

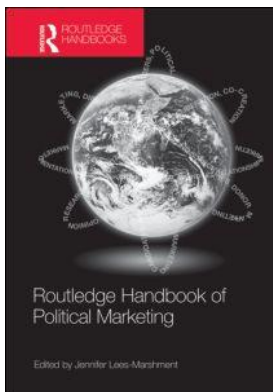
This article was downloaded by: 10.3.97.143

On: 28 Nov 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



Routledge Handbook of Political Marketing

Jennifer Lees-Marshment

Campaigning in the 21st century

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203349908.ch16>

Dennis W. Johnson

Published online on: 10 Nov 2011

How to cite :- Dennis W. Johnson. 10 Nov 2011, *Campaigning in the 21st century from: Routledge Handbook of Political Marketing* Routledge

Accessed on: 28 Nov 2023

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203349908.ch16>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Part IV

Communicating and connecting with the public

Campaigning in the 21st century

Change and continuity in American political marketing

Dennis W. Johnson

The topic: campaigning in the 21st century

Political marketing strategies and techniques have transformed campaigns and elections in the US during the first decade of the 21st century. What was creative and new in 2000 was surpassed in 2004; what was exciting and unique in 2008 was improved upon in 2010. Because of the immense changes brought about by technology and online communication over the past decade, a new model of professional political campaigning has been emerging: one that is far less top-down and controlled by political consultants and has greater engagement of ordinary citizens. This chapter describes and evaluates the enormous changes that have occurred in American political marketing, especially with the advent of online communication, and presents a model for 21st-century campaigning, looks at what works and what does not, and suggests areas for future inquiry and scholarly research.

Previous research

For most of American history, political parties have been dominant forces in campaigns and elections. They recruited candidates, made campaign funds available, assessed public opinion and mobilized voters (Herrnson 2005: 19–36). By the mid-1960s, however, party-centered campaigns had given way to candidate-centered campaigns, with individual candidates hiring their own teams of experts, political consultants and operatives (Menefee-Libey 2000; Herrnson and Campbell 2008). Scholars began noting the growing importance of a new fixture in election campaigning: the political consultant (Sabato 1981; Medvic 2001; Burton and Shea 2003; Dulio 2004; Johnson 2007). By the late 1960s and early 1970s, political consultants routinely worked for individual candidates and in the last two decades of the 20th century, they became permanent fixtures in US elections.

An example of a well-funded US Senate campaign held during the 1990s would illustrate the extent to which candidates relied on professional assistance. The senatorial candidate would hire a full range of consultants and operatives: a campaign manager, a media team, private polling firm, researchers, fundraisers, voter identification and targeting specialists, get out the vote, direct mail and telephone operatives. In order to pay for the consultants, the polling, phone

banks, television advertising, direct mail, staff and office, and countless other expenditures, the campaign would probably need to raise \$5 million, depending on the size and number of media markets (Johnson 2007).

This senate campaign and thousands like it would have been conducted using the 20th-century model of campaigning.

The 20th-century model of campaigning in the US

During the last 35 or 40 years of the 20th century, candidates for major political office in the US retained the services of political consultants. Those campaigns shared several common features.

First, political consultants were in command-and-control mode. They would be the dominant voice in defining the contest, creating strategy and in maintaining message discipline. Candidates, of course, would have the last word and were ultimately responsible for the conduct and tone of the campaign, but often the decisions were driven by the experience and knowledge of the senior consultants.

Second, the consultants and strategists would employ a top-down method of communicating. They would gather information from likely voters, guided by survey research results, through polls, focus groups and dial meter sessions, but would not involve individual voters or activists in the critical decisions of the campaign, such as what the candidate says, the shape and content of the candidate's television commercials, where the candidate goes and what issues should be emphasized.

Third, campaigns relied on television as the chief medium of communication. For many secondary races in major media markets which could not afford television, direct mail became the communication weapon of choice. Campaigns also relied on radio advertising, billboards, phone banks and newsprint to get their message across to voters (West 2010).

Fourth, campaigns had time to craft messages, days and even weeks to put together television advertising, time to absorb an opponent's attack and then respond in kind. However, with the advent of all-news television and radio channels and 24/7 news cycles, campaign messaging and communications were compelled to go on all-day and all-night alert. Polling results became more easily available and their results were aided by advances in software technology.

Fifth, much of the campaign was based on guesswork, instinct and past experience. Campaigns relied on past voting data and census figures, but did not factor in other elements such as lifestyle choices, intensity of support for issues or candidates, and other matters.

