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Clinton Camp Texts a Path to Pennsylvania Avenue

May 14, 2007 2:21 PM

ABC News' Eloise Harper Reports: Sen. Hillary Clinton's presidential aspirations went cellular today as her team launched a text message campaign that will allow supporters to receive personalized text messages and cell phone pics from the junior senator from New York as she storms the campaign trail.

In a world with almost endless digital options, the text message campaign is yet another strategy to reach a wide net of potential voters and let them feel like they are connected to Clinton herself. (Currently the campaign sends out mass emails to supporters that arrive in inboxes from "Bill Clinton" or "Hillary Clinton" -- voters feel as though they are personally being emailed by the candidate.)

Clinton is not breaking ground in the candidate pool with her use of cell phone technology: Senator Edwards launched a text messaging campaign a few months ago. Senator Obama and Senator Clinton and other candidates all use Facebook and MySpace to reach out to younger voters in a way to personalize and humanize the candidate.

Text messaging has successfully been used in the past proving to reach large numbers of potential voters and create results. Mobile Voter, founded in 2004, is a non-profit non-partisan organization that teamed up with hundreds of organizations to use this technology to get people to register to vote. In 2006, Mobile Voter's, TXTVOTER '06 campaign registered tens of thousands of young voters across the country. The campaign through text messaging, used a

peer to peer method of registering, along with existing grassroots organizations to sign up thousands.

Mobile Vote founder, Ben Rigby, says "setting up a text campaign is easier than putting up a web site. It's amazing that more candidates haven't folded it into their campaign tactics already." Rigby also notes that "young people communicate via IM, MySpace/Facebook, and text messaging. They don't send email and they distrust unsolicited voice calls. The successful candidate will find a way to communicate with young people using their familiar technologies" without annoying them by flooding their devices.

Clinton's effort likely to be one of many gimmicks to come out encouraging voters to personally connect with the Senator and attempt to elicit voters and support.

ABC News' Raelyn Johnson and Jonathan Greenberger contributed to this report.

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