



# MOVE PEOPLE

## **Speak and Be Heard: Using Your Online Voice to Build Relationships**

Jeanette Irwin, Internet Communications Director, Drug Policy Alliance

Michael Ward, Sr. VP of Internet Strategy, M+R Strategic Services

Alan Cooke, Product Marketing Manager, Convio



# Key Messages

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- Public Affairs groups tend to have strong support
- Constituents must be given clear pathways to action
- Important to know who your supporters are and what they care about
- Focus on moving constituents to a deeper level of engagement with the organization
- **Focus** matters – and not easy to sell internally!
- Activists are not necessarily donors

# Agenda

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- Drug Policy Alliance Challenges
- M +R audit and recommendations
- Overcoming internal challenges / building consensus
- Initial results

# Jeanette Irwin

Internet Communications Director, Drug Policy Alliance

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Jeanette Irwin, director of Internet Communications, started as a web designer at The Lindesmith Center in 1996, and also worked in television production for the Drug Policy Foundation.

As director of Internet Communications, she has overseen the dramatic growth in viewership of the organization's websites and email subscriber lists. Prior to working in drug policy reform, Irwin received her M.A. from George Washington University and published scholarly articles on drug abuse, women and drug policy.



The Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) is the nation's leading organization promoting policy alternatives to the drug war that are grounded in science, compassion, health and human rights.

Our supporters are individuals who believe the war on drugs is doing more harm than good. Together we advance policies that reduce the harms of both drug misuse and drug prohibition, and seek solutions that promote safety while upholding the sovereignty of individuals over their own minds and bodies.

# About Drug Policy Alliance

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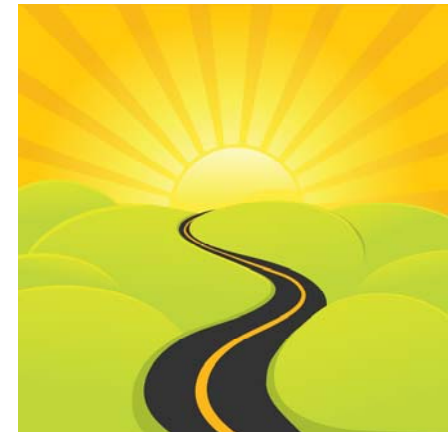
## Mission and Goals



- Alternatives to the war on drugs
- Replace criminal justice approaches with public health solutions
- Drug policies based on science, compassion, health and human rights

## DPA's Journey: From Public Education to Advocacy

- Think tank roots
- Gradual shift away from public education
- Current online communications is advocacy focused
- All grassroots advocacy is online



# More About Drug Policy Alliance

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## Organizational Resources

- >50 staff
- 7 offices nationwide
- <80,000 online constituents
- 35,000 member donors



# Why did DPA decide to take action?

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## Diminishing Returns on Online Advocacy

- Action Rates Declining
- Online donations
- List growth
- Declining ROI



# Michael Ward

Sr. VP of Internet Strategy, M+R Strategic Services

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Michael Ward, Sr. Vice President at M+R Strategic Services provides strategic online fundraising and advocacy guidance to major nonprofit clients including Habitat for Humanity International, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and AARP.

Prior to joining M+R, Michael worked for a project of the Rockefeller Family Fund, providing advice on public affairs campaigns for leading pro-choice and environmental organizations. In addition, Michael oversaw the development of a cutting-edge technology-planning tool available to nonprofit organizations via the Internet.



For more than 15 years, M+R Strategic Services has developed robust campaigns and disciplined execution for many of the country's most effective nonprofits, advancing their interests and earning support for their causes.

M+R's staff of more than 30 online specialists, understands how to run persistent, cutting-edge campaigns based in data-driven strategies to help clients achieve results. We help our clients manage over 9 million constituents and have raised over \$65 million online.



# Assessment

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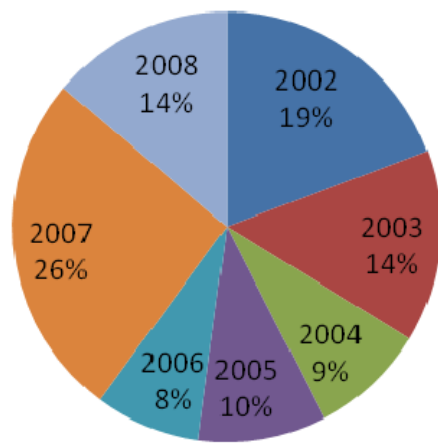


Drug Policy Alliance started with a strong online program that showed tremendous potential for growth

