



Electronic participation at election times

- *An **informal** study by participants of the eParticipation preparatory action*

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eParticipation

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Foreword

Recently there has been a major drive for innovative election campaigns such as Barack Obama's cutting edge US presidential campaign, or in Europe the recent French Presidential race. By contrast there is lesser acclaim for MEPs using eParticipation for their own innovative campaigns, particularly in the wake of European elections.

This is not to imply that there is a void of activity. For example, the 'ucount4eu' campaign uses an innovative digital marketing technique called 'the bug'. But is this effective? What can we learn from others? Where should we be heading?

This publication explores the efforts of the EC, parliament and MEPs taking stock of the recent European Parliament elections to build consensus about the use of eParticipation for campaigning, advocacy and the support of traditional activities.

Contributions have been made by members of the EC funded eParticipation preparatory projects and support action (MOMENTUM) in an attempt to increase the value of eParticipation among elected representatives and improve future electioneering.

The rationale is quite simple – while MOMENTUM is concerned with eParticipation between election times the impact of improved interim decision making is likely to have an affect *at* election times. Likewise MOMENTUM is interested to know if elections have an impact on the parallel flow of eParticipation, such as an increasing the volume of ePetitions.

"I think it'll be very useful if MEPs or candidates for the EP turn to online space for their campaign. They need to attract more young people to vote either for them or vote at all. Everyone knows that activity when there are elections in the whole EU is low and in my opinion online campaign will be a good sign for the readiness of the MEP to communicate with a big range of people. They must show they are people like everybody else and that they don't fear of talking (chatting) to people. After all we're in 21st century, there are new ways for communication and everybody must use them."

- Georgi Nikolov, EU citizen of Bulgaria and commenter on the European Parliament article "What impact will sites like Facebook and YouTube have in the EP elections?"



Fraser Henderson (ParticiTech)
on behalf of MOMENTUM

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Concepts

Relevance of eParticipation in digital campaigning

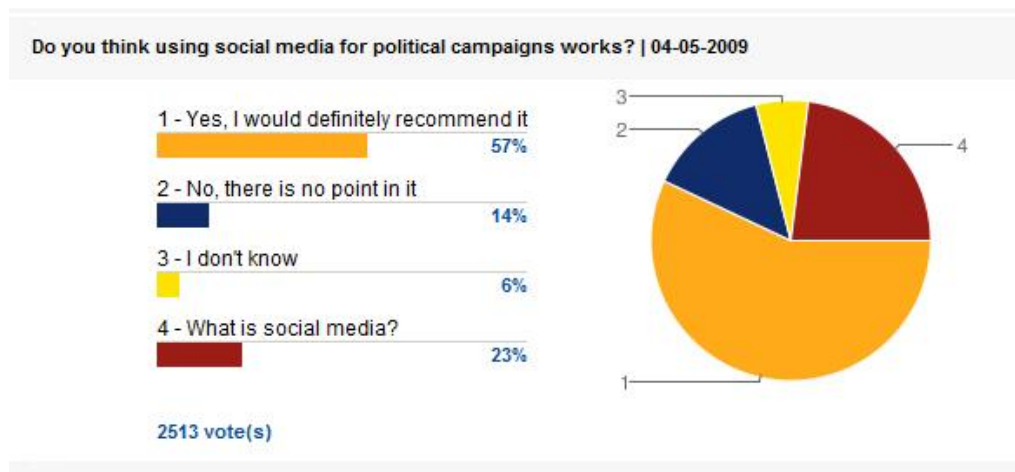
There is little doubt that the most effective mode of communication remains person to person speech and personal contact. However, digital channels such as the web are likely to be the first place that younger people (<30) refer-to for information. Engaging in the channels that constituents use to look for information is essential for a highly visible campaign.

"The Digital Space is the place to begin, because that is where the conversation starts."

-Jim Margolis, senior strategist to Senator Barack Obama's presidential campaign

The use of digital engagement methods such as new media can have either good or devastating effects, depending on what message is being spread. Networking in this way has the ability to attract mass audience, particularly young people but can alienate others such as the elderly or those with low socio-economic status. Despite this, digital campaigns which utilise technologies with high take-up such as mobile phones are in the minority compared to web-based initiatives.

In their own poll (below) the European Parliament rightly justifies the use of social media for its 2009 European election communication strategy. However, in creating the poll it also demonstrated that the fusion and blurring of online and offline spaces has created a mixed reality in terms of citizens really caring or understanding where their information is sourced – as long as it is convenient.



In terms of benefits there is an immediate and highly accessible audience which is low cost to attain but hard to follow and maintain. The lowered cost of self-organisation means that the internet and other digital forms of communication enhance off-line campaigns. However, the web makes message control more challenging, potentially less personal and more vulnerable. For example, digital content can be copied and manipulated with relative ease.

To be on-line you have to be very tolerant of lacking complete control of participation in something you're a little unsure about. Done right and what you get on-line can be decisive.

The key to a good on-line campaign is the candidate and practitioners must realise that a digital campaign can't out-perform the real world. Candidates with a personally compelling narrative and easy style and message that fit the times is most likely to succeed. Youth lends a connection to young people who take campaign to heart and work the hours. The ideal candidate is also willing. This must be a willingness to be open, to ask for views of supporters and to treat those seriously. Digital technologies are not particularly complicated to use but their effective use is quite challenging.

"On-line campaigning has given us the ability to directly communicate with supporters and to organise them"

- Matthew McGregor - BlueStateDigital London Director

"Though we have resources galore in terms of people and equipment, our operational budget - money to spend on communications activities - is, as we are frequently told by consultants, derisory. Especially for any sort of communications campaign involving the purchase of media space, we are simply not in the picture. Example: we can produce quite good TV spots, but we can't afford to get them broadcast where and when it matters. (For later reference, this is another good reason to look to viral distribution on the internet as a way ahead.)"

-Online EC communications' team

To summarise, digital campaigning is not a replacement for traditional campaigning. It is a means to do the old style engagement better, faster, cheaper and more transparently. The aim should be to harness enthusiasm and give people means to support in a variety of digital and traditional ways.

Barriers

The downside of digital campaigning

Social networks tend to react badly to the 'invasion' of corporate or concocted group activity in favour of amateur, home-made material. Consumers reflect this. For example, the YouTube video of UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown on MP expenses attracted around 35,000 views whereas the video of him picking his nose grossed over 380,000.

The seriousness of new media is therefore in question given that the space is a mildly anarchic stew of opinion and creativity that has little respect for hierarchy and authority. If those seeking to shape debate do not engage with it on its own terms, they could find themselves ignored, belittled or bypassed. Likewise, youth engagement cannot be solved as an issue with gimmicks. Politics must engage people on the basis of ideas and values.

Adverse reaction to content is almost inevitable. Imagine the politician with an interest in education who makes spelling mistakes in their blog or an un-moderated comment thread which contains unsuitable or abusive dialogue. As such, evidence of cynicism is riddled throughout comment dialogues of the European Parliament online campaign (example below).



The question remains around branding – if empowerment outcomes are not linked to online brand or identity then a possible solution would be to devolve the management of 'official' digital spaces such as the European Parliament Facebook group to third party advocates such as EuroNews.

Secondly there are issues of expectation. If a Google search takes less than a tenth of a second, why should it take any longer to get a request answered? Citizens are increasingly less tolerant of press releases or bland newspeak – they will expect a prompt, simple, intelligible, and above all human response - just as they will receive from their fellows online.

The online world is a faster world, a more chaotic world, and a more confusing world. Digital spaces are fundamentally more open and subsequently more honest and this creates challenges.

Baseline

On average Europeans spend more than 9 hours a week on the internet and around 66% are connected to social networks. In this sense an online communications strategy should not be underplayed.

Use of digital technologies by MEPs

The April 2009 Fleishman Hilliard Digital Trends survey reveals much about the habits of MEPs relating to their digital outreach. In their own work they use the internet extensively, some 93% of MEPs are estimated to use search engines daily to understand legislative issues (half of these citing Google as their search engine of choice).

It revealed that the overwhelming majority have a personal website and estimates that 80% of MEPs believe websites to be either very effective or effective in communicating to voters, making websites as effective as one-on-one meetings. But over half of the 110 MEPs surveyed weren't aware of the popular micro-blogging service 'Twitter'. Our own research estimates that there are about 105 MEPs who use Twitter, just over 13% of them.

The report also suggests that 24% of MEPs use a blog extensively but only 26% of MEPs who blog comment on other blogs once a week or more. Furthermore, only 33% of MEPs believe online advertising to be either a very effective or effective way to communicate to voters compared to 57% for TV advertising and 45% for print advertising. This is ironic as social media sites already exceed Television's reach.

CHAPTER 2: The 2009 European Elections

eParticipation in the 2009 elections

Overview

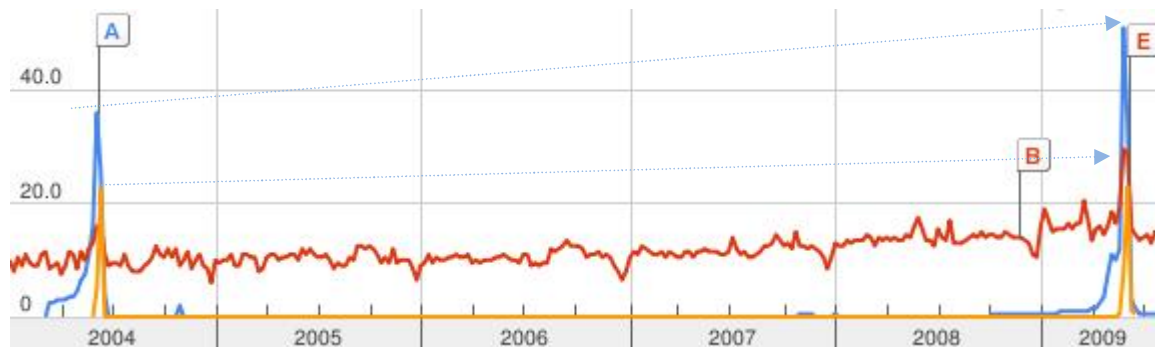
This year, approximately 375 million voters in 27 member states of the European Union had the opportunity to vote and elect 736 Members of the European Parliament.

However, according to the Eurobarometer conducted in February 2009, only 34% of citizens said they were ready to vote, 53% declaring themselves "not interested". Unfortunately this was no surprise as turnout in the European elections has been on a downward trend since 1979. The 2004 participation figure was just 45.5% for the EU as a whole and in 2009 this fell again to just 43%.

