

W&M

Woodward & McDowell

**REPORT FOR
EQUALITY CALIFORNIA**

**Summary of EQCA's Efforts To Help Defeat Prop. 8
Lessons Learned & Recommendations
Moving Ahead To The Next Battle**

INTRODUCTION

Woodward & McDowell (W&M), a bi-partisan political consulting firm specializing in California ballot measures, was asked by Equality California (EQCA) to inventory the role it played in the Prop. 8 campaign, the lessons learned from those efforts, and provide suggestions moving forward to the next campaign battle, whatever it may be. We spoke with EQCA staff and officials and key leadership from the umbrella No on 8 campaign. We reviewed news media coverage and editorials, Prop. 8 related internet activity, fundraising, etc., as well as post-election polling, post-election forum transcripts, and other activities following the passage of Prop. 8.

This report is not an analysis of the larger No on 8 campaign. We understand that the No on 8 campaign is conducting their own analysis. The focus of W&M's report is on EQCA's role, the takeaway, and based on our nearly 40 years of experience with California ballot measures, some recommendations for incorporating the lessons learned into the next initiative battle.

We would like to thank everyone who generously gave us their time and candor during the preparation of this report.

SUMMARY OF EQCA'S EFFORTS TO DEFEAT PROP. 8

Equality California was one of many organizations – national, statewide and local – that joined together to defeat Proposition 8 under the umbrella of Equality for All, the official No on 8 campaign committee (referred to hereafter in this report simply as No on 8).

One of the things we were asked to do is compile a record of all the work EQCA did leading up to and during the campaign to defeat Prop. 8 in order to record what took place and in preparation for the next political battle, whatever form it may take.

■ Early Organizing

In 2003 the late Senator Pete Knight took out papers to referend AB 205 (The EQCA sponsored California Registered Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2003). EQCA created a PAC to defend AB 205 and ultimately Senator Knight dropped his effort.

In January 2005, in anticipation of a potential anti-marriage equality measure on the 2006 ballot, EQCA began meeting with other organizations to prepare for battle. This ultimately led to the creation of Equality for All, the No on 8 campaign committee, a new organization with its own board and staff.

■ Decline to Sign

Once it became apparent in early 2008 that initiative petitions to qualify Prop. 8 would be hitting the streets, the No on 8 campaign organized a “Decline to Sign” effort urging Californians not to sign the petition and to begin the public education campaign which would be necessary should the measure qualify.

Focusing on regions where the proponents were organizing their signature gathering efforts, several organizations (including EQCA, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center and the San Diego LGBT Center) assigned field staff to work on this effort enabling it to start quickly while the campaign hired additional staff.

The “Decline to Sign” field staff and volunteers held their ground against Yes on 8’s paid signature gatherers. No on 8 activists, LGBT and straight alike, endured taunts of “faggot” and “God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve” from paid Yes on 8 signature gatherers.

At least four Yes on 8 paid signature gatherers were arrested for violating either No on 8 volunteers’ rights, store policies, or because they had outstanding warrants that became apparent when police had to intervene.

Over nine weeks this program resulted in the following:



- ❑ 4,429 volunteer shifts (with an average of 4.5 hours per shift).
- ❑ Volunteers urged voters not to respond to paid Yes on 8 signature gathering efforts in many regions of the state and field staff were placed in Fresno, Los Angeles (East Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley), Orange, Riverside, Sacramento and San Diego Counties.
- ❑ More than 76,000 Californians signed pledges to OPPOSE Prop. 8.
- ❑ On the peak weekend in April, 900 volunteers throughout the state participated, collecting 16,000 pledges to OPPOSE Prop. 8.

Although proponents qualified their initiative, the important “Decline to Sign” work built a cadre of ready volunteers and identified supporters for the No on 8 campaign.

■ Title & Summary and Ballot Label

With every initiative, proponents and opponents have the opportunity to share information with the California Attorney General’s Office regarding the ballot title and summary and the ballot label (the words voters see as they are about to cast their ballot). EQCA made information available to the Attorney General’s office and worked to ensure the official ballot title and summary and ballot label included a clear and accurate description of the true impact of Prop. 8.

Following the State Supreme Court decision creating marriage equality in California, the Attorney General’s Office revised the original initiative title which read “Limit on Marriage. Constitutional Amendment.”

The final title read “Eliminates Rights of Same-Sex Couples to Marry. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.” The ballot summary read that the measure “changes the California Constitution to eliminate the right of same-sex couples to marry in California,” making it clear passage of Prop. 8 would eliminate the right to marry for some Californians.

■ Fund-Raising

EQCA was originally asked by the No on 8 campaign to commit to raise \$1 million. EQCA ended up raising approximately \$14 million of the campaign’s approximately \$45 million directly through EQCA’s PAC and raised several million dollars more that were contributed directly to No on 8.

EQCA raised money to defeat Prop. 8 in the following ways:

- ❑ Over the course of the campaign, EQCA crafted and sent 137 emails to EQCA members that included an appeal for financial support. These emails directly raised \$2,091,843. (The campaign and many other organizations also used EQCA’s emails to appeal to their supporter lists.)



- ❑ EQCA turned its annual fund-raising galas in Los Angeles, Palm Springs, San Francisco, San Diego and Sacramento into events to raise money for the campaign.
- ❑ EQCA created a Wedding Registry allowing newly married couples to direct contributions to the campaign. 1,991 newlyweds joined the registry and raised \$1,176,000 for the campaign from 9,882 donors.
- ❑ EQCA's web-based "My EQCA" program allowed individuals to ask their friends to contribute to No on 8. 772 people signed up to help and raised \$412,000 from 2,200 donors.
- ❑ EQCA hired two fundraisers (one in Northern California and one in Southern California) to raise money for the campaign.
- ❑ EQCA board members raised money directly for the campaign.
- ❑ EQCA staff members worked with supportive Legislators to raise money for the campaign.
- ❑ EQCA raised money from individual large donors, the Labor Community, corporations and other allies.
- ❑ EQCA organized a multi-organizational direct mail fundraising letter for No on 8.

■ News Media Communication

- ❑ EQCA's Communications Manager was assigned full-time to the campaign to handle the campaign's incoming news media calls. She reported directly to the lead earned-media consultant and worked out of the consultant's offices.
- ❑ EQCA participated in many Editorial Board meetings with newspapers throughout California before and after the California Supreme Court's decision on marriage, including the Desert Sun, Los Angeles Times, Sacramento Bee and the San Francisco Chronicle. Ultimately, every major daily newspaper in California editorialized against Prop. 8.
- ❑ EQCA and other organizations helped organize "Marriage Day," identifying and training diverse couples throughout California who were married on June 17th for media interviews, pitching stories about their weddings to the media resulting in extensive positive coverage of the couples and their weddings.
- ❑ EQCA staff helped draft news releases and distributed them on behalf of the campaign.
- ❑ EQCA Executive Director Geoff Kors did hundreds of media interviews including a high-profile CNN debate against the Family Research Council's Tony Perkins and was on-call for 24-hour shifts every other day for the final month of the campaign.



