

# Integrating Campaigns with Direct Mail

## Political Mail Overview



Brenda Manos  
Business Alliance Specialist  
[Brenda.j.manos@usps.gov](mailto:Brenda.j.manos@usps.gov)  
3101 Sunflower Santa Ana CA 92799  
(949) 433-8322



# Agenda

Political Mail Overview

Strategies and Best Practices

Political Mail Requirements and Resources

Promotions and Incentives



# Political Mail Overview



# How is Political Mail Different from Election Mail?



VS



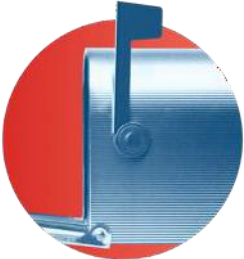
# Campaigns Come In All Shapes And Sizes



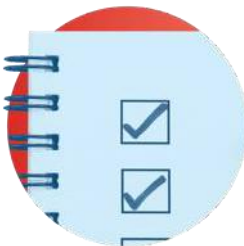
**CANDIDATES &  
CAMPAIGNS**



**POLITICAL ACTION  
COMMITTEES**

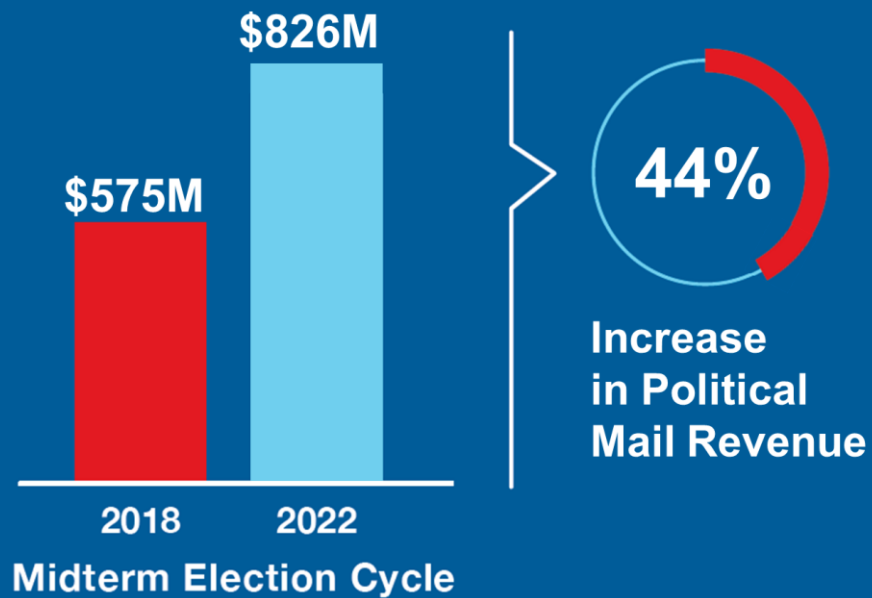


**OUTSIDE SPENDING  
GROUPS**

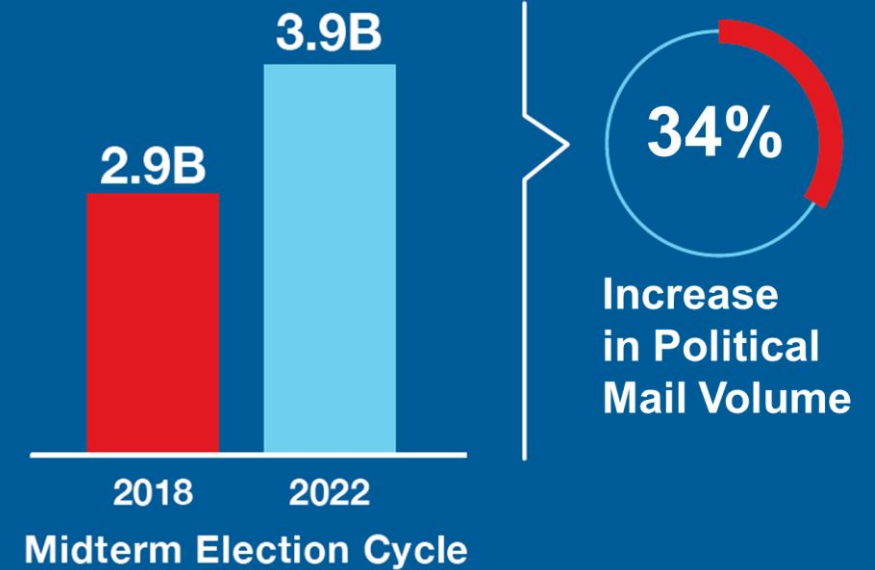


**BALLOT  
INITIATIVES**

## Political Mail Revenue



## Political Mail Volume



# Forecasting Record-Breaking Midterm Spending

**\$10.8B**

Projected Overall Political Advertising Spending

**\$5.0B**

Projected For House & Senate Races

**21%**

Anticipated Increase From 2022 Midterm Elections

**\$3.9B**

Projected For Down Ballot Races

**38%**

Growth From Previous Off-Cycle Year Midterm Spending

**\$1.9B**

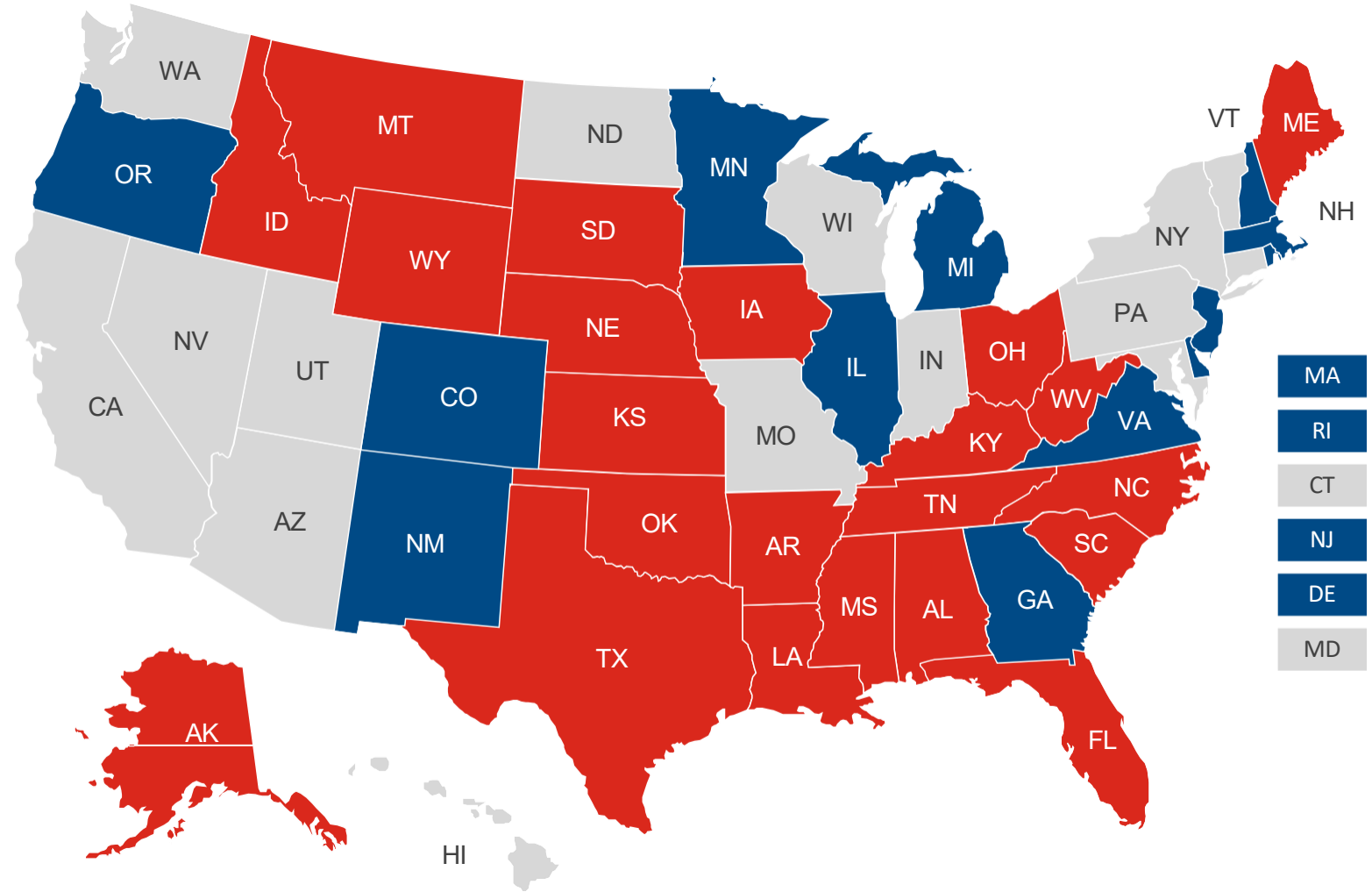
Projected For Gubernatorial Elections



# Federal-Level Opportunities

Republicans have 22 Senate seats and Democrats have 13 Senate seats up for reelection in 2026 (including 2 special elections).

