

POLITICAL ADS REACH MOBILE PHONES



Advertisements have reached iPhones and Androids recently, especially if you attended the Minnesota State Fair in 2010. If you were waiting in line to purchase food, you might have received an ad on your phone from Michele Bachmann, who was running a congressional campaign about her opponent wanting to raise the taxes on the food you were waiting in line to purchase. "I know, I know, it's state fair time and you don't want to hear about politics," the ad said. "But while you're at the fair, you should know that Tarryl Clark here voted to raise taxes on your corn dog and your deep-fried bacon and your beer." Bachmann's campaign purchased a mobile version of the advertisement within a two-mile radius of the state fairgrounds in an effort to reach people who were attending the fair. Advertising targeted by geography on mobile phones made its debut during the political campaigns of the 2010 midterms. This type of advertising allows candidates for the White House to reach citizens no matter where they are. This includes at a football game, a baseball game, a graduation, a birthday party and other events. "I would be surprised if we didn't get to the point this cycle where around caucuses, you could run ads to areas right around caucus locations," said GOP new media strategist Vincent Harris. "This is absolutely here and now, and I think that it's something that's going to continue to get more and more [frequent]." Mitt Romney's campaign has already begun using the mobile advertising effort to reach out to voters. "People will use [mobile] extensively this cycle," said Romney digital director Zac Moffatt. "We've done a little bit of it, but it's definitely something we'd use as we get closer to the actual voting time." Moffatt also said that the campaign will target specific caucus and primary states when the voting process starts. "Campaigns want to reach voters where they are," said Rob Saliterman, who oversees Google's political advertising on the Republican side. "And because of that, I think we'll see more [mobile advertising]." Advertising on mobile phones first entered the political world in 2004, but it has vastly improved since then. Hand-held PDAs were used by America Coming Together (a pro-Kerry group) in an effort to broadcast videos to voters about Kerry. "Just as 2008 was all about the social cycle, I think 2012 is going to be very heavy in mobile," said Republican new media consultant Pete Snyder. "I actually think it's a change in human behavior. Very few folks are sitting around getting all their info from TVs these days." Saliterman claims that mobile advertising is much more intimate than television advertising, which makes it an effective method when reaching voters. "It's an arm's length away from you, and if you're watching a video on your phone, the viewer is just much more likely to be engaged," Saliterman said. "It is a 'lean-in' medium, whereas TV is sort of more a 'lean-back' medium."

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