

The total amount spent by the Council that went into promoting the election, and increasing voter turnout - for every council election since 2000

Year	2019	2016	2013	2010	2007	2004	2001
Communications Spend	32,602	14,517	5,392	2,622	6,174	9,600	13,000

A breakdown of the spending that went into promoting the election and increasing voter turnout (e.g. through comms, publicity campaign, education campaign) - for every council election since 2000 (- if the information exists. If it is too time-expensive, then can I request the information just for the 2016 & 2019 election).

	2019	2016
Photography	600	
Out-of-home advertising	5090	
Radio advertising	10446	
Digital advertising	1874	
Print advertising	6317	8,496
Marketing Collateral (posters, flyers etc)	6651	6,021
Other	1624	
Total	32,602	14,517

An outline of the strategy that was used by the Council to promote voting in this election.

The Masterton District Council's aim was to halt a downward trend in voter turnout. If the trend continued, Masterton's voter turnout was expected to drop to 38 per cent in the 2019 election. The organisational goal was to (at least) halt the decline so voter turnout equalled 2016 (43.5 per cent). Desktop research helped us understand that the main reasons people didn't vote were:

- Not knowing enough about candidates
- Lack of interest
- Forgetting

To help overcome these challenges, a strategy was devised that focused on three simple elements:

- **Make it easy** – easy to get information and to vote.
- **Make it relevant** – people needed a reason to vote. We developed messaging and creative assets that made the election relevant to the,
- **Make it unavoidable** – we wanted to make sure everyone was aware of the election, to remove the risk of people forgetting to vote.

A list of new initiatives thought up by the Council this year that would promote voter turnout and voter engagement.

- **Local champions** - we used members of our local community in our advertising to capture the interest of people on the street. We put their faces on billboards and posters around town.
- **High-profile marketing** – we invested in a range of marketing collateral to ensure the election was well-known. This included street flags, posters, bunting, t-shirts for community champions and Council staff.
- **Partnerships** – we partnered with a range of organisations to help spread the word. This included working with the Electoral Commission on the enrolment phase and included hosting sausage sizzles at rugby games. We also partnered with local businesses such as Mitre10 Mega to get their staff and customers involved.
- **Business support** – a key part of the strategy to raise awareness was getting local businesses on board as supporters and display collateral. We had more than 40 businesses across town involved in displaying material.
- **Mobile ballot box** – to make it as easy for voters as possible to get voting papers in, we took the secure ballot box around the region to collect all the papers still sitting on kitchen benches and coffee tables. We collect about 70 votes – equating to about 1 per cent of votes.
- **Digital campaign** – in addition to traditional advertising, we invested in digital advertising to ensure people aged under 44 were engaged. This advertising also featured a younger, well-known, member of the community to capture interest.

Evidence of efforts made by the Council to encourage and increase voter engagement e.g. a “meet the candidates” event, a Mayoral debate, working with local news outlets to increase election coverage

- **Creative** – We developed visual assets that incorporated the notable election orange alongside recognisable people within the Masterton community to capture interest. Elements of the campaign were rolled out across a range of different assets, including bunting, posters, billboards, flags and t-shirts with different “I’m voting because” phrases, such as “I’m voting because...our tamariki can’t.”
- **Publishing candidate information** – To help voters get to know the candidates, we published candidate profiles on the website and promoted this across social media and through electronic direct mail to the rating database. We continued to use digital channels to keep the election top of mind.
- **Partnership with the Electoral Commission** – The enrol phase of the campaign was focused on partnering with the Electoral Commission to get the electoral roll as up to date as possible, meaning voters would have voting packs mailed directly to their houses and increase the likelihood of those people voting.
It included ‘pop-up’ enrolment booths out in the community; on the main street engaging people walking past, at the local kids soccer tournament and at the busiest day at the local rugby grounds where the provincial team (Wairarapa Bush) was playing. We engaged people with a sausage sizzle and encouraging them to check they were enrolled while they were at it (and enrolling if they weren’t). We also had people roaming throughout the crowd with electoral rolls and forms.
During the enrol phase we also had support from Mire 10 MEGA who hosting an enrolment pop-up next to their checkouts.
- **Business engagement** – To truly raise the profile of the election we needed to get local businesses on board. We developed an engagement plan to get businesses on the main

street promoting the election. This partnership also resulted in one business collaborating with the local weekly community paper to cover a running 'coffee bean poll'.

- **Mobile ballot box** – In the last week of the campaign before voting closed, we decided to take the ballot box around the region. We announced the tour via a media release and social media and attracted national media interest (Radio New Zealand, Newshub) which helped ensure people knew where we would be and when. The votes collected during the one-day tour amounts to more than 1 per cent of the total vote.
- **Candidate evenings** – external groups ran their own candidate evenings, which Council supported through promotion. The Council ran an information evening for potential candidates on the big issues and how to stand for Council.

RESULTS

Media targets achieved:

- Local media covered launch of election campaign, including focus on stand phase, including editorial
- Enrolment 'pop-ups' covered by Wairarapa Times-Age with key messages
- Regular coverage of vote campaign including mobile ballot box in local and national media.

Awareness of election increased, measured by:

- More than 60,000 website pageviews during election period
- VOTE 2019 election page third most-visited webpage with 5,294 pageviews
- Electronic Direct Mail with VOTE 2019 content consistently achieved >50% open rate, >21% click-through rate. Specific VOTE 2019 articles drove close to 500 pageviews on website
- Social media posts achieved cumulative reach of 42,500 over campaign period – one post reaching 9,000 alone. Engagement rates consistently above 5%, some posts reaching a high of 11% engagement.
- Social media activity and EDM resulted in the most traffic to the Masterton District Council website ever; 2,250 pageviews compared to a daily average of 770 pageviews. This record almost doubled when we announced the election results on social media with 4,340 pageviews on 12 October.

Engage local businesses:

The number of businesses engaged to promote the election exceeded our expectations with more than 40 businesses displaying material throughout the campaign. In addition, we took partnerships with two businesses further:

- Mitre 10 MEGA became a strong advocate and, in addition to displaying and distributing marketing materials, supported pop-up enrolment and ballot boxes. They also advertised on local radio that Mitre 10 MEGA was a location for people to submit votes.
- Ten O'Clock Cookie Company, the busiest café in town, also came on board as a significant partner. They had all staff wearing VOTE 2019 t-shirts, decorated the café in bunting and posters and also ran a "have your say" coffee bean poll in collaboration with the local weekly community newspaper; each week three issues would be presented for customers to vote on at the most important. The results were then covered in the Wairarapa Midweek.