In addition, all 435 seats plus +5 of 6 non-voting seats are up for reelection in the House of Representatives.



- Republican Incumbent
- Democratic Incumbent



# State-Level Opportunities

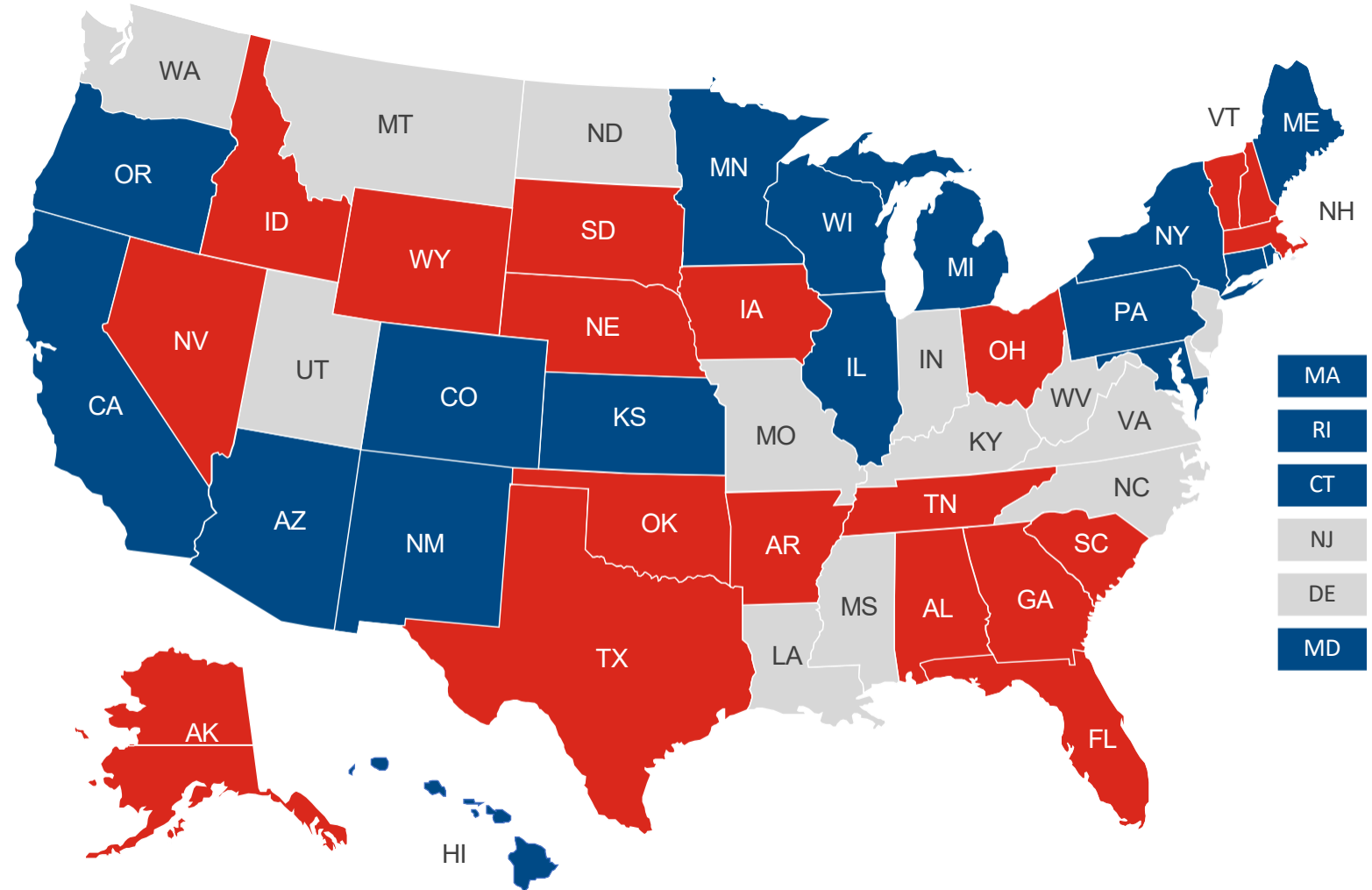
Republicans and Democrats each have 18 governorships up for reelection in 2026 (36 total, plus 3 territories).

Legislative elections in 46 states.

Attorney General elections in 30 states, 3 territories, and 1 federal district.

Secretary of State and State Treasurer elections in 26 states.

- Republican Incumbent
- Democratic Incumbent



# A Narrow Target Audience of Decision-Makers



General Political  
Consultant



Media  
Strategists



Campaign  
Manager



The  
Candidate



Political Direct Mail  
Consultant and/or  
Mail Service Provider



External  
Consultants &  
Agencies



“Kitchen Cabinet”  
or Campaign  
Committee



National, State, and  
Local Party Committees  
(Executive and Political  
Directors)



Executive Director  
(Party Committee, IE or  
Advocacy Organization)

# Boiling It Down, There Are 4 Core Questions

**What is our path to 50% + 1?**

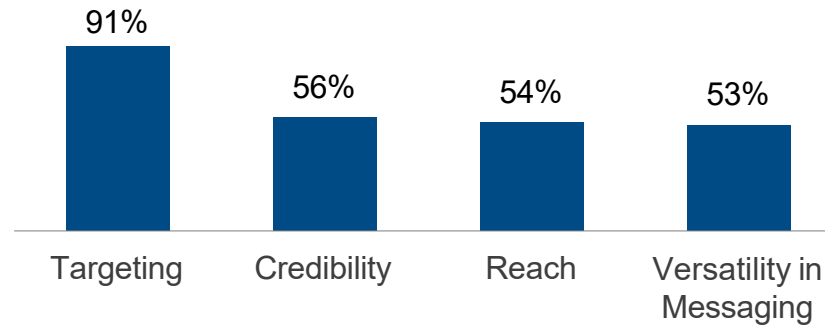
**What is our budget?**

**Who do we need to target?**

**What messages do we need  
to communicate?**

# Perceived Strengths & Weaknesses of Direct Mail

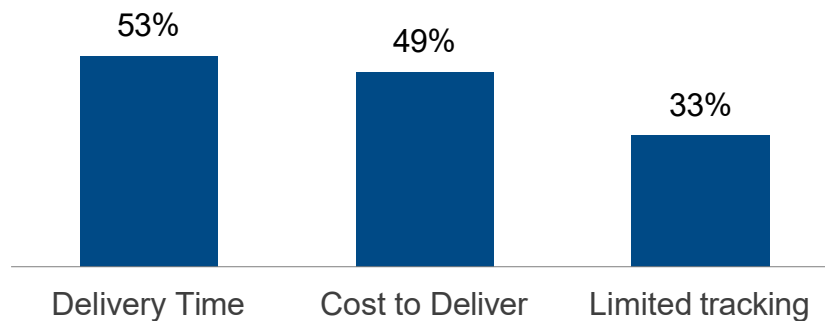
## Top Strengths



*“It’s by far it is the only medium where we have a **reasonable idea of who the voter is** and what would be important to the voter.”*

*– Democratic consultant*

## Top Weaknesses



*“The **rising cost of postal rates** and the fact that it **doesn’t necessarily always hit when it needs to** are the two things are always going to be the hindrance to mail.”*

