Political Campaigning
In the Digital Age

J201

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A Definition of Political Campaign

Purposive attempts to inform, persuade, or motivate behavior changes in a relatively well-defined and large audience, generally for political purpose of a group, individual, or idea, typically within a given time period, by means of organized communication activities involving media, and often complemented by interpersonal support.
Nowadays, politics is almost entirely mediated.

- News media, social media, and social contacts

What are the issues you care about?
How did you develop that interest?
Where did you learn about them?
What did you hear from media?
Campaign Spending on Media

2002 - 2012: Broke down $10B+ in campaign spending into 6 categories:

- **Administrative:** 12.8% vs. 13.3%
- **Campaign Expenses:** 4.2% vs. 4.9%
- **Fundraising:** 10% vs. 14.2%
- **Media:** 54.3% vs. 51.9%
- **Strategy & Research:** 5% vs. 6.1%
- **Wages & Salaries:** 13.7% vs. 9.7%

**Democrats Spent More On:**
- Personnel: 13.7% vs. R. 9.7%
- New Media: 2.6% vs. R. 0.5%

**Republicans Spent More On:**
- Fundraising & Consulting: 14.2% vs. D. 10%
- Direct Mail: 13.6% vs. D. 9.4%
Spending on Advertising

PROJECTED SPENDING FOR 2015-2016 CYCLE

POLITICAL ADVERTISING
$6B FOR 2016

ONLINE/DIGITAL ADS
$642M (+5% from 2012)

LOCAL TV
$3.3B (+18%)

NETWORK TV
$108M (+4%)

CABLE TV
$570M (+23%)

DIRECT MAIL
$720M (-23%)

RADIO
$300M (+11%)

NEWSPAPERS
$50M (-23%)

OUTDOOR
$60M (+46%)

OTHER
$240M (+32%)

Highest percentage of presidential spending will go to swing states (Colorado, Florida, Ohio, Virginia)
Similar to Product Marketing

4P’s Marketing Mix
### Political Campaigning as Marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Campaigning</th>
<th>Product Marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>Brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign advertising</td>
<td>Product advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding voters</td>
<td>Understanding consumer needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primaries</td>
<td>Testing markets (beta products)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Using effective language, finding niche segments, and sending right messages
- Seeking for voter/consumer support/satisfaction
- Money for buying ads, hiring people
- Partnerships in a district/market
Key Elements of Political Campaigning

Purposive attempts to inform, persuade, or motivate behavior changes in a relatively well-defined and large audience, generally for political purpose of a group, individual, or idea, typically within a given time period, by means of organized communication activities involving media, and often complemented by interpersonal support.

Purposive attempt to influence public

Communication between politicians and voters

Delivering the right messages to the right audience

Roles of media
How New Media Change These?

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Roles of media
Purposive attempt to influence public
Krugman’s 1965 Thesis: Advertising does not change attitudes; it changes perceptions of what should matter when buying.

- Speaking against the limited effects paradigm in mass communication, which focused on news and electoral campaigns changing political attitudes
- His speculation has been borne out, and found to help explain behavior of consumers and citizens
Propaganda Model

• Hitler’s propaganda machine did not increase anti-Semitic attitudes but brought already existing anti-Semitic attitudes into more prominent use for defining the everyday world
2016 US Elections

**Trump supporters**

- His message resonated with the low income/white/non-college educated/rural/conservative voters

**Clinton supporters**

- Her message resonated with the young/female/college educated/urban/liberal voters
Why is Persuasion Hard?

- Political philosophy
- Issue positions
- Past political records
- Race
- Gender
- International relations
- Reliability
- Economic ideology
- Health
- Looks
- Moral issues
- President
Building Candidates’ Image
People make judgment based on heuristics
Especially, low-involvement, low-information voters
Image, personal story, popularity
Parasocial Relationship
Potential for Direct Interactions

Communication between politicians and voters
Hope for the Internet

- Step forward to direct democracy
  - “Promote the functioning of democracy by greatly enhancing the participation of citizens in decision making” (Gore, 1994)
- The impact of the Internet on politics
  - Democratization: Elite-public
  - Equalization: Major-minor candidates
Technology is commonplace

• Almost all candidates running for a major race in the U.S. have web presence.
• Webpage, social media, blogs, online ads, email, Meet Up, Reddit AMA
• And they used it a lot!
  • Q: How many tweets have @realDonaldTrump tweeted from Jan 1, 2015 till the election day?
Skeptical Views

- Technology as a tool for governing and controlling people
  - More resourceful can use the technology better
  - More interested people use the technology more
  - Elites use it better
- “Politics as usual”
Equalization or Normalization?

**Political equalization**
- Direct communication
- Direct participation
- Everyone can have own medium
- Equal opportunity to speak out / of being covered
- More information leading to more participation
- Representative, direct democracy

**Political normalization**
- Elites block/control interaction
- Everyone can speak, few heard
- Still influential traditional media institution
- More resource, better communication
- Lack of interest / motivation
- Gaps in information / participation
- Politics as usual
Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump
President-elect of the United States

Hillary Clinton
@HillaryClinton
Wife, mom, grandma, women+kids advocate, FLOTUS, Senator, SecState, hair icon, pantsuit aficionado, 2016 presidential candidate.
Why Candidates Avoid?

