

Issues Management

Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) District

Challenge: To create a creative and compelling public relations campaign to convince voters to make a \$50 million investment for new buildings and capital improvements that would meet the current and future vocational and technical education needs of the Greater Milwaukee area.

Target: Voters in the MATC district, business and labor leaders, elected officials, and the news media.

Solution: Bottom Line's experienced team worked closely with the district staff to devise and carry out a public information campaign to explain the needs of the district, detail how the master plan would address those needs and highlight the benefits to the voters and community as a whole. Taking the lead, we created a business and labor coalition to advocate passage of the referendum. Our team conducted a survey of district voters to determine their perceptions about the master plan, its costs and potential funding sources, as well as to test persuasive advocacy messages. Based on the survey results, our team created and executed a coordinated campaign of direct mail, fundraising, print and broadcast advertising, third-party coalitions, media events and other advocacy efforts. The campaign was based on the theme: "Training tomorrow's work force today."

Outcome: In a highly anti-property tax environment, the referendum passed with nearly 54 percent of the vote.