- Strong fundraising response rates
- Large supporter base
- Useful website content
- Strong technology base and knowledgeable staff

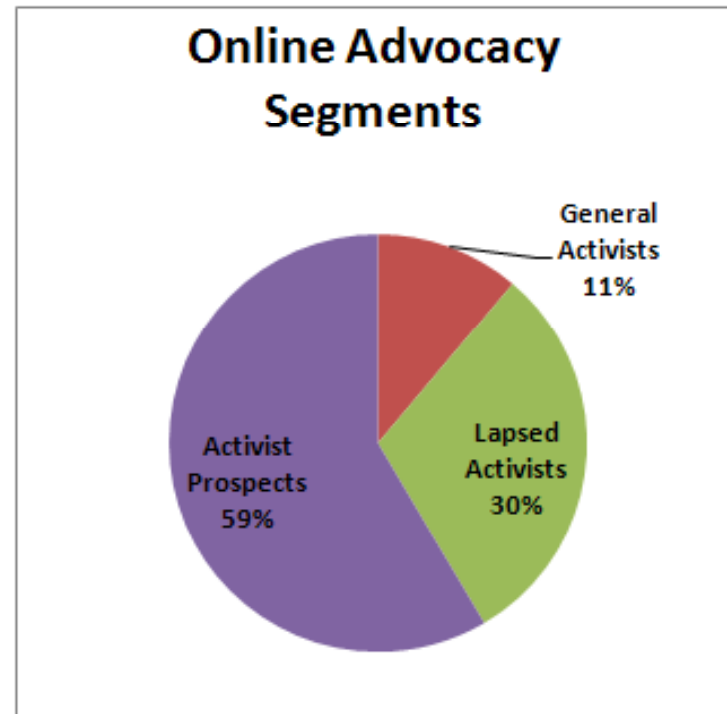
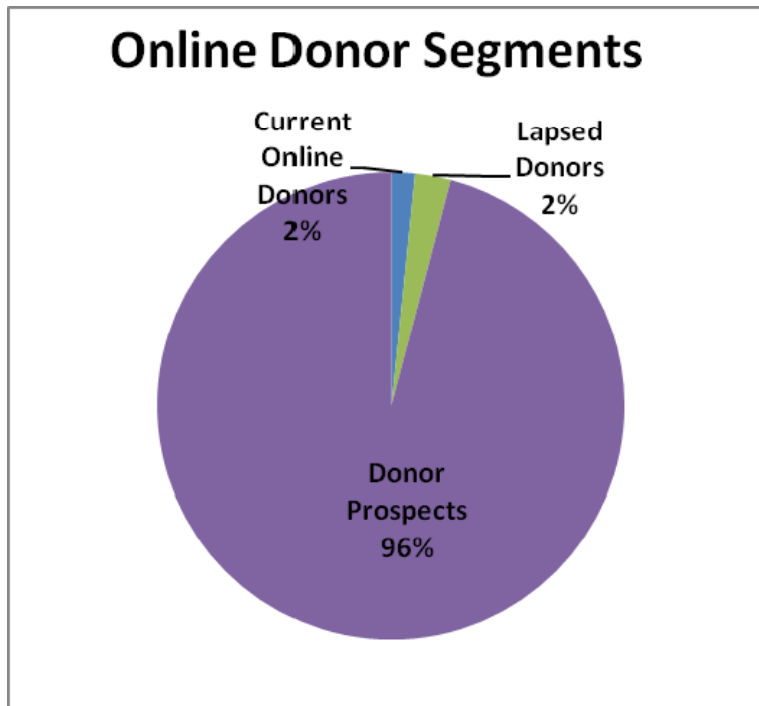
# Subscriber Time on File

**Subscriber Count by Year**



- The bulk of the list joined in 2007 or earlier
- Email addresses go bad over time, so continual recruitment is crucial in maintaining an active list
  - ❖ Currently, 28,616 of 109,059 emails are bouncing

