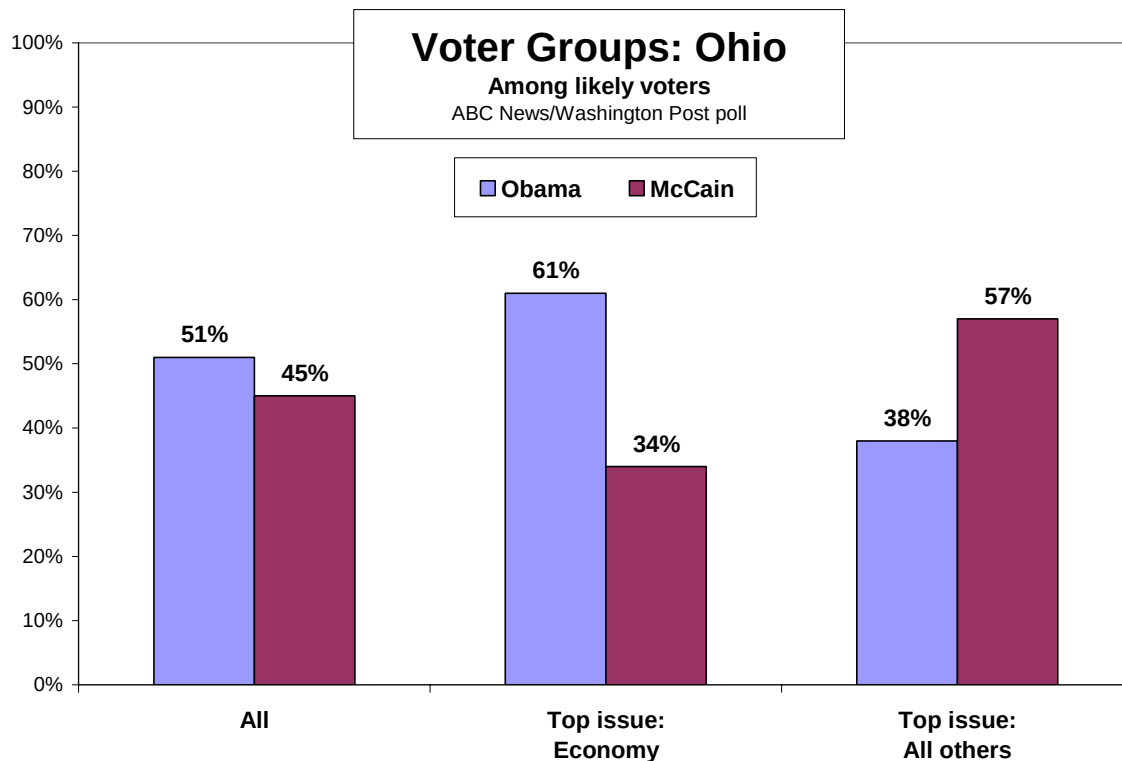


Economy and Ground Game Alike Give Obama an Advantage in Ohio

Barack Obama is riding economic discontent to an advantage in Ohio, bolstered in part by financially stressed voters in the state's hard-hit industrial belt – and following it up with a more extensive ground campaign in this key contest.

In political sentiment Ohio looks much like the nation; the economy far outstrips other issues and Obama leads in trust to handle it. That – plus the shadow of George W. Bush over John McCain's campaign – fuels Obama past lingering concerns about his experience.

