

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY'S IMPACT ON POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS IN THE U.S. AND  
AROUND THE WORLD

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. WEST: Okay, we're going to get going. First of all, good afternoon. I'm Darrell West, vice president of Governance Studies and director of the Center for Technology Innovation here at The Brookings Institution. And I'd like to welcome you to our forum on Mobile Technology's Impact on Political Campaigns, both in the United States as well as around the world.

We are webcasting this event, so we're pleased to welcome viewers from various states as well as countries. We've set up a Twitter hashtag at #TechCTI. That's #TechCTI. So those of you who'd like to offer comments and/or pose questions are welcome to do so. And when we come to the audience Q&A we will take questions both from our live as well as our virtual audiences.

And today is Valentine's Day, so happy Valentine's Day. We appreciate you spending some of your day with us here. I'm wearing a little bit of red in honor of that occasion.

In terms of our subject for today, mobile technology is playing an increasing role in political campaigns. Voters are using smartphones and mobile devices to learn about the campaign, to watch videos, and to text friends. We all remember in 2008, the candidate Obama announced his vice presidential choice via a text message to 2.9 million people.

Since then we've seen a proliferation of mobile ads, video links, and apps of various sorts. For example, people in the 2010 elections who attended the Minnesota State Fair received targeted ads on their mobile devices from Michelle Bachman's congressional campaign informing them that her opponent supported a tax increase on food. The message went as follows: "I know it's State Fair time and you don't want to hear about politics, but while you're at the Fair, you should know that Tarryl

Clark voted to raise taxes on your corn dog and your deep-fried bacon and your beer.”

Now, those of you from Minnesota know those are fighting words, especially the deep-fried bacon and the beer. But this is a harbinger of what we're going to see. The geo-location features, along with mobile technology, are enabling candidates to target ads geographically at specific events. So we'll be seeing a lot more of that in this political campaign.

We're seeing innovative outreach in other countries as well. For example, the Berlin Green Party has a mobile app that brings party billboards to life. People can point their phone at a billboard and an app will launch that will bring a mobile video message to their phone that discusses environmental issues in greater depth and refers them to a website where they can get additional information.

We can see that mobile technology is transforming field organization and public outreach. For example, the Obama campaign this year is allowing volunteers to log onto the Obama website with their Facebook account and access any tool that you typically would get in a campaign field office. So people can make calls, they can identify supporters, and then they enter that information into a comprehensive database. This gives the campaign real-time data on how people are responding and so it provides interesting strategic advantages for the campaign.

Romney and I'm sure other candidates are following similar strategies. Romney's digital director, Zac Moffatt, for example, is having people watch video online, engage with the campaign, share the video at their personal networks, and try and convince their friends to support the candidate.

The only part of mobile campaigning that is lagging in the United States is political fundraising via text messaging. In 2010, the FEC ruled that voters cannot text \$10 contributions to candidates for federal office. The FEC was concerned about

disclosure rules and feared that either foreigners or corporations would direct gifts to politicians. Now, in my view, I think this FEC ruling is shortsighted because it discourages small donors in political races. We need ways in American politics to empower small donors to offset the rising power of large donors in national campaigns. We've all seen the Super PACs, the negative ads that they have run funded basically by large contributors.

There are two states that have already authorized text donations to candidates for statewide offices; that's California and Maryland. Abroad we see countries such as the United Kingdom and South Africa that are doing the same thing. And in my view it is time for the FEC to kind of get with it and kind of allow people to text small donations to candidates for federal office.

Today we're putting out a paper entitled, "M-Campaigning: Mobile Technology and Public Outreach." If you didn't already get a copy you can pick up one on your way out or the paper also is at our website at [brookings.edu](http://brookings.edu). And the paper shows the range of public outreach tools that are being used by various candidates, political parties, activists, and reporters, and shows how this is strengthening citizen engagement with our political process.

This paper is part of a three-year mobile economy project. Roughly every three months we're going to be doing a forum and putting out a paper on different aspects of mobile technology, and we're very grateful for the generous financial support provided by Qualcomm for this project. It will enable us to undertake research and hold public forums on various aspects of the mobile economy.

Today we're pleased to welcome a number of distinguished guests to help us understand M-campaigning. Now, all of these individuals have been on the front lines and have been addressing different aspects of this topic.

Scott Goldstein is founder and CEO of Revolution Messaging. That's a company specializing in cutting-edge communication strategies for the mobile world. Previously he was the external online director for Obama For America, where he helped develop the campaign's social networking platforms. He helped build the campaign's lifestyle marketing strategy and its mobile strategy, including text messaging, downloads, interactive voice responses, and its mobile website.

Katie Harbath is associate manager of policy for Facebook. She works with candidates and elected officials on the best ways to use Facebook for public outreach. Previously she worked as chief digital strategist for the National Republican Senatorial Committee. She also served as deputy e-campaign director for Rudy Giuliani's presidential campaign in 2008, where she was responsible for his electronic outreach.

Aaron Smith is senior research specialist at the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. His areas of expertise include the role of the Internet in the political process, technology in civic life, and online engagement with government. He's also authored research on mobile Internet usage and demographic trends in technology adoption. He is a guy with the survey numbers that you read about all the time in terms of how people are actually using mobile technology.

Daniel Ureña is managing director at MAS Consulting, a public affairs firm that provides strategic support to senior management and institutional clients in Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Columbia, Brazil, and Venezuela, as well as elsewhere. He's also a professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Pontificia Comillas, where he directs the graduate program of public affairs and management of election campaigns. Since last year, he's been the coordinator of the Public Leadership Classroom, an initiative of the university that promotes dialogue and collaboration

between business, politics, and civil society. He is the first Spanish consultant to receive the Rising Star Award from *Campaigns & Elections* magazine and he has been awarded several Pollie Awards by the American Association of Political Consultants.

Our last speaker will be Clark Gibson, who is a professor and chairman of the Department of Political Science at the University of California at San Diego. He studies the policies of development, democracy, and the environment in Africa, Central America, and South America. His current research focuses on the accountability between governments and citizens in Africa. He's the founder of the Project on African Political Economy, which looks at political accountability, the determinates of voting, and the provision of public services in Africa's emerging democracy.

So, what I'm going to do is I'm going to, in terms of our format, pose a question to each of our speakers. We'll have a little bit of time for conversation among ourselves and then we'll open the floor to questions and comments, both from the live audience as well as people who are watching the webcast.

To kick off our conversation, I'm going to start with Scott. And you've thought a lot about how mobile technology and digital technology have evolved from 2008 and its use both for positive as well as negative purposes. So could you summarize what you view as the evolution of this technology?

MR. GOODSTEIN: Sure. So I had the honor of setting up the mobile program for the Obama campaign, one of literally thousands of people that worked on that campaign. And it was an amazing experience to see that we could actually use mobile to actually get people involved and actually get more people out to vote. It was a very simple program. We had our own unique short code that spelled the candidate's name, Obama, text joined to 62262. You all saw it at different rallies and events and it was exciting.

But now I think mobile has grown up and advanced and people are demanding more from a text message program. They want breaking news on their phones. They're going to get upset if they join your mobile program and there's not breaking alerts of what's happening. So I think it's advanced from sort of the novelty of text messaging being used for what I'd like to say is good -- getting more people involved in civic education. We were the first program to actually think about how do we make sure we have two-way text messaging? So a young person who on average, you know, texts, you know, somewhere around 2,000 to 3,000 text messages a month -- Pew can give better statistics than I can on this -- but, you know, how do they actually feel a real interaction with the campaign; to now, what we're seeing is actually similar to if you all remember the original Bill Clinton robocalls. Like, my grandmother actually thought, like, Bill Clinton was calling her and encouraging her to get out and vote. Right? That was, like, the first cycle in the mid-'90s. But by the end of the '90s, everybody hated these nefarious auto-calls that would happen in the middle of the night, telling you the wrong information of where to go and vote or fake information from a campaign.

