

# SOCIAL MEDIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Posted on November 13, 2012 by Lindsey

Out of the 1 billion Facebook users, President [Barack Obama](#) has over 33 million likes while his former republican opponent, [Mitt Romney](#), has more than 12 million virtual thumbs up. Granted Obama's lead could be attributed to his incumbent status, and being well known longer. However, if political analysts wanted to gauge whom was going to nab the election based on Facebook "likes", then Obama had it in the bag.

It's one of those chicken/egg arguments. Or are reality stars famous before they get famous for being famous, sort of things. Did voters start to like Barack Obama this year because of his Facebook page? Or, were people following Obama then voting for him because of their existing preference? In other words, just how much influence did social media have on this presidential election's outcome?

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Micah Sifry, director of Personal Democracy Media and professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, says social mediums did little beyond foster the often superficial, mud-slinging dialogue found online. "Both sides benefited: The politicians got a little 'Internet buzz' for their

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appearances, and the tech companies got some welcome and cheap marketing, “ he said on election day. To read more on this go to <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/Social-media-and-the-election-Any-impact-4026280.php>.

Undoubtedly people could broadcast which way they were going come election day – polling outfit Pew Research published a study on the day of the election entitled “[Social Media and Voting](#)” finding 22 percent of registered voters told friends and followers on Facebook or Twitter, how they voted. However, that information could have easily been shared in line while getting a coffee or over a beer that night at a local bar. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google Plus and the like package this information in flashy, Internet lit feeds – they don’t necessarily mold it before going live.

Do you think it’s possible for your social media profiles to sway people one way or another, or do you think they’ve gotten to your page because of a pre-conceived “like”? Tell us how you think you can set your social mediums up to allure or dissuade from one decision to the next.

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