



Greetings From the PIN Chair, Greg Knopp!

Buckle Up: It's Going to Be a Bumpy Ride

"I try not to tune in to politics until it's two or three months before the election. Till then, it's like watching preseason football."

— *Trey Parker*



Trey has it exactly right. Labor Day was the unofficial start to the final sprint of the election season. From now until November 4, the next nine weeks will be a mad dash of fundraising, campaign events, GOTV efforts and full-out spin from both parties. As a political junkie, I'm actually looking forward to the coming barrage of political ads — and the more mud splattered, the better.

Like you, I expect this frenzied pace to continue not just up to Election Day, but beyond. That means runoffs, recounts, debt retirement, leadership elections, committee assignments and lame-duck sessions. All of sudden Christmas doesn't seem all that far off.

It also means that now, more than ever, you have to be smart about setting key priorities and budgeting your time and resources. For PACs and political committees, that involves making sure you are not only getting checks out the door, but also leveraging your financial and grassroots resources where they can do the most good — for both the campaigns you want to support and your own organization. Early money is always best, but I'll say this about last-minute contributions: candidates seem to appreciate (and remember) them at least as much as the first check they received at the start of primary season.

Fall election season is also a great time to collect funds (both to the PAC and your direct giving programs) because it's much easier for your donors to connect the dots (political involvement = electoral success = a better legislative environment for you/your company/your industry). That's why many organizations have their most successful political giving months in the last quarter of the year. The downside, of course, is that if you are fundraising in September and October, you are competing against every political candidate, party committee, super PAC and ballot initiative at the national, state and local level for your prospects' attention — and dollars. And that's just political giving. Let's just hope the Ice Bucket Challenge has flamed out by next week!

In This Issue

Greetings from the PIN Chair, Greg Knopp!

10 Communication Ideas for a Successful GOTV Program

Supporting Candidates at the Office

Resources to Boost Your Political Involvement Program

2014 Social Media and Advocacy Summit: Top Insights and Takeaways

In the News: Political Involvement News You Should Know

Managing Issues in Election Season

Empowering Politically Involved Leaders

Quick Links

pac.org

pac.org/pin

[Conference calendar](#)

[Contact us](#)

All the more reason to have a plan or strategy in mind so you can be proactive — not reactive — in your approach. To that point, don't forget the Public Affairs Council has some tremendous resources (especially staff) to help you manage the craziness of an election year. And, as always, we encourage you to share your own thoughts and stories on this and related topics with your PIN colleagues and the Public Affairs Council staff (especially Hannah).

In the meantime, I'll implore you to remember the words of German statesman and political mastermind, the Frank Underwood of his day, Otto von Bismarck, who remarked, "People never lie so much as after a hunt, during a war or before an election." Good luck and enjoy the show!

— **Greg Knopp**, Executive director, political affairs
American Council of Engineering Companies
Chair, Political Involvement Network

10 Communication Ideas for a Successful GOTV Program

With the general election fast approaching, here are some communications tactics to help boost your internal GOTV program:

- 1) Distribute a brochure announcing an upcoming employee voter registration drive.
- 2) Ask the CEO to send a letter expressing strong support for your GOTV efforts and asking all employees to make their voices heard this election season.
- 3) Issue a press release announcing the company's mission to increase the number of registered voters.
- 4) Write an article in your company's newsletter on how to register, where to find out where to vote, etc.
- 5) Send a memo to employees indicating that the company will allow employees flexible schedules on registration days and on Election Day (check with senior management first!).
- 6) Circulate a memo reminding employees that they must update their voter registration information if they have gotten married and changed their name, moved recently or failed to vote for three or more years.
- 7) Distribute absentee ballot applications or actual absentee ballots (if permitted) to those employees traveling on Election Day.
- 8) Share information via email on early voting in your state(s) (if permitted) and where employees can find out more information on how to vote early.
- 9) Announce primary and general election dates and alert employees to the locations of the closest polling stations and their hours, or provide a link on where they can find that information ([Vote411](#) is an easy option to direct people to find this information).
- 10) Post notices throughout your building or in your facilities about voter

Upcoming Programs

Smashing Silos: Best Practices for Integrating PAC and Grassroots Programs*

September 16 |
Washington
[Register](#)

Tweeps for Advocacy*

September 25 | Webinar
[Register](#)

How Americans' Expectations of Business Affect Your Public Affairs Efforts (Complimentary)

September 25 |
Washington
[Register](#)

State and Local Government Relations Conference

September 29 - October 1
| Alexandria, Va.
[Register](#)

Reporting Back to PAC Donors*

October 2 | Webinar
[Register](#)

PAC Videos That Have an Impact*

October 14 | Webinar
[Register](#)

Grassroots Management Musts: 10 Strategies for Success*

October 21 | Washington
[Register](#)

Political Compliance Management*

October 22 | Washington
[Register](#)

PAC Management Musts: 10 Strategies for Success*

October 23 | Washington
[Register](#)

*Eligible for credit towards the [Certificate in PAC & Grassroots Management](#)

registration deadlines and reminders to vote on Election Day. Public places such as elevators, cafeterias, and receptions areas are good places to start.