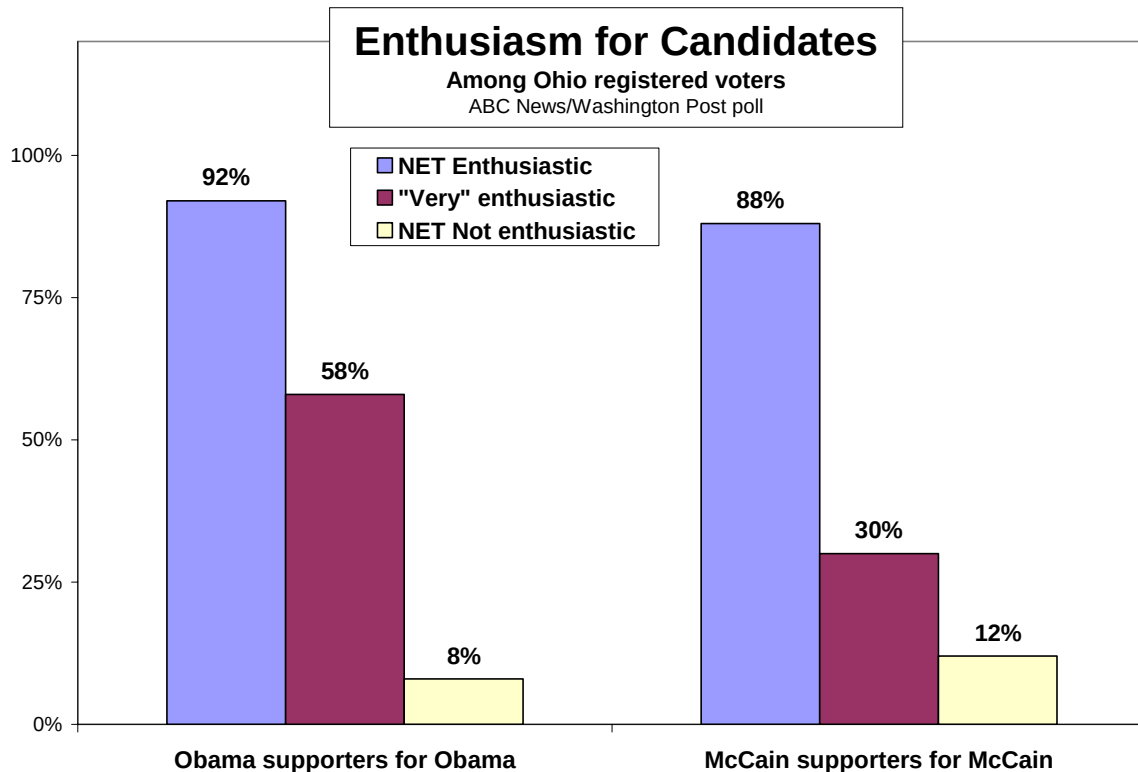
An aggressive ground war also helps: Thirty-seven percent of Ohio's registered voters say they've been personally contacted by the Obama campaign. That beats the 27 percent who've heard from McCain, and also surpasses the level of contacts by both campaigns in 2004, when Ohio was decisive.



Making and keeping such contacts may matter. Likely voters in this ABC News/Washington Post poll put Obama ahead of McCain by 51 to 45 percent if the

election were today. But it's not today, and there's room for change: Eighteen percent have not made up their minds for sure, much like the national figure. And movability peaks among independents, young and first-time voters – the former a swing group; the others, two of Obama's best.

Among Obama's advantages, though, is sheer energy: Fifty-eight percent of his Ohio supporters are "very enthusiastic" about his candidacy, compared with just 30 percent of McCain's. And while that's about the same for Obama as nationally, high-level enthusiasm for McCain is 8 points lower in Ohio than in the nation overall.



SHAPE – The contours of the race are telling. Obama leads by a wide margin in Cuyahoga County, the heavily Democratic Cleveland metropolis. But perhaps more critical is his 17-point advantage in the state's northeast, including the ailing industrial cities of Akron, Canton and Youngstown – a keystone for Democrats in statewide races. John Kerry managed only a closer, 52-47 split with George W. Bush in this region in 2004, not enough to win the state, and thus the presidency.

The northeast isn't the only region of interest. In the center and rural southeast of the state, generally Republican but including more-Democratic Columbus, it's a 6-point race, 51-45 percent Obama-McCain – a region Bush won by 8 points four years ago.

There are sharp divisions among groups, again with comparisons to 2004 instructive. While Obama's losing white voters by 7 points, Kerry lost them by 12. While Kerry won

84 percent of Ohio's black voters, Obama's winning them essentially unanimously – 98 percent. Bush won married women by 20 points in 2004; they're dividing about evenly now (and are substantially more worried than their husbands about the family's finances).

And while young voters favored Kerry by a 14-point margin, they're even more of a mainstay for Obama; he holds a 2-1 lead among likely voters under 30, compared with a dead heat among those 30 and older.

