

(Continued)

likely to vote than any other group of viewers. A more refined analysis of more extensive data, however, allows for a more focused media strategy. If a poll indicates that the candidate needs to appeal to more women or more young voters, the campaign can use Nielsen ratings to identify which TV shows the subgroup is more likely to watch. During the 2012 presidential campaign, Obama staffers were able to refine this approach even more. Linking up to the friends of Facebook supporters, the campaign was able to identify 15 million Americans who were not currently Obama supporters, but who were persuadable. For tens of thousands of those individuals, the campaign was able to find actual viewing histories from a new competitor to Nielsen, Rentrak. Because they were able to change the unit of analysis from groups of likely voters to voters who were persuadable in this specific election, the campaign was able to spend much less on television advertising than the Romney campaign, while simultaneously getting more coverage with the voters who ended up determining the outcome of the election.²