And so I see this as sort of a new form of technology that was used in 2007 and 2008 around real excitement, getting people involved and engaged in a campaign, getting real information on their phones for the first time to 2010/2011, being used for nefarious reasons. People getting millions of text messages by district of illegal text message spam that just goes to their phone and just gives them a negative opinion of politics and being ruined for the discourse. Plus, according to the FCC and everybody else, is that you're now having to pay for this messaging to get onto your phone of negative campaigning.

So I would encourage everybody -- my firm has actually taken this up with the FCC. We've got a petition going on with Julius Genachowski over there to put

an end to this. It's PocketSpamming.com and it's a way to sort of get people to know that these issues are happening. So, as new technologies come out they can be used for good, but also they're being used very stealthily and very quickly for evil, and we want to put an end to that and close all the loopholes. So feel free to visit either our website or visit PocketSpammers.com.

MR. WEST: And those of you who are standing in the back, we do have some remaining seats in the front row, so feel free to take those seats. They do say Reserved, but they're reserved for you, so don't be inhibited by that.

Katie, before you joined Facebook, you worked for the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee, so you have some experience in terms of what works and what doesn't work. So can you give us the benefit of your experience and, especially, how the social part of campaigning is being changed?

MS. HARBATH: Absolutely. I think that a big part -- while text messaging is a huge part of your mobile program, I think that it always drives me nuts that people think text messaging is the only mobile part of what you should be paying attention to, having a mobile website and realizing that people are reading your e-mails, many times on mobile devices.

And so looking at one thing I tried to do at the senatorial committee is, especially on the Republican side, we didn't have a baseline of how our folks were really engaging with us on mobile. So what I first started to do was I took a look at our Google analytics, where you can do an advanced segment just by mobile users, and I was shocked at how much traffic we were actually getting from mobile. And so we started to put efforts into building up a mobile website. We created an iPhone application and started to test different mobile apps. And what we found was, especially on our mobile apps -- on Election Day we had it for people to be able to find their polling place -- was

that more people were using our mobile apps and they were actually cheaper because not as many people were bidding on them. Because when people are out and about wondering where to vote, they're probably searching on their phone. They're not searching for it necessarily on a computer.

And so my big recommendations -- and another thing we found, too, is that with our iPhone app, doing alert notifications worked very well, in addition to a text messaging program that we might have, especially with election results as it got later in the night. I didn't want to necessarily wake people up with a text message at midnight, sharing who -- Scott's getting over here; he's going to start clocking me.

MR. GOODSTEIN: We woke them up at 3:00 a.m., come on. (Laughter)

MS. HARBATH: But it's something to think about because with notifications you can also reach a segment of folks who maybe have downloaded your app, but maybe aren't necessarily on your text messaging program. But the big thing that I learned is that even if you think you don't have a mobile campaign happening right now, you do. Because there are people visiting your website, there are people who are reading your e-mails on mobile devices, and if you're not looking to see what your website and what your content looks like on those, you're really doing a disservice to your users and probably losing folks.

And then, in terms of social, what we've been seeing a lot more of -- and I really like what the Republican National Committee does with their text messaging program in that they share videos over text message, but then there's a link in that text message to share it on Facebook or they encourage people to share it on Twitter. And so more and more Nielsen has found that it's actually people 50+ that are driving social media use on phones because -- I use my parents as an example -- it's easier for them to use an iPad, an iPhone, or an Android device than it is necessarily a computer. So that's

how they're checking their Facebook account to keep up with me and my brothers and sisters.

So be thinking about those users as you are going through your campaigns. And just take a look at your stats because we went from, at the NRC, from having 3 percent of our traffic being mobile in July to it being 10 percent in November. And some of that is just election traffic, but a lot of that is mobile use is skyrocketing and so if you're not paying attention to it, you're really losing a big chunk of people that want to interact with you.

MR. WEST: It's funny; you mentioned the problem of text messaging at midnight. I remember there was a congressional candidate who was using robocalls, but inadvertently programmed the phones to start ringing at 3:00 a.m. as opposed to 3:00 p.m. I don't think that candidate did so well.

But, Aaron, you have done surveys at Pew on cell phones and mobile devices. What are the broader trends that you're seeing in terms of how citizens are using these new devices?

MR. SMITH: Sure. And so I think Scott actually hit it on the head when he said that mobile has grown up over the last several years. And one of things that, you know, for someone like me who's been studying this for the last few years, you know, we've seen that, you know, the idea of constant connectivity combined with ubiquitous access to your social network has really become a mainstream activity within the broader population. So half the population -- or the adult population -- is now on social networking sites. When you look at smartphone adoption, it's gone from about 35 percent in May or so of last year to, in our more recent surveys that we've done in the last few weeks, it's close to 50 percent. And Nielsen has found largely the same things.

And more, I think, importantly than that is that it's moved from the sort of,

kind of 20-something urbanite population and is starting to diffuse within groups that did not have as high levels of adoption as in the past. So in 2008 to 2010, in terms of political activity, what we saw with Facebook and social networking sites was a move from the sort of young, sort of Democratic-leaning Obama supporters who really dominated the scene in 2008 to older, sometimes more conservative Tea Party-leaning folks who really became much more active in the 2010 process. And so it will be interesting for us to see if we see a similar sort of shift in the mobile political landscape from, you know, the sort of young urbanites who were active doing this in 2010 to, you know, kind of a more broader, more representative segment of the population in 2012.

So, generally speaking, that's sort of what we're looking to measure, how that broader diffusion is going to be impacting the way that people interact with the political process. And so some of the things in addition to that sort of broader diffusion that we're looking at as we start to think about our political surveys this year, sort of the impact of this just-in-time information that mobile offers to people.

And so, you know, Katie mentioned, you know, hitting people when they're out and about. And we've seen that in a lot of our work around, you know, people making last-minute purchasing decisions by relying on their phones to tell them whether they're getting a good deal or whether they're getting something that is going to work for them. I fully expect to see that same type of behavior in the political process with people relying on their friends, relying on, you know, the Internet at large to tell them, you know, who they should be voting for, what they should feel about a particular issue. You know, what the heck is this ballot initiative that I haven't heard of until I'm walking up to my polling place and I see a sign, and can sort of learn more about it. So that's one of the things we'll be looking at.

The other, sort of in a general sense, is the kind of impulse-driven nature

of a lot of this engagement. We've done some work recently around text donors, around people who've contributed to the Text to Haiti campaign. And one of the things we found is that type of donation is much more sort of ephemeral or impulse-driven than some of the traditional forms of giving that we've seen in our previous research.

So people aren't necessarily thinking long and hard about a particular issue or following something for a long time before they make a decision. They're seeing something right there that grabs them and they can immediately make some sort of action that takes them to a new stage in the process. And so I think it will be really interesting to track how people are using their mobile phones to facilitate that type of engagement throughout the political process this year.

So I'm looking forward to the Q&A and I'll pass it on.

MR. WEST: Okay, thank you. Daniel, you work on campaigns in Europe as well as elsewhere, so I was wondering if you could give us a European perspective on how you see mobile technology being used in the election campaigns that you've been involved with?

MR. UREÑA: Okay. Well, thank you, first of all, for inviting me and giving me the opportunity to share some thoughts with all of you.

Well, every single day I see that the main problem for many politicians, not only in Europe, but also in Latin America -- I don't know, maybe in America -- is the growing distance between politicians and people. For example, in my country the last polls that have been published, when you ask what are the three main problems that we have in Spain, the answer is unemployment, economy, and politics. So that's an interesting fact.

MR. WEST: That's unusual for me to stand by the United States.

