



NAVIGATING THE 2026 US MIDTERMS & BLACK FRIDAY RAMP UP

Balancing creator marketing during a politically charged holiday season

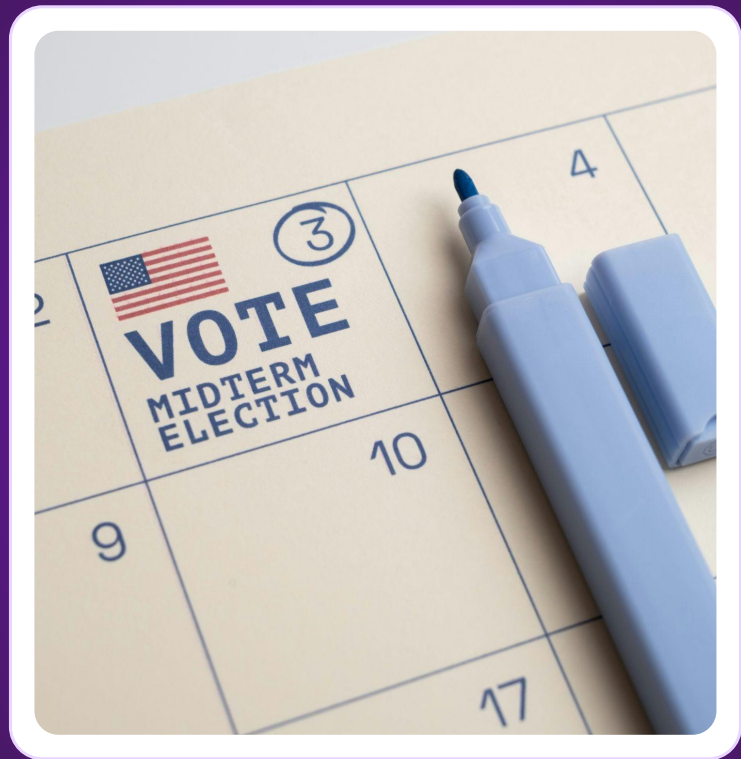
A CRITICAL HOLIDAY SHOPPING WINDOW MEETS ELECTION SEASON



The 2026 US midterms on November 3 fall during the ramp-up to Black Friday and the holiday shopping season.

The same feeds where consumers look for deals, promotions, and gift inspiration from creators will also be filled with political commentary, ads, and election updates.

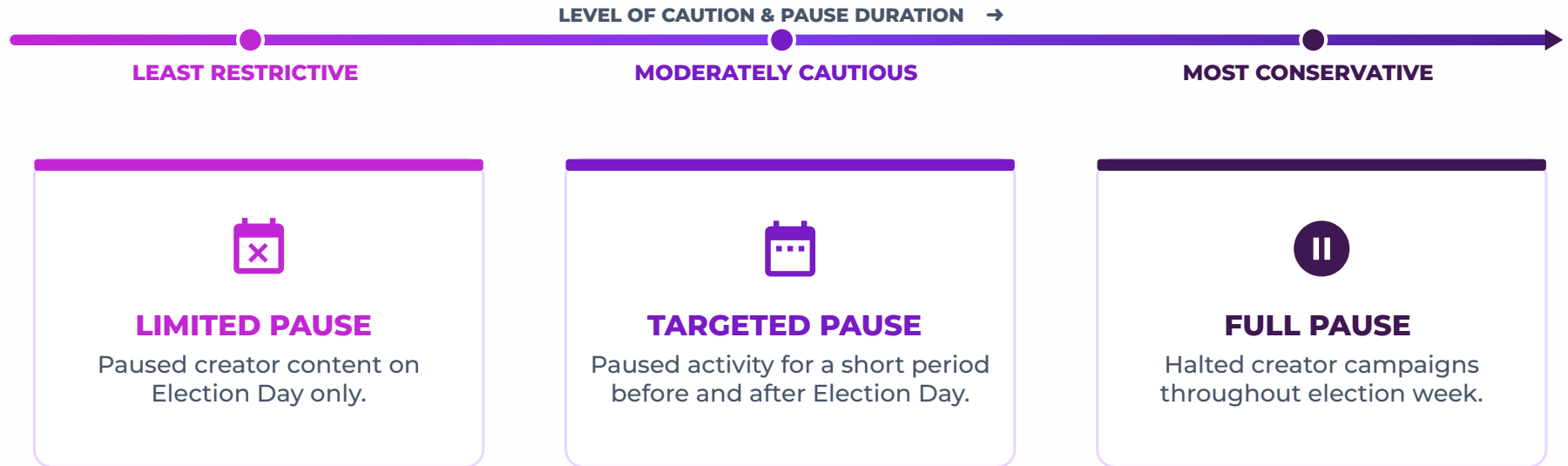
The challenge for brands is balancing election-related sensitivities with the need to stay visible during a critical holiday shopping window.



BRANDS HAVE TAKEN DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO ELECTION SEASON



During the 2024 presidential election, brands varied in how they balanced campaign continuity with election-related sensitivities.



CONSUMERS DON'T NECESSARILY EXPECT BRANDS TO GO QUIET



Americans are more than twice as likely to want brands to keep posting than to pause social media entirely during the election.

