

PubSent

CASE STUDY

Western City-Council Campaign

Time Frame : 2 Weeks

Audience : Registered Supporters and Swing Voters

Goals: Drive Turnout, Strengthen Base, and Pack Campaign Events



PubSent is an AI-powered conversational SMS platform that lets campaigns and nonprofits run compliant, personalized texting at scale, turning one-way messages into meaningful conversations that move people to act.

Summary

After a razor-thin victory four years earlier, the campaign partnered with PubSent for a two-week SMS program. Early texts invited voters to rallies and town halls, then pivoted to clear voting guidance as Election Day neared, all with the secondary objective of educating on the candidate. Each message included transparent opt-out language which made up 31% of the total character count. Initial texts focused on encouraging replies, then directing to the ultimate goal based on conversation flow.

OBJECTIVES

Drive Turnout

Increase overall voter turnout.

Pack Campaign Events

Drive attendance to a list of upcoming rallies and campaign events by identifying interests and smartly sending appropriate links

Strengthen Base

Encourage conversation to educate base on the candidate while maintaining strict compliance standards

APPROACH

- 1) SMS conversations available 24/7
- 2) Cadenced sends matching key dates for events, early voting, and Election-Day deadlines.
- 3) Conversational prompts asked direct questions, encouraging replies rather than one-way broadcasts, that then lead to CTA's based on expressed interest.
- 4) Live sentiment scoring let organizers directly contact undecided voters.

RESULT

13.3 %

Response Rate

76.4 %

Chats marked as "Positive"

57.9 %

Click-through on links

2.3 %

Clearly reached the CTA

IMPACT AT THE POLLS

43.9% Vote surge for candidate versus the prior cycle, with only a **11.7% total voter increase**, **despite being out-raised by the opponent 2:1**

Victory with a 65.42% vote share, compared to a 50.8% vote share in the previous election.

Key Lessons

- Pairing turnout nudges with candidate education makes for more meaningful interactions that convert at higher rates.
- Links sent within the context of a conversation are clicked at an exponentially higher rate than those sent in the first text.
- Transparent opt-out language can coexist with high positive engagement when texts deliver value.
- Even modest reply rates can power double-digit turnout gains when outreach is timely, relevant, and conversational.



Tom Carroll, PubSent Co-Founder

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CONVOS

The below texts are actual conversations with the PubSent Agent (Grey) and Real Voters (Blue).

All identifying information has been altered, see below for more details

QUICK INFORMATION SHARING

The motive for the below chat was to promote a local event, and track the click through rate for any sent links

Hey, it's Councilmember Jon. I have a few upcoming community events that I'd like to invite you to. Would you like to know more? Reply here and I'll tell you about them. If you'd rather not receive more texts, reply STOP and I won't message you again.

10/24/2025, 5:34:30 PM

Yes I would like to know more

10/24/2025, 6:53:18 PM

Great! We have a few options: a canvass with Rep. James Smith and union leaders on Sat, Oct 25 at 11am at North Park, a climate-focused canvass on Sun, Oct 26 at 10am at West Park, or a happy hour on Sun, Oct 26 at 4pm at Jake's Restaurant. Which interests you most?

10/24/2025, 6:53:28 PM

Sunday at Jake's is that off 2nd Street?

10/24/2025, 6:59:31 PM

Yes, Jakes Restaurant is just off 2nd. The happy hour is Sunday, Oct 26 at 4pm. It's a relaxed chance to meet Jon, Majority Leader Nancy Taylor, and others. Donation is optional. Can we count on seeing you there? If so, I'll send the RSVP link!

10/24/2025, 6:59:39 PM

Yes and thank you

10/24/2025, 7:00:28 PM

Thank you. Here's the RSVP link: <https://texted.link/GHyYdtDy>

10/24/2025, 7:00:36 PM 1

MULTIPLE CALLS TO ACTION

Complex conversation motives allow for multiple outcomes, including the below of shifting from just pursuing one vote, to encouraging community outreach.

Hi, this is Jon your City Councilmember. I'm running for re-election and every vote matters. Make sure your ballot is in TODAY Nov. 4 by 7pm. PS - you're also invited to our watch party at Jack's Market after polls close. Need help finding where or how to vote? Reply here and I can help. Thanks! If you'd rather not receive more texts, reply STOP and I won't message you again.

11/4/2025, 3:33:23 PM

I voted for you already, thanks

11/4/2025, 3:38:25 PM

Thank you so much for your support! If you have a friend or neighbor in Willow Creek, could you remind them to vote too? Every voice counts. If you ever want to talk about city issues, you can call my personal cell anytime at 555.123.4567. Thanks again!

11/4/2025, 3:38:38 PM

I will, and I will, thanks again!

11/4/2025, 3:47:54 PM

Thank you for your support.

11/4/2025, 3:48:01 PM

ADDRESSING CONCERNS, CONVERTING THEM TO ACTION

Especially when addressing various concerns, we aim to establish understanding, then shift that to constructive engagement.

Hey, it's Councilmember Jon. I have a few upcoming community events that I'd like to invite you to. Would you like to know more? Reply here and I'll tell you about them. If you'd rather not receive more texts, reply STOP and I won't message you again.

10/24/2025, 5:40:32 PM

I would actually of appreciated it more if you had responded to emails about the cross walks around East Park and safety being compromised a year ago, but it seems as if it wasn't important.

10/24/2025, 5:42:49 PM

I hear your frustration and I'm sorry you felt unheard about the East Park crosswalks. Your safety concerns matter. We're working to improve community safety and would love your input. Are you interested in joining an upcoming event to discuss these issues in person?

10/24/2025, 5:42:59 PM

yes

10/24/2025, 5:53:45 PM

Thanks for your interest. This Saturday, Oct 25 at 11 am, we're meeting at North Park for a community canvass with Rep. James Smith and union leaders. It's a great chance to talk directly about safety and other concerns. Can I count on you to join us?

10/24/2025, 5:53:56 PM

I can not attend tomorrow, however, how do we as a community address safety concerns, as it isn't just me who has been advocating for some type of lighted cross walk on the corner of Elizabeth and Thomas, a simple search on Nextdoor or Reddit has multiple people thinking the same... Let alone what you as community leaders will try to do with vacant stores, like the soon to be closed Safeway at 2nd and Main.

10/24/2025, 6:13:53 PM

You raise important points. Jon is focused on safer streets, community policing, and holding the city accountable for improvements like crosswalks. He's also working to support local businesses and bring new jobs to fill vacant stores. Can we count on your vote to keep pushing for these changes?

10/24/2025, 6:14:04 PM

yes

10/24/2025, 6:15:25 PM

Thank you for your support. Your vote helps us keep working for a safer, stronger Willow Creek.

10/24/2025, 6:15:31 PM

Why is this Case Study Anonymous?

Myself (Tom) and Andrew discussed this at length and ultimately decided the cost of social proof by making this anonymous was worth preserving one of our core values of strict neutrality. Especially as we operate in the political space, we solely want out platform to be judged on the results it provides, not the party it happened to lead to victory.