The internet as an election resource

A search trends analysis (relative to the number of searches on Google) was conducted around the 2009 European elections (below). This returned information on the words "European elections" [blue], "MEP [red]" and "European election results [orange]". Admittedly these are very UK centric search terms.

Three things are apparent - firstly there is a moderate, linear upward trend for the word "MEP" which peaks at election times; perhaps symbolic of their status or technological competence. Starker, however, is the search term "European elections" which still has very little volume until three months before election time.



However, the search volume index for "European elections" has almost doubled since 2004 which would indicate that there is significantly more relative online interest since the last election. Searches for European election results are only up slightly. The drop-off in search volume post-election is as sharp as in 2004 suggesting there is no loyalty or 'stickiness'.

A Google keyword insight (<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>) was also performed for the phrase "European elections". For the month of April the UK search volume was estimated as 27,100 whereas for May the UK figure was 201,000. The overall global figure for May was 246,000, up 5% on average. Hence supply and demand (public expectation) makes the case for exploiting the online channel.

Candidate activity around the 2009 European elections

According to a survey (carried for euobserver.com), the European elections have not resulted in a boost in the MEPs use of social media tools.

To test this hypothesis a sample of activities was collected across all 69 candidate activities within the region of Yorkshire and Humberside (UK) to determine the levels of campaigning on the digital channel. Searches were performed with Google in an attempt to replicate an end-user experience. Only personal activity was logged (i.e. non-party engineered initiative). Information was collected about the use of a personal website, Facebook, twitter and appearance in a top-10 search for regional election information. A full set of results is located in Appendix-A.

Activity levels varied widely between candidates with some using all the channels and others using none at all. Candidates who already held a seat as an MEP (i.e. up for re-election) tended to have more eParticipation activity than those who did not. The main political parties had the lions' share of online activity but the Greens and Independents also made a significant effort. Where individuals amassed an audience this tended to run into hundreds, not thousands of supporters.

There was no correlation between those parties with most active candidates and the balance of power pre or post election. For example, one party with no eParticipation activity (BNP) won its first MEP seat.

Nevertheless there were some good attempts at leveraging the medium (below: Yorkshire & Humber Labour party Facebook election pages – 212 supporters):-



facebook Remember Me

Sign Up Labour Yorkshire & Humber European election team 2009 is on Facebook
Sign up for Facebook to connect with Labour Yorkshire & Humber European election team 2009.

Labour Yorkshire & Humber European election team 2009

Wall Info Boxes YouTube Photos

Basic Info

Country: England
Currently running for
Office: European Parliament
County: Yorkshire & Humber
Party: Labour Party

Detailed info

Website: <http://www.labour4yorkshire.eu>
<http://www.lindamcavanmep.org.uk>
<http://www.richardcorbett.org.uk>
<http://www.emmahoddinott.com>
<http://www.melanieonn.eu>

Gender: Plural (they)
Birthday: 04 June
About me: This year, all 27 countries of the European Union will go to the polls to elect Members of the European Parliament. In the UK, that election takes places under a regional list form of proportional representation on June 4th - and we are Labour's team of candidates for Yorkshire and the Humber.

We are: Linda McAvan MEP, Richard Corbett MEP, Emma Hoddinott, David Bowe, Melanie Onn and Mahroof Hussain.

Information

Country: England
Currently running for
Office: European Parliament
County: Yorkshire & Humber
Party:

Sign up as a supporter to keep in touch with the campaign - and use the "suggest to friends" link above to make sure your friends know we're here!

Below: Conservative candidate uses Twitter to remind followers to vote



emcmillanscott

Campaigning in Yorkshire for the 2009 European elections on 4 June. Remember to vote!

1:57 AM May 26th from web

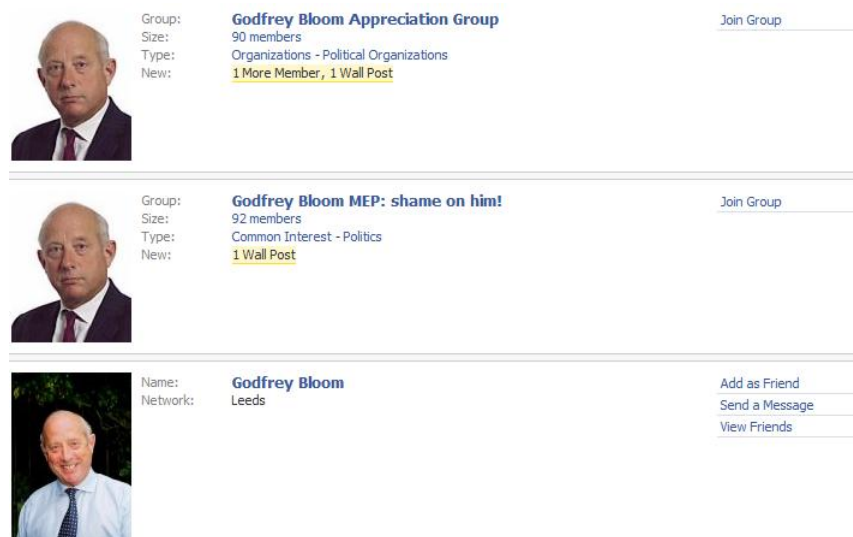
Name Ed McMillan-Scott
Web <http://www.emcmil...>
Bio Vice-President of the European Parliament representing Yorkshire & The Humber, UK (Conservative)

4 following 58 followers

Updates 10

Favorites

There were also some interesting cases which highlighted the complexity of the medium. For example, in the case of Godfrey Bloom (UKIP) there were three Facebook profiles of both and positive and negative intent.



Godfrey Bloom Appreciation Group
Group: 90 members
Size: 90 members
Type: Organizations - Political Organizations
New: 1 More Member, 1 Wall Post

Godfrey Bloom MEP: shame on him!
Group: 92 members
Size: 92 members
Type: Common Interest - Politics
New: 1 Wall Post

Godfrey Bloom
Name: Godfrey Bloom
Network: Leeds

One of the parties used text messaging (SMS) for a pre-selection vote, demonstrating that eParticipation can be leveraged at the earliest stages of campaigning.

eParticipation in the European Parliament communications strategy

2009 Elections communication campaign

The European Parliament put significant resources into bolstering its appeal; an €18 million communication campaign incorporated eight (official) online platforms to convey the key message “to know the date of elections and the impact of Parliament's decisions on the lives of Europeans”:-



- European parliament website (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>)
- Special elections website (www.elections2009.eu)
- EuroparlTV (<http://europartv.europa.eu/>)
- Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/europeanparliament>)
- MySpace (<http://www.myspace.com/europeanparliament>)
- YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/EUtube>)
- Flickr (http://www.flickr.com/photos/european_parliament)
- Twitter (http://twitter.com/EU_Elections_en)

It also commendably leveraged social bookmarking service Delicious (<http://tinyurl.com/electionbookmarks>), collating 134 links to associated web resources.

In terms of advertising there was an e-banner campaign consisting of 2,200 different types shown in 27 Member States- around a third of new visitors were drawn to the campaign in this way.

The 2009 election was the catalyst for the first time integration with social networks Facebook (www.facebook.com/europeanparliament), MySpace and Flickr. The existing YouTube channel (‘EUtube’) has been serving videos related to the European election campaign. While the general theory was to open up as many channels as possibly it is characteristic of new media that young people are the prime audience for this type of communiqué.

Ahead of the elections 4-7 June the Parliament also set up special "election tweets" providing information in all of the 22 official languages (tag #eu09).

Post-election the official records show that there were:-

- **1,955,627:** Visitors to the Parliament's website and special elections site between 1-8 June.
- **120 million:** page requests: the number of "page loads" requested for the special results site. (<http://www.elections2009-results.eu/>)
- **100,000:** visits to the Parliament's MySpace profile.
- **659:** photos put on Flickr on election night.
- **440,000:** views of election videos and of tv adverts for the elections.
- **2,189:** "tweets" on the election twitter during the election night with "elections" becoming the 3rd most debated topic that night.
- **83.000** views on the most popular election video on the EP YouTube channel

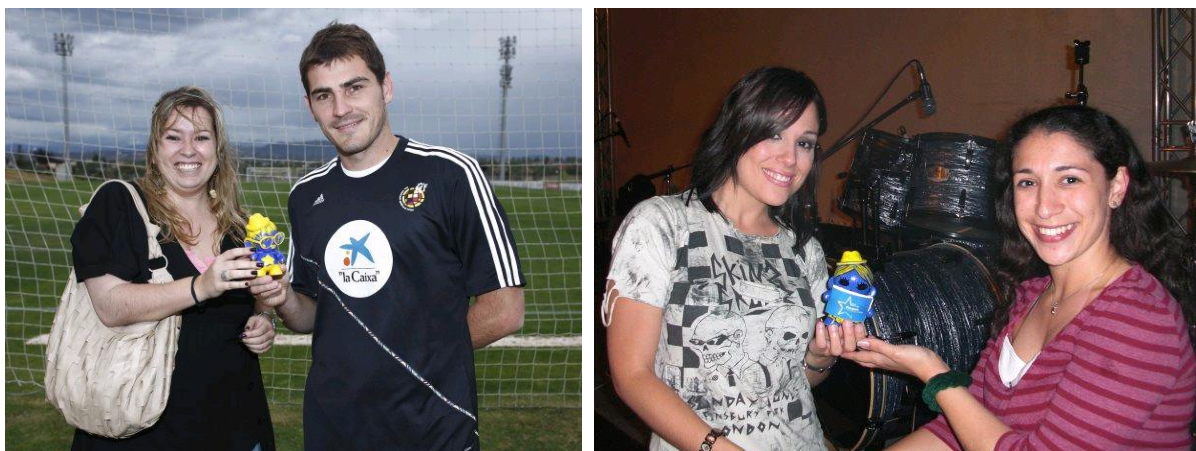
In perspective this is still disappointing – less than half a percent of the European population visiting the European Parliament website during the election period. Some countries claim to achieve a 16% visitor to population rate over elections during the same period.

Incorporating fun into electioneering

Alongside the formal online exercises in place around the 2009 election the online editorial team developed their own group blog and ran some light-hearted engagement exercises.