(Laughter)

MR. UREÑA: I think politics should be part of the solution. It should not be a part of the problem and so I think something is not working. In my opinion, this sad reality, I think it has to do with the lack of understanding by politicians of how fast is the world changing. We were talking some minutes before that we can do some predictions that maybe in the next conference they will not work because technology is changing the world so fast, no?

So my point is, in Europe and Latin America, where my firm is working very actively, I think that while politicians are discussing, while they are attacking each other, people are changing their social habits. They are changing the way they communicate. They are changing the way they access information. They are changing how they share their thoughts and opinions and how they organize themselves. So I think many politicians are forgetting this part of the picture.

MR. WEST: Okay.

MR. UREÑA: Thank you.

MR. WEST: Clark, you've written about how cell phones have helped to reduce electoral fraud in Uganda and Afghanistan. Can you tell us about your research and what you have found?

MR. GIBSON: Sure. Thanks again, Darrell, for inviting us. So, together with Qualcomm, our team at UCSD reduced electoral fraud in Afghanistan and Uganda by between 25 and 60 percent, which is astonishing only when you understand how simple this whole project is.

So it's clear that I'm not talking about campaigns, but kind of a more general promotion of democracy and to improve elections is to improve democracy, you would think. And democracy, as many, many studies have shown, is involved with improving human rights, economic outcome. So the idea is to improve these elections.

How do we do it?

The standard form of election monitoring that we've used in our country and many countries in Europe is to send election observers. That's pretty standard and they do a great job in establishing public support for an election. The difficulty is actually knowing what they do on the ground to fraud. So we wanted to come up with a more rigorous way to try to detect and actually suppress fraud, trying to use both really rigorous science and mobile technology. So excuse the professor in me. I'll quickly describe it if I can. But go back to your --

MR. WEST: But this will be in less than an hour. (Laughter)

MR. GIBSON: Yeah. Is that all?

MR. WEST: I can say that as a former professor myself.

MR. GIBSON: Yeah, exactly. It's hard to get professors to talk about their research. (Laughter)

So if you go back to your biology class we're really basing it on classic science, which is a control and a treated group. And when you compare the control to your intervention, did your -- for example, a drug trial -- did the drug have any effect? Very simple. A little harder to pull off in the field, but not impossible.

So what we did in Afghanistan and in Uganda is a random sample of polling stations; that's what you want for a control trial. Half the sample gets a letter, simply a letter, from a research firm that's a local research firm. And the letter says we're going to take a picture of the tallies that you must post at the end of the day. And it doesn't say we're going to throw you in jail. It doesn't say we're from the U.S. or from the EU. It merely says we're going to take a picture.

At the end of the day, the places that got the letter and the places that didn't, in both places we send researchers with smartphones. Qualcomm designed this

really nice app for us for this purpose. They take a picture of the vote, they answer a few questions, they hit Send, and it goes to my server in my office immediately. So we have the actual record, the picture of the polling station tally.

We compare the tallies and it's pretty easy, something called "digit analysis," and I'll go quickly through that. As a human being you can't generate random numbers. We're just poor animals. We don't have that mental capability to generate random numbers. But you can detect non-random numbers in results. And the idea is contiguous digits. Humans, after a while, if you're filling in forms illegally, will use 1-2, 2-3, 3-4-5-6, more than random. More than random. So if you look at the results and you see more than a random assignation of contiguous digits, it's pretty easy to determine that there was some fudging going on. You compare the rate of contiguous digits in the treated and untreated and you find this dramatic effect on the reduction of fraud. It's a terrific way -- it's one tool, but a really precise, scientifically valid way with really enormous impacts.

Now, the vision in the future, again, with Qualcomm and others, is to make it a cloud-based software. Let's let citizen groups download it on their Android platforms and then they would have another tool to hold their governments accountable. Slightly more risk, a little more scientific than right now where people take pictures of fraud and report fraud. This is a step up and a way to detect unfair elections. And everyone in all of these countries casting a ballot believe they should be able to change things, and here's another tool. We're very excited about it.

MR. WEST: Okay. I'd like to throw out a couple of questions and any of you who want to jump in can do so.

Is mobile technology just a new toy or is it something that's actually going to transform how we run political campaigns? And is it going to actually improve

the process or is it just going to introduce some new pathologies? I mean, Scott already mentioned the concept of pocket spamming as a potential pathology. We can see how our news cycle is getting speeded up. Could that be a problem?

How do you think this is going to play out and affect the system as a whole? Anyone who wants to jump in.

MS. HARBATH: I'll jump in on particularly the new side. I think that, first of all, A, I don't think that this is sort of a flash in the pan. I think this is a part of the fundamental transformation of really technology and going to the next level and just more and more people carrying around devices like this all the time and getting a lot of information off of them.

Where I think I -- where I still want to see and I haven't yet is in terms of that 24-hour news cycle, when you think in terms of campaigns, you know, they're on the bus throughout the day. If there's a commercial that comes out right -- what it used to be is you'd have to stop the bus, get the reporter pulled together, let them get their cameras set up so that you could do -- you could respond. Now, immediately the candidate -- the campaign communications director can send a Tweet, can post to Facebook, can take a quick video of the candidate responding to it and put it out, and be able to very quickly respond, rapidly, in a way that when the War Room was first set up in 1992 by Clinton's folks, like, was never, you know, even imagined.

So I think that, you know, people might lament the sort of very fast news cycle we have, but it's really giving campaigns that ability to talk directly to voters and to counter one another that doesn't necessarily require them to go through the press. But then you also have the press who you're getting an unprecedented, behind-the-scenes view of how these campaigns work by the pictures they're taking on Twitter, the videos that they're sharing on Facebook, whatever it might be.

I personally really enjoy it, but I'm also a very big political junkie.

(Laughter) But I think, too, in terms of interacting with people, the more that -- the most important thing is that you can't be forcing your mobile strategy into what you want it to be into what they're already doing online. You're going to have a much more successful one if you're sort of listening and looking at what people care about and engaging with them and not just trying to talk at them using this technology, and it doesn't matter if it's mobile or computer. But the campaigns that do that right will have really good success. And just one quick example.

Scott Brown campaign last January, when Martha Coakley would be on the radio station, a text message would go out to their list saying here's the phone number to call in. Ask her about her taxes or something like that. It was a great way to immediately mobilize supporters and all of a sudden she would be flooded with questions that she didn't want on that radio show.

MR. WEST: That's the reason we're careful on our webcasts in terms of taking questions. (Laughter) Scott?

MR. GOODSTEIN: I think should add to that and I think that what Katie is saying is 100 percent accurate. But these tools all still have their own specific needs for a campaign, so in the U.S., text messaging is an amazing and the only tool that really pushes your base to take active action. Twitter and Facebook you actually have to log in and sort of passive in the background where text messaging still pops and stops every single thing on your phone.

So if you have a very active text message list that you spend a lot of time to build, again, it's going to be your base voters. It's not going to replace persuasion because how many people are going to sign up to your text message list to get persuaded, right, at whatever the cost of your text message list is?

But that being said, the example in Wisconsin during this year's public employee battles, to send a text message out to the base and say, look, the Republicans just passed legislation without a single Democrat in the room. Show up the Capitol right now and again tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. We then watch people take that text message, copy it from their phone, drop it to their Twitter, drop it to their Facebook, send it to an e-mail, and show up at the Capitol.

So I do think -- and I can't agree more with Katie on the fact that these tools are here to stay. The campaigns didn't even have to do that, right? It could have been somebody else sending out that text message. It happened to be that the campaign was sophisticated and organized. In the Scott Brown case as well, it was a campaign that was sophisticated and organized. But if you can tap into the culture of what everyone else is already doing, we're already seeing millions and millions of Americans text messaging, whether we like it or not, while they're driving, on the bus, watching TV, making dinner, whatever it is, right. We're addicted to this tool. And so now we're actually adding political organizing to this all in one sense.

