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Obama outspends Romney on online ads

By [Jen Christensen](#), CNN
updated 11:20 PM EDT, Sun June 3, 2012

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Ad spending: Obama vs. Romney

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STORY HIGHLIGHTS

President Obama spent \$16.4 million this year on online ads, twice as much as Mitt Romney

Online ads are seen as a better way to target specific voters

Romney's ads appear traditional; Obama's feature his family, wife, even his dog

(CNN) -- President Barack Obama's re-election campaign is spending record amounts of money for [online advertising](#) and more than twice as much as his Republican rival, a CNN analysis of campaign finance data shows.

In the first few months of 2012, Obama's campaign bought nearly \$16.4 million worth of online ads after spending almost \$2.2 million last year -- even though he didn't face a Democratic challenger. That means he is on pace to spend a record amount on digital ads, according to ad spending experts.

The campaign for Mitt Romney, who survived a heated primary race to become the presumptive Republican nominee, spent \$7.8 million for online ads this year, in addition to the \$500,000 it spent in 2011. The numbers are compiled by the Federal Elections [Commission](#) from reports by the campaigns.

[Zac Moffat](#), digital director for Romney's campaign, predicted [online ad spending](#) would pick up for both camps as the general election contest kicks into high gear.

"We plan to do a ton more now that the primaries are over," he said. The Obama campaign won't comment on its digital strategy.

Moffat said that while TV ads are like hitting voters over the head with a hammer, Internet ads are more like using a scalpel.

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The presidential debates: They're the next big thing in the race for the White House. So which candidate will have the upper hand?

Watch: Mitt Romney's culture campaign

updated 5:24 AM EDT, Tue September 11, 2012



Mitt Romney promised to focus his campaign on the economy. Anderson Cooper looks at his recent speeches and events.

Analysis: Obama hit the marks he needed to

updated 10:16 AM EDT, Fri September 7, 2012

Obama's campaign going to the dogs -- and cats and chickens



When it comes to reaching specific voters, Moffat said, "you can be a lot more precise with your message online." Plus, compared with broadcast, online ads are cheaper and easier to track.

"We can show the value of a particular message right away by seeing who clicks through or who spends time with a particular message," he said. "We can immediately demonstrate its value, and we have hard numbers to show a person's engagement."

In theory, such targeted ads can help the candidates better engage with the key voters they need in what's sure to be a close election: the elusive swing state independents, the coveted **Hispanic** groups, the Catholics who vacillate between Republicans and Democrats. The campaigns buy ad space on sites such as [elNuevoHerald.com](#) to reach Latino groups and [SuburbanChicagoNews.com](#) to find the Catholics who could vote either way, and look for independents on general news sites such as CNN or e-mail sites such as Yahoo!

"They can find where these coveted voters specifically are online and get their message to them," said [Kate Kaye](#), senior editor for [ClickZ](#), a trade publication that covers the [digital advertising](#) industry, and author of "Campaign '08: A Turning Point for Digital Media."

"It's a major advantage."

Moffat also noted that Romney's campaign, like Obama's, has posted multiple videos to Hulu and YouTube to reach people who don't [watch TV](#) much. There's another strong advantage to online video ads: You generally can't fast-forward through them like you can if you use a DVR to watch TV.

Both campaigns have already spent millions on TV ads. The Obama campaign spent nearly \$13.3 million from January 19 to May 22, while the Romney campaign spent more than \$15 million from November 22 to May 22, according to [Kantar Media/Campaign Media Analysis Group](#), which tracks political ad spending.

Online, the Romney campaign has spent much of its early money on Google search terms. Type in "George Romney," Mitt's father, and an ad for his son appears on the top of the page. "Mayor Booker" pulls up a "Stand With [Cory Booker](#)" ad from the Republican National Committee criticizing Obama.

The Obama campaign is doing the same on Google, but ad buys for both sides may change, as the political debate shifts. When "Buffet Rule" was a hot topic a few weeks back, a Google search turned up a link to [WhiteHouse.gov](#). That ad has since disappeared now that the term is no longer in the news.

Romney's online campaign seems pretty traditional so far. Type Romney's name into [Moat.com](#), a visual ad search site, and 20 ads appear, most with a simple message such as "Stand with Mitt," "Ready to Lead" or "Vote for Mitt." In many of the ads, the candidate stands alone smiling confidently, looking off into the distance.