Sixth, fundraising was conducted primarily through big ticket events, where a small number of contributors would 'max out' – give the largest amount of money permitted by law. Direct mail was the vehicle of choice for reaching those contributors who gave less money, but it was very expensive to cast about for potential donors. Small-dollar donations, \$25 or so, were also received, but it was difficult and expensive to rely on such small givers. Except for special events, it was very hard to raise large amounts of money in short periods of time.

Seventh, except in presidential and other high-profile campaigns, voters were basically spectators. They would be asked primarily to do one thing, show up on election day and cast their ballot. Few voters contributed money, volunteered on campaigns or interacted with the campaign in any way.

New research

Scholars from the disciplines of political science, political communications and political marketing increasingly are turning their attention to modern campaigning and professional campaign

management. They have seen over the past decade a number of critical, even transformative, changes in the way US campaigns are conducted. The changes have come in fundraising, survey research, television advertising, targeting and mobilizing voters, and the nationalization of campaigns (Semiatin 2005; Semiatin 2008; Johnson 2010). Most profoundly, however, the changes have come from the explosion of online communication, which will be the focus of this chapter.

The new media

Just as online communication has fundamentally changed the way we interact with one another, so, too, have political campaigns made enormous changes in the way they communicate with people, the way people communicate with campaigns, and the way citizens, activists and voters communicate with one another about elections and campaigns. What has changed during the past decade?

Getting information about elections

Just like much of the industrialized world, the US has become a much more wired nation. At the end of 2009 a total of 74 percent of American adults stated that they used the internet, 60 percent used broadband and 55 percent connected to the internet wirelessly (Rainie 2010). While online communications have become more accepted by younger, better-educated citizens, still the majority of Americans rely on the local television news (40 percent), cable news networks (38 percent) and the nightly network television news (32 percent) to ‘regularly learn something’ about presidential politics. The internet was relied on by 24 percent of those surveyed (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2008).

Campaign websites

As new online technologies have emerged, they have been incorporated into political campaigns, sometimes quickly and, at other times, hesitantly and cautiously. By the 2000 US presidential campaign and the 2002 midterm elections, campaign websites and online communications had become common features (Johnson 2006). Some online activists and observers were talking about the profound changes that online communications would bring, changing forever the way campaigns are run. In their assessment of the place of the internet in future elections, political scientists Bruce Bimber and Richard Davis took a sober look, and concluded that internet campaigning helped to reinforce political attachments, helped mobilize activists to contribute funds and to volunteer their time, and ‘just maybe – to vote’. They recognized that the internet was a niche communication tool, directed at highly specific audiences, which would become highly effective to mobilize those who are politically active and interested, but they predicted that the internet would ‘not produce the mobilization of voters long predicted’ (Bimber and Davis 2003: 165).

Political scientists Stephen Schneider and Kristen Foot examined the growth of US presidential campaign internet site features from 2000 to 2004. They found that websites grouped features in four common areas: informing (with features presenting issues, campaign news, biography speeches, photos and campaign advertisements); involving (online donations, volunteer, sign up for email, campaign calendar events and campaign store); connecting (endorsements, links to government, civic and advocacy groups, political parties, and comparisons with other candidates); and mobilizing (sending links from the site, e-paraphernalia, offline distribution of

campaign materials, letters to the editor, action management sites or sections) (Schneider and Foot 2006; also Foot and Schneider 2006). The authors found a slight increase from 2000 to 2004 in informing, a sharp increase in the practice of involving, a slight increase in the proportion of campaigns engaged in connecting, and mobilization was just beginning to emerge in 2004.

The innovations in online communication first came in the 2003–04 Democratic presidential primary season from the Howard Dean campaign. Dean connected with the social networking site MeetUp.com, created the first presidential candidate blog site, its own social network (Deanlink), a personalized page for fundraising (Deanspace) and a virtual community for young people (Generation Dean). Several on the Dean online technology team created Blue State Digital, an online technology firm, and later worked directly on the Obama 2008 presidential campaign or as consultants to it. The Dean campaign led scholars to examine the impact of online technology in the pre-Obama era (Williams and Tedesco 2006).

YouTube and web videos

With the creation of the video website YouTube in 2005, it was not long before campaigns began using this convenient platform for free media. YouTube hit its stride in the 2008 presidential campaign. Barack Obama made the most use of this vehicle, posting 1,839 videos with an astounding 132.8 million viewers; by contrast, John McCain posted 329 videos with 26.3 million viewers. YouTube became a platform for candidates to bypass the established media and go directly to viewers online (Frantzich 2009). Many of those viewers, of course, were too young to vote or were not registered, were not American citizens, or were repeat viewers. YouTube also joined up with CNN to produce two presidential debates, where questions posted online by viewers were used, rather than those posed by a panel from the mainstream media.

