

**ROCK  
✓ THE  
VOTE**

# **SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT**

— 2020 —

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## EARNED DATA

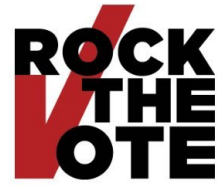
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Statement of Business Problems

As a nonprofit organization focused on mobilizing youth and minority voters, 2020 has been Rock the Vote's biggest year yet. There has been a positive trend in political participation over the past few years, and social media has served as a massive channel for this wave. That being said, Rock the Vote needs to figure out how to make their voice louder and not drowned out by other content, news media, and similar organizations when trying to reach and engage with audiences through social media.

## Our Goal

Increase engagement with target audience through social media channels, particularly with young voters, minority voters, and women.

## Methods

Social media analysis of conversations surrounding Rock the Vote, the topic of voter participation, and similar organizations to RTV

## Tools

Our data came from the social media analytics tool Brandwatch.



# DATA OVERVIEW

Throughout our analysis of Rock the Vote, we accumulated different types of data - owned and earned.

## Owned Data

Our owned data came from Rock the Vote's Twitter. We analyzed ~300 tweets within the timeframe July 27 - Sept. 9, 2020. In our analysis, we found that tweets centered around themes of volunteering and voting information were highly effective in terms of engagement. We also found that the use of infographics was also effective.

## Earned Data

Using Brandwatch, we collected earned data mainly from Twitter, Reddit and Facebook. We focused on conversations about our **organization**, the topic of **voter participation** and other **voting-centered organizations**. We collected data from July 1 - Oct. 1, 2020. Our main findings from our earned data analysis concluded that women and minority voices draw high levels of engagement in conversations about voter participation. We also found that posting on and in reference to nationally recognized dates leads to spikes in engagement.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In this analysis, our key performance indicator was engagement. To measure engagement, we looked at:

- **Total Engagement Volume**
- **Mentions (original posts, replies)**
- **Retweets**
- **Engagement demographics**
  - Gender

# DATA OVERVIEW

DATASET	PLATFORM	TOP THEMES AND HASHTAGS
Owned Data	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volunteering</li><li>• Voting Information</li><li>• #RockTheVote</li><li>• #Vote2020</li></ul>
Earned Data 'Organization Conversation' 'Topic Conversation' 'Competition Conversation'	Twitter Reddit Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Register to vote</li><li>• Early vote</li><li>• #votebyemail</li><li>• #NationalVoterRegistrationDay</li></ul>

## Organization Conversation **[Rock the Vote]**

- Date range: **July 1 - Oct. 1, 2020**
- Total number of posts: **20,101**
- Breakdown by gender: **50% female - 50% male**
- Breakdown by sentiment: **35% positive, 11% negative, 54% neutral**

## Topic Conversation **[Voter Participation]**

- Date range: **July 1 - Oct. 1, 2020**
- Total number of posts: **~409k**
- Breakdown by gender: **50% female - 50% male**
- Breakdown by sentiment: **18% positive, 15% negative, 67% neutral**

## Competition Conversation **[When We All Vote & National Voter Center]**

- Date range: **July 1 - Oct. 1, 2020**
- Total number of posts: **~241k**
- Breakdown by gender: **62% female - 38% male**
- Breakdown by sentiment: **18% positive, 18% negative, 64% neutral**

# TOP INSIGHTS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Based on insights from our analysis, these are some of the top recommendations we have come up with for Rock the Vote to take advantage of going forward.

## 1 **Feature/collaborate with figures that are relevant to our audience and mission**

In our analysis of the topic of voter participation, women and minority voices drew higher levels of engagement. Michelle Obama and Kerry Washington were mentioned in multiple popular posts. Moving forward, it would be beneficial for RTV to incorporate well-known minority women in conversations about minority voters and turnout.

## 2 **Utilize infographics to convey important information regarding elections**

In our analysis of our owned data, we found that posts including infographics were far more successful in terms of engagement than other media formats, such as video and external links. RTV should consistently utilize infographics in their posts to relay important information (registration information, election dates, statistics) in a way that can be quickly digested and shared by the audience but is still visually pleasing.

## 3 **Post more content specific to nationally recognized dates and events**

In our analysis, we noticed spikes in engagement in conjunction with some nationally recognized days and events. For example, the largest spike in engagement for our organization came on National Voter Registration Day (Sept. 22). RTV should continue this practice of posting frequently in reference to as well as on nationally recognized dates.

# OWNED DATA

# Rock the Vote Twitter Engagement

Our dataset consists of roughly ~300 original tweets posted by Rock the Vote's Twitter page between the date range of 7/27/20 - 9/9/20. With the 2020 presidential election quickly approaching, Rock the Vote has been extremely active on social media, especially Twitter, since they are an organization concerned with voting mobilization. RTV's posts typically utilize a positive tone, as they communicate various election information, opportunities, and background information on all things related to voting and U.S. elections in general.

**Account Analyzed:** @RockTheVote

**Time Period:** July 27, 2020 -  
September 9, 2020

**Total Number of Posts:** ~300

**Tweet Themes:** Information  
History  
Equality  
Volunteering  
Engagement  
Other

**Media Types:** Infographic  
Picture  
Video  
No Media  
Other

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Audience Likes:



