

# **VAN Best Practices and Tips**

**MDP Data Team**

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# **Part 1**

## **Overview of VAN For Candidates**

# What is VAN?

The Voter Activation Network is a **set of tools** for interacting with the **voter data** to contact voters

You can think of VAN in two types of buckets...

## Toolbox:

- Door-To-Door Canvassing
- Phone Calls
- Digital Campaigns
- Texting
- Direct Mail

## Data:

- Michigan Voter File
- Supplemental Analytics
- Commercial Datasets
- User Input



# What is VAN?

- With VAN, you'll benefit from over a decade of field work in Michigan:
  - The voter file improves constantly as users remove voters who have moved and clean up phone numbers.
  - Michigan field responses are used to train models and improve voter contact targets
  - Enter your data!!!



8063474	Aboytas-Colin, Eduardo 524 N 5th St Niles, MI 49120 59 M LD	(269) 683-7278	DNH DMV DLN Likelhd DRF DCB DWN DAV Email DDC DBZ DWX Party ID	D P M U N U 1 2 3 4 5	Volunteer Y N M L
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH					
7960053	Acevedo-Medina, Angel 129 Huron St Niles, MI 49120 34 M Per	(269) 363-0849	DNH DMV DLN Likelhd DRF DCB DWN DAV Email DDC DBZ DWX Party ID	D P M U N U 1 2 3 4 5	Volunteer Y N M L
NILES FIRE STATION					
7697109	Acosta, Alma 3025 Highland Ave Benton Harbor, MI 49022 61 F SO	(269) 369-4712	DNH DMV DLN Likelhd DRF DCB DWN DAV Email DDC DBZ DWX Party ID	D P M U N U 1 2 3 4 5	Volunteer Y N M L
TWP HALL					
21300854	Adame, Sandra 428 Millburg Dr Benton Harbor, MI 49022 38 F LD	(269) 760-5873	DNH DMV DLN Likelhd DRF DCB DWN DAV Email DDC DBZ DWX Party ID	D P M U N U 1 2 3 4 5	Volunteer Y N M L
BAINBRIDGE TWP HALL					
18294981	Aguiar-Garcia, Martin 714 Howard St Niles, MI 49120 58 M LD				eer Y N M L
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH					
17902890	Aguiar-Pedroza, Abner 8564 W Campus Circle Dr Berrien Springs, MI 49103 46 M LD				eer Y N M L
YOUTH MEMORIAL BLDG					

