Final Project Proposals (credit/no credit)

Group Members

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Project Concept

Create an interactive visual that displays marketing efforts and campaign contributions against electoral success in American politics. We will first compile the data and then iterate through a variety of visualizations to determine which is most revealing or successfully displayed. The project will be based on a map of a US state or the entire United States. The user will be able to assess the impact of political contributions and political advertisements on voting outcomes.

Once we have built the originally intended functionality, we will attempt to incorporate predictions of how many votes should have been cast for a particular political party based on the contributions and advertisements spent relative to the actual. The map will feature the areas where their actual voting record disagrees with the predicted votes.

Users

We envision the users to be both voters and politicians. The underlying data and predictions will be informative to researchers as well.

The driving philosophy of the project will be to enable users to understand the impact of political donations and advertisement on election results.

User Tasks

Users will be able to:

- Implement a zoom function to improve granularity to show efforts/results at the country, state, and county level
- Implement a click function to display a small table that provides details for the object (state/county, etc.)
- Implement a hover function to display important details of the region
- Toggle between views they would like displayed.
    a. Options exist to toggle between viewing any two combinations of the base data
    b. Options exist to view any single base data element to a prediction of results

Insights

The visual will show the correlation between political spending and political success. This can be used both as a tool for politicians and lobbyists, and a tool for voters to inform them of this correlation.

The end goal is to visualize where political contributions or advertisements are less successful in influencing an election. It will also demonstrate the areas with great amounts of spending in these categories.

Data

Political contributions for US House, US Senate, and Presidential races from:

https://www.followthemoney.org/

Election results from:

https://electionlab.mit.edu/data

Facebook advertisements from:

https://www.propublica.org/datastore/dataset/political-advertisements-from-facebook

Technology

Tableau will be the main technology to create the visual. Data aggregation, cleaning, and prediction will be done in python and fed to Tableau.

Because our group has fewer members, we want to be able to focus on achieving a clean visualization that can generate useful insights. Distributing effort across development using D3 might push the scope beyond achievable in the allotted time.

Assignment due date: 12 noon PST, day of week 6 live session