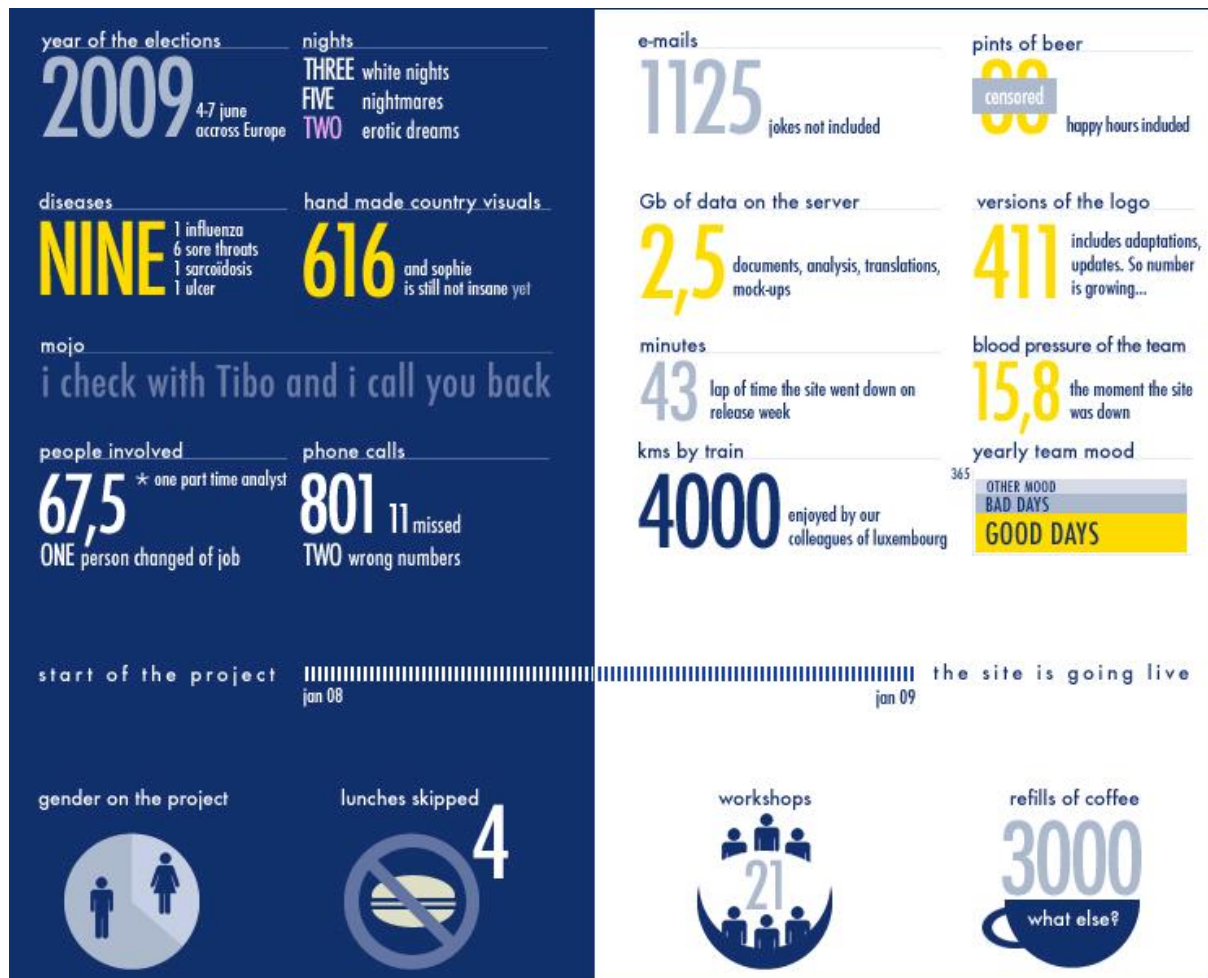
One of these was an offline challenge involving characters called YaBs, facilitated by a corresponding Facebook group (<http://www.facebook.com/YaBs>). This played on the "Six degrees of separation" theory that anybody on the planet can be connected to any other person on the planet through a chain of acquaintances that has no more than five intermediaries.

A nationally decorated figurine (YaB) was issued in each member state and the object was for them to reach a pre-selected celebrity in each country. To fulfil the challenge participants were asked to upload a photo of the YaB taken in front of one of the famous objects/places in the country, preferably accompanied by the person who made it possible.



Despite only seven of the 27 YaBs reaching their celebrity destination the process attracted significant high-profile media coverage, 213 contributor photos and 554 fans. The number of people involved along the journey is less transparent but the novel approach and entertainment value was perfectly poised to engage the digital generation.

Below: Satirical summary of the European Election website effort from the blog of the EC web communications team



European parliament on Facebook

During the run-up to the election [May'09] the European Parliament Facebook pages had a respectable 13,372 fans. However, being a fan does not imply endorsement and more in-depth analysis is required to determine the effectiveness of this channel. In terms of terminology, 'supporter' may have therefore been a better choice of language than 'fan'. Interestingly, post-election (mid June 2009) the number of fans had risen dramatically, to plateau at about 54,000.

European Parliament Facebook fan page discussions

The European Parliament enabled a discussion tab within their Facebook fan page and instigated five threads since April 2009, two of which are about the European elections.

The overall response rate as per Mid May 2009 was disappointing – of those five topics there have only been 35 reactions from 23 ‘fans’. Nevertheless the European Parliament has been active in providing a number of replies, mainly signposting to other online resources.

One of the questions raised relates to the way Facebook defines the relationship between citizen and institution:-

“Okay, so you can become a "fan" of the European Parliament, and the fact that you are here means you have chosen to be. "Fan" was one of the Facebook terms available... and like it or not, some things cannot easily be changed, even by the EP. Another option would have been "supporter", but then we would have Obama to measure up to (should we?).

How about you, fellow citizens and Facebook community member - would you rather be a "friend" of your Parliament, or a "supporter". Or should we have introduced a new term to Facebook?”

While this question did not yield any relevant replies it demonstrates that the European Parliament recognises and understands the problem therein. Arguably social networks are not the place for constructive or ‘sensible’ conversations; likewise it may not be ‘cool’ to be a fan of something associated with ‘older people’ or a brand perceived to be ‘less trendy’ than the norm. For example, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown attracted around 35,000 views of his YouTube video on MP expenses. By comparison there were over 160,000 views of a video of him picking his nose.

Two other questions relate directly to the elections:-

“For many of you, the European Parliament election will be the first election ever. What are your thoughts about it? Excited or pretty cool about it? How about your peers? Are they likely to vote? Have you tried to convince them whom to vote for? Have you made up your mind how gets your first vote?”

(Reponses: 16 posts by 6 people)

“Which person is most likely to convince you to go and vote in the European Parliament elections in June: Your mother, your girlfriend, your best friend or a teacher? Perhaps one of the candidates? Keira Nightly, Michael Ballack or another celebrity? What argument might convince you? Post what and who comes to your mind and discuss with others!”

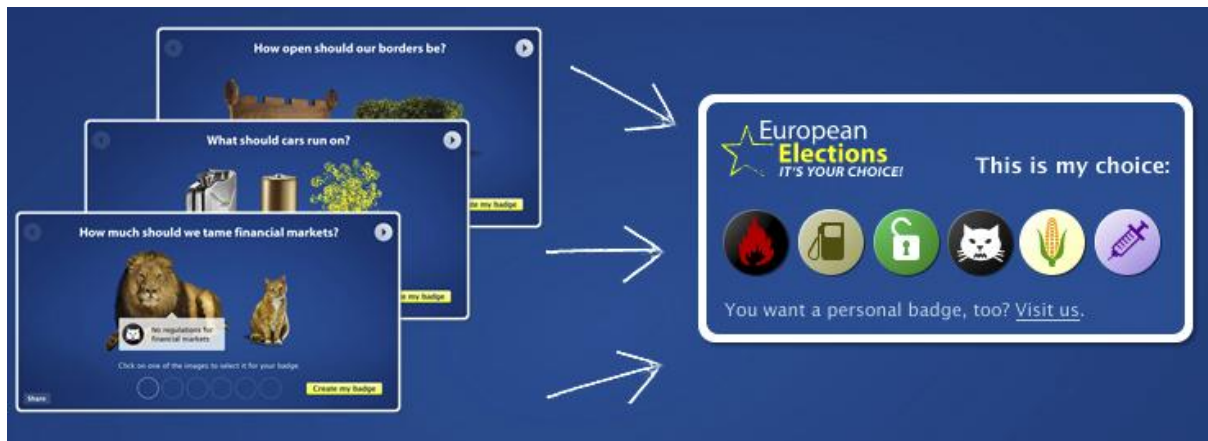
(Responses: 6 posts by 5 people)

Facebook application

The European Parliament built a Facebook application entitled “The European elections application” which is a third-party plug-in which broadcasts your stance on certain European election issues, aimed at virally encouraging people to vote.

There are three modules or ‘sub-applications’:-

1. **It’s my choice** – Form your own opinion on different issues like security, environmental protection, energy, etc. and show others what you think in your profile by creating a badge. The concept is that this tool can also be used to see if you’re alone with your opinion or if there are lots of other like-minded people who are all fighting for a common cause



2. **I use my vote** – Decorate your profile photo with the European elections logo and use it to make a statement by telling everyone that you’re using YOUR vote in the elections. In essence this “pimps your profile photo”. You can also use this application to download a banner you can embed in your website or blog.



3. **Ask Europe** – yes or no? Should I or shouldn't I? You have a pressing question and want to hear what other young people all over Europe think about it? This application will help you get answers from people in 27 different countries.



With this application you can enter your own questions so that other people from all around Europe and the world can answer them with a yes or no. It doesn't matter whether it's a personal question, a political matter or just something you always wanted to hear other people's opinion of. Ask Europe and find out what others think. Make a decision and answer questions by Marie from Belgium, Jorge from Portugal or Rebecca from Sweden.

Take-up of Facebook application(s)

The success of this application seems limited with only 1,580 users although it is recognised that the benefit of viral marketing will be realised on the network of networks. Public feedback from some of the participants reflected the shortcomings:-

"I want to be asked every time somebody updates my status, so I'll remove it, but I will VOTE on the 7th!!!"

"The app seemed too intrusive (asking to update my status! etc.)"

"Works pretty fine...I experience no corrupted pictures"

"This application only generates defect images. Removed"

European Parliament on Twitter

The European Parliament has used Twitter in a typical broadcast sense, publishing regular updates on news items relating to the elections. The total number of followers of the English feed during the pre-election period in May remained relatively low at 205; particularly when you consider that individual political parties have more (e.g. UKIP has 455). However, post election this was up to 627 followers with 167 updates [701 followers by July'09].

The ratio of the number of followers to those followed improved from 10:1 to 5:1 during the campaign. Following a disproportionately higher number of people than having followers can relay a bad image, Twitterers with more even numbers or a higher number of followers are seen as more trustworthy and influential.