**Gayle Forbing**

(989) 269-9814 • Not Connected

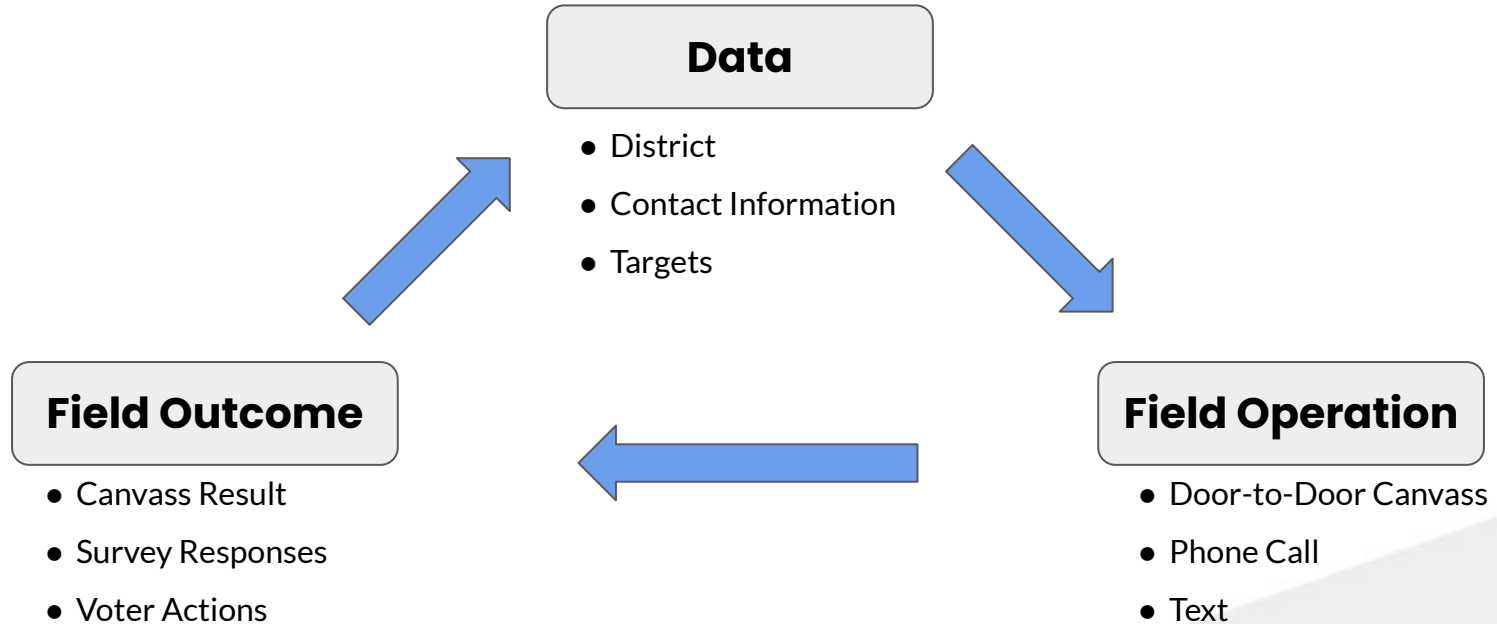
63-year-old F

I Couldn't Reach Gayle

- ☐ Not Home
- ☐ Refused
- ☐ Deceased
- ☐ Moved
- ☐ Left Message
- ☐ Wrong Number
- ☐ Disconnected
- ☐ Other Language
- ☐ Hostile

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# Integrated Data and Field Ecosystem



## VAN Data for Targeting:

### Geographic Info

- District
- Address
- Address type

### Demographic Info

- Age
- Sex (Voter File)
- Modelled Ethnicity

### Voting History

- Specific Elections Voted
- Vote Method
- Number of elections voted
- Etc.

### User Input Info

- Survey Responses
- Activist Codes
- Canvass Results
- Phone Numbers

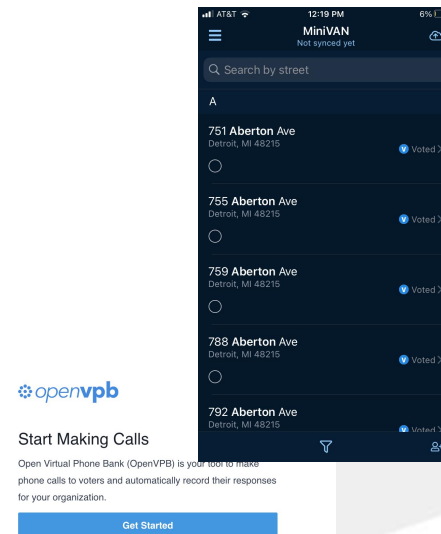
### Analytics Info

- Targets
- Democratic Support
- Volunteer Propensity
- Demographic Modeling



# Voter contact and digital outreach

- Built-in tools for phone banking and door-to-door canvassing
- Integration with external tools
- Create targeted mailing lists formatted for mail merge and mailing vendors
- Work with digital vendors to reach voters with online advertising.



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# VAN for Candidates

- New (and renewed) candidate VAN committees include:
  - A set of survey questions to track candidate support, volunteers, and yard sign requests
  - Access to cross-committee survey questions and constituency activist codes used by local Parties and Clubs
  - A basic starter script



# VAN for Candidates

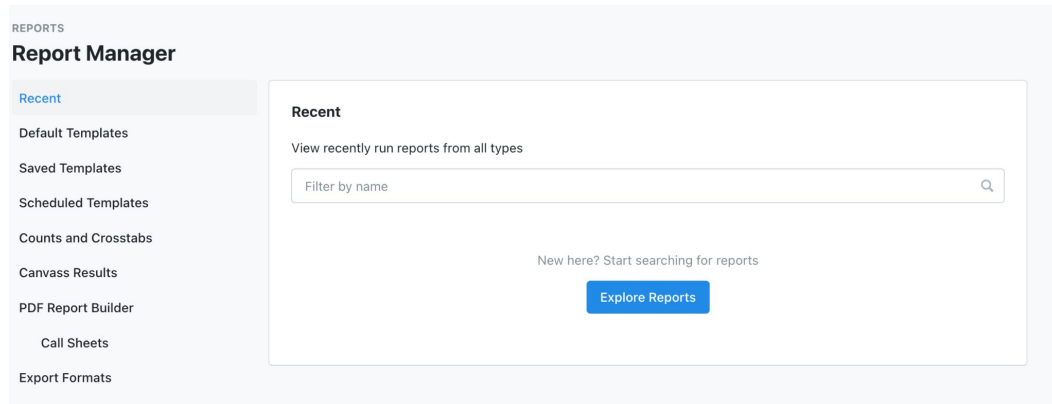
- Access to targets and modeled scores
- **Statewide AV data uploaded daily starting 45 days before each election**
- Store and track information across multiple cycles



