



Canada's Political Parties – Brand Analysis

A survey of 1,361 Canadians
Conducted from December 3 to 6, 2010
Released: December 15, 2010

www.abacusdata.ca



Methodology

From December 3rd to 6th, 2010, Abacus Data Inc. conducted an online survey among 1,361 randomly selected Canadian adults from an online panel of over 100,000 Canadians.

The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is comparable to +/- 2.7%, 19 times out of 20.

Results of the survey were statistically weighted by gender, age, region, language using census data from Statistics Canada and by past vote using Elections Canada results from the 2008 General Election. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

More interviews were completed in Atlantic Canada and so the weighted total of interviews does not add up to 1,361.

For more information about the poll's methodology, visit the Abacus website at www.abacusdata.ca

The table below reports the unweighted and weighted distribution by region or province.

Region/Province	Unweighted Count (All Respondents)	Weighted Count (All respondents)
Atlantic Canada	253	99
Quebec	257	317
Ontario	474	511
Prairies (MB and SK)	79	92
Alberta	132	145
BC	166	187
Total	1361	1351

Methodology

To test political party brands, we asked Canadians to select from a list of statements which ones they believed describe each party. Statements were displayed randomly to respondents for each party separately.

The statements were:

Keeps its promises

Understands the problems facing Canada

Represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds

Looks after the interests of people like me

Moderate

Extreme

Defends the interests of people in my province

Concerned about the people in real need in Canada

Has a good team of leaders

Will promise anything to win votes

Out of touch with ordinary people

Stands for clear principles

Has sensible policies

Too dominated by its leader

Professional in its approach

Divided

No opinion



Conservative Party of Canada

	Percentage of Non-Conservative Voters	Percentage of Conservative Voters
Top Statements Identified by Non-Conservative Voters		
Out of touch with ordinary people	69	9
Will promise anything to win votes	62	8
Too dominated by its leader	55	14
Extreme	36	4
Divided	15	2
Top Statements Identified by Conservative Voters		
Understands the problems facing Canada	9	78
Has sensible policies	6	65
Has a good team of leaders	5	61
Represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds	7	58
Looks after the interests of people like me	3	58

The Conservative Party is the most polarizing political party brand in Canada. The difference between Conservative supporters and non-supporters is large. This exercise clearly demonstrates that the party has a lot of work to do to appeal to a broader base of support as a large number of Canadians feel the party is out of touch and will promise anything to get elected.

A majority of Conservative Party supporters said that the party understands the problems facing Canada, has sensible policies, and has a good team of leaders. Very few non-Conservative supporters agreed with that sentiment.

For non-Conservative supporters, the statements most often selected were that the party is out of touch with ordinary people, it will do anything to win votes, and is too dominated by its leader.

Comparatively among all respondents (see page 8), the Conservative brand is strongest among all national political parties in “keeping its promises”, “has a good team of leaders”, and “has sensible policies”.

The Conservative Party brand was weakest in terms of being “out of touch with ordinary people”, “too dominated by its leader”, and “extreme”.

	Percentage of Non-Liberal Voters	Percentage of Liberal Voters
Top Statements Identified by Non-Liberal Voters		
Will promise anything to win votes	63	21
Out of touch with ordinary people	55	9
Divided	39	25
Moderate	26	69
Too dominated by leader	22	2
Top Statements Identified by Liberal Voters		
Represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds	21	73
Moderate	26	69
Understands the problems facing Canada	14	58
Looks after the interests of people like me	7	54
Concerned about the people in real need in Canada	10	51

The Liberal Party brand, like the Conservative one, is highly polarizing. However, Canadians who would not currently vote for the party did select some of the more positive brand attributes, which rarely happened among non-Conservative supporters.

A majority of Liberal Party supporters said that the party represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds (the big tent), is moderate, and understands the problems facing Canada.

For non-Liberal supporters, the statements most often selected were that the party will promise anything to win votes, is out of touch with ordinary people, and is divided.

Comparatively among all respondents (see page 8), the Liberal brand appeared strongest in the sense that the party is considered moderate by 36% of respondents. However, apart from moderation, the brand was quite weak in other attributes when compared with the Conservative or NDP brands.

The Liberal brand was weakest in terms of respondents believing the party will promise anything to win votes and that it is divided.

