

## Congressional Candidate Stands Out in a Crowd

### Problem

In a highly competitive primary election, a congressional candidate in Michigan used outdoor advertising to stand out in a crowd of competitors and win the race. Six Republican candidates jumped into the race after 12-year incumbent US Representative Nick Smith (R-MI) announced that he was stepping down. Schwarz spent a significant portion of his media budget on outdoor advertising – the only candidate in the race to do so.

### Solution

“Joe Schwarz used outdoor effectively, with attractive signs to boost his name identification,” said Paul Cook, president of Wolverine Sign Works, and a member of the OAAA Legislative Committee.

Strategically, Schwarz concentrated his outdoor buy in the home base of a competitor (Jackson County).

### Background

Six Republicans were on the August 3 primary ballot in Michigan’s 7th congressional District (nearly 4,300 square miles in southern Michigan that includes Battle Creek, Jackson, Adrian, and part of Lansing). Schwarz won the hard-fought six-way primary with 28%. As the Republican nominee, he was heavily favored to win the general election in November because the congressional district is solidly Republican.

### Result

“We were very pleased with the results from outdoor advertising,” summed up winner Joe Schwarz of Battle Creek, MI.

“We started with a base vote of 7-to-8 points in Jackson (initially 7 to 8% of voters said they would vote for Schwarz), and ended up with more than 19%,” said campaign manager Matt Mardsen. “In other words, our performance more than doubled in the area where our outdoor advertising was heaviest.”

