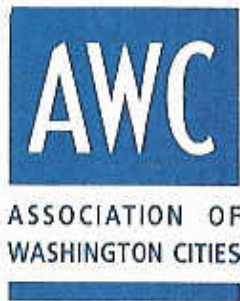




Winning Local Ballot Measures

Building a Strategic Campaign Plan



Association of Washington Cities
March 2004

Prepared by
Northwest Public Affairs, LLC

Winning Local Ballot Measures

Building a Strategic Campaign Plan

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I. Fundraising

Strategic Considerations

- Set a goal
- Budget drives Strategic Decisions
- Finance Chair, Committee
- Lead - Large, Medium & Small Contributions
- Campaign Cash flow
- Who Best to Ask

Best Prospects

- Most Likely Orgs. & Individuals based upon Measure
- Traditional Political Givers
- Previous Campaign Contributors
- Donors of local/state Elected Officials
- Compatible Non-profits
- Political Party contributors
- Major Local Fundraising Events
- Constituency Organizations
- Business and Labor
- Vendors

Keep in mind

- Gather Lists, Consolidate
- Low Overhead, In-kind Contributions
- Credit Card option
- Mail with Phone Follow up (Message Reminders)
- Electeds/Opinion leaders Help Make the Ask
- Give Deadlines -- tied to Campaign Needs
- Thanks and Ask Again!

Campaign Work Plan

Fundraising

Most Likely Suspects (Individual/Groups/Orgs.)?

-
-
-
-
-

Who Best to Make the Ask?

-
-
-

Most credible voice(s) on this issue?

-
-
-

Lists -- Ideal Membership/Organization or donor lists?

-
-
-

II. Public Opinion Research

Strategic Guide for campaign

- Timing of election – Best Voters for you
- Budget Considerations
- Other issues/candidates on ballot
- Ballot Title – Split sample tests?
- Allies, Opponents, Up for Grabs
- Credible Messengers – Titles
- Geographic and demographic data for targeting – Who, Where, What Message
- Internal Use – Expectations
- Tracker questions

Sample Survey

- Mood of Local Voters – Right Direction/Wrong Track
- If the election were held today...
- Tax sensitivity/thresh hold
- Messages in support
- Messages in opposition
- Key elements of plan – positive and negative
- Now that you know more, if the election were held today...
- Geographic/Demographics

Information on Voters

- Who responds to what message
- Absentee Voters
- Election Day Voters
- Frequent Voters – Vote all or most of the time
- Infrequent Voters – Only vote in major elections
- Party Affiliation
- Geographic/Demographic Information
- Education
- Children in Household
- Labor Household

Campaign Work Plan

Research

Best Reasons to Vote Yes

-
-
-

Best Reasons to Vote No

-
-
-

Timing of the election – Options

-
-
-

III. Strategic Guide

Timing of the Election

- Public Opinion
- Other Issues and Candidates
- Turnout and Likely Make-up of Electorate

Voter Targets

- Votes Needed to Win
- Turning out the base – YES voters
- Persuading Undecided Voters
- Neutralizing No Voters

Reaching the Voters

- Message of the campaign
- Earned Media
- Paid Media
- Direct Voter Contact
- Grassroots / Field Organizing
- Visibility

Greatest Assets – how to Capitalize

-
-
-

Greatest Liabilities – how to Overcome

-
-

Campaign Work Plan

Strategic Guide

- Greatest Assets – How to capitalize
- Greatest Liabilities – How to overcome
- Timing - When and Why
- Votes Needed to Win
- Who – Which voters are likely yes, no and undecided
- Budget Goal
- Message
- Coalition – Best Messengers
- Voter Contact - Persuasion
Direct Mail, Phone, Door-to-door, Paid Media, Earned Media, Grassroots
- Turnout of Voters
Absentee
Election Day
- Campaign Profile/Visibility/Level of Debate

IV. Message Development

Message is not a Slogan

1st Research

2nd Message

3rd Theme/Slogan

Message will win or lose a campaign

- Message can give meaning and purpose or say nothing
- Message can give focus or add chaos
- Message can inspire and unite or tear down and divide
- Message can motivate or cause complacency
- Message can differentiate or make the same
- Message can help or harm

The Seven C's of an effective Message

1. Chosen

- Research based
- Targeted to specific voters/audiences
- Right message to right audience at the right time

2. Clear

- Simple, makes the point
- Commonly understood
- Coherent, logical
- Passes the “elevator” test

3. Credible

- Believable, makes sense
- Connects to common understanding
- No “take my word for it” needed

4. Compelling

- Makes a persuasive argument
- Connects personally with voters/audience
- Breaks through the clutter

5. Contrasts

- Why the difference matters
- Offers voters a choice
- Clear comparison to the alternative
- Not “me too”

6. Controlled

- Always makes the main point
- Returns to message, despite distractions
- Offense not defense

7. Consistent

- Repetitious
- Constant, continuous
- Incorporates into all communications, formats, messengers etc.