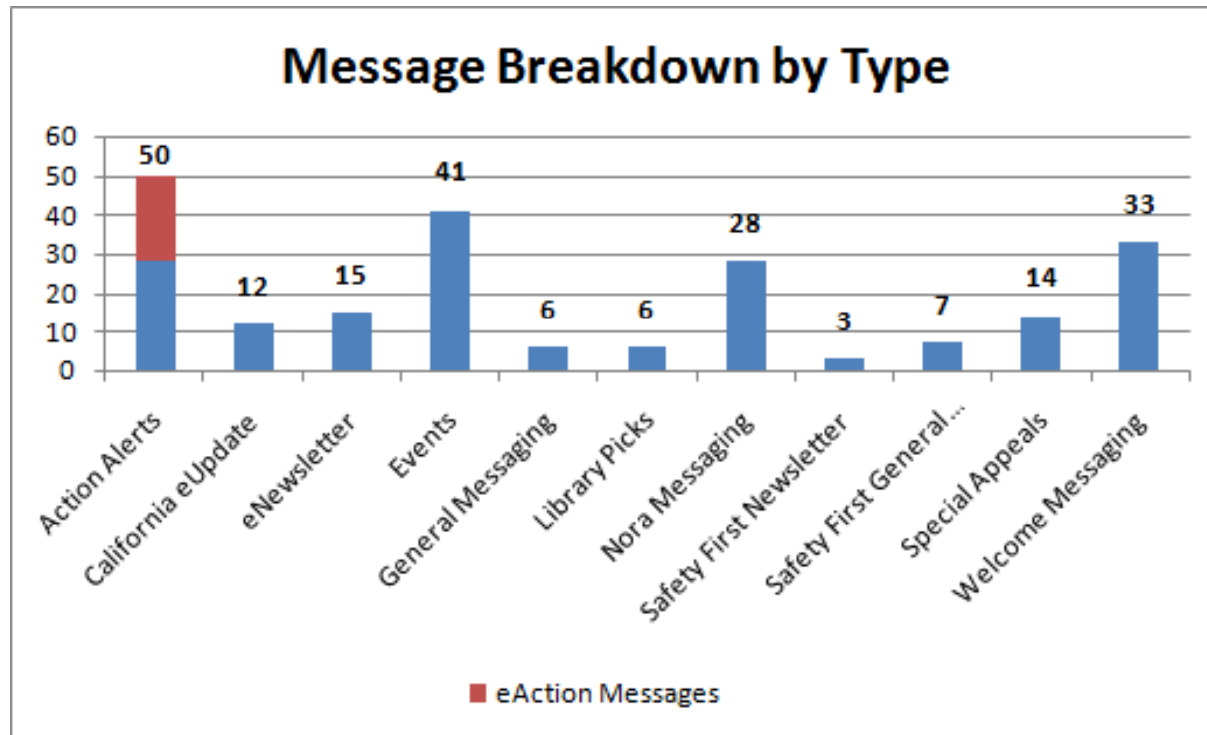
# List Engagement



*\*Note: These calculations include the 25,000 deliverable members who are not being messaged*

15,484 subscribers, or 23.9% of the total list, have engaged with the Drug Policy Alliance in some form via Convio or previous messaging platforms.

# Online Advocacy



Only 22 messages were Action Alerts that linked to Convio advocacy forms in 2008.

# Advocacy Response Rate



2008 Advocacy (full-file)	Open Rate	CTR	Resp Rate	# Resp
Eliminate the Crack/Powder Sentencing Disparity (1/18)	13.6%	2.17%	0.05%	16
Watch the Attorney General Saw a Lady in Half (2/12)	14.3%	2.31%	0.63%	258
No More Marijuana Arrests - Barney Frank mj decrim bill (4/23)	20.8%	9.54%	6.43%	2,575
A Life and Death Issue (8/4)	16.2%	4.86%	3.76%	1,536
Who's the Drug War's Next Victim? (8/20)	16.5%	5.73%	3.92%	1,587
<b>Advocacy Total</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>4.99%</b>	<b>3.03%</b>	<b>5,972</b>

M+R 2007 Benchmark Response Rate: 7.5%

# Antiquated Approach

Drug Policy Alliance Network  
Reason, Compassion, Justice.

manage my subscription | view on website

**You Can Make a Difference**



Dear Michael,

As I wrote to you in December, momentum is building in Congress to eliminate one of the worst excesses in the war on drugs: the crack/powder cocaine sentencing disparity. This disparity treats crack offenses one hundred times more severely than powder cocaine offenses.

Not only does the disparity create enormous racial inequities in the federal criminal justice system, it gives federal law enforcement agencies the incentive to waste taxpayer resources on low-level, nonviolent offenders instead of disrupting organized crime.

Three bi-partisan reform bills have been introduced in the U.S. Senate, and two reform bills have been introduced in the House with a third in the works. We believe that reform will move this year--**if members of Congress feel significant pressure to act.**

That's where you come in. There are four things you can do to make this campaign successful:

- 1) **Fax your members of Congress** if you haven't already.
- 2) **Write a letter to the editor** of your local paper.
- 3) **Plan an event in your area** for the month of February--a rally, teach-in, panel discussion, etc. If you would like to pull an event together, please **contact Jasmine Tyler** for resources and more information.
- 4) **Join us in Washington, DC on February 26** for a national lobby day on this issue, and bring friends and community leaders with you. If you can't make it to DC, set up meetings with members of Congress (or their staff) in their district offices. For more information check out **this toolkit** or **contact Jasmine Tyler**.