The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for 'EU_Elections_en'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Twitter logo, a bird icon, and buttons for 'Login' and 'Join Twitter!'. Below this is a yellow promotional banner with the text: 'Hey there! EU_Elections_en is using Twitter. Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing? Join today to start receiving EU_Elections_en's updates.' To the right of this banner is a green 'Join today!' button with a link for users already on their phones.

The profile header includes the name 'EU_Elections_en' and a bio: 'Follow the latest news from the European Parliament and the European elections'. It shows 20 following and 205 followers, with 47 updates. There are sections for 'Favorites' and 'Following'.

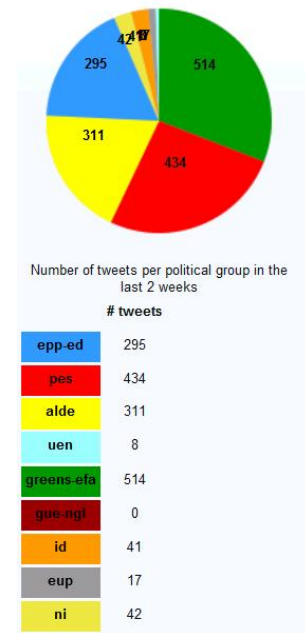
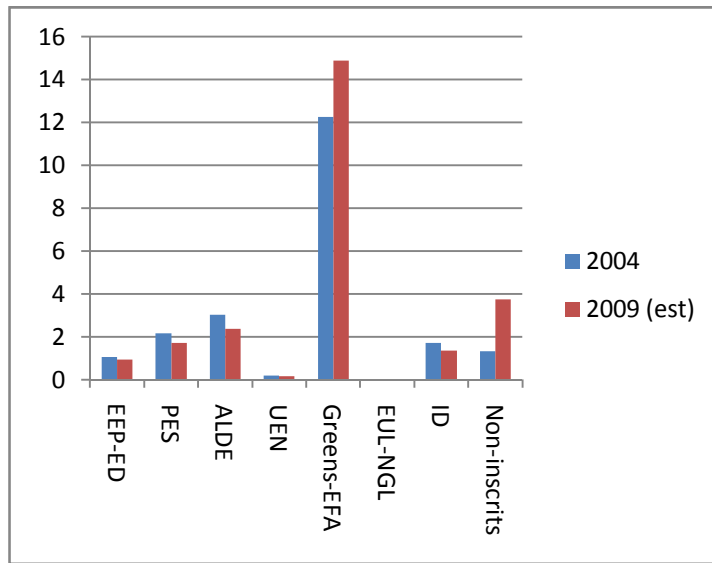
The main content area displays three tweets, each with a link redirection service (TinyURL or Bit.ly) and a timestamp:

- Tweet 1: 'EP headlines #eu09 European elections: some FAQs answered: In just a few days the 7th election.. <http://bit.ly/1nDuMT> about 2 hours ago from twitterfeed'
- Tweet 2: 'Irish or living in Ireland? A run down of all you need to know about the European elections. <http://tinyurl.com/rao9om> about 4 hours ago from web'
- Tweet 3: 'The Euro-elections in the UK - all you need to know! <http://tinyurl.com/p8g3fh> about 4 hours ago from web'

At the bottom of the profile, there is an RSS feed link for 'EU_Elections_en's updates'.

Interestingly a number of link redirection services (e.g. TinyURL) were used for embedding links – these are useful for 'click tracking' but also have the problem of non-transparency.

The MEP twitter aggregator <http://europatweets.eu/> is more informative; it allows you to follow 105 MEPs using twitter. Incidentally the most popular MEP has over 2,000 followers.

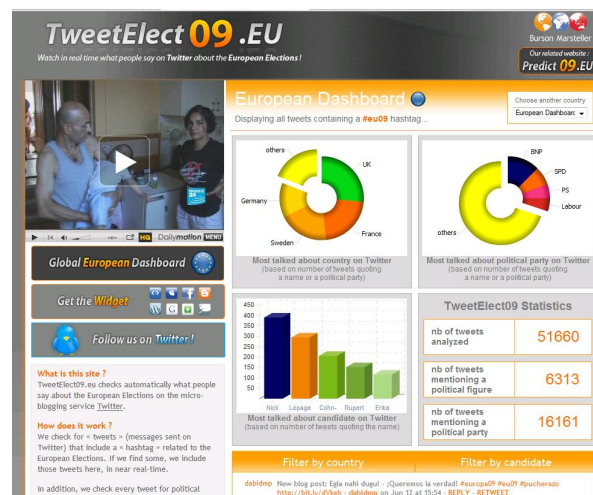


The bar graph above shows the average number of tweets per elected MEP per party (blue) compared to a projection of tweets based on the number of seats won post election (red). While there is no clear correlation between using twitter and party popularity the ‘European Greens – European Free Alliance’ were four times more active on twitter than the other parties and made some of the most significant gains.

The site also has some interesting statistics on tweet frequency. The PYE chart above shows the number of tweets made per political party on the two weeks prior to the 2009 European Elections. Right show the number of tweets proportional to the number of seats in the European Parliament (scale is average number of tweets per elected MEP). The Greens take advantage the most.

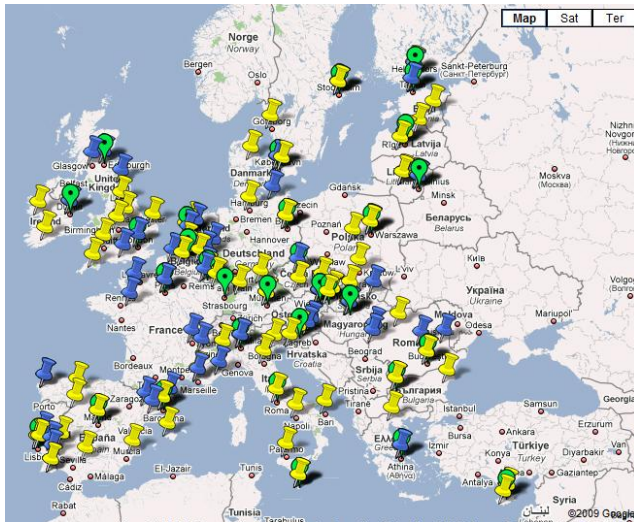
Conversely, Twitter intelligence from bottom-up conversations is useful for candidates and citizens alike. TweetElect09.EU aggregated all Twitter activity with the tag #eu09 and checked every tweet for political names and party names. Statistics were then produced in real-time to show the most twitted political figures, most twitted parties and most twitted countries.

51,660 tweets were analysed, 6313 of these mentioned a political figure and 16,161 mentioned a political party. Tweets from Sweden, France the UK and Germany made up the bulk of data.



The Choice Box

Part of the European Parliament's 2009 election communication strategy was a road-show which deployed a video "Choice Box" in prominent places across Europe. Google Maps was used to display the pan-European location of mobile exhibits (see below).

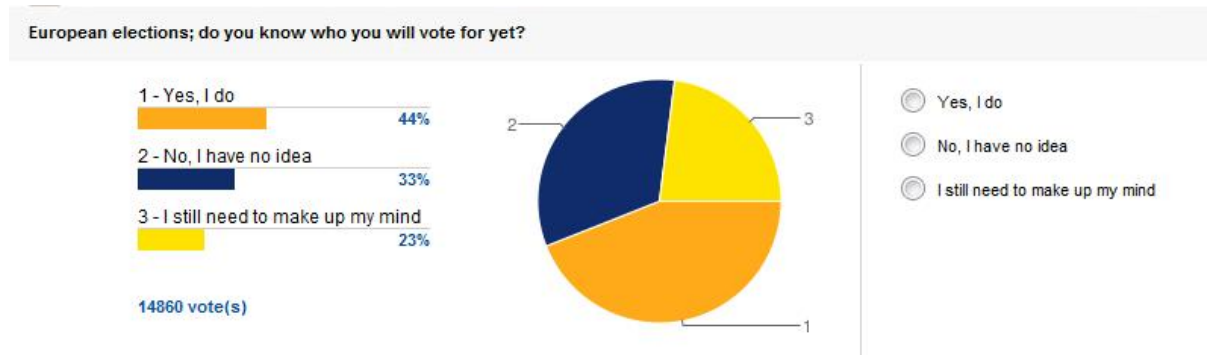


The "Choice Box", is hailed as a 'walk-in interactive multimedia experience' in which voters are able to record a video message giving their views and opinions on the choices facing the European Parliament. The messages – with the sole exception of racist, sexist, xenophobic and obscene statements – are post edited for publicly positioned large-screens and for consumption on YouTube and EuroparITV. Edits are enhanced with subtitles in a number of non-native languages.

Moreover, answers to the most frequently-asked questions were given on EuroparITV - the European Parliament's web channel. Each week there is a new selection of messages based on set topics such as migration, freedom of choice, education, environment and the food industry.

Voter information

Based on an EC poll during the 2009 European elections (below) around 1/3 of people were completely unsure about the candidates.



'Vote matching services' provide insight for the voter, particularly as the ability to gain an unobstructed view of the European political landscape is complicated by the some 300 European parties in 30 European countries.

Typically such services work by using a standardised questionnaire of 30–70 questions about values, attitudes and political issues the tools develop a political profile of interested voters. That profile is compared with the ones of the candidates or parties running for office in an election. At the end a voter receives a list of candidates or party lists with the most similar political preferences and attitudes.

During the 2009 European Elections most countries voted on party lists - so sites comparing party compatibility were of interest. That is not to say they necessarily help to pin-down candidates who have similar beliefs.

A number of such sites offered profile matches within the 2009 European Election. For example:-

www.euprofiler.eu (perhaps the most in-depth)

<http://www.votematch.eu/>

<http://www.wahl-o-mat.de/europa/>

In terms of building the most prolific of these sites (Euprofiler) the task involved more than 120 academic collaborators from across Europe – four assigned to each of the 30 participating member states. The tool was built *without* any EU funding, guaranteeing their independence and credibility.

By extension these tools also analyse the cohesiveness of European sister parties, demonstrating for example that "Social Democrats are quite cohesive, but Liberals are all over the place," according to one of the experts in the Euprofiler team.

The team of social scientists behind Euprofiler also conceded that for a voter, discovering that their ideal party is in another country "could put some people off voting, as it shows you're not adequately represented at national level," but they added that "we think the opposite will happen".

Certainly there are problems when matches return a number of possibilities if the level of initial questioning is too complex. Likewise without regulation these sorts of sites could result in misleading or biased information being passed onto the electorate.