Relying on young voters is a risk for Obama (as it was for Kerry) given their uncertain turnout. What's essential, then, is his ability to battle McCain to a standstill among over-30s, a group Kerry lost by 7 points. And that has much to do with the economy.

	ABC/Post likely voters		2004 exit poll	
	Obama 51%	McCain 45	Kerry 49%	Bush 51
All				
Men	45	48	47	52
Women	56	42	50	50
Whites	44	51	44	56
Blacks	98	1	84	16
White men	41	53	43	56
White women	47	50	45	55
18-29	65	31	56	42
30+	48	48	46	53
Whites <\$50K	54	44	52	47
Democrats	91	8	90	9
Republicans	7	90	6	94
Independents	46	45	58	41
Married men	38	55	41	57
Married women	50	47	40	60
White Catholics	46	52	41	59
White Protestants	34	61	38	61
Evangelicals	30	65	23	75
Non-evangelicals	40	54	53	47
Regions*:				
Cuyahoga county	71	26	67	33
Northeast	57	40	52	47
Central	51	45	46	54
Cincinnati and Dayton	38	57	41	59

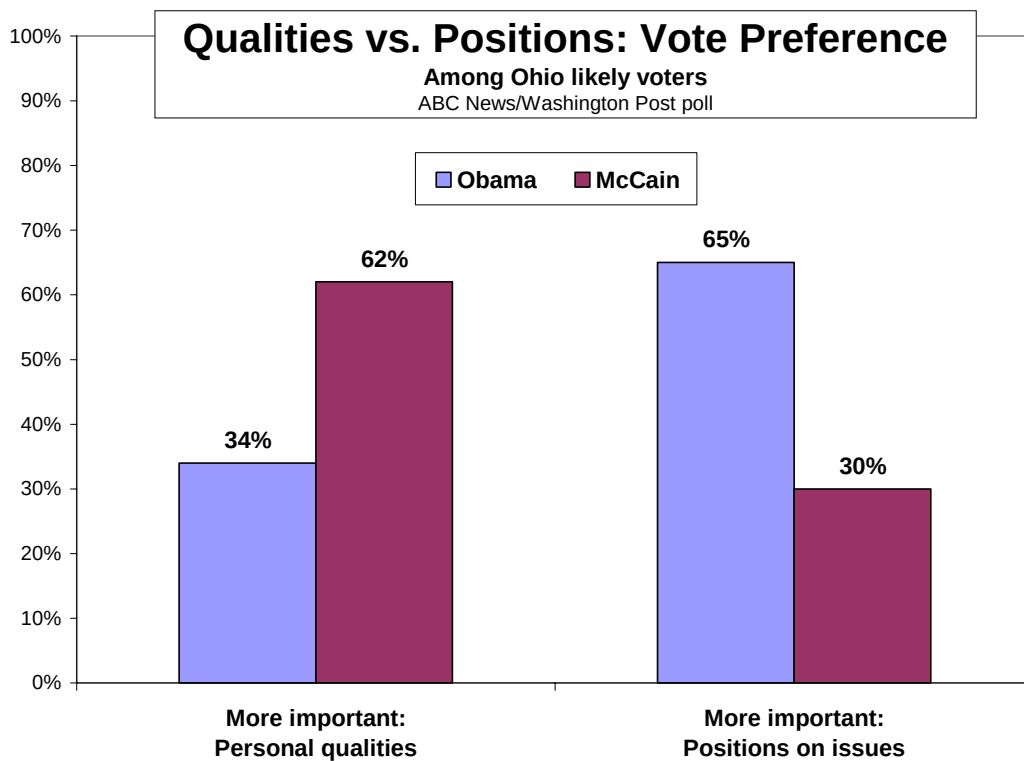
*2004: actual vote, not exit poll

IT'S THE... – Among all registered voters, 53 percent call the economy the single most important issue in their vote, much like the national figure, with all other answers in the single digits. And among likely voters, those focused on the economy favor Obama by 61-34 percent; among those who name any other issue, McCain leads, 57-38 percent.

