Indirect Communication in the Electoral Campaign

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Abstract

In the analysis, communication during the electoral campaign can be divided into direct and indirect communication. When using direct communication, the organizers of the electoral campaign communicate with the voters directly (without mediators). Direct communication is also called interpersonal communication. The second type of communication in the electoral campaign is indirect communication where the organizers of the electoral campaigns use the media (the traditional or the new media) for communication with the voters. Both types of communication have good and bad sides. In this paper we focus on ways of using indirect communication in electoral campaign through the media. We analyze different aspects of such as role of the candidate in campaign, ways of organizing approaches to voter's addresses and transfer the message to many people, importance of press conferences and debates. In the last part of this work, we introduces significance of computer mediated campaigns and consider different types of this newly cannels of indirect communication – internet sites, blogs, e-mails etc. Also there is interesting studies on interpersonal communication where are more quality relations between the organizers of the campaign or their activists and the voters.

Keywords: communication, electoral campaign, voters, media, press conference

1. Introduction

In the modern political-social context, with the enormous influence of the media in the public space and the creation of the public opinion, from the beginnings of the 20th century, to date, it is impossible to imagine successful political campaign which does not include the media. As time went by and with the progress of the technological innovations, also the media and the media space created by technological innovations also evolved slowly. So, as time went by, the traditional media left space to the new more protruding and more influential media, which became the bearing medium through which political campaigns took place. Hence in the beginnings, newspapers had an important role in the communication between political entities and voters, and then the primate was taken over by the radio, and then the television. In modern electoral campaigns we are witnessing the increased use of the internet and the social networks in the political campaigns. What is well known in communication science is the dichotomous classification into *mass media* and *new media* which the political entities use as means for conducting the campaigns. While mass media addressed to an extensive audience, the new media address to specialized segmented audience. The diversification of the audience brings communication techniques, which are specific for the new media. The new media, among other things, also bring a much higher extent of interactivity. Some of the most important forms of communication with the mediation of the media include: the media pseudo-events, the press conferences organized by political entities, the debates in the TV shows, the billboards and the posters which they use as media for sending messages to the voters and the internet pages, the social media are increasingly used lately.

2. Use of Media Space for Achieving the Objectives of the Campaign

Because of the importance that elections have for the society as a process of selection of the public policies and their enforcers and the fact that they occur relatively rarely depending on the mandate of the political body for which the elections are announced, media usually pay special attention to the organizers of the electoral campaign, compared to the remaining events relevant for the public.

Since media are not organizers, but they only transfer the campaign, they have certain trust among voters. Media, however have their own program scheme and in order to get space in newspapers, televisions and radios, there should be good relations with the editors, journalists and reporters. For this reason, the organizers of campaigns usually assign someone who is responsible for public relations, that is, a press secretary– who develops a strategy for public relations, which includes the manner of sending the campaign messages in the public space. The sending of messages and the total communication through the media should be well coordinated by sending the message through the techniques of direct communication such as the door-to-door campaign, the letters, the phone calls, the billboards etc.

As O'Day (1998:35) indicates, the organizers of electoral campaigns know that they should have good relations with media for at least two reasons:

➢ In general, skillful specialists for public relations know how to get free media space, for presentation of the electoral program and the candidate, from which the organizer of the campaign does not want to give up.
➢ Since they are an external factor which only follows, the media had credibility of independent institutions and as such they have trust among voters. Every information about the campaign presented by the media has a status of information which comes from an independent source, and not from a biased source – interested for improvement of the electoral result of a specific candidate.

It is important to know few things for successful communication with the media:

➢ Taking into consideration that the public relations are a very responsible activity, they should not be used for improvisations and they should not be left in the hands of amateurs. On the contrary, this requires engagement of people who are professionally educated and have working experience in this field. When structuring in the department of public relations with the public in the electoral campaign, usually a responsible person is determined for every medium. That is a person who works on getting the appropriate media coverage for candidate, in the specific medium.
➢ Candidate must strictly adhere to the campaign message during the entire campaign. The candidates had limited space for appearing in television and radio shows. This space should be rationally used for passing the campaign message
➢ Candidates must get training for behavior before the media (O' Day 1998:36).

