NARRATIVE INSIGHTS

Bridging the Ideological Divide: A Research-Driven Strategy to Engage Both MAGA and Non-MAGA Voters

CONCEPT

What messages can appeal to and unite both MAGA and non-MAGA audiences?
Narrative's Creative team developed an experimental, rough-cut test ad centered on American manufacturing as part of an internal study. The goal was to incorporate language and visuals that would resonate with both MAGA and non-MAGA audiences while identifying unifying themes capable of bridging partisan divides.

ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS

To understand what specifically in the ad captured attention and why, our Insights team applied mixed-method research with over 500 voters that included:

- Quantitative and qualitative **opinion research**

- Moment-to-moment **dial testing**

- **AI-assisted analysis** of specific responses to identify what unites and divides respondents ideologically

CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE ADS

WHAT UNITED AUDIENCES

UNEXPECTED UNITY: CROSS-IDEOLOGICAL APPEAL

Overwhelmingly positive reactions from voters. 83% of all voters reacted positively to the ad (Strongly/Somewhat Agree). This included 95% for MAGA voters and 74% for non-MAGA voters—strong majorities of both.

80% said the ad felt "authentic and believable," and 76% agreed it made them "proud to be part of America," including 65% of non-MAGA voters and 96% of MAGA voters.

> *"It made me proud to be an American because it showed what America is all about."*
> *- MAGA Respondent*

> *"The ad felt very upbeat, from the narrator's positive tone to the smiling characters."*
> *- Non-MAGA Respondent*

THEMES OF COMMON GROUND

Unity & Patriotism: 78% overall, and the majority of MAGA (93%) and non-MAGA (67%) voters said the ad "speaks to people like me and our values."

> *"All of the messaging about making our country better, stronger, and more prosperous resonated with me."*
> *- MAGA Respondent*

American-Made Goods & Jobs: 85% said the ad communicated the "importance of rebuilding American manufacturing."

> *"Producing products locally creates jobs."*
> *- Non-MAGA Respondent*

Family & Community: There was strong cross-ideological support for themes of togetherness and supporting middle-class families.

> *"I can identify with the ad because it is family-oriented, emphasizes hard work and honest work, brings people together."*
> *- MAGA Respondent*

Industrial Past: Phrases referencing America's industrial past struck an emotional chord.

> *"I remember when people could afford a house and car on one salary, and we need to get back to that."*
> *- Non-MAGA Respondent*

WHERE TENSIONS EMERGED

PEOPLE VS. PROFIT FRAMING

This messaging divided both MAGA and non-MAGA voters, briefly slowing momentum during the dial test.

Data shows 10-13% disagreement on profit-related language.

> *"I like the message, but it still has to make sense economically."*
> *- Non-MAGA Respondent*

TRADE AND ISOLATIONISM

MAGA respondents embraced nationalist trade language; non-MAGA voters raised concerns about feasibility. Mentions of "supply chains crossed bridges, not oceans" elicited some pushback from about 10-12% of voters.

> *"We should make the stuff we need and stop importing everything."*
> *- MAGA Respondent*

ROMANTICIZING THE PAST VS. MODERN COMPLEXITY

Nostalgic elements resonated, but non-MAGA voters were likelier to temper the sentiment cautiously.

> *"The ad reminds me of a better life when I was a child... but we also need to think about today's challenges."*
> *- Non-MAGA Respondent*

CALIBRATE TOWARD SHARED VALUES

The most straightforward way to do this is by substituting the closing shot of a bridge with an image of people to emphasize togetherness and community.

REFRAME PEOPLE VS. PROFIT

Address concerns with the "profits vs. people" framing by using a less binary frame, such as "shared prosperity."

VISUAL SHIFT

Recast nostalgia as motivation, not a destination. Incorporate more forward-leaning imagery and fewer black-and-white throwbacks to the past (such as the waitress image).

TAKE TWO

We produced a second cut of the experimental ad using the findings from our analysis - refining the script and visuals to address the points of tension and strengthen appeal across ideological lines. Based on the mixed-method research approach, we were able to identify and optimize for the recalibrations faster and more cost-efficiently than traditional message testing methods.

FINAL OUTCOME

THE NARRATIVE ADVANTAGE - COMMUNICATIONS INFORMED BY PACE, PRECISION, AND PERSPECTIVE

This test reflects the seamless collaboration between our Creative and Insights functions, showing how an integrated, research-driven strategy paired with mixed-methods design generates deeper insights, sharper narratives, and more resonant content--setting a new standard for moving critical audiences. To see the full analysis and watch the ads, **click here.**

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Reach out to **info@narrativestrategies.com** for a deeper dive into our data, strategic counsel, and other communications, reputation management, and public affairs capabilities.

ABOUT NARRATIVE

Narrative is a full-service strategic communications firm creatively solving today's most demanding reputational and public affairs challenges at the convergence of business, media, and politics. Narrative is a premier partner for the world's most influential brands by building upon our deep experience synthesizing complex issues and executing public affairs, media and public relations, crisis response, and other mission-critical initiatives. Our expertise spans industries and issue sets, including biopharmaceuticals, consumer products, energy, financial services, healthcare, manufacturing, tax, trade, technology, and more. We are powered by an award-winning team of senior strategists, detail-oriented practitioners, and imaginative creators who provide premium-level counsel and integrated service offerings that shape the ever-evolving communications landscape. To learn more, visit **narrativestrategies.com**.