*– Republican Consultant*





# Strategies and Best Practices



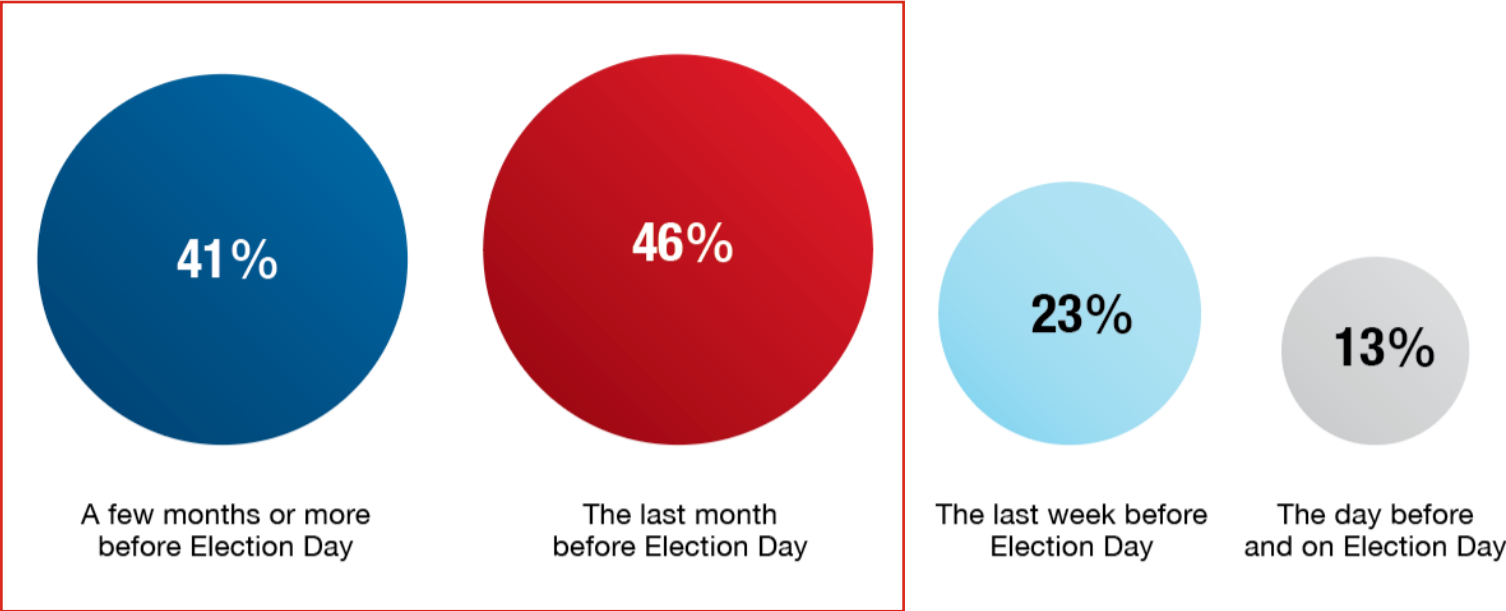


STRATEGY 1: TIMING, FREQUENCY, & EARLY VOTING

# **Give Voters Time and Space to Make Informed Decisions**

## When Voters Want to Receive Mail Pieces\*

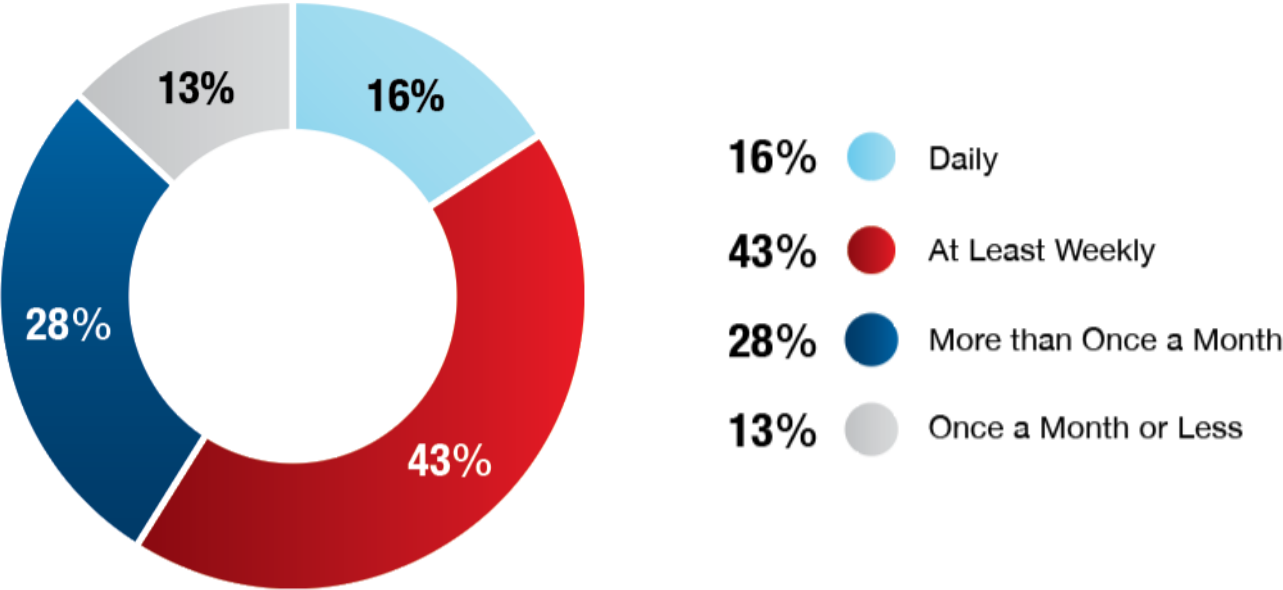
The majority of surveyed voters prefer to receive mail pieces **earlier during the election cycle.**



*\*Voters selected all that apply for when they prefer to receive mail pieces from various campaigns to help with their decision-making about the candidates.*



## How Often Voters Want to Receive Direct Mail



November 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## How Successful Voters Felt Direct Mail Was at Reaching Them Before Voting\*



\*Voters selected one option for how successful mail was at reaching them at the right time for early voting and regular voting.

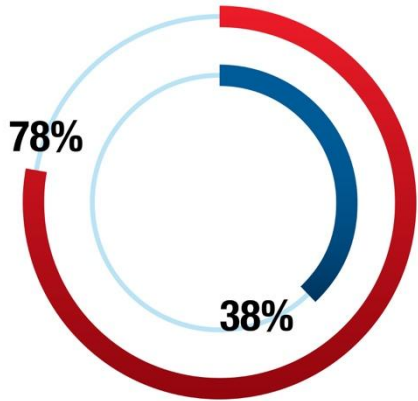




STRATEGY 2: PERSONALIZATION, TARGETING, & CHANNEL OPTIMIZATION

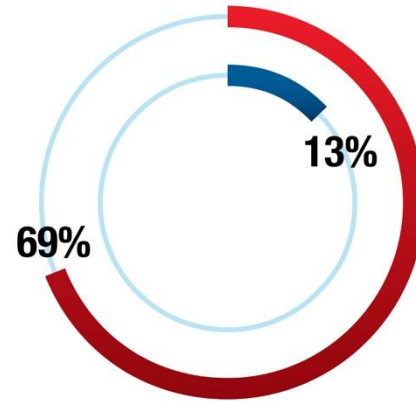
# Build Trust with Targeting Messaging

# Personalization



**78%** of surveyed voters say it is **important the messaging in mail pieces speak to them personally** on issues they care most about.

But **38%** felt that they **did not receive personalized mail pieces**.

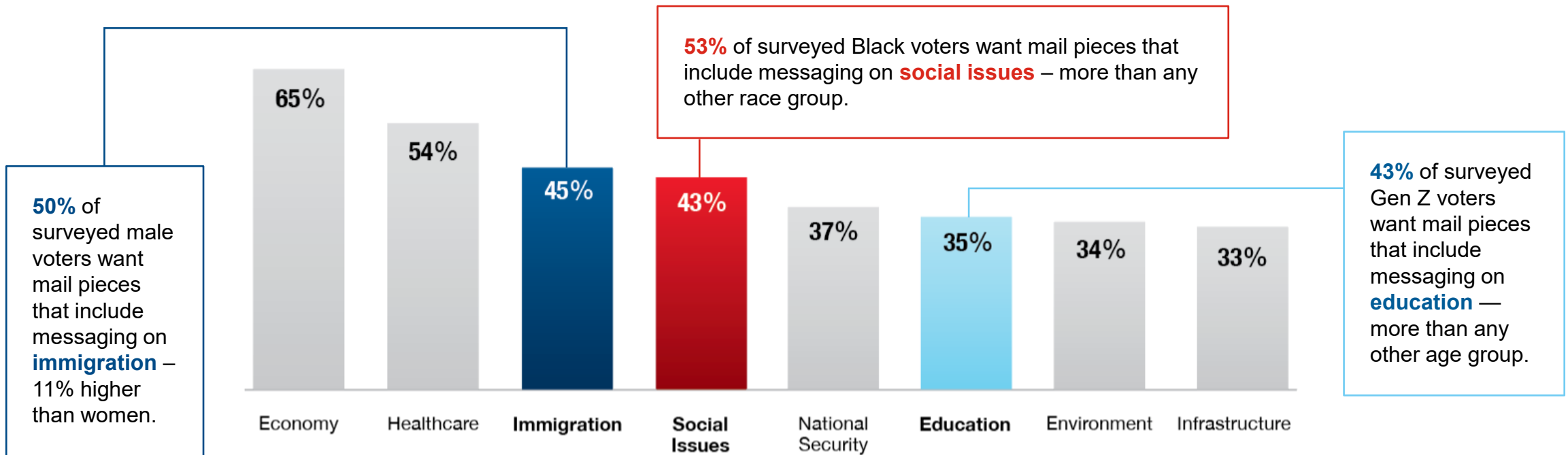


**69%** of surveyed voters who speak a language other than English said receiving political mail **in their primary language was meaningful to them**.