3. Press Conferences

Press conferences are one of the most important tools of political campaigns and with the dominance of electronic media in the process of creation of the public opinion they are becoming even more important. The primary function of press conferences is to inform the public of the latest developments and findings of political parties. As you can see below, successful press conferences are actions that are well-thought in advance and that have representation of instantaneous response to a specific event or situation. Hence they may be initially divided into incident and expected press conferences. Often press conferences are inspired and serve as a response to an earlier press conference (given by opponents) or doubts and accusations from the public. Press conferences primarily are convened to inform the public and the media about something new and they imply extremely good relationship between the entity that convened the press conference and the media. The timing of scheduling the press conference is a very important factor in determining political advantage and implies a seriously prepared strategy. Of particular importance is the good relationship with the media as transmitters at the press conference and in cases when the media have expressed a critical attitude towards the content presented at the press conference, because every serious press conference in advance foresees the unpleasant questions and provides some of the answers and integrates them into the main statement[1]. During electoral campaigns political parties organize daily morning press conferences. It allows political parties to announce the campaign theme for the day. At the same time these press conferences allow to present the work of researchers.

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[1]In exceptional cases, political entities who convene a press conference can resort to selective invitation to the media (this often happens with unpopular government measures) in order to control the critical dimensions of the media questions. Often this tactic does no good and the selective approach is an indicator of something problematic in the entity that convenesthe press conference.

One should make sure the press conferences have topics relevant to the public, in order to get attention in the media and to influence on the opinion of voters about the electoral candidates who will perform public function, and participate in the elections[2].

When it comes to press conferences as part of political campaigns - especially in electoral period, one should bear in mind that this is an extremely intense communication and therefore preparations for such press conferences deviate from the usual protocol for a press conference. For example, it is obvious that very useful rule - invitations for a press conference to be sent at least three days prior to the press conference, so that journalists can plan their schedules - can not be completely applies, because the intensity of such events does not allow such adherence to the protocol[3].

Press conferences are organized in the morning so that the information from the press conference can be used in the afternoon news. They often serve for accusations of opponents in the electoral campaign. Press conferences are part of the overall communication strategy and stick strictly to the information that should be passed on to the public. If some side questions are asked about the activities or accusations from opponents, just a short answer is provided and than the conference continues on the theme for which it is intended (O'Day, 1998:35). If they get serious accusations from opponents that can make serious damage to the reputation and the result of the party and the candidate, it is possible to organize emergency press conferences to respond to the accusations and these are usually timed so that, on one hand they be covered by TV stations, but without a possibility to get immediate counter response from the opponents, which in such case are supposed to respond to the morning press conference, which leaves all night , time enough for the news from the press conference to expand and to achieve the desired effect. The term for such extraordinary press conferences is usually before the TV stations finish with collecting of information for the afternoon news and before printing the newspapers.

There are many reasons for convening a press conference, below is a selective review of the frequent reasons for holding press conferences:

➢ To gain publicity for the efforts and problems
➢ To get wide media coverage
➢ To send a message to those who decide what is a priority
➢ To gain more people for the organization / the party
➢ To develop skills among members
➢ To express the strength of the group / the party

In regard to the protocol of running the press conferences, we distinguish structured and improvised press conferences. In the first type, this is often a case when a press conference is conducted by the candidate himself, a president or another senior officials of the party, but there is at least one person (moderator) who, once the announcement is read, selects the journalists or the media that can ask questions of the one who holds the press conference –the purpose of which is greater efficiency and greater transparency (example of such press conferences are the press conferences of the U.S. President in the White House). While in the second type, after the completion of the main announcement, the one who presents the announcement immediately decides which journalist or medium will get the right to ask a question first. Press conferences can be used to share to reporters, biographies of candidates for election in the public governance, information about the campaign, press clippings, election program, promotional material etc. In terms of the strengths and weaknesses of press conferences, one may point out that the good side of this kind of communication with the public is the avoidance of repetition of information or the information which should be made public by different reporters in different interviews. The greatest effect on media coverage is achieved when all (relevant) media are gathered in one place[4].

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[2]Although it may sound trivial, but the first thing that any serious planner of press conferences has to do is to constantly renew and refresh the list of relevant journalists and media that should be invited to a press conference. Also he needs to follow the daily schedule of events to make sure that at the same time when he scheduled the press conference, there is not other scheduled conference.

[3]In the regular preparations for press conferences, in addition to paying attention to the appropriate time to send invitations, an approach is made tpwards a*follow up* phase where the one who sends the invitations forthe press conference followshow many attendants from the media and journalists have received and responded to invitations.