Email, cell phones and Twitter

One of the older technologies is still one of the most important: electronic mail. Online expert Michael Cornfield observed in 2004 that email would outperform a website ‘ninety-nine days out of a hundred’. Email is sent to a defined address, it is read, it is easier to respond to, and it is harder for the press and the political opposition to monitor than a campaign website (Cornfield 2004: 27). Over the years, campaigns have become more interactive: posting pictures, videos, links to other information and, not surprisingly, including ‘Donate Now’ buttons.

One of the innovations of the 2000 presidential election came from the Al Gore campaign. Through emails to supporters and followers, it encouraged them to text message or email their

Table 16.1 First use of selected online communication tools in US political campaigns

Campaign websites	1992
Email	1992
Political advertising on the web	1998
Text messaging	2000
Blogging	2003
Social networking	2004
Online videos (YouTube)	2006
Microblogging (Twitter)	2008

own friends, to get them interested in Gore's campaign. By 2008, and particularly in the Obama campaign, text messaging and friend-to-friend contacts were used on a massive scale.

Not until the mid-2000s did US campaigns begin to understand the potential of cell phones as communication devices. Mobile phone communication had caught on in other parts of the world, helping to bring down the government of Joseph Estrada in the Philippines in 2001 and mobilizing democracy protestors during the Ukrainian 'Orange Revolution' in 2004 (Institute for Politics, Democracy and the Internet 2005). With the creation of the smartphone, particularly the RIM BlackBerry, the Apple iPhone, the Nokia N900 and phones running Google's Android operating systems, campaigns have been able to develop smartphone applications to help mobilize volunteers, and facilitate fundraising and other campaign functions.

The microblog Twitter was created in early 2006 and soon went public. Several 2008 presidential candidates, starting with John Edwards, Joe Biden and Barack Obama, used Twitter to communicate with followers. Since then, candidates have been routinely adding Twitter to their repertoire of online communication devices.

Political and campaign blogs

Political blogs have fundamentally changed the way citizens interact with candidates and others. Blogs, first used in presidential campaigns by Howard Dean in 2003, were then used extensively by John Kerry and George W. Bush in the 2004 general election (Trammell 2006). Since that time, presidential and many other national and state candidates have used blogs to communicate with followers.

Social networking

Social networking as a political communication tool first appeared during the 2004 Democratic primaries, when Howard Dean's campaign used MeetUp.com; then other campaigns both at presidential and congressional levels in 2006 began to use social networking. Presidential candidate John Edwards signed up on more social networks than any other candidate in 2008: at least 23 sites. However, it was Barack Obama's campaign that had a huge presence on social network sites. There were over 2.2 million supporters on the various Obama Facebook sites, 800,000 on MySpace and a substantial following on LinkedIn and other social networking sites. More than 2 million people logged on to MyBO (My.BarackObama.com) and through it were able to contribute funds, raise funds, develop communities and reach out to like-minded groups. Through MyBO, there were 400,000 blog postings, 35,000 volunteers were recruited and 200,000 off-line events were held. Obama had 'friended' more than 7 million supporters (Vargas 2008a).

Online advertising

Political advertising on internet sites began in 1998 and has grown slowly since. During the 2004 presidential campaign, the candidates, parties and major interest groups spent roughly \$2.6 million on online banner advertisements. Yet this figure was less than 1 percent of that spent on television buys in the 100 largest media markets during the same time. By the end of the 2008 presidential election, the Obama campaign had spent some \$16 million on online media – a tiny fraction of the complete media buys (Kaye 2009).

A relatively new marketing theory, Long-Tail Marketing, argues that businesses and political candidates can communicate better with those they are trying to reach by going to small, niche

markets rather than relying on broadcasting to larger audiences (Anderson 2006). The 2008 US Senate campaign of Minnesota Democrat Al Franken used long-tail nanotargeting to reach voters. It targeted more than 125 niche groups with more than 1,000 pieces of persuasive online advertising, for less than \$100,000. For example, when a Minnesota farmer used the search engine Google, the Franken campaign had bought keywords and phrases, hundreds of them, like ‘farm supply’, ‘feed stores’, or ‘large animal veterinarian’. When the farmer entered those words in his search, up would pop a Franken for Senate advertisement geared toward agricultural interests (Koster 2009).