- ❑ EQCA recruited coalition spokespeople to participate in news conferences to demonstrate opposition to Prop. 8 from leaders representing communities of color, business, labor and women.

■ Internet Communication

- ❑ The EQCA website provided information to voters on why they should oppose Prop. 8 along with continual updates on the campaign. Between May 1st and the end of November, 2008 more than 324,000 unique visitors (not repeat visitors) viewed the EQCA website.
- ❑ 137 separate emails were crafted, updating Prop. 8 opponents on the campaign and requesting contributions. Beginning in October, emails went out daily. The EQCA-drafted emails were also used by the campaign as well as by some of the other organizations opposing Prop. 8.
- ❑ Using tools provided on EQCA's website, opponents of Prop. 8 organized house parties throughout California.
- ❑ EQCA's Webmaster relocated to San Francisco for the final three weeks of the campaign to beef up the campaign's internet program.

■ Internet Social Networking

- ❑ EQCA's Social Networking Associate created communications messages used by the campaign for Facebook, MySpace and other networking profiles.
- ❑ EQCA managed the No on 8 MySpace page.

■ Loaned Staff to the Campaign

Several EQCA staff members filled key staff positions on the campaign:

- ❑ The coordinator of the "Decline to Sign" campaign was an EQCA staff member who was assigned full-time to the campaign.
- ❑ EQCA's Communications Manager was assigned full-time to handle the campaign's incoming news media calls. She reported directly to the lead communications consultant and worked out of the consultant's offices.
- ❑ EQCA field staffers were assigned full time to work for the campaign's field operation. They reported directly to No on 8 staff and worked at the campaign office where they were assigned.
- ❑ EQCA's webmaster was assigned full-time to the campaign's internet operations in the final weeks of the campaign and worked out of the campaign headquarters.



- The EQCA staff member responsible for social-networking programs was assigned to support the campaign.

■ Coalition Building

EQCA helped bring many organizations into the campaign including labor organizations that joined the campaign's Executive Committee. EQCA also worked to get endorsements from elected officials, including Governor Schwarzenegger and Legislators in opposition to Prop. 8.

■ Executive Committee

Beginning in 2005, Geoff Kors, EQCA's Executive Director, was one of five people elected by the then approximately 40 member Campaign Committee to serve as a member of the Executive Committee of the No on 8 campaign. Ultimately, the Executive Committee grew to 18 members with each member having one vote. The Executive Committee was the legal board of the campaign and in this role hired campaign professionals including a lead campaign consultant, campaign manager, campaign director, political director, field director, internet consultant and finance director to run the day-to-day operations of the No on 8 campaign. The Executive Committee met regularly with the consultants and senior staff running the campaign and provided input and voted on key decisions.

Members of the Executive Committee were tasked with assisting the campaign in one or more specific areas. Kors was assigned to fundraising and EQCA turned almost all of its development efforts over to raising money for the campaign. For nearly all of 2008, Kors worked full time assisting the campaign, and during the last five weeks of the campaign worked at the campaign's headquarters.

■ Campaign Committee

EQCA helped provide staff support for the No on 8 Campaign Committee, comprised of more than 100 member organizations. Prior to the campaign hiring staff, EQCA helped organize the Campaign Committee's regular meetings, pulling together information and distributing it prior to the meetings.

■ Post-Election Lawsuit

EQCA is the plaintiff in one of the lawsuits before the California Supreme Court to overturn Prop. 8. Additionally, EQCA worked with many allies of the LGBT community to file Amicus Briefs. EQCA is also the sponsor of two resolutions that passed the California Senate and Assembly putting both bodies on the record in support of overturning Prop. 8 as an invalid revision to the Constitution. To help pass these resolutions, EQCA organized the largest LGBT Lobby Day in California history.



SITUATION ANALYSIS

■ **The Aftermath of the Election Spurs a New and Renewed Commitment by Activists**

The passage of Proposition 8 understandably resulted in a tremendous amount of anger within the LGBT community and its allied organizations in California and across the nation. The day after its passage large demonstrations took place in Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco and other locations and continued in the following days in cities across the state and the nation, drawing thousands. Over time, other awareness-raising ideas (i.e., “A Day without Gays,” “White Knots”) came into being.

In addition to the ongoing work of long-time leaders in the LGBT community, new organizations began to spring up almost overnight. One leader who has been tracking this told us he had counted 96 new LGBT organizations that had formed in California just since the November election.

The number and intensity of the demonstrations that took place immediately after the election have naturally dissipated, however, the painful loss has spurred a lot of groups and individuals into action – dedicating themselves to organizing toward next steps.

In addition, new allies have appeared. The list of organizations and individuals who have filed friend-of-the-court briefs challenging Prop. 8 clearly show there is room to go beyond the No on 8 campaign coalition. It can help to demonstrate to the public that there is a growing consensus on marriage equality as a call for protection of basic civil rights for everyone.

While the next steps to be taken together as one movement have yet to be defined, there are some key activities that have united many groups and individuals:

□ **Legal Challenge to Prop. 8**

EQCA is the plaintiff in one of the lawsuits to overturn Prop. 8. In addition, EQCA and the legal organizations representing EQCA, secured a very large and diverse array of organizations and individuals to file amicus briefs with the State Supreme Court which includes labor and business, civil rights, legal scholars and constitutional law experts, faith-based groups and state lawmakers.

□ **Repeal of The Defense of Marriage Act**

January 10, 2009 saw protests across the country around this issue. President Obama calls for the repeal of DOMA on his administration’s official website.

❑ Statewide Initiatives to Overturn Prop. 8

Two initiatives were filed with the Secretary of State in December of 2008: “The California Marriage Equality Act,” filed by a new organization called Yes! On Equality; and “The Domestic Partner Initiative,” filed by Kaelin Housewright and Ali Shams, two individuals.

■ Will this Energy Translate into Success in Winning Back Marriage Equality?

Hopefully, a new generation of activists has been born. How many will continue the hard work of grassroots organizing over the long term is not yet known. EQCA played a leadership role in organizing the Equality Summit on January 24 in Los Angeles which brought together more than 400 activists from around the state -- many whose commitment to the issue has only been intensified by the passage of Prop. 8, and many who are new to the activist world. The sheer number of people showing their support for marriage equality is real. However, what is most important is whether or not the organizations attracting them are collecting their data in a meaningful way and will be able to work effectively together going forward.

■ You Have a Formidable Opponent with a Plan and Significant Resources

Since the election, the opponents of marriage equality have not been resting on their laurels. They appear to have been emboldened by the passage of Prop. 8 as well as the inclusion of Rev. Rick Warren in a high-profile position at President Obama’s inauguration and their ability to cast themselves as victims in this fight through the media. They have worked to find ways to radicalize marriage equality supporters in the eyes of the public and attempt to make the LGBT community look hateful -- characterizing peaceful demonstrations as out-of-control riots, and filing a cynical lawsuit against the FPPC, claiming their donors need “protection” against the LGBT community and should not be made public for their own safety.

