

Libertarian National Committee IT Committee Report

November 13, 2015

The task of the IT-Committee has been to review the current information technology platform of the Libertarian Party and made recommendations for updates/upgrades to make it a better vehicle for members, non-members and staff to further the LP's goals.

The LNC discussed IT concerns at its meeting last December and, together with input from staff and the Affiliate Support Committee, decided to focus our efforts on developing a new web site for the party with the larger issue of the database as secondary.

During several meetings in early 2015 we began the process of developing a Request for Proposals to be submitted to web site developers this fall with the goal of implementing a new web site for the national party early in 2016. The resulting RFP is attached and is ready for distribution depending on the decision of the LNC. The cost of a new website design would be based on the bids received and services offered.

However, from a variety of sources, the NationBuilder platform came to our attention mid-summer of 2015 and has changed our focus to looking at a possible solution to both the web site and database problems.

NB could provide us a new web site that is easily customized to our needs and that would be integrated with a new database system, internal and external communications and also social media. Many of our current IT providers that have no coordination would be replaced with one system that would be much easier for staff to use and would provide a better user experience for both members and non-members.

The committee has had several meetings and on-line discussions with NB culminating with a proposal that would have cost the LP \$12,500 per month to integrate all 50 state parties into the system. The considerable financial and implementation burden of that initial proposal caused us to request an alternate proposal for NB's Enterprise system, which seems much more reasonable to the committee.

At the Enterprise level, the LP will get a new, customizable web site fully integrated social media and NB's database system. However, the new database would not be accessible to state parties nor would it be integrated automatically with state party databases, though the system does support import and export of data to provide new contact data to affiliates. The quote in the proposal reflects the larger database we need over the default implementation.

Many of our current IT expenses would be replaced with perhaps even a slight monthly savings after the startup costs are absorbed. Specifically the \$13,200 we pay annually to BlackBaud for RaisersEdge would be replaced by the \$4999 data import to NB and up to \$8000 in training for staff and other implementers. But starting in 2017, that is a \$13,200 savings every year. The other potential one-time cost would be paying for a new template design or customization of an existing template.

The IT-Committee's recommendation is that the LNC proceed with the NationBuilder plan at the Enterprise Level.

There are currently up to 12 affiliates using or rolling out NationBuilder, so if at some future date the LNC decides to upgrade to the Network level, those databases can be integrated “at the touch of a button” according to our technical contact at NB (who is supporting all the libertarian nations). We have already started conversations about cost sharing and FEC issues around that arrangement.

The committee is also assessing our current hardware and networking costs associated with the website and other communications to find cost savings either through negotiation or finding better service providers.

Respectfully submitted,

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