- Burdensome
  - Resource: Platforms, staffs, messages, time…
  - Not essential for winning the election
- Loss of control
  - Everything is planned and tested
  - Potential negative effect
- Loss of ambiguity
  - Strategically ambiguous
  - Targeting broad constituents
  - Risk of appearing to waffle on policy issues
Growing Interactivity = Risk of Losing Control

- Rick Perry's 'Strong'
- Backlash: Brokeback Mountain, Jesus responds
- Rick Santorum and Google's PageRank algorithm
What About Now?

Hey, everyone: I'll be taking your questions online today. Ask yours here: OFA.BO/gBof44 -bo
3:08 PM - 29 Aug 2012

I am Barack Obama, President of the United ...  
Hi, I'm Barack Obama, President of the United States. Ask me anything. I'll be taking your questions for half an hour starting at about 4:30...
reddit.com

Is this another façade of Interaction?
Delivering the right messages to the right audience
Data-Driven Campaigning

- Data tells a lot about voters
  - Opinion polls
    - Demographics: Age, race, gender
    - Attitudinal: Political norms, policy positions, religion
  - Long data trails of buying behavior, Web use, mobile use, social media, …
  - Psychographic: Thinking patterns, values, parenting style
There's Even a Red-Blue Christmas Shopping Divide

WHERE CONSERVATIVES SHOP

belk
Dunal's
HOBBY LOBBY
Academy
Stein Mart

WHERE LIBERALS SHOP

REI
J.CREW
H&M
FOREVER 21
NORDSTROM RACK
NORDSTROM

SOURCE: COMMON RESEARCH INDEX
Narwhal
Building a Giant Database

- Merging multiple database
  - Official voter files
    - Birthday, gender, address, phone number, past voting record, method for voting
  - Geographic data
    - Census data: SES, ethnic distribution, average voter turnout of the precinct
- Consumer DB
  - Updated phone number
  - Cheap DBs: home ownership, mortgage, education
  - Expensive DBs: magazine subscription, car purchase
Database then Offers Insights

- Persuadables: People who are undecided but are potential supporters if they are given the right informations
- Goal is finding the right audience with less money
  - Find people who easily can be mobilized for low cost
- Reactivate the network: Unsubscribers after the previous elections
The Success of Cambridge Analytica

"We have psycheograms of all adult US citizens - 220 million people"

- Combine personal data from all sorts of sources
  - Land registry entries, bonus cards, dial-up directories, club memberships, journal subscriptions, medical data
- Sent a personalized advertising to the target audience
  - The advertising adapts as closely as possible to the character of an individual consumer
Mobilizing Activists

- Based on public opinion polls and comprehensive DB, identifying a congress member with most sensitive constituents
- Provide detailed data about the target and how much resources they need for campaigning
  - Sending out letters and emails, buying ad on local TV, …
Dark red: least contacts
Dark green: most contacts
Dark red: least contacts
Dark green: most contacts
• Data help to design the right message to the right audience
• 2008: Donate for a chance to have dinner with George Clooney
  • West Coast females ages 40 to 49
• 2012: Dinner at Sarah Jessica Parker’s place
  • Chosen based on data-mining

• Data don’t make it happen, data make it more efficient.
A/B testing is a method of comparing two versions of a webpage or app against each other to determine which one performs better.
CONTROL

SEQUENTIAL

How much would you like to donate today?

Select amount

$10  $25  $50

$100  $250  $500

$1,000

http://by lunark.net

↑ +5%
CONTROL

DINNER WITH BARACK
Your chance to meet the President

YOU'RE INVITED. WE'LL COVER YOUR AIRFARE.

IMAGE VARIATION

DINNER WITH BARACK
You're invited. We'll cover your airfare.

↑ +19%

http://ly.ruler.net
Asking for Donations

- It is very effective for donations
  - Ask for $3, they’ll give $10+
  - $59 or $137 was more effective than $55 or $140
- What you must do:
  1. Ask
  2. Ask specific amount
  3. Show how they can donate
When we started our campaign, we were down 37 points in Nevada. We had no money and no organization. No one gave us a chance. It was supposed to be part of the “Clinton Firewall” in case we did well in Iowa and New Hampshire (which we did).

Now, look at this — what could be the final public poll before Saturday’s Nevada caucus.

**CNN - Nevada Caucus (February 17, 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders</td>
<td>47%</td>
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</table>

It’s SO CLOSE. And if we win in Nevada, we have a chance to create a real domino effect that swings a number of Super Tuesday states in our favor. We can all see the path to victory — let’s bring it home:

**Your $3 contribution to Bernie’s campaign, right now, could mean the difference between victory and defeat in Nevada, and for our political revolution in the Democratic primary.**
Data-Driven Campaigning to Maximize Resource

- What is the new analytic methods for?
  - Radical transformation of campaign operation
  - Improvement of efficiency of understanding race
  - Helping strategic judgment
  - Resource allocation
- *How much do we need to put for getting one more vote?*
Cost-Benefit

Cost of Analysis

+ 

Cost of Outreach

Impact on Voters

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