# Data and analysis

If you wish to take a closer look at the data in your VAN committee, the following tools are available:

- Data analysis tools
  - Reports
  - Detailed Canvass results
  - Counts and Crosstabs



# Collaborate!

- VAN makes it easy to collaborate with other candidates with VAN access
  - Slate Committees
- Share survey questions and activist codes with other VAN committees
  - This allows you to share responses you've collected that could be helpful to an allied campaign
  - Allows those groups to add your survey questions to voter contact scripts so they can also collect IDs for your campaign



# Requesting VAN Access – Candidates

- Fill out the form at [midems.co/van](https://midems.co/van)
- Three requirements for access:
  - Must be a Democrat
  - Active MDP Membership
  - VAN fee - scaled by # of registered voters in district

A screenshot of a web form titled "Michigan VAN Access for Candidates". The form is set against a light blue background. At the top is a dark blue header with the "MI DEMS" logo. The main content area is white with a blue border. It contains introductory text about the VAN resource, a statement of purpose, and instructions for candidates. Below this is a red asterisk indicating a required field, followed by a text input box labeled "Email address \*". The input box contains the placeholder text "Your email". At the bottom of the form is a small blue button labeled "Next".

**MI DEMS**

### Michigan VAN Access for Candidates

VAN is a powerful resource for running successful field campaigns here in Michigan, from City Commission to U.S. President. Tools for analysis, targeting, and voter outreach are at your finger-tips with a powerful voter database designed for progressive campaigns.

We strive to make VAN available and accessible to all Democratic campaigns in Michigan, no matter what office you are running for. The following questions will help us get you set up with VAN quickly so you can start campaigning.

This form is only for candidate VAN access. If you are not a candidate, but are requesting access to a County Party, Club, or Caucus VAN committee, please reach out to [van@michigandems.com](mailto:van@michigandems.com)

\* Required

Email address \*

Your email

Next

# Requesting VAN Access

- Candidates who are elected can retain access to their VAN committee for constituency work during their term until their next election year
- VAN access can be renewed by candidates running for re-election. Any work done in VAN can be accessed and used across multiple cycles



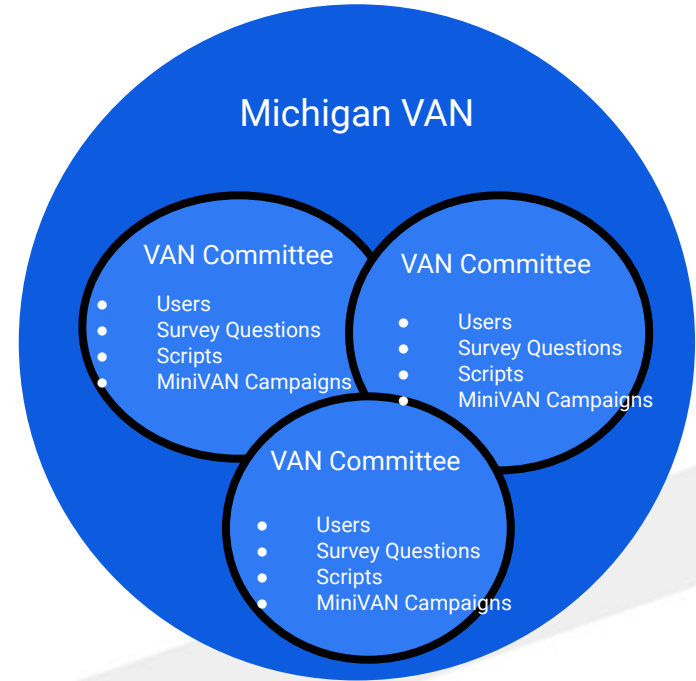
# **Part 2**

## **VAN Policies and Best Practices**

# Committees

VAN is organized into sections called Committees

- Elements like Users, Survey Questions, Scripts, and Turfs are organized by Committee.
- Every candidate has their own committee. This committee follows the candidate from cycle to cycle, even if they are running for a different seat
- Some information is shared with all committees
  - Core Voter File Data
  - Targets
  - Master Survey Questions
  - Cross-committee SQs
- Some information can be shared between committees
  - Survey Questions
  - Canvass Results
  - Scripts





# User Accounts

User accounts are how individuals gain access to VAN committees. While our team can create and edit user accounts on our end, your campaign will have the ability to manage and create your own users.

