

# Knowlegis Case Study

## Sister Cities International

*How to set up meetings for 800 activists and their Members of Congress with only 2 staff members in 1 day*

*"Thank you and the rest of the Knowlegis/Capwiz-XC staff for being available and so willing to work with us in orchestrating our first Sister Cities International Capitol Hill Advocacy Day and ensuring its success. We truly could not have done it without you and your team!"*

**- Swathi Veeravalli, Legislative and Special Projects Coordinator,  
Sister Cities International**

### Challenge

Sister Cities International set an ambitious goal of organizing their first advocacy day on Capitol Hill. The organization's 50th Anniversary Conference was scheduled for July 2006 in Washington, D.C., and they wanted to use the conference to aid their legislative agenda. The nonprofit group focused their energies in carrying out their core mission: "To promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation - one individual, one community at a time."

This year, the group sought Members of Congress to cosponsor the "Sister Cities International Exchange Initiative," a program that would dramatically increase and improve sister city programs worldwide. More than 800 committed supporters were descending on Washington in July for the 50th anniversary celebration, and the group decided they would connect every one of them with their Members of Congress in a massive advocacy day event. However, they had two problems in launching the event. First, Sister Cities International had never organized a fly-in event during their 50-year history. Secondly, they had only two employees to manage the meetings in addition to the other work related to the conference.

### Solution

Sister Cities International was already using the Capwiz-XC service, so when Swathi Veeravalli and Lindsay Wilson heard of Knowlegis, they thought it might be the solution to their problem. Using Knowlegis's Advocacy Event Manager tool, Swathi and Lindsay set up meetings for 800 conference participants. After they entered the data through the online entry forms, Knowlegis compiled all of the relevant information on every elected official. It allowed Sister Cities International to manage hundreds of meetings, organizing them by participant, office, or state.

On the night before the supporters arrived for the event, the two staff members at Sister Cities International printed out custom appointment forms for each of the participants identifying the who, what, where, and when of the meetings. The end result was a smashing success! The meetings went off without a hitch, and the participants were so pleased with the administration of the entire event that they've asked the national office to organize an advocacy day every year.

*"The appointment forms were a BIG hit with our members. We had made appointments for approximately 800 individuals to take our message to the Hill, and so these sheets were instrumental in providing critical information to them in regards to their meetings. The members who went to the Hill loved it and have requested that we hold our fly-ins annually."*

**- Swathi Veeravalli**

## Best Practices Lessons

This case study represents a best practices lesson for organizations that wish to organize and motivate supporters who are planning trips to Washington and state capitals.

- **Recognize the Opportunity:** Sister Cities International's 50th Anniversary Conference in Washington represented a rare opportunity to influence the policy process.
- **Maximize the Use of Information Technology:** The only way to tackle large administrative tasks is to identify IT tools to simplify the project. Sister Cities International found a tool that met their needs, received professional training on how to use it, and amplified their capabilities through the wise use of technology.
- **Execute VERY Simple Instructions to Coordinate Participants:** Analyzing hundreds of meetings with elected officials and staff is a daunting challenge. However, Sister Cities International kept their feedback system very simple by utilizing Knowlegis's Appointment Feedback Forms so that each participant could easily submit the details of his or her meetings online.

Our analysis of advocacy events shows that for a 100-person event, Knowlegis can compact **60 hours** of administrative work into **90 minutes**.

KNOWLEGIS | KNOW IT ALL

WWW.KNOWLEGIS.NET 703.289.9816

A CAPITOL COMPANY  
advantage