Prove Mitt's not a unicorn, group says in satirizing 'birthers'

"What he is trying to do here is essentially show Romney is the strong leader, implying that Obama is the weaker leader," said [Drew Westen](#), an [Emory University psychology professor](#) who wrote "The Political Brain," a book about the role of emotion in deciding elections.

For now, Romney's ads are most likely to show up online where readers may be sympathetic to his message, or on sites that would



Obama had to take on the ghosts of conventions past: comparisons with his stadium acceptance speech four years ago, and the 2004 speech that launched him into the national spotlight.

Opinion: Young people, don't vote for Obama

updated 11:17 AM EDT, Tue September 11, 2012



In his September 4 op-ed, Jack Schlossberg presents his case that young Americans should cast their ballots for President Obama. His piece is as ill-timed as it is unconvincing.

Romney: Obama had no new ideas



Mitt Romney fired back against Democrats Friday, the morning after being skewered by the president and top party officials on the closing night of the Democratic National Convention.

Post-convention campaigns underway

updated 1:42 PM EDT, Sun September 9, 2012



The primary season over and the nominating conventions complete, Mitt Romney and Barack Obama hit the ground running Friday for the final stretch of a campaign that began, for Romney at least, more than a year ago in Iowa.

Five things we learned from Day Three

updated 9:22 AM EDT, Fri September 7, 2012



President Barack Obama accepted the nomination of his party, wrapping up a three-day political lovefest in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Romney says GOP made 'mistake,' weighs in on Eastwood, health care



Mitt Romney said congressional Republicans were wrong to accept a deal last year that could ultimately result in across-the-board spending cuts, including massive cuts to the military.

Group claiming to have Romney tax records threatens to leak them

updated 4:45 PM EDT, Thu September 6, 2012



An anonymous group says it stole copies of GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney's tax records and will release them unless the company it stole them from pays \$1 million.

Are you better off than four years ago?



Interactive: It's the single most important question in an election. See how your situation stacks up against others.

Five things we learned from the RNC

updated 10:28 AM EDT, Fri August 31, 2012

catch the attention of voters in a particular primary state.

According to a CNN analysis of Nielsen Online AdRelevance, which tracks online ad spending, Romney's campaign made its largest online ad purchase -- some \$32,000 -- on DrudgeReport.com. The site had more than 5 million Romney ad impressions between January and April. His ads also ran on local news sites such as [TheState.com](#) in South Carolina and [OrlandoSentinel.com](#) in Florida.

By comparison, Obama's campaign spent the most at [Comcast.net](#), paying more than \$1 million for ads that have appeared on the site more than 238 million times. His ads also pop up regularly on general news sites such as CNN and [The New York Times](#). They also turn up in some unexpected places -- [games.com](#), [elyrics.net](#) and [match.com](#).

The images in the [145 Obama online ads that surface on Moat.com](#) stand in stark contrast to Romney's. Most feature first lady Michelle Obama or the president's entire family. There's even one that features their dog, Bo. The messages encourage people to "Enter to win dinner with Barack" or "Wish Michelle a Happy Mother's Day" by clicking the ad.

"It makes a lot of sense to put Michelle front and center," Emory's Westen said. "She is so much more popular than the president is at this point. It makes him likable to be associated with her. I think Romney should be doing more of this, because his wife seems quite likable in a very different way. It will be key for Romney to share who he is in a real way with voters so they can feel some connection."

[Borrell Associates](#), which tracks ad spending, predicts online ad purchases will make up about 1.5% of the candidates' overall campaign ad budgets. While that may not sound like much, Borrell said it would be \$159 million more than in 2008 -- a sevenfold increase. And it's likely that as technology improves, that number will grow.

"What TV and radio used to do exclusively is now something, with the improved technology, that online ads can do very well," Kaye said. "So you can be sure to see a lot more political presence online in the very near future."

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Mitt Romney accepted the Republican Party's nomination for the presidency on Thursday night, culminating a convention shortened to three days by Tropical Storm Isaac.