[4]The advantage of a news conference, on the other hand, is reflected in the possibility for the reportnot to fully cover the event, i.e. what a journalist does not have in hisfield report, is contained in the report of another journalist and what a reporter will forget to ask the politician, this will be done by someone else.

The weaknesses of press conferences is that by the very nature, the news of this type of communication can`t enjoy the status of exclusivity. Skilled organizers of the press conference can convince reporters of the exceptional importance of the event although after the press conference is terminated, they may determine that this is not true[5].

4. Debate

The debates are kind of communication in which many individuals discuss on a particular topic. In the beginning, there should be an emphasis on the differences that exist between different voice tools for gaining the trust and support of the public. This primarily refers to the differences between discussion, debate and dialogue. These forms of communication are not only different in external features, but have a completely different purpose of the output result. Hence, Tanya Kachawata makes a summary schematic representation of few previous observantins between discussion, debate and dialogue:

In DISCUSSION we try to…	In DEBATE we try to…	In Dialogue we try to…
Present ideas	Succeed or win	Broaden our perspective
Seek answers and solutions	Look for weakness	Look for sheared meanings
Persuade others	Stress disagreement	Find places for agreement
Enlist others	Defend our opinion	Express paradox and ambiguity
Share information	Focus on `right` and `wrong`	Bring out areas of ambivalence
Solve our own and others` problems	Advocate one perspective or opinion	Allow for and invite differences of opinion and experience
Give answers	Search for flaws in logic	Discover collective meaning
Achieve preset goals	Judge other viewpoints as inferior, invalid or distorsed	Challenge ourselves and other`s preconceived notions
Acknowledge feelings, then discount them as inappropriate	Deny other`s feelings	Explore thoughts and feelings
Listen for places of disagreement	Listen with a view of countering	Listen without judgment and with a view to understand
Avoid feelings	Discount the validity of feelings	Validate other`s experiences and feelings
Avoid areas of strong conflict and difference	Focus on conflict and difference as advantage	Articulate areas of conflict and difference
Retain relationships	Disregard relationships	Build relationships
Avoid silence	Use silence to gain advantage	Honor silence

Source: Tanya Kachawata 2002.

Debates as an exchange of opinions through conversation between several individuals do not have to be related exclusively to electoral campaigns, such as the theme of the debate does not necessarily have to be political[6]. However, the first association of debates refers to political debates during electoral campaigns.

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[5]Depending on the nature of the content that is presented at the press conference, photos and other graphical material from the press conference in agreement with the organizers, is sent to media houses, and sometimes when it is possible, considering the frequently dense election agenda, the graphical material is distributed at the event.

[6]There are different categorizations of debates but one of the primary ones is that it divides them into individual and team debates. In the literature of the huge number of debates, commonly referred are the parliamentary one, online debate, Karl Popper debate, presidential, parliamentary, British, Lincoln-Douglas debate, high school debate, legislative, Mock-trial, cross-examination, public debate, public debate forums, Speech Events (which has several of subtypes: Imprompty Speaking, Extremporaneous Speaking,)Platform Speaking Events (Inormative speaking and Persuasive Speaking), Interpretative Events (Prose Interpretation, Poetry Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duo Dramatic Interpretation, Programed Oral Interpretation) etc.

The political debates during electoral campaigns are kind of public communication in which aspirants for performing a public function, debate by representing their electoral platforms and exposing their personal positions, leaving space for notes by the opponent and allowing voters to compare and thus to decide which candidate should get their vote[7]. In all other forms of communication with voters, the candidates for implementation of public politics communicate with the citizens, the debate is a place where they interact with opponents and before the eyes of the public. Unlike other types of communication that have limited impact on voters because of bias, the debates have the greatest impact on the thinking of undecided voters. The debates between presidential candidates are one of the most watched television events in the United States but also in other countries where such debates were organized. Just as an example, the first debate between George Bush Junior and Al Gore Junior in 2000 was seen by 46.6 million people. When it comes to the impact of campaigns on the outcome of the elections, Norton and Goethals (2004: 228) citing Schrott (1990) concluded that the perception of the outcome of the debates shows a high correlation with the final outcome of the elections. On the other hand, Strimson (2004: 133) points out that the debate in USA takes place at the end of the campaign, at a time when the majority of voters already have a certain political party or candidate that would have given their vote for, which reduces the effectiveness of the campaign in regard to the impact they have on the electoral behavior of voters.