Campaign Work Plan

Message Development

Winning

Losing

Us on Us

Them on us

-

-

-

-

-

-

Us on Them

Them on them

-

-

-

-

-

-

V. Targeting

Purpose

- Turnout Yes
- Persuade Undecided
- Neutralize Opposition

Resources

- Polling data
 - Geographic
 - Demographic
 - Persuadables
- Previous Elections – Voting Patterns
- Voter File

Every Voter

- Gender
- Age (most)
- Address / Household
- 55-60% with Phone
- Voter Frequency – Turnout History
- Absentee/ Election Day Voter

Campaign Work Plan

Targeting

Sample Scenario:

Registered Voters	1000	
Turnout Projection	40%	$1000 \text{ (reg. voters)} \times .4 = 400$
Votes Needed to Win	50%+1	$400 \times .5 + 1 = 201 \text{ Yes Votes}$
Votes Needed to Win	60% +1	$400 \times .6 + 1 = 241 \text{ Yes Votes}$

Votes Needed to Win

Registered Voters	_____	
Turnout Projection	40%	_____ (Reg. voters) $\times .4 =$ _____
(substitute projection from County Auditor)		
Votes Needed to Win	50%+1	_____ $\times .5 + 1 =$ _____ Yes Votes
Votes Needed to Win	60% +1	_____ $\times .6 + 1 =$ _____ Yes Votes

City of Woodland

Registered Voters	_____	_____	HH
Absentee Voters	_____	_____	HH
Voters with Phone Numbers	_____	_____	HH
0/4 Voters – Total	_____		
Female Voters 35-44	_____		
4 / 4, 3 / 4, and 2 / 4 voter with phones	_____		

VI. Direct Voter Contact

Purpose - Targeted Group of Voters

- Voter ID – Yes, No, Undecided
- Solidify Yes Votes
- Persuade Undecided
- Neutralize No Votes
- Turn out

Voter ID - Identification (Early in the campaign)

- Request voter by name
- Identify yourself by name, volunteer with the campaign
- As you may know there's an upcoming election for X
- If the election were held today, Yes/No.
- If undecided, do you lean Yes/No.
- Short statement on message
- Thank you, appreciate your time and consideration

Voter Persuasion – UNDECIDEDS

- 3 Pieces of Direct Mail
- Call Absentee Households first
- Then call election day Voter Households
- Volunteer with the campaign
- Key messages in favor
- Re-identify – Yes, No, Still Undecided
- Possible GOTV or continued persuasion

Get-out-the-Vote – YES Voters (3 weeks out – thru election day)

- 1-2 Pieces of Direct Mail
- Absentee voters 2-3 three weeks before election.
- Election Day voters – Weekend before Election & Election Day
- Volunteer with the campaign
- Calling to remind you about election on Tuesday.
- Have you mailed absentee ballot yet?
- If yes, thank you. Is anyone else in household is voter – have they voted?

VII. Staffing & Structure

Campaign Committee

- Chair/Co-Chairs (1-2)
- Executive Committee (4-6), Kitchen Cabinet
- Steering Committee (10-50+) / Finance Committee
- Endorsers – Citizens for X (100s+)

Staff

- Campaign Manager/Director
- Field/Speaker's Bureau
- Press/Communications
- Administration/Volunteer Coordination
- Others, depending on strategy & Volunteer Capabilities

Primary Responsibility

- Day to Day Management – Campaign Manager, Chair/Co-chair as appropriate
- Key Decisions, Strategy – Campaign Manager, Executive Committee
- Fundraising, Strategic Updates – Steering Committee
- Coalition Building – Endorsers

VIII. Timeline

Operations

- Key Election Dates
 - Measure referred to the ballot
 - Campaign Committee Filing with PDC
 - Voters Statement Due
 - Rebuttal Statement Due
 - Voters Guides Arrive
 - Absentee Ballots Arrive
 - Primary Election?
 - Other Major Community Events?
- Headquarters Operations
- Staffing Plans
- Fundraisers, if planned
- Public Disclosure Reports Due dates
- Steering Committee Meetings / Updates

Strategy & Research

- Campaign Plan
- Staffing
- Public Opinion
- Voter Targeting

Field Activities

- Kick off
- Campaign Events
- Major Community Events
- Speaker's Bureau Opportunities
- Visibility

Communications

- Press Events & Opportunities
- Debates, Voter Forums
- Editorial Boards

- Opinion-editorials
- Letters to the editor
- Paid Media? (radio/tv)

Voter Contact

- List Orders
- Volunteer Recruitments/Sign-up
- Paid Calls

Identification

- Script Draft/Approval
- Phone Capacity – Paid or Volunteer
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Data Collection

Voter Identification Absentee	(6-8 weeks before election, depending on #'s)
Voter Identification Poll Voter	(4-6 weeks before election, depending on #'s)

Absentee Voters - Persuasion

- List Order
- Design/Approval
- Mail House – Postal Drop

Direct Mail Absentee 1	(3 weeks before election)
Direct Mail Absentee 2	(2 weeks before election)
Direct Mail Absentee 3?	(end of week before Tuesday election)
Phone Follow up Absentee	(following Mail 2 or 3)

Poll Voters - Persuasion

- List Order
- Design/Approval
- Mail House – Postal Drop

Direct Mail Poll Voter 1	(2 weeks before)
Direct Mail Poll Voter 2	(1 week before)
Direct Mail Poll Voter 3?	(end of week before Tuesday election)
Phone Follow up Poll Voter	(following Mail 2)

Get Out the Vote

- Phone/Mail Combination
- List Order
- Design/Approval
- Mail House – Postal Drop

Get-out-the-vote Absentee 1 (2-3 weeks before election)

Get-out-the-vote Absentee 2 (1 week before election)

Get-out-the-vote Poll Voter 1 (weekend before election)

Get-out-the-vote Poll Voter 2 (election day)

In-kind Contributions

- Office Space (safe with parking visible familiar)
- Stationery/Envelopes/Remit Envelopes
- Banners/ Yardsigns
- Computers / Software
- Copy Paper
- Fax Machine
- Copy Machine
- General Office Supplies
- Work Tables / Desk / Chairs / Furniture
- Refrigerator/Microwave
- Telephones for headquarters
- Phonebanks
- Volunteer Food/Coffee/Softdrinks/Munchies/Pizza
- Design layout
- Printing
- Website Design/Management
- Other