

To: Double Negative model users
From: New River Strategies
CC: Innovating for the Public Good & Patinkin Research Strategies
Date: September 14, 2026
Re: Double Negative model release notes

Thank you for your interest in the 2026 Double Negative model. These release notes provide information about the model, how it was built, factors to consider in using it, and suggested universes. Please do not hesitate to contact the modeling team at doublenegative@newriverstrat.com if there are any questions or if there is further information we can provide.

Model summary

The double negative model identifies voters who are likely to hold negative views of both major political parties. Implicit in that is the assumption that these voters feel disaffected and disconnected from the political system and are at least somewhat open to hearing from candidates of either party. However, the model does not take direction of partisanship into account and it is likely that these voters' latent issue preferences may make them more or less susceptible to voting for Democrats. The model is scored 0-100, where 100 indicates that a target is most likely to hold a negative view of both parties. When using the deciles, the 10th decile holds the targets with the highest scores.

Survey & what was modeled (and what was not)

We conducted a large survey to collect data for this model. Using online panel (just over 30% of responses) and text-to-web, we surveyed all voters (just over 50% of responses) and voters living in targeted (Frontline and Red to Blue) congressional districts, ending up with 9,815 responses matched to the June 2026 copy of the TargetSmart national voter file. The questionnaire contained attention traps and measured for speeders. Responses were matched to the file using the Civis platform's matching tools.

In the survey, we asked voters to list their support for the Democratic and Republican parties on a 0-100 scale. After testing nearly six dozen combinations, the final model ended up modeling towards voters who listed support for both parties at or below 30 on the 0-100 scale. The group modeled away from consisted of strong partisans on either side, defined as voters with a partisanship score above 65 (or below 35), who listed approval of their party as 85 or higher and approval of the other party as 15 or below. Including strong partisans from both sides of the aisle ensured that we properly modeled away from partisans in general as opposed to just Democrats or Republicans.

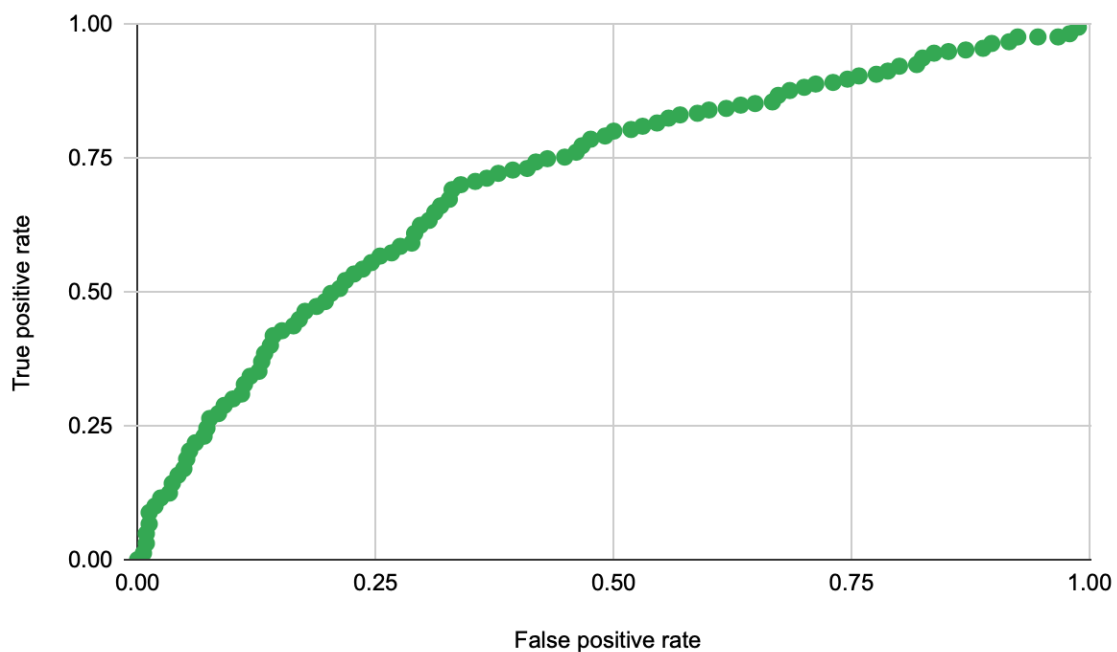


The resulting score should be interpreted as a relative ranking of voters' likelihood of resembling the Double Negative population, rather than as a calibrated probability that an individual voter meets the survey definition

As part of the nearly six dozen combinations tested, we also tested modeling people who approved of or disapproved of Congressional representatives of one party and named leaders of each. All of those attempts produced models with lower AUCs and worse accuracy, precision, and recall, especially those where we attempted to model favorability of specific named leaders.