Volunteering



Election Information



Organizations  
Affiliated with Rock  
the Vote



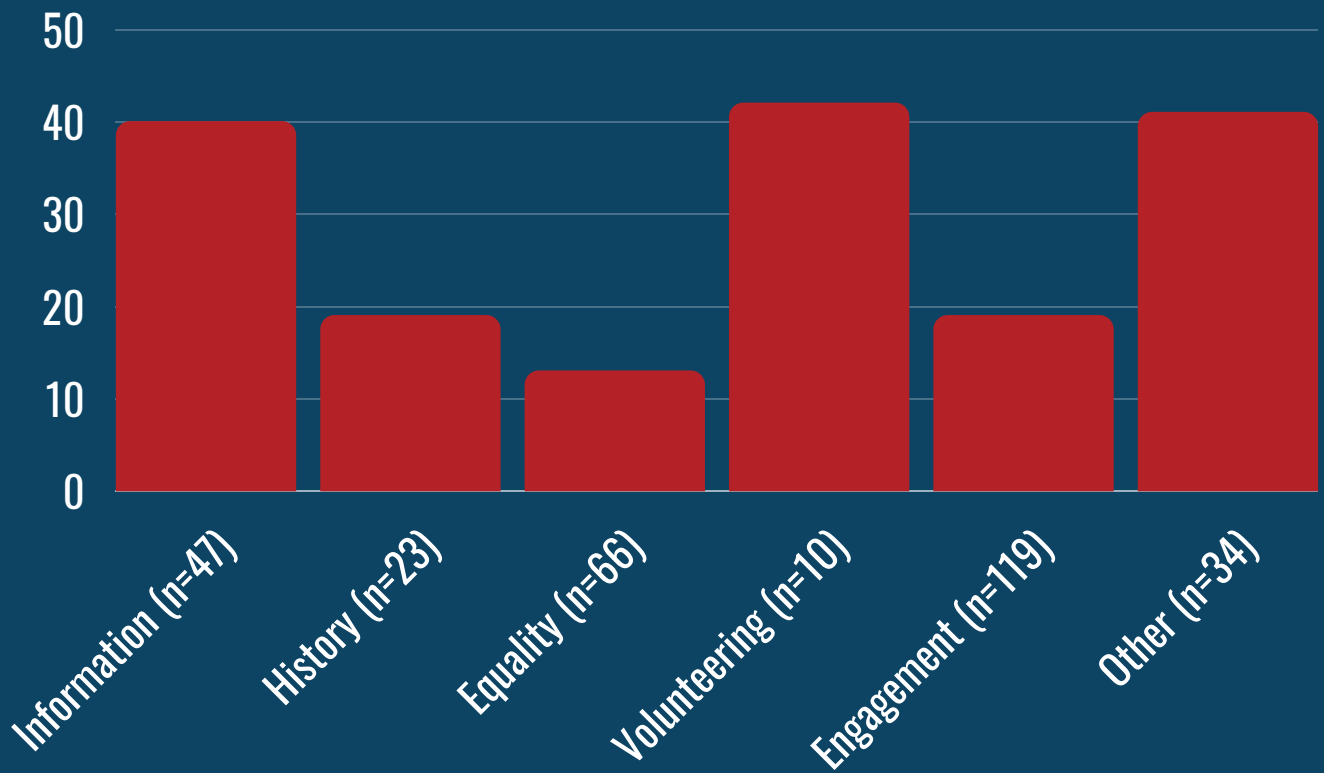
Celebrities



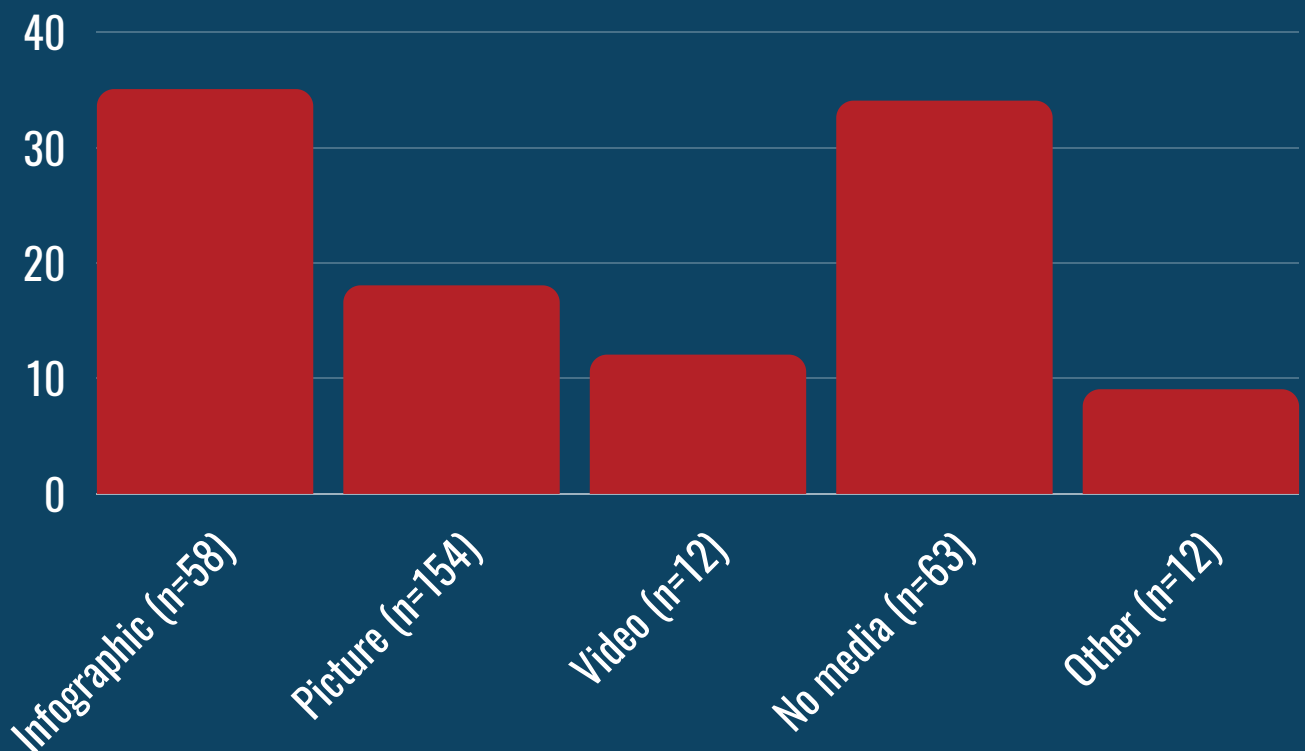
Infographics



## Average Engagement by Tweet Theme



## Average Engagement by Media Type

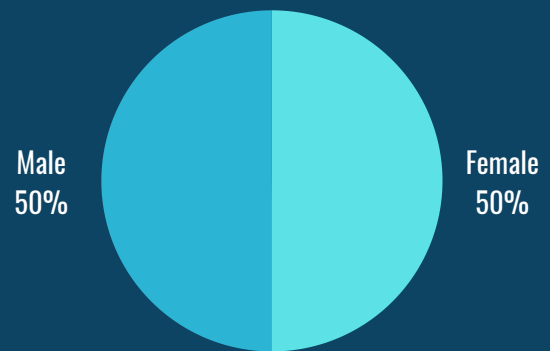


# EARNED DATA

## Rock the Vote Cross Platform Conversation

Across all the content sources we analyzed, we see that all other sources, excluding Twitter, have relatively similar mention volumes over time, with spikes corresponding with what we see with our Twitter data. That said, there is far more variety on a day to day basis in our other sources.

