NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

NEW YORK POST, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2001

Bloomy's ad-vantage

How he rode the airwaves to victory

By MAGGIE HABERMAN

Michael Bloomberg's mayoral victory was made possible in large part by a smart ad campaign that always targeted Hispanic voters while using Mayor Giuliani as its crown jewel.

Using his personal millions, Bloomberg spent $23.8 million to flood the airwaves up to Oct. 20 — twice as much as the $12 million Democrat Mark Green spent on his entire campaign.

The strategy had four clear phases:

- Introducing himself to voters.
- Stressing his business skills and his resolve to keep crime low and improve education, a topic that polled well.
- Painting himself after Sept. 11 as the only man with the economic skills to create jobs.
- Airing attack spots against Green as he broadcast testimonials from the wildly popular Giuliani.

With a strategy crafted by veteran strategist David Garth and Washington-based ad man Bill Knapp, Bloomberg began by creating a virtual portrait of himself as a businessman, free of special interests and politics.

At first, the ads shielded the first-time candidate from novice mistakes he made later.

"The worst thing in this business is taking a virgin," Garth joked — but he added that Bloomberg was a "quick study."

The Republican declared his candidacy with two TV spots — one in English, one in Spanish — on June 5, while Bloomberg himself was at Princeton attending his daughter's graduation.

The Hispanic ads, which aired constantly, helped Bloomberg pick up a huge swath of Democrat Fernando Ferrer's supporters.

On June 8, Bloomberg was under fire for an ad criticizing the campaign-finance program, although Garth said it cut "right to the issue" of Bloomberg's finances, a potential vulnerability that they diminished.

Two weeks after the trade center tragedy, Bloomberg became the first to air ads again — a testimonial using footage of the vigils, which tested well with women, with whom Bloomberg hadn't been polling well, sources said.

On Oct. 19 — as Green made amends with runoff rival Ferrer after days of fighting — a new Bloomberg spot highlighted the fray by accusing Green of "dividing" the city.

Seven days later, Bloomberg aired his smartest ad — replaying Green's boast that he'd have governed "as well or better" than Giuliani during the crisis.

The week before Giuliani's Oct. 27 endorsement, Bloomberg's internal polls had him 12 points down, and the campaign wanted Giuliani publicly involved fast, sources said.

Garth said the key to the Oct. 29 ad was Giuliani's statement that people didn't always agree with him, "but I gave it my all."

Garth said that line — straight out of playbooks from some of his old campaigns, including former Mayor John Lindsay — allowed Giuliani to deal head-on with people who didn't like his policies.

As Election Day neared, Bloomberg aired a flood negative spots about the Ferrer-Green fray — effective ads because they weren't over the top.

CITY_21MC100_01183284 6

NYC-WTC_000414844