Impact of online communication

Increase in online news consumers

We might mark the 1996 presidential election as the beginning of online political campaigning in the US. During one of the presidential debates, Republican candidate Robert Dole announced his website address to a nationwide audience. His presidential website was rudimentary and he botched the address; nevertheless, over a million people responded the next day. Looking back on 1996, it seems almost light years away when thinking about online communication. First came email and websites, then blogs, social networking, web videos, smartphone applications and the rest. The best of presidential, congressional and statewide campaigns began adopting all of these communications tools; so, too, did advocacy groups, the old media and others. By the mid-2000s, the attentive public had an incredible, bewildering array of information available about presidential campaigns. During the 2004 campaign, for example, the Pew Research Center estimated that there were 63 million ‘online news consumers’ in the US (Rainie *et al.* 2005). That number rapidly expanded during the 2008 campaign, as indicated in Table 16.2.

Instant, unfiltered communication

Online communication meant instant communication and campaigns, especially in the crucial final weeks, can run at warp speed. A campaign can be attacked at all times of the day or night,

Table 16.2 Online metrics for the 2008 presidential campaign

	<i>Obama</i>	<i>McCain</i>
Facebook friends on election day	2,397,253	622,860
Unique visits to campaign websites in week ending 1 November	4,851,069	1,464,544
Online videos mentioning candidate	104,454	64,092
Campaign-made videos posted on YouTube	1,822	330
Total hours people spent watching campaign videos (as of 23 October)	14,600,000	488,000
Cost of equivalent purchase of 30-second advertisements	\$46.9 million	\$1.5 million
References to campaign’s voters contact operation on Google	479,000	325

Note: These figures should be observed with caution, since there is no way to know the number of repeat viewers, those who live outside of the US, and those not eligible to vote.

and in the pinball-like atmosphere of a heated contest, particularly in its final days, bad news can come with the speed of digital communication. It could be a blog posting, an email charge gone viral, a nasty video posted on YouTube, or any one of a variety of online sources. This also means that rumor and innuendo, unchecked and unverified, can abound. Rumors during the 2008 presidential contest were bountiful. Whisper and rumor campaigns have always been part of political campaigns, but the online nature took them to a different, more sinister level. Psychology professor Nicholas DiFonzo, who had been studying political rumor-mongering for 20 years, observed that he had never seen so many rumors as seen in 2008 (DiFonzo 2008). Many of the falsehoods and ugly rumors were directed against Obama, in particular.

Is the internet the culprit? It is certainly the vehicle. Cass R. Sunstein argues that people increasingly are getting their information not from the major news channels, like network television, but from online sources. They subscribe to email listservs or RSS feeds for their favorite sites. Liberal blogs tend to link to other liberal blog sites, and conservative blogs, to an even greater extent, link to other conservative blogs (Adamic and Glance 2005). Sunstein argues that the internet 'serves, for many, as a breeding group for extremism, precisely because like-minded people are deliberating with greater ease and frequency with one another'. He calls this process 'cyberpolarization' (Sunstein 2009; Kolbert 2009).

The ever-present camera and the viral response

Today, no candidate is safe from the prying eye of the television lens, the video recorder, or the cell phone camera. A gaffe, an errant word or gesture, can be immediately captured by a campaign volunteer or by anyone holding a cell phone. During the early 2008 presidential primaries, Hillary Clinton was caught singing the national anthem horribly off-key at a campaign stop; John Edwards was caught primping for two full minutes in a television station's green room, meticulously combing his hair before an on-camera appearance. Journalists Chris Cillizza and Dan Balz mark the 2006 mid-term election as one that changed the rules of the game. This was the year of the 'rogue videographers' (Cillizza and Balz 2007). Probably the most damaging was an errant comment made by Senator George Allen of Virginia, running for re-election. His slur of an Indian-American campaign worker reached YouTube, went viral, and was probably a central factor in his close loss. The Allen defeat meant the end of his possible presidential bid, but also a key loss for Republicans in the US Senate, leading to a turnover in party control.

The open-source campaign

Taking its name from open-source software, the term 'open-source campaigning' or 'open-source politics' emphasizes citizen involvement and direct online participation in elections and campaigns (Sifry 2004). Veteran Democratic pollster Peter Hart summed up the impact of technology on the 2008 presidential campaign: 'This is a big transformation in how campaigns operate, and it boils down to the power of one, the feeling that one individual can make a difference' (Vargas 2008b). Successful, professionally driven campaigns have always been driven from the top down, but now with the enormous opportunities and challenges of online communication, a new model is appearing, with citizen input encouraged and fostered.