Of course, the lawsuit is particularly hypocritical, considering the threat the Yes on 8 campaign issued to Equality California donors, *“Make a donation of a like amount to ProtectMarriage.com which will help us correct this error. Were you to elect not to donate comparably, it would be a clear indication that you are in opposition to traditional marriage. ... The names of any companies and organizations that choose not to donate in like manner to ProtectMarriage.com but have given to Equality California will be published.”*

Alongside the LGBT community’s peaceful protests, grassroots organizing and simple pleas for tolerance, there have been some random acts of violence against key organizations behind the passage of Prop. 8, handing those who oppose marriage equality a weapon to use against the LGBT community. And, while the other side has also committed acts of violence against members of the LGBT community, those incidents have not been as well

publicized when compared to the proactive and coordinated public communications effort funded by marriage equality opponents.

So, while they have stripped an entire segment of the population of a basic civil right (at least temporarily), they are now succeeding, to some extent, in portraying themselves as victims. Several newspaper editorial boards across the state that were on your side during the campaign are now chastising Prop. 8 opponents. For example:

SACRAMENTO BEE EDITORIAL

Bitterness serves no one's interest

Opponents of Prop. 8 Need To Build Support, Not Drive It Away

November 13, 2008

“In a statement issued after the election, leaders of the No on Proposition 8 campaign urged its coalition to take the long view. ‘We achieve nothing if we isolate the people who did not stand with us in this fight,’ the statement said.

Unfortunately, a lone statement on a Web site is not adequate. That message needs to be spread widely and loudly by all leaders in the gay and lesbian community, and all opponents of Proposition 8. It's part of the task of building enough support to ensure that Californians support equal rights for same-sex couples the next time the question is on the ballot.”

LOS ANGELES TIMES EDITORIAL

Prop. 8 -- boycott, or blacklist?

Shunning businesses is one thing; intimidation crosses the line.

December 10, 2008

“As much as we abhorred Proposition 8, there's nothing to cheer about when private individuals are afraid to donate to the political campaigns of their choice because it may cost them their livelihood.”

In addition, there are signs gay-rights opponents are mounting efforts to chip away at other civil rights. “Meanwhile, conservative activists across the country are working hard to make sure that no court, at any level, has the final word on gay adoption. Like gay marriage before it, conservatives are looking at the issue of who can raise children as one best decided at the ballot box, not in the courthouse.” (The Fight Over Gay Adoption Heats Up, Michael A. Lindenberger, Time Magazine, Nov. 26, 2008)

Even though the No on 8 campaign included a remarkably large coalition of religious leaders and faith-based organizations of all denominations, a few powerful religious groups

have declared that banning gay marriage is part of their calling. Specifically, the Mormon and Catholic churches which oppose marriage equality bring to the table a massive built-in, sustainable grassroots organization with a simple message, committed leaders to deliver it and a captive and devoted audience at their disposal. They have healthy financial resources from which to draw, and they have invested in state-of-the-art internet outreach and mobilization tools. As importantly, the sheer size of these organizations gives them a very large megaphone in the public discussion leaving the public with the perception that they represent the religious community's views on same-sex marriage, when this is not the case. Suffice it to say, they are a formidable force which must not be underestimated.

■ **It is in this Environment that the Next Battle Will be Waged**

While it's uncertain what form the next fight will take, it is certain there will be one. Defining the message and the public debate itself will be critical, and will require much groundwork be laid in advance. All signs point to an opponent that will be organized and well-funded. Effectively channeling the new and renewed energy and awareness within the LGBT community and its allies across the state and the nation will be a challenge, but one that can make a real difference in the battle.

LESSONS LEARNED & RECOMMENDATIONS ON MOVING FORWARD

■ Don't Fight the Last War – Look Clearly at What's Ahead Rather Than Behind

Probably the single most important thing we can tell you is this: as you prepare for the next phase of this struggle, don't make the mistake of re-fighting the battles that were particular to Prop. 8.

The specifics are different for every campaign, even if the subject is the same. The political environment is different, as are the messages, makeup of the electorate, voter turnout, etc. If you let yourselves get continuously mired in the details of the Prop. 8 campaign, you will not be able to clearly analyze and prepare for the next fight.

If the community finds itself in another election fight, that campaign will require its own polling, strategy, planning, and groundwork in order to figure out the best course of action for that specific election. Don't fall into the trap of reliving the past – instead, take what you have learned and use it to build your plan for the future.

■ The Stage is Being Set Now for the Next Battle – Move to Shape the Public Message Around the Positives

In the time since the last election, the opponents of marriage equality have been very good at using isolated incidents to paint an image of themselves as victims and the entire LGBT community as radicals as pointed out in the situation analysis.

While in reality this may be a stunning piece of revisionist history, if allowed to stand, it will color the climate for future battles, whatever form they may take. Even some editorial boards that glowingly supported marriage equality during the election have focused on the negativity.

There is certainly time to re-focus the public on the positives, but it needs to be a top priority moving forward. We're not suggesting you can control the actions of every person out there who's angry about the passage of Prop. 8, but the community clearly needs to move quickly to put forward vocal, unified, positive messages.

□ Public Education Works

Leaders of the LGBT community know that public education on this issue, outside the heat of a campaign, works. The extensive experience of community members over the years demonstrates that. All the more reason to take control of the public messages now and use this valuable time outside the campaign bubble to visibly promote positive images of the community and marriage equality.

And, of course, the public message sent by the community right now not only could impact voter attitudes in the future, but the view of the Supreme Court justices now as they decide whether or not to overturn Prop. 8.

□ No Charge Should Go Unanswered

Even though you're not in an election campaign at this moment, you cannot let charges go unanswered. Those who oppose you have been very clever in their post-election positioning and you can't afford to let false perceptions settle in. As you move forward with your positive messages, one component of that must be a swift counter to any charges, mis-characterizations and falsehoods promoted by the other side.

■ Campaign Management and Structure

Most of the people we talked to while preparing this report spent a lot of time focused on this topic – and it is worth spending a lot of time on. There was pretty much unanimous agreement that this part of the campaign will need to be well thought through before setting up a future campaign. A campaign without a clear management structure, defined roles and accountability is almost certain to lose.

A statewide California initiative campaign is a complex animal. The size of the state, its diverse makeup, the number of functions a statewide campaign must undertake, the budget, all make it a management challenge. Even a small California statewide campaign is responsible for raising and allocating millions of dollars as well as managing the cash flow and spending of that money – all in a relatively short amount of time. Campaigns are generally set up in a hurry and expected to be functioning smoothly right away.

Where to begin:

A clear, quick, decision-making structure will be critical to success.

The worst decisions on campaigns are the ones that are never made. Many decisions need to be made every day and the closer you get to the election, the quicker they need to be made. Campaigns that allow themselves to drift because there's no decision-making authority usually fall victim to unfolding events rather than shaping them.

