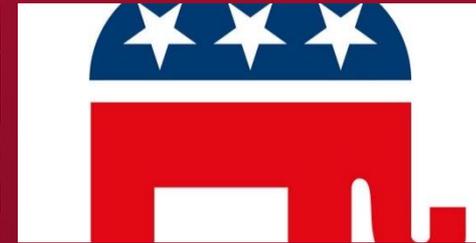


# Media's Professional Responsibility in an Election: CNN should stop announcing results while voters in other time zones can still vote

U.S. TV News, July 1 - October 14, 2020

- Biden has an advantage on issues like COVID-19, health policy, and the environment
- Trump is still receiving some media coverage that gives him an advantage on the economy as he discusses tax cuts
- Horse race coverage emphasizes Biden's advantage in public opinion polls
- Questions about Trump's suitability to govern are said to remain



# Media Must Resist Calling Race Too Early

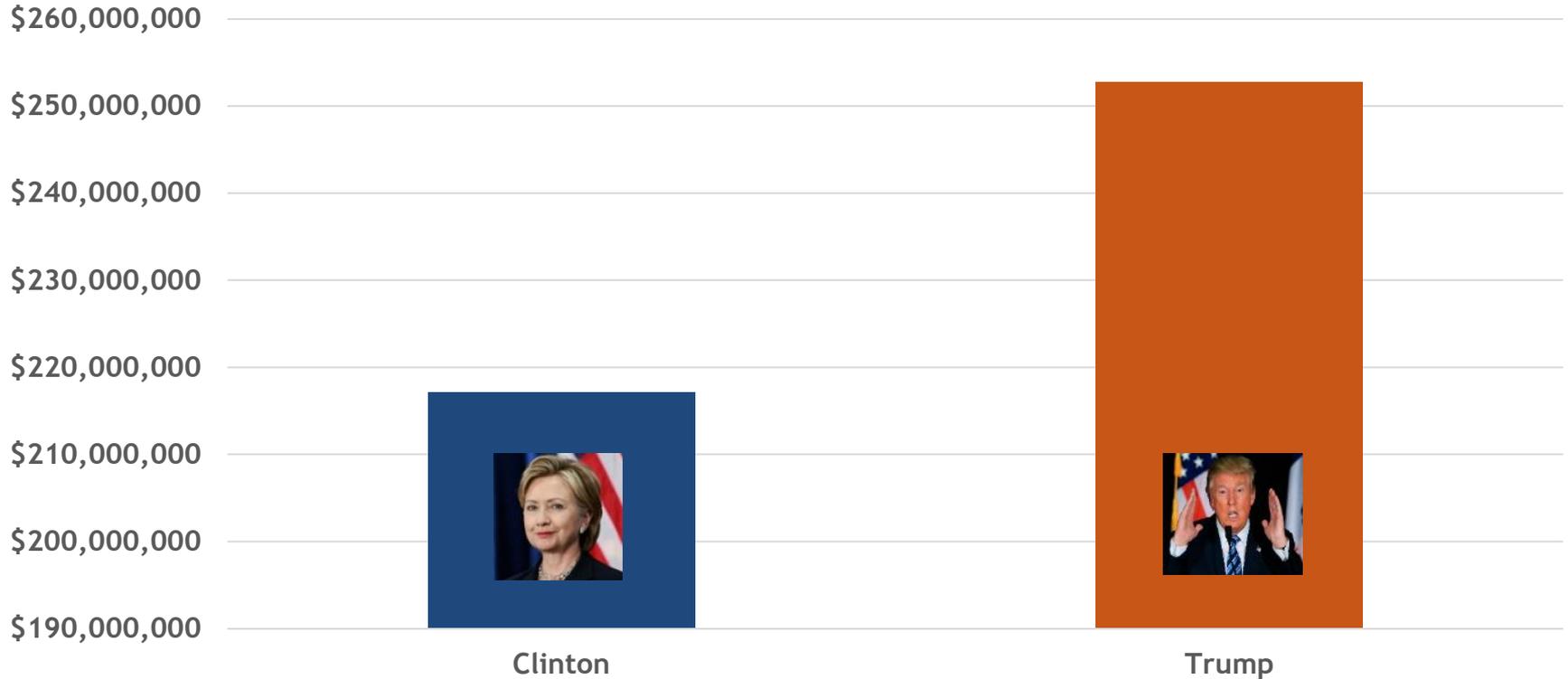
**October 17, 2020. New York.** - Media coverage and tone continues to strongly suggest that Biden will be the winner of the 2020 election, but the media tendency to declare a winner before voting is done must be resisted, according to new research from Media Tenor International.