This is probably the most important aspect for new media and online communication in election politics: in the best of campaigns (and with the best of candidates) activists and even casual voters can feel a sense of sharing and participation. Through online communication, they share their ideas with candidates, are encouraged to volunteer, meet and talk with others, share their experiences and take some measure of ownership in the campaign.

Advice for practitioners

The 2008 presidential campaign offered us the most technologically savvy presidential candidate in history, Barack Obama. Armed with his two BlackBerrys, Obama first had to do battle against Hillary Clinton, who announced her candidacy over the internet but then ran a much more traditional 20th-century campaign, and in the general election against John McCain, who didn't even use email and whose campaign, while it used some of the bells and whistles of online communication, didn't have the same remarkable effects as Obama's. The Obama campaign set the standard for the use of online technology, the integration of offline and online elements, and the innovative usage of social media, cell phones, the internet and television.

Obama campaign manager David Plouffe stated that 'technology was core to our campaign from Day One and it only grew in importance' (Plouffe 2009: 237). The campaign invested heavily in staff and equipment. Digital campaign veterans from the Howard Dean campaign, like Joe Rospars and Jascha Franklin-Hodge, both of whom then worked for Blue State Digital, Chris Hughes, who along with Mark Zuckerberg had co-founded Facebook, and a number of executives from technology companies teamed up to form the backbone of the online campaign team. Nearly 90 staffers were hired, and millions were spent on servers, email systems, web development and text messaging. A single database, with terabytes of information, was created, integrating all aspects of fundraising, social networking and activism from MyBO – something never done before in presidential campaigns (Graff 2009).

Aided by online communication, Obama supporters held more than 100,000 events throughout the country; more than 10,000 people applied to become one of the 3,000 Obama 'organizing fellows' who would go out in their communities to register voters; more than 3 million phone calls were made by Obama supporters during the last four days of the campaign alone (Graff 2009).

The Obama campaign oversaw more than 100 different websites, had 57 different profiles on MySpace, created nearly 2,000 YouTube videos, including the most successful YouTube entry, Obama's 37-minute speech on race relations during the 2008 primary season, which was watched by more people online than seen on television.

What the Obama team had done could have been done by any of the 20 major party candidates for president that year. There was nothing radically new about the technology; there was no secret formula. The key was the integration of online campaigning into the overall campaign: in fundraising, field organizing and communications (Cornfield 2010; Germany 2009). Garrett M. Graff, a veteran of the Dean presidential bid, observed that 'the game-changer in the Obama campaign ... was that technology and the Internet was not an add-on for them. It was a carefully considered element of almost every critical campaign function' (Graff 2009: 38).

Impact on politics

The 21st-century campaign model

Compared with the presidential campaign of 2008 and the congressional elections of 2010, the US campaigns of a decade earlier on the surface may seem antiquated. With the maturing of online communication techniques, it seems like a whole new ball game for candidates, political consultants, political activists and voters. The reality, however, is more complicated. A new campaign model is emerging, but in many ways it still fits into the contours of the 20th-century model.

First, political consultants will still dominate in defining the campaign, setting its objectives, laying out the strategy for victory. Consultants will be in much greater demand because of their

ability to cut through the clutter of both new and old media communication. With many more voices involved, there is the need for a clear, determined voice to define the race and state the case for the candidate. Campaigns will forever need to focus on fundraising, developing and communicating their message, mobilizing voters and getting them to vote. Campaigns in the 21st century will rely heavily on campaign managers, general consultants, pollsters, media teams, direct mail and other specialists. What will change, however, is the acceptance and the integration of online media into the core of the campaign. As the online component began to mature, campaigns realized the importance of having a webmaster, a blog specialist, a director of social media, an online advertising group, an online staff with equal strategic importance as any other component of the campaign. Ultimately, in the best-run campaigns, the online component will be a seamless, integral part of all campaign functions.

Second, the top-down, command-and-control model will give way to a more fluid model, which encourages citizen input and involvement. However, this can be tricky. On the one hand, it sounds like a clearly desired goal to have more people involved with the campaign, with more ideas flowing, with greater participation. On the other hand, it can be chaotic: following the whims and wishes of the moment instead of concentrating on a consistent, long-term strategy; listening to the loudest voices rather than the voices of those voters who could carry the candidate to victory; having a thousand messages and no clear message at all; and, like online media-savvy 2004 presidential candidate Howard Dean, being overtaken by the demands of supporters and losing control of the campaign.

