

Internet Marketing Strategies: Extending Your Online Reach



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August 19, 2006

Overview

- Blackrock's experience and online philosophy
- Mapping out your online strategy
 - Designing, building, & managing web infrastructure
 - Growing your supporter email database
 - Managing your online fundraising & communications program
- 3 things to take away



Blackrock's experience

- **Directed online fundraising and new supporter acquisition programs for the Wesley Clark for President campaign in 2003-2004**
 - Raised more than \$7 million in 5 months (40% of total campaign fundraising)
 - Amassed more than 250,000 online supporters
- Currently managing online strategy for **Wesley Clark, Barbara Boxer, Patrick Leahy, Carl Levin, Dick Durbin, Mary Landrieu, Amy Klobuchar (MN-Sen), Jim Webb (VA-Sen), Nick Lampson (TX-22), Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Debra Bowen (running for CA Sec. of State), and John Chiang (running for CA Controller)**
- Previously, Blackrock managed online programs for the **Senate campaigns of Barbara Boxer & Blanche Lincoln, Bill White's campaign for Houston Mayor, the "No on I-330" campaign in Washington State (WSTLA), the National Jewish Democratic Council, and SEIU UHW-West**
- **Brent Blackaby**
 - McKinsey & Company management consulting
 - Marketing at E*TRADE
 - BA in Economics from Harvard University