You can find fact sheets, talking points and articles about crack/powder reform [here](#).

Imagine being able to reduce the federal prison population, eliminate racial disparities, cut government waste and fight violent crime instead of sentencing nonviolent drug law offenders to long prison sentences.

We can do it with your help.

Thank you,

Bill Piper  
Director of National Affairs  
Drug Policy Alliance


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**Contact the Drug Policy Alliance:**

Drug Policy Alliance  
70 West 38th Street, 16th Floor  
New York, NY 10018

**ACTION REQUEST**

In this DPA Action Network alert, you can make a difference:

PERSONAL ACTION CENTER

To view other actions, see actions you've completed, or edit your profile please log on to the [DPA Personal Action Center](#).



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# Streamlined Sample



Drug Policy Alliance Network  
Reason. Compassion. Justice.

**You Can Make a Difference**

Dear Michael,



Drug Policy Alliance New Jersey is gearing up for the first ever legislative hearing on medical marijuana in the Assembly! This Thursday, May 22, the Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee will hold an informational hearing on Assembly Bill 804, the New Jersey Compassionate Use Medical Marijuana Act.

Much is riding on the success of the hearing—if this initial informational hearing goes well, it will help us advocate for hearings in the fall that will lead to votes in committee and then in the full legislature. You can help to ensure that the committee holding Thursday’s hearing understands how much support this legislation has among New Jerseyans. Please take a moment to contact the members of the committee telling them you support Assembly Bill 804!

**Take action now.**

In 2006, Drug Policy Alliance New Jersey launched the Compassionate Use Campaign to support safe medical marijuana access within the state. This Campaign supports Assembly Bill 804 and Senate Bill 119, which are sponsored by Assemblymen Reed Gusciora and Michael Patrick Carroll, Assemblywoman Joan Voss, and State Senators Nicholas P. Scutari and Jim Whelan. These bills would allow seriously ill patients access to medical marijuana with a doctor’s recommendation in a program run by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. **Encourage members of the Assembly Health committee to support this important legislation.**

The time has come for New Jersey to join the 12 other states that allow seriously ill patients access to medical marijuana! This common sense and compassionate legislation would relieve much needless suffering. Join supporters of the Compassionate Use Campaign, including the New Jersey State Nurses Association; the New Jersey Academy of Family Physicians; the New Jersey Hospice and Palliative Care Organization; the New Jersey League for Nursing; the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Southern NJ and Northern NJ chapters; and the American Civil Liberties Union, and **show your support for medical marijuana access in New Jersey.**

Together we can make a difference and ease suffering in New Jersey! Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

Roseanne Scotti  
Drug Policy Alliance New Jersey

**More Information**

See our website for more on the Medical Marijuana Compassionate Use Campaign.

hearing understands how much support this legislation has among New Jerseyans. Please take a moment to contact the members of the committee telling them you support Assembly Bill 804!

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Together we can make a difference and ease suffering in New Jersey! Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

Roseanne Scotti

# Strategic Recommendations



# Messaging Strategy

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- Structure fundraising and advocacy in terms of messaging campaigns
- Adopt a behaviorally-based messaging strategy
- Focus messaging

# Campaign Messaging Strategy

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- Develop messaging campaigns.
- Example campaign flow:
  - **An initial full-list alert** to subscribers asking them to send a letter to their Representative, asking him or her to vote for the legislation at hand;
  - **A follow-up** alert to non-action takers (using the Campaign Activists segment described above), reminding them to take action, and
  - **A follow-up viral message** to action takers, asking them to forward a message to a friend;
  - **An email / phone call** to core activists and/or campaign activists in a particular legislative district requesting that they setup a meeting with their elected official.
  - **Later, a call-in alert or event invitation** to action takers or a full-list alert around a new action or development related to the issue; and
  - **A fundraising message** to the full list (or action-takers only, depending on the frequency of recent fundraising communications).

# Behavioral Messaging Strategy



- Advocacy segments:

- **Core Activists:** Subscribers who have made 3+ online advocacy actions in the past 12 months.
- **General Activists:** Subscribers who have made 1-2 online advocacy actions in the past 12 months.
  - If it appears that certain Activists are particularly engaged in certain campaign issues such as syringe access or mandatory minimum sentencing but are *not* Core Activists, M+R suggests developing additional issue-based activist groups.
- **Lapsed Activists:** Subscribers who have made 1+ online advocacy actions prior to the recent 12 months.
- **Activist Prospects:** Subscribers who have made no online advocacy actions ever.
- **Campaign Activists:** Subscribers who have taken action on a given advocacy campaign.