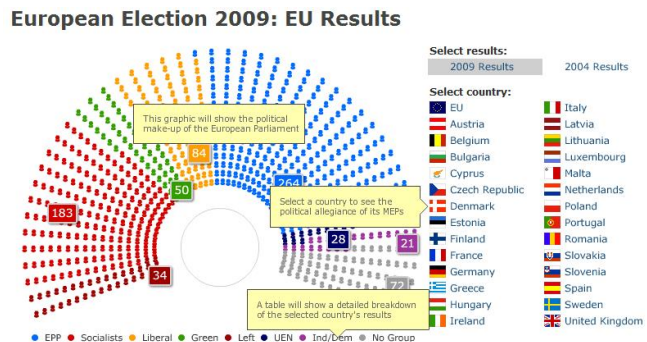
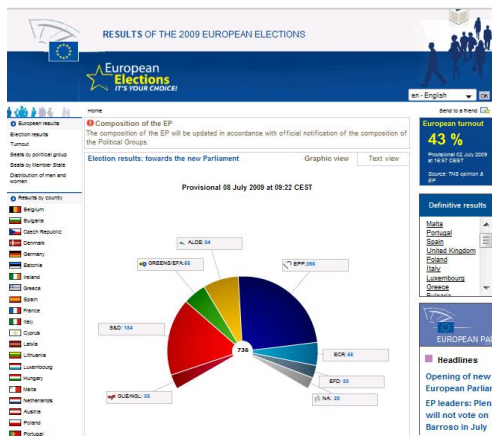
Typically a disclaimer along the lines of "a guarantee cannot be given regarding completeness, accuracy as regards content, actuality or reliability of the information" is used – which is not very reassuring for service users’.

There were also a number of sites giving information about candidates such as <http://micandidate.eu/> and www.votewatch.eu






Election Results

Relay of outcomes

A number of websites carried the 2009 European election results, many featuring highly visual and interactive features (below, left the official EP site and right: UK Broadcaster BBC results page).



More interesting, however, was the live relay of results using Twitter – including on the official channel. While this has benefit in terms of immediacy it can also have negative effects – as discovered in the German presidency vote when results were leaked 15 minutes before an official announcement (see right).

- 
axelhorns (Munich, Germany) Berlin "Twitter-Gate" - German MPs tweeted election results for Bundespräsident Köhler early: heavy quarrelling on Twitter use in Parliament *26 May 2009 from web*
- 
Katikat (Germany) Germany's idiotic politicians should not be allowed to twitter. They gave away the result of the pres elections 15min before it was official *26 May 2009 from web*
- 
AnnaU52 (Hamburg, Germany) loves the fact that the final result of the election of the federal president of Germany was on twitter before it was official *26 May 2009 from web*
- 
me Jochen (Sønderborg, Germany) Germany has its #twitter crisis. Two members of parliament twittered about the outcome of the president election, before it was official. *27 May 2009 from mbpjdqin*
- 
brunotoleado (London, England) @RealBillBailey the dangers of twitter! Apparently some politicians in Germany tweeted an election result before they were official *27 May 2009 from dab: in reply to RealBillBailey*
- 
tim (London, England) German MPs under fire for Twitter leak: <http://bit.ly/NNvX1> Any other good examples of Twitter gaffes from politicians? *27 May 2009 from web*

CHAPTER 3: Case Studies

The London Mayoral race

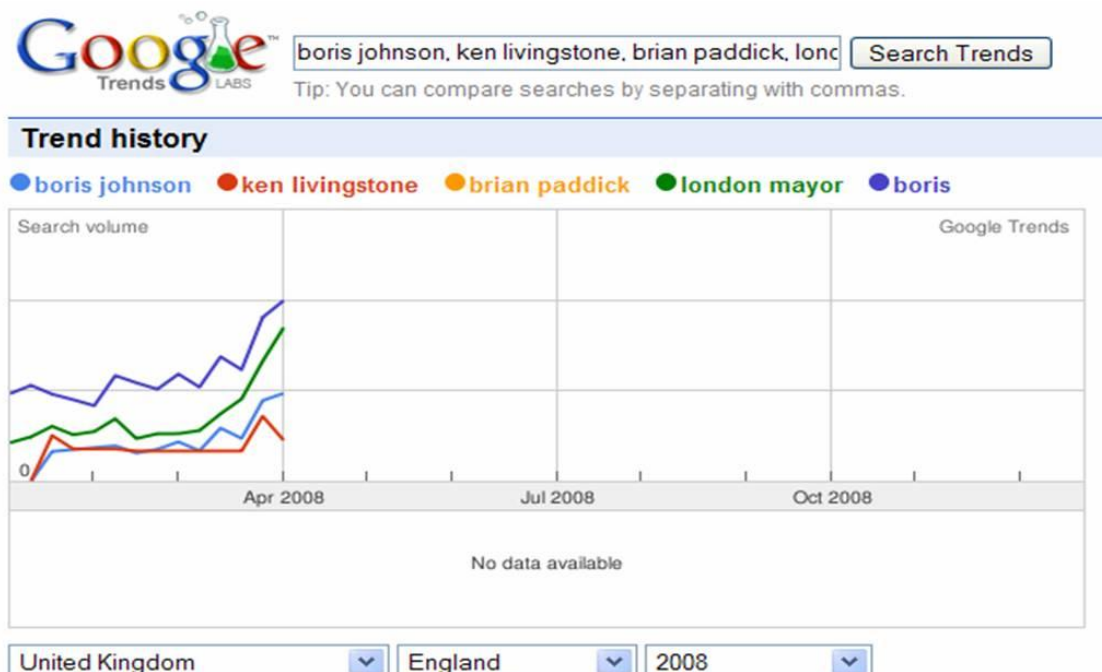
Analysis of the digital campaign

The 2008 Mayoral election was the first short and intensive campaign to leverage new media on UK voters.

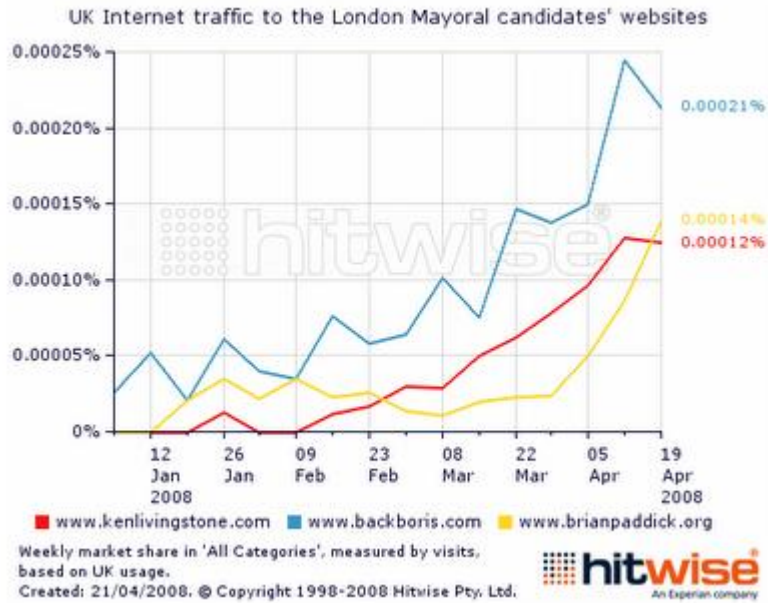
Independent candidates made some of the most interesting news; in particular there was a £50,000 prize offered by www.londonelectsyou.co.uk to the campaign of an individual candidate - awarded to the winner of an online 'primary' with the candidate getting the most online votes by March 18th qualifying for the fiscal support. One candidate, Michael Hodges, offered readers the chance to participate in the collaborative production of his London manifesto (www.helphodges2008.com).

The on-line audience was relatively small, elected candidate Boris Johnson acquired just over 7,000 fans on Facebook at the time and YouTube views were in their hundreds. The candidates took a number of different approaches – ruling Mayor (Ken Livingstone) focused on his website while for capturing supporting data while Boris concentrated on making campaign videos.

A Google Trend analysis performed at the time [below] revealed some voter search-term habits. The majority of searches were for 'London Mayor' and candidate names; search volumes increasing as the election drew closer. It also revealed that the term 'Boris' had more search volume than 'London Mayor', likewise 'Boris Johnson' had greater search volume than the other candidate names.



Hitwise (www.hitwise.com) analysed *actual* internet traffic to the various campaign websites and reached a conclusion in-line with the Google Trends data - Boris Johnson receiving significantly more web traffic than the other candidates:



The polls suggested that the race for London Mayor was too close to call, but online data suggests that Boris Johnson was significantly ahead of Ken Livingstone and Brian Paddick.

US Presidential 2008 (Barack Obama)

Analysis of the digital campaign

The US Presidential 2008 was the most expensive in US history attracting more voters than ever before. Undoubtedly the Internet and video become major factors in respective candidates campaigns – the most prolific being Barack Obama.

During the primary-election examination, the Obama Web site focused heavily—more than that of any other candidate from either party—on engaging supporters and motivating them to turn their enthusiasm into on-the-ground, grassroots activities

The McCain website offered customisation tools through “McCainSpace,” a feature advertised as early as 2007 but not fully functioning until August of 2008. As late as August 1, the only option was to create a personal page—and even that was still not really working. Eventually Users could post McCain videos, pictures and blogs to their home pages, and with a few clicks send any of that material out to users of 25 different social networking sites.

Both campaign websites offer two ways of facilitating user engagement—allowing people to communicate with the campaign, personalize their own pages, and sign up to receive information updates. For most of the summer, however, many of these features on the McCain site were not operational.

Obama had noticed that the most important part of the marketing campaign was his website and the thinking was that the candidate website would determine the ROI of all efforts and budgets. In other words, spend less on campaigns and create a smart website.

Hence My.BarackObama.com was the epicentre of the campaign. The website was such that supporters could join local groups; create events, sign-up for updates and set-up personal fund-raising pages. The campaign website was leveraged to the extent that MyBarackObama.com, or “MyBO” generated the creation of 2 million profiles. In terms of this site, the only thing Obama could have done better was to offer podcasts and vodcasts.

In terms of other digital tools, Obama used email lists as the most important tool in the marketing campaign. The Obama email list is thought to contain upwards of 13 million addresses. Over the course of the campaign, aides sent more than 7,000 different messages, many of them targeted to specific donation levels (people who gave less than \$200, for example, or those who gave more than \$1,000). In total, more than 1 billion e-mails landed in inboxes.

