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## Foreword

The power of organizing starts with people. What we learned on President Obama's campaign in 2008 and what was confirmed in 2012 was the importance of relationships. The best messengers were people you knew. It was friends talking to friends, neighbors talking to neighbors, students talking to students. It was about meeting people where they are and increasingly that was online.

Since the 2012 campaign, I have had the privilege of having conversations with political leaders and organizations all over the world. I believe that the best practices we learned from years of leading the Obama organization can be applied universally. At the core of our campaign were the people. It was the volunteers who showed up after work to spend hours on the phones. It was the mothers who brought their children along to knock on doors in their neighborhoods. It was the young people who shared information with their friends on Facebook. What we know now is that campaigns are constantly evolving, and successful campaigns will be the ones that are innovative and stay ahead of the curve.

Facebook was relatively new when we started organizing in 2007 and we did not fully know the impact of Twitter heading into 2012. But we knew the person-to-person contact that was so important in 2008 would be taking place not just on the ground, but also online. That's why the campaign made an early investment in digital-specific strategy. It paid huge dividends when we raised more than \$690 million online, connected with millions of people over email, and ultimately engaged 150 million Americans throughout the course of the campaign.

The effective use of online resources helped the Obama campaign widen its footprint significantly in 2012. These same tactics can be applied to campaigns across the globe to help broaden their reach. Gianluca Giansante's book sheds light on this growing field and adds a critical piece to the conversation about modern campaigns. Online political organizing is in its infancy but will only continue to get stronger as more people get plugged in and as organizations become more digitally sophisticated. Smart campaigns, whether in America, Italy, or anywhere else, will take advantage of this technology to better facilitate relationship building. It all comes back to friends talking to friends, and that's happening more frequently now through digital channels.

It's exciting to think about the new technologies that will emerge in the coming years to help campaigns stay connected. But there's one constant that will remain,

regardless of the latest technology or social organizing tool—and that’s the people. No matter what the latest platform is, the emphasis must remain on the people. It will be incumbent upon campaign and party leaders not to lose sight of that.

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