

Strategic Communications Plan

Client: Get INvolved

- Sponsored by Indiana's secretary of state
- This plan is specific for Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.

Organizational (Marketing/Business) Goal: Get INvolved is a campaign designed to help young voters, specifically college students, better understand the voting system. Although there is assistance with voter registration, the campaign is more focused on helping new and first-time voters become more acclimated and comfortable with the voting system.

Public Relations Goal: Public relations is essential to educating and engaging voters in this campaign. The ultimate goal is to help voters better understand their responsibilities, options, and opportunities. There is a need to directly present a clear, consistent message to students and young voters to minimize their confusion and apathy involving voting.

Marketplace Environment: The current crisis in young voters is not in within a lack of voter registration. The biggest problem is getting registered voters to polling places when the time comes. Get INvolved is a new approach in engaging voters, so there is not any prejudices currently, but there is an idea that one vote does not make much of a difference. Get INvolved faces the challenge of indifferent voters who may not be confident in or the most trustworthy of the government.

The following are three adjectives that describe client:

- Engaging
- Education driven
- Straightforward

The following are competitors (groups who raise money from same audiences):

- Rock the Vote
- National Student Campaign for Voter Registration/Student PIRGS

What this organization does better than competitors:

- Focuses on voting knowledge beyond just registration
- Offers local perspective rather than a generalized national campaign
- More personable
- Active and hands-on in areas of greater uncertainty

Organizational Strategy: Get INvolved is a two-part campaign utilizing both printed materials and interactive events.

- **Media:** Get INvolved will use social media to interact with participants, share information, and generate groundwork for future engagement. Media and publications utilized will include utilizing the local media (print, TV and radio broadcast) as well as making materials such as brochures, fliers, and other condensed sources of information available for publics.
- **Events:** One of the most important aspects of Get INvolved is making young voters more comfortable with the entire voting process. Outside of registration fairs and issue engagement seminars, Get INvolved will sponsor polling place simulations. In these simulations, young voters will have the opportunity to practice how to vote by going through a sample check-in process, utilizing technology similar to what will be used in polling places on election days, and demonstration of the importance of voting at the end of the event based on what was voted on during the simulation.

Organizational Preparedness: Get INvolved is a nonprofit organization aiming to increase voter registration and turnout in youth voting segments. The services offered are intended to make voters feel more comfortable in the polling place, which is generally not offered beyond services like Kids Vote in elementary and secondary schools. This campaign offers more real life experiences, making it more valuable to students than other campaigns. If the campaign is successful, it will increase voter turnout and government involvement, making the money the Secretary of State spent on it more worthwhile.

Target Public(s): The main target public of this campaign is young voters and college students in Indiana. There is not necessarily a prioritization over those who are or are not registered yet, but Get INvolved is more driven by getting registered voters to polling places. The specific target public of this specific division of Get INvolved is young people ages 18-24 at Ball State University and in the Muncie area.

Tactic(s)/Tools/Materials Needed:

- **News Articles** – Articles will be published for the state of Indiana, and those focused on the Muncie area will be published mostly in Delaware County. Articles will be used to increase awareness about Get INvolved and its events.
- **Radio Interview** – A radio interview is to be conducted to create a dialogue about young voter registration and turnout as well as promote an upcoming voting simulation.
- **Fliers/Brochures** – These materials will be published and circulated with quick fact sheets and checklists regarding everything young voters need to know about the voting process and upcoming elections.
- **Registration Fairs** – Get INvolved will sponsor a series of sporadic and casual registration fairs to ensure as many students are registered as possible.

- **Voting Simulations** – Get INvolved will sponsor multiple voting simulations during the registration period and time leading up to elections to acquaint voters with the process.

Deadline Date(s): Deadline for voter registration to participate in the May 5 primary is April 6.

- Registration fairs will occur on campus once a week until April 6, which is when the last will be held until voting registration reopens May 19.
- Voting simulations will occur on campus once a week until the primary on May 5. If possible to obtain the technology, a final simulation will be held on May 5. If not, a similar simulation will be held for the basic steps of the process.
- The radio interview will take place the week of or a few days before the final registration fair and biggest voting simulation on April 6.
- Brochures and fliers will be available as readily prepared. They will be published on the website, and will be distributed and updated regularly.
- Articles will be published in relation to events and deadlines. Coverage will focus more on events, and it is important to have coverage both before and after any of the events.

Anticipated Distribution: Get INvolved as a whole will distribute stories to major state publications, while the BSU specific campaign will stay within Muncie.

- Get INvolved (state)
 - Indianapolis Star
 - South Bend Tribune
 - Indianapolis Public Radio (WFYI-FM/IPR)
 - Indianapolis TV stations (i.e. WISH, Fox 59, etc.)
- Get INvolved (BSU)
 - The Star Press
 - Student media
 - The Daily News
 - WCRD (The Morning Chirp, Live @ 5, spots)
 - NewsLink

Message(s):

- Registering to vote is important, but it is even more important to exercise the right to vote.
- Voting is an important decision, but the process is not complicated and can be easily completed.
- Participation in elections helps guide government officials in decision-making and can act like a moral compass.

Approvals Needed: For BSU specifically, Get INvolved will need to work with the Office of Student Life. Get INvolved will need approval for using BSU's resources and space, and permits may be needed. The state of Indiana, and likely Delaware County specifically, will need to approve the use of its technology for voting simulations. Get INvolved and the secretary of state will need initial approval to bring their campaign to campus.

Potential Crises with this Project: Students may feel the campaign is a tactic to sway voters toward a specific party because the secretary of the state sponsors it. However, the campaign is aimed at helping young people be more comfortable voting, not to get them to support a specific candidate or political issue. To prevent this kind of fear, it is important to be transparent about the goals and sponsors of the campaign.