Account Analyzed:	@RockTheVote
Time Period:	July 01, 2020 - Oct 01, 2020
Total Mentions:	62,526
Rock the Vote Main Themes:	Voting Registration & Information
Content Sources:	Blogs Facebook Forums Instagram Reddit Tumblr Twitter Youtube



## TOP AUTHORS

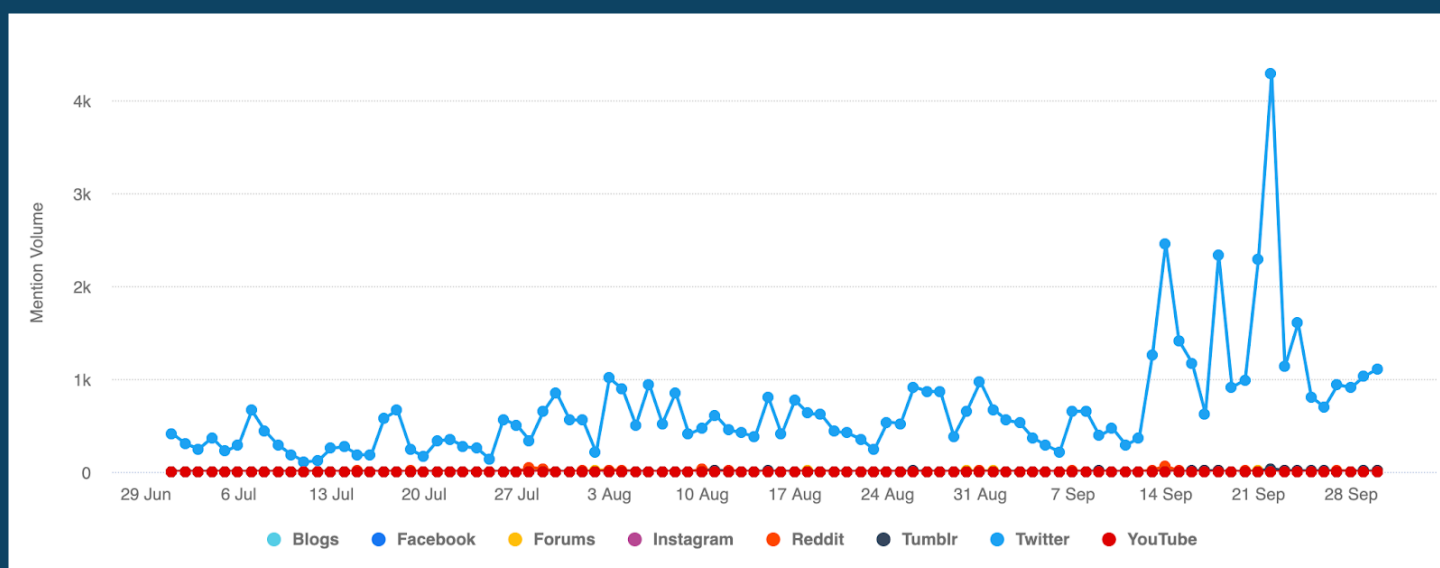
### TheRubPR

The RubPR is one of Rock the Vote's top cross platform authors because it has a significant reach of 12,961 and it is a public relations organization.

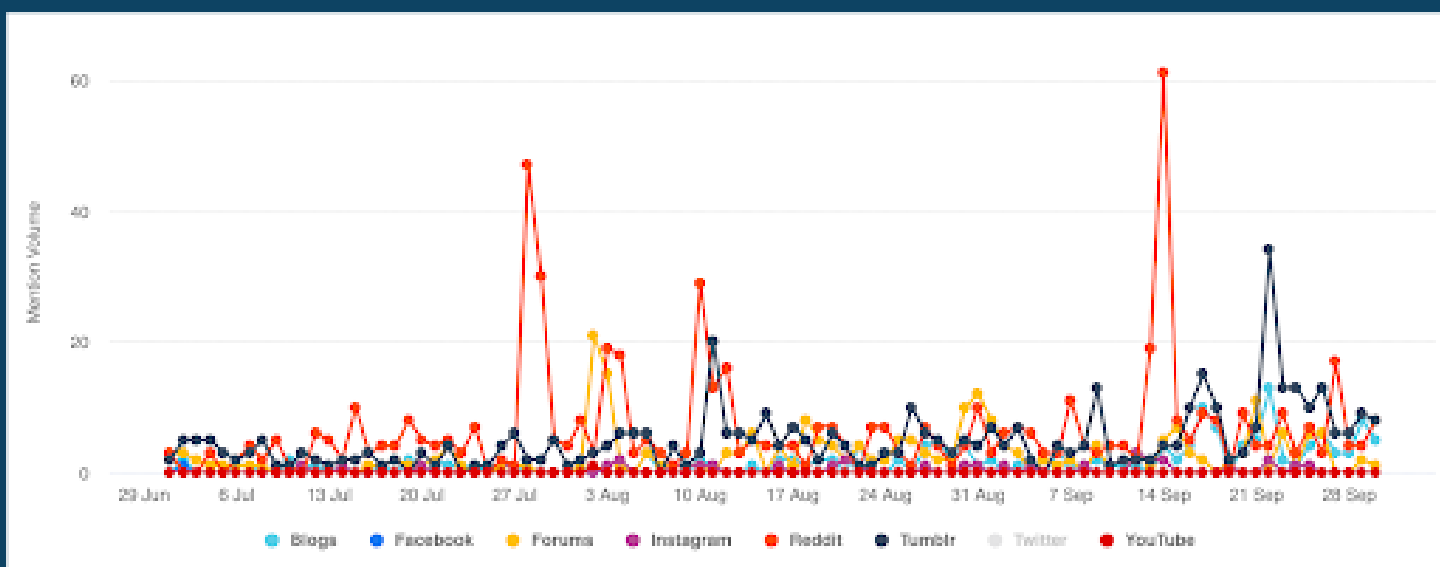
### Matthew669691

Matthew669691 is one of Rock the Vote's top cross platform authors because it has a significant reach of 5,222 and it is an individual influencer.