With less than three weeks left until the 2020 elections and the cancellation of the most recent presidential debate, Trump has lost the chance to convince voters that he can help the U.S. deal with the COVID-19 crisis and its economic fallout. But with early voting and mail-in voting setting record numbers across the U.S., it is important for the media to resist the urge to declare a winner too soon. Additionally, four years later, it should now be public knowledge that Trump had a significant financial advantage from journalists that helped him avoid advertising spending by over-focusing on his 2016 campaign and reporting on it favorably.

“This is an issue we saw in 2000 when CNN called Florida before the court cases and lawsuits began,” says Roland Schatz, founder and CEO of Media Tenor. “We saw this again in 2016, when CNN again declared states won before the votes showed that that was true. We know that the electoral college system, voter suppression, and legal challenges may make the results come out other than as something that seems obvious. It is important that all voters get a fair say without being told a future that suggests their votes don’t matter. Only then can the U.S. start returning to norms that include free and fair elections and candidates that represent what the people show they want through their votes.”

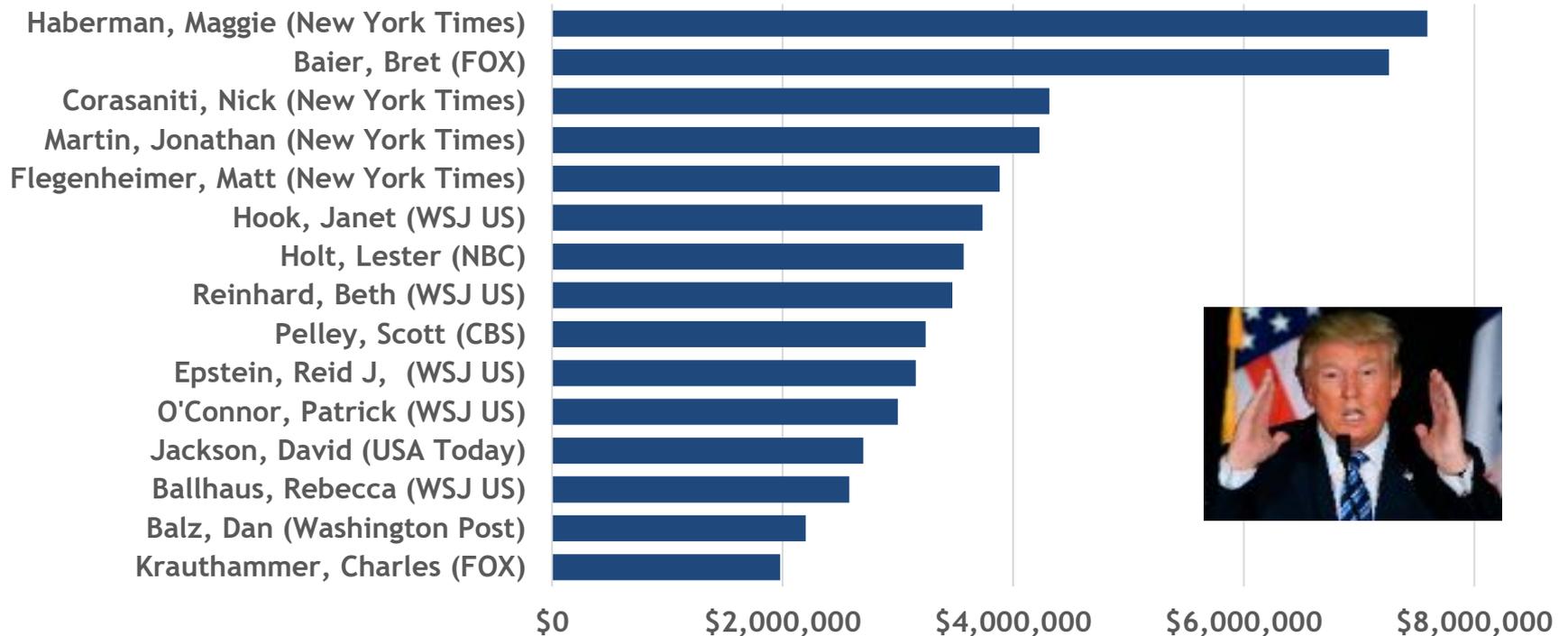
For over 25 years Media Tenor's mission has been to contribute to objective, diverse, and newsworthy media content. Media Tenor's global research projects include analyses of election campaigns, investor relations, public diplomacy, corporate communications and other topics critical to news makers and news audiences. For more information please contact [r.schatz@mediatenor.com](mailto:r.schatz@mediatenor.com) or +41 55 284 5109