4.1. Effects of Debates

According to Trent, Friedenberg and Denton (2011:282), it would be difficult to determine the effects of the debates, for several reasons: it is difficult to construct a methodology which will be used in order to follow the debates and their effects, because debates differ from one another, debates can`t be isolated from the rest of the campaign and the overall political life, and it is hard to track the reasons for the electoral behavior of citizens, the insufficient exploration of the debates in the social sciences, the inability to control the debate, to repeat the same etc. as this is the case when doing laboratory experiments. However, some effects of the debates in electoral campaigns are undisputed. Such effects are:

➢ Increasing of the audience during campaigns, through the great popularity that debates have. The debates attract more attention than any other activity during the electoral campaign. Debates, even when it comes to local elections, because of the opposing views and the drama they carry with them, cause great ratings on TV. So the expectations for the CBS debate for presidential elections in 1960 between Kennedy and Nixon were that 100 million people will watch, the debate between Carter and Ford in 1976 was watched, at least partially by 70% of Americans, while the first debate between Kerry and Bush Jr. in 2004 was watched by 62 million viewers

➢ They reinforce the views of those who support one of the candidates before the debate. So after the debate between Kennedy and Nixon, the researchers could not find a significant shift in the support for the two candidates, but found more support for the two candidates by those who had already supported them

➢ It increases the awareness of the audience on matters of public good. This is especially true for the under-informed voters.

The debates during electoral campaigns are especially typical for the electoral campaigns in the United States. The history of televised debates between the candidates for U.S. president have their beginning with the legendary debates Kennedy - Nixon in the presidential electoral campaign in 1960. Many believe that debates had a crucial influence on Kennedy's victory in these elections. Especially great damage to the Nixon election results was cause by the first of four debates. In these debates Nixon entered as a candidate with more political experience which he had from the position of vice president for which previously he was elected twice, but in these debates according to many people, Kennedy showed greater knowledge of key topics, more confidence and he left a better overall impression between voters. Additionally in one of the debates, Kennedy had such serious problems with the make-up that Chicago Daily News, on its front page, speculated that it may be a matter of sabotage (Stempel III and Gifford 1999:73).

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[7]When it comes to debates during electoral campaigns , lately a frequent occurrence that gains importance and has adequate influence on the outcome of the elections is the so called "Expert debates" where from the position of personally uninvolved people, the participants in television studios include analysts, journalists and university professors. It is not excluded that such debates can be transformed into discussions where the invited guests build their own viewpoints on the candidates, the political parties, the electoral programs and the role and influence of the media during the campaign. As part of contemporary political culture, this kind of debates in some of the most influential global media (CCN, BBS, Aljazeera etc.) have grown into a realanalytic-commentary stars such as Fared Zakaria, Christina Amanpur etc.

The next debate between the candidates for President of the United States took place in the 1976 campaign. One could say that ever since them, the debates between presidential candidates almost became an institution in the presidential electoral campaigns, directly regulated by the decisions of the Federal Communications Commission (Federal Communication Commission) and without them it would be hard to imagine an electoral campaign in USA (Lilleker, 2006 : 54). Since 1988, the debates between the candidates for president and vice president of the United States are sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD), which was formed a year earlier, despite the fact that it sponsors the debates and undertakes research and educational activities related to the debates (Kaid and Holdz-Bacha, editors 2008:119).

When the difference in the support enjoyed by presidential candidates is tight, the debates can be one of the moments that can be decisive for the elections. For example, the presidential elections in Serbia in 2012, after the first round, little advantage of 2% was achieved by the Democratic Party candidate and current President of Serbia - Boris Tadic, who before the second round got support by all major parties in Serbia[8] excluding the party of his rival, Nikolic[9]. All measurements of the public opinion showed that Tadic will certainly be re-elected President of Serbia. But after the debate held on 16.05.2012, in the elections held on 20.05.2012, Tomislav Nikolic was elected president. One of the reasons besides the poor motivation of the supporters of Tadic to go to the polls, believing that he will surely win, is the debate from 16.05.2012 which particularly emphasizes the importance of a sentence which Nikolic repeated during this debate "Punish Tadic".