The one thing I would also like to add is that it's fascinating to have a panel where we actually have a global perspective. The problem in the U.S. is that the carriers are really still the hindrance to a lot of this. If you think about it, text messaging still is not approved as First Amendment freedom of speech. You have to still get a short code. It's expensive to set up. There's a right way to do these things. And, you know, the FEC concept of donations and some other things, there's still some quirkiness. We're still in our infancy of getting these technologies to really start humming with a campaign.

MR. WEST: Okay. Clark, this is just a new toy.

MR. GIBSON: Oh, gosh. For the rest of the world, those of you who might be interested in the rest of the world, political junkies outside the U.S., I was in

Tahrir Square, November, during their parliamentary elections. And on the square there were T-shirts being sold: The New Tools of Revolution. And the pictures were or the logos were -- probably illegal -- Twitter, Facebook, Google. So they're selling those shirts. So that's an obvious example of how mobile technology is changing everything overseas. All the crowds in Russia, all the crowds in Egypt, these are all being driven by text messages and cell phones. This is why these governments want to shut them down. The Taliban shuts down lots of Afghanistan when -- the towers when it hopes to; Uganda did.

So there's this relationship between its power as a social movement tool that will never go away unless, again, the big switch is pulled by the central government. But these are the tools of political accountability; never will go away.

MR. WEST: Daniel, what do you think the system impact will be?

MR. UREÑA: Yeah, my impression is that technology -- while technology is not something cool, it's not something in fashion, I think it's a huge innovation. I think after television, after Internet, I think it's the next social revolution. But in this scenario I think we don't have to forget what is the essence of politics: people. I think the essence of politics is people working for people. The essence of campaigns is people trying to persuade people, people communicating with people.

And I think I would like to bring two ideas to the table: that technology is a means, it's a great tool for political engagement, it's a huge opportunity, but I think that personal contact, the personal contact with citizens, with a politician will be always the most powerful tool. So we only -- we don't have to do more wide campaigns. It's only a part of the campaign. Because when we have a new innovation we think that everything will change, but I think the essence will be always there, the personal contact with people.

MR. WEST: Aaron, what do you think the long-term impact will be?

MR. SMITH: So we've actually asked people about this and when you ask people what they think the impact of this stuff is you get a very classic response, which is that it's great for me, but I don't know about the rest of all you people.

(Laughter) So you see that a lot in, you know, polling that we do. So, you know, people think the educational system is going down the tubes, but they love the teacher at their kids' school. They think the health care system is the pits, but they love their primary care physician.

And so when we ask them about the impact of technology on the way they interact with the political process they say it's great for me. I can, you know, feel more connected with the issues that I am interested in. I can find other people who share my views about those issues and interact with them in a meaningful way that I couldn't do before this stuff came along. At the same time, they are -- when you ask them sort of about the broader impacts, they start to say, oh, well, yeah, it does kind of -- you know, I'm worried that other people might, you know, get more susceptible to extreme viewpoints or that the loudest voices can dominate the discussion.

So, you know, whether that ultimately portends, you know, sort of a good or bad thing for society is for probably someone smarter than me to decide, but you see a very classic response in that they see very clear advantages to them personally in the way that they can interact with the things that interest them, but do see some concerns around some of the broader impacts that, you know, kind of other people who are, you know, maybe less capable than they themselves of handling experience when they sort of bring out this to a broader level.

MR. WEST: Let's move to the audience to give you a chance to ask some questions. We have Sarah Wheaton, who is here. She's the *New York Times*

editor for the paper's 2012 mobile app. And I've asked her just to add a little bit in terms of a reporter's perspective and how the mobile app affects the way in which she does her job.

There's a microphone coming up. She's right here.

MS. WHEATON: Hi. Thanks, Darrell. So as the strategists were discussing, the campaigns are trying to give people instant information and the media are trying to keep up. So at the *Times* we have started a new app called Election 2012 and it's free. And it is an aggregated app, so even though we think, of course, the *Times* brings you the best political coverage; we recognize that campaign coverage is very collaborative. And so a dedicated editor -- me (Laughter) -- not at the moment obviously, but I --

MR. WEST: A little self-promotional there.

MS. WHEATON: Yes. Moving on from that, but I am devoted all day, every day to bringing people the best coverage from all over the web. So, for example, there's a new section in the app about Mitt Romney's op-ed today in the *Detroit News* reaffirming his opposition to the auto bailout. And so we have our coverage of the op-ed, we have his *Detroit News* op-ed, we have a link to his 2008 op-ed in the *Times*, and we also have a Tweet from Nate Silver about how this might play -- this position might play in Michigan.

And we also have live election results on election nights and cool maps where people can kind of zero in on electoral data from around the country. And we recognize that political junkies need to have information in a manageable way available to them all the time that keeps up with the speed of the campaign, so that's what we're doing in the MSM.

MR. WEST: Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. WHEATON: Thank you.

MR. WEST: So any of you who are watching on the webcast who would like to ask a question, you can e-mail -- excuse me, you could post the question at our Twitter feed, #TechCTI. #TechCTI.

Questions from our live audience here. And don't everyone speak at once because that is so rude.

MR. SMITH: And Pew says you're only going to use like five apps, so you should probably use her app as one of the five from his recent report.

MR. WEST: Okay. Stephanie has a question from our Twitter feed.

STEPHANIE: Hi. We have a question from Nancin Mullen in Seevee, Washington, and she directs this specifically at Katie.

MS. HARBATH: Oh, man.

STEPHANIE: She says how --

MR. WEST: It's probably coming from a Democrat, by the way.

MS. HARBATH: No, I know Nancin. (Laughter)

STEPHANIE: She's asking how mobile technology is nationalizing local elections and how helpful is that.

MS. HARBATH: That's a really great question. One of the things that I like to say, so Tip O'Neill always liked to say all politics is local. But online it's really very national, especially you saw it last cycle in 2010 with so many of these races. What we were seeing was, you know, the campaigns would try to only do advertising or any other focus just in their state, and they were really missing out on a to of people nationally who wanted to share -- who wanted to donate to their campaign or share content.

And one of the things that, you know, I think where social media can really come in handy and really making a social experience for people, whether it's on

mobile or your website, is people move around a lot more. They've got friends all over the country. Imagine if you could log in with Facebook and have people see their friends who live in that state who can vote.

And so if I -- so I'm from Wisconsin. If I wanted to log in and ask my friends in Wisconsin to go vote, you know, if somebody gave me that app, that's a very easy way for me to do that and to easily hit all of my friends in Wisconsin.

So I think that there's a very good way to take, you know, a national -- you local campaign, make it national and turn it back local again, and keep that viral aspect going.

MR. GOODSTEIN: In addition to that, the one cool feature that still stays at the time of the original Obama mobile app that we did on iPhone was literally spinning your address book by geo-targeted states, so you could actually push that in. And so you had to then have a coordination between the field offices and the field strategy and the digital offices, and they had to actually get along, which hasn't really happened since I would say 2008 in that sort of sophistication way.

It's going to be exciting to see how more and more people can do exactly what Katie's talking about: nationalize an issue that they truly care about that's happening in -- about an issue that's happening in maybe five states and really start pushing that through very sophisticated mobile apps, geo-location, and even mobile video that wasn't available in 2008. I don't know how many of you remember in 2008 you couldn't think about, like, well, what was your data plan of your phone, and you didn't really have a smart enough phone, right. The iPhone was barely out for less than a year. And now we've changed the market completely with the advent of Google's operating system, with the Android phones now being available for less than \$40. So all this stuff that Katie's talking about nationalizing stuff and then now linking it with mobile to move it

even more rapidly.

