



# HOW TO USE DATA FOR SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY





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**PRO-TIP:** Millions of dollars are wasted every year (if not every month) by advocacy “campaigns” that have no impact. They have no impact because they are focused on the wrong people.

## DATA-DRIVEN GRASSROOTS

- Don't guess, KNOW who you are talking to.
- TV is the biggest waste of advocacy dollars there is — a huge but scattershot audience that largely cares nothing about your issue and therefore won't do anything about it.
- Data-analytics allow you to focus on individuals who matter.

## POLITICAL CAMPAIGN-STYLE TARGETING

- A true advocacy campaign should be run like a political campaign.
- Your campaign strategy dictates which policy-makers you need to influence.
- Nothing moves a policy-maker more than the voters who can keep them in office ... or send them home.
- Data analytics directs us to the right voters, the ones who should care about your issue when properly messaged.

## DELIVER THE RIGHT MESSAGE TO THE RIGHT AUDIENCE AT THE RIGHT TIME

- You have to make the complex policy arguments simple and relevant.
- Compelling, creative messages are critical to get busy individuals to engage.
- Different audience segments may require different messages.
- The timing of the messages is critical, just like in a political campaign.

## REPETITION

- It takes hearing a message from 12 to 15 times, on average, for a person to recall it.
- Repeating the same or a similar message over an extended period is a cornerstone of political campaigns. Advocacy campaigns are no different. Advocacy groups with the best results never stop talking to their constituents.

## THREE PHASES: AWARENESS, PERSUASION, ACTIVATION

- In a political campaign you drive up a candidate's name ID (or your opponent's negatives), you persuade swing voters to support the candidate, and then you drive turnout of likely supporters.
- Advocacy on an issue is the same process. You have to build awareness of the issue, persuade your target audience that it matters to them, and then move your supporters to take a specific action, like showing up at a town hall meeting or emailing their representative.
- Data analytics allow you to focus on individuals who matter.
- This is all done for specific legislative targets among their constituents. It's real grassroots and it's cost effective.

## PROVEN METRICS

- Make sure you know what you are getting. Many vendors, especially digital vendors, will tell you they are targeting your messages to a custom audience.

Here are some questions you should be asking:

- What is the KPI (key performance indicator) that will measure the success of the campaign? And what are the goal KPI numbers?
- How are you targeting the prospective audience? What data sets are you using?
- How many similar projects have you done and what were their results?

**REMEMBER:** Custom audience building is the key to effective grassroots advocacy. Data analytics and modeling are sciences that very few vendors do well. Make sure your targeting and message delivery metrics are backed up by hard facts and third-party verification.

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