



How Your Nonprofit Can Host a Phone or Text Bank to Reach Voters

October 7, 2021

Agenda

- WHY use phone-banking or text-banking to reach voters?
- HOW to set up a phone or text bank at your organization
- Stories from the Field: How AAF used text-banking in NYC
- Question & Answer



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Why use phone-banking or text-banking?

What are phone-banking and text-banking?

From Merriam-Webster:

As *phonebanking* is the act of gathering people to make calls on behalf of a cause, such as a political campaign or a donation drive, *textbanking* is the more modern equivalent, where a group collectively sends out texts to many recipients rather than call many individuals on the phone.



Why should we use phone or text banking?



- Raise awareness- especially for local and primary elections
- Studies show higher efficacy than email for GOTV messages
- Flexible to your needs (in-person, at a distance, all at once or over many shifts)
- Enjoyable for your staff and volunteers
- Flexible: Pair GOTV messages with wellness checks, invitations to events/services, or other messages you want to get out to your community

How do I choose which type of bank to host?

Consider Phone-Banking:

- If you want to engage in deeper conversations
- If you want to bring up other topics (related to voting or your services)
- If either the voters you are targeting or the volunteers banking find cell phones less accessible
- If there is an existing relationship between voter and caller (high impact contact!)



How do I choose which type of bank to host?



Consider Text-Banking:

- If the voters you are targeting are young (millennial or gen Z)
- If there is an important link you want to share (ex: sample ballot, candidate guides)
- If you have limited bilingual banking support but can get a text message script translated
- If you're getting some hesitance from staff/volunteers – text-banking is easy to do while watching TV



How to set up a phone or text bank at your organization

What type of Event?

In Person: You provide volunteers/staff with printed lists in-person, printed material can be comfortable for older volunteers and less tech set up.

- **Needs:** People's own devices, If doing calls: a location where you can host everyone in a COVID-safe way and not have conversations bleed over too much

Virtual: Provide volunteers/staff with virtual lists and schedule a zoom call where people can be onscreen to call together and ask any questions, hop on and hop off

- **Needs:** People's own devices, a zoom call link

For both: Try to Hold them 7-8pm on Saturdays!



Pro tip: Scheduling Events for Highest impact

Highest Delivery Rates: Send messages at 10-11am or 6-7pm any day of the week

Highest Response Time: Saturdays at 7-8pm, people are most likely to actually respond!

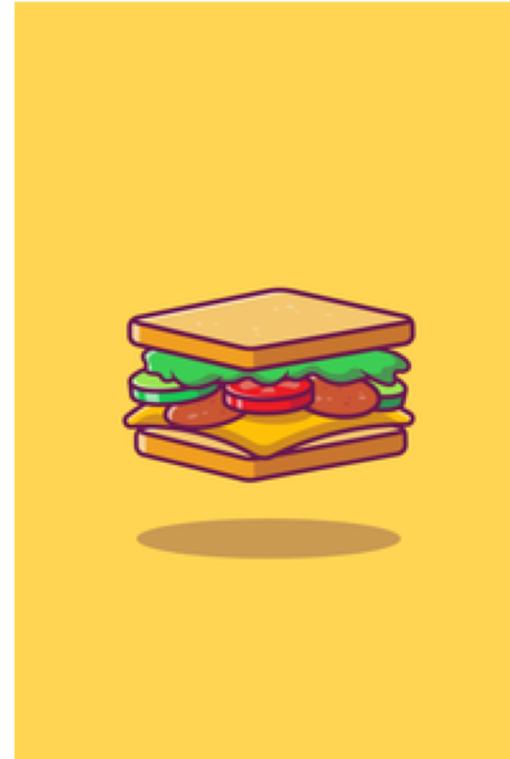
SOURCE: <https://callhub.io/political-text-blast-best-worst-time/>



What do I need in order to phone or text bank?

