

WISCONSIN TO BE INUNDATED WITH POLITICAL ADS



The state of Wisconsin is about to witness a perfect storm when it comes to an increased amount of political advertising on television. "It's sort of uncharted territory. We've never had a political year which has had that much advertising for so long," says Ken Goldstein, a campaign ad academic expert. Goldstein runs Kantar Media CMAG, a DC-area company that tracks political advertising. "I can't think of a single thing that would depress ad spending in Wisconsin." According to research and analysis done by Goldstein, the most popular spot in the United States for campaign advertising was Las Vegas in 2010. This data was compiled by measuring total advertisements aired. In 2010, Las Vegas had the pleasure of seeing roughly 63,000 political advertisements. Goldstein claims that the state of Wisconsin will see those levels of advertising in 2012. "A heavy TV viewer in Wisconsin will see literally thousands of ads," says Goldstein. "A medium TV viewer in Wisconsin will see many hundreds of ads." Experts are trying to figure out what political implications the heavy advertising will have on the election. Some experts fear that voters will be turned off by the overkill of advertisements but there just is not enough data to prove this theory one way or another. On the other side of things, voter turnout could be boosted in the state of Wisconsin because of the advertising overload on television over the next 11 months. Political advertising can be dubious and marginal more so than some people realize. If both sides of the political ad are spending an equal amount of money and the information is not one-sided, then the ads are not going to have too much of an impact. It will be very difficult for people to weed through the clutter when the volume of the ads is this large in the state of Wisconsin. Some political campaigns will probably have to change their course of advertising to make a difference. For instance, some might consider advertising when there is less ad clutter on television rather than waiting for later in the day when the stations will be overrun by ads. Some campaigns will also have to shy away from ads that attack an opponent or are considered cookie-cutter messages (traditional messages). Candidates have to compete with the larger amount of advertising spending done by outside groups, which is something that cannot be controlled or predicted by campaigns. Try to remember back to the presidential campaign of 2004, when George Bush and John Kerry decided to hold rallies only a couple of blocks apart in Milwaukee the day before the election. Can you remember the 2010 mid-terms when a Senate seat and the governor's office were up for election? Just six months ago there were recall battles that dominated the politics of the United States. Picture all of this happening at once and you will know what Wisconsin will suffer through for the next 11 months.