Third, television will continue to be an important medium for campaign advertising, but, perhaps in the most fundamental transformation, online communications have created whole new ways of reaching voters. Free media, once confined to television, radio or newspaper coverage, now finds an unlimited home on YouTube and other web video sites. Likely voters are now reached through internet advertising, RSS feeds, podcasts, interactive websites, social media platforms, blogs, microblogs (like Twitter), text messages and that old standby, email.

Fourth, campaigns have speeded up dramatically. The campaign must expect to be engaged 24 hours a day. Polling results, field information, targeting and early voting data can all be received, analyzed and put into action in hours rather than in days or weeks. The campaign now sleeps only when the election is over.

Fifth, guesswork, instinct and experience are still key, but they are supplemented by research, metrics, and advances in market research and data collection. It now becomes easier for a campaign to know if a series of advertisements is working through focus group and dial meter research, by the click-through rates of online advertising, by the analysis of microtargeting information, and other techniques.

Sixth, campaigns still rely on big-dollar givers, but now can also have inexpensive access to small-dollar donors, thanks to online contributing solicited through email, texting, websites and online advertising. The universe of money givers can expand many-fold, using techniques often seen in public radio or other nonprofit fundraising schemes.

Seventh, thanks to online communication, voters can have a greater sense of participation in a campaign. They can be mobilized, they can mobilize themselves, meet with like-minded activists, and more easily contribute time, money and energy to a campaign. Of all the aspects of the 21st-century campaign model, this is the most promising for bringing about greater participation.

The 21st-century model recognizes the continuing need for consultants and campaign specialists, but it also recognizes that campaigns stuck in the old traditions and practices of the 1980s and 1990s are destined to be left behind and ultimately will become non-competitive. Likewise, those campaigns that fail to appreciate and use the craft and techniques of the 20th-century model are destined to become non-competitive.

Table 16.3 20th-century and 21st-century campaign models compared

<i>20th-century model</i>	<i>21st-century model</i>
Consultants dominate in creating strategy, in maintaining message discipline, in communicating with the public, and getting voters out to vote on election day Top-down approach	Consultants dominate; online component becomes integral part of campaign More fluid, with ideas, direction and support from grassroots
Television as most important communication medium Relatively more time to craft messages, responses and analysis Much of campaign based on guesswork, instinct and past experience Fundraising through big-ticket items; expensive direct mail solicitations; few small-amount donors Except for presidential contests, limited involvement of citizens beyond voting	Television is important, but explosion of new media, free media online Campaign speeds up, running 24/7 Heavier reliance on research, data and metrics to guide the campaign Big-ticket fundraising important; small-amount donors opening up through inexpensive online technology Greater involvement of citizens, activists; sense that campaign is directly connected to them

The way forward

The 21st-century campaign offers many research opportunities for political management and political marketing scholars. With a new model of campaigning emerging and dynamic new ways to reach people, there are many challenges and opportunities for scholars and practitioners to examine and explore. Here are a few questions concerning new media communications and other aspects of 21st-century campaigning in the US:

The shape and direction of professional campaigning

How have the various segments – campaign generalists, pollsters, media, fundraisers, targeting specialists – of the political consulting industry adjusted to the new reality of technology and online communication? Is there a disconnect between the manner in which voters want to be informed and contacted and the way political consultants inform and contact them?

Just what works?

Green and Gerber (2008) have examined the impact of get out the vote techniques and found most of them wanting. What about other areas of communication, persuasion and identifying voters – are the current practices of political consultants effective and efficient uses of scarce time and money? What new technologies and online communication tools hold out the most promise for connecting with voters?

Integration of old and new media in campaigns

How will online media be integrated into other forms of communication? Is the technological revolution in campaigning at a plateau, or will there be new advances in communication and in identifying and contacting voters? Will there be a grand convergence of media platforms?

New media advertising

If we are in the ‘prehistoric age’ (Cornfield and Kaye 2009) of online advertising, what are the possibilities and opportunities for such advertising? What is the impact of such advertising? With the ability to measure click-throughs, do such metrics give researchers a clearer insight into the impact and effectiveness of online advertising?

Television

Is the 30-second spot a relic of 20th-century advertising? With more people watching more television (and more television channels), how can consultants strategically target their paid television advertising? How will television advertising be transformed in the next decade?

Polling, cell phones and reaching people

How can the inherent problems of cell phone-survey research be resolved? Can automated polls (robocalls) and brushfire polls yield results that are statistically reliable and valid as survey instruments? Will private political pollsters find online polling an inexpensive and reliable alternative to telephone-based polling? Is random digit dialing (RDD) too expensive a method for reaching voters; should it be replaced with voter lists?