Eighty-six percent of registered voters in Ohio are worried about the economy's direction and 70 percent are worried about their own family's finances – two more groups in which Obama has broad advantages. His lead peaks among those who are “very” worried – and that high-level worry is strongest in the important northeast region.

Economic worry at the personal, household level also peaks, naturally, among lower-income Ohioans. And notably, Obama holds a 10-point edge among working-class whites in the state, those with household incomes under \$50,000 a year.

Obama's trouble connecting with working-class whites helped Hillary Clinton beat him in the Ohio primary. But now, among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who'd preferred Clinton for the nomination, 82 percent prefer Obama to McCain. That's 10 points better than Obama's support among Clinton Democrats nationally.



There's another way in which the economy throws its weight in vote preferences: Ohioans divide closely on whether they care more about the candidates' personal qualities or their positions on the issues. Among likely voters more focused on personal

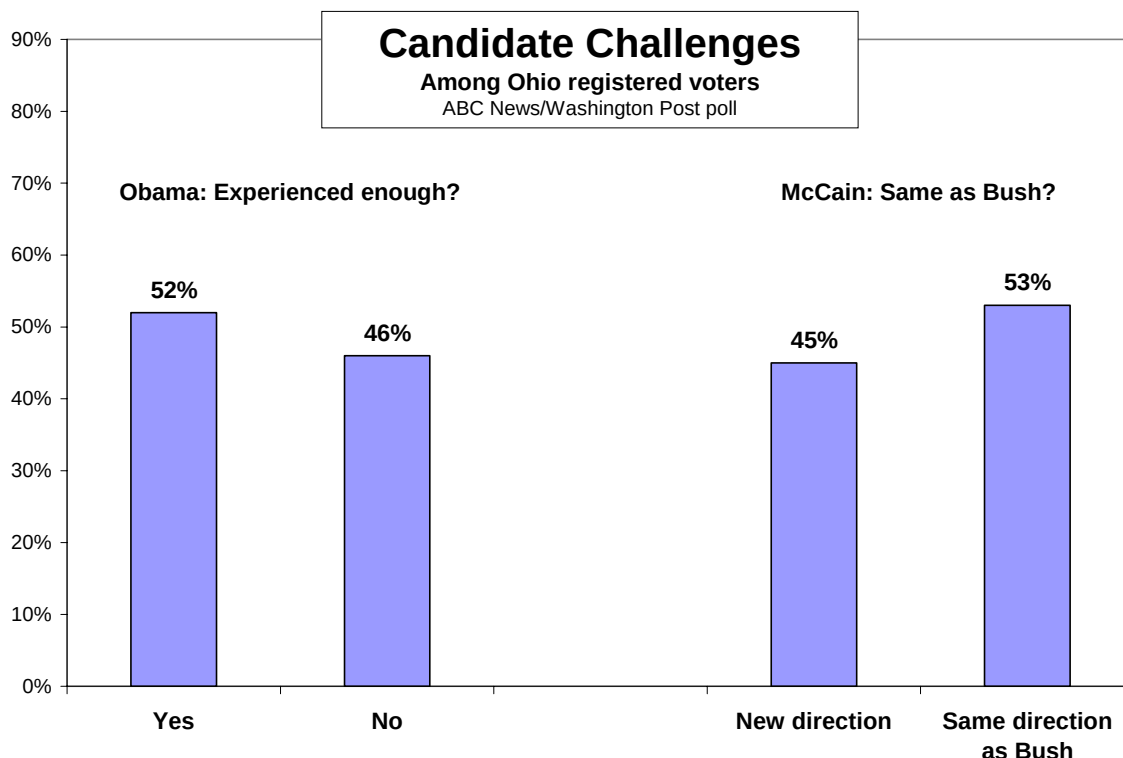
qualities, McCain has a 62-34 percent lead. But among those more concerned with the issues – the economy chief among them – it’s 65-30 percent for Obama.

Ohio isn’t the only state where economic concern is boosting Obama. The same effect has appeared in national ABC/Post polls since Sept. 22, in an ABC/Post Virginia poll Sept. 21, and in a variety of state polls from other sources.

