

# eAdvocacy for Nonprofits: What's Real, What's Missing and What Do You Want to Know?

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# Welcome!

## ▶ Who Are We?

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# What Do We Mean by eAdvocacy?

- ▶ eAdvocacy = New Tools for Extending Reach
  - Project message, engage media, influence decision makers and campaign targets
  - Connect with new allies and supporters
- ▶ eOrganizing = New Tools for Base Building
  - Grow relationships, achieve trust
  - Mobilize base

# What Are We Covering Today?

- ▶ Interactive Group Polls: The Spectrogram +
- ▶ eAdvocacy Tools Snapshot Today
  - What is the state of the art?
- ▶ eAdvocacy Themes
  - What key topics should you be tracking?
- ▶ eAdvocacy: What's Still Missing?
  - What problems remain unsolved?
- ▶ Your Questions

# Who are You?

## ▶ Who's in the room?

- Organizers
- Techies
- Developers
- Fundraisers
- Communications
- Operations
- Managers
- Others?

# Spectrograms

- ▶ My organization is making effective use of the internet for advocacy / My organization has no idea how to get started
- ▶ The internet should be the single highest communications priority for any nonprofit working in the US today

# eAdvocacy Survey

## ▶ Who Does eAdvocacy?

- Who has a web site?
  - Updates Monthly/Weekly/More Frequently?
  - Who has done “online campaigning”?
- Who has an emailing list?
  - Mails Monthly/Weekly/More Frequently?
  - Has more than 1 list?

# eAdvocacy Snapshot Today

## ▶ Good Options for Email Messaging

- Email is still the “killer app”
- Hosted solutions span a range of prices
- Deliverability issues are a threat

## ▶ Web publishing is easier but still not simple

- Range of platform options is confusing
- Integration of tools is unsolved problem
- Setup still required lots of help, maintenance much less so

# eAdvocacy Snapshot Today

- ▶ 3rd-party services make for richer campaigns
  - Rich media is getting easier to publish
    - Odeo (podcasting), YouTube (video), Flickr (pictures)
  - MeetUp, Evite and Upcoming.com support organizing events
    - But remember privacy issues
  - Volunteer for Change is a great new tool for volunteer and event management
  - Always plan for these services disappearing

# eAdvocacy Snapshot Today

- ▶ Emerging Tech is Changing the Landscape
  - Blogging is powerful new tool accessible to non-technical organizers
    - RSS changes the way information flows
  - Cell phones are becoming ever more critical
    - Reach folks without computers, in real time
  - Social Networking tools have potential
    - MySpace, LiveJournal get huge traffic
    - Reach younger demographic

# eAdvocacy Themes

## ► Changes and Challenges

- Traditional web actions tools aren't really reaching decision makers
  - It's mostly going in the bit bucket
  - But still useful for engaging and growing base
- Email is getting harder to deliver
  - Spam filters catch more of your mailings every week
  - It's easier to get blacklisted as a spammer every day
  - Third-party services have become essential delivery conduit

# eAdvocacy Themes

- ▶ It's all about your data, not your software
  - The primary goal of eAdvocacy is to build a mobilizable database of supporters
  - The value of data dwarfs the cost of technology
- ▶ Remember these rules of thumb:
  - Know where your data lives and back it up!
  - Know how you can migrate your data
  - Privacy and security of your data is SO critical

# eAdvocacy: What's Missing

## ► Unsolved problems

- Online and offline data integration is hard
  - Compounded by “multiple database” problem
- Platform interoperability barely exists
  - Example: try making your email tool talk to your supporter database
- Skilled practitioners and trainers
  - Capacity building is more important than new tech

# eAdocacy Tools We Love to Use

- ▶ Democracy In Action
  - Email blasting and web action tools
- ▶ NPOGroups / Electric Embers
  - Discussion groups and email
- ▶ Volunteer For Change
  - Volunteer and event management
- ▶ GoodStorm.com
  - Cafe Press done well and progressive

# Summary

- ▶ eAdvocacy tools are ever improving, but little is turnkey at this point
  - Hosted solutions are essential for success
- ▶ Critical challenges remain
  - Availability of experienced practitioners is limited
  - Deliverability of email and online actions
- ▶ It's about the data, not the tools
  - eAdvocacy builds your lists, engages your base

Thank You!