Yet only **13%** of surveyed voters reported receiving mail **in a language other than English**.



## The Issues Voters Want Addressed in Mail Pieces



# Channel Optimization

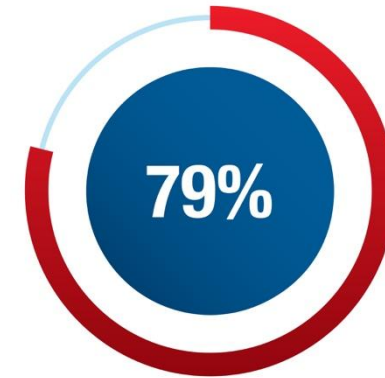
STRATEGY 2



**92%** of surveyed consultants find direct mail is an **effective channel for making a connection** with voters in today's elections.



**91%** of surveyed consultants agree that **targeting is a top advantage** of using direct mail.



**79%** of surveyed consultants **maintained or increased direct mail campaign budgets** during the last election cycle — while other traditional channels saw a larger decrease in spending.



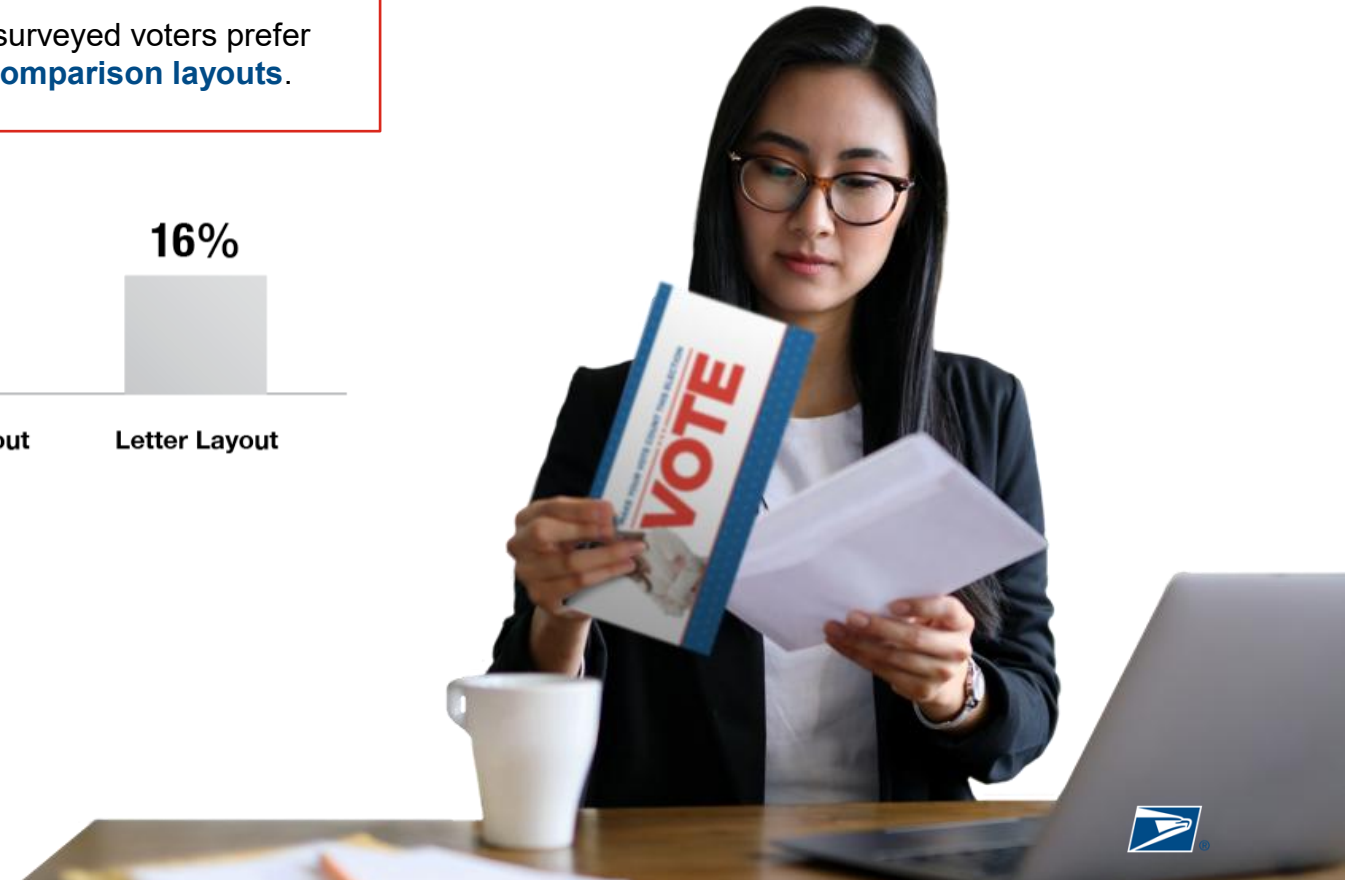
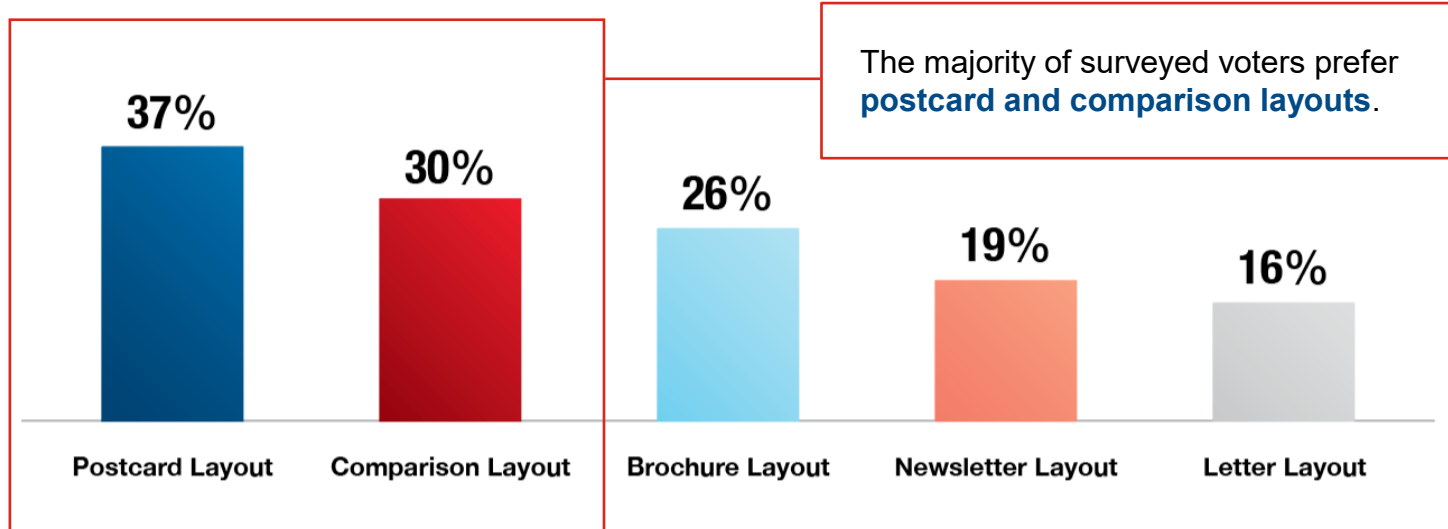