Looking for other tips? See our [article](#) on *Promoting GOTV Efforts in Your Organization*.

Supporting Candidates at the Office

Looking to host a candidate event this fall? There are a few rules you should know about who can be in the room, what they can say and who can pay for what.

There are two main types of fundraising events you can host at your organization's offices: internal events and external events.

Internal events are fundraisers for candidates to which only an organization's solicitable class (i.e., those eligible to give to the PAC) may be invited. These events fall under the internal communications standard. As long as only PAC eligibles are at the event, your company can pay for the costs of the event, which will likely include:

- The cost of the space the event is being held in
- Any cost associated with invitations to the event
- The costs incurred for administrative support to prepare for the event (e.g., setting up the food)
- The price for a *modest* amount of food

In holding these events, there are a few items to consider. First, candidates should attend the event at their own expense. Additionally, the hosting organization should not collect or bundle any of the contributions to the candidate. And all contributions should be given directly to the candidate or their representative, whether before or at the event.

Many candidate fundraising events do not meet the internal communications standard and are considered **external events**. External events are those at which individuals outside of the solicitable class (e.g., other industry PACs and lobbyists) may be invited to attend. In this circumstance, all costs for the event — space, food, administrative support time, invitations and the use of office equipment — must be paid for by a permissible source. Permissible sources include:

- A political action committee, up to its per election limit
The PAC must alert the campaign of the amount of its in-kind contribution for reporting purposes. This in-kind contribution goes against the PAC's per election limit for the candidate. The PAC must also report this in-kind contribution on its own reports.
- Individual(s), up to the individual's per election limit
An individual making an in-kind contribution must alert the campaign of the amount for reporting purposes. This in-kind contribution goes against the individual's per election limit for the candidate.
- A campaign committee

Should the organization pay for any initial expenses, the organization should

Have a question about the Political Involvement Network?

Contact us.

Greg Knopp
Chairman, Political Involvement Network
Executive director, political affairs American Council of Engineering Companies

Hannah Wesolowski
Staff executive, Political Involvement Network
Senior manager, political involvement practice

Public Affairs Council
pin@pac.org |
202.787.5969

be reimbursed by one of the above sources in advance of the event.

Not all events with candidates are fundraisers. Organizations are always encouraged to invite legislators to their facilities to meet their employees and show them what they do. Plant tours and site visits are considered constituent, rather than campaign, events, provided there is no discussion of fundraising or political activity. Generally, nonincumbents will not be doing a nonpolitical event so will not fall into this category. If any candidate speaks to your employees about their campaign, any opponents must be granted equal time upon request.

In an effort to always make sure our members are compliant, here are a few **key items to remember:**

- Always avoid the appearance of impropriety and do not host fundraising events — or make PAC contributions — close to votes on legislation important to your organization.
- You cannot coerce or appear to coerce any individuals to support a candidate as a condition of employment.
- Do not put detailed justifications for contributions or events in writing, including email.
- Always seek the opinion of general counsel before hosting any candidate event.

For questions on how to engage with candidates at your facilities this election season, contact Hannah Wesolowski, senior manager, political involvement practice, at 202.787.5969 or hwesolowski@pac.org.

Resources to Boost Your Political Involvement Program

The Value of Integrating Communications and Government Relations

Every company has a unique personality. Because of this, there is no “ideal” model for managing communications and government relations. But given the challenging environment faced by global corporations, more and more are embracing an integrated approach to communications and government relations. In [this members-only resource](#), Council President Doug Pinkham shares why it is important to integrate your communications and government relations strategies.

Americans’ Opinions on Business and Government

The Public Affairs Council released the [Public Affairs Pulse survey](#) last month, which gauged over 1,600 Americans’ attitudes toward business and government and yielded some rather surprising results on government regulation, corporate responsibility and funding of political campaigns. The survey site also features infographics which may be helpful in your internal presentations and resources.

Want to learn more?