# Behavioral Messaging Strategy

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- Donor segments:
  - **Donors:** Subscribers who have made 1+ online donation in the past 24 months.
  - **Lapsed Donors:** Subscribers who have made 1+ online donation prior to the recent 24 months.
  - **Donor Prospects:** No online donations ever.

# Implementing a New Strategy

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## Goal

- Messages adhere to best practices
- Campaign focused
- National campaigns prioritized over state-based
- Behavioral-based messaging

## Compromise in the Interim

- Action-oriented, one link destination per message
- Prioritize state campaigns over national
- One campaign at a time, with exceptions

# Results



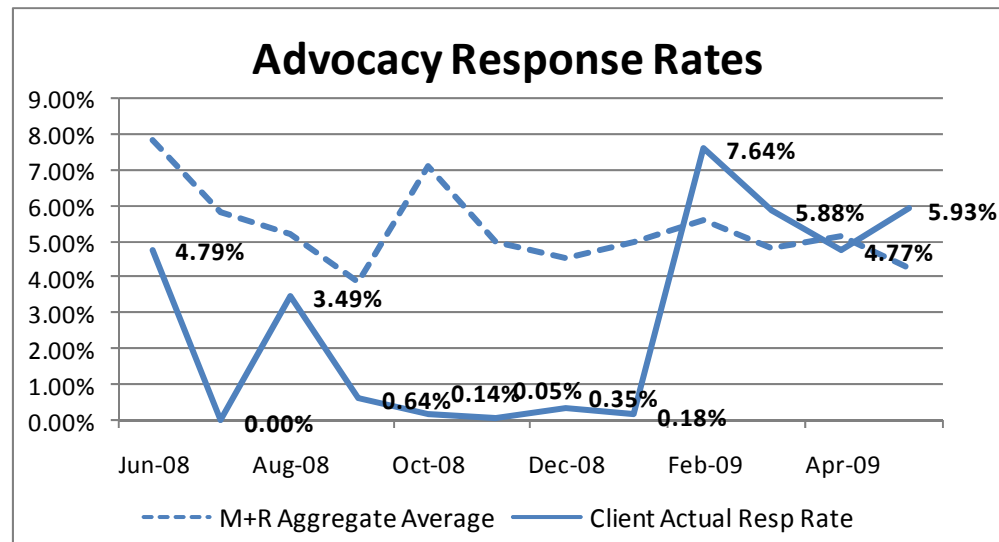
Average subscribers from 2005 - 2007: Over 104, 000

## Before implementing M + R's recommendations:

- Deliverable email addresses in December 2008: 72,000
- 2008 Action Rate Average: 3%
- 2008 Donation Rate Average: 0.12%

## Post Implementation, May 2009:

- Deliverable email addresses: <80,000
- Action Rate: 6%
- Donation Rate: 0.03%



# Q & A

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Want to contact us after the presentation?



Contact Jeanette Irwin  
Director of Internet Communications  
Drug Policy Alliance  
[jiirwin@drugpolicy.org](mailto:jiirwin@drugpolicy.org)



Contact Michael Ward  
Sr. VP of Internet Strategy  
M+R Strategic Services  
[mward@mrss.com](mailto:mward@mrss.com)



Contact Alan Cooke  
Product Marketing Manager  
Convio, Inc  
[acookel@convio.com](mailto:acookel@convio.com)

# Convio Helps You Drive Results

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- Strong partners to the public affairs sector
  - 240+ public affairs clients from the largest to very small ones
  - Strong partner experts!
- Best solution available for online marketing
  - Engagement (advocacy, social network integration, surveys)
  - Fundraising (donation micro-campaigns, peer to peer, events)
  - Communications (email, website management)
  - Integration to multiple donor databases
- Integrated donor management/CRM (Common Ground)
- You focus on your mission and leave us to worry about the technical stuff



# About Convio

- Leading provider of software and consulting to help nonprofits drive support online
- Focus on helping nonprofits get results from their online investment
- Internet strategy and campaign consulting capabilities



## For Additional Information

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- Learn about our advocacy solutions for public affairs organizations:
- [www.convio.com/advocacy/](http://www.convio.com/advocacy/)
  - You'll also find case studies, on-demand webinars, and other resources
- Questions?
  - [www.convio.com/contactus](http://www.convio.com/contactus)or call
  - **888.528.9501**