STRATEGY 3: DESIGN, CONTENT, & MAIL INTEGRATION

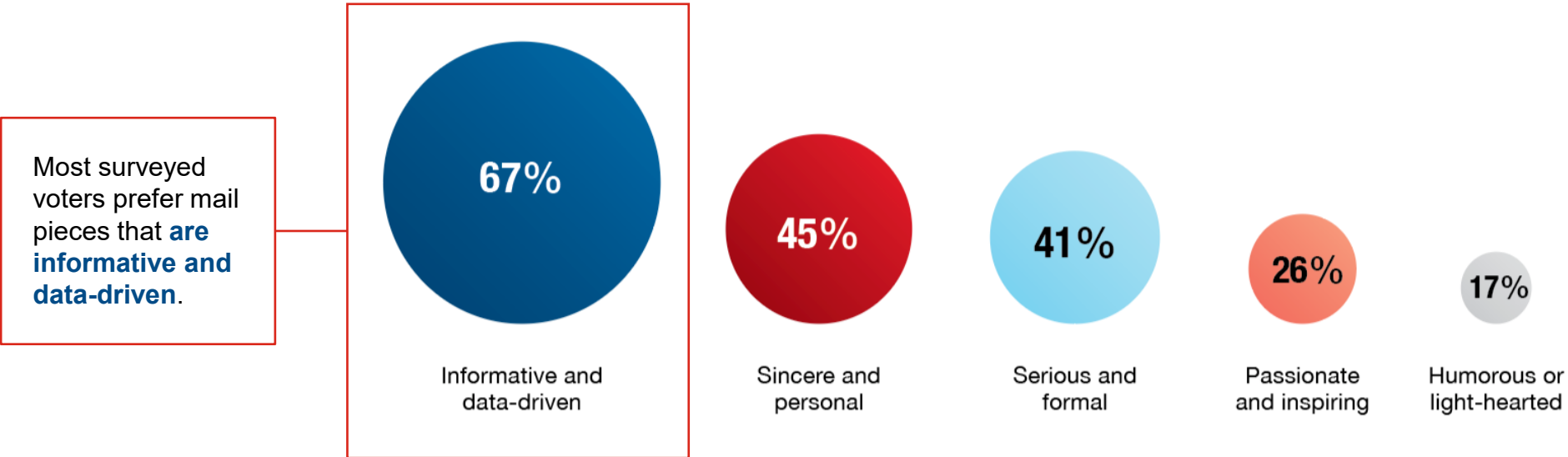
# Maximize Impact with Memorable Mail Pieces



## The Format Voters Prefer for Mail Pieces



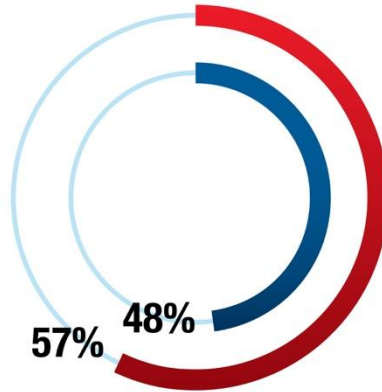
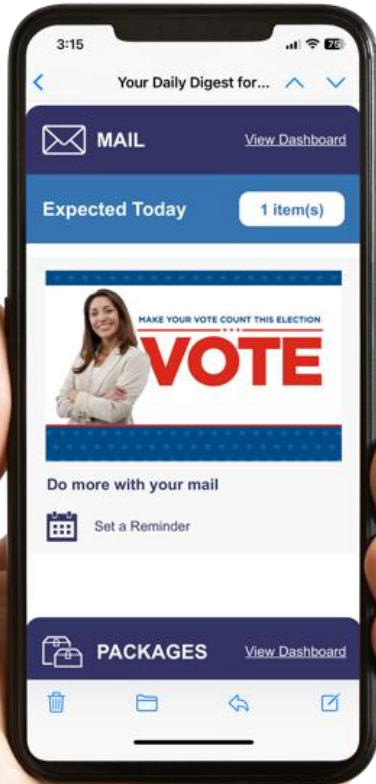
## The Look and Feel Voters Prefer for Mail Pieces\*



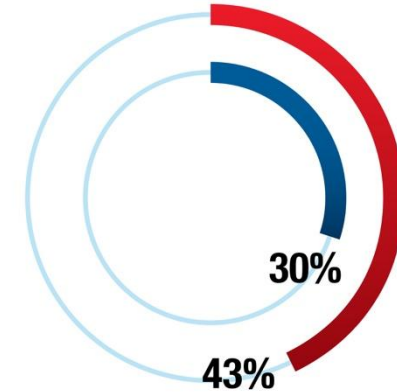
*\*Voters selected their top two options for the approach to the look, feel, and messaging in political mail that is most effective for them.*



# Mail Integration

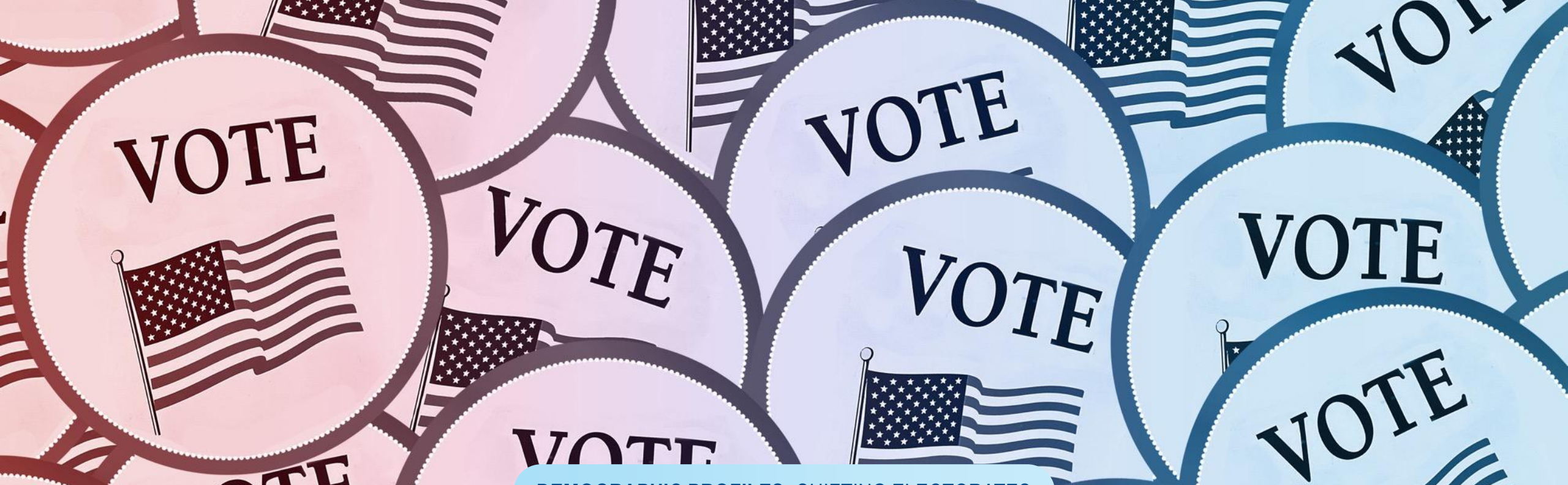


**57%** of surveyed voters reported **seeing a QR Code®** in a political mail piece, which they can scan to learn more online — and **48%** then **read more information about the messaging** in the mail piece online.