The opportunities and limitations of microtargeting

Microtargeting in political campaigns came of age during the first decade of this century. Is there a more cost-effective way of conducting microtargeting analysis? With more and more demographic, lifestyle and psychographic information loaded into databases, does this information yield more accurate and sophisticated portraits of the electorate?

Campaigning at the local level and 21st-century techniques

As Chapman Rackman (2009) has observed, local-level campaigns seem to be a decade or so behind in developing the state-of-the-art campaign techniques that are seen at the presidential or major statewide level. How have local, small-budget contests been able to tap into new technologies and online communication? What are the optimal tools that a small-budget campaign can use most effectively?

A better way to fund political campaigns

Thanks to online contributions, it becomes easier to both solicit funds and contribute them. Are there ways in which structural and legal barriers to small-amount campaign financing can be broken down further? Is democracy better served by having strict limits on campaign contributions and by encouraging small-dollar donors through online giving? Is the legislation for public funding of presidential candidates in need of a major overhaul?

Better campaigning or merely louder voices

How can online technology and online communication bring about better citizen participation, a more informed electorate and more democratization of the electoral process? How can it do so

without merely succumbing to the loudest, most persistent voices rather than the true wishes of the greater majority?

These and other questions face us in the decade ahead, as the 21st-century model of professional campaigning becomes more evident, and as technology and online communication both reinforce and transform our ways of electing candidates to office.

Bibliography

- Adamic, L. and Glance, N. (2005) 'Divided they blog'. Online, www.blogpulse.com/papers/2005/AdamicGlanceBlogWWW.pdf (accessed 10 June 2010).
- Adkins, R.E. and Dulio, D. (2010) *Cases in Congressional Campaigns: Incumbents Playing Defense*, New York: Routledge.
- Anderson, C. (2006) *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More*, New York: Hyperion.
- Baker, F.W. (2009) *Political Campaigns and Political Advertising*, Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press.
- Bimber, B. and Davis, R. (2003) *Campaigning Online: The Internet in U.S. Elections*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Burton, J.B. and Shea, D.M. (2003) *Campaign Mode: Strategic Vision in Congressional Elections*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Cillizza, C. and Balz, D. (2007) 'On the electronic campaign trail', *Washington Post*, 22 January.
- Cornfield, M. (2010) 'Game-changers: new technology and the 2008 presidential election', in L. Sabato (ed.) *The Year of Obama: How Barack Obama Won the White House*, New York: Longman.
- (2004) *Politics Moves Online: Campaigning and the Internet*, New York: Century Foundation.
- Cornfield, M. and Kaye, K. (2009) 'Online political advertising: The prehistoric era continues', *720 Strategies*. Online, www.720strategies.com/site/page/online_political_advertising_the_prehistoric_era_continues (accessed 1 June 2010).
- Corrado, A., Malbin, M.J., Mann, T.E., and Ornstein, N.J. (2010) *Reform in an Age of Networked Campaigns: How to Foster Citizen Participation Through Small Donors and Volunteers*, Washington, DC: Campaign Finance Institute, American Enterprise Institute, and Brookings Institution.
- Corrado, A., Ortiz, D.R., Mann, T.E. and Potter, T. (2005) *The New Campaign Finance Sourcebook*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- DiFonzo, N. (2008) 'Political rumors in the 2008 election', *Psychology Today*, 29 October.
- Dulio, D.A. (2004) *For Better or Worse? How Political Consultants Are Changing Elections in the United States*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Foot, K. and Schneider, S. (2006) *Web Campaigning*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Frantzich, S.E. (2009) 'E-Politics and the 2008 presidential campaign', in W.J. Crotty (ed.) *Winning the Presidency 2008*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Germany, J.B. (2009) 'The online revolution', in D.W. Johnson (ed.) *Campaigning for President 2008: Strategy and Tactics, New Voices and New Techniques*, New York: Routledge.
- Graff, G.M. (2009) 'Barack Obama: How content management and Web 2.0 helped win the White House', *Infonomics*, March–April. Online, aiim.org/Infonomics/Obama-How-Web2.0-Helped-Win-Whitehouse.aspx (accessed 28 May 2010).
- Green, D.P. and Gerber, A.S. (2008) *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout*, second edn, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Herrnson, P.S. (2005) 'The evolution of political campaigns', in P.S. Herrnson (ed.) *Guide to Political Campaigns in America*, Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Herrnson, P.S. and Campbell, C.C. (2008) 'Modern political campaigns in the United States', in D.W. Johnson (ed.) *Routledge Handbook on Political Management*, New York: Routledge.
- Institute for Politics, Democracy and the Internet (2005) *The Politics-To-Go Handbook: A Guide to Using Mobile Technology in Politics*, Washington, DC: George Washington University.
- Jagoda, K.A.B. (ed.) (2009) *About Face: The Dramatic Impact of the Internet on Politics and Advocacy*, San Diego, CA: e-Voter Institute Press.
- Johnson, D.W. (2006) 'Campaigning and the Internet', in S.C. Craig (ed.) *The Electoral Challenge: Theory Meets Practice*, Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- (2007) *No Place for Amateurs: How Political Consultants Are Reshaping American Democracy*, second edn, New York: Routledge.