## Did Clinton & Trump declare their profits on free media visibility?



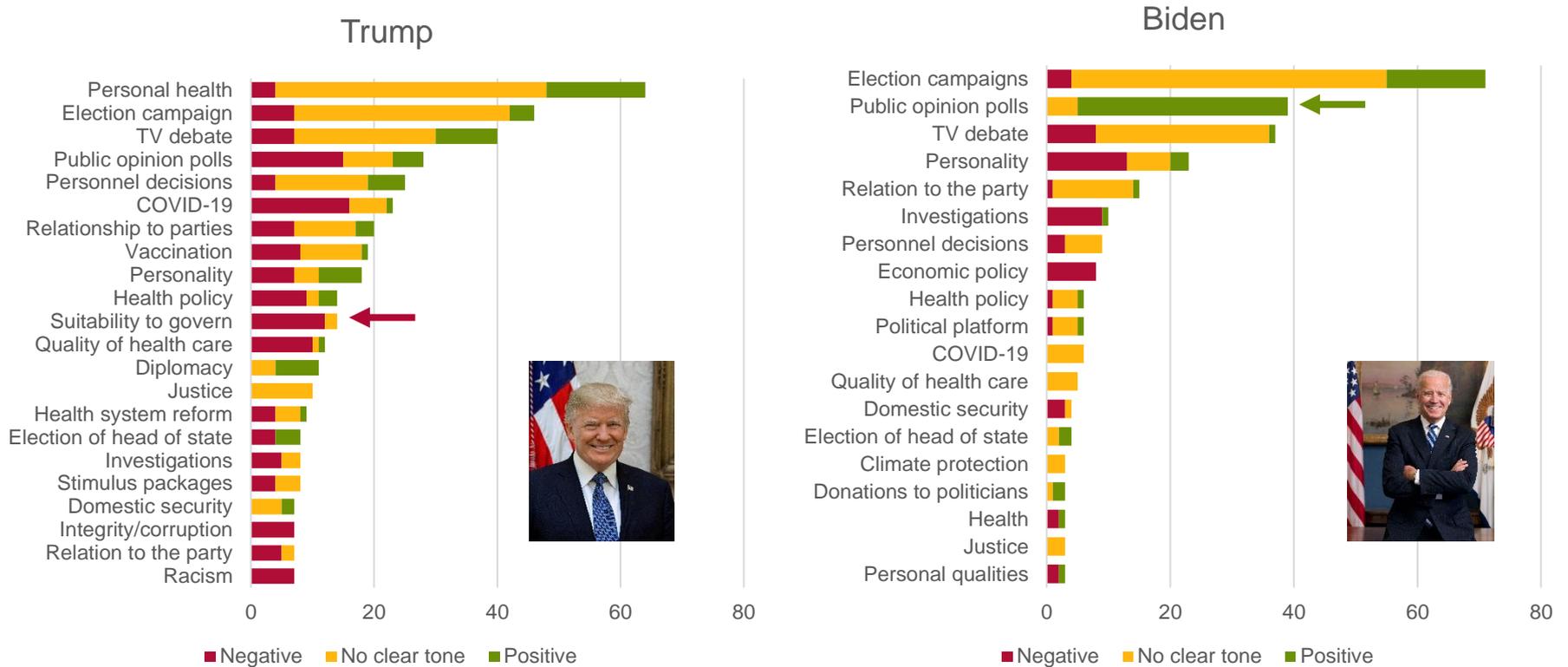
When the advertising dollar value equivalent of neutral and positive media coverage for Clinton and Trump was compared, Trump had a massive advantage that helped to frame him as “presidential” despite the unprecedented nature of his campaign.