Rock the Vote's data, when compared across platforms, reveals a terribly simple first impression. Twitter, compared to the other sources shown, really is the most relevant platform. With spikes occurring throughout the latter half of September, we found some explosive days of mentions. We believe this largely to correlate with the national political agenda. Twitter reached a single-day peak of 4,291 mentions. Across our 3-month window, Rock The Vote saw over 62K mentions from 42K unique authors. That said, it remains important to acknowledge that without our Twitter Data, Reddit hit a max mention volume (amidst all other platforms) of 61 in a single day.



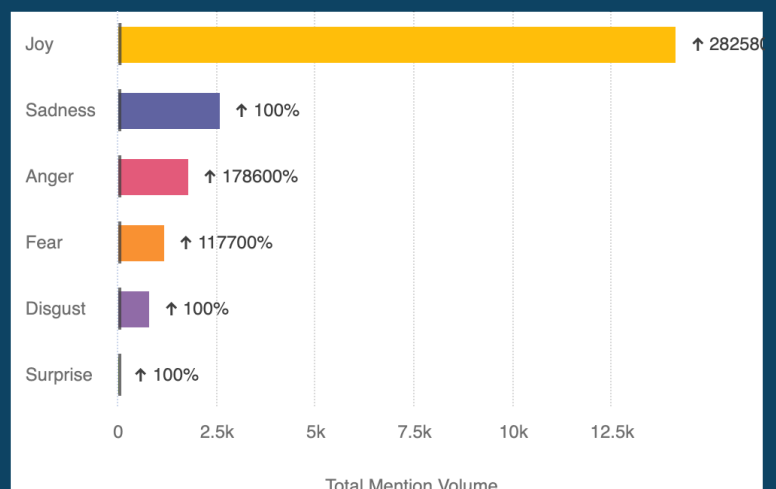
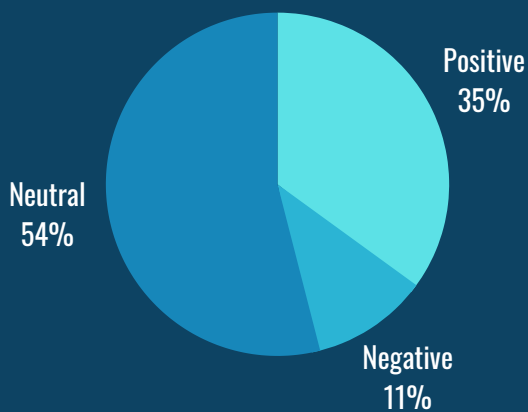
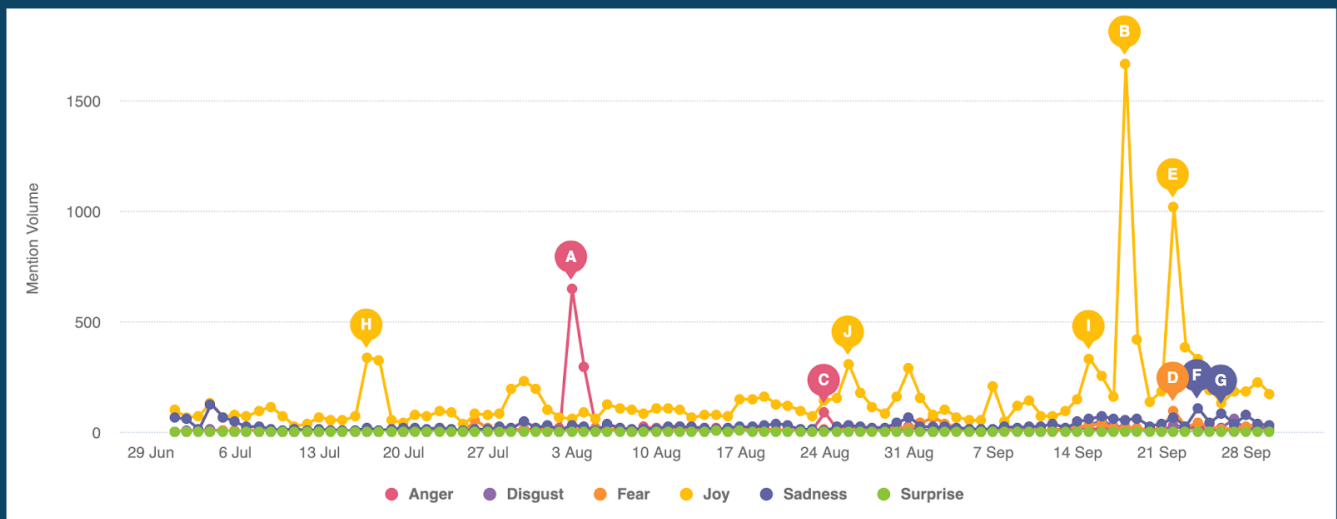
## Platform Engagement Comparison



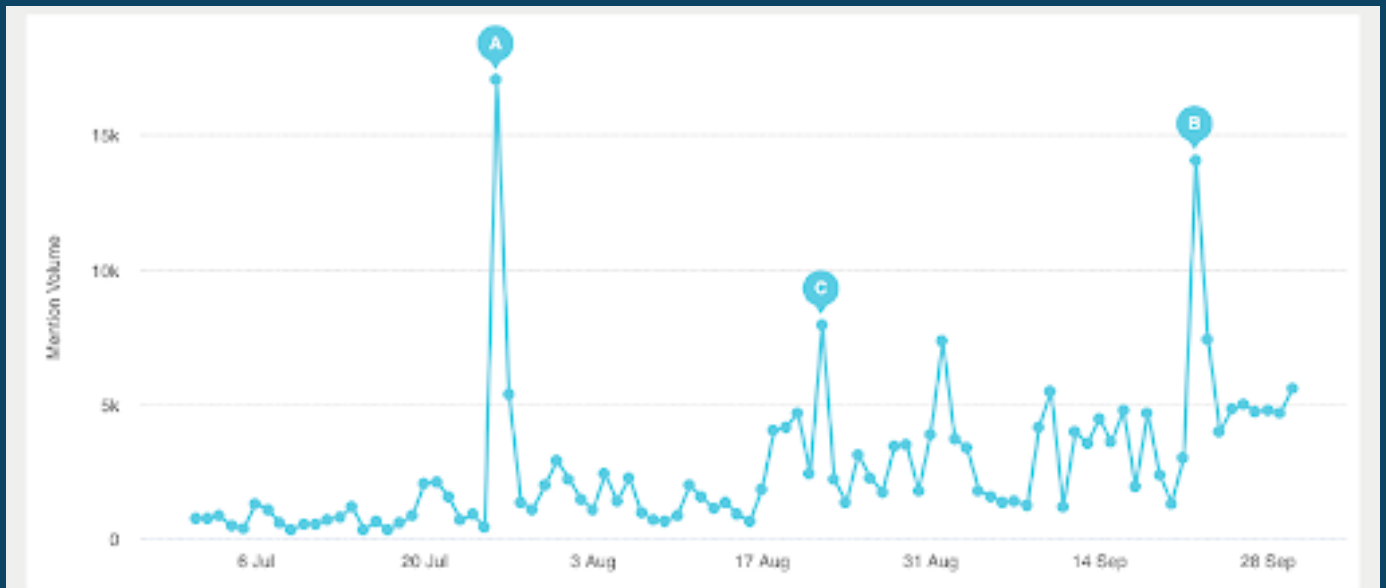
## Platform Engagement Comparison Without Twitter

