

Capwiz·XC Case Study: Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association

www.isvma.org

Mobilize enthusiastic supporters and encourage member participation in important legislative advocacy efforts.

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– Peter Weber, Executive Director of ISVMA

Challenge

The Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association (ISVMA) predicts, monitors, and confronts issues that affect the professional practice and licenses of Illinois veterinarians. More than 1,800 member veterinarians depend upon the representation and services provided by the ISVMA. Their participation ensures the continued strength of the veterinary profession in Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Revenue was "dragging its feet" in issuing a policy letter that would formalize a law eliminating the requirement for veterinary practices to hold retailer certificates if they were transferring tangible personal property incident to service.

ISVMA needed a way to engage its members in the legislative process and to influence legislators to support local veterinarians.

Solution

In 2006, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) turned to Capwiz·XC's Affiliate service to coordinate their state associations' advocacy efforts.

ISVMA got started with Capwiz·XC right away by creating two Action Alerts on their web site urging their members to e-mail their state legislators, encouraging them to stand with ISVMA and help resolve the retailer certificate issue. **Within 24 hours, almost 200 Illinois veterinarians had sent emails to their legislators.**

According to Peter Weber, Executive Director of ISVMA, **"We had legislators sign on as co-sponsors of our bill just because they were contacted by their veterinarian!** The feedback I got from ISVMA members was overwhelmingly positive. I was told that it was, '...easy to use' and '...a good idea.' Most importantly, I'm now building a list of ISVMA Activists that will be useful as we tackle bigger 'gorillas' at the Capitol!" Weber found that members felt satisfied because they were part of something that yielded practical results.

"The great part about Capwiz·XC is that we're not telling our members what to do or taking action for them. They are learning how to use online advocacy for themselves."

- Peter Weber, Executive Director of ISVMA

"It brought a sense of ownership to our members," Weber says. "Ownership in the sense that they could feel engaged and directly involved with an issue, and this helps build long-term member commitments as well. So for us, using Capwiz·XC was not just about accomplishing a legislative goal, but getting members to see the value of investing time and thought to our organization."

Weber believes there is a conscious choice involved in being an active association member. By providing their members with Capwiz·XC, ISVMA mobilized an enthusiastic member base. Weber believes that using Capwiz·XC can have far-reaching effects. **He says, "Members that have a positive experience using Capwiz·XC to make a difference may be more inclined to register for one of our Association meetings in the future.** Or they may use the Bills and Votes feature to research legislation that ISVMA is monitoring."

Whether it's looking up issues in the Bill Summary section, responding to an Action Alert, or researching legislators, **Capwiz·XC is essential for ISVMA to successfully mobilize their supporters.**

About Capwiz·XC

Capwiz·XC, Capitol Advantage's award-winning online advocacy solution, helps your organization achieve legislative success by influencing state and federal policymakers, managing online fundraising, getting out the vote, and much more! With roughly 18 million constituent messages delivered to elected officials in 2007, no one is working harder or smarter to help your constituents influence the outcome.

Capitol Advantage is the leading provider of innovative products and services designed to support government relations programs for over 1500 associations, corporations, media and educational institutions. Capitol Advantage offers a variety of hosted online solutions, including Capwiz·XC and PACbuilder, a PAC management tool. Our company also powers Congress.org, a free public-service web site engaging citizens in democracy.

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