23%

KEEP POSTING BUT AVOID POLITICS

Want brands to keep posting regular content while avoiding politics

11%

PAUSE ALL POSTING

Want brands to pause posting entirely until the election passes

44%

NO CHANGE IN SOCIAL HABITS

Say their social media habits will not change during the elections.



Source: [Sprout Social](#)

CREATORS OFTEN ADJUST THEIR CONTENT & PARTNERSHIPS



From participating in political campaigns to mobilizing their communities around causes, creators engage with politics in different ways.

This extends beyond political-focused creators, as those across verticals navigate political issues, personal views, and audience expectations.

Nearly half of creators say they adjust their content and brand partnership strategies during election cycles, reflecting how the political climate can influence their approach to sponsored content.



of creators have adjusted their content and brand partnership strategies during election cycles.

Source: [Collective Voice](#)

WHAT CREATOR CONTENT CAN OFFER DURING ELECTION SEASON



CREATORS CAN HELP BRANDS CONNECT WITH AUDIENCES AND NAVIGATE RISING MEDIA COSTS.

77%

of voters feel exhausted by how much is happening politically

A CHANGE OF PACE

Creator content offers entertainment, inspiration, and product discovery amid a steady stream of political commentary and campaign ads. Sponsored content can help brands show up in a more welcome context.

\$11.07B

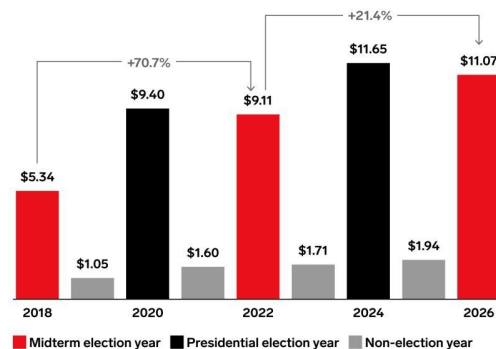
projected U.S. political ad spending in 2026, up 21% from 2022

AN ALTERNATIVE TO RISING MEDIA COSTS

Political ad spending can drive up competition for paid media inventory and increase costs. Creator partnerships can offer a more cost-efficient way to reach audiences and maintain holiday momentum when media costs rise.

2026 POLITICAL AD SPENDING

Political Ad Spending in 2026 Will Be 21.4% Higher Than in 2022 and Only Slightly Down From 2024
US political ad spending in billions, 2018-2026



Note: includes advertising related to federal, state, or local politics, including elections and lobbying activities; includes advertising directly related to legislative and regulatory issues; includes digital (desktop/laptop, mobile, and other internet-connected devices), directories, magazines, newspapers, out-of-home, radio, and TV
Source: EMARKETER Forecast, April 2026

366535

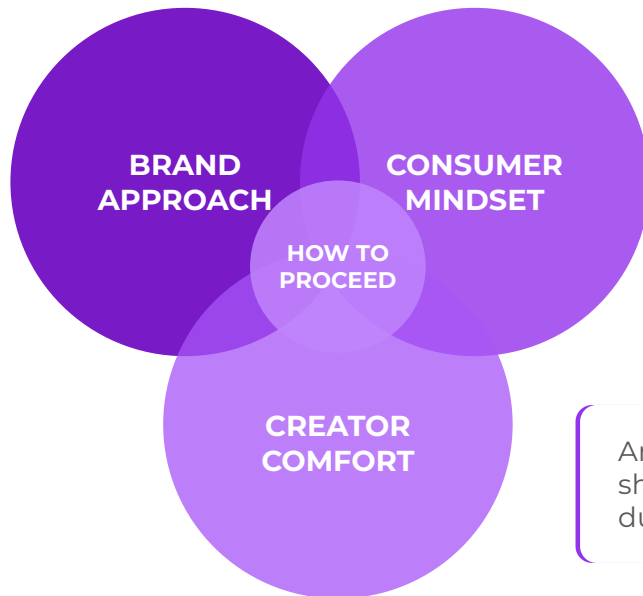
EM | EMARKETER

THREE FACTORS TO GUIDE HOW TO PROCEED



BALANCE BUSINESS PRIORITIES, AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS, AND CREATOR PREFERENCES TO DETERMINE THE RIGHT APPROACH.

Is the brand maintaining business as usual, scaling back activity, or pausing campaigns?



Will promotional content feel relevant and welcome, or out of step with the moment?

Are creator partners comfortable sharing sponsored content during this period?

Use these considerations to decide what to keep on track, what to adapt, and what may need to wait.

A FEW WAYS WE CAN SUPPORT YOU



01

DEFINE THE PAUSE WINDOW

Evaluate your campaign timing, brand priorities, and the election calendar to identify potential pause windows.

Determines whether and when to adjust activity effectively.

02

ALIGN WITH CREATOR PARTNERS

Connect with creators to understand their plans, discuss comfort levels, and align on content timing.

Sets clear expectations during the election period.

03

MONITOR LIVE CONTENT

Monitor creator content as it goes live, flagging potential brand-safety or contextual concerns.

Assesses when real-time adjustments may be needed.



THANK YOU