**43%** of surveyed voters are **signed up for Informed Delivery** — compared to **30%** of surveyed voters in 2020.



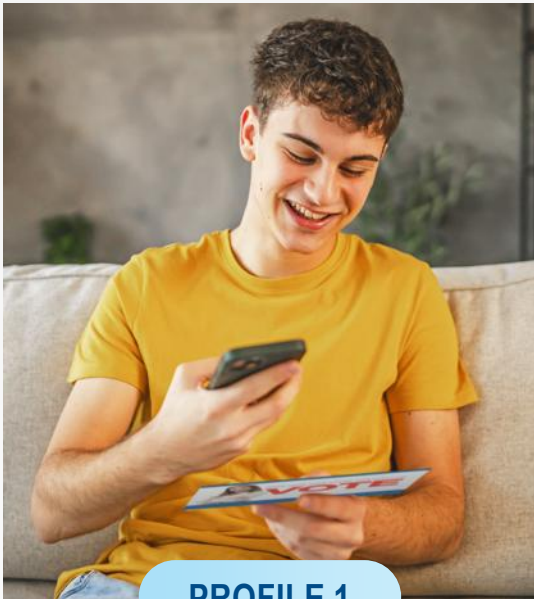


DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES: SHIFTING ELECTORATES

# Data Double Click: 4 Demographics Impacting Election Outcomes



# Demographic Profiles: Shifting Electorates



PROFILE 1

**Gen Z Men**



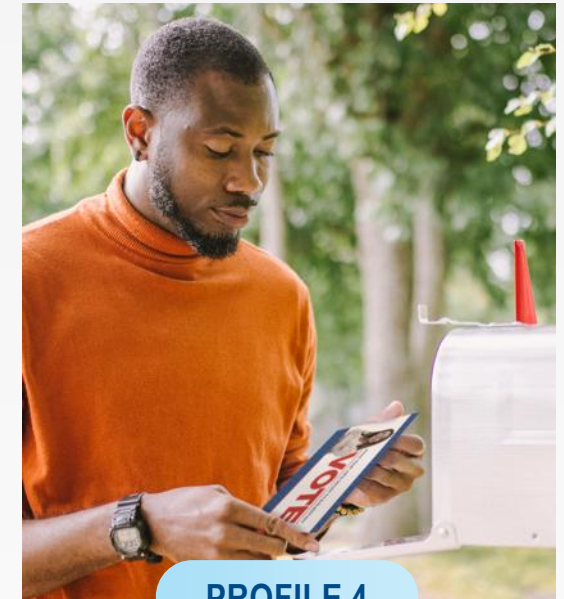
PROFILE 2

**Hispanic/Latino Men**



PROFILE 3

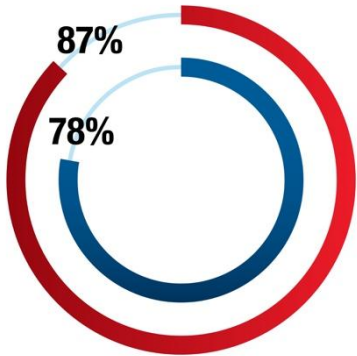
**Suburban Women**



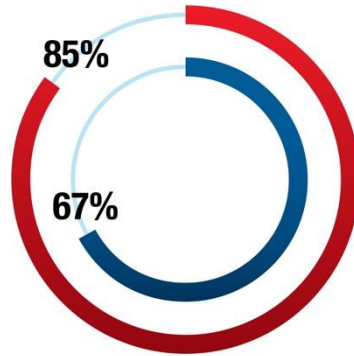
PROFILE 4

**Black Men**

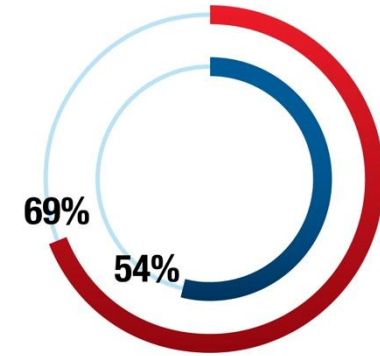




**87%** of surveyed Gen Z men said it is important the **messaging in mail pieces speaks to them personally** on the issues and concerns they care most about — compared to only **78%** of all surveyed voters.



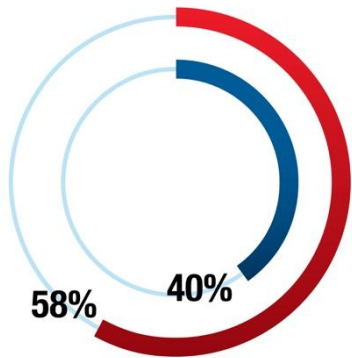
**85%** of surveyed Gen Z men said **mail piece layout and design make it more memorable** — compared to only **67%** of all surveyed voters.



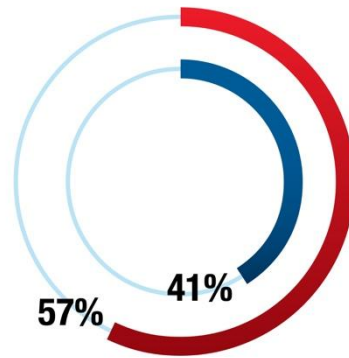
**69%** of surveyed Gen Z men **go online to learn more about the race** after reading a mail piece — compared to only **54%** of all surveyed voters.

# Hispanic/Latino Men

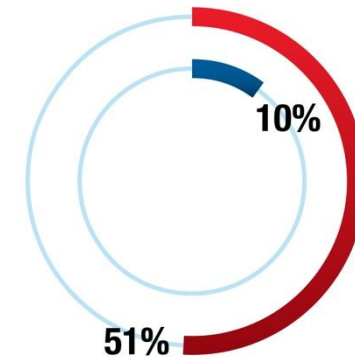
PROFILE 2



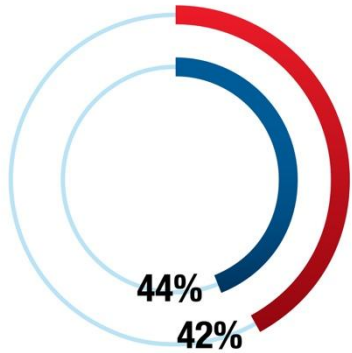
**58%** of surveyed Hispanic/Latino men **speak Spanish regularly**, but only **40%** received **political mail pieces in Spanish**.



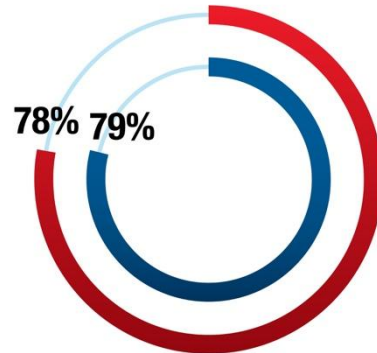
**57%** of surveyed Hispanic/Latino men said direct mail is the **best channel to learn about a candidate in time for early voting** — compared to **41%** of all surveyed voters.



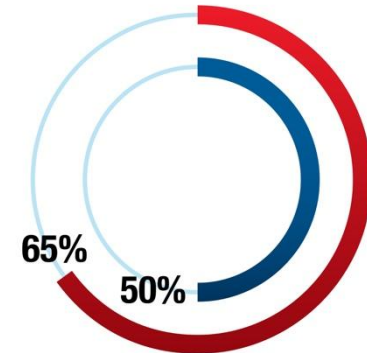
**51%** of surveyed Hispanic/Latino men felt the amount of **political mail they received was "just right"** this past election cycle, while **10%** would **like to receive even more mail pieces** — double the amount of all surveyed voters.



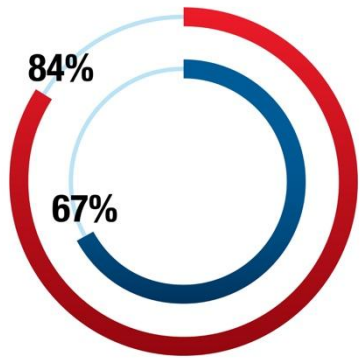
**42%** of surveyed suburban women prefer to **receive mail pieces a few months or more before Election Day** — aligning closely with the preferences of all surveyed women (**44%**).



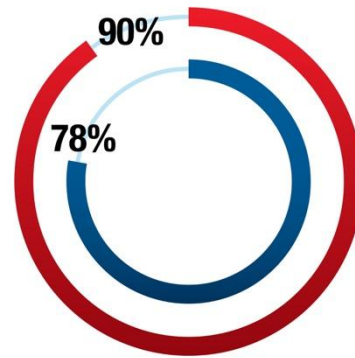
**78%** of surveyed suburban women said it is **important the messaging in mail pieces speaks to them personally** on the issues and concerns they care most about — on par with all surveyed women (**79%**).



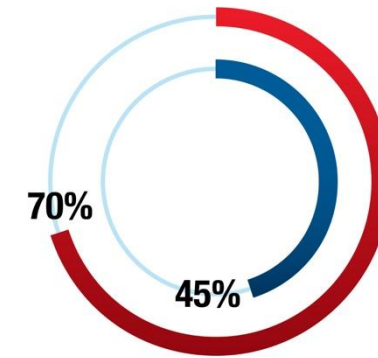
**65%** of surveyed suburban women want the tone of their mail pieces to be **informative and data-driven** — while **50%** want it to be **sincere and personal**.



**84%** of surveyed Black men said mail was successful at **reaching them at the right time for early voting** — compared to **67%** of all surveyed voters.



**90%** of surveyed Black men said it is **important the messaging in mail pieces speaks to them personally** on issues and concerns they care most about — compared to **78%** of all surveyed voters.



**70%** of surveyed Black men said the mail they received this cycle was **visually effective** — compared to **45%** of all surveyed voters.



