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REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

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# Growth & Opportunity Project

POST-ELECTION PROGRESS REPORT

*By Chairman Reince Priebus & Co-Chair Sharon Day*

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**Co-Chairs of the  
Growth & Opportunity  
Project:**

Henry Barbour

Sally Bradshaw

Ari Fleischer

Zori Fonalledas

Glenn McCall

# Introduction

Nearly two years after the release of the Growth and Opportunity Project report, the RNC can proudly announce that we have completed nearly all of the recommendations. We revamped the committee and our party on every level in order to operate more effectively and win elections, and we saw the results of these efforts in our historic victories in 2014.

We successfully completed almost every recommendation from the report during the midterm election cycle, and we will continue to build on and improve our operations as we enter the 2016 presidential cycle. A few of the other recommendations focused on presidential elections and were not implemented fully last cycle, so we are now revisiting these ideas and finding a way to implement them.

Of the 216 recommendations, some remain incomplete. There were some recommendations the RNC found not to be the most effective use of our resources, some were outside the limits of the law for us to execute, and others were recommendations geared toward outside groups, friends or allies.

The following report shows how the RNC has taken the recommendations put forth and transformed our party by reaching out to new communities, building an unprecedented ground game, and creating the best digital and data operation the RNC has ever seen.



## Victory 365

In the midterm cycle, the RNC raised more than \$200 million to invest in our ground game, known as Victory 365 or V365 for short. V365 invested in our field operation earlier than ever before, beginning a full 18 months before Election Day. We had 295 political staffers in the field, 2,000 paid walkers, 169 field offices and more than 30,000 precinct captains, who went on to make 35 million voter contacts and identify 2.4 million low propensity voters.

We utilized new mobile walk apps to upload data in real time, launched early voter and Election Day Facebook apps, and integrated voter data into a revamped GOP.com website.

In addition, we developed a 1 to 100 scoring system to model voters, and we increased our grassroots email list from 2 million to 12 million, leading to record-breaking online fundraising and improved turnout.

### 2014 FAST FACTS

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**295** Political Staffers in the Field

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**169** Field Offices

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**30,000** Precinct Captains

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**35 Million** Voter Contacts

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**2.4 Million** Low Propensity Voters Identified

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## Digital & Data

The RNC made a multi-million dollar upgrade to the data and digital operation and opened an office in Silicon Valley in order to recruit top tech talent. We hired a Chief Technology Officer, Chief Data Officer and Chief Digital Officer, and launched Parabellum Labs to create an innovative startup culture of digital and data.

Thanks to our unprecedented investment, we built the most advanced digital and data operation in RNC history. Seventy percent of our data is collected via technology now, as opposed to the five percent previously. Our team built an Application Program Interface (API) so vendors, campaigns and party organizations can build data-driven apps and share on an open data platform. Vote.gov.com uses the API to help people find Absentee, Early Voting and polling information. We commissioned walk applications allowing our volunteers to access

real-time voter information, and commissioned a voter relationship management tool called Beacon to help volunteers and staff navigate RNC data.

We built an internal data science team who conducted pilot projects in mayoral races in San Diego, Charlotte, Minneapolis and Albuquerque to identify potential target groups of voters in order to gather more information to help build greater support in the 2014 elections. We have conducted tests of random digit dialing vs. listed voter samples, and we are encouraging that future Republican polling include no less than 25 percent cell phone subsamples. Additionally, we trained regional data directors and worked hand in hand with state parties to effectively execute these programs.

The RNC email program has been completely revamped and has integrated our voter file in order to raise more money. Thanks in part to these advances, we saw record-breaking digital fundraising numbers throughout the midterm cycle.

Through a product called Sprinklr, we are monitoring social media across the country and are able to provide reports to campaigns on who is influencing the conversations and what messages should be amplified or corrected.



## Political Education

This past cycle we dedicated resources toward renewing and improving our Political Education program with innovative ideas and enhancements, including training in data technology. We also increased media training for candidates and staffers across the country.

