



## GOVERNING 2.0 AMERICAN STYLE

With a political agenda rooted in change, the President aims not only to create a fundamental shift in US environmental policy, but – more broadly speaking – also seeks to transform the way the government interacts with its citizens.

It is no longer groundbreaking for politicians to ask voters to go to their campaign site to provide input on the issues of the day – but for the new President to do so it marks an exciting transformation in the way we are governed.

Many of us who helped elect candidates in 2006 had expectations that the technology-driven online applications we helped pioneer – such as video, blogs and social networking – would play a major role in governing.

They did not. However, they did reassert themselves in new and innovative ways in the 2008 presidential election.

Now we are embarking on a four-year, two-way conversation. With more than 10 million e-mail addresses, the President will be speaking directly to the American people in a medium that will

enable them to take specific actions to help to pass his agenda in Congress.

But Obama is going much further. The Whitehouse website, [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov), is seeking real, substantive input on issues such as health care – and thousands of replies have already been generated. Several of the users have engaged further by commenting on other health-care related questions posted on the site.

The President has already signaled his intentions to engage in a two-way dialogue by shifting the traditional presidential weekly radio address to a weekly “YouTube” address. The significance of the shift is monumental because it can facilitate an interactive dialogue.

Governing 2.0 is much more than technology or online applications. With a community organizer now as the most powerful person on earth, the rules of engagement have changed. It is the beginning of a fundamental restructuring of how we are governed – a citizen’s movement that at its core will ask, push, even demand that elected officials get things done.

The implications of Governing 2.0 for organizations advocating and lobbying on behalf of their members' interests are game-changing. Advocacy groups and associations urgently need to consider how they can harness the power of Governing 2.0 to achieve their organizational objectives and mission.

To prepare for the brave new Governing 2.0 world, advocacy organizations need to prepare their organizations and supporters to take action in new ways using new communications tools and tactics.

## HERE ARE SOME BASIC STEPS FOR PLANNING, LAUNCHING AND SUCCEEDING WITH YOUR ORGANIZATION'S GOVERNING 2.0 INITIATIVES.

### + Go to where your supporters live

Social media networks have expanded beyond college campuses and teen chat rooms. Networks like Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube are highly customizable communications and organizing platforms. We now have a political class that will be tuned in hour-by-hour to these media.

### + Integrate your messaging across media platforms

As communications opportunities proliferate and new tools like social media networks grow in importance, it is essential that your messaging be broad enough so it may be integrated across multiple platforms.

### + Solicit, enroll and engage supporters in two-way conversations

We would expect other officials to follow Obama's lead and solicit input. Engaging an active, informed membership in these conversations can yield a huge impact. This is particularly true when fused with phone calls, email, letters to the editor and other more traditional tools.

### + Invite officials into the dialogue you establish

This means soliciting input from your membership, then getting your government targets engaged in your dialogue on your terms.

### + Increase the frequency of your online communications

Recognize that timeliness and importance should determine the frequency and tone of your online communications with supporters. Consistency is also key here, as supporters adjust their own routines to become more in sync with their organization.

### + Use the power of communicating visually with images and words

Expectations for quality online video communications are now commonplace as users and supporters rely more and more on visual image story-telling to convey messages and compel actions.

Getting the jump on Governing 2.0 can pay huge dividends to groups seeking to influence the new administration, and Washington in general. Investments in these activities will result in larger returns than investments in traditional lobbying and government relations. If advocacy groups are to remain effective in this new era of politics, they must modify their current tactics and management styles in a way that will be conducive to such change.

*Developed by FD Element*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

GRANT DRAPER  
(212) 850-5615  
grant.draper@fdelement.com

DON MILLAR  
(604) 696-5574  
don.millar@fdelement.com