# Political Mail USPS Resources



# Informed Delivery® Feature

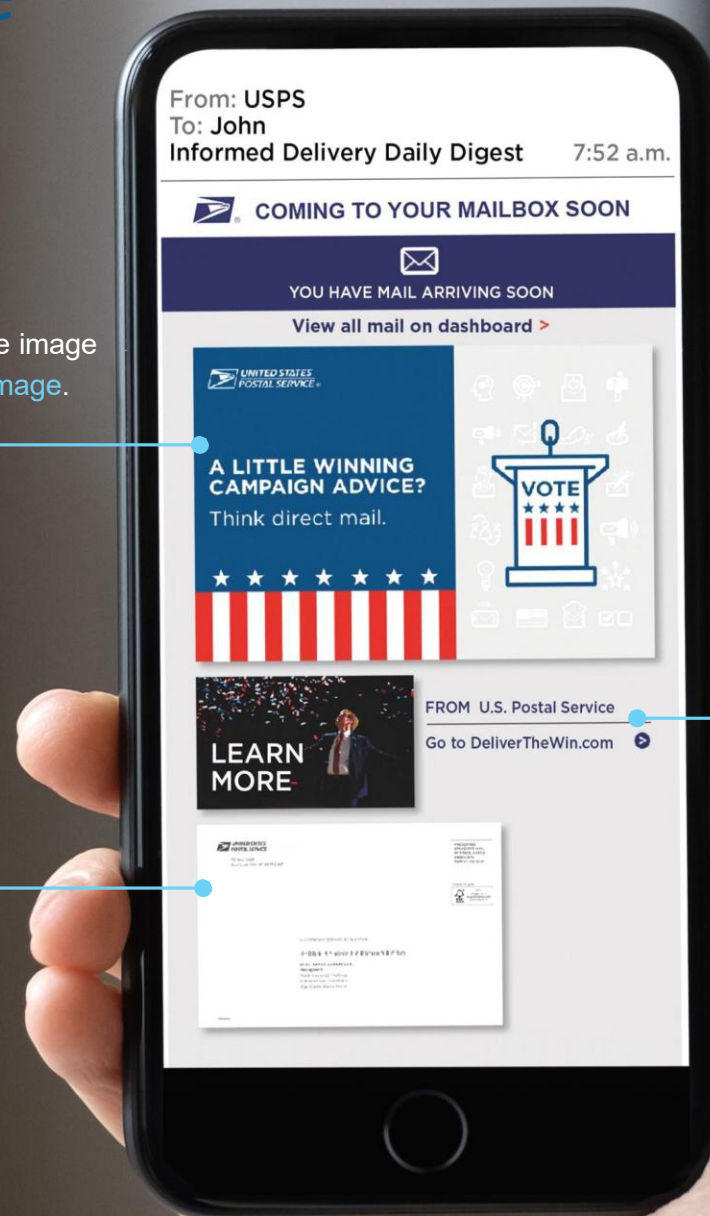
Here's what an Informed Delivery® interactive campaign looks like to the recipient.

## REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE:

Mailers can replace the grayscale image with a full-color Representative Image.

## MAIL PIECE IMAGE:

Users receive emails with grayscale images.



## SUPPLEMENTAL CONTENT:

Mailers can include color images and interactive content.

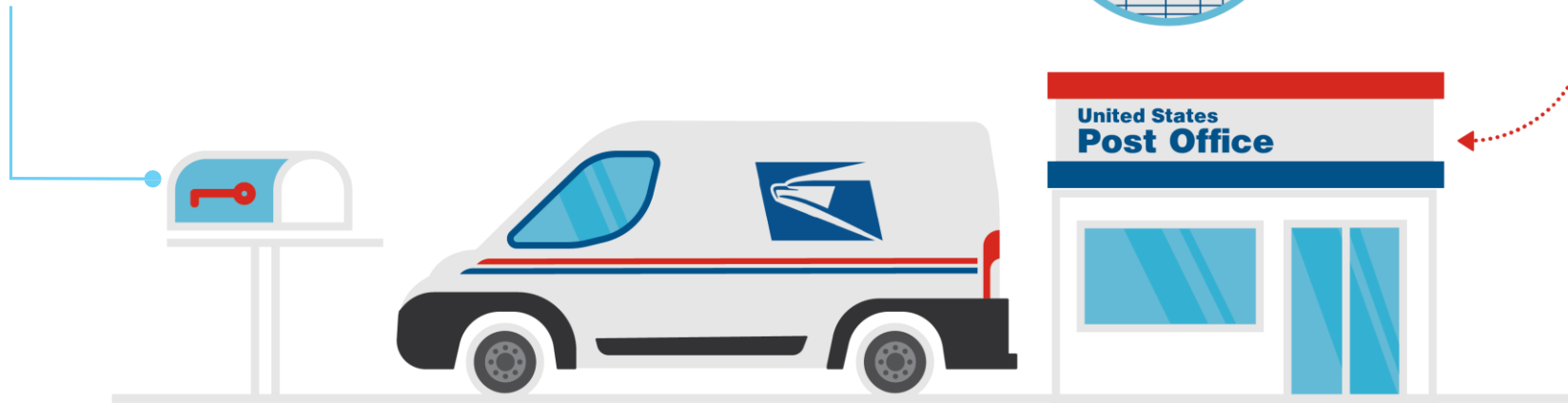


# How Informed Visibility Works.

Enables you to determine when your mailing has reached its destination and seamlessly coordinate your campaign efforts across all channels to reinforce your message.



Offers near-real-time delivery reporting data that can be customized to fit your specific needs using filters.



Provides end-to-end mail tracking information for letter and flat pieces, bundles, handling units, and containers.



# 2026 Promotions Calendar












Add-on & Upgrade | Additional discount to base/primary promotion all year long

Informed Delivery

+1% to mailer  
+0.5% credit to eDoc submitter

Sustainability

+1%

Promotions	2025	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>Integrated Technology</b> 5% Discount Marketing Mail <a href="#">First Class Mail</a>	 NOV 15, 2025 <span style="float: right;">DEC 31</span>												
	 PICK YOUR START DATE FOR 6 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS <span style="float: right;">DEC 31</span>												
<b>Tactile, Sensory &amp; Interactive</b> 5% Discount Marketing Mail <a href="#">First Class Mail</a>	 OCT 15, 2025 <span style="float: right;">JUN 30</span>												
	 JAN 1 <span style="float: right;">JUN 30</span>												
<b>Continuous Contact</b> 5% Discount Marketing Mail	 FEB 15 <span style="float: right;">DEC 31</span>												
	 APR 1 <span style="float: right;">DEC 31</span>												
<b>First-Class Mail Advertising</b> 5% Discount <a href="#">First Class Mail</a>	 JUL 15 <span style="float: right;">DEC 31</span>												
	 SEPT 1 <span style="float: right;">DEC 31</span>												
 <b>Catalog Insights*</b> 10% Discount Marketing Mail	 AUG 15, 2025 <span style="float: right;">JUN 30</span>												
	 OCT 1, 2025 <span style="float: right;">JUN 30</span>												

\*Catalog Insights: Participants will be able to register anytime during the registration period of: August 15, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026



# 2026 Mail Growth Incentives

USPS will offer two mail incentives to grow volume. Both First-Class Mail and Marketing Mail Growth Incentives will provide eligible mailers postage credit on mail volume growth.

**Baseline Period:** January 2025-December 2025 **(NEW)**

**Registration Period:** March 2026 – May 30, 2026 **(NEW)**

**Incentive Performance Period:** January 2026 – December 2026

## Postage Credits for Mail Volume Growth

**30%**  
Postage  
Credit

- Mailers will receive a **postage credit** for qualifying volume in excess of 1M pieces or CY25 baseline volume – whichever is higher
- Earned **postage credits will be issued quarterly** after June, September, and December 2026

Find more information on the promotion process, eligibility, and requirements on [Postal Pro!](#)

# Red Tagging

## Benefits of Tag 57



**1**

Clearly identifies trays, sacks, and pallets that contain political campaign mail.

**2**

Provides greater visibility to mailings as they move through processing and distribution operations.

