

THE ORGANIZATION

Election Protection is a dynamic coalition of non-partisan organizations led by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the NAACP and the People For the American Way Foundation. The goal of Election Protection is to provide a comprehensive, national voter protection program to ensure that all eligible Americans have an equal opportunity to cast a meaningful ballot. 1-866-OUR-VOTE is the only national voter protection line that provides live agents and state and local specific information to callers.



THE CHALLENGE

In 2001, Election Protection introduced a new hotline, 1-866-OUR-VOTE, as a resource for voters who had questions or problems with voting on Election Day. Calls come into a call center and are routed to volunteers and attorneys all over the country. Between 2001 and 2003, the hotline received anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 calls on Election Day. In 2004, however, call volume spiked exponentially, resulting in 200,000 calls, with over 100,000 on Election Day alone.

At the time, Election Protection relied on a remedial infrastructure to handle call routing and found itself quickly overwhelmed. The organization did the best it could with existing resources, but vowed to improve the process for the 2006 election.

To do so, Election Protection put out an RFP for a new provider to better manage the infrastructure and performance of the hotline. Of utmost importance was flexibility, specifically the ability to route calls to available volunteers regardless of location.

In the previous election cycle, though Election Protection had planned for various scenarios, the call center application used was very static and did not allow them to adapt to changes in call volume and call flow. As a result, agents handling calls from certain parts of the country were overwhelmed, while agents handling other areas were under-utilized. There was no way to dynamically shift call flows to meet these demands. According to Barbara Arnwine, Executive Director of Election Protection, "Before, we had to make decisions about call routing weeks in advance and had no flexibility on the back-end."

AT A GLANCE



Headquarters

Washington, DC

Industry

Non-Profit

The Challenge

- Replace previously-used call center solution
- Dynamically route calls to multiple locations
- Provide ability to make changes on the fly
- Accommodate huge call spikes
- Report on all call statistics in real time

The Solution

Angel.com Virtual Call Center

The Results

- Complete, real-time control over call center operations
- Scaled to meet demands of more than 20,000 calls in one day
- Provided up-to-the-minute reporting on call data such as requests for Spanish translation
- Dynamically routed calls based on area code

THE SOLUTION

While the RFP process brought in many bidders, only one company – Angel.com – showed Election Protection that it understood the challenge and could deliver beyond expectations.

Angel.com's Virtual Call Center allowed the organization to create a call center in very little time that would rapidly respond to voter needs and route calls to available volunteers who were located all over the country. The system also allowed the organization to analyze data, such as caller location and percentage of requests for Spanish translation – an added feature that Election Protection was happy to have.

Flexibility was the No. 1 goal for Election Protection.

Angel.com was chosen because of the extreme flexibility of the platform. As a hosted solution, the entire application can be changed at a moments notice. On Election Day 2006, Angel.com was on-hand to help Election Protection and their allies monitor call volume and call flow in real time, and Election Protection could dynamically change the flow simply by logging into a web browser, making a few clicks and hitting 'save.'

"What we saw with Angel.com was the opportunity to really be forward thinking in how we administered the hotline and how we collect data through the hotline," said Jonah Goldman of the Lawyers' Committee. "With Angel.com we were able to do things like route different calls based on the actual phone numbers to different call centers. We had a lot of flexibility. The difference between [2006] from 2004 is we were allowed to make these changes on the fly, keeping the lines open longer."

“With Angel.com we had a lot of flexibility. We could make changes on the fly. There was not another vendor that could offer a similar suite of products.”

Jonah Goldman,
Lawyers' Committee

THE RESULTS

On Election Day 2006, 1-866-OUR-VOTE received roughly 20,000 calls, and 25,000 for the election cycle. Angel.com's Virtual Call Center allowed Election Protection to route calls to available volunteers seamlessly and intends to use the system in the future, including for the Presidential election cycle of 2008. Angel.com earned the organization's confidence and trust not just through its superior technology, but by showing genuine interest and creativity regarding the project.

"Angel.com was genuinely interested in the project and backed up its technology with real creative thinking," Goldman said. "There was not another vendor that could offer a similar suite of products. We look forward working with Angel.com again in 2008."