Branding and Political Marketing in the United States

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Abstract

Similar to the challenge that companies have in branding their products and services in the commercial marketplace, governments, political parties and campaign organizations all rely on similar theories and strategic tools to carve out successful niches for their leaders. Political parties are like corporate brands that offer an umbrella of predictability of performance just as a corporate endorsement does for a new product that enters the market. Candidates become the political brands of a political party. Branding is all about appealing to peoples’ dreams. Politics is all about selling hope to a people. It has become very difficult for politicians to communicate to their respective target audiences without a clearly defined brand image. We live in an era where politicians manufacture their images through clever branding strategies. These images are sometimes altered overnight because of unexpected events and uncontrollable forces that may take place around the world. Theories and models that explain how products and services are branded are inadequate when one attempts to make the leap to the political marketplace. This article will provide a "strategic overview" of the role of branding in politics; focus on the differences between the role that branding plays in the commercial and political marketplaces; and point to the increasingly more important role that branding is playing in the field of political marketing today and in the future.