## Top 15 journalists offering most value to Trump



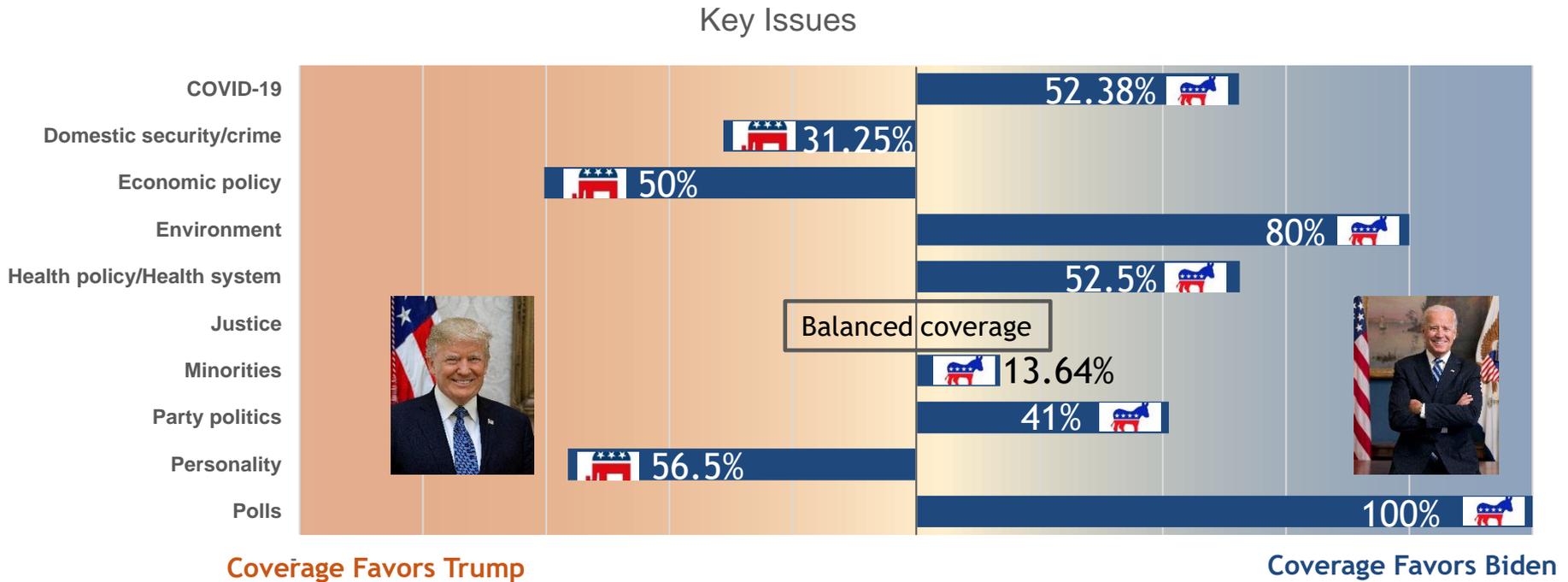
The high dollar value of visibility in *The New York Times* put Maggie Haberman in the lead for offering the most value to Trump. The value of coverage from FOX and CBS was notable because of how much more coverage is required to reach the same value as the NYT.

