WHAT IF IT ISN'T SAFE

A toxic chemical leak, a contaminated water supply, and a long wait for answers in West Virginia.

BY MARIN COGAN
Opening Discussion

A Role in Transition
Not On Angie’s List
The Rise and Fall of the Smithing Profession

Global Market Demand for Blacksmithing
1500 BC - 1930 AD

- 1500 BC: Birth of blacksmithing in Syria
- 1500 AD: Major advances in forge welding
- 1793: Whitney patents cotton gin
- 1838: Deere invents steel plow
- 1850: Widespread adoption of American system of manufacturing
- 1855: Bessemer patents steel production from pig iron
- 1882: Benjamin invents carbon arc welding
- 1910: Ford mass produces affordable farm tractor
- 1930: Great Depression

False Sense of Adaptation | Golden Age of Architectural Ironworks
A Dysfunction with Many Contributing Factors

Halting Congressional Production

Public Laws Passed
1947-2013

Annual Average:
609 laws

2012:
238 laws*

*Lowest rate of legislation passed vs. introduced since tracking began after World War II
A Sisyphean State of Affairs

Drivers | Outlook | Rationale
---|---|---
Redistricting and Lack of Compromise | • Court challenges to 2012 redistricting few and far between • Next redistricting in 2022 • Shifts from demographics likely to be marginal, occurring over long term • Same-party challenges to incumbency continue to limit potential for compromise
Declining Productivity | • Number of days in session likely to drop going into 2014 midterms • Should Republicans take the Senate in 2014, could see improvement on days in session at the margins (as occurred with re-invested Dem party after retaking of the House in 2006) • No reason to believe that amount of time spent fundraising (versus legislating, confering with colleagues on issues) will change
Declining Experience, Sophistication | • Current outlook: Not likely to see incumbent losses in 2014 and 2016 as witnessed in “wave” elections of 2008 and 2010 • That said, further drops in tenure likely as senior members retire in coming years • Education requirements and generational differences (lack of legislative experience, new legislative approaches) among new legislators persist
A Commuter Congress | • Residency-related challenges not going away...and could get worse • Public disgust with Congress likely encouraging members to spend more time back home, cultivate image as “one of us, not one of them” • Not likely to see a resurgence in joint travel—reduced as effect of partisanship and diminished collegiality—in the near term
Lobbying Crackdown | • Recent revolving-door exceptions and foreign government loopholes notwithstanding, status quo holds • Next president likely to have considerably more “establishment” backing, cause to restrict lobbying will diminish, but relaxing of current policies not a given • Fresh scandal(s) could again increase scrutiny
Media Decentralization | • Communications technologies and media channels—local and national—proliferating rapidly; result is more voices and new voices in the discussion, adding to sward of “clutter” • Transparency among new and emerging media could have chilling effect on degree to which members of Congress visibly and predictably engage with audiences
Concentration of Power | • Recent efforts to push power to committees unsuccessful • Reality: Powerful committees unlikely to emerge when party holds relatively narrow majority; leadership assumes reigns for consistency in messaging • Clarity divided public portends narrow majority for some time to come • Reduced incentive for legislator collaboration in the no-emphasis era
A Bear of a Market

A Consultant’s View of Washington Advocacy, circa 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High</th>
<th>Scenario: “A Rising Tide...”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High performance can be achieved passively—demand alone buoy organizational value proposition</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Scenario: “Race to the Top”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low performance shared, but limited (if any) external demands for improvement</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Efforts to improve performance often inciting winner-take-all battles—fraught with expense, exhaustion, and often negative public relations outcomes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High</th>
<th>Scenario: “Friendly Competition”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All players capable of performing well—competition tempered by vast opportunity</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Scenario: “Surviving a Bear Pit”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worst of all scenarios—high investment, limited (or slow) returns</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Standout performance is rare, and competition—once started—is difficult to stop</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Aggressive maneuvering required just to preserve status, position for future</td>
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Market Opportunity

Low

High
Begging the Question...