- One person - one user account - one committee
- **Do not create your ActionID with a shared email.** Use a personal or individual email address to set up your ActionID.
  - ActionID accounts are tied to a specific email and cannot be unlinked. Once that email is used to create an account, we are not able to switch over ownership of the account.
- When reaching out to be added to a VAN committee, please cc the candidate or campaign manager on the email to streamline the approval process. Their permission is required before our team can make additions or changes to user accounts.



# User Account Administration

- Committee admins have the following user profile: MI Field (2) Field Dir.
- Only one user account per committee can have this user profile.
- Once a user is no longer with your campaign, please immediately deactivate them or notify us at [van@michigandems.com](mailto:van@michigandems.com).

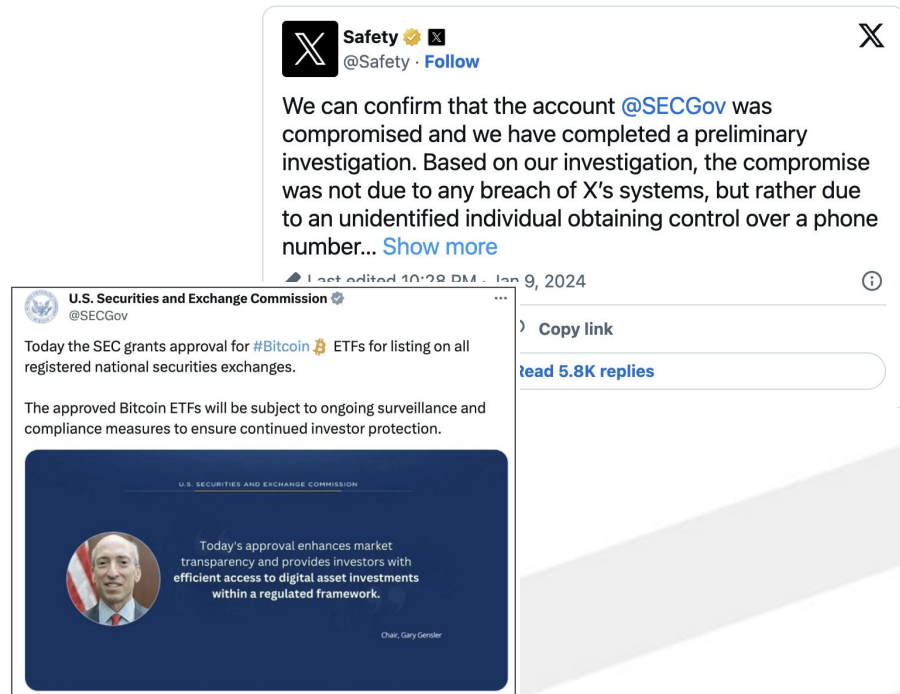
## Available user profiles:

User Profile Level	Description
MI Field (1) Comm Admin	VAN account for trained data staff. Has roughly the same permissions as field director but receives support requests from the rest of staff before they go to the state party. Also has a few more options for interacting with/uploading data from outside data sources.
MI Field (2) Field Dir.	VAN account for managing a field campaign. Can manage all staff, schedule reports, launch auto dialer/robo dialer campaigns, and request API integrations to outside vendors/services.
MI Field (3) Reg. Director	VAN account for higher level campaign/party staff. Can manage field organizers, take bulk actions in VAN, and administer more back-end data considerations like report formats, letters, and labels.
MI Field (4) Field Organizer	VAN account for campaign/party staff. Can create lists, manage canvasses and phone banks, administer volunteer accounts, write scripts, run basic reports, and export data for mailings.
MI Field (5) Super Vol	VAN account for super volunteers who are helping out on more back-end processes like cutting turf and data entry. Can cut turf from saved lists, enter data from paper lists, or use quick lookup to update voter contact information and deceased records. Cannot search on scores or prior field data.
MI Field (6) Phone/miniVAN Vol	VAN account that can dial into virtual phone bank campaigns or auto-dialers. Also applicable if you want to send miniVAN lists directly to canvassers instead of printing list numbers. <b>DOES NOT</b> have MyCampaign access.



# User Accounts – Two-Factor Authentication

- Two-factor authentication (2FA) is required to set up your ActionID account. We strongly recommend using an authenticator app such as Google Authenticator, Authy, or Okta Verify.
  - You may experience delays in the deliverability of your 2FA code if you use text messages as your authentication method.