- (ed.) (2008) *Routledge Handbook on Political Management*, New York: Routledge.
- (ed.) (2009) *Campaigning for President 2008: Strategy and Tactics, New Voices and New Techniques*, New York: Routledge.
- (2010) *Campaigning in the Twenty-First Century: A Whole New Ballgame?* New York: Routledge.
- Kaye, K. (2009) 'Google grabbed most of Obama's \$16 million in 2008', *ClickZ*, 6 January. Online, www.clickz.com/3632263 (accessed 20 May 2011).
- Kerbel, M.R. (2009) *Netroots: Online Progressives and the Transformation of American Politics*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Kolbert, E. (2009) 'The things people say', *New Yorker*, 2 November.
- Koster, J. (2009) 'Long-tail nanotargeting', *Politics*, February. Online, www.politicsmagazine.com/magazine-issues/february-2009/long-tail/nanotargeting (accessed 28 May 2010).
- Malchow, H. (2003) *The New Political Targeting*, Washington, DC: Campaigns and Elections.
- Medvic, S.K. (2001) *Political Consultants in U.S. Congressional Elections*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- Menefee-Libey, D. (2000) *The Triumph of Campaign-Centered Politics*, New York: Chatham House.
- Panagopoulos, C. (ed.) (2009) *Politicking Online: The Transformation of Election Campaign Communications*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2008) 'Internet's broader role in campaign 2008', 11 January. Online, people-press.org/report/384/internets-broader-role-in-campaign-2008 (accessed 15 August 2009).
- Plouffe, D. (2009) *The Audacity to Win: The Insider Story and Lessons of Barack Obama's Historic Victory*, New York: Viking.
- Rackman, C. (2009) 'Trickle-down technology: The use of computing and network technology in state legislative campaigns', in C. Panagopoulos (ed.) *Politicking Online: The Transformation of Election Campaign Communications*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Rainie, L. (2010) 'Internet, broadband and cell phone statistics', *Pew Internet and American Life Project*, 5 January. Online, www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Internet-broadband-and-cell-phone-statistics.aspx (accessed 12 January 2010).
- Rainie, L., Cornfield, M. and Horrigan, J. (2005) *The Internet and Campaign 2004*, Washington, DC: Pew Internet and American Life Project and Pew Research Center for the People and the Press.
- Sabato, L. (1981) *The Rise of the Political Consultants: New Ways of Winning Elections*, New York: Basic Books.
- Schneider, S.M. and Foot, K.A. (2006) 'Web campaigning by U.S. presidential primary candidates in 2000 and 2004', in A.P. Williams and J.C. Tedesco (eds) *The Internet Election: Perspectives on the Web in Campaign 2004*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Semiatin, R.J. (2005) *Campaigns in the 21st Century: The Changing Mosaic of American Politics*, Boston: McGraw Hill.
- (ed.) (2008) *Campaigns on the Cutting Edge*, Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Sifry, M.L. (2004) 'The rise of open-source politics', *The Nation*. Online, www.thenation.com/issue/november-22-2004 (accessed 15 August 2010).
- Stoncash, J.M. (2008) *Political Polling: Strategic Information in Campaigns*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Sunstein, C.R. (2009) *On Rumors: How Falsehood Spread, Why We Believe Them, What Can Be Done*, New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux.
- Trammell, K.D. (2006) 'The blogging of the president', in A.P. Williams and J.C. Tedesco (eds) *The Internet Election: Perspectives on the Web in Campaign 2004*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Vargas, J.A. (2008a) 'Obama's wide web', *Washington Post*, 20 August.
- (2008b) 'Something just clicked', *Washington Post*, 10 June.
- West, D.M. (2010) *Air Wars: Television Advertising in Election Campaigns, 1952–2008*, fifth edn, Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Williams, A.P. and Tedesco, J.C. (eds) (2006) *The Internet Election: Perspectives on the Web in Campaign 2004*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.