

What is On-Demand Government and Public Affairs?



One word can be used to sum up what pundits are saying about expectations for 2024: uncertainty. Meanwhile, executives continue to navigate problems like intense shareholder and regulatory scrutiny, a volatile economy, continuing global crises, supply chain issues, and much more -- all of which threaten their efforts to maintain a profit or even just survive. Government and public affairs executives are also reporting to us that both the volume of government activity and the complexity issues have increased considerably over the past few years, no matter their industry or the size of their organization.

The Impact of Uncertainty and the Need for Flexibility in Government and Public Affairs

Savvy government and public affairs executives learned over the last three years that being able to pivot budgets and business strategies is essential to manage through periods of uncertainty -- some of which happen unexpectedly! -- and that not all situations are as flexible as desired. They are now trying to apply the lessons they have learned to the future. Some of the key questions we are hearing executives ask as they think about 2024 and the road ahead include:

- How do we justify/advocate for a budget that is always under organizational scrutiny given all of the uncertainties we face?
- How can we best ensure we are positioned to be as proactive as possible with our agenda instead of reactive, and are there ways to be better prepared for any unknowns we will encounter in the year ahead?
- How can we address job satisfaction, burnout, and ensure that the team possesses the right expertise for both the known agenda and all of the unknowns we face?

Unsurprisingly, many of the answers to these key questions will revolve around time and cost. With budgets strained or cut, compounded with government activity increasing in both volume and complexity, the how, when, and where of budget spend will be more important than ever. How will government and public affairs executives continue to provide quality advice and engagement within their respective organizations given there are only so many hours in the day, and without breaking the bank?

Traditionally, executives have been limited to two options when it comes to government and public affairs resourcing: staff up internally and/or retain external firms. Executives now have an exciting, new third option to consider in addressing public policy-related challenges: **on-demand resourcing**.

On-Demand Resourcing and Agility-Based Budgeting

When a credible on-demand resourcing option is available, executives can quickly access a bench of top policy experts and government and public affairs talent who have been carefully pre-screened by the service provider and engage them only when needed -- like flipping the on switch. Executives can match their specific need to a best-fit expert who can address it. This is especially attractive when compared to the alternative of hoping that someone in their existing resource pool can quickly step in to cover an issue they don't have experience with. On-demand

resourcing helps executives maximize output while minimizing business risk for a fraction of what they would otherwise pay a new hire or a retained firm. They can draw upon the well-earned insights of a credible expert to assist them whenever needed, while keeping both their in-house team and any retained consultants focused on their priorities. **This serves to minimize costly disruptions to daily workflow and save hundreds of hours currently spent finding and evaluating resourcing options for what may be short term needs.**

The budget planning season is a vital period for government and public affairs executives to look back at accomplishments and lessons learned over the previous year, especially in terms of what the team expected to face and the unexpected issues they had to pivot quickly to address. The uncertainty of 2024 will prove particularly challenging in terms of budget planning. Ready access to a high-quality on-demand resourcing option will help ensure an organization is better prepared to respond to unexpected issues or activities, whatever they may be. In the legal services realm, this is often referred to as Agility-Based Budgeting (ABB). Including ABB as part of the government and public affairs budget planning process sends a strong signal to management that executives are effectively taking action to prepare for and mitigate the unknown risks they will face in the year ahead.

How Executives Are Using On-Demand Expert Resourcing

- 30- and 60-minute virtual private consultations to assess policy & political topics
- Hiring of speakers and creation of panels or flexible advisory boards (virtual or in-person)
- Creating focus groups to assess policy idea blind spots and for problem-solving workshops
- Generating customized executive memos and research reports
- Creating policy assessments and tracking issues
- Developing communication frameworks to engage government stakeholders and respond to political issues
- Writing or reviewing talking points and speeches
- Mapping key government stakeholders for outreach
- Planning events and scheduling meetings

It's helpful for executives considering the on-demand option for their resourcing mix to remember that this isn't going to be a foreign idea to your management team. Organizations have been leveraging fractional resources for functions like sales, marketing, finance, and operations -- as well as sourcing project-focused talent through online marketplaces like Upwork -- for years. **Fortunately, the time for an on-demand resourcing option that delivers top quality talent, efficiency, and cost effectiveness has finally arrived for the government and public affairs services realm.**

Government and public affairs executives will continue to face the tug-of-war between protecting their organization against escalating uncertainties and the need to demonstrate fiscal responsibility, all while navigating major risks and market opportunities that come from increasing government activity. We've seen time and again that government and public affairs executives are resilient and creative in their approaches to achieving their goals and providing great benefit to their organizations, especially when they can maximize resourcing flexibility.

The most innovative government and public affairs executives and their teams will be better prepared to take action on their agendas -- as well as whatever unexpectedly comes their way this coming year -- by considering on-demand resourcing as a component of their resourcing strategy through an agile-based budget planning process. It's all about taking the steps now to better ensure that your organization can work smarter, adapt faster, and go further in terms of your government and public affairs programs in the year ahead.

If you'd like to learn more about how Poligage can help your government and public affairs team succeed with on-demand resourcing, visit www.Poligage.com or **reach out to us today.**