MR. WEST: Okay. Other questions? Right here we have a question. If we can get a microphone.

If we could ask you to give your name and your organization as well.

MR. SWIKHOLM: Okay. Hi. My name is Trul Swikhholm. I'm from Norway and I'm a member of parliament in Norway from the Social Democratic Party.

My question is you were talking about text messages just being the things that now pop up and the sure way to reach your voters. How do you think that iMessage and the new messenger app from Facebook is going to change that? Because those two apps have the same capability and people are starting to use them more and more because it's free.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Yeah, and if there's anybody here from Apple that wants to give us APIs to get into that iMessage gateway, I would really appreciate that.  
(Laughter)

It's going to happen. BlackBerry messaging, iMessage are going to start changing, and the U.S. carrier systems know that they have to step up. Right now, though, if you're a campaign and you need to broadcast to everybody, text messaging has not really been sexy in the United States in a long time, but for political activism it is the one way to get across everybody's phones. iMessaging you may be able to segment your list into who's on iPhone and then send them an iMessage notification to save them a little bit of money. But ultimately, you want something on your phone that's going to push and demand that they do something. What the channel is and how you segment your list, it really isn't about the technology to me, it's more about how do I actually get something to actively pop on the phone?

So you're 100 percent correct. It's just for national broadcasting at this

point iMessaging is just not there yet. Soon.

MR. WEST: Okay. Over here next to the wall, is there a question? We have the microphone coming over to you right there.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Thanks. Benjamin Williamson from London, currently between jobs and organizations.

There's the old adage that decisions are made by people who show up. Do you think now decisions are made by people who are online? And if so, is there not a slight danger that we're moving towards a system where it's becoming a bit more of a polarization: those people who are already disenfranchised, those people who are already inactive, would become more so? And is there anything that we can do in rolling out mobile technology to those people?

MS. HARBATH: One thing that you might want to look at, so if you go to facebook.com/, I think, facebookdata, some of our guys actually did a study starting to look at how people get information and who they get it from. And while they do pay attention a lot to their very close core group of friends, because people have a lot of friends as well on Facebook or social networks that they're not necessarily close to, but also have differing opinions, they actually found that, you know, they are -- people are getting differing opinions and it's not necessarily an echo chamber. So you might want to go look at that and kind of look at that study. It's a really great one to look at.

And then my only other point would be I still think that the adage remains that it's people who show up, and online it's people who show up online. There's a lot of people who are online who maybe aren't even paying attention to the political process. Online just gives them a much easier way in which to participate that doesn't require them -- look at phone banking. You can now phone bank from home and never even have to go down to -- sign up for a two-hour shift, have to find the location, get down

there and do it. If you have 5, 10 minutes from home, you can do that. And then as people start to integrate social into it, you can -- Gingrich had this for a while, you could log into the phone bank application, see your friends who are making phone calls, and now all of a sudden it's become a shared experience with your friends even though you didn't have to be in the exact same place at the exact same time. And so I think we'll start seeing a lot more of that as well.

MR. WEST: Clark, is this technology just going to reinforce existing social and economic inequities?

MR. GIBSON: That's a great question and, in general, I would say no. Because ruling parties in fragile democracies depend on ignorance, especially in the rural areas and that's where parties usually cling to for a long time. Movements often come from urban areas.

Now, the urban areas, yes, they're enfranchised by mobile technology because they can afford it, but all the things that our panelists are going to hit all of these countries. So 10 years ago, polling started in these countries. Ruling parties do want to know how they're doing. Now there's some polling by phone, by cell phone in fact. In Egypt they have the CATI system, which is the automatic calling systems to land lines and cell phones. All these places will get this technology. You know, in general, you want a more informed public in some ways because showing up is dangerous in these places. Right? If you're in the square, it's a little more dangerous than if you get something on mobile technology. So this actually may be a nice steppingstone to showing up.

MR. WEST: Okay. Other questions? In the very back there's a question.

SPEAKER: So I work on voter engagement in communities of color --

Latinos, African Americans -- and I thought that between 2008 and 2012 we'd make tremendous jumps given how many cell phones exist in those communities and that it was such a promising infrastructure for engaging people who haven't been engaged. So I actually think the opposite of, you know, what -- you know, the idea that you could disenfranchise people more by not having the right technology. Mobile is the place where we could actually find people in ways that we've never been able to.

MR. SMITH: We see the exact same thing in our work as well, so.

SPEAKER: Yeah, and I'm basing on Pew numbers. This is all from you, Aaron.

MR. SMITH: Whatever you're seeing is on point with (inaudible).

SPEAKER: So given those statistics, I'm actually really interested in why we haven't made more progress in the last four years in building up that infrastructure and why the number -- I mean, there are no people of color on this panel. There is still very little work happening that I think is revolutionizing the way that we could accessing these communities using mobile tech and I'm interested in what's sort of in the way.

MR. WEST: Responses?

MS. HARBATH: I guess mine, and Scott might have an idea, too, I think, you know, it's still also very -- while we have made great strides, it also still is very new. And also the -- especially from my angle, the political strategist side, there are still very few folks who kind of do this in working on campaigns and I hope to see more and more people like you becoming very -- you know, experts in this and doing mobile. And, you know, start publishing the results, have a blog. Use Facebook, use Twitter to start to do that and help to build up that expertise and do that. But I'm really excited to see even where this keeps going further as more and more people start testing it out in different communities.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Yeah, the only thing I would add to that is Nokia is looming. That's coming out at like \$27 a smartphone. You've got Samsung that's coming out with 25- to \$30 smartphones. Droids on Cricket and Metro PCS that are \$40 smartphones. So you're going to put this type of iPhone tool in the hands of a lot more people. But the gateway of getting into an iPhone app and having to do smart development and all this stuff is gone now. So for the first time, you can use mobile web with universal coding experience very easily, so you no longer have to have an app that's approved through iTunes, et cetera, et cetera. I think that we're lowering the barriers.

The other thing is that the Obama campaign really wanted us -- David Plouffe challenged us every day that he wanted a kid at the door to be able to go, oh, you want to Barack Obama's position on the war? Here, let me show you a little video on my phone. Now think about 2008. There was no universal video. YouTube wasn't able to actually transcode video, so you had to have an expensive transcoding system. Nobody knew the cost of it. Nobody had a phone with the cost of it. All the phones that I just talked about automatically have a beautiful screen in there with some type of minor data plan. So things are going to change and make it more universal.

Now, the one piece that I think often forget about in this space is messaging. If there is not a powerful message to get people to move, it's not going to matter. So all the text messaging in the world, if I'm just annoying your phone with some type of spam or broadcast that you wanted of a press release, that's not the same as an organic, bottom-up text messaging program of people demanding change.

In the NAACP -- full disclosure, we do the NAACP's program -- Troy Davis' wrongful execution was the largest growth point for the NAACP's mobile program. People wanted to know. They weren't getting the information on their televisions as to what was going on. College campuses all over the country texted in and then in

response the NAACP had to turn out real information in real time because it was being demanded at such a great amount. So I think it really has to do with messaging.

Political campaigns: Scott Brown's campaign saw a good use for mobile technology on the other side of the aisle. But what they did around going, hey, you know what? Every time she goes on a radio station we're going to send a message asking these same five questions over and over again. That was organic. Their base wanted to hear answers to those questions.

Troy Davis, the NAACP's base wanted to actually know what was going on with that case and what they could do to change the outcome.

MR. WEST: So it's not just about the technology. The content matters a lot.

Stephanie has another question from our webcast audience.

STEPHANIE: Yes, we have a question from Adam Schiffrus in Washington, D.C., and he has a two-part question involving campaigns and text messages and their Get Out the Vote effort.