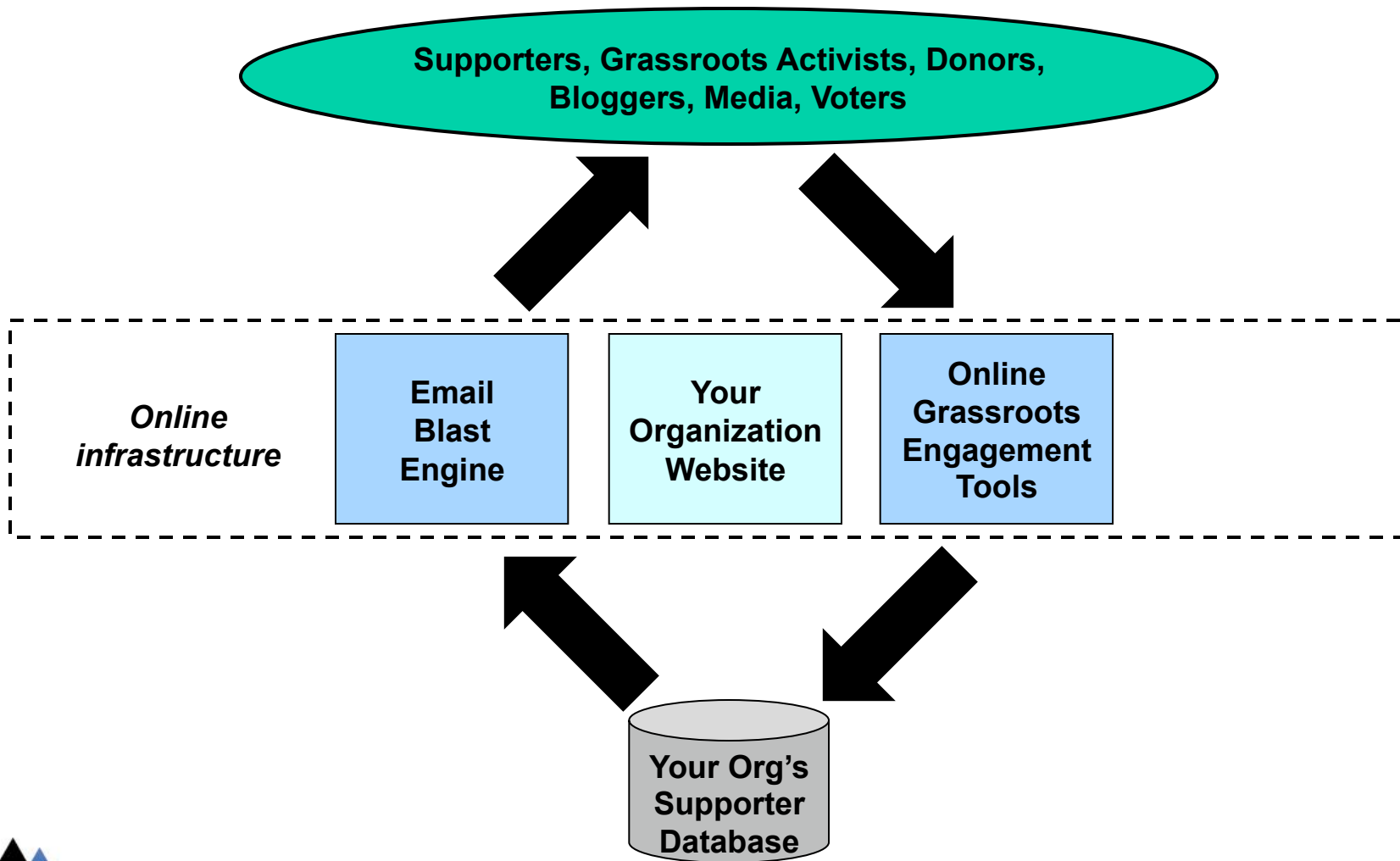


Our online philosophy

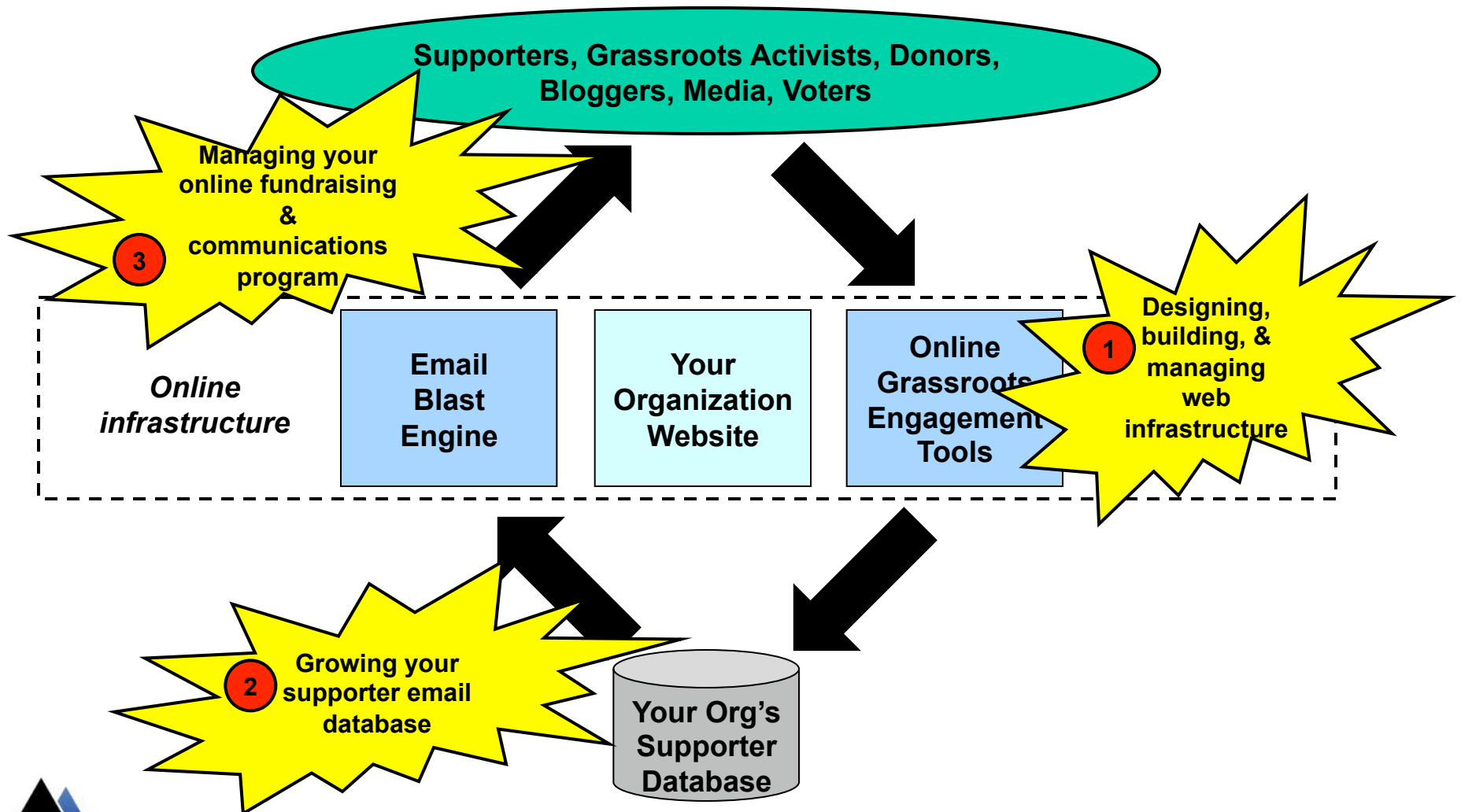
- **An effective online strategy is more than a snazzy website**
 - A website is necessary, but not sufficient
 - Unlike *Field of Dreams*, it's not "If you build it, they will come"
- **You must also develop an effective online communications program**
 - Use outbound emails and blog outreach to drive traffic back to your website
 - Email your supporters and/or post diaries on large blogs when you have something new to say – don't assume folks will come back to your website on their own
- **Your online program must be integrated into core of your org's operations**
 - Online program should not be a one-off channel, isolated from the rest of the org
 - Effective online program is tightly integrated with every function – communications, finance, field, scheduling, political, policy
- **Your supporters are not one-dimensional – don't message them that way**
 - You don't have one group that gives money, another group that volunteers, and another group that circulates online petitions – your supporters are multi-faceted
- **Provide a variety of grassroots tools to engage your supporters**
 - Supporters want to be treated as more than cash registers
 - Ask supporters to circulate petitions on key issues, sign-up their friends, push your message out across the blogs, and plan their own grassroots events
 - By giving your supporters a variety of tangible ways to help, they are likely to become larger donors, more dedicated volunteers, and more active online evangelists