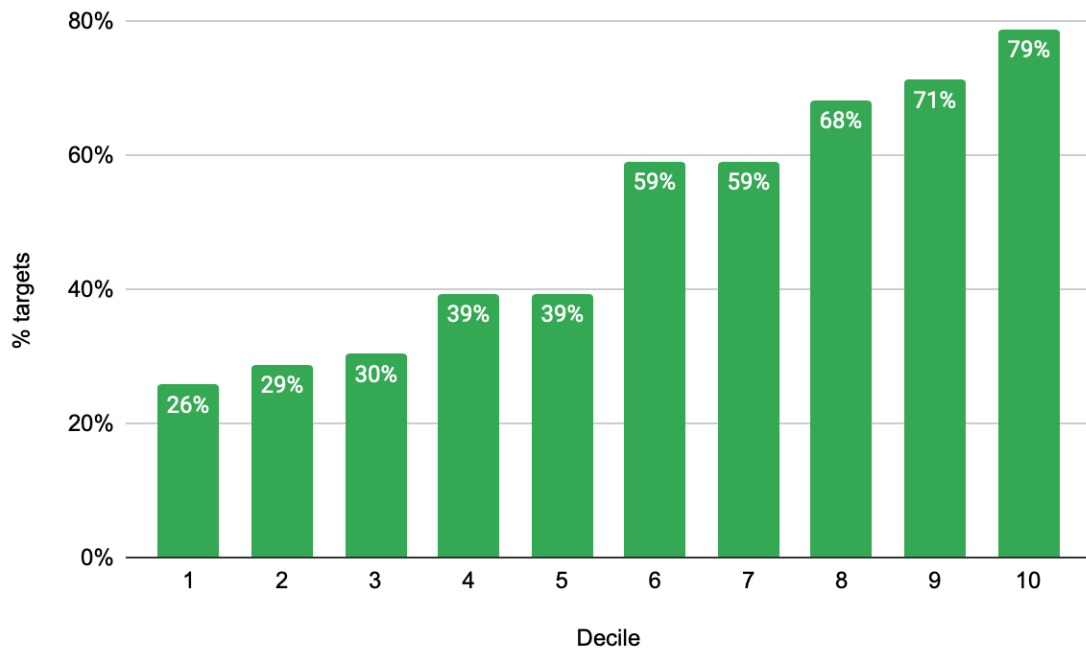
Validation details and key features

This binary classification model was built using XGBoost. A subsample of IDs was used to build the model and the holdout IDs were used for validation purposes. Key metrics from this model include:

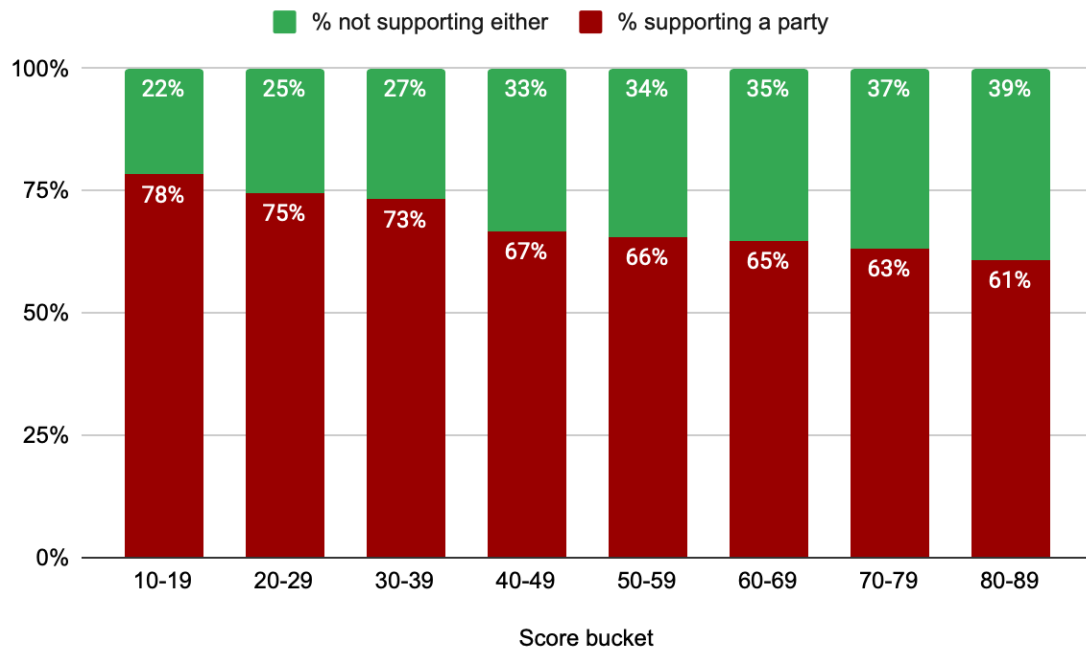


The ROC curve plot displays a model AUC of 0.79.





The in-score decile plot shows a clear stair-step pattern, with the top decile containing 58% more targets than a randomly selected list of the same size.



The out-of-sample ID plot also features a stair-step pattern and demonstrates that the top score bucket contains almost twice as many targets as does the bottom.

At the classification threshold that maximizes the model's F1 score, the model has an F1 score of 0.70, precision of 0.62, recall of 0.80, and accuracy of 0.65. The relatively high recall reflects the model's usefulness in identifying a broad pool of potential targets, which can then be narrowed by layering other models or targeting criteria on top of it.

Key features of the TargetSmart file used to build this model include age, the absolute value of their partisan score, how many times the voter has voted in primaries, for how long the voter has been registered (vs. first ever date of registration), whether or not the voter is married, how many times the voter has voted in generals, and whether or not the voter is a parent or has children in the household.

Considerations for use

The score does not contain any built-in filters, including with partisanship, turnout, or persuadability. As such, we do not recommend using it by itself unless the goal is to capture as many targets as possible, since you may end up including, e.g., low-propensity latent Republicans (or Democrats). We have built the model this way on purpose: this preserves flexibility for users to find whichever targets they need based on the unique considerations of their program.

While partisanship is always a factor, this is especially important when considering turnout propensity. As mentioned above, some of the most important features used to build this model are age and date of registration. Specifically, younger voters and those who registered for the first time recently are more likely to have higher Double Negative scores. Given that, voters with higher Double Negative scores are those likely to have lower turnout scores. As such, we recommend being flexible on turnout screens when attempting to persuade these voters, including a vote intent question on DVC scripts when contacting them, etc., since some of the lower-turnout targets may actually be quite open to voting and doing so for your candidate/issue if asked.

One key universe this model helps identify is voters not typically found by traditional persuasion targeting due to their partisan scores being too high or low. To find these voters, we recommend taking all voters with Double Negative scores over, e.g., 75, removing your existing persuasion universe, and contacting the remaining targets. (Of course, you can also apply a turnout screen if desired, but per the above notes, we recommend doing so cautiously.) If you have a custom persuasion score, you may wish to



apply that as well. The remaining targets will likely be strong Double Negatives and should be at least somewhat open to hearing from you.

Comparing the top decile to all voters

Below is a brief set of summary statistics comparing voters in the top decile of the Double Negative score to all voters on the file. These numbers are provided for informational purposes only and this group is not a targeting recommendation by itself.

Feature		Top decile	All voters
Gender	Female	40%	53%
	Male	60%	47%
Age bucket	18-34	68%	25%
	35-49	29%	25%
	50-64	3%	23%
	65+	0%	27%
Race	AfAm	5%	12%
	Asian	7%	5%
	Hispanic	20%	12%
	Native	0%	0%
	White	69%	72%
Marital status	Married	21%	58%
	Unmarried	79%	42%
Parental status	Non-parent	80%	81%
	Parent	20%	19%
Partisanship bucket	Democrats	21%	40%
	Middle partisans	49%	18%
	Republicans	30%	42%
Turnout bucket	Below 35	70%	37%
	35-65	25%	20%



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	65+	5%	44%
Earliest reg date	Before 2024	73%	88%
	2024 onwards	27%	11%
	Unknown	0%	1%