While the suggested structure that follows is certainly not the absolute, only way to set up a campaign, it is a structure we've used successfully, answering some of the challenges from Prop. 8 and can at least provide a starting point for discussions.

❑ **Very Small Management Committee Empowered to Make the Big Decisions**

Call it a management committee, call it an executive committee, call it whatever you want – the bottom-line is these are the people responsible for the big decisions – strategy, message, budget allocation, etc. When a decision needs committee approval, the campaign manager should not have to get in touch with more than 3 – 5 people. These are not magic numbers, just common sense. The more people you need to contact and consult with before a decision is final, the longer it's going to take – time you won't have in the heat of a campaign.

Set Deadlines And Stick To Them. All decisions should be attached to a deadline. If a committee member has not weighed in by the deadline, they have forfeited the right to participate in that decision. If a management committee member feels they need to consult someone outside the committee before weighing in, that's their responsibility, as long as it's done by the deadline.

And deadlines must apply not only to committee decisions but to the time allowed for consultants and staff to implement those decisions. We cannot stress time management enough – time is one thing you can never replace on a campaign, so it must be used wisely.

Hold Consultants Accountable. Setting deadlines is a key part of holding the people you hire accountable. If agreed upon deadlines are being missed, that needs to change, or the vendor needs to be changed. Another piece of holding people accountable is being very clear on who's responsible for what. If no one person or entity has line responsibility for something, it usually doesn't get done. Who specifically has hiring and firing authority must also be very clear. If no one person has that authority things tend to float and it becomes very difficult to make the staff and/or consultant changes that are necessary.

Makeup Of Management Committee. Now the tough part – who sits on the Management Committee? Participation on the Management Committee needs to be defined by contribution – pure and simple. However, “contribution” does not always mean money.

The people raising the bulk of the money must be represented on the Management Committee. They will want, need, and deserve a decision-making role. In addition to the funders, there have been times we've put organizations on the Management Committee that did not have the ability to give or raise money but contributed very significantly in other ways. For example, irreplaceable message credibility and expertise on a key issue such as religion or education, grassroots ability, etc.

And, if someone has a spot on the Management Committee because of their organization's financial, grassroots, or other contribution to the campaign, they must be held accountable by the other members of the committee to produce what they committed.



Campaign Chair. Even the small management committee can't stay afloat without one person in the lead. The management committee needs a chairperson.

❑ Day-To-Day Decisions Left to Campaign Manager

The campaign manager needs to be very clear on which decisions he or she can make on their own and which require approval. And the more the committee feels comfortable leaving to the manager, the more nimble the campaign will operate. If you don't trust that person to make a lot of decisions, you've got the wrong person. The flip side of that responsibility is that the campaign manager must make sure the committee is aware of decisions he or she is making and is not surprised by them.

To be clear, we're not talking about major strategic decisions. But once the committee has agreed to the strategy, messages, budget allocations, etc., the manager needs some flexibility to make and implement decisions within that framework.

❑ Steering Committee

This is the larger group of people and organizations actively involved in the campaign. How often and how they meet to share information, provide input and be updated by the campaign depends on various factors particular to the individual campaign. But constant communication in one form or another is key.

- **Not Being on the Management Committee Should NOT Mean Being Out of the Loop or Lacking a Way to Get Your Ideas Heard**

Not being on the Management Committee should not be synonymous with not knowing what's going on in the campaign. Constant communication with the larger campaign committee of active organizations – communication that moves in both directions – is key to keeping everyone informed, on board and moving forward together.

While some sensitive information about strategy and tactics is best kept quiet, there's a lot of campaign information that should and must be passed on. Sharing as much information as possible doesn't mean that everyone will agree with every decision, but knowing what decisions have been made and why helps people keep their eyes on the ball and moving forward. Communication must also be a two-way street. The members of the broader committee can provide the management with valuable information, intelligence and ideas – two-way communication is critical.

Campaigns always struggle with how much information to pass on versus the need to keep sensitive information from spreading too far into the public realm. In any campaign you play the hand you're dealt – given the hard feelings over the No on

8 campaign, any future campaign will likely have to share more than it may want to share.

- **Regional Committees**

If there are a tremendous amount of organizations involved – which will likely be the case – the campaign can consider regional committees as well. We've seen it work and we've seen it fail. It can become an efficient way to keep people up-to-date on campaign progress and prevent duplication of efforts. If, however, it just becomes another layer of bureaucracy, it's not worth doing. The bottom line remains the same – if a campaign wants people pulling together and believing in the campaign you must have some form of regular communication with them.

- **Finance Committee**

It's generally a good idea to set up a separate finance committee, which is generally larger than the management committee. It gives the folks raising money an efficient way to share information on who's being approached, what's working, status on meeting goals, etc. In addition, the people raising the funds generally require more detailed campaign updates than a larger steering committee. People and organizations being approached for large contributions often ask for a lot of information regarding campaign strategy and tactics before agreeing to put in their money. The finance committee should have that information at their fingertips so they don't have to waste time seeking it out, potentially delaying contributions.

And having that information is not enough. Finance committee members need to proactively use it to keep donors informed. It is one of the critical jobs of the finance committee to educate donors about the campaign. Confusion leads to money drying up and/or going elsewhere. Can we win? How are we going to win? Should I believe the poll numbers just printed in the paper? Why is the ad on the air right now the best strategy? What about the story I saw this morning on the news? And it goes on, and on, and on. People need to feel comfortable they are giving their money to an organization that knows what it's doing. Committee members can always call in the campaign manager or a key consultant to fill in more detail, but it is the finance committee's job to make sure donors have the information they need to feel comfortable contributing.

Having a finance committee also helps keep the people raising the money accountable. Once you have clear fundraising goals and deadlines, having regular finance committee meetings to review them, helps keep everything on track. The campaign can't spend efficiently unless they know how much is coming in and when.

❑ One Overall Person in Charge

To make all of this work, there must be one overall person in charge. Sometimes it's the campaign manager, sometimes it's the campaign chairperson – we've seen it work both ways. Whoever is best suited to that role for the next campaign will depend on many factors not knowable at this time – the political environment, the people available and willing, personalities, etc. But the most important thing is that someone is in charge and everyone knows who it is. Otherwise, everything will grind to a halt.

One factor is certain on all campaigns: The person in charge cannot be overly concerned about whether or not he or she will be “liked” after the election. If you're making dozens of decisions every day, you're going to be criticized by some people for every single one – it's unavoidable. If the person in charge is worried about that, they will not be able to do what needs to be done. As one person said to us, “we need someone who doesn't care if everyone thinks they're a jerk.” Truer words were never spoken.

❑ Do the Tough Things Early

We recognize that it's very easy to say these things right after a campaign has concluded and much tougher to make them happen as another is beginning. All the more reason to make the tough choices early and get a functioning management structure in place as soon as possible, giving everyone time to adjust. That means it's one of the first things that needs to be tackled as another campaign begins. Once you're in the heat of a campaign it's too late.

