# Targeting the Right Audience Across Screens to Win a Contested and Expensive Congressional Seat

DEEP ROOT

**Client:** Comstock for Congress

**Race:** Virginia's Tenth Congressional District

## SITUATION ANALYSIS:

On October 19, 2016, the Cook Political Report changed the race rating of Congresswoman Barbara Comstock's (VA-10) re-election campaign to a Toss-Up from Lean Republican, citing the challenge posed by the top of the ticket in "well educated suburban districts" like Comstock's, located outside Washington, DC in Northern Virginia.

> **VA-10 had a Reluctant Republican audience index of 339, the second highest district in the country.**

To Comstock's media team, comprised of buying agency Strategic Media Placement (SMP) and media analytics firm Deep Root Analytics (DRA), this was not a surprise. Months before, **DRA had identified VA-10 as the district with the second greatest density of "Reluctant Republicans" – traditional GOP voters with hesitancies about Donald Trump as the party's nominee – in the country.**

Well before Cook's race change, SMP and DRA had formulated a plan to target these individuals across screens to ensure they turned out to vote in support of Comstock. Deep Root identified these voters through an in-depth survey and modeling process before matching these individuals into cable set-top box data to see how they consume TV. DRA also matched these voters, along with information on how much TV each voter was likely to

watch, into digital platforms for cross-screen targeting executed by SMP.

By October 19, **SMP was already executing media buys on the programs most likely to be watched by Reluctant Republicans in the Washington, DC market while targeting the members of this group least likely to be watching TV through a sophisticated digital advertising campaign.**

And when Democratic outside groups poured money into the district late in the election cycle – in total, Democrats spent over $10 million in their effort to unseat Comstock – SMP increased its digital targeting of these groups by expanding the audience to reach all Reluctant Republicans except for those most likely to watch a lot of television.

> **By targeting Deep Root Audiences on TV & Online, Comstock for Congress executed a media campaign built around audience harmony.**

From October 1 through Election Day, Comstock maintained a 52% share of impressions against the Reluctant Republican audience. She also produced more impressions to this audience on broadcast TV on 65% of the days during this time period than her Democratic opponent.
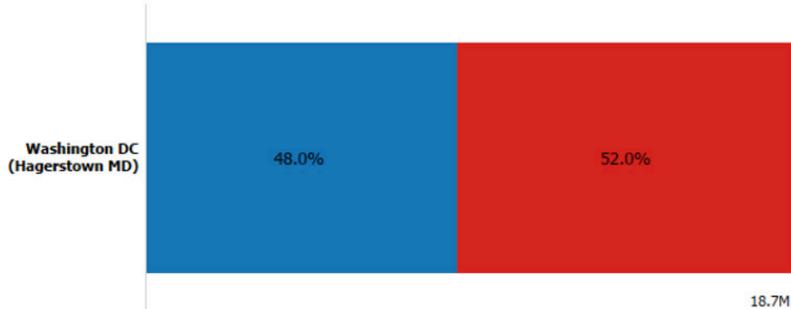
# AIR WARS: STATE OF THE RACE OVERVIEW

## Sponsor Overview

| | | # of Creatives | # of Markets | Target Imp |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **REPUBLICAN** | COMSTOCK, BARBARA | 4 | 1 | 9.7M |
| | COMSTOCK, BARBARA & NATIONAL REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE | 1 | 1 | 0.1M |
| | **Total** | 5 | 1 | 9.7M |
| **DEMOCRAT** | BENNETT, LUANN & DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN.. | 3 | 1 | 9.0M |
| | **Total** | 3 | 1 | 9.0M |

(Select Sponsor to act as filter. Hold down CTRL on PCs or CMD on Macs to select multple)

**Daypart or Market?**
Market

### Market Share of Reluctant Republicans Impressions

| Washington DC (Hagerstown MD) | 48.0% | 52.0% |
|---|---|---|

18.7M

(Select Market to act as filter)

### NET Reluctant Republicans Impressions
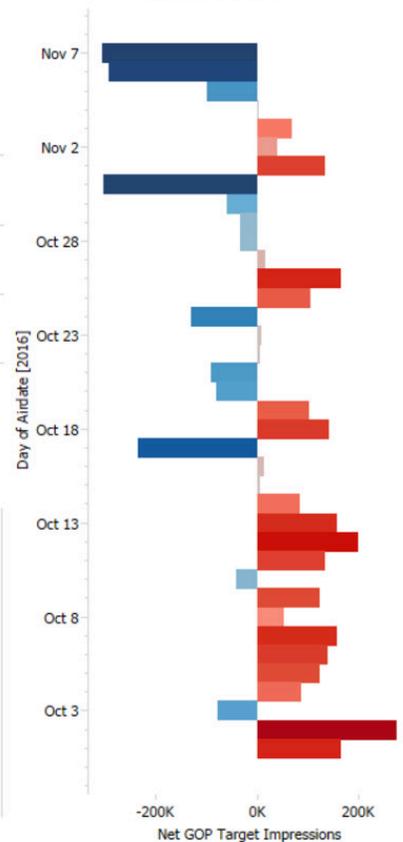


Day of Airdate [2016] / Net GOP Target Impressions
Nov 7, Nov 2, Oct 28, Oct 23, Oct 18, Oct 13, Oct 8, Oct 3
-200K, 0K, 200K

Comstock simultaneously ran a robust digital campaign targeting the Reluctant Republicans least likely to be watching TV to ensure that her message reached the entirety of the target audience with consistency. The consideration of TV consumption was highly innovative – it ensured that Comstock's campaign was as efficient as possible by talking to voters where they were most likely to be consuming media.

Using a number of cutting edge digital ad delivery tactics to most efficiently target Reluctant Republicans as well as testing contrast messaging towards likely supporters of her opponent, Luann Bennett, SMP was able to drive home consistent messaging across digital mediums and cross-channel marketing platforms that resulted in video view

through rates and click through rates that far surpassed industry benchmarks – meaning visitors of the Comstock for Congress website to ultimately spend upwards of 1-2 minutes longer on average.

As a result, Comstock for Congress ran a highly targeted and effective ad campaign that reached the voters most likely to support Comstock regardless of support for the Republican nominee across screens. **Most importantly, Comstock won – and out-performed the top of the ticket by 11 points in the district.**

By identifying the voters that mattered early and targeting them consistently across screens, SMP and DRA helped Congresswoman Comstock win re-election in an extremely expensive and contested congressional seat in 2016.

Deep Root Analytics leverages media analytics to surface hidden data insights and provides greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability for media buying decisions. Using proprietary methodology, Deep Root Analytics matches first-party target data to a blended set of large-linked, multi-sourced datasets and makes available a suite of media analytics dashboards and tools, including custom ratings, optimized media buys, ad occurrence evaluation, media mix modeling, and unduplicated reach analysis.

**For more information, follow @DeepRootX and visit deeprootanalytics.com**