Text messaging (SMS) was also used for spreading campaign messages. For example, 1 million people signed up for Obama's text-messaging program. On the night Obama accepted the Democratic nomination at Invesco Field in Denver, more than 30,000 phones among the crowd of 75,000 were used to text in to join the program. On Election Day, every voter who'd signed up for alerts in battleground states got at least three text messages. Supporters on average received five to 20 text messages per month, depending on where they lived -- the program was divided by states, regions, zip codes and colleges -- and what kind of messages they had opted to receive.

Obama created the largest peer-to-peer call centre in history. Using smart web tools, volunteers called to convince peers to vote for Obama or to donate to Obama. The campaign produced an Obama'08 iPhone App. The brilliance of this app was that it ordered your contacts by importance of location within the battleground states. So your friends from Florida, Pennsylvania and Ohio would be listed at the top. As a supporter the expectation is that you'd call them and encourage them to vote Democrat. The App monitored your calls and uploaded the data to the Chicago HQ so that the other Democrat phonebanks didn't bother your friends.

In addition, 200,000 off-line events were planned, about 400,000 blog posts were written and more than 35,000 volunteer groups were created -- at least 1,000 of them on Feb. 10, 2007, the day Obama announced his candidacy.

Social networking was also exploited. Obama gained 5 million supporters in other social networks. He maintained a profile in more than 15 web communities, including BlackPlanet, a MySpace for African Americans, and Eons, a Facebook for baby boomers. On Facebook, where about 3.2 million (during the campaign) signed up as his supporters; a group called Students for Barack Obama was created in July 2007. It was so effective at energizing college-age voters that senior aides made it an official part of the campaign the following spring. And Facebook users did vote: On Facebook's Election 2008 page, which listed an 800 number to call for voting problems, more than 5.4 million users clicked on an "I Voted" button to let their Facebook friends know that they made it to the polls.

As-to was in-game advertising. Obama surprised Millions of Xbox users with a subtle advertisement in the popular racing game 'Burnout Paradise'. Gamers immediately shouted online to other Xbox users (through Xbox Live, in game communities, blogs and forums): wow have you seen how Obama tapped into our Burnout Paradise game?? The guy must really understand my likes and passion.

Technology was also used to assist traditional campaign communications, in this case internet telephony (VOIP) was used to reduce costs. An estimated 3 million calls were made within the final four days of the Obama campaign using the MyBO virtual phone-banking platform.

An overview of the campaign is shown in the table below:-

	Barack Obama	John McCain
Marketing messages	“Hope”, “Change we can believe in	“Country first”, “The original maverick”
Offline marketing channels	TV, radio, print (including candidate’s books), direct mail	TV, radio, print (including candidate’s books), direct mail
Online marketing channels	E-mail, display, organic and paid search, in-game advertising, mobile, social media	E-mail, display, organic and paid search, social media
Budget	Est. \$800 million	\$ 84 million (public funds)
Marketing strategies	Energize young voters; spread optimism and hope; emphasize McCain’s similarities to Bush	Energize the right wing; attack Obama’s weaknesses; emphasize experience and military service

Fundraising

While it is not common European practice to fundraise, Obama had fundraised \$150 Million in September 2008 alone. His fundraising strategy worked to drive his own marketing/media budget.

Obama's victory in the general election was aided by his tremendous fundraising success. Since the start of 2007, his campaign relied on bigger donors and smaller donors nearly equally, pulling in successive donations mostly over the Internet. After becoming his party's nominee, Obama declined public financing and the spending limits that came with it, making him the first major-party candidate since the system was created to reject taxpayers' money for the general election.

Barack Obama raised half a billion dollars on-line 3 million donors made a total of 6.5 million donations on-line adding up to more than \$500 million. Of those 6.5 million donations, 6 million were in increments of \$100 or less (‘micro-donations’). The average on-line donation was \$80, and the average Obama donor gave more than once. In terms of spend this equated to about \$7 per vote.

Votebug

Analysis of the project

With an estimated three quarters of Europeans unaware of forthcoming EU parliamentary elections, an innovative viral marketing campaign was devised by Greek NGO 'Gov2U' to improve the historically low voting and engagement figures.

The idea was simple - encourage email users to append a simple strap-line to their email signatures promoting the European election. The code was available in a number of languages and freely downloadable from the project website (ucount4eu.eu) up-to seven months before the election.

Prior to the launch, briefings (including press releases) were sent to all of the MEPs and democratic institutions from each European member state. The ucount4eu material was sent to over 45 press agencies and all major European newspapers and magazines from all countries; it was also sent to many web sites relevant to the cause, to over 10 Trade organizations, Industry associations and Trade Unions, to 58 NGOs / interest groups, to 12 think tanks, governmental agencies, 16 Universities with EU studies, to all political parties in Greece and abroad, EU institutions, National ministries, news related sites and to over 100 opinion leaders and influential individuals.

As a result, information about ucount4eu along with website links and the voting bug were displayed on hundreds of parallel websites and e-mail signatures.

The overwhelming response from MEPs was also supportive although 5% of respondents believed that the initiative would have negligible effect in their country. With no easy way of determining the campaign impact (i.e. if it met its aim of encouraging people to the vote) then this remains a valid comment.

However, by the end of the campaign there were over 35,000 downloads of 'the bug' and over 1,000 results generated by Google using the keyword 'ucount4eu'.

Finally, visitors to the website were given the opportunity to participate and voice their opinion on the Forum of the website, in the 5 most crucial topics that concern European citizens the most. For 3 months, all users were encouraged to speak their mind freely and provide their arguments.

CHAPTER 4: Campaign Tactics

Digital campaign

Fundamentals of online marketing

Online ads, particularly linked to search, are an important ingredient for driving traffic and audiences to eParticipation exercises. In the example (below) the search term “European elections” is rightly being sponsored by the European Commission during the 2009 election campaign:-

The screenshot shows a Google search for "european elections". The search bar contains "european elections" and the search button is visible. Below the search bar, there are radio buttons for "the web" (selected) and "pages from the UK". The search results show "Results 1 - 10 of about 28,100,000 for european elections. (0.13 seconds)".

The first result is a sponsored link: "Government Election Info" from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk. Below it is a news result: "News results for european elections" with a sub-headline "Gordon Brown 'will stay, whatever happens in European elections' - 5 hours ago".

The second sponsored link is "Elections in the EU 2009" from europarl.europa.eu, which is circled in red. Below it is another sponsored link: "European Elections 2009" from www.betterworldlinks.org.

At the bottom, there are more news results from BBC News, including "BBC NEWS | World | Europe | Q&A: European elections 2009" and "BBC NEWS | Politics | European election candidates".

The value of internet marketing varies by country – for example, online marketing revenues in UK and France are significantly higher than Spain, Germany and Italy. However, experienced marketers recognise the low confidence in online marketing as a narrow-minded attitude. In particular, consumer time online keeps increasing, broadband take-up is increasing, watching TV on the internet is main-stream and search is now habitual. Most significantly the share-shift from offline to online is a reflection of the ability to target and tap into variety, reach and effectiveness of interactive media.

“We are seeing an ongoing secular shift from traditional to online media as marketers recognize that ad dollars invested in interactive media are effective at influencing consumers and delivering measurable results. In this uncertain economy, where marketers know they need to do more with less, interactive advertising provides the tools for them to build deep, engaging relationships with consumers—the experience marketers’ gain from this will deliver dividends especially after the economy turns around.”

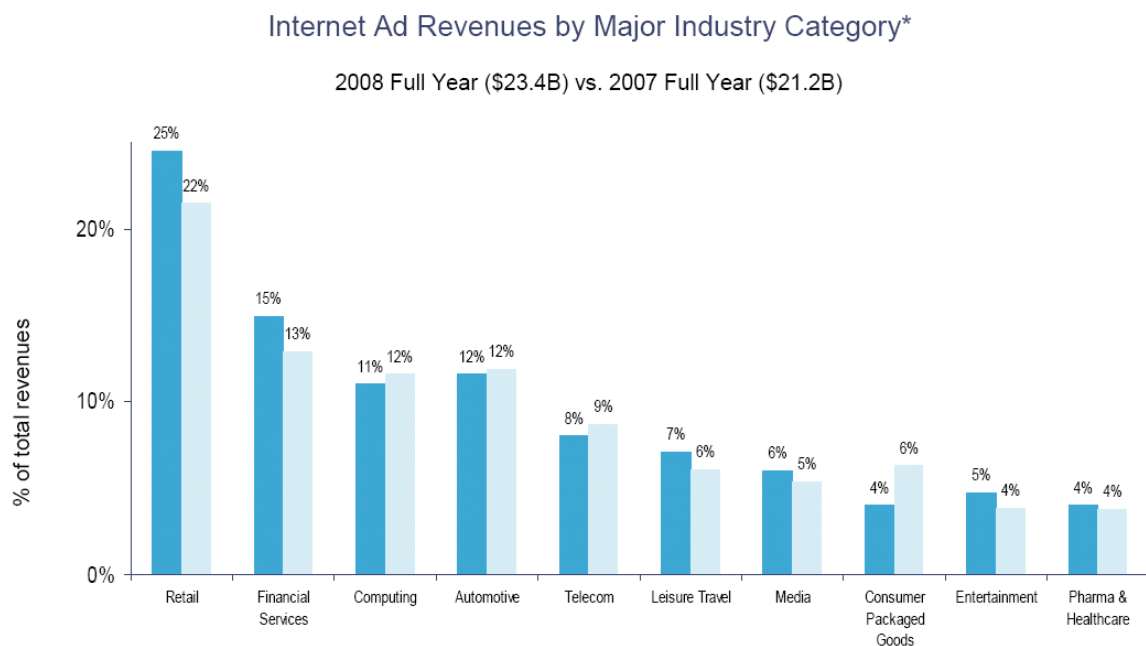
-Randall Rothenberg, President and CEO, Internet Advertising Bureau

Bear in mind that modern consumers are less and less likely to believe “shouting ads” any longer. Consumers are not led by ads; consumers are influenced by their peers. Typically they will only buy brands and their products/services if their peers have written a positive review about in online (92% of all digital consumers only buy a product if their peers, social influencers or blogs have written a positive review about it).

With the advent of interactive media, consumers have started to interact with brands and are starting conversations about them within blogs, forums and social networks. This includes being critical about brand identity, ads, products and services.

Tapping into online conversations and mapping where the conversations take place, including who are the social influencers per topic/theme is therefore an emerging strategy to a successful online campaign.

Ironically if you consider recent data for revenue share in the private sector (below) then the total investment by public sector organisations is comparatively small.



