Political Advertising on Social Media

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Abstract: *"Tomorrow is full of unknowns" is what most people would say today. What is more, tomorrow is not guaranteed either. However, there are tasks that fall to us. Such a task would be getting as informed as possible about the leader of one's country and making others aware of how important this is. The leader of a country is a very important figure and plays an essential role in the organization of a country. The choice of the leader is in the hands of the citizens in countries such as Romania, which have a republican system of government. The ongoing evolution of technology and all the devices that help to use it, together with the introduction of new ones, have brought about new practices for their most careful functioning and operation. People with diverse backgrounds have had to adapt to current trends. Social networks such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok are the best examples. From the advent of each individual social network to the present day, they have encountered and had to introduce and accept a long series of updates.*

Keywords: *politics, leader, social media platforms, technology*

1. Introduction

The world we live in is constantly changing. Designs do not stay the same, people evolve too, and so does technology. All these changes have caused quite a stir and brought along as many new things as possible, which have either supplanted existing practices or replaced them (Guyot, 1992).

In advertising, each change has had an impact. Advertising has the ability to mirror current trends so as to keep up with consumer needs and wants. This ability is essential to the development of the field, so that it can merge with other individual fields (Guyot, 1992).

Political advertising on social media plays a significant role for both sides. It can help the consumer who receives information, whether they seek it voluntarily or not, and it can better inform them about issues in the field, whereas for those working in the field, just accessing the pages and having as many people follow them as possible is a gain - the satisfaction that their work is appreciated (Guyot, 1992).

Although Romania was not a country to embrace advertising in all its various forms from the very beginning, advertising in Romania has managed to stand out and highlight all the benefits it brings along. It has equally managed to be acknowledged as very effective not only in attracting as many consumers as possible, but also in representing the image of the product, service or whatever else is being promoted.

The purpose of advertising is to make a product, brand, institution, person, service, activity or important cause as well-known as possible (Marhuenda, 2002).

2. Research methods

Two research methods have been used to investigate election advertising: content analysis and comparative analysis. The former involves a close examination of different aspects related to the communication of political information through social media. On the other hand, comparative analysis involves identifying as many

similarities and differences as possible between two or more election campaigns.

These research methods are very useful; if applied accurately, they greatly facilitate reaching the research objectives. Putting these methods into practice means paying special attention to important aspects such as the language used to address the public, the colours, symbols and slogans used, among others.

Hypothesis 1: Advertising varies greatly, depending on how it is carried out, as it involves a great deal of subjectivity, among other factors. In addition to creativity, advertising evolves with the people and with the passage of time. Advertising may also vary according to the size of the project; hence, some campaigns need to be bigger than others.

Hypothesis 2: Social media started to be used for this purpose, and consequently, political advertising has also moved in this direction. The popularity of political ads has increased with the help of political party members or political alliances. These ads ended up being viewed by more people than they would have been viewed, had they not appeared on social media.

3. Results

To analyse political advertising for the Romanian elections on 9 June 2024, two mayoral candidates from different political parties in Timișoara were selected, alongside two competing political alliances for the European Parliament elections held on the same day. A comprehensive analysis of their advertising on the Instagram social network was conducted, followed by a comparative analysis to contrast the campaigns.

Additionally, a comparison was made between an advertisement for a candidate in the local elections and one for a candidate in the European Parliament elections, focusing on their structure, similarities, and differences. The aim was to identify the key elements of successful election advertising and understand the efforts required to make campaign advertisements as engaging and appealing as possible to the

public. Both research methods provided support for the two hypotheses established at the outset of the study.

In line with the first hypothesis, advertising appears to vary significantly depending on its execution, influenced by a range of subjective factors. Alongside creativity, advertising evolves with society and over time. Additionally, the scale of the project plays a role, with some campaigns requiring a larger scope than others.

The second hypothesis aimed to demonstrate that social media has increasingly been utilised for political advertising. Political campaigns have shifted towards this medium, with the popularity of political ads growing due to the involvement of political party members or alliances. As a result, these ads reached a larger audience than they would have without the presence on social media platforms.

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111 aprecieri

gheorghe_falca Dragi prieteni,

Cu emoție și determinare, vă anunț că mă voi prezenta din nou în fața voastră pentru a candida pentru un nou mandat în Parlamentul European. A fost o onoare să vă reprezint și să lupt pentru interesele României și ale românilor în Uniunea Europeană.

În noul mandat, îmi propun să continui munca în domeniul transporturilor și infrastructurii, să veghez la gestionarea responsabilă a bugetelor europene, să promovez extinderea Spațiului Schengen și să lupt pentru o mai mare vizibilitate și recunoaștere a României și a românilor în cadrul Uniunii Europene.

Contez pe susținerea voastră și pe încrederea pe care mi-ați acordat-o în trecut. Împreună, putem construi un viitor mai bun pentru România și pentru întreaga Europă.

gabrielafirea 🇪🇺 Ocup locul trei pe lista alianței PSD-PNL la alegerile europarlamentare din 9 Iunie. Vă mulțumesc că îmi sunteți alături!

4. Conclusions

This study combines two domains that tend to have opposing levels of interest among students: politics, a subject that young people often appear less engaged with, and social media, a medium they frequently access in their free time. Given the background in advertising studied during the master's degree in Communication and Public Relations, there was a strong interest in exploring political advertising on social media.

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