# Sentiment Analysis

Due to Rock the Vote's focus on promoting voting information and voter engagement, sentiment remains fairly consistent across each platform. Differences in sentiment primarily occur around events related to voting. Ultimately, one platform's sentiment is not significantly different than the sentiment of another platform as it relates to a particular event, but rather the event itself predicts the resulting sentiment. Posts related to certain sentiments also had a much larger impact than posts related to other sentiments. Posts related to joy, anger, and fear had a significantly higher mention volume than posts relating to sadness, disgust, and surprise.



# Spike Analysis



**August 31** - n = 196; "We Vote. We Rise." the final event of Rock the Vote's virtual #DemocracySummer2020 initiative took place. Featured women voices in politics such as political commentator Tara Setmayer, Mass. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, and former NM Congresswoman Michelle Grisham

**September 22** - n = 787; National Voter Registration Day. Rock the Vote and many affiliated organizations spent the day reminding everyone to make sure they are registered to vote and to check that their voting information is accurate and up to date.

**September 29** - n = 253; On this day, there were special elections in both Texas and Georgia. Rock the Vote encouraged voters in these regions to get out and vote while sparking the discussion that local races can be just as important as top-of-ballot races.

NOTE: 4th Tuesday of Sept. = national voter registration day

Voter registration AND Information: unique authors spike the biggest events that corresponded with the spikes I saw were:

Democratic National Convention: Aug 17-20

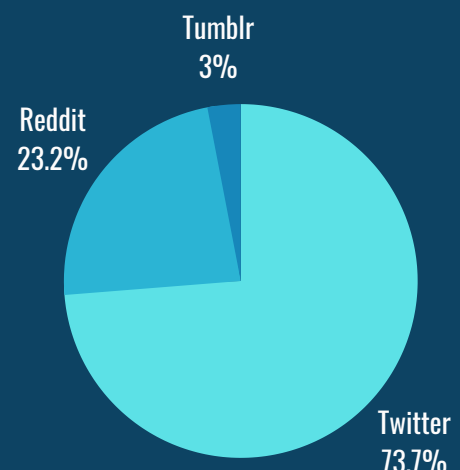
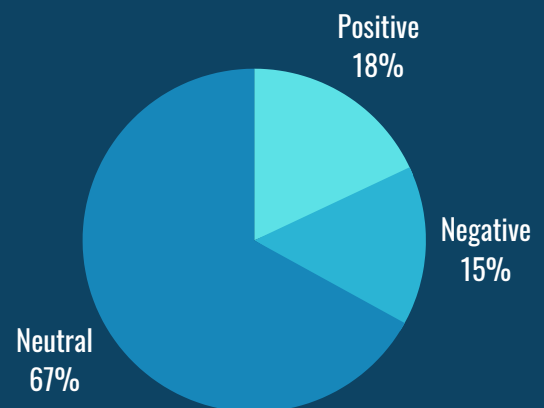
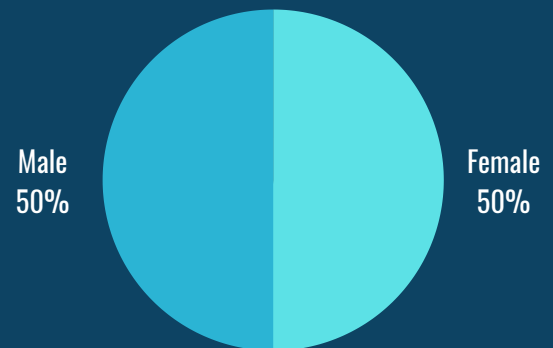
Republican Convention: Aug 24-27