He wants to know if campaigns will allow people to check in at polling places, which would then remove them from the list. And also, how text messaging to individual voters with follow-up to specific people they've previously engaged with via phone banking or via other sort of social networks will also help the Get Out the Vote initiative.

MR. WEST: Okay. Great question. Panelists?

MS. HARBATH: I love the check-in idea. I think I responded, too, in Twitter, too. I'm not sure where you are in the room, but I love the idea. And I think, too, is you see more and more social networks open up APIs for that check-in. It will allow the ability to have that action be taking on a social network or an application that they

might build and then have it being able to go into the voter bank. I have no idea if anybody's working on that, but I absolutely love the idea.

And then if I'm following the second part right, I think every opportunity where you have somebody coming into your campaign, whether it's e-mail, they're at a phone bank, something, getting them to sign up for your text messaging list is very key. Because if there is one day where it probably -- and Scott can correct me if I'm wrong -- where this is like probably the most important thing is Election Day and being able to text message those folks and asking them to vote -- or one of the most important.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Yeah, Aaron's already done the research on this, so I'll let Aaron talk about that.

MS. HARBATH: Yeah.

MR. GOODSTEIN: But this is the one place where I actually disagree. I think that check-ins on Election Day is too late. If I want to have that person organized I want that person to check in to every campaign office.

I think Foursquare did a nice little sort of PR stunt around check-ins on Election Day last year. I don't think we actually moved any new voters in this. I think it was a nice little novelty to say Foursquare wanted to be in the game that Facebook was already sort of dominating and Twitter was already in the game in a different way in politics; and that if we're going to use geo-location services the right way, we should actually use them to actually get more people out to vote instead of sort of patting ourselves on the back for being the select few that actually vote in the U.S. on Election Day.

The second point being text message -- what was it, text message to -- and social networks?

MR. WEST: And phone banking in particular.

MS. HARBATH: Like if you --

MR. WEST: And being able to see other people being engaged.

MS. HARBATH: If people can phone bank and then give you their numbers and leave a message on the phone.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Yeah, yeah, sure, sure. If you have a sophisticated social networking, social media campaign and a sophisticated text messaging platform, you're already being segmented. So I'll give the example.

In the Obama campaign we sent out a different message to those in South Carolina with a different message than we were sending out to those in Ohio. You should be able to segment your text messaging list the same way your campaign segments every other type of list that you're on. So if you're phone banking and you come in off of a phone banking forum, you know, I'm not giving any secret sauce away, that I'm sure that Republicans and Democrats are both already marking you as to where you came in from.

MR. WEST: Daniel?

MR. UREÑA: Yeah, I would like to give a European insight from here. In many European countries people are very reluctant to the culture of receiving a phone call from a party. And many people do not understand that here campaigns -- an important effort of the campaign is doing phone calls and encouraging people to go to the polls. Many European people would not understand to receive a phone call when they are having lunch or they are having dinner or watching TV. So I think it's a great opportunity for political organizations maybe in Europe, of course also here, that it's not so aggressive in terms of receiving a phone call from a political party.

So I think these follow-up messages -- for example, in Spain, text messages has had a huge role in the last political movement. I don't -- like, I think you

will remember that eight years ago we had terrible attacks in March, in Atocha, a train exploded. Well, there was a big attack three -- four days before for the presidential elections and these days were absolutely -- well, they were very political movements. There were many social movements and the cell phones were the tool and the text messages were the most powerful tool in order to mobilize people.

So I agree: text messages are an absolutely useful tool. I think in Europe they can have an opportunity even more than the robocalls.

MR. WEST: Clark?

MR. GIBSON: And to go from Europe to the developing world, this is actually one place where the translation's not one-for-one. So there have been a handful, probably three, of Get Out the Vote experiments. So there is actually experimental design on if you knock on a door or if you leave a leaflet or if you call, does it have any impact on turnout in the States?

We did I think the only one in Africa, there was one I believe in Turkmenistan, and they depress votes. And they depressed votes because people are afraid. And if they texted or talked to, they feel like people know who they are. How did they get my text number? How did they learn who I was? Why are they knocking on my door? So while all this technology, I think, will come to the developing country, this will be a little more fragile the more fragile the democracy is.

MR. WEST: Okay. Other questions from the audience? Right there on the aisle.

MR. AKABI: Fermi Akabi with African Development Center, originally from Nigeria.

From where I'm from with about 180 million people our biggest issues are fraud in the government, fraud in the political system, and lack of transparency in all

the governmental systems. I think early we had only about like 5,000 phone lines for the whole country of 180 million people land lines. When the cell phone people came in they think there were going to be about 5,000 a month. They started getting like 100,000, 300,000 a month. And because of the backlog in the system, most Nigerians carry two call phones.

I guess my question is how best will we use this kind of technology to help advance our economic or political issues? For example, in the continent of Africa we don't have a Social Security number, so we have no way of knowing where people are. Half of the people still live in the rainforest with no roads to get to them. How do you know who they are?

We don't have any system that is a registry system like Social Security. So when people are given data, I'm asking where do you get it from and how accurate is this? Please if you could just give a little bit of light on ways that we can use this system, the phone, to help us in our system. Thank you.

MR. WEST: Okay, thank you. Panelists?

MR. GOODSTEIN: There's a tool called FrontlineSMS. Ken Banks created it. It's an open source tool platform that does just amazing things around the world for not international U.S.-based smartphones, but very simple mobile applications, 64 Carat applications, onto, like, very cheap Nokia mobile devices to basically take a SIM card and turn your computer, for about \$200, into a text messaging service. These guys are truly saving the world by basically making sure more people can get goods and services, economics, make sure people know when there's prescription drugs that are coming to the town, or things like this, so that, you know, the text messaging towers in a lot of places around Africa are more outreaching than even electrical infrastructure. And so I think I would check out his system because he's built so much infrastructure and it's

being used already in your country to do a lot of -- Frontline Medic and then FrontlineSMS are both doing amazing things.

And then the final piece on this, I'd say, for disenfranchisement everywhere is we used to use these things, and Ian Inaba and a couple other people did these Video the Vote, we wanted to show people waiting in line in places like Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where there was no voting machine or in any foreign country. The Video the Vote stuff now? Video cameras are all -- and text message photo cameras are so amazing that they're not even making the little flip phones that we all used two years ago and thought were revolutionary. So I think that, you know, the combination of it doesn't matter how smart your phone is, there is a way and there is free software out there to do the beginnings of stopping either disenfranchisement or better engagement.

MR. WEST: Clark?

MR. GIBSON: I've been in your country. It's very difficult. So the changes are already happening. Mobile banking, they're cutting out the usurious rate of middleman to farmer. Mobile technology's allowing the farmer to get better prices for their crops because they can check the prices in city centers. Mobile phones are allowing people to document what's at the infirmary in their village and what's not and what should have been there.

And other organizations, especially economists, are using reporting mechanism on public service delivery. You go with your -- because almost everyone has a smartphone. I mean, not the poorest of the poor, but smartphones -- I mean, not smartphones, but regular cell phones. They're everywhere. It's unbelievable. The poorest farmer has a cell phone, even if they only have credit for a five-second call.

So there are many now programs -- the World Bank sponsors some, different aid agencies -- that ask cell phone users to call in after they've gone to the

licensing board to see if they were asked for a bribe or after they've gone to this place to see if they were treated well. So those programs are starting to try to get an idea of the level of corruption.

Cell phones are not going to change the GDP of any country soon and nor will they address the problem of an oil-dominated economy where the central government is awash in it. That's always a problem. But it does increase accountability. And right now it may be at the margin, but it's going to grow and grow. Cell phones by themselves will probably not develop the world, but they are so new and so powerful that I think they'll accelerate it far more than other tools.

MR. WEST: Okay. Other -- there's another question right on the aisle near the back.

MS. CASSIN: Norma Cassin, Center on Congress.

