

*Rebecca*  
THOMPSON

*the*  
**CAMPAIGN**  
**STARTER KIT**

*Definitive Resource Guide*

## Researching which position to run for:

In partnership with NationBuilder's "Run for Office" initiative, this free database allows you to search over 40,000 elected positions nationwide by inputting your address.

[www.rebeccamthompson.com/run](http://www.rebeccamthompson.com/run) (Free)

## Researching demographic data:

The US Census Bureau has information about your district that you'll absolute need (and want) via the [American Fact Finder](#) including race, age, income levels and other demographic info.

(Free)

## Organizing your files:

Both [Google Drive](#) and [Dropbox](#) are great free cloud based tools to help your team stay organized. With Google Drive you can also access Google Docs (similar to Microsoft Word), Sheets (similar to Excel), Forms and a number of other tools. (Free)

## Project management:

[Asana](#) is one of my favorite project management tools that allows you and your team to stay on top of your big projects. Got a fundraiser coming up? It allows you to create and designate every task associated with that event such as create the invitations, order the food, etc. and set deadlines for each. (Free)

## Designing a logo:

If you don't have access to a local graphic designer there are a number of low cost options including [99Designs](#), [Fiverr](#) (designs start at just \$5), and [Tailor Brands](#) to help get you started. Remember, you get what you pay for so if you want a high quality or custom logo you may have to pay more. (\$5-\$99+)

## Buying your domain name:

When buying your domain name I'd suggest getting your first name and last name. If your name is common like mine feel free to add a middle initial (i.e. [www.rebeccamthompson.com](http://www.rebeccamthompson.com)). It's also helpful to use your own name if you want to be able to continue to use the site after your election. Both [GoDaddy](#) and [BlueHost](#) are two inexpensive companies I've used in the past to purchase domain names. (\$4.99+)

## Website hosting:

Depending on the kind of site you create one you buy your domain name you'll need a hosting service. Again, both [GoDaddy](#) and [BlueHost](#) are two great options. (\$3.99+)

## **Graphic design:**

One of the tools I use every single day is [Canva](#). It's free to use and has templates for just about everything you'll ever need to create for your campaign. If you don't have the time (or someone on your team) to do design work another great resource is [Fiverr.com](#). For as low as \$5 a project you can outsource your design needs.

## **Creating your website:**

In the early days of launching your campaign if you just want a splash or landing page to collect email addresses you can use [Squarespace.com](#) (\$12-16 per month). I would strongly recommend that you use [NationBuilder](#) or [NGP VAN](#) for not just your website but for your overall database. Both will give you the option of creating your website and includes additional features such as the ability to send emails, schedule social media posts and more. (\$19+ a month)

## **Business cards:**

One of my absolute favorite sites for business cards is [Moo.com](#). If you want cards that stand out (or even want to create custom designs) these are a good choice. A few other options to check out include [Vistaprint](#) which is much cheaper and starts around \$7.99 for standard cards. If you're in an area where it's important to have a union bug (indicating it was printed at a union shop) you can search for union printers in your area [HERE](#).

## **Communicating with your team:**

Even if you have a small team that consists of you and your volunteers you'll still want to be able to communicate with them quickly and these days it's easy for things to get lost in email. That's why I love [Slack](#) for communicating across teams. You can set up channels related to specific projects and even send direct messages to people without cluttering their inboxes or Facebook messages. (Free)

## **Time management:**

With so much to do in a week it's hard to keep track of what's actually a priority. That's why I use [Weekplan](#) to help me keep track of my priorities each day. It allows you to create "buckets" of work and if you're like me and love creating lists just so you can check something off when it's done you'll enjoy this. Another great resource is [ToDoist](#). (Free)

## **Scheduling meetings:**

One of the biggest time sucks for a candidate (or their campaign manager) is the time spent emailing back and forth to schedule meetings. My favorite solution for this is [Calendly](#). Free and super simple to use you get a custom link to send people with times you're available. Once the meeting is scheduled you can even upgrade to send automatic reminders and to have lots of different meeting types. (Free)

## **Accepting online donations:**

The #1 tool that I suggest candidates use to raise money online is [ActBlue](#). Not only is it free and easy to use, (and integrates with Nationbuilder/NGP VAN) but it makes your campaign finance reporting soooo much easier by collecting all the information you need for your reports (you can't do this with Paypal). You can also create unique fundraiser links for host committee members and the reporting is amazing. (Free)

## **Accepting in person donations:**

There's nothing worse than going to a fundraiser and not being able to contribute via a credit card. In the event that you don't have access to wifi and folks can't contribute via your website having a [Square](#) device will be a lifesaver (you'll need cell service or wifi). It's free to order and once linked to your bank account all you have to do is insert the device into your cell phone and swipe. Be sure to always use donor forms when using Square since it doesn't collect donor information.



## **Social media:**

[Bitly](#) is an awesome tool for shortening those super long url's from articles or even events. (Free)

[Canva](#) is a great resource for creating social media images, invites, and just about everything you need for your campaign. (Free)

Don't have someone who can post to social media in real time for your campaign? [CoSchedule](#), [Sprout Social](#) and [Hootsuite](#) are sites that make it possible for you to schedule your social media posts in advance saving you lots of time. (\$29/month+)

## **Printing:**

Just about every campaign needs to print thank you cards, letterhead and envelopes, t-shirts, and yard signs. In some communities it's really important to use a union printer (this is especially important if you're getting endorsements from labor unions) and it's also a great way to support local businesses. [CWA Print Shops](#) is an online resource where you can search for union printers across the country.