**3**

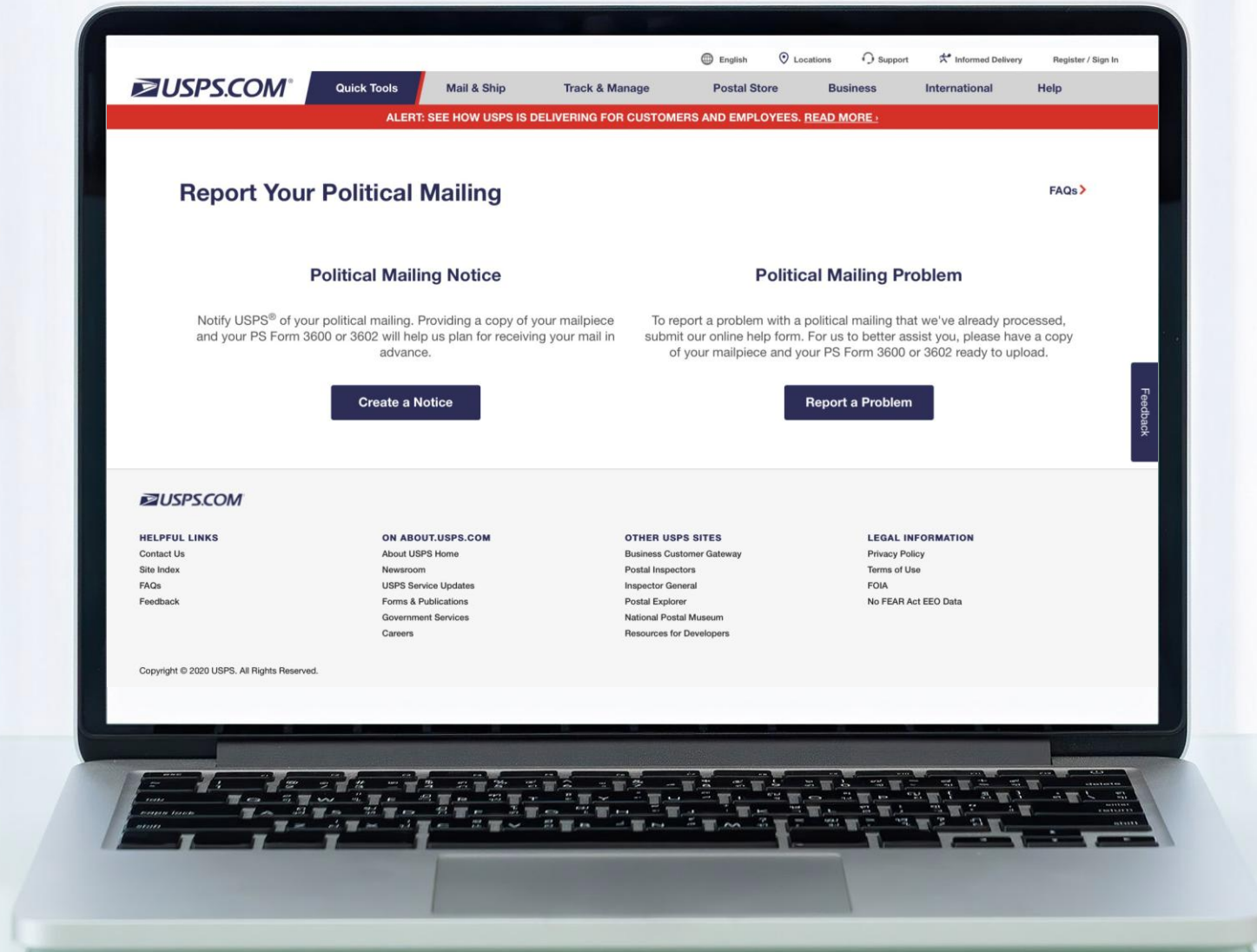
First-Class Mail® items are delivered within 2-5 days and USPS Marketing Mail® items are delivered within 3-10 days, consistent with our delivery standards.

**4**

Should a problem occur, there is a dedicated web form that directly alerts the appropriate postal officials.



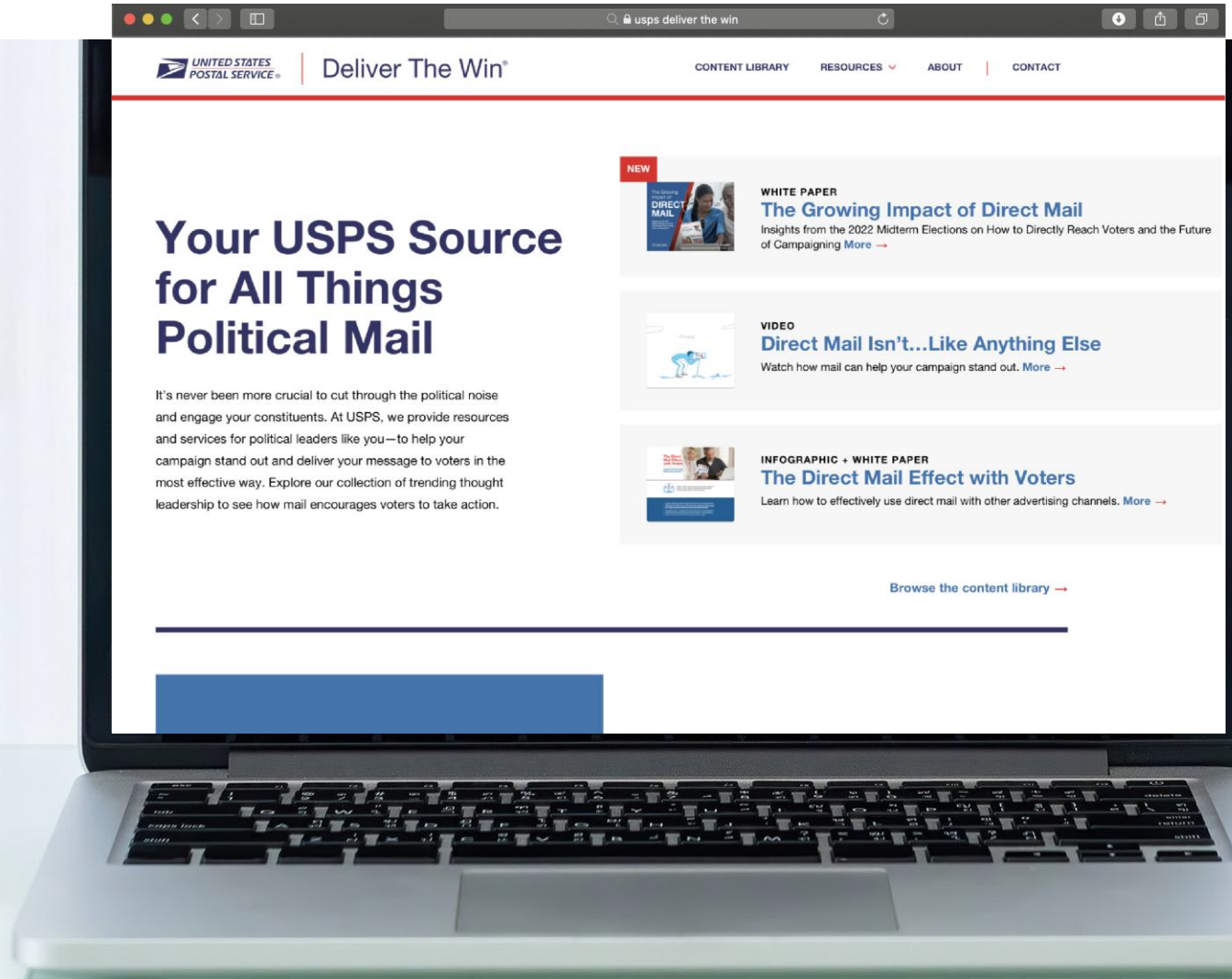
# Mail Notices and Inquiries



<https://tools.usps.com/political-mail.htm>



# Deliver The Win<sup>®</sup> Website



## Your USPS Source for All Things Political Mail

It's never been more crucial to cut through the political noise and engage your constituents. At USPS, we provide resources and services for political leaders like you—to help your campaign stand out and deliver your message to voters in the most effective way. Explore our collection of trending thought leadership to see how mail encourages voters to take action.

**NEW**

**WHITE PAPER**  
**The Growing Impact of Direct Mail**  
Insights from the 2022 Midterm Elections on How to Directly Reach Voters and the Future of Campaigning [More →](#)

**VIDEO**  
**Direct Mail Isn't...Like Anything Else**  
Watch how mail can help your campaign stand out. [More →](#)

**INFOGRAPHIC + WHITE PAPER**  
**The Direct Mail Effect with Voters**  
Learn how to effectively use direct mail with other advertising channels. [More →](#)

[Browse the content library →](#)



# Thank you



- Brenda Manos
- Business Alliance Specialist
- [Brenda.j.manos@usps.gov](mailto:Brenda.j.manos@usps.gov)
- 3101 Sunflower Santa Ana CA 92799
- (949) 433-8322