# Survey Questions & Activist Codes

Survey questions are used to store data collected from the field in VAN. You can include them in the scripts you create to collect information from the field, and in Create a List to use that information to cut new lists of voters.

- New (and renewed) candidate VAN committees include:
  - A set of survey questions to track candidate support, volunteers, and yard sign requests
  - Access to cross-committee survey questions and constituency activist codes used by local Parties and Clubs
  - A basic starter script
- Our team creates all new survey questions and activist codes in-house. You can request new survey questions or activist codes by filling out the [Survey Question and Activist Code Request Form](#).



# MiniVAN

- Canvass Results available in MiniVAN are determined by the options selected in your script.
- Once you complete your canvass, you'll need to commit your MiniVAN data within 21 days.

**9 Jackson T Abbott**  
Not Attempted • 29M

[Script](#) [Details](#) [Notes](#) [History](#)

**I Couldn't Reach This Contact**  
Select a reason why this person could not be contacted

☐ Deceased

☐ Inaccessible  
Ex: Locked apartment building or gate

☐ Lit Dropped

☐ Moved

☐ Not Home

☐ Refused  
Refused to answer questions

[Cancel](#)

1401 Catalpa Dr Unit LOWR Apt LOWR  
1 of 1 [Next HH](#)

[Main Menu](#) / [MiniVAN Manager](#) / [MiniVAN Commit](#)

## MiniVAN Commit

[Help Wiki](#)

[Export To Excel](#)

[Commit](#)

Contacted By  Status  Date From  Date To  ☐ Show Individual Syncs

[Refresh Results](#)

<input type="checkbox"/> List Name	Sync Date	Syncs	Canvasser	Attempts	Doors	Canvassed	Contact Rate	NH	Moved	Refused	
<input type="checkbox"/> MiniVAN Test Turf 10	5/15/17	15	Ashley Wilson	15	11	12	80%	2	1	0	<a href="#">Delete</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> Lafayette! Turf 02	5/11/17	1	Jennifer Willis	1	1	1	100%	0	0	0	<a href="#">Delete</a>

# Export Policy and Vendors

We do not approve exports for texting, phone banking, door-to-door canvassing, or lit drops. These programs need to be set up with an API Key, Virtual Phone Bank, MiniVAN, or printed call/walk sheets.

If you need to export a file for a dialer, mail piece, or digital ad, please include the following information

- A brief description of your targets
  - E.g. “Likely Democrats who voted absentee in 2020” or “Women in Bagley Township who are likely Democrats”
- A detailed explanation of how you will be contacting the voters on your list
- If you are sending your export list to a vendor, include the name, website, and contact information for the vendor.



## Export Policy and Vendors Cont. 2

There are many vendors and technology companies working in the progressive data ecosystem, and while we're happy to work with them to get you what you need, we do have a couple rules if a vendor is going to be working with Michigan Data:

- They must have a way to get any field data back into VAN
  - We can work with non-texting vendors who might not have an integration, but you must have a clear plan to get data back into VAN.
- They must only work with Democratic or Progressive Causes
  - We cannot provide field or voter data to a firm that is working with Republicans or conservative campaigns as well. This is a security risk.



## Export Policy and Vendors Cont. 3

Once your export request is approved, you'll have a few formats available. Depending on your user profile, you'll have access to the following export formats:

- Standard Text
  - One record for every person in your list and limited to 10K records.
- Householded Mailing List
  - One record for every mailable household in your list and limited to 100k records
- Email Blob
  - List of email addresses, separated by semicolons or commas.





## VAN Do's and Don'ts

DO request VAN access before you need it	DON'T wait to request VAN until the day before your first big mailing
DO login with your own individual email address	DON'T use a shared or temporary email address for your login
DO create user accounts for your campaign staff and super-vols	DON'T forget to remove user access when someone leaves your campaign
DO make sure you understand our export policies	DON'T request full district exports
DO read VAN newsletter emails and/or join our Slack channel	DON'T wait to ask for help



# Support Channels

- Your Project 83 Organizer
- Have a question? [van@michigandems.com](mailto:van@michigandems.com)
- Schedule a 1-1 Training: [calendly.com/mivan](https://calendly.com/mivan)
- [MDP Slack](#)



# VAN Resources

## VAN How-To:

- VANual: [midems.co/vanual](https://midems.co/vanual)
- miniVANual: [midems.co/mini-vanual](https://midems.co/mini-vanual)

## Michigan Specifics:

- Michigan VAN FAQ: [midems.co/van-faq](https://midems.co/van-faq)
- [Available Help and Resources](#)
- [MI VAN Update Emails](#)