Is there a way to govern to control the flow of messaging so that voters do not become so inundated with messages that they become hostile or is this simply not been a problem?

MS. HARBATH: Do you mean just text messages or messages overall?

MS. CASSIN: I'm talking about messages overall so that one may be getting text messages, phone messages, knocking on the door, and one feels overwhelmed.

MS. HARBATH: I don't think that there's -- I mean, I personally don't necessarily want to see that to a point where it's something that is being regulated by the government, but I think where you're going to do it is having campaigns where -- a campaign that starts to hit people in multiple different levels isn't going to be successful. And so much more of it is user opt-in, so a user has to opt in to get text messages from them. They have to opt in to get e-mail messages. They have to -- you know, hopefully,

we may get to a point where there's opting in with phone banks. It's not going to happen probably any time soon, but, you know, the campaign that allows people to more pick and choose how they want to get reached at some point and level to really help people control their data and control the messaging, I think that's where we're going to see a lot more success and start to see it, you know, get equaled out.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Yeah, and the only thing I would add to that is when you join a campaign's text message program, you're going to get some carrier information. Message and day rates may apply. Text Help for help, text Stop to quit. And that's sort of what I was talking about when I opened up the speech of you don't want somebody to just send you text message spam to your phone because they match it against a voter file or find out what your cell phone is and then send you a message in the middle of the night.

I know it sounds like a silly, quick name. We do that for new media purposes, but seriously, if you go to PocketSpammers.com you're going to see a legitimate petition that we put to Julius Genochowski about really ending this nefarious practice. It happens on every campaign. Direct mail vendors could have been sitting up at this very panel, you know, 10 years ago talking about people doing stealth new technology of direct mail campaigns without a paid-for and the FEC demands there be a paid-for and a registration on it. I'm demanding the same type of thing on text messaging that you know exactly what short code it came from and it's legitimately set up and it's not spam.

MR. WEST: I have a question for the panel. Is it time for the Federal Election Commission to reconsider its ban on texting donations of \$10 to federal candidates?

MS. HARBATH: I will answer it without actually answering the question.

(Laughter)

MR. WEST: Wait, Katie, (inaudible).

MS. HARBATH: Well, I think while I hope that at some point in time we find a way to make that, you know, legal and, you know, fitting within the political rules, I think that the other thing to look at as well is that there are a lot of donations happening on mobile devices through the forums on websites. You see both the Obama campaign and the Romney campaign testing Square. Well, if you're not familiar with Square it's on your iPhone you just get a little card scanner thing that's no bigger than, you know, a piece of gum that you can swipe credit cards through. And so I think that while we're probably a little further away on the text messaging part, I do think there are other ways that campaigns and individuals are starting to give via their mobile devices.

MR. WEST: Aaron, what do you think?

MR. SMITH: Well, I can already feel the electroshocks coming from my funders before I even answer this question. So, you know, we don't do advocacy stuff, so I don't -- you know, we don't have a position on that particular issue. But, you know, we certainly see that there's a desire out there on the part of ordinary folks to do this sort of stuff. You know, 1 in 10 cell phone users has donated by text message to some sort of cause or organization. One in five Internet users has made a charitable donation online. So clearly this is something that's going to become more of an issue moving forward as, you know, the tools to do this spread more widely and people start figuring out, you know, how to really appeal to people in a way that encourages these types of donations.

MR. WEST: Scott?

MR. GOODSTEIN: Usually I enjoy beating up on the telecommunications and the carrier system in the U.S., so this answer may shock you, but I actually believe that this is actually on the political campaigns and the FEC to figure

out and not on the carriers in the sense that -- or it's a little bit of fault on both, that we need to figure out a way that we are still transparent. The carriers don't want to share the information of privacy policies that you sign. They're not going to pass through your name and your address and your occupation off of your cell phone bill into the Federal Elections Commission or even forward your phone number. If you're giving charitable giving for a 501(c)(3) organization, you give 10 bucks; if you take it off your taxes, that's your business. But in political organizing, people that understand the FEC, it's a higher threshold of what the campaigns really require. And so the campaigns ultimately need to get that information of your employer, your occupation, and all this other stuff.

I don't think we should change campaign finance rules to allow text messaging or there needs to be a national cry that says, okay, we'll allow up to \$50 as a threshold or some nominal amount to get people into the process. But let's not, like, have multimillionaires go out and buy 100,000 phones and send 10 bucks each. (Laughter) So, you know --

MR. WEST: But they're already doing that with the Super PACs.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Right, we've already seen this problem. Before the Super PACs, it was straw organizations and you had a guy down in Florida have his assistant that made less than \$30,000 a year give \$100,000 in political contributions. Let's not go back to those days, but we need to demand more on the FEC and the carriers as well as the politics to think a little bit better.

The letter that was sent off from the FEC last year and the FEC was not really thoughtful. It was, like, hey, can we do this? And the answer was no, we don't have anything -- we're not thinking creatively, there's no new protection of privacy, there's no way of passing data. And those are the questions that were never answered in those letters last year.

MR. WEST: Right here in the front row is a question.

MR. JOERN: Thank you. Bill Joern is my name with ROI3, Inc., which is a new company to develop apps for the developing world, social and economic development. Two questions.

In those developing countries and so forth, particularly with somewhat high penetration of mobile phones and somewhat high -- the lack of literacy, also, in many areas, kind of on a scale of 1 to 10, there's, let's say, a curiosity about the use of cell phones by the masses, so to speak, and growing interest, acceptance, and reliance, if you will. Where are we on that continuum going into the future, particularly on those things in which people may want to find information that would be very helpful to them individually?

And then a second question, with the evolving political situation in Mother Russia can you make any predictions as far as the use of mobile phones in that situation?

MR. GIBSON: I tried to get funding for that to do this very experiment. I'll jump in, but everybody on the panel knows a lot about what you're asking.

So the penetration will never stop. Cheaper phones, it's just correlated with deeper penetration. Phones are cheaper and cheaper and cheaper.

An anecdote on smartphones. Smart ones are still expensive, especially the places in Africa that I know. And so we use smartphones that Qualcomm gave us. We trained 600 Ugandans in the last election with smartphones. And the response was overwhelmingly happy, positive, intrigue, curious. We had them practice taking pictures because the next day they take pictures of the tallies, so they took the phones home. We had 350 pictures of family, of furniture, of everything coming back. And in a testimony to both their commitment to the technology and to democracy, which is kind of important,

we got every cell phone back. Every single -- 600 cell phones, not one person kept it. But they love them.

A big avenue for your company maybe is all the information that's now collected by paper -- surveys, censuses -- all the census in the world are paper, or most of them, are paper, right? And developed countries pay for the developing countries' census. If an app could be developed for that the enormous savings of things like polls, surveys, business surveys -- the polling companies we use in these countries, they look at these phones and just drool at the possibilities of these kind of technologies, so there's no end to that.

Mother Russia? That's a long call. My understanding from Russian experts is that some of the fraud -- some of the simple fraud that we detected in other places does still happen in far-flung places in Russia. So what's going to happen with mobile phones? GOLOS is the big opposition group that's going to hopefully, or they think, are going to bring cameras into every polling station. They're the ones that are going to try to expose the presidential cheating. They're the ones that helped expose the parliamentary cheating. They're the ones that caught the stuffing. So they've doubled or tripled their size, will go to lots of places and try to do this with cell phones' cameras. So they're going to try. They can't go everywhere.

MR. JOERN: If I may ask a follow-up (inaudible) question precede the voting.

MR. WEST: Can you give him the microphone, please?

MR. JOERN: A question that precedes the voting, though, in Russia. How will the mobile phones be used in developing the candidacies and their campaigns and all that sort of thing?