4.2. Terms and Conditions for Debate

Like any other type of communication, the debate also takes place according to certain rules. The rules under which the debate takes place should be specific and clear for each of the participants in the debate. Depending on the rules, we can make a distinction between a debate with and without a mediator. Usually in debates despite participants, there is also a mediator of the debate that asks questions to the participants in the debate. It is possible for the mediator to ask selected questions from the audience. One of the rules of the debate may be the time which participants in the debate have in order to answer questions from the mediator, time for potention remarks of the attitudes of the opponents and the answers to comments. Also the right to indicate notes about the attitudes of opponents is usually limited to a reasonable level, so that the entire the debate is reduced to the remarks and responses to comments. In addition to ask in questions, the role of mediator is to monitor and prevent potential violations of the rules of debate. The mediator of the debate, but also the editor of the medium can sometimes intervene in the debate if serious violations of the debate behavior happen such as threats, hate speech etc.

4.3. The Role of the Audience in Debates

The debate provides an opportunity to the candidates for a certain public function to address the voters in a direct manner, without the mediation of media interpretations. At the same time, since it is a kind of public communication that involves multiple candidates, the debate allows comparison of the candidates and their programs, as well as recognition of their shortcomings in dealing with opponents. Because of immediacy and the ability to compare candidates and political programs they propose, debates arouse great interest among the audience. Usually this is the most watched part of the electoral campaigns. Due to the interest that it arouses in the public, the supporters of political parties and their candidates, especially in a part of the undecided voters, who are not normally interested in politics, the debate is a good opportunity for the candidates to convince undecided voters to vote for their candidate.

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[8]Among the parties who supported Boris Tadic before the second round of the presidential elections were the Socialist Party, which had the support of 16 % of the electorate and was third-place finisher, behind the Progressive Party and the Democratic Party. Also Tadic got support in the second round by the Liberal Democratic Party and the United Regions of Serbia, which also secured seats in the parliamentary elections (which means they had more than 5% support from the voters),which were held together with the first round of Presidential elections.
[9]Besides the Progressive Party, behind the nomination of Nikolic in the second round was also the Democratic Party of Serbia of Vojislav Kostunica, which barely crossed the census of 5% for entry into the parliament in the parliamentary elections

Therefore, in countries where the debate has not raised itself to the level of informal institution of the electoral campaign, usually candidates and political entities who have less support from voters challenge their challengers in the debate, hoping that in this manner they will get the attention of neutral voters and later in the debate they will get their support. Those who have more support from voters usually do not want to risk by losing support and often do not accept participation in such debates.

4.4. Interpretation of Debates and Their Repercussion

As there are different traditions of holding or non-holding a debate during the electoral campaign, there are also different interpretations of the same. On the one hand there is an opinion that if there is a serious difference in the support of the citizens, the party / candidate who is ahead would tend to reduce the risks imposed by a possible mistake in such a debate, and accordingly the likelihood that the party / candidate who has a serious advantage will appear at the debate is very small. On the other hand, one could assume that if the majority of people are already committed to a candidate before the debate begins, they would prefer to interpret the debate to the perspective of their own preference for the given choices, which significantly reduces the risk of debacle of any of the candidates, especially of the one who has serious advantage. But even the minimum loss of support from viewers at certain moments can imply defeat in the elections, especially if the candidates have similar support from voters.

5. Computer -Mediated Communication (Use of Websites for the Purpose of Electoral Campaigns)

With the advancement of the use of the Internet and social networks, an increased number of citizens gets information about politics with the mediation of the Internet. This is even more true if one knows that the Internet is increasingly integrating information and contents of traditional media such as TV and radio show, as well s newspapers that are available online. Authors differ in regard to the number of people who get their information online. So according to Packer, (2004) in 2004 in USA, 13% of the citizens got political information online, while according to Williams and Trammel (2005: 560) that number gradually grew from 3% in 1996, 11 % in 2000, up to 21 % in 2004. Regardless of the differences that arise between authors regarding the number of people who have used the Internet as a source of information for politics, all agree that since this campaign and further on, the Internet has become one of the dominant media through which political actors and citizens communicate during the electoral campaign (Criado and Martinez-Fuentes, 2007).