Online campaigning case study – The London mayoral elections

Ken Livingstone and Brian Paddick used Google ads (and the Google Content Network) in the London mayoral race, albeit with fixed messages that did not evolve during the campaign. In this instance the way that these were funded resulted in uneven visibility – ads being rarely featured in the evenings when budgets had been spent. Campaigns should be sure to keep Ad-text fresh and capitalise on timing.

Ken Livingstone did not geo-target any ads either – instead they appeared across the UK. For the mayoral campaign, ‘London only’ targeting would have cut-down on wasted revenue and allowed a wider spread of ad-words to be considered.

Targeting is often unjustly narrow, such as terms associated with the election. There is an untapped opportunity to position specific policies alongside relevant searches. For example, it may have been productive to run ads alongside user queries such as 'London Crime', 'London Bus', 'tube', 'Oyster Card', 'London environment' in the case of the mayoral campaign.

Ironically, Boris Johnson (eventual winner) did not have any search engine activity – but had the most impressive website, a well developed social media plan (including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter).

It is possible to examine candidate sites and see how many other sites are linking to them by using Yahoo! Site Explorer. This gives insight into popularity and also indicates campaign reach. The results for the London Mayoral candidates were as follows:-

Website	No. of pages of content	Sites linking to it
www.backboris.com	773	62,913
www.kenlivingstone.com	242	14,733
www.brianpaddick.org	377	20,277

When analysed in this way Boris Johnson was the clear leader, albeit with many less links than barackobama.com [894,000].

Case Study #2 – The US Presidential race 2008

Obama and his team realised that the key ingredients of the web were not shouting banner ads - the power of the web was: peer communications, sharing, interaction, building relationships, entertainment, sharing opinions and so-forth.

The challenge was to get Obama from unknown brand to very trusted brand within 2 years. Obama needed to climb the ranks in a period that would takes 99% of all trusted brands 5-50 years.

Obama's smart facilitating campaign evoked users to become co-creators. Obama embraced new models – for example, many marketers use viral videos for short campaigns whereas Obama embraced the long tail, and used content to build his brand in the long term. The premise, in this case, was simple - viral videos and social content are not suited for 6-8 week campaigns; instead they should be used to fuel your brand in the long run: 6-24 months.

To become a core identity and profitable brand, Obama researched continuously: brand tracking and conversational tracking. Most marketers are only measuring online campaigns by: hits, views, clicks, and more web analytics. Obama was therefore different - he admitted research, loyalty and retention were key ingredients to become a core identity brands.

Obama knew online is the place to facilitate consumers and offered them entertainment, engagement, relevant topics, grassroots participations. Obama knew this was the fastest way to create a huge opt-in database of engaged consumers.

“What we've learned from this campaign is that there's huge potential for people that haven't been involved in politics to discover that, yes, this is something that impacts me. Even before I joined the campaign, the fundamental premise was to help put the political process into people's own hands. That was the value from the start of the campaign, that was the value at the end of the campaign, and it's not going away.”

-Chris Hughes (brand engagement architect)

Summary of successful digital campaign strategies

- Do participate and share
- Be innovative
- Place your website at the heart of an online strategy
- Have an integrated strategy (e.g. time display ads with important events)
- Use online to drive offline action
- Embrace video and social networks
- Use/create widgets
- Engage in brand and conversation tracking
- Target audiences and use ad-words carefully to coincide with parallel events
- Keep any advertising message updated and relevant
- Social networks are conversational platforms. Use a channel or a widget that facilitates; don't put interrupting and shouting banners in a social network!
- Think WOM (Word of Mouth)
- If you want seeding, write consumer reviews (about your brand yourself) or invite social influencers: be open and honest about it
- Be authentic. Never bribe bloggers. Don't cheat or lie. Be transparent.
- Use or open up Skype as a communication mechanism
- Offer features and tools. Make content available as broad as you can, facilitate niche groups.
- Consider how your target audience would perceive your brand within their digital space
- Speed matters (this also improves your search engine ranking)

In terms of a campaign website, consider the following:-

- How can the power of the web drive store traffic for your brand?
- How can you use the power of the web to activate your events or sponsorships?
- How can you implement web2.0 tools to drive brand interaction?
- How can you extend your offline event experience by using photos and videos?
- How can online sampling ignite your awareness?
- How can a member-gets-member program increase your opt-in database?

Google recommend the following to maximise web effectiveness:-

1. Bring me to the right place (i.e. links from ads)

- Ensure key messages are visible
- Mirror key points from ads in your landing page
- Link to the right page
- Use "vanity" URLs for specific campaigns in order to track traffic

2. Make your homepage useful

- Reaffirm your site and brand purpose
- Test new features
- Inform users of new feature
- Make sure there's not too much going on
- Make it easy to navigate

3. Help me navigate

- Make service categories visible
- Highlight where to go next
- Use easy to understand terms.
- Use easy to understand terminology

4. Give me the right search results

- Check the quality of results
- Allow users' to sort results
- Make search visible
- Lay out search results clearly

5. Display services clearly

- Provide clear layout and design
- Group services logically
- Enable cross-referencing

6. Give me the details I need

- Summarise key service details
- Make your call to action button highly visible
- Provide clear images

7. Make registration optional

- Allow conversions without registering
- Highlight the benefits of registering
- Make registration processes easy (e.g. short forms) – 23% of checkout abandons are due to registration requirements

8. Make it easy to enquire

- Don't ask for unnecessary detail
- Show transparent steps, avoid distractions (e.g. at the checkout remove any banners or clutter from your page, can have its own CMS)

9. Reassure me

- Offer security (e.g. SSL)
- Clarify what happens after a payment or transaction

10 . Let the user design your website

- All about trial and error – use analytics regularly to see where the hot and cold parts of your site are and refine accordingly

Crossover eParticipation activity

Parallel activity to the 2009 European Elections

It is fair to say that the European Elections created extra parallel eParticipation activity, such as that on the Debate Europe (<http://forums.ec.europa.eu/debateeurope/>) forums. A separate European Election topic on this site spawned 63 new threads and a few polls - generating thousands of views.

One of the posts (below) was a call to action and triggered an ePetition calling for more visibility of the Elections in the United Kingdom. It received 87 signatures as a result.

French, European citizen living in the UK, I am appalled by the invisibility of the campaign for the European Elections in this country.
There is no campaign, no information, no reminder nowhere that there is a vital election coming up, here on Thursday 4 June 2009!

Is it the same everywhere in Europe?
Are governments conveniently forgetting to do their duty and inform their citizens and residents of their rights?

As there is nothing on the government website about the European Elections, I have started the following e-petition available on the Number 10 website at the following address:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/Date4Europe/>

This petition reads:

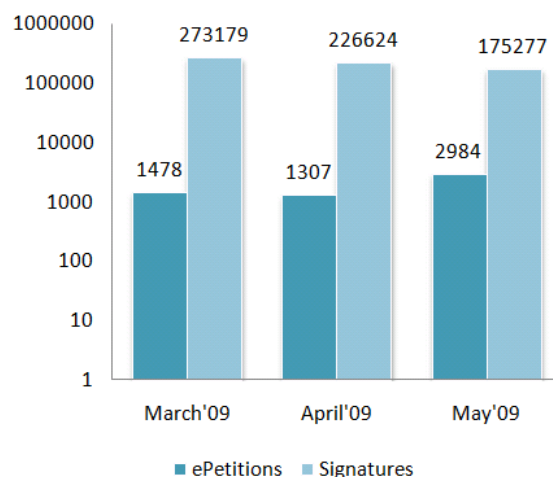
We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to inform all citizens and residents to vote in the European Elections on 4 June 09.

It is the Government's duty to communicate the importance of these fast-approaching, and largely invisible, elections to all voters. The European Parliament is responsible with the Council of Ministers for passing legislation that affects us all. The Government is represented in the Council of Ministers. It is its job to inform us what it does and how important the European elections are for making the EU accountable to its citizens.

Thank you for adding your name online if you would like to support the petition.

ePetition volumes

The number of petitions submitted on the No.10 ePetitioning service in the UK more than doubled during the election period (right: data courtesy of MySociety). The number of signatures in the same period actually dropped, suggesting that many of these were an attempt to create background noise.



Voter cause and justification

Elections alone do not give any insight into citizen behaviour when it comes to voting. For example, a vote may be cast as a protest or spoiled to make a statement about the state of democratic renewal.

A website called 'NotApathetic' was built a number of years ago for UK citizens who were planning to vote in the General Election on May 5th 2005. The aim of the site was to collect expectations from the electorate. Hence NotApathetic became an online place where non-voters told the world why.

One of the aims of this site was to let people respond to politicians and journalists who like to theorise about why people choose to stay at home, often attributing motives which aren't true.

A Greek adaptation of NotApathetic was launched in time for the 2009 European Elections at www.not-apathetic.eu. Greek non-voters (for starters) could speak for themselves and say why they chose not to vote (at all or cast a blank vote). As per mid-June 2009 (in the 1 month of life of the project) there were 16 posts, 8 comments, 74 twitter followers and 86 Facebook page fans of the site.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusions

Summary

It is widely agreed that there is no such thing of over-saturation in terms of on-line campaigning. Certain technologies such as email must be treated with caution - too much and it equates to spam even if recipients have pro actively opted-in.

The on-line coverage of electoral campaigns now pretty much outweighs both the traditional media and all of the output of the campaign itself put together. There's clearly still space for new innovations. Ironically one of the overriding aims is to get supporters off-line - to encourage and motivate them through online tools, but to then switch off the monitor, speak to their neighbours, deliver leaflets and ultimately vote, while staying engaged with the on-line campaign.

The European elections 2009

With turnout continuing to fall, down to 43% across the EU in the 2009 election, it is difficult to say that new media campaigns contributed to turnout.

Metrics from individual efforts are disappointing and we suggest that the key to creating digital content with maximum coverage is to focus on harness existing technologies (such as email) instead of 'edgy' or emerging trends which are used by a minority of citizens. Likewise, with the exception of choice-box, few digital channels other than the web were exploited.

There is no evidence to suggest that increased eParticipation by candidates prior to elections affects election outcomes either. However, there is evidence to suggest that increasingly digital spaces are used as an election information 'resource'.

