

Republican Party Overhauls Campaign Call Centers

New call center technology using Grandstream GXP2020 IP Phones improves productivity and reduces national campaign costs.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

CHALLENGE

Decrease costs & increase productivity of national call centers in preparation for the 2008 Presidential Campaign

SOLUTION

National deployment of 6,000 Grandstream GXP2020 IP Phones over Qwest IP backbone

VALUE CREATED

20 million survey data collection calls over the course of five months

Reduced resources spent on volunteer training

Reduced telephone operating rate to approx \$23/mo plus LD rates from \$60-80 cell phone or \$50-\$70 on land line

CHALLENGE

Ineffective communication solutions drained campaign, human and financial resources.

Political campaigns rely on voter contact to help find, identify, motivate, and encourage individuals to turnout at the polls on Election Day. Prior to the 2008 campaign, the Republican Party/GOP faced several challenges that hindered voter turnout efforts including: the cost of voter outreach, resource budgeting and inefficient data management.

For years leading up to the 2008 election, the GOP conducted their voter calling outreach program using thousands of \$60-\$80 cell phones (not including penalty fees for not signing one or two year agreement) and \$50-\$70 land line phones.

The Republican Party also spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on paper used to collect voter feedback on surveys. This cost the GOP tremendous financial outlay and stretched the campaign's human resource capital for administering training to thousands of volunteers nationally.

Additionally, the national call centers lacked mechanisms to ensure the

accuracy of voter data as well as the ability to capture data in real-time. Prior to the 2008 campaign, voter data was recorded using standard pencil and paper throughout thousands of campaign centers nationally. The high propensity for human error in administering this type of survey resulted in a loss of capturing critical voter demographic data.

Furthermore, the campaign effort failed to capture data in real-time which along with analysis and action can provide a substantial competitive advantage especially when trying to gain swing votes.

"Prior to the 2008 election our processes for capturing key voter demographic information were archaic and ineffective. We lost critical voter data because of antiquated processes. We lost so much money because of antiquated technology," says Chad Barth, Deputy Strategy Director for Political Technologies at the Republican National Committee.



GXP2020 6-line Enterprise IP Phone

SOLUTION

Ideal communication solution combines scalability, cost control and data management.

In 2007, the John McCain Presidential Campaign/GOP, Grandstream Networks and SmarTech Corporation met to discuss the idea of implementing a data collection component on one of Grandstream's broadband telephones, the GXP2020. Grandstream's GXP2020 Enterprise IP Phone was selected for its affordability, open interface, six phone lines, broad array of voice codec support and XML capabilities.

According to Barth, "We found Grandstream to be the most affordable and easiest solution to acquire, but also one that could ramp up in functionality."

SmarTech's Voter Vault software, a centralized, web-based system that

manages voter data and contact information, would run on the GXP2020 IP phone. The GOP would develop an XML application that resided on an application server that the phones were able to access remotely.

The GOP presidential campaign used a Qwest backbone for its T1 contracts in over 191 locations nationwide. Although other local exchange carriers (LECs) were used in various other areas around the U.S., Qwest handled all ordering and engineering.

While Qwest was the T1 provider, the campaign's call handling backend was dedicated on Asterisk servers located at SmarTech Corp. in Chattanooga, TN.

BUSINESS RESULTS

Real-Time Data Capture

The phone-based survey application that was developed allowed John McCain's Presidential Campaign to capture each caller's information in a real-time environment. Immediately after each call, the data was pushed back into the Voter Vault application for up-to-the-moment analysis of survey data and efforts happening around the country. Each call also helped the GOP to capture one and as many as 11 pieces of information.

Resource Savings

At an average monthly operating rate of approx. \$23/mo. plus long distance rates per phone, the Grandstream GXP2020 IP phone saved the GOP an enormous amount of money. Compare that new monthly fee to the \$60-\$80 cell phones (not including penalty fees for not signing one or

two year agreement) and the \$50-70 land line phones used in past cycles. Now multiply that per phone savings x 6,000, the number of new Grandstream IP phones deployed and the financial savings was remarkable.

In regards to human capital savings, little or no training was required to get volunteers (of all backgrounds and technical proficiencies) up and running on using the phones.

With the solution now nearly paperless, the need to purchase, store and destroy critical voter data was eliminated.

"In any other call center you would have to use a phone and a computer. We had one device managing both data and voice. We saved an incredible amount of energy, resources and time with this deployment," says Barth.



Republican Party Campaign Call Center



"We were able to get more real time data so that we could analyze where we were underperforming or and change our strategy right away. We would immediately queue up new questions and send them out through the Grandstream GXP2020. We could capture up to 11 points of data at a time. We've never had such access to information."

Chad Barth

*Deputy Strategy Director
for Political Technologies at the
Republican National Committee*



Grandstream Headquarters
1297 Beacon Street, 2nd Floor
Brookline, MA 02446
617-566-9300
www.grandstream.com

©2009 Grandstream Networks, Inc.
All rights reserved

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 6,000 GXP2020 IP phones were deployed at 229 Republican Party call center locations nationwide.
- From June 2008 to November 2008, the Republican Party made over 30 million phone calls on this new network, with the high – the day before the election – at 1.8 million calls in approximately a 9 -10 hour period.
- The Republican Party was able to collect at least 2 data points per call.
- The solution allowed volunteer outbound callers to leave over 13 million pre-recorded voice mail messages for unavailable voters.
- The new network generated valuable time and cost savings as well as improved voter data collection never before experienced in previous campaigns.
- Despite the Republicans eventual loss in the 2008 election, the technological advances played a crucial role in the overall success of its campaign goals.



2008 Republican Presidential Nominee John McCain's daughter, Meghan McCain, visiting a call center

LOOKING AHEAD

The Republican Party is committed to using this technology in upcoming campaigns and will continue its quest to find ways to further reduce costs and increase productivity.

Future enhancements are being considered to the survey application to 'deliver' more data points in real-time to voter vault.