Organizers of political campaigns are increasingly using the Internet to achieve the objectives of electoral campaigns. The very use of the Internet and more specifically, websites of political parties, according to Pippa Norris (2003), increase their field of view i.e. opens wider perspectives of voters in the selection of the party and the candidate to vote for, but gives greater opportunity for voters to participate in political life and increasing alternative views in the political spectrum. According to Kaid (2002), the advantage of the Internet is reflected in increased opportunities for interaction among political parties and citizens. Internet campaigns can be used for different purposes: to mobilize citizens and to persuade them (Davis 1999). Unlike traditional media, the Internet provides higher quality and faster communication, bidirectional communication and the opportunity to see the feedback of the audience. Hence, party websites are a significant part of the political communication and can lead to increase of the representativeness of democratic institutions. Namely, the campaign led through the website is relatively inexpensive, while allowing direct communication between the organizer of the campaign / the candidate and the voters.

Political campaigns organized through websites have their own evolutionary path of development since 1992 when in the campaign of Bill Clinton, for the first time, all speeches, biographical data, as well as the electoral which stipulates specific policies, were put online to date. Since, in that time a limited number of people had access to the then, new technology of communication, then the effect of the campaign through the Internet was not very large. Already in the 1996 campaign, parties and candidates created official campaign pages. This campaign for candidates was so important that the candidate of the Republican Party in those elections, Bob Dole, in his closing remarks from the first debate of the presidential candidates, among other things, indicated the address on its website, which resulted in more than 2 million visits of the address in first 24 hours (Farries, 2005: 33).

Every political entity that organizes campaign and nearly every candidate for election for carring out public works, creates his own internet site. Internet pages of the campaigns, parties, candidates are basically a communication tool for distribution of information to a wide audience.

Creating your own website is relatively inexpensive compared to the use of other techniques of conveying the message of the electoral campaign. Also internet websites give a lot of unlimited space for promotion of the candidates through a mix of printed, video, audio materials, which have not previously passed the filter that materials which are presented in traditional electronic mass media must pass. This makes the communication between candidates and voters easier and more comprehensive, and it makes websites one of the most commonly used tools of political marketing in electoral campaigns. Besides internet websites, in the campaigns there are other forms of use of the Internet such as sites of political parties of allied and ideologically close organizations, news, informative portals, blogs, network of blogs etc.

In terms of content, the site of the candidate is a place where very useful information for the candidate can be presented during the campaign, commercials etc. The website of the campaign must contain:

➢ Data about applicant: name, surname of the candidate, his biographical data, information about his family life, education, work experience and key elements of his political positions
➢ Data about the political party that candidates him, its structure, leadership, political programs and electoral program with the policies set forth in specific areas
➢ Basic information about the campaign: the names and contacts of campaign managers, a calendar of important events of the campaign, as well as the time and place of meetings with citizens, footage of events already held in the campaign etc.
➢ Information and links to media coverage of the campaign
➢ Contact information for campaign organizers at central and local levels, candidates and persons obliged for contact with citizens, leaving citizens the opportunity to comment on the content of the site, and to give their suggestions, space for donations by citizens (Dervan, 2003)

Analyzing the opportunities provided by the opening of the websites of the candidates in the presidential elections, Schneider and Foot (2002) state that they can distinguish six types of content that can be placed on them: information intended to persuade visitors of the correctness of the given party politics, political education, conversations on politics, voters' mobilization, promotion of the candidate and participation in candidate campaigns. From all these features on their websites, candidates consistently use only two types of content: information to persuade voters and participation in elections. Other types of activities are undervalued as content on the websites of the candidates.

With all the advantages of a campaign by creating its own web page, it is a passive type of campaign. The voter should open the page to see the contents placed on it. This is mostly done by fans and supporters of the candidates. Hence we can say that it is very effective at finding the target group of the election campaign, which includes the undecided voters (O'Day, 1998:36). However, with all the disadvantages that brings with itself, communicating with voters through the web sites, in the U.S. in 1996, 5 % of voters used the information from political websites to inform themselves about the campaign, further research shows that the attention of TV viewers can be kept for a maximum of 30 seconds, while people in the U.S. spend an average of 8.5 minutes asking and reading information on the websites of political campaigns. In addition, during the campaign for the parliamentary elections held in 1998 in Sweden, 44 % of citizens have visited the website of the Social Democratic Party (Dervan, 2003). Similarly visitors of the website of the McCain campaign in 2000 spent an average of eight minutes, which is much more than the 30 seconds of attention that voters dedicate to a political ad (Potter and Manatt 2002 : 30). This just shows that with all restrictions on the structure of visitors to the sites, campaign organizers should seriously take care of the content found on the sites of the campaign, where political parties organize campaigns and on sites of candidates.