First presidential Debate: Sept. 29th

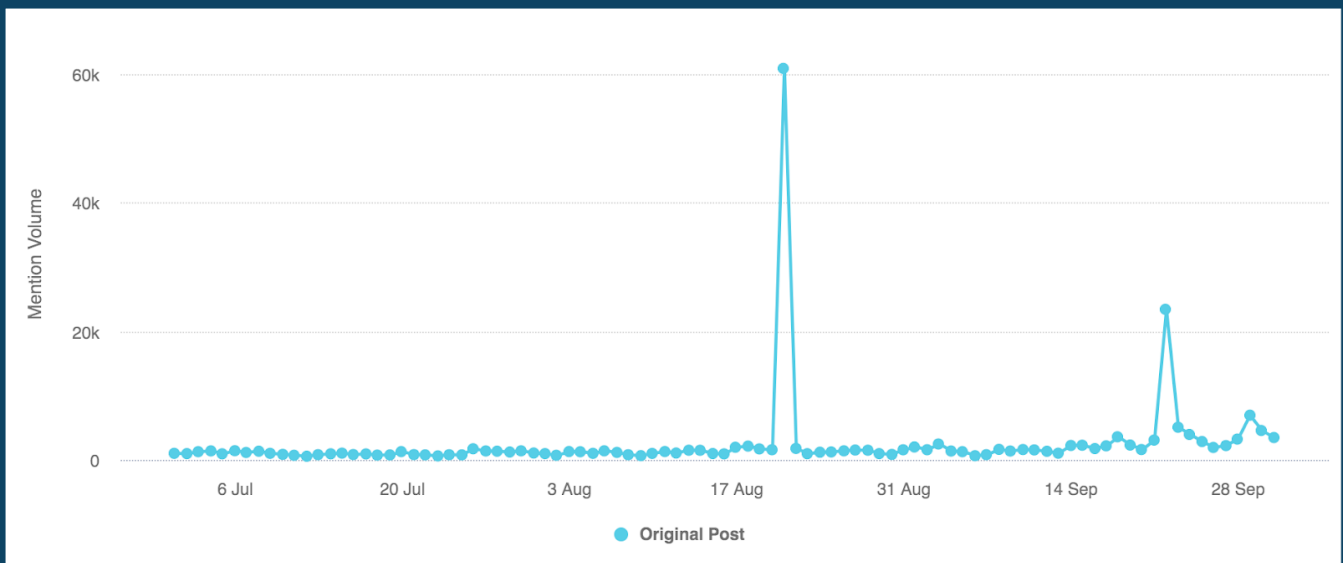
## Voter Participation Conversation

The conversation surrounding voter participation takes place mainly on Twitter. A lot of people emphasize that this election is bigger than any before it. There are also a lot of posts with “countdowns” to election day or specific dates related to the election, such as registration deadlines or deadlines to vote early or by mail. Many of the larger voices and figures are presumably left-leaning, though there are definitely voices from both sides engaging in the conversation.

<b>Account Analyzed:</b>	@RockTheVote
<b>Time Period:</b>	July 01, 2020 - Oct 01, 2020
<b>Total Number of Posts:</b>	~409,000
<b>Trending Topics &amp; Hashtags:</b>	"Plan your vote, mail in votes, voice heard on november 3 #vote, #voteready, #nationalvoterregistr ationday
<b>Key Influential Users:</b>	The Lincoln Project, Michelle Obama, Kerry Washington
<b>Top Linked Sites:</b>	iwillvote.com, vote.org, uga.gov/register tovot



# Spike Analysis



**August 21** -  $n = 60,860$ ; The Democratic National Convention took place August 17-20. With the Democratic nominees officially selected, many users and organizations began to shift their focus on encouraging people to take the steps to make sure their voices are heard.

**September 22** -  $n = 23,400$ ; National Voter Registration Day. Influential figures including NY Governor Cuomo, Leonardo DiCaprio, Bernice King, and Conan O'Brien, among tons of others, used their platforms to encourage everyone who is able to get registered to vote, often accompanied by the hashtag `#NationalVoterRegistrationDay`

**Voter Participation:** There is a massive spike around Aug. 20th for mentions!

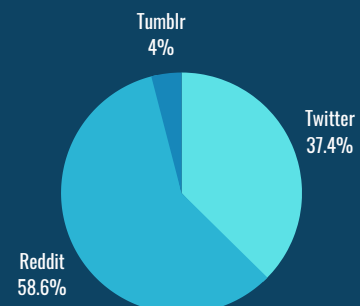
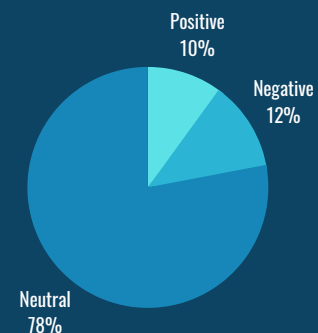
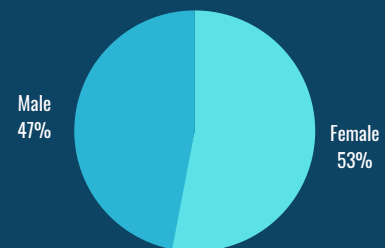
We can assume this happened because of the political climate. With 2020 as an election year, and our time frame of study set from July- to the end of Sept. we expected to see an increase in the conversation on social media. As far as why this spike was so sharp and sudden, we are not entirely sure, but this date does correlate with the Democratic National Convention



## Voter Participation Conversation: Mail-in Voting

The conversation around mail-in voting is generally positive. A large majority of the posts contain relevant information for people planning to vote early by mail, including deadlines for requesting ballots, how to request ballots accompanied by links, and state-specific information since laws about mail-in voting can vary across states. The pandemic is relevant to the conversation since it was one of the largest driving factors for the surge in mail-in voting with this election.

<b>Account Analyzed:</b>	@RockTheVote
<b>Time Period:</b>	July 01, 2020 - Oct 01, 2020
<b>Total Number of Posts:</b>	~88,000
<b>Trending Topics:</b>	"Early vote" "Plan your vote" "Request your ballot" "Check your registration status"
<b>Top Unique Hashtags &amp; URLs:</b>	#votebymail vote.org nbcnews.com (state-by-state voting guide)

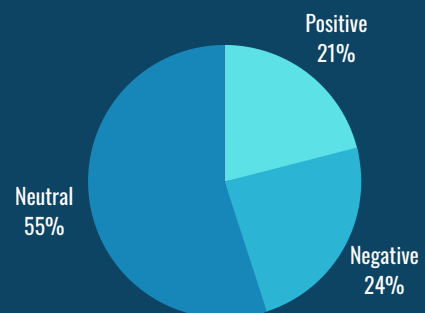
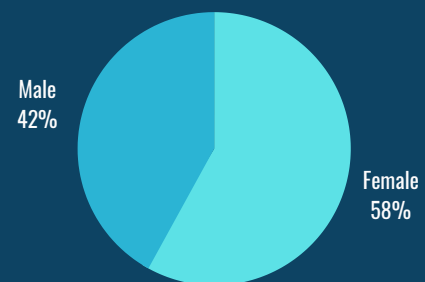


Positive conversations around this theme often talked about how easy it is to get registered to vote and vote by mail. They also talked positively about the power voters have when they organize. Negative conversations were more political, with some users such as CA Congressman Adam Schiff criticizing the GOP for quietly trying to roadblock voters through litigation and discouraging mail in voting.

