



Political Marketing in a Changing World: Global, National and Regional Dimensions

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Political Marketing in a Changing World: Global, National and Regional Dimensions

In the memory of Professor Svetlana Vinogradova (1950–2019)

In the run up to the fifth Political Marketing Forum in St. Petersburg (Russia) in July 2016, one of the major personalities in the planning and organization was Svetlana Vinogradova, known to many scholars and students over the years for her friendly and open attitude to those fortunate enough to meet and work with her. Svetlana carried a very commanding and yet welcoming presence with her, which is appreciated by all. Unfortunately, in the year 2019, Svetlana lost her battle, just short of seeing this special issue being realized. The editors of the special issue would like to dedicate the special issue to the memory of this extraordinary researcher and wonderfully warm personality that is Svetlana Vinogradova.

Overview of political marketing forum 2016

The fifth Political Marketing Forum (PMF-2016) was hosted on 20–23 July 2016 in St. Petersburg (Russia). The Forum was devoted to the important and actual theme of “Political Marketing in a Changing World: Global, Regional and National Dimensions.” This event was hosted by St. Petersburg State University, which built on some of the previous themes raised in the previous Forum held in Uppsala (Sweden) in 2015. It was chaired by Professor Svetlana Vinogradova. Members of the Organizing committee were Professor Konstantin Pantserev, Associate Professor Dmitrii Rushchin, and Professor Natalia Tsvetkova (all from St Petersburg State University).

In recent years, the problems of political marketing have become the subject of in-depth attention of theorists and practitioners specializing in mass communication and political technologies. This is evidenced by the experience of the previous annual international forums dedicated to the theme of political marketing. The first two—held in 2012 (Champagne-Urbana, USA) and 2013 (Budapest, Hungary)—focused on Eastern Europe and the Eurasian region. The following meeting was held in 2014 in Bucharest (Romania), it was devoted to the interaction of the theory and practice of political marketing. The goal of the fourth forum 2015 (Uppsala, Sweden) has expanded the range of research in the field of political marketing. The 2016 forum was attended by participants from Italy, China, Latvia, Poland, Russia, the United States, Turkey, Germany, Sweden, Estonia and other countries with a total of 55 speakers.

The fifth international forum in St. Petersburg (PMF-16) became a real discussion forum, a platform for discussing problems that arise in the development of global political marketing. This is all the more relevant because both professional marketers and representatives of the academic community were able to exchange views. Professor Svetlana Vinogradova emphasized that the idea of change was central to this meeting, because everything changes in the modern world. The configuration of the world is changing, new political forces are coming. It depends on those who work in the field of political marketing and PR, together with what will be the political choice of the people. And the problem of political choice today is of vital importance, both inside any particular given country and outside of it.

Aims and goals of the special issue

Political marketing has developed significantly in terms of its focus, breadth and depth from the late 20th century origins (Newman 1999). Politics touches many more aspects of our modern lives. Contemporary modern political realities have not only witnessed color revolutions, but also brought to life a new type of revolution, which is that of marketing. In this global political environment the role and relevance of marketing as a revolutionary and all-encompassing influence of political marketing has been the increasing focus of academic research (Newman 2016). But just how far and wide does the reach of political marketing extend in the global political environments? Do we need to extend the empirical focus to include new areas that have been previously not considered?

The goals and objectives of the special issue are to introduce various approaches, ideas and features of political marketing in a globalizing and changing world. The papers in this special issue investigate different aspects of the political marketing in global, national and regional dimensions. Now we could realize the huge importance of the marketing revolution and the growing role of new media in the electoral process and political changes.

The organizers and participants of the forum had several interrelated tasks: to identify the relationship between the old and the new in modern marketing technologies, to analyze the models of political marketing that have emerged not only in the West, but also in other regions of the world, which means to master new areas of functioning of this phenomenon and to consider the prospects for its further study at the academic level. The speakers revealed the problems of interaction between producers and consumers of a political product, as well as traced the relationship between political marketing, public relations, political management and soft power (Vinogradova and Rushchin 2015: 35–38). Thus these are the foundations for making political marketing more multi-and-interdisciplinary in nature, shifting it from the original election focus to the constant political campaign and now to include aspects of foreign policy, international relations and even security studies.

The broadening of the application of the political marketing lens to include “non-traditional” actors and circumstances is a necessary step in order to facilitate a better understanding of communicating actors’ attempts to influence the cognitive realm of their target audiences in an attempt to affect outcomes that favor their political agenda. For example, Baines and O’Shaughnessy’s (2014) special issue in the *Journal of Political Marketing* that examines the relationship and use of propaganda and contemporary political marketing in a globally marketed political environment. There are also, increasingly, attempts to understand the role and actions of non-state actors that include notorious terrorist organizations and their attempts to create relationships with global publics (Simons 2018). Political marketing is still a young academic discipline and a professional practice, which is evolving rapidly in a transforming global political landscape that both imitates and innovates within the fields of political communication in order to try and gain that key and critical advantage over an opponent.

Articles in this special issue

In this special issue there are a total of five, very different articles that coverage a broad range of contemporary political marketing topics, issues and trends. These articles demonstrate the various trends, directions and influences of political marketing as a simultaneously rapidly evolving academic discipline and professional communicational practice. These five articles represent a cross-section of the Forum theme from 2016, *Political Marketing in a Changing World: Global, Regional and National Dimensions*.

The first paper to appear is by Andrzej Falkowski and Magdalena Jabłońska on *Framing in Political Evaluations: An Empirical Study on the Role of Positive and Negative Comparisons in Affect and Preference Construction*. A test was conducted of people’s ideal understanding of what constitutes an ideal and a bad politician via the framing used. This was then used as a means to measure the affective evaluation and preference for political candidates. The study demonstrates the power and effect of negativity on voters’ affective evaluations of political candidates.

In Search of the Americanisation: Candidates and Political Campaigns in European General Election by Rossana Sampugnaro and Francesca Montemagno is the second paper to appear. The authors argue that the means of digital communication have permitted an evolution in political consulting and have fundamentally changed election campaigns. An argument is made that Obama not only changed the way electioneering is done in the United States, but this model has been imported to European politics and elections. A special focus was paid to election techniques and the style of election campaign management.

Svetlana Vinogradova, Galina Melnik and Tatyana Shaldenkova are the authors of the third paper, *Political Technologies: The Interaction of Old and New*. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish and separate the effects and influences of old versus new communicational means and styles. A lot of attention has been given to new communication technologies that carry the message that is formatted and styled by older communications concepts and theories. They conclude that new technologies have helped to enhance the possibilities of political marketing and in the task of influencing target audiences.

The fourth article, *Public Diplomacy of Russia: From Soft Power to Political Communication*, by Natalia Tsvetkova and Dmitry Rushchin is the next to appear. The authors discuss the evolution of Russia's public diplomacy communications to international audiences in order to try and improve Russia's international image and reputation. They conclude that strategic communication and political marketing are the favored styles of persuasive communication. However, in spite of the increased attention and resources dedicated to improving Russia's international image, they identify weaknesses and threats to these foreign policy goals.

The fifth and final article in this special issue is *ISIS propaganda on the Internet, and Effective Counteraction* by Evgeny Pashentsev and Daria Bazarkina. In this article the authors conduct a logical and "cold" rational evaluation of the Islamic State's digital communications in order to assess the actual reasons why they were so effective in influencing target audiences. They reveal a very coordinated communication campaign of marketing the terror organization and its objectives. This was the first step of the article, the second step is to suggest ways to counter those communications in order to render them less effective.

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