

## Obama breaks ground tonight with 30-minute ad

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(10-28) 18:04 PDT SAN FRANCISCO --

Sen. Barack Obama is going where millions of voters spend their evenings - their own living rooms - when he stars in a 30-minute paid commercial tonight on national TV that will serve as his big media finale in the 2008 presidential race.

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it."

"This was always a great idea - to make sure that if something bad happened, if there was an October surprise, you had a placeholder where you could ... deal with a game-changing event," Obama supporter and fundraiser Wade Randlett said this week. "But in the absence of that - God willing - you have the opportunity to do what Barack started yesterday (Monday), which is to bring the process full circle."

With just six days until the election and polls showing Obama leading Sen. John McCain by anywhere from 6 to 14 points in national polls, Obama supporters like Randlett say the Illinois senator's big buy on the national media stage is not just a campaign commercial and is not just targeted at swing states or undecided voters. They say it's about making an appeal to all Americans about what lies ahead if he becomes president.

"What (Obama) said from day one, what this campaign was always about was to ... put it in context," said Randlett. "This is about bringing the country together, getting past race and ideology - and getting ready for the hard work."

Bob Gardner, a San Francisco adman and GOP strategist who helped create media for Republican President Gerald Ford in 1976, notes that H. Ross Perot, a Reform Party presidential candidate in 1992, bought half an hour of TV time to explain to Americans how he would "get under the hood" and fix the system.

The Democrat's unusual coast-to-coast pitch to voters - with a price tag some have suggested is in the \$3 million range - is another reminder that after two years of campaign ads, events and stump speeches, even the closing arguments in this campaign are breaking boundaries.

The Obama ad - part biography, part campaign commercial - will be hard to miss. It will be broadcast locally at 8 p.m. on CBS5 - between "Access Hollywood" and "Deal or No Deal" - and also on NBC affiliate KNTV and BET.

This is the first time a major-party presidential candidate has bought 30 minutes of time for a single commercial on national TV.

Michelle Obama, speaking Monday night to Jay Leno on "The Tonight Show," said it will put her husband "all over the place ... but I don't know what they're calling

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