TRILOGY
THE CHANGE AGENCY

Brennan Center for Justice

BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE

Creator content and ads in English and Spanish combated disinformation and built trust in our electoral system in the lead-up to the 2024 elections.

Preventing Another January 6

On January 6, 2021, a rogue president and rampant disinformation culminated in a riot at the U.S. Capitol that killed Americans, damaged property, and traumatized the nation. In 2024, with Donald Trump on the ballot again and perpetuating lies about election security, the Brennan Center for Justice recognized the need for a strategic messaging campaign to prevent political violence and strengthen faith in the system.

The message was simple: U.S. elections are safe and secure. Making it credible among the audiences inclined to believe otherwise required a savvy digital partner who could get the message to the right people and through the right messengers. That's where Trilogy came in.

Reinforcing Reality with Facts and Trusted Messengers

Trilogy devised a two-pronged strategy, using paid video ads and creator content to spread the Brennan Center's message.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Achieved over 1 million views on creator videos in English and Spanish
- Served 9.8 million ad impressions via YouTube, Meta, Univision, and The Trade Desk

CONSPIRACIONES

First, our in-house creative team produced straightforward, public-service-announcement-style videos underscoring the security of U.S. elections. The videos described the process for counting ballots and emphasized that the people who run elections aren't faceless members of the so-called "deep state" — they're people in our communities who shop in the same grocery stores and send their kids to the same schools.

Our media team served up those ads on YouTube, social media, and programmatic platforms. Meanwhile, our strategy team partnered with non-political content creators — including ones who typically talk about national security, church teachings, and other conservative-coded topics — to drive the message home to Americans skeptical of the system. On TikTok and Instagram, in English and Spanish, creators countered disinformation and educated their audiences about the trustworthiness of U.S. elections.

Our deep experience running creator campaigns meant we could use the TikTok algorithm to our advantage. We directed creators to title and tag their videos with keywords like "election," "election results," "foreign actors," and "democracy," so that when voters did their own research on TikTok, our content would appear in the search results. The more views this content earned via search, the more the algorithm promoted it.

Some of the disinformation we dispelled over the course of the campaign was predictable, like rumors about voting machines or hand counts subverting the integrity of the election. When unexpected news broke, we responded immediately. In late October, when ballot drop boxes were set on fire in

Washington and Oregon, we worked seamlessly with the Brennan Center team to get new, accurate talking points to creators. Their videos went up within 48 hours, telling voters they had recourse if their ballot was destroyed in one of the fires.

Earning the Trust of Algorithms and Voters

While other advocacy organizations' political content was removed or suppressed, Trilogy worked within the algorithms' constraints. We ensured our content was nonpartisan, stayed up, and earned views without drawing attention from trolls or bots. On TikTok, several of our videos received a banner prompting viewers to "Get info on the U.S. Elections" — a signal that TikTok's AI software deemed our videos trustworthy. This categorization automatically brought our content to the "For You Page," putting our message about the security of U.S. elections in front of more voters. When a creator video performed particularly well, we served it on YouTube as a paid ad, so our target audiences kept getting the message.

With their objective tone, our videos broke through political ad fatigue and came across as a trustworthy, nonpartisan source of information — exactly what Americans needed in the run-up to the first presidential election since that fateful January 6.