# Trump faces more negativity... especially on polls



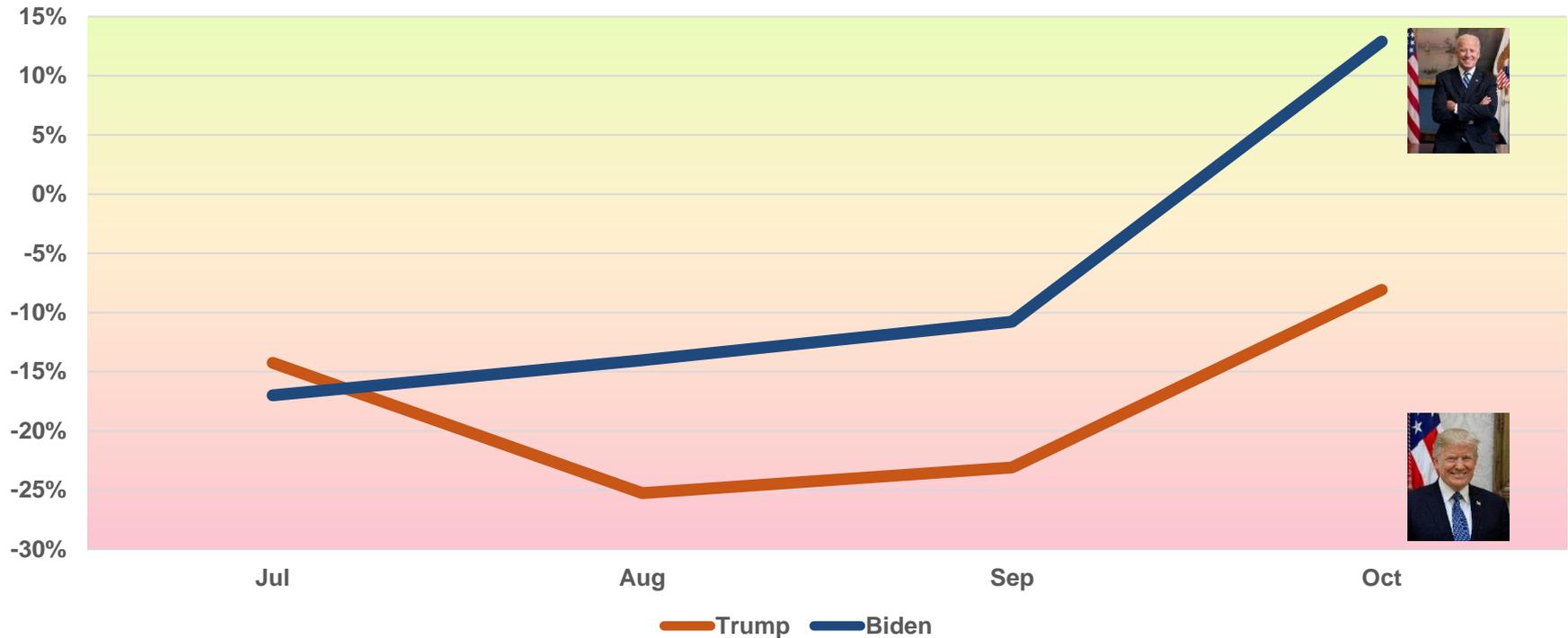
As Biden pulls away from Trump in multiple polls, the media is covering people's anxiety about poll accuracy since the election is not just the result of the popular vote due to the electoral college. Trump's suitability to govern remains sharply criticized.

