



## Case Study

### The Challenge

A group of patients and advocacy organizations wanted to begin a public affairs campaign to influence legislation to make prescription drugs more affordable.

### Our Solution

We implemented a hybrid campaign featuring an online advocacy platform and traditional public relations efforts, sharing patient stories and news updates with an active online community, media outlets and decision-makers.

### Results

The online community grew from zero to more than 10,000 active participants, with hundreds of patients and families sharing stories, and thousands engaging with lawmakers and leaders.

## Digital Advocacy

In late 2015, WordWrite began working with patients and patient advocacy organizations in Pennsylvania on a public affairs effort to highlight the need for legislation to cap the rising out-of-pocket costs state residents pay for their prescription medications.

The project took shape using a digital advocacy strategy, with an online coalition and platform at its heart. Using organic and paid social media, fresh content, patient stories and regular email communication, we helped the advocacy organizations build a vocal online community to connect with state and national lawmakers.

## Diagnosing the Problem

We began the engagement by learning as much as possible about the issues and types of legislation the organizations were trying to influence — in particular, cost-sharing practices by insurers and pharmacy benefit managers' role in the prescription drug chain.

We also identified our target audiences:

- Patients who need affordable maintenance medications and their families.
- Lawmakers and influential parties who operate in the legislative sphere.

Following this research, we came up with three primary goals:

1. Create and grow a vibrant online community of patients, their families and advocates.
2. Regularly engage this online community with fresh content, including industry news and information specific to Pennsylvania.
3. Mobilize the online community to act when legislation that can improve out-of-pocket costs and coverage comes before the Pennsylvania legislature, and mobilize the community to lobby against legislation that would be detrimental to their interests.



## The Right Treatment

The organization's website served as a hub for information regarding ongoing legislative initiatives connected to the cause. We also established Facebook and Twitter accounts to serve digital ads and real-time updates to users about current activity and movement on bills. In addition, our public relations team assisted in placing op-eds and other related media stories to highlight a need for action. All content that was placed in the media was re-shared on social platforms to amplify the message even further. Social media ads were used in two ways: first, to grow a distribution list for future alerts, and second, to extend the reach of news updates.

When a legislative action alert was needed (ex: we needed to encourage lawmakers to move a specific bill forward), our team would email our distribution list to encourage direct outreach to legislators. To aid this process, we used a platform called VoterVoice that aggregates legislator information and distributes messages based on voter district.

In between action alerts, our team distributed regular e-blasts to keep our users engaged and up to date.

## Outcomes

- Since the organization's website went live in early 2016, the online community has consistently grown from zero to more than 10,000 active participants.
- Hundreds of patients and families have offered their personal stories to be shared with legislators and news outlets via op-eds. We also maintained the website with additional fresh content, often promoted through social media and email blasts, that enhance engagement.
- To date, thousands of state residents have engaged with legislators during periods of legislative action – through petition signatures, email outreach and sharing their stories.

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