❑ The Obvious Concern with this Will be: How Can a Campaign that is Fighting for Equal Rights Not Give Everyone Involved an Equal Say?

We understand how hard this may be to hear for a large, diverse, egalitarian movement. As one person said to us, “The LGBT community has always stood for inclusion because we've often been excluded from society in general.” But the hard truth is, that while a movement such as this can be run as a democracy over the long term, once you're actually in a campaign, things are different.

Campaigns are short by nature with a concrete immovable deadline – Election Day. And a campaign that hopes to win simply cannot do so without a tight management structure and the ability to make and implement decisions on a moment's notice. Again, that should not be turned into a recipe for isolation at the top – that doesn't work either. But too much happens too fast in a campaign to make large group consensus a possibility. If you try, forward progress will be halted and the campaign will just drift. There are hard choices to be made in order to make this work but it's also a choice between winning and losing.

❑ No Matter What You Do, Splinter Groups Will Likely Pop Up

Every campaign tries to avoid individual efforts splitting off from the central campaign and running separate operations. It's confusing for donors and duplicates efforts, which wastes limited resources, wastes limited time on in-fighting and most importantly, sends a confusing message to voters. This is a serious problem, particularly on a "yes" campaign. But sometimes, quite frankly, it simply cannot be avoided. Don't let fear of this outcome keep you from doing what needs to be done. It could happen no matter how the campaign is structured and the campaign will be better prepared to deal with this situation if set up well from the beginning. The more organized the central campaign is, the more visible it will be, and the more it can minimize the damage.

❑ Staffing

During the No on 8 campaign we understand many organizations generously donated staff members to the campaign. While this can be a tremendous financial benefit to the campaign as well as provide expertise and familiarity with the LGBT community and the issue, it can also cause some problems. Specifically, problems arise when there are confusing lines of authority and/or split allegiances. The tendency will be for a loaned staffer to feel a stronger allegiance to the person who was their boss before the campaign and will be their boss at the end of the campaign than to the campaign manager.

Our understanding is that some people thought the loaned staff system worked very well during the Prop. 8 campaign and others found it problematic. Not having been involved in the campaign we certainly can't come down on one side or the other. But we would recommend that a future campaign consider the following to make that system work as smoothly as possible:

- **Working out of central campaign office(s)**

Loaned staff and campaign-only staff working out of central locations helps form a cohesive unit focused on the campaign with streamlined communication.

- **Extra effort on behalf of campaign manager during set up**

It will likely take a bit of extra effort from the manager at the start of the campaign to forge a good working relationship and develop loaned staff and others into one team.

- **The entire campaign staff should not be loaned from other organizations**

There likely needs to be a limit on loaned staff. If everyone is coming from and going back to other organizations it's most likely that a cohesive campaign team will not have time to gel.

- **People must know to whom they report**

Many staff people we talked to said they were unclear to whom they should report and where to go for instruction, guidance, clarification, etc. Again, we don't know the dynamics of the internal staff structure. But, in terms of preparing for another campaign, we do know that if staff members are not clear on who their "boss" is, it's a problem.

■ **Fundraising**

□ **Early Money Will be Even More Critical on a "Yes" Campaign**

No on Prop. 8, with the EQCA PAC as the top donor, raised an unprecedented amount of money on this issue and deserves an extraordinary amount of credit for going so far above and beyond what was thought possible.

The problem on Prop. 8 was apparently not how much was raised, but when it came in. Particularly when compared to the "Yes" campaign, which brought in significant sums earlier than the "No" side.

Early money allows you to define the message before your opponents, set the tone and push people to argue the issue on your turf. This is even more critical on a "yes" campaign, especially one where you have funded opposition. If your opponents define your initiative in voters' minds before you do, it's very difficult to recover. Understandably, this is much easier said than done. There's often a chicken and egg problem, especially with big donors. They don't want to give until they feel you have a reasonable chance of success and the campaign can't always demonstrate the ability to succeed before laying some expensive groundwork. Hopefully, history will help crack that problem as there seems to be wide agreement among those involved, that the proponents of Prop. 8 were allowed to define the issue and set the agenda, leaving the "no" side in response mode much of the campaign. If there is understanding of how damaging that was, there will hopefully also be an understanding that changing that dynamic for the next battle will require early money. To make sure donors feel comfortable, the campaign will likely have to do some aggressive "selling" of the campaign plan and team to those large donors early.

Another potential source for early funding is the internet. We understand the internet fundraising really picked up towards the end of the campaign once you beefed up your web operation and supporters became aware that polling showed the "No" side losing. In the end, internet fundraising brought in almost ½ of the total money raised. Putting that structure in place early will be tremendously helpful.

Coalition outreach to their members for early financial support is also key. These are the organizations signed up to support the campaign, so in theory, they should be

willing to reach out to their members and ask for early financial support to get the campaign up and running. To make this work everyone needs to be on board and aggressively asking members for campaign contributions.

□ Fundraising Structure

When the campaign funds are raised by organizations that have a history prior to the campaign and a future after the campaign, there are some challenges:

- **Understandably, no organization wants to turn its donor list over to the campaign**
- **Understandably, every organization wants to get “credit” for the money they raise**

But when setting up your fundraising organization you also must take into consideration:

- **Confusion among donors about where their money is going, who else is giving, etc. can quickly undermine fundraising efforts.**

Some people will suggest the issues of concern to existing organizations should be dismissed on behalf of the immediate goal of winning a campaign. Unfortunately, that’s generally not realistic. These organizations will have a life well beyond any specific election campaign so they are always going to protect their donor list and will also insist on getting “credit” in order to demonstrate value to their members. Failing to recognize that life goes on after a campaign only causes more problems than it creates.

It should also be noted the issue of “credit” is as important to the campaign as it is to existing organizations since it’s a way of holding people responsible for their fundraising goals and commitments.

To fund the No on 8 campaign, many organizations had donors write checks to existing or newly created PACs and then the PAC donated to the campaign. While it’s hard to quibble with a system that ended up raising more than double its original budget, this does seem more confusing than it needs to be.

According to the Secretary of State’s website there were more than a dozen different committees organized to defeat Prop. 8. We understand many organizations felt their donors would be more likely to give to an entity they had some history with, rather than a generic campaign committee. Given that sentiment, it was decided to make a calculated trade off – there might be some donor confusion, but in the end they would raise more money. But, while the purpose for each of these committees may have been clear to the campaign leadership, it does send a message to prospective donors of confusion and disarray or at a minimum gives them a convenient excuse to opt out.



Another system to consider for the future:

- **Each organization works its own donor list and;**
- **Requests that all donations be sent to one campaign committee and;**
- **All donations are sourced as they come in by the finance committee**

If there are large donors that absolutely refuse to give unless they can do it through a specific organization, they can be accommodated. But campaigns get complicated enough on their own – doing everything possible to simplify things at the beginning will pay dividends as the campaign heats up.

