

5 TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ONLINE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

by Steve Daigneault, Vice President, M&R Strategic Services

Online advocacy is no longer in its infant stage. Countless organizations have used online petitions to send billions of electronic letters to Congress. Within the nonprofit community, some have asked themselves whether or not this advocacy is just “slacktivism,” or a means for people to feel good without getting out of their chair, yet making little impact.

Regardless, online advocacy is here to stay. And, it's each organization's job to make the most of online advocacy efforts. Below are five tips on how organizations can use online advocacy to impact the outcome of an issue, while also building public awareness, raising money, and growing a community of supporters.



- Leverage the 24-hour news cycle.** Content on the web changes every minute. That means the actions you post and promote need to be hyper-relevant to the moment: Why does this action matter right now, this very minute?
- Talk about what else you're doing.** Expose the full breadth of your organization's work on an issue, and how this one petition fits into your overall plan to move an issue forward. That could be your staff visits to the Hill, an event you're holding where you've invited media, or partner organizations that are pooling names to make a bigger impact.
- Confirmation pages matter.** Once someone signs a petition, you've got a split second to capture their interest to take the next step. Oftentimes that means asking them to tell their friends, but some organizations might find more success landing them on a donation page that has a thank you message above it. That simple soft ask can sometimes convert more activists to donors than a straight-up appeal.
- Don't just ask once.** Everyone's inbox is flooded these days; sometimes you have to send the same action a few times to get traction. Build a campaign around an action, promote it two or three times via email, post it on your social network pages, and create a homepage promotion for it.
- Set goals and deadlines.** In the absence of a real world moment, sometimes you can create your own moment. Set a hard deadline and a specific goal for the number of actions you need. Reinforce that deadline and goal wherever you promote the action. If possible, show progress towards your goal with a thermometer.