

THIS IS MASACOTTES SECRET WEAPON

UNDERSTANDING CATALIST

Here is a clear, factual breakdown of the individuals and organizations that founded and funded Catalist. This information is based on public financial disclosures, corporate records, and political reporting, which you can use to explain the origins of the database to your community.

GENERATE BY AI USING 100% PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION

The Founders

Catalist was officially launched around 2006. It was not built by tech executives in Silicon Valley, but by high-level Democratic political strategists operating out of Washington, D.C., who recognized that the Democratic Party was losing the data war.

- **Harold M. Ickes** (Founder & President Emeritus): Ickes is a veteran Democratic political strategist and a highly connected fundraiser. He famously served as the Deputy White House Chief of Staff during the Bill Clinton administration and advised Hillary Clinton during her Senate and presidential campaigns. He helped conceptualize Catalist following the 2004 election to ensure Democrats had a centralized, powerful voter database to compete with Republican operations.
- **Laura Quinn** (Founder & Former CEO): Quinn is a seasoned progressive strategist and media advisor. She served as the White House Deputy Chief of Staff for Vice President Al Gore and worked in senior communications roles for several Democratic U.S. Senators. She served as the Chief Executive Officer of Catalist from its founding in 2006 until 2018.

The Investors and Funding

Because Catalist is a privately held, for-profit company, its internal financial ledgers are not public. However, public investment tracking, FEC complaints, and financial reporting have verified its primary backers. The company was started with an estimated \$11 million in initial venture-capital funding.

Here are the primary investors and the known amounts they contributed to build the database:

- **George Soros / Soros Fund Management:** The billionaire progressive philanthropist was the crucial financial engine behind Catalist. Soros reportedly provided the \$1 million in initial seed money that led the venture capital launch. He continued to heavily fund the database over the years, including a reported additional \$2.5 million investment in 2013.
- **Al Dwoskin:** Dwoskin is a prominent Virginia real estate developer and major Democratic donor. He is listed on Catalist's Board of Managers as "Founder Emeritus" and has been documented as the second-largest initial investor in the company behind Soros.
- **The National Education Association (NEA):** The nation's largest labor union is registered as an institutional investor through the Employees' Retirement Plan of the National Education Association. Public reports indicate the NEA injected \$725,000 into Catalist in 2015.
- **Rose Tech Ventures:** A New York-based early-stage venture capital and investment firm that provided institutional backing during Catalist's growth.

Summary for the Community

If you are explaining this to locals, the clearest picture is this:

Catalist was built by the highest levels of the Democratic establishment (the Clinton and Gore administrations) and bankrolled by the party's wealthiest progressive donors (led by George Soros and large labor unions). They built a multi-million-dollar, national data utility to predict and influence voter behavior. The digital ad networks that Chris Massicotte operated were specifically engineered to weaponize that exact data system to win elections.

Funding Sources

Catalist was started with \$11 million in venture-capital funding, including \$1 million in seed money from [George Soros](#).² In 2008, a profile in the [New York Times](#) noted that if Catalist were successful, its early funders would stand to profit financially as well as politically.²

During the 2024 election cycle, the largest [Federal Election Commission](#)-regulated customer for Catalist's services was [Planned Parenthood Votes](#), which spent \$233,272 in reportable expenses with Catalist.²⁰ The second-largest was the [Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee \(DCCC\)](#), which spent \$149,725.²⁰ Other major customers during the 2024 election cycle included [House Majority PAC](#), the organized labor-financed super PAC In Union USA,²¹ [United We Can](#), [Republican Accountability PAC](#), and [State Democracy Defenders PAC](#).²⁰

The Connection to Local Politics

This brings us back to your concerns regarding Key West.

Chris Massicotte's career at DSPolitical was built entirely on leveraging this exact system. DSPolitical created the technology that plugged into Catalist's massive database, allowing them to take those predictive models and serve highly specific, micro-targeted digital advertisements to voters.

When a political operative with a background in orchestrating billion-ad digital networks using Catalist's predictive scoring enters a local race, they bring a different playbook. They aren't just guessing who might vote for them; they are utilizing advanced, national-level data infrastructure to segment the local population and target them with precision. For a community accustomed to traditional local campaigning, the sudden introduction of these national, data-driven tactics can absolutely make the environment feel much more intense and sharply partisan.

This is Catalyst’s client list. Can you produce a table that lists the locations of the clients office and their proximity to Catalyst’s office. I have a hunch they are clustered together in washington dc

The Washington, D.C. Cluster

The clustering you suspected is very real among the political operatives. Catalyst, NGP VAN, BlueLabs, Rock the Vote, and The Action Network all operate within roughly a half-mile radius of one another in downtown Washington, D.C. This physical proximity reflects how tightly integrated this political data ecosystem is; these firms often partner, share data APIs, and coordinate strategies to support the same national campaigns and progressive causes.

Catalist Client Locations

Client Name	Headquarters / Key Office Location	Proximity to Catalist (1310 L St NW, D.C.)
DSPolitical	Washington, D.C. (1133 15th St NW)	~0.2 miles (Walking distance; just 1-2 blocks away)
NGP VAN	Washington, D.C. (1225 I St NW)	~0.4 miles (Walking distance)
BlueLabs	Washington, D.C. (700 14th St NW)	~0.4 miles (Walking distance)
Rock the Vote	Washington, D.C. (655 15th St NW)	~0.5 miles (Walking distance)
The Action Network	Washington, D.C. (1900 L St NW)	~0.6 miles (Walking distance on the same street)

(Note: DSPolitical also maintains a secondary regional office at 619 Congress St in Portland, ME, but their D.C. headquarters acts as the primary hub for their political operations).

At just two-tenths of a mile away, DSPolitical's headquarters was located practically around the corner from Catalist. This physical proximity perfectly illustrates how intertwined these progressive strategy firms are, allowing for seamless sharing of data, personnel, and campaign strategies.