Every good phone or text bank has four key ingredients:

1. A list of clients/voters to contact
2. Staff or volunteers (bankers) to make the calls/texts to voters
3. A script to guide their interactions
4. A tracker to record voters' answers and important notes



A list of clients or voters to contact

Gather a list of names and phone numbers of clients, people who participate in your programs/services, or even volunteers.

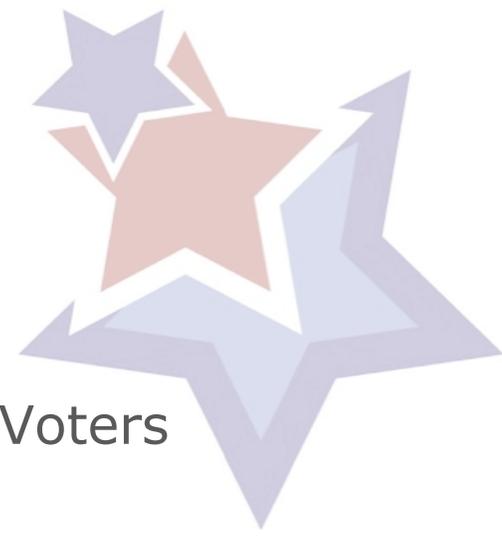
If you don't have such a list you can purchase one from L2, a political data firm that can use different targets to generate a list of voters.



Use pledge-to-vote cards to build a list

Using pledge cards with your voter registration efforts will help you build a list of voters to follow up with

Staff or volunteers who can call or text voters



Recruiting from your network:

- Program staff
- Committed volunteers
- Program participants
 - Youth leaders are great at this!
- Board/donors
 - Use this as an opportunity to bring them more deeply into your work
- Staff/volunteers from partner organizations or coalitions

Outside your network:

- Local League of Women Voters
- Vendors
 - Stone's Phones
 - Thrutext
 - PointBlank Political

How many people do I need?

Two people can get through a list of 100 phone numbers during a two-hour shift.

A script to guide their interactions

What is needed in a script

- Check if this is the right person
- Keep it **short**. Keep it **simple**.
- No shame!
- Appreciate their time!

Helpful information to have at the ready

- Voting In Your State
 - Find info and link for your script
- Canivote.org
 - Links to all the state-specific resources so you don't need to search for it
 - Direct voters to the "Election Official Directory" if they need more assistance



Register To Vote



Voter Registration Status



Find Your Polling Place



Valid Forms of ID



Absentee & Early Voting



Overseas Voters



Election Official Directory



Become A Poll Worker

A tracker to record voters' answers and notes

Why use a tracker

- Mark when people don't want to be called
- Call them later if you weren't able to reach them
- Note any follow up questions or help needed
- List build a more engaged voter base over time
- Track "reach" rates

NOTE: Make sure to copy the tracker with different sections of the list if you have multiple people phonebanking (Or copy into a google sheet)

Let's Demo! You can use a laptop or print this out



DIY Call/Text Platforms

Respond and send texts/make calls on your computer, not your personal cell

Requires Tech Set Up and Platform Training for Volunteers/Staff



Text Platforms

Thrutext

- No minimum costs
- \$0.08/text

Action Network

- Must be an 'opt-in' list

Callhub

Phone Platforms

Callhub

- \$3 - up to 43 minutes or 88 texts

Hustle

Thrutalk

State Voices MiniVAN/Spoke



Stories from the Field

Who is Asian American Federation?

Established in 1989, AAF is the largest umbrella leadership organization in New York serving diverse Asian American communities that make up the fastest-growing population in the city, state, and country.

AAPI Power Coalition promotes the full civic participation of Asian New Yorkers by:

- Ensuring Asians are counted in the Census
- Educating and mobilizing voters
- Encouraging broader participation in the civic life of our city through joining Community Boards and engaging with elected officials
- Helping to develop community leaders





Question & Answer

Thanks for joining us!



Please take a brief survey to provide us feedback.

You will receive a follow up email next week with recording and slides.

Find us on social:



@npvote



/nonprofitvote