# Biden has clear edge, but Trump leads on a few key issues



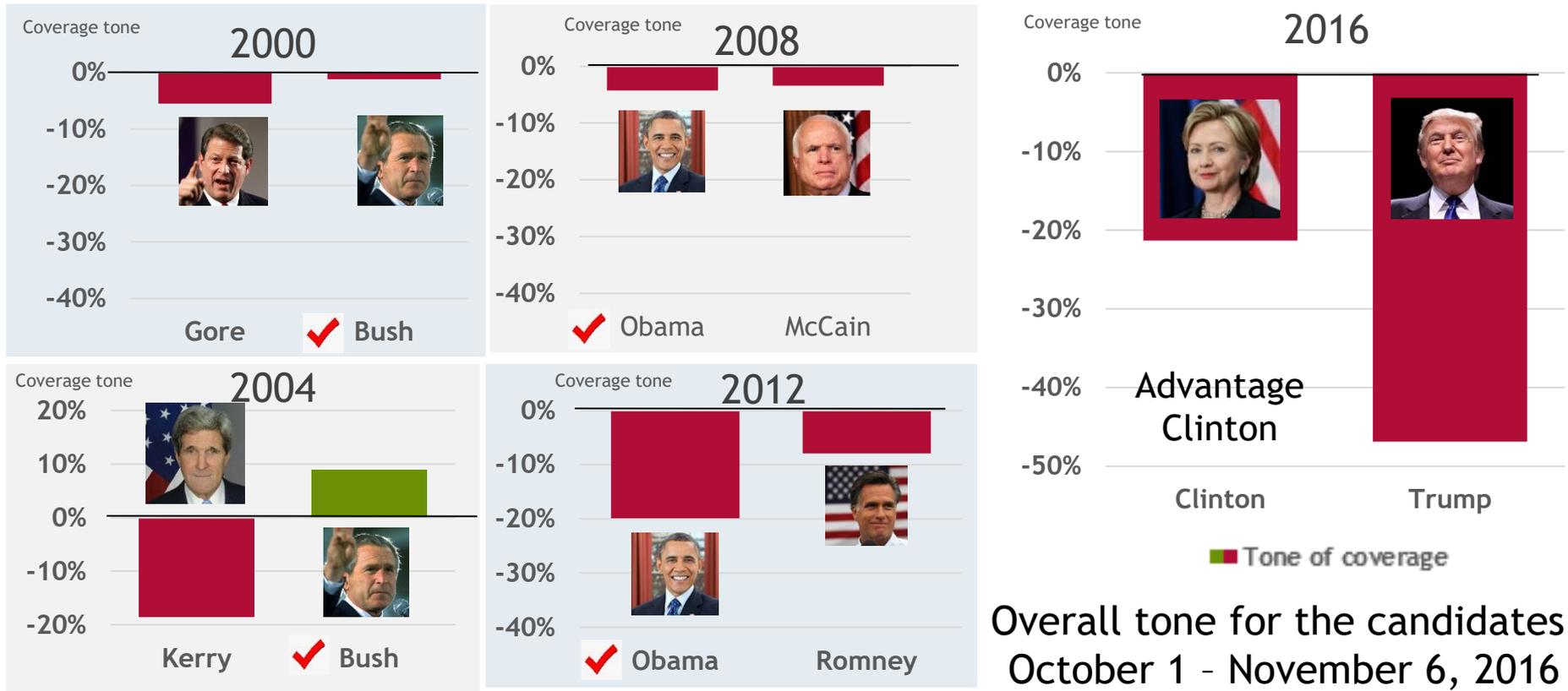
Biden is receiving better media coverage on a range of key election issues, including COVID-19, the environment, U.S. health policy, minorities and public poll results. But the media continue to give the Republicans an advantage on security and the economy.

## Media coverage shows Biden pulling away from Trump



Biden has gained momentum over the last several months of campaign, but much of the coverage continues to focus on uncertainty that lingers after 2016 polling results showed a popular vote victory for Clinton that didn't translate into a win.

# On Nov. 8 Clinton had largest advantage compared to 2000-2012



Overall tone for the candidates  
October 1 - November 6, 2016

In the last election, Clinton seemingly had a huge advantage going into election day; her image, despite containing negatives, was far better than Trump's. This long-term negativity seemed impossible for him to overcome, and media called the election result too early.

# Methodology: Scientific content analysis

## Human or Machine?

Computer based language processing currently is used in the following fields:

Automated customer hotlines | Language recognition | Automatic mail answering systems

Classification of text with similar patterns (e.g., medicine, law)

but

Automated analysis of media stories by computers at present doesn't meet the requirements for reputation risk management with regard to:

- Identification of relevant passages and themes
- Relationships between protagonists
- Correct identification of tonality/sentiment (MIT: < 60%)

### Media Tenor's Solution

Combines technology and human intelligence:

- Search strings check completeness of analysis material and identify stories on social media
- Trained human analysts code content based on scientific codebooks (validity/reliability > 85%)