We overhauled our Political Education curriculum with input from our Strategic Initiatives directors to include segments on engaging minority voters. We held five campaign management colleges, five campaign finance colleges, a data director boot camp, campus captain's boot camp, and an intern training day. Last cycle, we had 362 graduates from RNC political education programs.

The RNC revamped its finance schools and held four sessions, including a West Coast Finance School. Field Finance taught at Regional Leadership Conferences. We held two state party finance director schools and conducted monthly finance training webinars for state party finance directors. We also developed a finance school specifically for State Executive Directors and Finance Directors regarding the challenges of state party fundraising.

The RNC Communications Department hired a Director of Media Training who organized eight communications colleges. Nearly 1,000 Republican operatives and candidates took part in RNC media training sessions both at headquarters and at training sessions held across the country.



## Strategic Initiatives

The RNC has made an unprecedented commitment to diversify our base and engage with communities where our party is typically underrepresented.

Through the RNC's Political and Communications Departments we established Strategic Initiatives, consisting of staff at our headquarters and in the field dedicated to engaging with minority communities – African American, Asian Pacific American (APA) and Hispanic. In the midterm election cycle, we had more than 1.6 million voter contacts made by minority volunteers

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES (CONT.)

to targeted minority voters, and hundreds of thousands of minorities engaged through community events attended by Strategic Initiatives staff, other RNC staff, and the Chairman.

Additionally, we established senior level advisory councils for Hispanic, African American and Asian Americans. We are now talking openly and regularly with groups with which we've had minimal contact in the past. Our Strategic Initiatives team planned, participated in or had a Republican speaker at 2,590 events this past cycle. Chairman Priebus has held meetings with the former Chairman of the NAACP, and addressed groups such as the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, the National Urban League Conference, National Association of Black Journalists, and several Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Chairman Priebus attended the first naturalization ceremony on behalf of the RNC, and we've established swearing-in citizenship teams who have continued to represent the party at events across the country.

Our RNC Communications staff executed a media strategy that included reaching out to publications that appeal to minority groups. We conducted more than 350 Spanish language interviews and several candidates bought ads on Spanish language digital, print and radio

outlets. Our African American Communications team added nearly 1,000 new press contacts and published 25 op-eds in African American outlets such as BET, Ebony and the Root. And our Asian Pacific American team increased our Asian American earned media by 231 percent and booked 12 candidates and surrogates on APA TV.

Republicans won the APA vote on a national scale and we saw double digit support from African Americans. But we still have more to do. Becoming a more inclusive party will take work and cannot be completed in one cycle. We will continue to build on this engagement effort and grow our base in this presidential cycle.



## Rising Stars

In 2013, the RNC launched the Rising Stars program to give new voices and young and diverse candidates in the party a national platform to promote their perspectives. To date, the program has now featured a total of 22 individuals who have been recognized at RNC meetings.

## RNC & State Parties

The RNC is working to strengthen our state parties and help them become more self-sufficient. We hired a National State Party Director in order to emphasize candidate recruitment and training on the state party level. In order to help states become more financially self-sustaining, we reinstated our Field Finance program. The Field Finance team analyzed past performance and goals of State Party fundraising efforts and helped to establish new goals and benchmarks. They helped state parties to expand donor lists on all levels through online, mail, phone and direct solicitation. The RNC Communications Department provided State Parties with Communications Plans. The State Chairman Director, Regional Press Secretaries and Regional Political Directors all maintain constant contact with the state parties to ensure we have an open line of communication, and that each party has access to the most up-to-date data, research and resources available.

## Women

Led by our Co-Chair Sharon Day, the RNC invested significant time and resources to engage women voters, encourage more women candidates to run for office and increase the visibility of our strong female candidates running for office – many of whom achieved historic victories in November 2014.



