AngusReidStrategies

FEDERAL POLITICAL LANDSCAPE: TESTING PUBLIC REACTION TO THE CONSERVATIVE ATTACK ADS

Conservative Attack Ads Didn't Work – Perceptions of Liberal Leader Dion Remain Stable

Ads More Effective among Canadians with No Firm Opinions of Dion

From January 30 to 31, 2007, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 909 adult Canadians from our Angus Reid Forum online panel. The margin of error for the total sample is ±3.3%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted using the most current Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in totals are due to rounding.

Using our Angus Reid Forum online panel platform, respondents had the chance to watch three TV commercials while responding the survey thanks to an embedded video link. The ads were originally released by the Conservative Party of Canada on Jan. 28. After answering a brief series of questions, respondents viewed the ads once or twice on their computer screens. Respondents were then asked the same series of questions in order to measure the impact of the commercials on their opinions and perceptions of Dion.

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[Toronto – Feb. 8, 2007] - An Angus Reid Strategies poll has found that the highly-publicized Conservative Party television commercial campaign—airing during such high-ratings programming as the Super Bowl—had a negligible impact on the perceptions of Canadians on Stéphane Dion.

Using the Angus Reid Forum online panel platform, respondents had the chance to watch three TV commercials while responding the survey thanks to an embedded video link. Before viewing the ads, 40% of Canadians said Dion would make the best Prime Minister of Canada, while 36% selected Stephen Harper. After viewing the spots, the percentages remained almost identical, with Dion at 39% and Harper at 36%.

Of four characteristics tested, the views of respondents of Dion's leadership remain practically untouched. Before watching the ads, 45% of respondents agreed that Dion "has what it takes to lead Canada". Following the ads, the number dropped to 42%. At the same time, the number of respondents who disagree with the statement changed from 38% to 43%.

Dion's perceived aptitude to manage taxpayer money in an ethical and wise manner garners the largest negative impact, as the percentage of respondents who doubt his abilities rises 10 points from 36% to 46% after watching the ads.

The trustworthiness of the Liberal leader to keep his promises also suffers a slight negative impact, as the number of those who express doubts about Dion rises eight points from 38% to 46%. In both cases, the ad has altered the balance of opinion on these measures from a slightly positive perception to a negative one.

The percentage of respondents who do not believe that Dion will improve Canada's environment increases seven points from 30% to 37% after watching the ads. However, in this case more Canadians (47%) continue to hold a positive view of Dion.

Regionally, the ads were shown to have the greatest impact on viewers in Eastern Canada, particularly in Ontario. The ads were also shown to have a more significant impact on female respondents—both demographics of special interest for the Conservatives.

Those with no firm opinion of the Liberal leader are the most susceptible to the Tory campaign. Over time, the Conservative strategy could prove most effective among undecided voters.

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No Significant Impact on Preference for Prime Minister

Best Prime Minister

Q1. Of the following two federal party leaders, which one do you think would be the best Prime Minister of Canada?
Q4. Now, of the following two federal party leaders, which one do you think would be the best Prime Minister of Canada?

Agreement / Best PM	Before Viewing Ads	After Viewing Ads
Stéphane Dion	40%	39% (- 1%)
Stephen Harper	36%	36% (No change)
Don't know	24%	26% (+ 2%)

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Minor Negative Impact on Dion's Perceived Ethics, Integrity, & Green Credibility

Impact of the Ads

Q2. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.
Q3. Now that you have seen this ad, we have a few questions for you. First, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements again.

	Before Viewing Ads			After Viewing Ads		
Agreement / Attributes	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Stéphane Dion has what it takes to lead Canada.	45%	38%	17%	42% (- 3%)	43% (+ 5%)	15% (- 2%)
If elected Prime Minister, Stéphane Dion will improve Canada's environment.	53%	30%	18%	47% (- 6%)	37% (+ 7%)	16% (- 2%)
I trust Stéphane Dion to keep his promises.	44%	38%	19%	40% (- 4%)	46% (+ 8%)	13% (- 6%)
If elected Prime Minister, Stéphane Dion will manage taxpayer money wisely and ethically.	42%	36%	22%	40% (- 2%)	46% (+ 10%)	14% (- 8%)

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Respondents Watched Three TV Commercials while Responding

The Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com) is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. Moreover, Angus Reid Strategies' premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Angus Reid Strategies is a dynamic North American full-service public affairs and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995. Stationed in offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal, our team of 100 research and operational specialists provide research solutions across every type and sector of research.

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**