative. Another way to look at this challenge might be to think more about finding people online who you estimate *should* see that messaging, and delivering highly viewable impressions to help add reach to TV programs in the digital space.
- We then focused on targeting different types of creative, more suited for digital delivery to audiences more suited to receive it, in channels geared for that type of inventory.
- We matched the campaigns offline mail universe to mobile device ID's, household IP's, and direct Facebook profiles to pair display and video delivery with offline snail mail programs as tightly as possible to the mail recipients.
- This was specifically employed to enhance the campaigns robust vote-by-mail chase program
- We leveraged integrations between AdVictory and the campaigns live phone vendor, Victory Phones Live -- an industry leader in live and automated telephony. AdVictory was able to ingest data from phone programs and active those audiences to addressable digital profiles to serve pre-programmed messaging tracks.

## Digital Storytellers

In addition to using digital tracks to add value to traditional voter programs, we implemented strategies and tactics only achievable with state-of-the-art technology in the digital space.

Surprisingly, the foundation for these efforts is the same foundation from our previous strategic lane -- the data. Early benchmark polling uncovered various geographic, demographic, and messaging tracks the campaign wanted to pair. We structured data driven / audience based delivery paths to message micro-audience segments with paired messaging programs.

- We created actionable audiences from voter segments and broader models for reach into numerous targeting pools -- our delivery strategies were structured to aggregate every ounce of data generated from these ad flights.
- We built engagement (view and click) audiences from in-flight data, as well as segmented audience retargeting pools based on user land page paths.
- We programmatically served fresh creative to targets who had clicked or viewed previous creative and we often went back to the well (using exclusion audiences) to try and engage high value targets with messages they had not yet engaged with.
- We organized landing pages and tracking tags to utilize data across platforms to reach targets in other platform based on content they engaged with somewhere else.

This data structure and ad delivery workflow allowed us to move actionable subsets of our audience down programmatic messaging paths over the course of the campaign across platforms.

## GOTV

Our GOTV (Get Out The Vote) Program also relied heavily on activating offline ID work and modeling that data into broader targeting polls.

A few aspects of the program involved:

Actionable modeled audiences pools of high value “likely supports” built from our base data, offline models and offline ID work.

Direct delivery to audiences of supporters and undecided voters with tightly targeted GOTV creative on platforms like Facebook, or via matched IP household and mobile devices -- person based targeting from hard offline ID work.

High value targets were matched and segmented across platforms to enhance options for reach and frequency.

- We geo-fenced delivery zones around target polling locations on Election Day.
- We suppressed known supporters of our opponent as well as those who already early voted from Election Day GOTV delivery audiences.

One interesting example of parity in the offline to online world is in the final vote totals and some segmentation counts within our online audiences.

In order to drive messaging related to a high profile endorsement late in the primary we developed display creative to generate engagement based on news of the endorsement.

We developed a landed page where we asked targets to “vote” if they were supporting Doug, someone else, or undecided.

Landing Page - <http://join.dougburgum.com/schafer/>

This creative track generated far more engagement than any of our previous display creative. Once on the landing page we captured segmented audience pools based on someone’s response. Surprisingly, the breakdown with our audience pools is very close to final Election Day results.

This was / is not intended to be scientific in any way, but is still interesting to note.

	Audience Poll		Election Results
Support Burgum	55%	Burgum	59%
Support Someone Else	40%	Stenehjem	38%
Undecided	5%	Other	2%

## Conclusion

As noted in Inforum, Burgum for Governor ran an “extensive TV and online advertising campaign,” but few knew the extent the campaign went to structure a true omni-channel marketing approach to delivering their message -- and the key role digital and data played in that effort

The Associated Press pointed out that Burgum’s “barrage of ads is especially prevalent online,” and while our digital efforts might have been more aggressive than voters in North Dakota had seen before, in a spirited primary, they were also heavily targeted and orchestrated to flow with the rest of the campaign messaging channels in some exciting ways made possible through data coordination and activation.