Our 14 in '14 initiative recruited more than 600 women in targeted states to get involved in the election process. We commissioned a women's messaging project to understand how to better communicate with female voters. The RNC then shared insights from the results of this polling with our sister committees, state parties, candidates and surrogates. We also held media trainings across the country for female candidates, and Co-Chair Day held a Taking Back the Future Summit in D.C. to provide women the training

## WOMEN (CONT.)

and tools to engage female voters in their own communities and states.

We highlighted the women of the GOP in a web video, showing our strong female candidates running for office, including: Joni Ernst, Terri Lynn Land, Barbara Comstock, Elise Stefanik, Susana Martinez, Martha McSally, Mia Love, Marlinda Garcia, and Monica Wehby.

We successfully fought back against the War on Women narrative in places like Colorado, and the results of our efforts are clear. In 2012, the GOP had a 12-point deficit with women voters, and in 2014 our deficit was down to only four points. We now have to keep building on this progress and talking to women about the issues that matter most to them.

## Youth

We hired a Youth Political Engagement Director and Youth Press Secretary to expand our footprint on college campuses and among young voters. We reached out to college papers and created a Campus Captains program, engaging 220 young Republican leaders on college campuses.



We created a database of 2,000 college Republican and young Republican leaders and recruited 365 youth surrogates to book on media. Our Rising Stars program highlights up-and-coming young Republican leaders from a variety of different backgrounds on a national scale.

We have been engaging with media outlets that are more popular with the youth demographic and encouraging other Republican leaders and surrogates to do the same. For

example, Chairman Priebus joined Jon Stewart on the Daily Show on Election Night. Our Press Secretary participated in our first ever interview with Cosmopolitan Magazine, and our Youth Liaison regularly met with

college papers and focused on getting more young Republicans interviewed.

## Strategic Engagement

We've also hired a faith-based outreach director and a Director of Strategic Partnerships to engage with our conservative allies. Our Communications Department also hired a Deputy Press Secretary to work with and share our message with conservative media outlets.

## Principles for American Renewal

Prior to the November elections in 2014, Chairman Priebus introduced the Principles for American Renewal, consisting of 11 principles representing the ideas from across the party. These principles unite us as a party and inform our policymaking, and allowed our party to show what we are for and not just what we are against.

## Debates

We formed the Committee on Presidential Primary Debates to sanction debates on behalf of the RNC. The committee chose to limit the number of debates, spread the debates across the country by sanctioning no more than one debate per state, allocate the debates over the course of seven months, include a larger conservative media presence and allow campaigns to know and plan for the debate schedule early. At the RNC 2015 Winter Meeting, we released a preliminary schedule of sanctioned debates.

## Convention & Primary Calendar

We've moved our convention to July, allowing our nominee more time to begin the general election phase. We have also made changes to our primary calendar to shorten the process and accommodate an earlier convention.



## Friends & Allies

We focused on sharing ideas and best practices through the cycle at all levels of staff and in curriculum. As allowed by law, we were in regular communication with the NRCC, NRSC, RGA, RSLC, state parties and other friends and allies to discuss messaging and best uses of resources.

The RNC strategically decided that our resources would be best spent on an unprecedented ground game, and building the best digital and data operation the RNC has ever seen. With the RNC investing in the ground and field game, our sister committees, friends and allies are able to focus investments in ads and candidate recruitment efforts. Given that, we did not work closely with media buyers this cycle. We did however target some pre-roll ad buys for specific campaigns, and our data team assists campaigns with media research.

## Conclusion

It is clear the Growth and Opportunity Project helped provide a solid path forward for our party in the midterm election cycle. Our party took these recommendations seriously and implemented them to the best of our ability. Because of this, we saw historic victories in 2014.

Our work is not done. We as a party are reviewing our 2014 victories and determining what worked and where we can improve. We fully intend to keep building on our success in order to put a Republican back in the White House in 2016.

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To view the 2013 Growth & Opportunity Project Report go to <https://gop.com/growth-and-opportunity-project/>

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