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davedudeusa

what would romney do to help the economy? more tax cuts for the rich, of course
what would romney do to lower the deficit? more tax cuts for the rich, of course

It must be easy to be a republican. same answer to all economic problems, all times



BLindfAith

Romney is now making the EXACT same promises he made when he ran for Governor of Massachusetts (more jobs, more businesses, lower debt, lower taxes etc). He even uses the same words in most cases. You can see the clips side-by-side on the Romney Economics website.

How did he do in Massachusetts on keeping these promises? Very poorly.

Massachusetts was 47th in job creation when Mitt was Governor. It's hard to do worse than that. The debt skyrocketed under Romney. The citizens of Massachusetts were hammered with all kinds of fee hikes (aka tax hikes).

In short, Romney reneged on pretty much every promise he made. That's Mitt Romney's record.



impermanence

Well, I'm far from rich and Obama has not made my life any easier, I guess you have to be on the government's various "let me take care of you for the rest of your life programs" in order to be pleased with Obamas leadship.



MendoCal

And as long as we never look at the factual accuracy of their statements they all sound great



RichardBroderickJr

Bingo.



sailor353

What will Obama do? give us 4 more years of high unemployment and record deficits from out of control government spending. Obama keeps telling us that all of the economic problems were left to him by GWB, so far in almost 4 years he has not managed to fix any of these problems. Why will 4 more years of a clueless regime fix any problems?



nObummer2012

I laugh at people who talk about job creation numbers. Land mass and geographical location have a huge impact on this stat. If you want an even number to look at, check the Unemployment rate to see if the people in his state have work. Mass. is well below the national average.. Looks like he is better than Obama yet again!

**opinion8it**

I can't believe that anyone would vote against their own interest by voting for Romney.... but then again, some people voted for Bush..... twice.

**BarryStalin**

I can't believe anyone would vote against their country's best interest.... but then again, some people voted for Obama.

**blackjack0**

Germans voted for Hitler, now if they only read Mein Kempf!

**jennluck**

Then maybe you should open your eyes a little bit and understand that they are not voting against their own best interest.

**opinion8it**

ROMNEY...

Turned his back on his core beliefs for a shot at the presidency.

Worked for a company that made millions from other people's miseries

Preaches about everyone doing their part while his own money is in swiss banks.

Tells hispanic crowds that he's hispanic; tells non-hispanic crowds that hispanics have to go.

Does not support woman's causes.

Bullies people who are different than himself

Is known for inhumane treatment of animals

....and he's not even in office yet!!!

**checkurfacts**

Obama...

Turned his back on our freedoms by resigning the patriot act and now has a kill list that he decides on

Never worked for a company or signed a paycheck except using taxpayers money.

Preaches about everyone giving their fair share while pandering to people who pay nothing.

Tells Hispanics and Blacks that he is on their side in the mean time creating the most unemployment in those demographics .

Relegating women to the life of Julia.

Demonizes anyone that isnt a progressive maniac.

Eats dogs

and he is in office.

**MendoCal**

Well 1 out of 9 of those are certainly a warranted criticism

**opinion8it**

lonewolf1069 -- of course he has -- you haven't been paying attention... google it.

**teacher87**

And don't forget he bullies people who are perhaps gay, holds them down and cuts their hair.

**DoNotWorry**

Prefers commies to American workers... spent 20 years sending jobs to them.

**Lonewolf1069**

Romney has NEVER claimed to be hispanic

**TimGreer**

I don't like any politician and both party's are crazy.. but the GOP has been extra super-duper crazy and stupid in comparison the last 12+ years now and it's just getting worse. So, I'm voting for the least crazy guy (Obama). All of the Conservatives that are into conspiracy theories, end of the world mindsets, and spoon fed Faux News nonsense, can deal with it, and I suggest they work on getting an actual viable, non nutty candidate for 2016 and stop acting like maniacs and maybe some of us will actually consider a vote for the GOP some day (I'm not holding my breath though).

**55Buckeye**

See, Tim, . . . these are the insults I mentioned in another post . . . "you are still a puppet" was completely unnecessary in replying to your comment, with which I agree, but rwb49 had to put it in there anyway!

**rwb49**

I hear you & in my opinion, you are still a puppet on government strings, no matter which party is in power :(...Did you forget to remember your own common sense for your country? Afterall, your future generations depend on YOU; Are you willing to put a price on THEIR FUTURE, & feel they should also agree with your own personal political party's agenda???? Can you truly tell your future generations that government had all the answers??? Or, will you want our future generations to have the same individual freedoms as you've been entitled too, so far? Has it not been enough that our government has already maxed out the USA credit card, & expect the next generation to cover this current generation's financial mistakes.....How fair is that??? The only people that feel America owes them a financial life support, are the "selfish" & those that envy those that worked hard for their success...

