Importance of Data & Good Data Practices
HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA

a case study

Jaron Benjamin former VOCAL-NY Organizer
FIGHT AIDS!
NO MORE DRUG WAR!
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Currency: Native
Scaling Factor: Millions
Note: Scaling does not apply to Price/Rev, low, trend
Source: Thomson Financial
VOCAL's organizational culture became data oriented.
3 Key Things:

Key to harnessing power of data is ALL THREE of these things:

• Data
  – what's the information you want to collect and track and why

• Place to Keep Your Data -- the "container"
  – lists on paper, spreadsheet program, database

• Use
  – An internal culture of training, discussions, and using the database
  – More important than the tool
  – It’s gotta work for you!
Data You Should *Routinely* Collect (Suggested List)

- first/last name
- email
- home address
- primary phone number
- phone number(s)
  - Landline
  - Work
  - Cell
- preferred contact method
- do you text?
- do you change cell # frequently?
- preferred language
- issue interests
- demographic data
  - i.e. gender, neighborhood, race/ethnicity, country/origin
- Social media usage
  - Twitter (yes/no), Facebook (yes/no)
- way to categorize contacts
  - i.e. donor, member, prospect, volunteer
- history of involvement with your organization (donations, events, etc.)
- how they entered org
- org affiliation
Lessons Learned

1. Be thoughtful about information you want to collect. What and why?

2. Need cross-organizational, ongoing discussions about this. This is how your use and understanding (and work!) evolves.

3. Staff needs ongoing training on data *collection*, data *entry*, and data *use*.

4. Staff needs to *use* the database.

5. Someone who has *ownership* over your database.
An Integrated Approach to Fundraising is Driven By...

Having a clear sense of best data practices!