Using websites in election campaigns has attracted the interest of social sciences for research of this phenomenon. According to Farries (2005:20), given the scale, there are three types of research of the use of websites in election campaigns:

➢ Research focused on features, content and categories of pages of the campaign, parties, candidates, these surveys are often used for at least two reasons: the conducting of such research does not require additional technical knowledge and empirical research material required is readily available. The second reason is that when they encounter the necessity to make a new type of research, researchers usually apply descriptive approach trying to come to a conclusion as campaign websites are arranged, and how it should be regulated, depending on the goals and standards;

- Small-scale research focused on how certain online user uses the website, of the campaign, of the party, the candidate. These studies explore the requirements, preferences and objections of users of certain content on the websites. Instead of dealing with the style and content of the campaign, researchers with this type of campaign deal with the acceptance of the site by users.
- Researches of smallest scale that focus on specific issues related to campaign strategists.

5.1. Blogs in Electoral Campaign

Blogs are like online diaries where information after elections is publish, updated and presented and they were one of the first manners to uses of possibilities that the Internet opens for the purpose of electoral campaigns (Blood, 2005; Keren, 2004). An important feature of blogs is that they allow interactivity or can provide readers comments of the content featured on the blog. Observed from the perspective of one who governs a blog, blogging has several advantages over other forms of communication with voters. The frequency of the given information and their volume is determined by the blogger. The blogger decided on the style that he will use to communicate with voters. He can set up his own text or text to convey the mass media on his blog. The blogger has the ability to filter comments and engage in discussion on a particular topic placed on the blog (Criado and Martinez-Fuentes, 2007: 11).

Blog as a means of communication appeared in 1999, when Pyra Labs created the program blogger. This program provides constant updating of information. After her owner became Google, this communication tool is constantly evolving and there are an increasing number of users. Blogging among others is increasingly being used in political communication, particularly in electoral campaigns. Many consider blogging had a serious impact on the U.S. presidential election in 2004. (Kirk 2005: 548). For example, Howard Dean has used his own blog to get mass support to be nominated as a candidate for president in 2004 presidential elections. (Troppi, 2004). Criado and Martinez-Fuentes (2007) write that blogging is an important part of the election campaign in Spain. According to these authors blogging can be used for multiple purposes in the election campaign such as dissemination of reports on campaign advertising to candidates in elections, expressing the views of political parties or candidates in certain current issues, comparing the results of measurements of public opinion etc. Still, blogging never reached the popularity of websites in election campaigns, but it has its own value and is an integral part of every well-designed electoral campaign. Until now blogging has seriously affected one part of the electorate.

5.2. Using Electronic Mail in Electoral Campaigns

With the growth of new technologies and the growing number of people who use e- mail, the organizers of the electoral campaign saw the opportunity for successful presentation of their programs and candidates to voters. The illustration for the advancement of the use of e-mail will indicate that in the U.S. in 2000, 46 % of population used e- mail, in 2003 this number was 57 %, while in 2006 it was 70 % (Green and Gerber 2008: 97) .

The use of electronic mail to send messages to voters has its advantages which are reflected in the fact that when having e-mail addresses, very large numbers of people can be very quickly and very cheaply contacted (Green and Gerber 2008: 97). Those we are addressing to, can very easily communicate messages to their friends, whereby the network of those who receive the message dramatically increases. The content of messages can be very flexible and easy to shape, preferably with electronic referral letter to the links to additional promotional content for the candidate and his program. As noted by Cornfield (2004) significant advantage of e- mail in terms of web pages as it that through e-mail the message is sent directly to the user, and Internet stations are intended for general audiences and possess more general information.

Electronic mail in the campaign for presidential elections in the United States for the first time was massively used in 1996. At that time the campaign paid serious attention to collecting mail addresses by the supporters order to establish easier contact. Farries (2005: 36) citing Benoit and Benoit (2000) concluded that in this campaign the Democrat candidate Bill Clinton was able to collect mail addresses of 10.000 supporters, while the campaign of the Republican Party, the rival Bob Dole managed to snap 75.000 addresses of their supporters. These data helped for quicker, easier and cheaper communication during the campaign. Also during the elections in 2000, the senator from Arizona at that time, and later presidential candidate of the Republican Party, John McCain via email, contacted 43.000 supporters (Williams and Trammel, 2005: 560).

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