**Which Way from Here?**

1. Do we scale back? Pack it in (for now)?

2. Can we overwhelm the challenge with effort? Do what we do today...just more of it?

3. Can we overwhelm the challenge with improvement? Do what we do today...but better?

4. Do we ply our skills in new or adjacent advocacy “markets”?

5. Do we re-engineer our operations? Adopt a unique tactical agenda to advance our priorities?
Not by Lobbying Spend Alone

Flat-Lining Yield on Corporate Spend

- All Policy Influentials
- All Hill Staff

Direct Contributions

Lobbying Spend

Associations Investing Past Point of Return

Perceived Lobbying Effectiveness
- All Policy Influentials

Lobbying’s Contributions to Perceived Overall Effectiveness
- Lobbying Spend
Experiments Afoot across Washington

Sample Activities Seen in the Research

- Corporate GA function enlists employees as surrogate lobbyists to drive issues surrounding exposure on priority legislative issues.
- Industry association pursues strategy of unaffiliated stakeholder mobilization—coalition building with companies traditionally connected to other associations—to secure, diversify, sustain distinct dialogue with legislators.
- Corporation adopts customer-centric lobbying policy, exclusively lobbying on behalf of primary customer base to tighten and authenticate narrative.
- Corporation builds platform for proactively engaging “hottest camps,” including collaboration on projects of joint interest, to neutralize opposition and build a base of unlikely supporters.
- Corporation builds app to minimize “clicks” supporters must perform to share comment with federal bodies, maximizing ease of activism and personalized messaging.
- Professional association creates highly centralized organization structure to drive accountability for responsiveness and advocacy quality deeper into grassroots network.
- Professional society creates mobile advocacy app for members, supplying real-time policy updates and encouraging regular, substantive congressional outreach by members on the go.
- Corporation adopts partner-centric lobbying policy, restricting legislative priorities to battles that promise broad and active support.
- Corporation conducts joint education exercises with other organizations to create collaboration frameworks, broadens options for rapid formation of new partnerships in the future.
- Interest group creates ideal advocate profile, using Big Data, to find and engage individuals who are not currently in the network but likely to support the organization’s policy agenda.
- Interest group conducts “roaming” staff model, collapsing state and federal lobbying roles to optimize talent deployment.
- Association begins franchising unique research assets to peer organizations, creating a value exchange and illuminating exposure in advocacy community and on the Hill.
Advocates at the Center

Recurring Theme

Leveraging the Influence of Others

- Grassroots community members
- Community leaders
- Friends and families
- Customers
- Employees
- Partner organizations
- “Hostile camps”
## Transforming the Government Affairs Model

### Repositioning for the Future

#### Model #1: GA Optimized for Direct Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Affairs Function</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Focus:</strong> Building own influence</td>
<td><strong>Primary Focus:</strong> Leveraging the influence of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influence Model:</strong> Direct; executives are doers</td>
<td><strong>Influence Model:</strong> Indirect; executives are facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agenda Autonomy, Control:</strong> High</td>
<td><strong>Agenda Autonomy, Control:</strong> Low; interdependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purview:</strong> All legislative-related activity (including low-value activity)</td>
<td><strong>Purview:</strong> Limited to “highly billable” activity; mostly directorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inputs on Process and Tactics:</strong> Internal, top-down management</td>
<td><strong>Inputs on Process and Tactics:</strong> External and internal, bottom-up as well as top-down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accountability:</strong> Limited to senior staff, “controllers”</td>
<td><strong>Accountability:</strong> Highly distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grassroots Relationships:</strong> Transactional, campaign-based</td>
<td><strong>Grassroots Relationships:</strong> Familial, continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workflow:</strong> Cyclical; extreme up and down periods</td>
<td><strong>Workflow:</strong> Mostly steady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility:</strong> Occasional, targeted</td>
<td><strong>Flexibility:</strong> Constant, broad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale:</strong> Low</td>
<td><strong>Scale:</strong> High</td>
</tr>
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#### Model #2: GA Optimized for Distributed Influence
The Importance of Management

The Winchester Mystery House

- 160 rooms
- 6 kitchens
- Gas lights
- 47 fireplaces
- 10,000 windows
- Intercoms

Winchester House Workforce, 1884

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Builders</th>
<th>Architects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
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</table>

- 65 doors to blank walls
- 13 staircases abandoned
- 24 skylights in floors

$5.5 million total cost over 38 years
Greater than the Sum of its Parts

*Working Together to Drive Change*

### Traditional Advocate
- Credible and authentic (firsthand) knowledge of local issues
- Many constituent connections
- Significant ability to impact fundraising and public opinion
- Technical expertise
- Not (usually) politically connected
- Unfamiliar with policy issues

### Hybrid Role
- Credible and authentic (firsthand) knowledge of local issues
- Many constituent connections
- Significant ability to impact fundraising and public opinion
- Technical expertise
- Growing number of political connections
- Working knowledge of lawmaking process

### Traditional Lobbyist
- Viewed as “contract” help
- Not tied to constituent community
- Close to money, but not in district
- Lacks technical expertise
- Many political connections
- Expert in policy process
Supporting High Value Interactions

Congressional Relationship Continue in the District

Outside Washington

Legislator’s District Office

Advocate

Inside Washington

Legislator’s Hill Office

Association Staff