ISSUES/ATTRIBUTES – Head-to-head on issues, in this survey Obama leads McCain by 13 points, 52-39 percent, in trust to handle the economy, and by similar margins on creating jobs and in trust to handle taxes, a point of sharp contention between them. They’re even in trust to handle a major crisis, and McCain’s usual edges in trust to handle terrorism and the Iraq war are single-digit margins here. Obama’s +8 on energy policy.

Personal attributes also differentiate the two. Obama connects especially in trust to bring needed change to Washington, a 2-1 lead over McCain; and in better understanding the economic problems people are having – potentially an essential point given the level of concern, and a 53-35 percent Obama advantage, again much like the national figure.

Obama also has an 8-point edge as the stronger leader; and the two run closer – about evenly – on who better “shares your values,” an opening for McCain.



McCain’s best line of attack continues to be Obama’s experience; while 52 percent of registered voters say he has the kind of experience it takes to serve effectively as

president, a very substantial 46 percent say he does not. That result more than anything explains why Obama's advantage on the economy and other issues and attributes doesn't translate into a bigger lead over McCain in vote preference.

McCain, though, has if anything an even greater vulnerability of his own: Fifty-three percent of registered voters think he'd lead the country in the same direction as Bush.

These, in sum, provide a blueprint to the campaigns' likely approaches: McCain to stress the experience issue, to try to capitalize on his competitiveness on shared values and to press his advantage on trust to handle terrorism, Bush's winning issue in 2004; and Obama, to push hard on the economy, change and Bush.

One somewhat delicate point in the economic debate is the financial plan passed by Congress on Friday. Both candidates supported it, but Ohioans divide – 45 percent in favor, 49 percent opposed. (It was similar nationally last week.) The plan's opponents in Ohio split evenly between the two candidates; supporters favor Obama by 12 points.

VPs – After the debate last week, the effect of the vice presidential candidates also looks much like it did pre-debate nationally. Sarah Palin does not appear to help her ticket overall; 31 percent of registered voters say she makes them less apt to back McCain, vs. 25 percent more likely, a slight 6-point net negative. Joe Biden runs 12 points positive: Twenty-six percent more likely, 14 percent less so.

PARTISANSHIP – Partisanship, and vote preferences among swing independents, are worth dissecting. Thirty-six percent of likely voters identify themselves as Democrats, 32 percent as independents and 28 percent as Republicans – substantially more independents and fewer Republicans than in the 2004 Ohio exit poll (when they accounted for 21 and 40 percent, respectively). The number of Democrats is about the same.

That's apparently because some 2004 Republicans, in the current climate, are more apt to identify themselves as independents. In 2004 Kerry won independents by 58-41 percent. Today they're splitting essentially evenly, indicating that there are more Republican-leaning voters in their ranks.

At the same time, fewer likely voters in this poll are under 30 (16 percent) than were identified as such in the 2004 exit poll (21 percent), and union voters are fewer in number – two strong Obama groups. All such variables fuel the aggregate estimate.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 3-5, 2008, among a random sample of 1,010 adults in Ohio including oversamples of African Americans and 18- to 29-year-olds (weighted to their correct share of the Ohio population), for a total of 134 black respondents and 166 18- to 29-year olds. Results among the 891 registered voters and 772 likely voters surveyed have a 3.5-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) How closely are you following the presidential race: very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not closely at all?

	---- Closely ----			---- Not closely ----			No
	NET	Very	Smt.	NET	Not too	At all	opinion
10/5/08 OH	91	57	34	9	6	3	0

2. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) I'd like you to rate the chances that you will vote in the presidential election: Are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or less than that?

	Certain to vote	Probably vote	Chances 50/50	Less than that	Don't think will vote (vol.)	Already voted (vol.)	No op.
10/5/08 OH	88	6	3	1	1	1	*

3. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats) and (John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE - LIKELY VOTERS

	Obama	McCain	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	51	45	1	1	2

NET LEANED VOTE - REGISTERED VOTERS

	Obama	McCain	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	51	43	1	2	1	2

3b. (IF NAMED CANDIDATE) Would you definitely vote for (CANDIDATE), or is there a chance you could change your mind and vote for someone else? (IF CHANCE CHANGE MIND) Is there a GOOD CHANCE you'll change your mind, or would you say it's PRETTY UNLIKELY?

	Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET Good Unlikely	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	81	18 6 11	1

Barack Obama:

	Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET Good Unlikely	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	81	18 7 12	1

John McCain:

	Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET Good Unlikely	No opinion
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10/5/08 OH	83	16	5	11	1
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4. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Have you voted for president in any year before this 2008 election, or is this the first year you'll be voting for president?

	Voted in previous	First time	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	89	11	0

5. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) What is the single most important issue in your choice for president?

	10/5/08 OH	Compare to: 9/29/08 NAT
Economy/Jobs/Stock market/Credit problems/		
Gas/Energy*	53	53
Iraq/War in Iraq	6	10
Health care	9	3
Terrorism/Nat'l security	3	5
Ethics/Honesty/Corruption in government	4	3
Education	2	1
Immigration/Illegal immigration	*	*
Morals/Family values	1	2
Taxes	3	2
Environment	*	1
Abortion	3	2
Foreign policy	1	2
Guns/Gun control	*	1
Federal budget deficit	1	*
Housing/Mortgages	*	*
Social Security	*	*
Iran/Situation in Iran	0	*
Global warming	0	*
Change	2	2
Experience	2	3
None/Nothing	1	*
Other	6	6
No opinion	2	3
*Separately:		
Economy/Jobs	52	51
Stock market/Wall Street	*	1
Banking/Insurance/Credit problems	*	*
Gas/Oil prices/Energy	1	1

6. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Regardless of who you may support, who do you trust more to handle [ITEM] - (Obama) or (McCain)?

10/5/08 - Summary Table*

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. The economy	52	39	1	6	2
b. The war in Iraq	44	50	2	4	1

c. Creating jobs	52	38	*	7	2
d. Energy policy	49	41	2	6	2
e. The U.S. campaign against terrorism	43	50	3	3	1
f. An unexpected major crisis	45	46	3	4	2
g. Taxes	52	38	1	7	2

*Full sample asked item a, half sample asked items b-d, other half sample asked items e-g.

Trend: (Latest national data for comparison)

a. The economy

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	52	39	1	6	2
9/29/08 NAT	50	43	1	3	2

b. The war in Iraq

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	44	50	2	4	1
9/29/08 NAT	45	50	1	3	1

c. No trend

d. Energy policy

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	49	41	2	6	2
9/29/08 NAT	51	41	1	4	3

e. The U.S. campaign against terrorism

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	43	50	3	3	1
9/29/08 NAT	44	52	1	2	2

f. An unexpected major crisis

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	45	46	3	4	2
9/29/08 NAT	44	50	1	2	3

g. Taxes

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	52	38	1	7	2
9/29/08 NAT	48	46	*	3	3

7. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Regardless of who you may support, who do you think [ITEM] - (Obama) or (McCain)?

10/5/08 - Summary Table*

Both Neither No

	Obama	McCain	(vol.)	(vol.)	opinion
a. better understands the economic problems people in this country are having	53	35	3	8	1
b. shares your values	47	44	3	5	1
c. would do more to bring needed change to Washington	62	31	1	5	1
d. is the stronger leader	51	43	2	2	2

*Half sample asked items a,b; other half sample asked items c,d.

Trend: (Latest national data for comparison)

a. better understands the economic problems people in this country are having

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	53	35	3	8	1
9/29/08 NAT	55	36	3	5	1

b. No trend

c. would do more to bring needed change to Washington

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	62	31	1	5	1
9/29/08 NAT	61	33	1	3	2

d. is the stronger leader

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	51	43	2	2	2
9/29/08 NAT	49	45	1	2	2

8. (ASKED OF REGISTERED OBAMA VOTERS) Thinking about his candidacy for president so far, how enthusiastic are you about Obama - very enthusiastic, fairly enthusiastic, not too enthusiastic, or not enthusiastic at all?

	--- Enthusiastic ---			---- Not enthusiastic ----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
10/5/08 OH	92	58	34	8	6	2	*
9/29/08 NAT	95	61	34	4	4	*	1

9. (ASKED OF REGISTERED MCCAIN VOTERS) Thinking about his candidacy for president so far, how enthusiastic are you about McCain - very enthusiastic, fairly enthusiastic, not too enthusiastic, or not enthusiastic at all?