Join us for

**How Americans’ Expectations of Business Affect Your
Public Affairs Efforts (Complimentary Event)**

Hosted by the Political Involvement Network

September 25, 2014

9 – 10:30 a.m. EDT

Washington

(Also available via webinar)

[Register](#)

2014 Social Media and Advocacy Summit: Top Insights and Takeaways

Participants at the Council's July Social Media and Advocacy Summit shared best practices and strategies learned from speakers via Twitter. Here are some of the key topics discussed and top tips we gathered using the [#SMAS14](#) hashtag:



The State of Social Media

Aaron Smith (@aaron_w_smith) of the Pew Research Center shared his insights on the current state of social media in America and its impact on grassroots and advocacy. Key takeaways included:

- Twitter is good to reach a younger, more ethnically diverse and mobile-centric audience. Instagram is similar. — Beekeeper Group (@BeekeeperGroup)
- We'll likely never see the day of online-only campaigns because ~50% of social media users don't talk about politics online. — Pew Research Center (@PewResearch)

Capitol Hill's Use of Social Media

Michael Marinaccio (@mmarinaccio), digital director for the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, and **Allison Bormel** (@allisonbormel), communications director for Congressman Eric Swalwell, provided some great tips for getting your social media advocacy messages heard by members of Congress, including:

- How to effectively engage w/Members of Congress? Use shareable graphics and personal messages from constituents! — Caitlin Reicks (@CaitlinReicks)
- Another gem from a Hill Comms director: Facebook is constituent-focused; Twitter is more focused on influencers. — Erin Scheithe (@escheithe)
- File this under good to know: say you're a constituent or resident of X district when tweeting your member of Congress. — Erin Scheithe (@escheithe)

Digital Ad Buying

SMAS participants heard from **Sam Huxley** (@shuxley), senior vice president, digital at Fleishman Hillard Inc., and **Brad Peck** (@blpdc), manager, digital strategy at the American Petroleum Institute, about using paid advertisements to communicate messages to a meaningful portion of intended audiences. Some key tips included:

- You should spend vast amounts of money promoting social content than you do creating it. — Charles M. Kelley (@CharlesMKelley)
- It's not a question of organic or paid reach the answer is always BOTH. — Clarissa Garcia (@cog1203)
- Just like organic #socialmedia, paid social should be "short, sharp and sharable." — Public Affairs Council (@PACouncil)
- Microtargeting is a key feature of paid #socialmedia. @shuxley named recent homebuyers and uninsureds as examples. — Public Affairs Council (@PACouncil)

Making the Most Out of Video

In a presentation by **Rob Jordan** (@robthej), director, political and legislative grassroots at the American Medical Association, and **Margaret Case Little** (@mcaselittle), senior director of strategic initiatives at the National Retail Federation, attendees heard what makes a compelling video for both internal communications and external advocacy. Top tips shared included:

- The ROI of your video will be determined by the creative AND distribution strategies @mcaselittle. — Public Affairs Council (@PACouncil)
- Video contests energize your #grassroots base through competition and built-in recruitment — and are cost-effective @robthej. — Public Affairs Council (@PACouncil)

See all the great advice shared on Twitter and follow the Council at [@PACouncil](#) to stay on top of public affairs best practices.

And, whether you are attending the State and Local Government Relations Conference at the end of the month or not, you can follow the conversation by following [#SLGR14](#) and [@PACouncil](#) on Twitter.

In the News: Political Involvement News You Should Know

OMB Reverses Key Provision in Federal Lobbyist Ban

The Council recently [reported](#) on the Office of Management and Budget's

revised guidance on a [2010 Presidential Memorandum](#) prohibiting registered lobbyists from serving on government advisory committees, boards and commissions. Effective immediately, the revised guidance prohibits only federally registered lobbyists serving in an “individual capacity” from serving on federal committees. This includes “individuals who are appointed to committees to exercise their own individual best judgment on behalf of the government.” Those serving in a representative capacity for a nongovernmental entity (trade association or industry) can now serve on federal executive branch committees.

Wealthy Donors Take Advantage of *McCutcheon* Ruling

Since the Supreme Court ruling in *McCutcheon v. FEC*, which knocked down the individual two-year aggregate contribution limits, more than 300 donors have exceeded the previous limit of \$123,200, [reports *The Washington Post*](#). Through July of this year, 310 donors have contributed \$50.2 million to candidates, party committees and traditional PACs (contributions to super PACs excluded), which is \$11 million in contributions more than they would have previously been allowed to contribute.

Campaigns and Candidates Find Creative Ways to Share Information

Although candidates and super PACs are prohibited from collaborating on any independent expenditures by federal law, [this article from *Bloomberg BusinessWeek*](#) documents how many are sharing information while still following the letter of the law. By revealing ad buy plans to the press and using creative approaches to spread opposition research, most super PACs are not working in isolation.

