



Housing First Minnesota Experiences
81.5% Political Victory Rate with
Genius Monkey

genius  monkey

HOUSING FIRST
MINNESOTASM

OVERVIEW

Housing First Minnesota is a political advocacy group with a simple-to-explain mission: homeownership for all Minnesotans. The organization seeks to accomplish this goal through advocating for fair pricing, charitable work, and legislative awareness, the latter of which requires a strong marketing campaign. Over 10 years ago – prior to first working with Genius Monkey – Housing First Minnesota was falling short at obtaining the right support to help get the legislation through to help housing affordability. Since partnering with Genius Monkey in 2012, they have been propelled to one of the leading housing advocacy groups in the country.



THE CHALLENGE

Over the years, housing policy has become increasingly complex, with regulatory roadblocks piling up to form a barrier to homeownership. To increase awareness and keep housing affordable for future generations, Housing First Minnesota started creating advertisements on behalf of Housing Champions who were running for political office around the state. At first, these ads consisted of flyers, mail drops, door hangers, and billboards: legacy media that was often lost or ignored in the stack of other messages in their mailbox throughout the busy election season. They realized that they needed to find a targeted online approach to grow their awareness and effectiveness.

Such coverage would need to be near-universal; people absorb messages in different ways and in different places, so Housing First Minnesota needed a platform that could reach everyone through multiple channels. A key issue was brand-awareness; people needed to know who the company was and – more importantly – the candidates and issues they stood behind. On top of widespread coverage, Housing First Minnesota required great precision to target their ads to voters who may be on the fence regarding issues or candidates.

Finally, Housing First Minnesota felt they were falling behind their competitors in the digital public square; they needed to catch up quickly, which meant spinning up an effective advertising campaign yesterday. If they were going to make this big change, then it would have to be done in an efficient manner within budget and proven results.

Housing First Minnesota focused on these primary goals with their programmatic vendor:



Expand to
Everywhere Online



Increase Issue and
Candidate Awareness



Efficiency and
Cost-Effectiveness

OUR SOLUTION

In 2014 Genius Monkey started helping the Housing First Minnesota through their first election cycle together. With the goal of increasing name recognition of candidates in each congressional district – candidates who would be Housing Champions for Housing First Minnesota – Genius Monkey dug in with a targeted yet agnostic approach to get their ads and names everywhere.

The campaign started by focusing on targeting their exact audience of people interested in home ownership and current homeowners. Repetition is important in politics, but even more so is precision. The Genius Monkey campaigns focused on targeting people who were looking to move, interested in building a home, recently married and looking to buy their first house, or otherwise had housing concerns on their mind.

These Genius Monkey campaigns were able to raise awareness around housing critical topics, especially by increasing name recognition of political candidates who would fight the housing affordability crisis. The balance of wide coverage with pin-point targeting proved to be the perfect combination, and it did not take long for Housing First Minnesota to notice a major difference.



THE RESULTS

Immediately after starting the campaigns, Housing First Minnesota saw increases in traffic, engagements, and brand awareness. Internal tests suggested that brand recognition was up by five times after the first election cycle. Voters reported knowing more about issues and candidates than ever before, and political opponents even demanded that they “get your ad off my phone”!

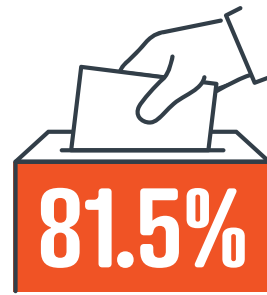
That was then, this is now; since 2014,

Housing First Minnesota has experienced an 81.5% victory rate in cross-ticket movements, campaigns, and election seasons. Housing once hovered as low as a top 15 to 20 issues in Minnesota; now it is considered a “top 5 issue” in Minnesota politics. Ten years ago, Housing First Minnesota was considered a small part of the housing conversation; today they drive the conversation nationwide.

Bill Burgess is a Division President at Lennar Minnesota – one of the largest national home builders – who has helped counsel and provide insight into the housing market for Housing First Minnesota. Burgess was impressed with the transparency of the campaigns and the ability to see metrics reports in real time. “Big platforms will ask for a budget and then may or may not tell you the results at the end of the campaign. With Genius Monkey, you don’t need to worry about that; you’re given the data and you’ve got a partner that’s willing to work with you to make a difference.”

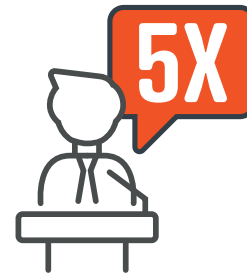
As of August 2024, Housing First Minnesota continues to work with Genius Monkey, running campaigns across Minnesota and beyond with similar results.

Results with Genius Monkey Platform



Victory Rate
in cross-ticket
movements,
campaigns, and
election seasons

**Brand
Recognition**
Increased by



After the First
Election Cycle

Now
Considered A



in
**Minnesota
Politics**

SUMMARY

In the busy political season, an advocacy group needed their message to be heard more than ever through digital marketing. After seeing immediate results and sticking with the Genius Monkey platform long-term, Housing First Minnesota has been able to make a significant difference and take major steps toward fulfilling their mission.

James Vagle, CEO of Housing First Minnesota, said, “The world is complex and sharing messages is getting hard; Genius Monkey is a partner that can help you cut through.” Reflecting on how far they’ve come, Vagle concluded with: “Ten years ago, we were looking for our pathway; Genius Monkey helped us find it.”

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT A GENIUS MONKEY CLIENT SOLUTIONS MANAGER:
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