**realitycnn**

Regardless of ads, etc., President Obama has demonstrated with his actions and policies that he supports fair policies that benefits ALL Americans (middle class, poor, rich, etc.) . . . In CONTRAST, the Romney and Republican policies show that they are about 'greed and bigotry', the GOP have gradually and now BLATENTLY (with the Supreme Court Citizens United Decision) allowed anonymous legalized Bribery and the sale of the U.S. Democracy to the highest bidder (top 1% wealthy) who will profit at the expense of the 99% of Americans (ie. middle class, women, children, veterans, seniors, etc.). It also gives Corporations unlimited power in the name of free speech. Americans, Corporations ARE NOT people and this decision needs to be overturned because it is going to DESTROY our Democracy Republic, eliminate the middle class, turn America into a country where only a few rich Billionaires (top 1%) will be controlling the U.S. and making the laws and making themselves rich, to the DETRIMENT of the 99%, all of whom will eventually be in poverty, penniless, powerless and at the mercy of the Rich.

2. An Oligarchy" is when the government is controlled by a small group. A "Plutocracy" is when the government is controlled by the wealthy. Romney's and Republicans Economic policies will turn the U.S. into a Oligarchy Plutocracy, where a small group of wealthy people will control everything including ALL laws, and they will make laws to satisfy their greed and make themselves richer, while the 99% (including

middle class, etc.) will be forever moved into the poverty class - your vote will mean nothing and the Rich will make sure of that . ALL AMERICANS (Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, etc.) should be OUTRAGED by the idea of the U.S. becoming a Oligarchy Plutocracy, and you should realize that the way to STOP this from happening is NOT TO VOTE FOR Walker, Romney and Republicans, who are destroying the U.S. and if you continue to vote for them you will have no one to blame but YOURSELF when the U.S. goes over the cliff



realitycnn

@rwb49: Your reply sums up your idea of 'American Heritage', translated as follows: The Republican party is about 'greed and bigotry', and they often believe and tell any lie to further their greed and bigotry. Many Republicans are fearful that a second term for President Obama will PREVENT them from making the top wealthy 1% richer - giving them and corporations more unjustified tax breaks, deregulation without oversight, etc., to the DETRIMENT of the 99% of Americans (middle class, children, women, seniors, veterans, etc.). And the Republican Party is a haven for, and rampant with, Bigots (racists, anti-women, anti-gay, anti-senior, etc.), and many of the ignorant bigoted people who vote for Republicans, often ignore facts and foolishly vote against their own and their families interests, see the U.S. destroyed - cut off their arms, vote with the 1% wealthy who are pushing them from middle class to poor, etc. - as long as their vote and actions reflects that they are clinging to their ignorance, bigotry, and hate their sick pathetic definition of being a Patriot and proud American. Yes, that is apparently what you cling to as 'American heritage', and Republicans will be the destruction of the U.S. if people continue to vote for them.



rwb49

This potus in chief has demonstrated with his actions and policies that he supports fair policies that benefits ALL Americans (middle class, poor, rich, etc)? Not only that, this potus has put a price on our American individual freedoms, values, heritage, & our Constutional law of our land, continually, "dividing" the people of America "United" as a people"...How any of us American citizens could allow anyone in our government to invade & force their people to change their American heritage, is a "red flag" in my book...America will never be a "socialist society sheeple" follower...America is a free Nation of people; any other Nation calling us otherwise, are jealous of our exceptionalism & freedoms....



barbie1311

No President has tried harder and more persistently than Obama to include the opposition in national policy.... Ironically, the determination of the GOP to make the country fail in order to tag the first black President with its failure cancelled out those efforts right down the line.



barbie1311

Obamacare ?....

He tried to implement a Republican healthcare plan..... it's not his fault that Republicans are too racist to support their own plans when they're offered back to them.



