



# BLUEPRINT FOR TOMORROW

## DEVELOPING RNC 2.0: REIGNITING REPUBLICAN ACTIVISM THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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### CHAPTER FIVE TECHNOLOGY

# DEVELOPING RNC 2.0: REIGNING REPUBLICAN ACTIVISM THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The power of new media technologies to engage, unite and inspire to action is indisputable. As a Party, we have allowed earlier investments in these technologies to languish, damaging our ability to communicate our message and connect with voters. While the web is moving toward a new era that allows for greater creativity, exchange and collaboration (and the Democrats ride this wave towards success at the ballot box), the Republican National Committee lags behind. Harnessing technology to transform the RNC will be the cornerstone of my Chairmanship.

The Party belongs not to a small cadre of elected officials and consultants, but to the millions of hard-working Americans who live Republican values every day across this country. We need to capture this energy and build our online activists so we can increase our person to person outreach on the ground and through the internet. New technology also provides us with an opportunity to improve our organizational efficiency. By renewing our commitment to innovation, and integrating game-changing technologies into every aspect of the RNC's activities, we will empower our online activists, communicate with voters in new, dynamic ways and create a more efficient and effective RNC.

*Action:*

*As Chairman, developing RNC 2.0 will be a priority. To that end, I propose investing more resources in technology and the internet in all departments of the RNC. We will do more than simply spend money — the RNC will take a comprehensive approach, ensuring that each investment works in concert with others to achieve our mission: spreading our message, connecting with voters and getting them to act.*

*To accomplish this, we will hire a Chief Information Officer on a six month contract (just as successful private sector entities do) who will work with the RNC and State Parties to ensure we are on the cutting edge of new technology. The RNC will work with Republican supporters who are experts in the area of technology on new and bold applications. And, we will ensure our technology works in concert — Voter Vault, microtargeting, PDA technology and more — so that we remain laser focused on results. Our dedicated E-Campaign team will work with each State Party to develop their on-line presence, manage social networking operations and make an impact on the blogosphere.*

## I. UNITING ACTIVISTS AND LEADERS

Our on-line efforts need to be more than just a token footprint on the internet. The energy we put into growing the Party should match the passion we hold for our principles. Increasingly, conservatives have felt isolated by an at-

times hostile media and by liberal activists who have followed directives to “get in their face.” To begin reconnecting these isolated nodes, we must embark upon a campaign of consistent and purposeful collection of contact information — mobile and residential telephone numbers, email addresses, instant messaging and social networking site i.d.’s — at rallies, community gatherings, and websites.

Further, we must reach out to cultivate younger activists and leaders. Not only are they the greatest users and consumers of internet communication, they are our Party’s future.

As Chairman, I will work with every state and local Party organization to craft a unified effort that is effective in each of the 435 districts, and impactful when leveraged across the entire nation. We will form a real-time, responsive network to begin a vigorous and representative national Republican dialogue.

This dialogue will empower our grassroots to remain invigorated and active year-round. Active and organized using the tools we work with them to develop, these independent and thoughtful on-line communities will activate millions of volunteers across the country, exponentially increasing our ability to recruit candidates, raise funds, get out the vote, register new voters, recruit volunteers, and effectively communicate the Republican vision

*Action:*

- *Promote the RNC’s website as a one-stop-shop on-line community for Republicans.*
- *Expand blogging operations by hiring four additional staff members dedicated solely to that purpose.*
- *Expand our presence on social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace and others through the creation of fan pages, ad buys and other tactics.*
- *Develop audio and video podcasts to connect national leaders with grassroots activists.*
- *Create web videos, banner ads, graphics and other materials that promote our message, attack Democrats and unite our supporters.*
- *Engage activists through contests, fundraising drives and incentive programs, encouraging them to act and take ownership of their Party’s future.*
- *Leverage the internet to connect local leaders, county Party Chairs, and national leaders to share best practices for fundraising, GOTV, communications, recruitment, training, education and internal operations.*
- *Recruit volunteers, donors and voters and communicate with them through interactive media.*

## II. DETERMINING & IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES

Just as some of our new ideas will come from a democratized community of online activists, some of our best technological solutions will come from industries that have not traditionally collaborated with the RNC. We must seek out these tech trailblazers and present to them a transparent and thoughtful partner in the RNC. As Chairman, I will immediately convene a Working Group to identify technology gaps, and to formulate technology mitigation and acceleration plans. Comprised of state leaders, GOP technology strategists and trusted technology entrepreneurs and executives, this vibrant task force will lead our Party to the cutting edge, addressing immediate needs and charting an executable path to exceed, not just meet, our competitors' efforts. We will apply new solutions and tactics. We will learn from those that do not succeed and we will build upon those that do.

In addition to our Working Group, the contracting of a Chief Information Officer for the RNC will provide the Committee with a technology expert with the background and experience to ensure have the most up-to-date and useful tools at our disposal.

*Action:*

- *Contract a Chief Information Officer to take stock of our technological strengths and weaknesses, make recommendations and ensure we are prepared to match the Democrats in this critical area.*
- *Hire as our Director of E-Communications an established leader in the field, who is both an expert communicator and an experienced new media specialist, and who has contacts in the industries on the cutting edge of web 2.0.*
- *Convene a Working Group comprised of leaders in the E-Communications Field to advise the Committee on best practices.*
- *Identify where the Party has achieved technological advantages (the use of databases, micro-targeting and direct mail), and work to apply these tools in concert with our E-Communications operations.*

## III. LEADING THROUGH INNOVATION

Despite the acknowledged appeal of our conservative principles, there appears to be a growing disconnect between Party organizers, leaders and voters. By expanding our circle of thought leaders beyond the Beltway to include proven activists and entrepreneurs from across the country, we can harness the power of technology to close geographic and demographic distances. As Chairman, I will lead a thought and process sea change, powered by the infusion of the same curiosity and fearlessness that characterizes innovation in all of our activities from candidate recruitment to fundraising to message creation. All transformation is challenging and, at times, daunting. But I know together we will succeed and

develop a stronger correlation between the popularity of our principles and the outcomes of our campaigns and initiatives.

Action:

- *Determine our best practices, and provide state and local Party organizations with the tools they need to implement them.*
- *Expand on the Team Leader program, which connects activists with the national Party, and provides them with the motivation and tools they need to spread our message and activate our grassroots.*
- *Host periodic E-Campaign University sessions in Washington and throughout the states that will provide local leaders with the information and instruction they need to pursue an aggressive e-communications operation.*
- *Form a leadership circle to recognize local, county and state Party leaders who have implemented superior on-line tactics to achieve critical off-line goals, such as voter identification and fundraising.*

## **CONCLUSION**

RNC 2.0 will not be just a collection of different technologies operating independently. Rather, to compete with the Democrats, we must harness the power of the internet, databases, mobile data collection and more to create an integrated matrix of technologies that help us spread our message, identify supporters, mobilize activists and get our voters to the polls on Election Day. To do this, we need resources and human capital. But, most importantly, we need the will to turn this plan into reality. The Democrats are light years ahead of us. If we don't act now, we may never have the chance to catch up.