And it's the job of the campaign to make this as easy as possible for organizations by providing templates, messages, updates to send to donors, etc. – but the actual “ask” comes from the parent organization.

■ **Title & Summary and Ballot Label**

The official description of a measure and the actual ballot label seen by voters when they cast their vote are produced by the Attorney General's office. The final wording can have significant impact on the final vote and is worth paying a lot of attention to. Even though these are prepared by the Attorney General, a standard part of the initiative process is for organizations on both sides of a measure to provide the necessary legal background supporting their view of what should and should not be included in the official wording -- much like the process of submitting Amicus Briefs in a court case.

The change in language from the initial ballot label to the final was a significant victory for the pro-marriage equality side.

While it's impossible to determine what the vote would have been with the original language, it's clear the change was a huge boost for the No on 8 campaign. EQCA's work in providing the Attorney General's office with the documentation to back up its case provided a tremendous benefit to the campaign. Focusing resources and effort in this area is definitely worth doing again if you find yourselves in another initiative battle.

■ **Factor into Your Strategy the Significant Differences Between a “Yes” Campaign and a “No” Campaign**

You were on the “no” side of Prop. 8 but if the Supreme Court fails to strike that initiative down and you decide you need to head back to the ballot with a proactive initiative, you will be the “yes” campaign and the two are very, very different.

❑ Positive vs. Negative

“No” campaigns can, and usually should be, negative. “Yes” campaigns need to operate on a much more positive level. (Obviously, the Yes on 8 campaign was an exception to that rule.) In general, if you’re trying to get people to vote “yes” it’s contradictory to be speaking in the negative. Your messages, the tone of your materials, even the colors of your logo and website need to be crafted with the differences in a “yes” campaign in mind. It may sound easy, but often it’s not and is a very important thing to always keep in mind as you move forward.

❑ Drafting a Proactive Initiative is a Critical, Time Consuming Process, but Worth Every Bit of Effort You Put Into it – Don’t Take Shortcuts

Is it enough to simply strike one line in the constitution or does the initiative need to go farther to make it easier to pass and more air-tight? That must be added into the early research phase if the community finds itself preparing for another campaign. But in general, people who complete the drafting process too quickly without taking considerable time to vet the text in every way possible – legally, with potential coalition supporters and opponents, and with the use of public opinion research– usually lose. Start early and take the time to do it right. The more time and care you take drafting the better your election chances will be – this is your “candidate.”

- **Keep it very, very simple**

It’s no secret that the “no” side prevails more often than the “yes” side in California’s initiative wars. The single most consistent reason we see “yes” efforts lose is their inability to keep their measures simple. The shorter the initiative text, the simpler and clearer the goal – the greater chance you have for success.

- **Having said that, it’s worth considering using your initiative text to shut down key arguments you know will be raised by your opponents**

This is always a huge balancing act when drafting an initiative – keeping it simple and short vs. adding text to inoculate against key charges. But it’s a critical one, worth spending significant time, research and resources on. Two of the obvious considerations are -- whether the text of your initiative should take on the issues of the impact on schools and the impact on churches – both of which greatly affected the outcome of Prop. 8.

If a decision is made to take on these or other issues, should it be part of the initiative text or just part of the purpose and intent section? Research at the time you begin another campaign, done in the context of the environment at that specific time must be the guide.

❑ **A Future “Yes” Campaign Will Not be About Defending an Existing Right**

Prop. 8’s goal was to prohibit same-sex couples from marrying. Once the court decision made same-sex marriage a reality in California, Prop. 8 could then be characterized as stripping away an existing, legal right. If the court decides to uphold Prop. 8, a proactive initiative will obviously no longer be defending existing law. What is the best way to talk about this? Are you restoring a right? Retaining it? How this is dealt with must be explored in the research that’s conducted during the drafting process and ultimately be factored into the initiative, particularly the findings and declaration of purpose.

❑ **Are Any of the Initiatives Currently on File the Right Vehicle?**

Several initiatives that would repeal Prop. 8, or eliminate marriage and replace it with domestic partnership for everyone, have already been filed with the Attorney General’s office and we hear additional measures may be on their way. Are any of these the right vehicles to move forward with? Again, careful research and thorough vetting must be your guide.

❑ **Carefully Choose which Election to Target**

The profile of voters who turn out for special elections, primaries and generals differ markedly from one another. And no initiative is passed or defeated in a vacuum. What candidates and other measures are on the ballot as well as a host of other factors will impact the chances for success. Again, careful thought and good research must be your guide.

■ **Increase the Focus on Coalition Building Outside the LGBT Community**

Coalition building is a critical component of an initiative campaign. Endorsements are helpful to candidates as well, but in the end, success or failure really depends on who the candidates are and how the voters perceive them. An initiative is an idea spelled out by words on a piece of paper. The people that support a measure reinforce the campaign’s interpretation of those words, help negate the opposition’s interpretation and serve as the campaign’s “ambassadors” to various voter groups.

If I’m concerned about the impact on education, the position taken by the education community influences me. If I’m concerned that my church will be forced to do something it doesn’t want to, hearing from religious leaders can make a difference. If I’m a senior citizen, organizations representing my generation may be very convincing to me. Voters tend to downplay how much they are impacted by endorsements. But we know from long experience that in practice the coalition endorsements matter a great deal. In a contested battle where people are hearing conflicting information from both sides, the right endorsements help them answer the question: “Who should I trust?”

❑ No on 8 Coalition List

There were many impressive entries on the campaign coalition list, but outreach next time around should go much farther. It's clear from the list of organizations and people that have filed Amicus Briefs supporting the lawsuit to strike down Prop. 8 that more outreach is already taking place. While support for a court case may not automatically transfer to taking a position on a political campaign, it's still critical outreach that is likely to yield dividends next time around.

There are additional categories of organizations worth fighting for – seniors, moderate Republicans, taxpayers, children and family advocacy groups and others.

A word about elected officials. In general, elected officials do not make good spokespeople for initiatives. As with everything, there are exceptions. The No on 8 campaign's use of Superintendent Jack O'Connell and Senator Dianne Feinstein appear to be such exceptions. But the No on 8 coalition list had a lot of support from elected politicians – so the question then becomes, "how to use them?" In a fight like this you need to find a way to use absolutely every resource available. One thing worth considering on an issue like this is asking politicians to, at a minimum, communicate with their own constituents. On an issue like marriage for same-sex couples, having a face of the "establishment" endorse your efforts in their local area may be helpful – it's at least worth exploring as the environment for the next campaign takes shape.

❑ When Can Coalition Building Begin?

General discussions can begin taking place immediately, but most organizations will not officially sign on to an initiative without seeing the specific language. It can be helpful to talk to key groups while initiative text is being considered, as was discussed in the section on drafting an initiative. If there are small things you can do in the drafting to make it easier for folks to sign on or keep them from opposing you, it's well worth the effort.