## Voter Participation Conversation: Voter Turnout

A lot of the conversations surrounding the theme of voter turnout reference the polls that are reported by the media regarding election projections. A lot of popular pre-election polls projected a Biden victory, some with huge margins. A lot of left-leaning personalities and figures, including Joe Biden himself, implored American voters to “ignore the polls” and be sure to show up in force at the ballot box, either on election day in person, or figuratively through absentee voting. Other popular posts come from lesser known figures and even just regular people, urging people to get to the polls and bring a friend or two along with them. Authors stress the importance of this election and speak hopefully of achieving the highest voter turnout ever.

<b>Account Analyzed:</b>	@RockTheVote
<b>Time Period:</b>	July 01, 2020 - Oct 01, 2020
<b>Total Number of Posts:</b>	~74,000
<b>Trending Topics:</b>	“election day”, “polls to vote”, “registered voters”, “civic duty”
<b>Top Unique Hashtags &amp; URLs:</b>	#vote, #election, #nationalvoterregistrationday iwillvote.com, vote.org



The conversation around voter turnout is mainly on Twitter. The volume of posts about this theme on other platforms was negligible.

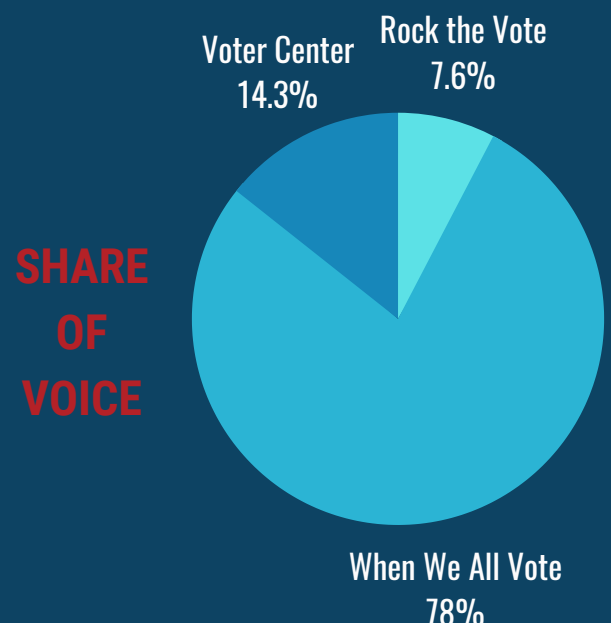
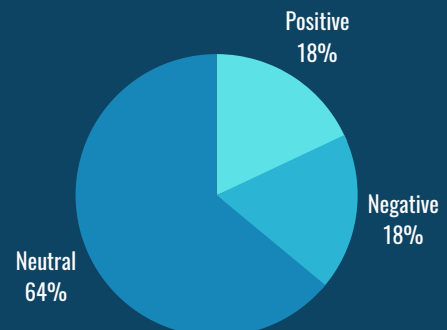
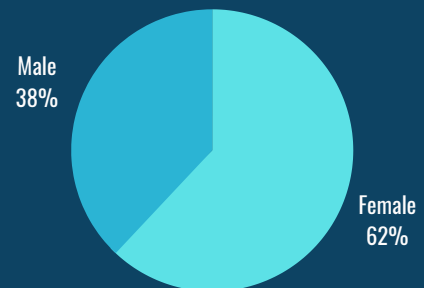
The positive conversations around voter turnout generally just talk about the importance of voting and encourage people to use their power. The more negative conversations aren’t usually about voting in general, but rather about the reasons why people think voting is so important. Some of these tweets have negative sentiments about one side or the other alongside messages pleading with people to use their right to vote so that their side wins.

# COMPETITION DATA

## When We All Vote & Voter Center Twitter Engagement

The conversation surrounding our competition (When We All Vote and VoterCenter) gave us a lot of insight. First and foremost, the number of posts from our two competing organizations was much larger than the sum of posts from Rock The Vote. Coming in at just over 241,000 posts, our competitors (combined) saw a few thousand posts less than quadruple our count. That said, engagement, sentiment, and demographics became more critical. Perhaps most notably, the demographic information relating to our competition was very different than that of Rock the Vote. Our competition had 68% of content posted by women.

<b>Accounts Analyzed:</b>	@WhenWeAllVote @VoterCenter
<b>Time Period:</b>	July 01, 2020 - Oct 01, 2020
<b>Total Number of Posts:</b>	241,050
<b>Trendig Topics:</b>	"Shortage of poll workers" "Voter registration" "Michelle Obama" "Register to vote online" "Vote by mail"
<b>Trendig Hashtags:</b>	#nationalvoterregistr ationday #couchparty
<b>Top Mentioned Tweeters:</b>	Michelle Obama Leonardo Dicaprio Alyssa Milano NBC Latino Adrian Carrasquillo Thomas Wesley



# Sentiment

Looking at key dates and posts with significant sentiment spikes, our competitors featured Michelle Obama and Kerry Washington, as well as hosted a “#couchparty” with other notable women. Similar to Rock The Vote, our competitors also feed on the hype surrounding nationally recognized political events such as the passing of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, National Voter Registration Day, and large scale activities of the president. These events largely reflect the sentiment expressed in posts by Rock The Votes competition. By sharing messages that strike an emotional chord with the public, we can theorize that they are seeing more engagement with their posts.



**Negative: September 12** - President Donald Trump held a "Great American Comeback" campaign rally at the Minden-Tahoe Airport near Reno, Nevada on Saturday night.



