CODE FOR DEMOCRACY
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Emerging Technologies for Citizen Outreach

May 9, 2018

Combating disinformation starts with understanding which citizens are being reached and developing targeted responses. However, constituent outreach tools have remained largely the same over the years. How can we utilize the latest in emerging technologies in order to modernize citizen outreach?

Challenges

Despite advances in technology, interactions between elected officials and constituents are still limited to broad public statements and reactionary conversations driven by citizens who reach out. Legislators are still using the same polling, mailing list, and town hall formats to reach constituents, even if the new method of dissemination is digital, and citizens are still calling into congressional office lines to demand change, even if they are using apps to find new numbers to call.

These traditional citizen engagement techniques are effective in understanding what citizens believe, but they are insufficient for understanding why citizens hold each belief and if their mindsets may have evolved over time. Some opinions may be based on long-held values, while others may be new opinions that have formed in response to trending news, but it is difficult to divine without understanding which real-time narratives each citizen has engaged with.

Our Solution

Code for Democracy traces information campaigns in order to provide insight into the messages that localized audience segments are encountering, allowing elected officials to proactively reach out to constituents and inoculate against malicious messages. By examining the distribution channels utilized by these information campaigns, government staffers can better gauge which avenues are most effective in reaching their voters.

Further Reading

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