❑ Neutralization

An important component of coalition building is neutralization. Some organizations may never join your cause, but if aggressively communicating with them during the endorsement process keeps them from joining your opponents, it is certainly time well spent.

❑ Face(s) of the Campaign

It's not enough just to build a huge list. Coalition members that reinforce key messages need to be active, very visible faces of the campaign. The campaign needs to present a very diverse face to the voters, which demonstrates the full breadth of support.

That means members of the LGBT community AND representatives of the faith-based community AND the education community AND communities of color, AND business leaders, etc. The most visible faces need to reinforce key message points such as education issues and acceptance by the faith-based community.

❑ Labor Intensive Effort

A good coalition building effort is very labor intensive. Committee members with key relationships can and should do outreach to coalition targets. In fact, one of the first tasks as a campaign is ramping up, is to do an inventory of which committee members have existing relationships with key coalition targets. But the organizations you really have to fight for take a lot of work, no matter how good the relationship – materials preparation specifically geared to that organization, physical presentations, calls to board members and/or key staff as well as the work to activate their members once they do come on board. As with everything on a campaign, a decision must be made about allocation of resources, but it's a discussion worth having.

■ Take Advantage of Grassroots Options and Prepare for the Challenges that Come with Them

Since the election there has been a tremendous amount of discussion about the grassroots efforts of the No on 8 campaign. Some people say it was, “the largest field operation ever assembled for an anti-gay ballot initiative.” Others claim the effort was non-inclusive, overly restrictive and basically an overlooked element of the campaign. Whatever the reality was during the last campaign the grassroots outpouring since the election will likely present some opportunities as well as some challenges for the next campaign.

Most initiative campaigns do not have the luxury of even thinking about mounting a serious grassroots effort, especially in a state the size of California. Significant grassroots activity more often follows personality-driven candidate campaigns than issue campaigns – which is usually one of the significant differences between the two. Marriage equality appears to be an exception to that rule.

Even before the passage of Prop. 8, the number of organizations with significant numbers of activist members was impressive. Since the election and the devastating spectacle of seeing rights stripped away, even more people have expressed a willingness to engage in the fight. How many folks will carry those intentions through to the next fight? It's impossible to know today. But the odds are a grassroots effort in some form is going to be possible; it's just the exact size and structure that is unknowable at this time. The ability to mobilize at the grassroots level – not often seen on initiative campaigns – needs to be factored into the planning for the next battle. As much of an asset as it is, it also presents some challenges and requires planning.

❑ **At the Grassroots Level it's Less an Issue of "Controlling" Activities than "Channeling" and "Focusing" Them.**

Grassroots activity is by nature, gloriously loud, messy and full of passionate and diverse opinions. Campaigns, on the other hand, seek to control the playing field, and with good reason. The average voter has a limited amount of time to consider any election day vote and good campaigns want to make sure consistent messages are being echoed throughout every channel of the campaign and energy expended is prioritized based on the activities most likely to produce actual votes on election day. People going off in 100 different directions, each with their own program and message will certainly fail to maximize the effort being expended.

Monitoring message and channeling activities at the grassroots level is always a challenge and likely will be more so in the wake of the disappointment over the passage of Prop. 8. Right or wrong, there is a feeling that volunteers were too restricted in what they were asked to do and that sentiment will carry forward to the next effort. One person we talked to put it this way: "We were like an upside down ship. We didn't have enough command and control at the top, and we had way too much of it at the bottom."

It's unlikely the next campaign supporting marriage equality will be able to impose heavy control if it wants to fully activate the grassroots. Finding the right balance between the two will be a challenge, but one worth taking on in order to get the most out of a tremendous asset.

What the campaign can do is seek to channel energy into productive activities. There needs to be an outlet for energy and creativity – and if it's not made available by the campaign, that energy will be released on a variety of tasks, some helpful in winning the campaign and some not. Pick 3 or 4 tasks that will be the most helpful, provide volunteers with materials and data necessary to accomplish those tasks, and give them some freedom in how to reach the goal. Will some people go off on their own? Inevitably. But people will be more likely to participate in the central campaign if they have clear, meaningful tasks, some flexibility on how to participate, and the necessary tools to accomplish those tasks. The "My Barack Obama" program seemed to do a great job of keeping people involved in the central campaign but giving them some freedom in deciding how to participate.

❑ **Utilize Volunteers Nationally**

This is a national issue. Given the fallout from the passage of Prop. 8, complacency will hopefully not be a problem when the next campaign comes around. But if a future campaign really wants to engage people on a national level, there's still a need to educate the community and its allies nationally regarding the ability of the campaign to win, how it's going to win, the importance of passage in California specifically, the need for their help, etc.

Technology provides productive ways to engage these folks on a California campaign. People across the country can take on tasks such as downloading lists of voters to phone, sending emails and text messages, and contributing financially. This is true of individuals as well as national and state organizations outside California.

□ Take Advantage of All the Post Prop. 8 Activity by Focusing it Now, as Well as Laying the Groundwork for the Future

People have literally been pouring into the streets since the election. As one person said, “As hard as the criticism has been to take, we’re also seeing a new spirit out there that says, ‘I don’t like what I see, and I’m going to change it.’” Much of the early energy was focused on recriminations for the election loss, but that seems to have turned a corner. Likely in part due to simple human nature, in part due to the willingness of No on 8 leaders making themselves available since the election and in part to the Equality Summit which brought hundreds of people together to talk about what they could learn from the passage of Prop. 8 and plan for the future. There was tremendous energy at the Equality Summit, a commitment to making marriage equality happen and, for the most part, a positive attitude. One person put it this way: “We have a great opportunity. Anger has turned to fuel.”

There was a lot of discussion surrounding activities that could be helpful while the Supreme Court case is pending, which is tremendous. If all this energy and commitment can be focused on putting forward a positive, unified, visible message of support from the community AND its allies, that will help set the stage in case the Supreme Court upholds Prop. 8.

But, as previously mentioned, no one really knows at this time, how many of those people and new organizations will still be involved if it becomes necessary to mount another ballot fight. That’s not a comment on people’s commitment, just a reality that with so much going on in the world at large and in individual people’s lives, it becomes difficult to sustain that level of energy – as the leadership who has been in this fight for years well knows.

How to sustain the movement over time is something you are experts at. What we can tell you from a campaign standpoint is this: someone needs to be collecting the data for every single person that demonstrated, blogged, wrote or in any other way showed support for marriage equality in recent months. Even if they move on to other things in the interim, having a way to contact these activists when the next election fight begins will ensure the next campaign begins a bit ahead of the game.

□ Organizing Beyond the LGBT Community

In addition to taking advantage of all the renewed energy at the grassroots level of the LGBT community specifically, outreach needs to be done in other areas as well.



