Organizing Best Practices: Distributed Canvassing

Distributed Contacts is designed to completely automate the turf cutting process, saving hours of valuable time for campaign staff and allowing increased flexibility for volunteers. This guide gives you a broad overview of Distributed Contacts — read more in our **VANual** and **MiniVANual**.

With Distributed Contacts, each canvasser will get a unique list of doors. Once a door has been assigned, it can't be checked out by another canvasser for a set period of time. That list is checked out to them until the voters are checked back into the Distributed Contacts universe or the days checked out has passed.

You can customize the rule set for the number of days that a list can stay checked out on a device. The saved search powering the Distributed Contacts campaign refreshes overnight, which is when voters are added to or removed from the universe based on the search criteria.
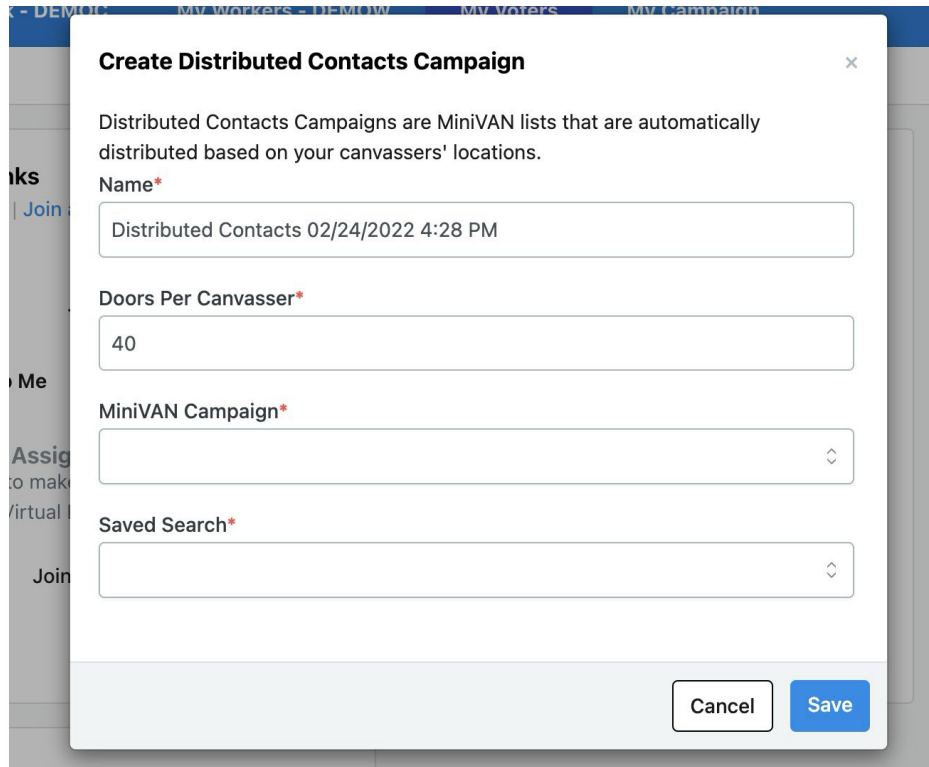
When should Distributed Contacts Campaigns be used?

We've seen folks use Distributed Contacts Campaigns in a number of creative ways, such as running lit drop programs, ballot cure operations, and generally creating walk universes where staff is low but volunteers are ready to knock doors. While hand-cut turf by an organizer who knows their turf is always going to be the gold standard for turf creation, Distributed Contacts Campaigns can be used when you don't have the time or the staff power to cut turfs manually.

Be sure to include enough doors and include a step in your saved search to remove folks who have already been canvassed to make sure folks aren't contacted more than once.

Setting up distributed contacts

1. From the Organizer Dashboard or the Distributed Contacts List Page, select **Create New**.
2. In the **Create Distributed Contacts** pop-up window, name your canvass and indicate how many doors you want to be assigned to each canvasser. Then select your MiniVAN Campaign and your Saved Search or universe.
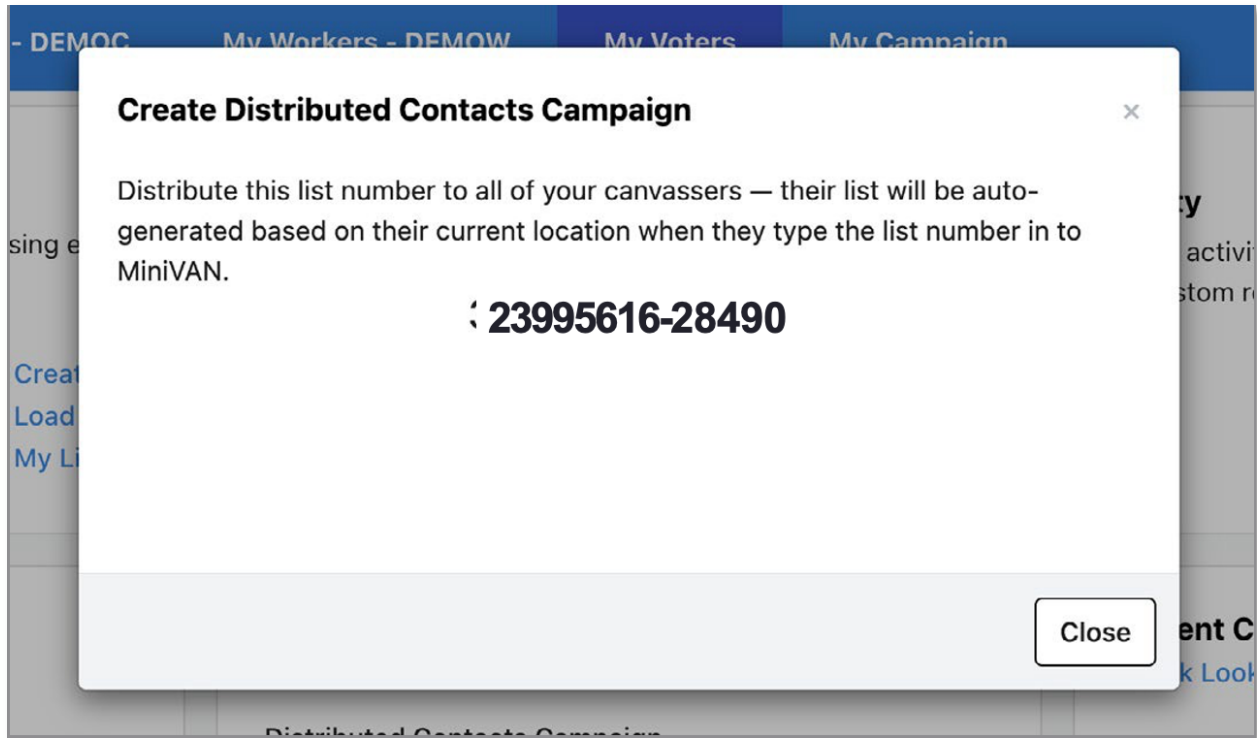

Under Advanced features, you can adjust the canvass radius and the number of days that a list can stay checked out to an individual canvasser.

3. Next, you'll see a list number that you can distribute to all of your canvassers. (Each canvasser will use the same list number.) Their turf will be auto-generated based on where they are located when they type the list number into the MiniVAN app.

2

After the canvass, you will be able to see a full Distributed Contacts report.

[Read more about Distributed Contacts campaigns](#)

[Watch a tutorial about managing Distributed Contacts](#)