

Comment from Dr Andrew Hughes, Australian National University:

In terms of this campaign there definitely seems to be a trend emerging:

- Labor are going very high on ad number and increasingly spend on digital platforms. These ads are tending to become increasingly negative as the campaign goes on.
- The Coalition are running a more focused campaign, with a smaller number of ads being run on the digital platforms, but have been largely negative since the campaign started.
- Linked to the above is the role of the UAP – they act as a major party on spend and volume, and being seen as conservative are perhaps the foil for the Liberal Party so taking some of the heavy lifting off of the Coalition in terms of attacking Labor and the minor parties/independents. They are also contributing significantly, as in 2019, to voter fatigue when it comes to the campaign itself.
- Some organisations, like Greenpeace, are running large number of ads on social media at low spend. This is usually a sign of possibly 2 strategies: 1. Very targeted advertising at a micro market, so won't be seen or discussed by those outside that market 2. Research for a campaign on TV, radio or even print where the ad rates are significantly higher than social.
- And starting to become more noticeable this campaign is the use of the controversial/disinformation ads by some, like Advance, to obtain attention and awareness of the attacking party or candidate, at the expense of other parties and candidates, not just the one being directly attacked. These ones generate a lot of interest and discussion.
- The Teal Campaigns are noticeable for making global issues localised, but also their methods being very grass roots based. Everything from the use of volunteers, to meet and greets, fund raising and engagement online and offline. They are perhaps the most effective this election for the use of positive messaging to achieve significant vote change in a short period of time. Honourable mention here to David Pocock in the ACT. But that said they do raise, similar to Clive, the role of powerful stakeholders in driving agenda in Australian elections, and how campaigns are not just funded but the money required to take on the established duopoly in an effective campaign.