Faith-Based. Post-election research indicates that three of the biggest determinants in the Prop. 8 vote were ideology, age and religion/frequency of church attendance. Hearing a positive message about marriage equality from people with credibility on issues of faith is critical to making the necessary inroads. In addition, the Amicus Brief filings on the current court case demonstrate there's room to grow this segment of the campaign next time around, adding to the large coalition of faith-based groups that opposed Prop. 8.

Communities of Color. Much has been written about how these communities voted on Prop. 8. And while the post-election polling indicates the exit polls taken on Election Day vastly overstated the "yes" vote of some demographic groups, there's no question that more outreach here will be important and can only bring positive results.

❑ **"Grassroots" Does Not Equal "Free"**

Grassroots outreach in addition to paid and earned media amounts to a powerful campaign. But mounting a serious grassroots campaign is time consuming and expensive. Technology certainly makes it much more affordable than in the past, but to do it well is still not free. For every house party, precinct walk, phone bank, rally or other activity, there is staff time behind it as well as financial resources to provide the necessary tools.

For example, a campaign could simply ask supporters to do house parties, step back and see what happens. But the results will be much greater if instead of merely making the request, the campaign takes on the tasks of doing the preparatory organizing necessary for maximum participation, connecting supporters with others in their neighborhood, providing materials and goals and doing the follow-up afterwards. Reaping maximum benefit from grassroots activities is directly linked to the resources put into the task. How much can be allocated to a grassroots effort will be a function of many variables of the next campaign – but it's certainly not free. Ask the Obama campaign, which organized in Iowa two years before the caucuses.

■ **Fully Utilizing the Best and Latest Technology is Critical**

❑ **Strongest Opposition to Prop. 8 Was Among Voters Under 40**

No matter how turnout varies in future elections, younger voters will be a crucial part of securing marriage equality. You cannot communicate effectively with younger voters unless the technology portion of your campaign is firing on all cylinders. It will be worth investing in a state-of-the-art web operation and more.

As importantly, what defines "state-of-the-art" will likely change many times between now and the next initiative battle. Today, you're not visible on the internet without YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and others. Tomorrow? Even email is already

somewhat outdated to a generation that communicates through text messaging. And 10 new ways to use the technology pop up every day. All the more reason it's important to make certain the people involved not only stay on top of all the technological changes but understand how to use them effectively. Any campaign operation surrounding this issue that doesn't utilize the latest technology will likely fall short.

❑ **Establish Your Web Presence Early**

There seems to be general consensus that the web operation really kicked into high gear for the last 5 - 6 weeks of the campaign and produced some incredible results. It was at this time that volunteers came out of the woodwork, many taking unpaid leave from their jobs at web firms, to volunteer full-time for the campaign. They were joined by loaned staff from several organizations including EQCA and they took charge of everything from overall web site performance to blogging to social networking. One of these volunteers said, "we went overnight from having about 1 ½ people working on it to more than 36 volunteers." The increased focus on web activities paid off organizationally as well as in a huge amount of money being raised over the internet. Clearly a lesson learned is to make sure that part of the campaign is up and running at full speed as early as possible. It helps maximize grassroots organizing as well as making it more affordable and easier to do on a large scale, helps tremendously and efficiently with communication and obviously pays financial dividends.

■ **A Cautionary Note about Message and Target Voter Groups for the Next Battle**

The post-election survey does a good job of highlighting the demographics of the Prop. 8 fight and the underlying voter sentiments for and against it. While the basic rationale for marriage equality will not likely change much between now and the next campaign, additional and exhaustive qualitative and quantitative research will be necessary once a future initiative begins to take shape.

Crafting campaign messages for a specific measure is very much a creature of the moment and dependent on factors such as the exact wording of a measure, whether you're asking for a yes or no, retaining rights or restoring them, what else and who else is on the ballot, shifting public attitudes, the general political climate in California and nationally, and who lines up in support and opposition.

■ **The Last Campaign Demonstrated How Massive the News Media Effort Must be and How Successful You Can be with Editorial Boards**

It's possible that the next time this issue is on the ballot in California there will be so many other things going on that it will not receive much news media attention – but that seems unlikely. There was so much interest in Prop. 8 both before and after the election that it's

hard to imagine anything less than a glaring media spotlight. The challenge in that situation is having the ability and staffing necessary to “feed the beast,” stay out in front and respond in a timely fashion to every single request. You can’t afford to leave yourself in a responsive posture – you need to grab hold of the message ground and not let go.

All campaigns come down to allocation of resources at some point, but this is one area that a future campaign cannot afford to have under-staffed. Managing that kind of attention and not getting crushed by it requires significant staffing.

Talk about something done well, that was certainly the newspaper editorial effort - wow. The near-unanimous editorial opposition to Prop. 8 was impressive. All we can say is, do it again.

■ **You Faced an Organized, Committed Foe that Pulled Out All the Stops in the Last Election – There is No Reason to Expect Anything Else the Next Time**

Clearly, one of the key lessons learned is that the proponents of Prop. 8 proved how far they will go to try and prevent marriages for same-sex couples in California. Their unprecedented fund-raising and volunteer commitment cannot be ignored, nor can their willingness to lie and distort the truth. Like you, they clearly recognize that what happens in California serves as a harbinger for the rest of the nation.

Through their churches they have a ready-to-go organizational structure and a base of people who are fanatical about preserving their discriminatory ideology on our state’s law books. To win against this relentless force in another election battle, the LGBT community and its allies need all hands on deck in an organized and focused manner. Winning such a battle requires every member of the LGBT community and its allies to step up – with time and money. No one can sit out the next battle. Everyone needs to pull in the same direction. Nothing less will get the job done.

■ **Don’t Throw Out All the Things You Did Right Because You Lost**

Just eight years ago, Proposition 22 passed 61% to 39%. Last November, Prop. 8 passed 52% to 48%. That’s a lot of progress in 8 years, so the No on 8 campaign clearly did many things right.

We’ve heard a lot of people basically coming to the conclusion that, *if we did it during the Prop. 8 campaign it must have been wrong because we lost*. And some of the more specific comments include things such as, *we shouldn’t use polls to determine a message, TV ads are a waste of time, we didn’t do enough grassroots work last time so if we just do local organizing next time that’s all we need*, and, of course, -- *don’t use campaign professionals*.



We think you need to use it all. Hire good professionals but make sure they are used in conjunction with all the knowledge and expertise brought to the table by LGBT leaders with a long history on the issue and hold them accountable; use professional research but overlay it with common sense and input from those who've been working on the issue for years; use the best technology but in a way that empowers rather than stifles the grassroots.

While a lot of the criticism of the Prop. 8 campaign may be justified, it does nothing to help the next campaign, to begin by throwing out absolutely everything that was done, just because it was done during Prop. 8.

The focus moving forward should not be on how far you fell short but how close you came to success. This **WILL** happen. But even knowing that, marriage for same-sex couples remains a difficult issue for many people and you will need to use every weapon at your disposal. In order to cross the finish line you will need to marry the best knowledge from within the LGBT community with the best professionals and the best of modern campaign techniques with grassroots momentum and the passion of your larger coalition.



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