

Democracy.com is the first platform connecting voters and candidates at every level.

ELECTED OFFICIALS & CANDIDATES  
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### Calling All Candidates. And Every Voter.

It's democracy's turn for an upgrade. We give every candidate in every election a free campaign website, and every voter the ability to make a difference through quick online actions.

Let's get started.

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Set up a Free Profile

**I'M A VOTER**  
Find Your Candidates

NEW YORK — An Internet presence is pretty much essential for any modern-day political campaign, whether it's as simple as posting updates to Twitter or a full-blown website with tools for collecting donations.

But at the local level, where races for City Council and other smaller races are fought and budgets are tight, it can be daunting for candidates to consider spending hundreds or even thousands of dollars on their digital brands. Many local candidates also don't have the necessary digital skills or manpower.

The challenge of taking advantage of digital technology has become significant enough that Google, Twitter and Facebook were holding a workshop yesterday afternoon to address questions from candidates .

A handful of companies have also begun to offer free and low-cost websites for budget-minded candidates to advertise their campaigns. Companies such as [NationBuilder](#) , [NGP VAN](#) and the recently launched

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say their goal is to nurture democracy in the digital age by connecting candidates and voters. Altogether they have thousands of candidates using their services.

“Our bigger mission is to get more people involved in politics, get more people in elections, get more people to run that wouldn't have run otherwise, making it really easy for them to run,” Democracy.com CEO Talmage Cooley said in a recent interview. “We think there is a real opportunity to both change the world, get more people involved and making civic engagement as important, if not more important than big money donors in elections.”

The importance of political campaign websites was spotlighted during the 2008 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, which Cooley and others say Barack Obama never would have won without a smart digital strategy. Obama’s opponent at the time, Hilary Clinton, “was playing an old school game, when [Obama] was playing a new school game and he ended up winning pretty easily,” Cooley said.

But while campaign websites on the national political stage are all but given, they can't be taken for granted at the local level.

While there are no solid numbers, it's unlikely that a majority of political candidates in the United States — most of them running in local races — have campaign websites. And there are a lot of candidates.

In New York state alone, the number of candidates for elected offices could fill a small book: There are 293 elected offices including state Senate, Assembly, City Council and the U.S. Congress. That is in addition to local judges, district leaders and larger or smaller city and statewide offices.

# Digital Tools For Democracy

by {ga=dssayles}

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The advertisement banner for NationBuilder features the company logo in the top left corner. In the top right, there is a green button that says "Start your 14-day free trial" and a link for "Customer support". The main headline reads "The tools of the powerful, for everyone." Below this, it says "Select an Edition:" and shows four distinct building illustrations representing different sectors: Nonprofit (a modern glass building), Government (a classical building with columns), Political (a stage with a speaker and a crowd), and Business (a storefront with a sign). Each building has a corresponding label below it. At the bottom of the banner, the text reads "Community building software for every type of leader".

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