Campaign Finance Amendment Advances in the Senate ... Sort Of

On September 8, several Senate Republicans joined Senate Democrats to advance an amendment that would give Congress and states more power to regulate campaign finance, [reports *Politico*](#). However, Democrats are accusing Republicans of voting to advance the amendment to take up precious floor time before Congress breaks in advance of this fall’s election. Meanwhile, Republicans have accused Democrats of taking up this issue to pander to voters. To that end, check out the op-ed Sen. Mitch McConnell penned this week entitled [“The Democrats’ Assault on Free Speech,”](#) which was featured in *Politico Magazine*.

And, in fake news ...

The Onion shares a story of a seasoned lobbyist talking about [the good ol’ days of lobbying](#).

Managing Issues in Election Season



With everyone getting swept up in election issues and policy platforms, it’s easy to lose sight of your organization’s everyday priorities and the issues that have the potential to impact your industry’s license to operate in the long run. But ignoring today’s concerns — many of which are brewing at the state and local levels — can mean having to deal with crisis management tomorrow. That’s why it is imperative that you establish an organization-wide IM process.

So what does it take to get a best-in-class issues management system together? It’s important to start by defining what we mean by “issues.” Issues



are the ideas, proposals and societal discussions with the potential to affect your organization's ability to operate effectively and even exist. You can also think of these as arenas in which conversations can evolve to eventually undermine your organization's objectives. We often see these troublesome conversations

come up through legislative proposals, regulatory initiatives, media and news trends, activists' communications and now, often before anywhere else, on social media.

Of course you're used to keeping an eye on what is coming up on the legislative side, and you're likely taking a look at industry and trade communications as well. But you can't be everywhere all the time, which is why one of the most important steps in the issues management process is creating a cross-functional team. Let communications cover the social media monitoring. Let government affairs look at legislation. Include someone well-versed in the technical aspects of the industry who can translate the potential impact of regulatory initiatives. Make sure that someone from senior leadership is present to provide their approval. Once you've built that team, you can move forward with scheduling regular meetings to prioritize the issues that pop up and deciding when and how you want to take action.

Since most organizations don't have the bandwidth to monitor, create messaging and campaign in response to all industry-affecting issues across all states and localities, you need a formula for prioritization. There are a few key questions you need to ask your organization to determine what issues or areas should receive the most resources.

- Will this issue have an (economic, reputational) impact?
- Can this issue be affected or altered?
- Do we want to be the spokesperson on this issue?
- And, perhaps most importantly, what resources do we really have?

Going through this issue prioritization process is no small feat, and once you have determined your top three to five high-priority issues, you have to establish a plan for how to proceed, which should include information-gathering outside your organization's walls, defining mission and establishing SMART goals, benchmarking and setting yourself up for sustainable success.

At the Council's upcoming [State and Local Government Relations Conference](#) (September 29 – October 1 in Alexandria, Va.), representatives from the Toy Industry Association, PEPCO, and PCIAA will lead two sessions: one focusing on the intricacies of the issues management process and the other on how to establish a cross-functional, full-scale issue campaign in response to those areas of highest priority. These sessions will help you bring functions together, showcase the value of government relations, launch successful local-level lobbying campaigns and get your senior leadership more involved.

For more information, contact Piper Evans, manager, government relations practice, at pevans@pac.org.

- Piper Evans,

Empowering Politically Involved Leaders

August is the Public Affairs Council's Professional Development Month. We held a series of webinars on career development and planning. If you missed them, check out these complimentary webinar recordings:

Ace Your Interview

Download [here](#)

Your résumé can get you in the door, but it's your face-to-face interview that will make or break your chances of landing your dream job. Not only do you need to prepare for the questions that may be asked; you also need to ensure you stand out. Listen in to hear how to distinguish yourself from competitive candidates, what employers are expecting during an interview and proven preparation and practice techniques.

Building and Maintaining a Professional Network

Download [here](#)

Building relationships and a thriving network depends on one thing and one thing only: you. Hear from a professional networking trainer on top tips to expand your network, enhance your reputation and personal brand, make networking a vital and ongoing component of your professional career and manage your network both online and off.

Public Affairs Career Planning

Download [here](#)

There's no single path to a public affairs career; the road is winding, with lots of avenues to explore. Tune in to this recording to hear strategic advice on developing your career, including discussions about setting timely, valuable and achievable career goals, networking to develop and maintain lasting professional relationships and climbing the organizational ladder and navigating internal politics.