	--- Enthusiastic ---			---- Not enthusiastic ----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
10/5/08 OH	88	30	58	12	10	2	*
9/29/08 NAT	90	38	52	10	7	2	*

10. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) If McCain were elected president, do you think he'd (mainly lead the country in a new direction), or (mainly continue in George W. Bush's direction)?

	New direction	Same direction	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	45	53	2

9/29/08 NAT	46	53	2
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11. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Regardless of who you may support, do you think Obama does or does not have the kind of experience it takes to serve effectively as president?

	Does	Does not	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	52	46	2
9/29/08 NAT	52	45	2

12. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Which is more important to you in choosing a candidate for president: (their personal qualities such as experience and leadership ability) or (their positions on specific issues)?

	Personal qualities	Positions on issues	Both (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	42	45	12	1
9/7/08 NAT	37	48	13	2

13. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Does Obama's choice of Biden for vice president make you more likely to vote for Obama, less likely, or won't it make any difference in your vote?

	More likely	Less likely	No difference	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	26	14	60	*
9/29/08 NAT	25	13	61	*

14. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Does McCain's choice of Palin for vice president make you more likely to vote for McCain, less likely, or won't it make any difference in your vote?

	More likely	Less likely	No difference	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	25	31	44	*
9/29/08 NAT	23	32	45	*

15. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) How do you feel about [ITEM] - very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried or not worried at all?

10/5/08 - Summary Table

	NET	Worried Very	Smwt.	NET	Not worried Not too	At all	No opin.
a. The direction of the nation's economy over the next few years	86	51	36	13	9	4	1
b. Your own family's financial situation	70	27	43	30	17	13	*

Trend:

a. The direction of the nation's economy over the next few years

	NET	Worried Very	Smwt.	NET	Not worried Not too	At all	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	86	51	36	13	9	4	1
9/22/08 NAT	79	40	39	17	13	5	3

b. Your own family's financial situation

10/5/08 OH	70	27	43	30	17	13	*
9/22/08 NAT	60	22	38	40	26	14	*

16. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) As you may know, Congress voted [FRI: today / SAT/SUN: Friday] to use up to 700 billion dollars to shore up failing financial institutions on Wall Street. Some people say (it's a bailout that those companies don't deserve). Other people say (it's necessary to protect the broader economy). On balance, do you support or oppose this plan?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
10/5/08 OH	45	12	33	49	20	30	6

Compare to:

(ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) The government has proposed using up to 700 billion dollars to shore up failing financial institutions on Wall Street. Some people say (it's a bailout that those companies don't deserve). Other people say (it's necessary to protect the broader economy). On balance, do you support or oppose this plan? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
9/29/08 NAT	45	17	28	47	20	27	8

17. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Have you personally been contacted by a representative of the [CANDIDATE] campaign, either by phone or in-person, asking you for your support, or not? How about by a representative of the [NEXT CANDIDATE] campaign?

10/5/08 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. Obama	37	62	*
b. McCain	27	73	1

Compare to 2004:

	----- Bush -----			----- Kerry -----		
	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.
10/17/04 OH RV	29	70	1	27	72	1

18. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) Have you personally received any e-mail or text messages from the [CANDIDATE] campaign asking you for your support, or not? How about by a representative of the [NEXT CANDIDATE] campaign?

10/5/08 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. Obama	17	82	1
b. McCain	12	87	1

19. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) How confident are you that votes in Ohio will be counted accurately: very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident or not at all confident?

	---- Confident ----			---- Not confident ----			No
	NET	Very	Smwht.	NET	Not very	At all	opinion
10/5/08 OH	79	34	45	20	13	7	1

20. (ASKED OF REGISTERED LEANED DEMOCRATS) Who did you want to see win the Democratic nomination for president this year - (Hillary Clinton) or (Barack Obama)?

NET LEANED SUPPORT

	Hillary Clinton	Barack Obama	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/5/08 OH	52	46	*	2	*

END