	Percentage of Non-NDP Voters	Percentage of NDP Voters
Top Statements Identified by Non-NDP Voters		
Represents people with different incomes and educations	38	85
Concerned about the people in real need in Canada	38	77
Will promise anything to win votes	31	8
Understands the problems facing Canada	27	78
Out of touch with ordinary people	26	2
Top Statements Identified by NDP Voters		
Represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds	38	85
Understands the problems facing Canada	27	78
Concerned about the people in real need in Canada	38	77
Looks after the interests of people like me	22	73
Has sensible policies	12	60

Despite being third in voter preferences, the NDP brand is probably the strongest when it comes to the attributes tested in this study. However, respondents were most likely to say they had no opinion of the NDP than other parties (17% vs. 7% Conservative and 10% Liberal) so there is still an opportunity to shape attitudes towards the party.

A majority of NDP supporters said that the party represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds, is concerned about the people in real need, and understands the problems facing Canada.

For non-NDP supporters, the statements most often selected were similar to those selected by NDP supporters. Canadians were more likely to say that the party represents people with different incomes and educations, and concerned about the people in real need. Non-NDP supporters were also more likely to say that the NDP will promise anything to win votes.

Comparatively among all respondents (see page 8), the NDP brand was strongest in terms of understanding the problems facing Canada, representing the interests of people with different incomes and educational backgrounds, and looking after the interests of people like me.

The NDP was the least likely to be selected for any negative attribute.

	Percentage of Non-BQ Voters	Percentage of BQ Voters
Top Statements Identified by Non-BQ Voters		
Defends the interests of people in my province	42	89
Out of touch with ordinary people	35	2
Extreme	31	2
Will promise anything to win votes	28	5
Stands for clear principles	26	62
Top Statements Identified by BQ Voters		
Defends the interests of people in my province	42	89
Looks after the interests of people like me	22	86
Represents people with different incomes and educations	24	74
Stands for clear principles	26	62
Has a good team of leaders	17	29

Perhaps not surprisingly, the BQ’s brand image is quite strong in Quebec. Not only does it dominate the voting market (40% of decided Quebec respondents would vote BQ) but its brand is strong on its key message – defending the interests of Quebec.

Among non-BQ supporters, the BQ is seen as defending the interests of people in Quebec, but also as being out of touch and extreme.

Among BQ supporters, almost all consider the party to be good defenders of Quebec, to look after the interests of people like them, and to represent people with different incomes and educations.

Despite Gilles Duceppe’s long reign as BQ leader, Quebec respondents do not consider the party dominated by its leader since only 15% of respondents in Quebec linked that attribute to the BQ.

Statement	Conservative	Liberal	NDP
Keeps its promises	20%	5%	11%
Understands the problems facing Canada	31%	24%	37%
Represents people with different incomes and educational backgrounds	23%	32%	46%
Looks after the interests of people like me	20%	17%	31%
Moderate	29%	36%	26%
Extreme	26%	15%	20%
Defends the interests of people in my province	16%	13%	21%
Concerned about the people in real need in Canada	16%	19%	45%
Has a good team of leaders	22%	10%	21%
Will promise anything to win votes	45%	54%	27%
Out of touch with ordinary people	50%	45%	21%
Stands for clear principles	22%	10%	32%
Has sensible policies	24%	16%	21%
Too dominated by its leader	43%	18%	13%
Professional in its approach	21%	11%	16%
Divided	11%	36%	9%
No opinion	7%	10%	17%

Just the Facts: Abacus Data Inc.

Abacus Data Inc. is Canada's newest player in the public opinion and marketing research industry. Whether it's telephone or online surveys, focus groups, one-on-one interviews, or secondary data analysis, the team at Abacus Data conducts public opinion, marketing, or stakeholder research that provides strategic insight to our clients. What sets the team at Abacus Data apart is its fresh perspective on politics, business, and consumer behaviour and a commitment to its clients.

Abacus Data offers its clients a comprehensive research tool kit that includes:

- Custom quantitative studies
- Opinion leader/Decision maker consultations
- The Vertex Panel (www.vertexpanel.ca)
- Omnibus surveys
- Focus groups
- Intercept studies
- One-on-one interviews
- Custom community panel creation and management
- Secondary data analysis

Abacus Data also runs the Vertex Panel:

An online research panel of Canada's leading public policy practitioners and scholars.



Find out more at www.vertexpanel.ca



Dr. David Coletto, CEO

Coletto has over six years experience working in the marketing research industry. He has conducted research studies for organizations in many sectors including pharmaceutical, transportation, educational, telecommunications, media, arts and cultural, tourism, and retail. He has also advised elected officials and senior-level decision makers at the federal, provincial, and municipal government levels.

He received his PhD in Political Science from the University of Calgary where he taught Research Methods to undergraduate students.

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