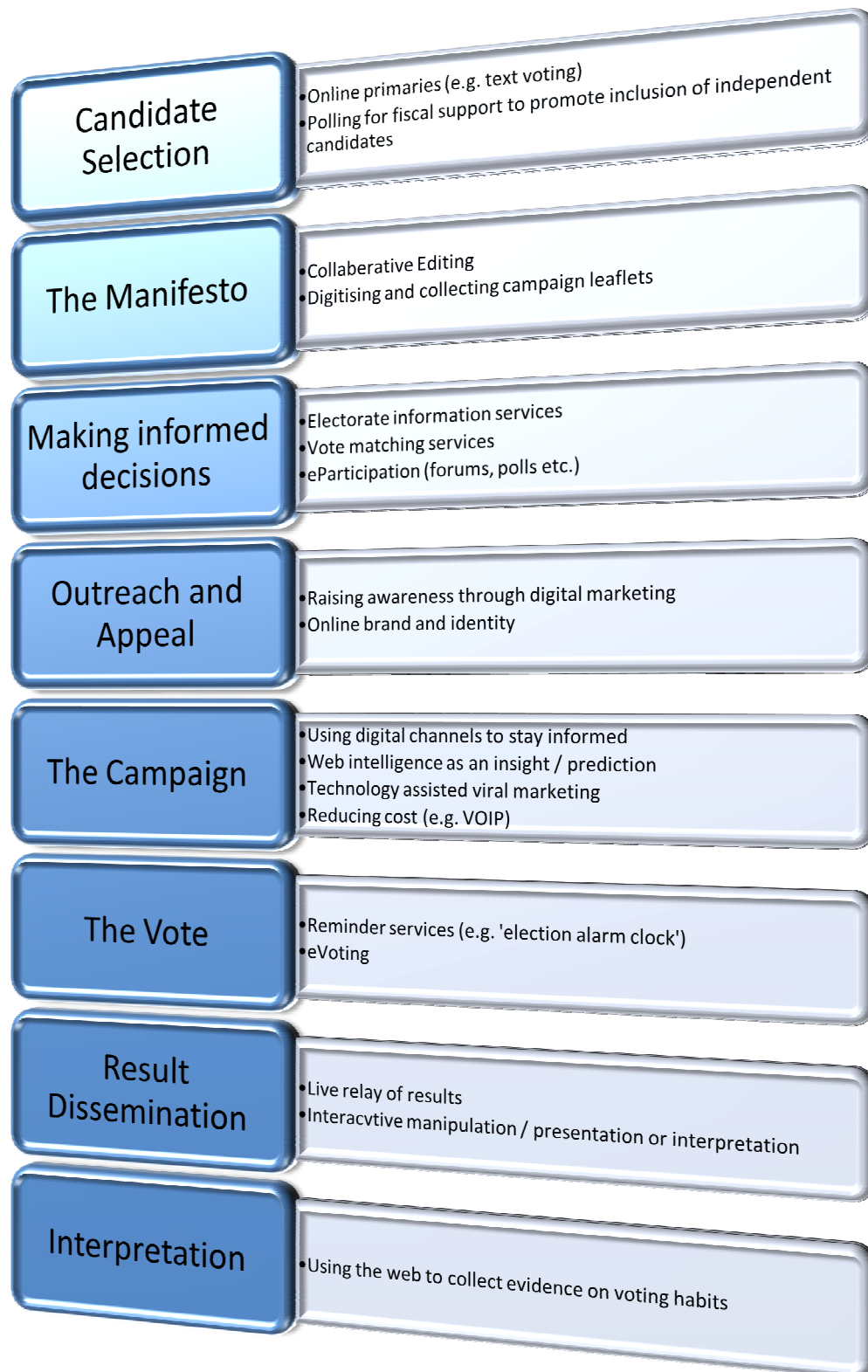
While the efforts of the European Parliament are to be commended in terms of leveraging social networks, traffic volume was also disappointing. To make a real assessment of impact we need more clarity in terms of the investment, diversity of participants and subsequent wider influence on change due to the various initiatives. Moreover to look at the long-term trend such as repeat visitors or post-election uptake of the various digital platforms created.

It is the opinion of the study group that the digital campaign *did* contribute to citizens' ability to make more informed choices and positive reinforcement of the European Parliament brand. However, *current* eParticipation tactics within the context of electioneering are not likely to lead to revolution in terms of influencing opinion. That is not to say this might be different if the actual process of voting was conducted electronically.

A major benefit of the digital opportunity is mapping, intelligence/insight and analytics. The ability to adapt in order to refine is an important advantage over traditional media but there is little evidence of this in individual campaigns.

Mapping the digital opportunities

Based on the case studies herein we have classified the discovered digital opportunities around stages in the electioneering process:-



Harnessing the web for online campaigning

Managing the online campaign with offline advertisement is one area of weakness.

It is clear from <http://www.thestraightchoice.org/> (a service that digitises campaign leaflets) that Political parties and campaigns are not endorsing the new tools and communication channels endorsed by the EC in their own online or offline literature. Furthermore there is rarely reference to official EC website or online resources on polling cards or leaflets from local parties. Citizens have no direct, impartial sources of printed information.



Some thought must also go into individualism. For example, Denmark has the highest penetration of member-state Facebook users' accounting for some 38% of the population whereas in Ireland this figure is only 14%. A 'one size fits all' strategy is therefore flawed and it is unapparent if the recent European Election campaign took stock of this over the diversity in terms of language barrier.



There is a growth in independent (non party) information sources which make the regulated, official sources of information more important.

Looking ahead

The task of planning ahead for the next big campaign is hampered by the rapidly changing nature of eParticipation. For example, YouTube did not exist in the 2004 US presidential election yet in 2009 it is by-far the most popular video-based social website.

Bridging technologies which interface analogue and digital worlds are particularly advantageous. For example, the use of VOIP (internet) phone calls to landlines in an effort to reduce costs. Video, short messaging and widgets are also increasingly popular tools. However, not all developments are useful in the core goals of mobilising supporters. Conceivably www.mypoliticalparty.co.uk could soon become a reality.

Appendix A

Yorkshire & Humber candidate eParticipation matrix

Name	Political Party	QDOS Rank	Web site (personal)	Search Top10	Facebook for elections		Twitter Followers	Other
					Group	Personal		
Edward McMillan [6]	Conservative	63%	Y	N	N	182	58	YouTube
Timothy Kirkhope [2]	Conservative	67%	Y	N	N	No	No	None
Fleur Butler	Conservative	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Matthew Bean	Conservative	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Nick Burrows	Conservative	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Glynis Frew	Conservative	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Linda McAvan [1]	Labour	61%	Y	YY	Y(212)	223	No	None
Richard Corbett [5]	Labour	84%	Y	Y	Y(212)	No	67 (proxy)	YouTube
Emma Hoddinott	Labour	-	Y	Y	Y(212)	100	No	Flickr
David Bowe	Labour	-	Y	Y	Y(212)	No	No	No
Melanie Onn	Labour	-	N	Y	Y(212)	Yes (n/a)	No	No
Mahroof Hussain	Labour	-	Y	Y	Y(212)	196	3	YouTube
Diana Wallis [3]	LibDem	83%	Y	YY	N	99	No	YouTube
Stewart Arnold	Lib Dem	-	N	Y	N	No	No	None
Rebecca Taylor	Lib Dem	-	Y	Y	N	No	No	None
James Monaghan	Lib Dem	-	Y	Y	N	No	No	None
Nader Fekri	Lib Dem	-	N	Y	N	522	No	None
Neil Poole	Lib Dem	-	Y	Y	N	No	No	None
Martin Hemingway	Green	-	Y	N	Y(24)	No	No	None
Shan Oakes	Green	-	Y	N	Y(24)	139	No	PayPal
Leslie Rowe	Green	-	Y	N	Y(24)	No	No	None
Lesley Hedges	Green	-	N	N	Y(24)	No	No	None
Kevin Warnes	Green	-	N	N	Y(24)	5	No	None
Steve Barnard	Green	-	N	N	Y(24)	No	No	None
Andrew Brons	BNP	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Nick Cass	BNP	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Chris Beverley	BNP	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Marlene Guest	BNP	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Paul Harris	BNP	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Trevor Brown	BNP	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Keith Gibson	NO2EU	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Celia Foote	NO2EU	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Jackie Grunsell	NO2EU	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Peter March	NO2EU	-	N	N	N	No	No	None
Mike Davies	NO2EU	-	Y	N	N	No	No	None
Juliet Marie Boddington	NO2EU	-	N	N	N	5	No	Teamtweet (1254)

Name	Political Party	QDOS Rank	Web site (personal)	Search Top10	Facebook Party	individual	Twit	Other
Barbara Hibbert	Jury Team	-	Y	N	Y(569)	223	No	None
Anthony Hooper	Jury Team	-	N	N	Y(569)	No	No	None
Ben Saxton	Jury Team	-	N	N	Y(569)	No	No	None
Godfrey Bloom [4]	UKIP	57%	Y	N	No	110	95	None
Jonathan Arnott	UKIP	-	Y	N	No	86	No	None
Jason Smith	UKIP	-	N	N	No	No	No	None
Toby Horton	UKIP	-	N	N	No	No	No	None
David Daniel	UKIP	-	N	N	No	No	No	None
Lynette Afshar	UKIP	-	N	N	No	No	No	None
Sid Cordle	Christian pty		N	N	No	39	No	None
Andrew McClintock	Christian pty		N	N	No	No	No	None
Angela MacDonald	Christian pty		N	N	No	No	No	None
John O'Brien	Christian pty		N	N	No	No	No	None
Samantha Cauldwell	Christian pty		N	N	No	No	No	None
Rebecca Jones	Christian pty		N	N	No	No	No	None
Michael Cassidy	English dems		N	N	Y(272)	73	No	None
Joanne Robinson	English dems		N	N	No	No	No	None
Peter Davies	English dems		N	N	No	No	No	None
David Wildgoose	English dems		N	N	No	No	No	None
Paul McEnhill	English dems		N	N	No	28	No	None
Geoffrey Crossman	English dems		N	N	No	No	No	None
Antony Devoy	Libertas		N	N	No	No	No	None
Edward Devoy	Libertas		N	N	No	55	No	None
Stephen Clark	Libertas		N	N	No	No	No	None
Diana MacLeod	Libertas		N	N	No	No	No	None
Trevor Bending	Libertas		N	N	No	No	No	None
Kathleen Harris	Libertas		N	N	No	No	No	None
William Capstick	Socialist Lab		N	N	No	No	No	None
Linda Sheridan	Socialist Lab		N	N	No	No	No	None
Stephen Yoxall	Socialist Lab		N	N	No	No	No	None
Holly Yoxall	Socialist Lab		N	N	No	No	No	None
Terence Robinson	Socialist Lab		N	N	No	No	No	None
Christopher Butler	Socialist Lab		N	N	No	No	No	None