Victoria1957

rwb49: Uh, were have you been? On mars? Obama has created 4 million jobs (CBO), he has rescued the auto industry and the massive supply chain connected to it. He has helped millions of children/young adults get health coverage previously denied. He has begun closing the doughnut hole helping the elderly. He has commanded the end of even more Al Qaeda leaders making America safe. He has eliminated prejudice in the military for the first time in history. He has lowered the debt, the deficit, and is spending lower than in 60 years. The Republican's? They have deliberately attempted to strangle the recovery just to make Obama look bad. They have obstructed and filibustered (over 400 Democratic bills) more than any party in American history. The Republican's have eliminated nearly a million public jobs (unemployment would be 7.1 now) in a time when people need jobs desperately. The austerity from Romney, Ryan and the Republican's is like taking more blood from an anemic, it will sink this country even more.



demchaos

please tell us how obama saved ford? also where hvae you been venus, because obama lost 4.3 million jobs.



opinion8it

oh how I wish I could click "like" 50,000 times



rwb49

You truly don't have to remind any citizen of O's leadership, even though he happens to be a little bit dark in skin color....He hasn't needed any help; he's created all of America's turmoil on his own..You are wasting your time trying to convince other citizens that this current putus has our best interest at heart...NOT!



demchaos

like with obamacare. really to try and post that BS barbie.



Coolnight0

Barbie:

ignore him, he knows very few words given by Repubs. He will use words like, BS, lies.



demchaos

so you have come to post lies today collnight. thanks for sharing. someday when you grow up coolnight you will not want the dems to take it from you.



Guest

they aint determined to see Obama fail. they just disagree with his policies.



Brational2

One result of the Obama presidency is that it has brought out, for all the world to see, that the underbelly of the GOP is a class of people who are uneducated and blinded by prejudice.

I often wonder if has occurred to them that the screen names they pick, which I think they must consider to be witty, actually reveal their bigotry and ign0rance more than anything else.

And when they post comments that are just venomous and full of racial epithets, I wonder if they realize that far from attracting independent voters to the Republican party, they actually are doing great damage to the party and driving independents away from it. Romney can put on a mask of tolerance and the GOP leadership can make carefully worded statements about inclusion. But the voices of throwbacks to the Jim Crow era whose comments you can read on CNN every day by the hundreds, outweigh everything that the GOP wants people to believe about their party.

No independent voter can want to align themselves with people who say such things, and reading the comments just makes Democrats more firm in their commitment to vote in repudiation of bigotry.



BarryStalin

Independents are moving away from Obama in droves. So are traditional democrats.

Labeling someone a racist because they don't believe Obama to be the man for the job is nothing short of showing yourself as a scared and desperate person, who cares more about their party, than their country.

People like you should not be allowed the privilege of voting.



Brational2

And what makes you think you know what race I am?
More evidence that you are not a Democrat.

I didn't actually say that everyone who is voting against Obama is a racist, because of course they are not. What I actually said is that there is a segment of the GOP, which I called it's 'underbelly', that is decidedly racist. I don't think you are racist. I've read your other comments and see that you frequently object to religious bigotry. But I admit that honestly, you were one of the people I was thinking about when I wrote the comment about screen names. Yours is an offensive name and reveals that you are extremist in your views which in turn, I feel, is actually quite likely to make your comments less likely to be considered as reasonable or worthy of consideration.

I stand by what I said about independents. Whatever else they are, they are not political extremists. I don't think they are going to turn out as a unified block for either candidate, but they will be inclined to turn away from racism and unfortunately, the comments on CNN from people who identify themselves as conservatives often are quite racially derogatory at the least.



impermanence

The problem with your argument is it's racist in itself. You assume every person of color is a Democrat. We do not all speak with one mind. Stop insulting an entire class of people. Thank you.



rwb49

Class of people???? If you feel so intent on dividing the American citizens by political affiliation, race, or class, than I feel sorry for your lack of using your own common sense.....If you truly believe this current potus or any of our current candidates running for our C in C are the answer to our current USA problems, than you're living in a dream world.....It truly is not our government, no matter what party in power, that can solve our problems, it's we the citizens that can solve our problems....Government needs to "butt out" & allow the American people the chance to save our Nation....We all know, government has neglected to do so....For 200+ years, our Nation has survived, not by our government, but by we the people...The citizens have the strength to protect & fight for what's ours, without any \$\$\$ involved.



Coolnight0

nObummer2012It is you, ding dong !!!

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