

1 **Resolution Requesting Investment of More Resources into the**  
2 **VoteBuilder Project by the Democratic National Committee**  
3

4 **WHEREAS** the Democratic Party has, until recently, been behind the Republican Party in  
5 building and using technology used for voter identification; and  
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7 **WHEREAS** the DNC, in conjunction with the fifty state strategy, has developed the  
8 VoteBuilder software for national use with the flexibility for adaptation to the needs of the  
9 various state Democratic Parties; and  
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11 **WHEREAS** the Obama campaign took technology utilization to a higher level by putting  
12 basic online volunteer and donor information directly into the hands of field organizers,  
13 adding significantly to our state party voter ID base; and  
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15 **WHEREAS** the existence of standing Technology Committees in state Democratic Party  
16 organizations (for example, the Washington State Democratic Party Central Committee)  
17 correlates positively with higher levels of utilization of VoteBuilder software by PCOs; and  
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19 **WHEREAS** the Democratic National Committee does not have a technology committee  
20 consisting of DNC delegates; and  
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22 **WHEREAS** all state Democratic Parties, like state governments, are short of money for  
23 further investment in technology development; and  
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25 **WHEREAS** it is imperative that the Democratic Party not let the vast improvements in  
26 voter ID achieved in 2008 deteriorate, but instead extend and build on those improvements;  
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28 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we direct the WSDCC to instruct our DNC delegates  
29 to request at the next DNC meeting that more financial resources be directed to  
30 maintaining, updating and improving the VoteBuilder database, including the hiring of  
31 more database specialists to work for the state parties; and  
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33 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we direct the WSDCC to instruct our  
34 DNC delegates to request that the DNC establish a Technology Committee to oversee  
35 improvements in voter and volunteer identification technology at the national level; and  
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37 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the national Technology Committee  
38 track innovations contributed by campaigns and various state parties for the purpose of  
39 identifying promulgating best practices nationally; and  
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41 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the national Technology Committee  
42 encourage state parties that do not have technology committees to establish them; and  
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45 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Technology Committee make regular  
46 reports to the DNC and the state parties on a quarterly basis.  
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49 **REFERENCES**

50  
51 1. Republican Party database development

52  
53 <http://archive.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2006/6/11/104427.shtml>

54 In fact, when Dean was boasting about the 600,000 email addresses he had amassed, the  
55 Republicans had 10 times that number. Writing in the National Journal, Michael Barone  
56 observed that few reporters at the time "took note of the number of e-mail addresses the  
57 Bush campaign had collected: 6 million."

58  
59 "We had surmised that the DNC database was not useable by state and local parties," said  
60 Collister "Cuddy" Johnson, who was national field director of the 2004 Bush-Cheney  
61 campaign. "But to see it written in plain ink was unreal. Think about the loss of economies  
62 of scale and efficiency that this causes, not to mention the inability to have a coherent  
63 national field strategy. It was amazing."

64  
65 [http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-op-](http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-op-hamburger25jun25,0,906381.story?coll=la-news-comment-opinions)  
66 [hamburger25jun25,0,906381.story?coll=la-news-comment-opinions](http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-op-hamburger25jun25,0,906381.story?coll=la-news-comment-opinions)

67  
68 Both parties can identify voters by precinct, address, party affiliation and, often, their views  
69 on hot-button issues. Democrats also use marketing data, but Voter Vault includes far more  
70 information culled from marketing sources — including retailers, magazine subscription  
71 services, even auto dealers — giving Republicans a high-tech edge in the kind of grass-  
72 roots politics that has long been the touchstone of Democratic activists.

73  
74 As a result, Republicans have moved well ahead of Democrats nationally in their ability to  
75 find previously unaffiliated voters or even wavering Democrats and to target them with  
76 specially tailored messages. Voter Vault, although it is a closely guarded GOP trade secret,  
77 is nevertheless easily accessible to on-the-ground campaign workers and operatives should  
78 they need to mobilize votes in a hurry.

79  
80 2. Democratic Party database development

81  
82 [http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/03/welcome-new-media-campaign-tools-](http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/03/welcome-new-media-campaign-tools-2012-0?page=2)  
83 [2012-0?page=2](http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/03/welcome-new-media-campaign-tools-2012-0?page=2)

84 New Media Field Manager Judith Freeman acknowledges that the integration of the  
85 supporter database used by field organizers (VAN), the web campaigning tools (MyBO  
86 tools and email list powered by Blue State Digital), and the national voter file and  
87 associated demographic data (Catalist) brought important improvements. In addition to  
88 putting basic online volunteer and donor information directly into the hands of field

89 organizers, integrating voterfile data with the national calling tool, "Neighbor to Neighbor"  
90 allowed online volunteers to make immediate contact with sets of voters.

91  
92 [http://marcambinder.theatlantic.com/archives/2008/11/technology\\_catalist\\_votebuilder.](http://marcambinder.theatlantic.com/archives/2008/11/technology_catalist_votebuilder.php)  
93 [php](http://marcambinder.theatlantic.com/archives/2008/11/technology_catalist_votebuilder.php)

94 Howard Dean's DNC brought the party in the 21st century. Under his direction, the party  
95 was able to create what the Republican Party already had -- a single national voter file  
96 interface. The DNC struck data-sharing agreements with state parties, got everything  
97 uniform (more or less.)

#### 98 99 **Summary of databases used in 2008**

100  
101 **MyBarackObama.com** -- the central online volunteer/social networking/mobilization hub  
102 of the campaign. Synonymous to many with the DNC's **PartyBuilder**, which preceded it.  
103 Created by BlueStateDigital, it helped the campaign expand dramatically: 2 million active  
104 users, 35,000 affinity groups, etc.

105  
106 **VAN** -- a. k. a. "the Van," or just "VAN". Voter Activation Network. A private Boston-  
107 based voter file software company responsible for creating VoteBuilder, the active interface  
108 used by field organizations doing door-to-door canvasses, event organizing and other  
109 volunteer management and mobilization activities.

110  
111 **VoteBuilder** -- VoteBuilder is the DNC's voter file; the branded version of the VAN tool  
112 that the party gives for free to all the state parties and was also licensed to the presidential  
113 primary campaigns. The frontline interface for field organizers.

114  
115 **Catalist** -- a private data company run by Harold Ickes and Laura Quinn that has detailed  
116 information on 280 million Americans -- just about every registered voter and eligible  
117 voter in the United States; how they vote (if they do); where they live; what motivates them.  
118 More than 90 groups subscribed to Catalist data in 2008, including the Obama campaign.  
119 For the general election, the Obama campaign used Catalist's data to update and backstop  
120 the VAN Votebuilders, and to manage the data flow into and out of their various  
121 organizing and fundraising tools.

122  
123 Catalist appends a unique identifier to each name as it flows through its master national  
124 file -- and this allows the various data silos to be synced and in effect "talk to each other."  
125 The Obama campaign liked Catalist's ability to rapidly update its data and used Catalist  
126 data to keep tabs on its early voting programs. (Note: the RNC keeps its data in-house.)

127  
128 **Strategic Telemetry:** Ken Strasma's firm used data from a variety of sources to set targets  
129 and create the likely voter model used by the Obama campaign. The exact composition of  
130 that model is among the biggest secrets in the political universe. But even more important:  
131 all the issue, persuasion and support models that Strasma's firm completed.