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Head to Head: NeuroFocus Measures Brainwaves to Reveal Best Communication Styles for 'Brand Obama' and 'Brand McCain'

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BERKELEY, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

They've been scripted, focus grouped, and now they'll be delivered to hundreds of millions of television viewers worldwide. But will they be effective in capturing attention, engaging emotions, and remaining memorable?

NeuroFocus, the world's leading company in the field of neurological testing, applied the same highly advanced, patented, brainwave-monitoring technology that it employs for its clients' biggest worldwide brands to answer that core question about the Presidential candidates' approaches to the economy. NeuroFocus conducted a series of neurological tests involving a carefully-selected, screened, and equally-weighted panel of Democrat and Republican voters prior to the first Presidential debate. The company measured brainwave activity, tracked eye movement, and acquired galvanic skin response data from the participants to arrive at its findings. Those results were then analyzed using NeuroFocus' proprietary IRF-Issue Response Framework.

Through intense research over the last four years studying a wide variety of various organizations' most and least effective responses to critical corporate issues and crises, NeuroFocus has developed the Issue Response Framework. The framework isolates, aligns, and extracts the response modality that best matches the issue and the corporate brand/spokesperson. The IRF is particularly relevant to the corporate crises unfolding on Wall Street today and their eventual repair.

The core question NeuroFocus focused on answering was: as McCain and Obama respond to the current economic crisis, which response modalities within the Issue Response Framework best suit the issue and each man's unique brand image?

Statements representing different modes of communications regarding the economy were tested. The research results showed clearly that the most effective and least effective response modalities for each candidate fell into these categories:

McCain: Best and Worst Communication Style Regarding The Economy:

Rational and Confrontational communication styles are the most effective

Semantic Dissection communication styles are the least effective

Obama: Best and Worst Communication Style Regarding The Economy

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Rational communication styles are the most effective

Confrontational communication styles are the least effective

Stemming from NeuroFocus' research, there are numerous strategic implications for the debate at hand. For McCain, engaging in lengthy semantic and definitional discussions would be the most unproductive strategy. Instead, for McCain adopting a challenging, confrontational, and thoughtfully rational approach would resonate very well neurologically.

On the other hand, for Obama, a strategy to confront must be presented only as a rational question, and not as an open challenge. NeuroFocus' research shows that it is particularly obvious that even though the issue of the economy, especially of the loss of homes, is a deeply personal and emotionally charged topic, emotional responses regarding the Economy do not resonate as well at the subconscious level of the brain as well rational responses. To achieve the most effective neurological response from the viewing audience, hype and hyperbole should be subjugated to reasoned and thoughtful statements, at least for this topic, and at this time.

"The application of the Issue Response Framework to the current most critical issue-the economy-and the debate is a novel and new application illustrating the power of our neurological testing technology," said Dr. A.K. Pradeep, Chief Executive Officer of NeuroFocus. "As is true for any brand, surveys and focus groups can't say for sure which message works best, because they can't measure at the level of the brain where we do. These days no CEO or corporate communications pro worth the title can afford to accept that degree of uncertainty when it comes to operating his or her business., Surely running the executive branch of the government of the world's largest economy should be no different."

"But we can get at that essential truth, because we capture voters' actual brainwave activity, deep down in the subconscious mind where the real decisions are made. What we learned from this IRF study has profound meaning, not just for the candidates and the campaigns, but beyond that, for any business or other organization with a pressing need to know what specific types of messaging resonate best in the marketplace of ideas."

NeuroFocus monitors brainwave activity using high density arrays of EEG (electroencephalographic) sensors, and complements that regimen with pixel-level eye movement tracking technology and galvanic skin response data. The company's equipment captures brainwave signals across as many as 128 sectors of the brain, at 2,000 times a second. Research results from this vast body of data are distilled into three primary metrics of attention, emotional engagement, and memory retention. From those, three additional metrics are derived for persuasion, awareness, and novelty.

"These findings are a very clear demonstration of the capability of neurological testing to uncover the truth about how consumers, and in this instance voters, think and feel," Dr. Pradeep said. "Whether it's a political campaign or a commercial one, the ability to gauge the impact of one message's resonance, memorability, and persuasion over others can result in more relevant and therefore more effective communications. Both the candidates and voters benefit if we have political discourse that's on point with what matters most at the level of the brain where the ultimate choices are formed. The same applies to other organizations as well. Virtually anyone with a key message to communicate can be very well served by this technology and the IRF methodology."

About NeuroFocus

NeuroFocus Inc. is the market leader in bringing neuroscience knowledge and expertise to the world of advertising, marketing, product development, packaging, and entertainment. The company leverages Doctorate-level academic credentials in

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neuroscience and marketing from Berkeley, MIT, Harvard, and the Hebrew University combined with C-suite level business management and consulting experience.

NeuroFocus clients include Fortune 100 companies across the consumer package goods, food and beverage, financial services, automotive, and retail sectors. Entertainment category clients include major companies in the broadcast and cable television and motion picture industries. The Nielsen Company is a strategic investor in NeuroFocus.

Source: NeuroFocus Inc.

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