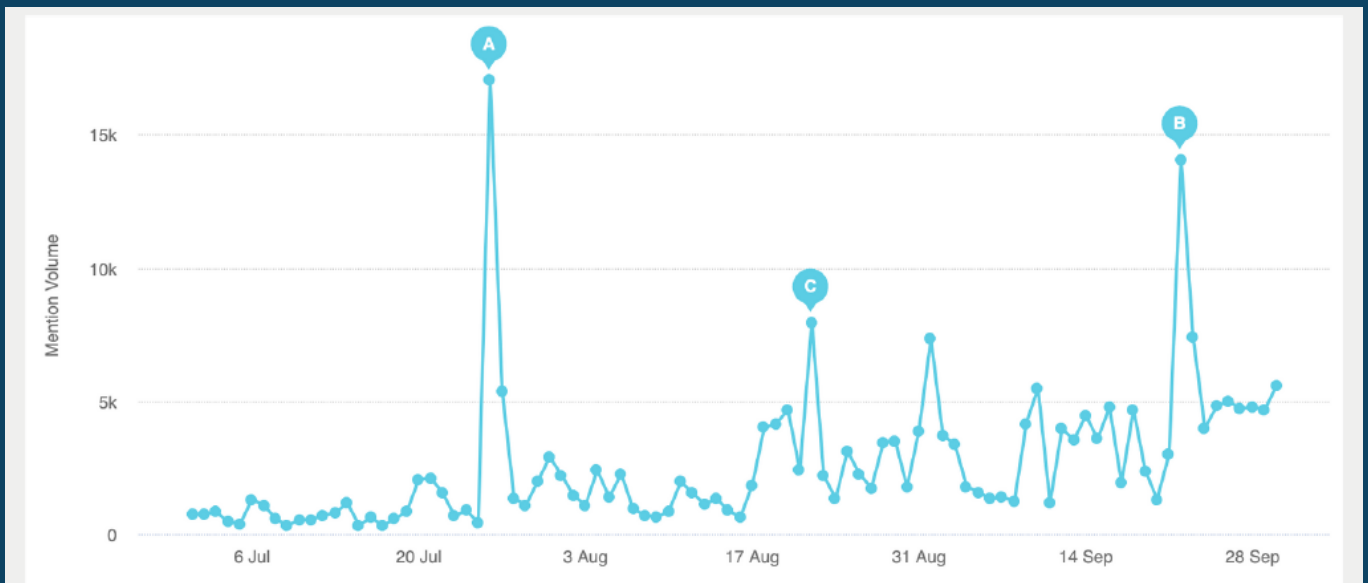
**Negative: September 18**- Ruth Bader Ginsberg dies



**Positive: August 22**- "'We vote to honor those who came before us and to protect those who will come after us.'

Meghan, The Duchess of Sussex, joined our #CouchParty with @samanthabarry, @ValerieJarrett, @YNB, @djdiamondkuts, and @angiemartinez for an inspiring night of strong women."

# Spike Analysis



The overall post volume for the competition continued to be fairly steady on Twitter throughout the given time frame except during these dates:

**July 26** -  $n = 17,070$ ; 100 days before the election

**September 22** -  $n = 14,080$ ; Michelle Obama live Instagram discussion about voter registration information

**August 22** -  $n = 7,960$ ; Duchess of Sussex live streams "Couch Party" discussion about the importance of female voting

# CUSTOM CLASSIFIERS

## **Organization Theme: Voter Registration**

("Rock the Vote" OR #RocktheVote OR @RocktheVote) AND ("voter registration" OR registration OR register OR "are you registered" OR registered OR ready OR prepared)

## **Organization Theme: Information**

("Rock the Vote" OR #RocktheVote OR @RocktheVote) AND ( "voting information" OR information OR info OR "voting locations" OR location OR "deadline to vote" OR deadline)

## **Topic: Voter Participation**

("voter participation" OR "register to vote" OR "request your ballot" OR "get to the polls" OR "make your voice heard")

The custom classifiers we chose for each part of our searches enabled us to sift through the noise. Twitter is a massive platform, and while Rock The Vote is an established account with a history, Brandwatch isn't perfect. We used words like "prepared" and phrases like "are you registered" in order to more accurately assess how Rock The Vote pertained to voter registration.

A similar process was done for our topic theme of information. We benefitted largely here by using the term "deadline to vote". Using a phrase like this takes the conversation about information and lets us see Tweets that are specifically pointed at a piece of information we found pertinent in the conversation of Rock The Vote as a whole.

For the topic Voter Participation, we wanted to get a better concept of the dialogue outside of Rock The Vote, but still connected to it. The process of selecting a topic was rooted in data and ended with a snapshot of how the Twitter world is discussing 'voter participation'. A unique note we made was that because so much of the conversation was neutral in terms of sentiment, we stretched our search to include "make your voice heard". This was intended to serve as a palette test for how users really felt about sharing a message.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## ACTIONABLE STRATEGY AND PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Actionable Strategy & Proposed Next Steps



- **Feature prominent figures and voices who resonate with our target audience and mission**
  - Our topic analysis of 'voter participation' found that women and minority voices consistently drew higher levels of engagement. Moving forward, it would be a good idea for RTV to incorporate well known female minority figures in conversations about minority voter turnout. Michelle Obama is a good example.
- **Pay close attention to election calendars and post heavy on days of significance**
  - We saw some of our highest engagement on days when national political events were happening. Posting on these days with information about volunteering and other forms of participation will be beneficial. An example of a day to take advantage of is September 22, National Voter Registration Day.
- **Increase hashtag usage**
  - While the #RocktheVote hashtag is emblematic of the organization, we noticed little effect on engagement. Take note of some of the more general hashtags used by RTV's competition that appear to drive engagement. It is also beneficial to use hashtags for certain events, such as #CouchParty, a livestreamed discussion about the importance of female voting with Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex.
- **Share information in concise, easily readable formats**
  - Our owned data analysis showed that posts including infographics were far more successful in terms of engagement than tweets with other media formats such as video and external links. RTV should consistently utilize infographics in their posts to relay important information such as election registration info and dates in a way that can be quickly digested and shared by the audience but is still visually pleasing.



- **Continue posting neutral (information heavy) content and post more positive content**
  - In terms of engagement, RTV saw very little success with negative sentiment posts. More information heavy content achieved greater engagement, so it is good practice for RTV to continue posting content with information. If posts are not neutral, a positive sentiment could be beneficial if we want to increase engagement since posts like these are more likely to be shared.
- **Talk about volunteering**
  - In our owned data analysis, the average engagement of tweets focused on volunteering was very high in comparison to other themes. That said, it would be beneficial for RTV to continue and possibly increase the number of posts related to volunteer opportunities, as they become available of course. Examples could be seeking volunteers to register voters.
- **Stay on top of conversations surrounding other voting-centered organizations**
  - It will be important to continue monitoring the conversations around other voting-related organizations so that we can take advantage of timely hashtags and be aware of specific themes that are resonating with audiences and driving engagement.
- **Be entertaining AND functional**
  - Rock the Vote's social media pages can draw their target audience in with celebrities and political figures, but ultimately people will follow and continue to engage with RTV if they find use in it. RTV should continue providing helpful information regarding registration, events, and opportunities. If they position themselves as a hub for resources for voters, RTV can maintain strong levels of engagement and continuously increase their following and reach.