Mapping out your online strategy



Mapping out your online strategy



Growing your supporter email database

- **Launch online acquisition marketing campaigns to grow your database**
 - Viral marketing campaigns to existing email list (e.g., circulating online petitions and advocacy campaigns on hot button issues for your organization)
 - Outreach to national, regional, and issue-specific blogs (e.g., blog ads, blog posts, blogger interviews)
 - Search engine marketing (free listings and paid keyword search)
 - Targeted email list rentals and online advertising
 - Opt-in email campaigns to supporter lists of allies (political candidates, affiliated organizations)
 - Online co-registrations (e.g., identify potential online supporters through third-party websites' online registration processes)
- **Launch offline efforts to grow your database**
 - Email append to existing in-house supporter database
 - Ensuring collection of email sign-ups at all organization events
 - Ensuring ubiquity of website URL and/or online petitions in all organization activities (e.g., speeches & interviews, press releases, newspaper articles)
 - Tasking grassroots supporters to circulate physical petitions and collect email sign-ups in their neighborhoods



Case Study #1: National Jewish Democratic Council

- Started October 1, 2004 with 3,000 opt-in email addresses
- Wanted to grow the list quickly leading up to the November election (to get their message out in battleground states & raise money)
- Target universe: Jewish Democratic voters
- Designed multi-faceted online acquisition campaign:
 - 3000 online co-registrations (\$5,400)
 - Rented email lists from Jewish.com and BeliefNet (\$6,000)
 - Site marketing on Ha'aretz and MavenSearch (\$6,000)
 - Email append to in-house donor file (\$1,000)
 - Search engine marketing on Google/Overture (\$600)
 - Blog ads on liberal political blogs (\$1,000)
- Yield: 14,500 new supporters for \$20,000 (\$1.38 CPA) in 5 weeks