MR. GIBSON: You know, that I have no idea. I do not know -- I'm not a

campaign person and these are the people to ask. I do not know how they're using campaigns. They're not used in campaigns yet in poorer countries. Cell phones are not. They're just starting to do things like land lines calling. There's some robocalls in some countries, but nothing sophisticated in cell phones.

MR. WEST: Daniel, do you have any sense of what's going on in either Russia or elsewhere?

MR. UREÑA: Well, I feel like Sarah Palin answering about Russia. (Laughter) But I'm not an expert in Russia, but what I can tell you that in many countries, many European countries, the use of mobile technology is, I think, it's like cosmetic. It's very tactical. They are not doing a strategic use of technology. They don't -- I think there is still not a clear understanding of which are all the possibilities.

What I mean is that we see many candidates that they want to be the first using this new technology. They want to be the first having applications, but they really don't know why they are using -- why are they doing that. They want to be the first because they want to be in the media and they want to be that journalists report they are the coolest candidates, they are the most innovative. So I think we are in a very first step. We are in the beginning of the beginning, so I think we have a long way to walk. I don't know about Russia, I'm not an expert on Russia. Thank you.

MR. WEST: Nobody wants to touch that question apparently. Stephanie has another question from our webcast audience.

STEPHANIE: Yes, we have a question from Seth Weathers, who's an entrepreneur in Atlanta, Georgia. And he wants to know if there's any research on how much or what portion of their budget campaigns are investing in mobile technology for the 2012 election?

MR. WEST: Interesting question.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Not enough. (Laughter)

MS. HARBATH: That's a good answer.

MR. GOODSTEIN: In all seriousness, I think that in 2010, everybody in the world wanted to write a press release similar to the last conversation we just had of there's an app for that or our campaign has an app. And there's a lot of really, really shady app developers that were charging campaigns hundreds of thousands of dollars for apps that were like RSS readers.

And so I think that as, again, I sort of said earlier, that people have grown up and become more sophisticated and demanding more of what their app does or that they're demanding that their text message program is text to call, text to a mobile website that works and you can read, text to audio, text to video, and if you're doing text to app that that app actually does something that you want it to do, like the *New York Times* app. So, you know, it just depends on what it is your campaign's doing.

Text messaging is a gateway, not really that expensive. You know, it's not a huge portion of any campaign's budget. Social media as an organizing tool, not an expensive tool. Now, what you're seeing is can we actually change customer services and field operatives and field resources and communications operatives and communication real sources into using these tools in a smarter way?

And so it used to be like the new media kids and the bloggers on the Howard Dean campaign would sit in a corner and invent new stuff all the time, and now it was to the Obama campaign where we were actually having a seat at the table, to now it's sort of being decentralized, just sort of like e-mail is part of the field program. E-mail's part of the communications strategy. E-mail's part of the fundraising strategy. And what you're starting to see is mobile social media. Everything else is sort of becoming ubiquitous with the entire campaign.

MS. HARBATH: As one of those people who did one of those shiny things, I actually --

MR. GOODSTEIN: Oh, sorry about that.

MS. HARBATH: No, that's okay. I mean, I -- part of the reason that we did do it is, I mean, Republicans always have that stigma and we still kind of a little bit -- it depends on where you look -- of being behind on technology. And one of the things I wanted to do was sort of, you know, try out an iPhone app. You know, we worked with a lot of different vendors to make sure that we weren't spending a lot of money and it was doing what we wanted it to do, and it did. But a big reason of that, too, was to start trying to help push the party forward on technology.

But that being said, the advice that I give campaigns now is don't forget about the fundamentals. I get really frustrated, everyone who just wants to do that bright, shiny thing to get the press story and then they stop using it or they barely use it at all.

Make sure your website looks good on mobile and your e-mail looks good on mobile, and make sure you've got a way to text message folks. Get those three things done first and then start worrying about everything else and then start figuring out how it can fit into your strategy. But going over here and being like, oh, we're going to do this awesome thing on mobile, but if they can't get to your site or they can't read your e-mail, you're going to be a failure from the beginning.

MR. WEST: So the numbers that I've seen on mobile ads in campaigns this year is candidates are devoting about -- no more than 10 percent of their advertising budget to mobile applications, so.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Digital. All digital.

MS. HARBATH: All digital.

MR. WEST: Yes, mobile and social media and digital outreach. And so

in a typical presidential campaign they're spending about 45 to 50 percent of their budget on advertising, so that means the mobile and social media and digital part is going to be no more than 4 to 5 percent of the overall campaign expenditure.

We have time just for a couple more questions. Right here on the aisle.

MR. ALTMAN: Hi. I'm Fred Altman. And I was wondering, seeing the FEC won't allow small donations to go to campaigns, are there any PACs that are set up to collect small campaign funds that would have something like that in place?

MR. GOODSTEIN: It's the same federal rule for PACs as it is for a federal candidate. You need employer, occupation, and carrier privacy policies, like I stated earlier. You can't get the privacy policy from the text into the FEC reporting yet.

MR. WEST: I think the two states to watch where they have legalized text contributions for candidates for statewide office are California and Maryland. Maryland is restricting the text donation for political races to no more than \$10. In California, it's unlimited. So we have kind of a comparison of laws that are trying to enable this and we can see what the impact is of the differences in those laws.

There's one other question over here. We'll make this the last question, so this has to be a really, really, really good question. (Laughter) No pressure.

MS. BOZEHAZEN: I'm not sure I can promise that, but, hi, I'm Lauren Bozehazen with the State Department.

And you mentioned that there is kind of a smaller number of people who do vote in the U.S. than might be possible, so do you see any possibility for electronic voting in the future for the national campaign for president?

MR. WEST: Electronic voting, is it in our future?

MS. HARBATH: I personally think we're a little ways away from it being on a mobile phone, but.

MR. GOODSTEIN: Yeah, I agree. I think it's a long way away. We can barely get, you know, voting right right now and we still are doing provisional ballots and there's countries in this room that are doing voting better than the U.S.

MS. HARBATH: I mean, you looked at the Iowa caucuses and it was people with slips of paper in their hands that were counting like this. I mean, it's, you know, hopefully down the line, but I think that we're far, far away from it.

MR. WEST: And sometimes the slips of paper they had to personally bring to the polling place.

MS. HARBATH: Yes, exactly.

MR. WEST: Clark?

MR. GIBSON: So I was trying to think of the equivalent of a digital hanging chad, but I couldn't quite get there.

So we actually had a discussion about this at lunch and we have mobile banking, even in Africa, right? So you'd think that eventually -- and I do think eventually; I don't think it's near term, but eventually -- the problem's going to be secrecy and all the algorithms that would do that.

And the way that the banks can do it now, even though it's money -- you'd think that needs secrecy, which it does -- is that they have insurance. So if there's fraud, you're covered. There's no real insurance yet for fraudulent votes. So it's going to be a little harder to do the quadruple firewall back-check with you, calling you back, whatever's going to happen.

I think it's inevitable, but I defer to my Americanist colleagues up here that it'll be a while.

MR. WEST: I mean, I've seen some polling data on how Americans view electronic voting and Americans are actually the big barrier to innovation in this area.

It's interesting. When you look at public support for technology innovation in general, the public is supportive of lots of new applications. The one exception, though, is electronic voting because they don't trust the process. They worry about electronic chicanery or maintaining the confidentiality of their vote. They think the system can be rigged in certain respects, so I've seen surveys in which up to 70 percent of Americans don't favor electronic voting.

Interestingly, the place to watch is Estonia. That is one country that actually does most of its elections online and through electronic means. They've actually had pretty good success with that, but most other countries around the world have shied away from that.

We're out of time, but I would like to thank Scott and Katie, Aaron, Daniel, and Clark for sharing your views and we appreciate you as well. Thank you.  
(Applause)

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