Case Study #2: Senator Barbara Boxer's PAC for a Change

- Launched online petition campaign during confirmation hearings for Condoleezza Rice
- Wanted to promote the petition campaign broadly to maximize participation
- Target universe: Online Democratic activists
- Designed rapid, inexpensive online marketing campaign
 - Search engine marketing on Google and Overture -- for keywords like "Condi Rice", "Barbara Boxer", "Secretary of State", and "confirmation hearings" (\$1,500)
 - Blog ads on DailyKos, Atrios/Eschaton, and others (\$1,000)
 - Set up interview with Senator Boxer and DailyKos bloggers
- Yield: 7,500 new supporters for \$2,500 (\$0.33 CPA)
- Overall yield (w/ viral marketing): 97,500 petition sigs in 3 weeks



Determining List Building Success

- Before you start, set a target “cost per acquisition” (CPA) for each new supporter you add to the list
 - One helpful metric is the average donation per online supporter per year
 - If, on average, your organization generates \$4-5 in contributions from each supporter in your database, you should be willing to spend that much on each new supporter (even more, if your time horizon is greater than 1 year)
- As your list building effort is underway, keep an eye on each tactic to make sure sign-ups are being generated at or below your target CPA
- Also, measure the performance of the sign-ups you get from each channel as you message them subsequently (e.g., open rates, click-through rates, contribution rates) to gauge their relative value
- As desired, increase your spending on the channels that are working best (where the value-to-CPA ratio is greatest), and dial down spending elsewhere



Additional List Building Thoughts

- **Think about your list growth program as a multi-step process**
 - Set a low initial hurdle to encourage sign-ups with your organization
 - Ideally, bring people in with advocacy campaigns or petitions which are more compelling than just “sign up for organization X”
 - Don’t ask for money right away – you’ll significantly depress response rates
 - Instead, focus just on getting someone in your email list first, and making that process as easy as possible
 - Then, once you’ve begun building a relationship through subsequent messaging campaigns, you can work up to a fundraising solicitation
- **Testing is critical!**
 - Don’t be afraid to take some chances
 - Sometimes the best results come where you least expect them
 - Not everything you try is going to work – and that’s ok
 - Keep measuring results on an ongoing basis to dial up things that are going well, and dial down things that aren’t



Managing your online fundraising & communications program

- **Develop your online communications strategy**
 - Determine the right frequency for your organization (monthly? semi-monthly? weekly?)
 - Balance email calendar among fundraising, issue advocacy, persuasion/education, and grassroots mobilization messages (i.e., volunteering, attending events, making phone calls, walking precincts, registering voters, etc.)
- **Execute your online fundraising and communications program**
 - Write effective copy that will compel supporters to give money, volunteer, sign-up their friends, or take other actions
 - Maximize your open rate – From line and Subject line
 - Maximize your click-through rate – Email copy, attention-grabbing links
 - Maximize your conversion rate – Streamline the landing page, minimize opportunities to “stray”
 - Segment your supporter database (e.g., previous donation history, geography, sign-up date) and send targeted messages to each segment
 - Develop visible online fundraising goals, featured in emails and on the website
 - Launch grassroots fundraising and recruitment programs, where supporters can set up their own personal pages with individual goals, with corresponding rewards program
 - Test, evaluate results, and incorporate what you’ve learned back into your program on an ongoing basis



3 Things to Take Away:

- 1. Online strategy is more than just your website**
- 2. Use email to tell supporters what they need to know**
- 3. Always be thinking, “How can I grow my email list?”**



Thank you!

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