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POLITICS 2.0

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Summary: The article is devoted to studies of the application of social Web for forming the image of the politician, defining Web efficiency in designing the politician image, as well as for analyzing the effectiveness of 2.0 policy.

Key words: blog, Internet, politics 2.0, political communications.

Аннотация: Статья посвящена изучению исследований, направленных на анализ использования социального Web для формирования образа политика, определение эффективности использования Web при конструировании образа политика, а также анализ эффективности политики 2.0.

Ключевые слова: блог, интернет, политика 2.0, политических коммуникаций.

Анотація: Стаття присвячена вивченню досліджень, спрямованих на аналіз використання соціального Web для формування образу політика, визначення ефективності використання Web при конструюванні образу політика, а також аналіз ефективності політики 2.0.

Ключові слова: блог, інтернет, політика 2.0, політичні комунікації.

The relevance of the given topic is absolutely obvious. Since the arrival of the Internet in the late 1960s it has become an integral part of everyday practices in the XXIst century, which has led to global changes throughout the world. We are witnessing a profound transformation of data yet, a great deal of new Internet-related technologies are expected to appear in the nearest future. Created by American developers, worldwide global telecommunications network has irrevocably changed the world, society, and each individual in particular. To date, we can speak about such phenomena as "Internet-Education", "Internet Communications", "Internet commerce", "Internet Policy", etc.

With every passing day more and more people are becoming Internet users, which are not surprising, since the Internet has transformed society of the XXIst century into society of information and communication. Also, the Internet has encouraged the emergence of virtual reality, whereby self-presentation through social networks became possible, which is increasingly being used by modern politicians. For example, it was the effective use of the Internet in the construction of his image and building relationships with potential voters that Barack Obama won the political elections in 2008. Thus, free access to Obama's speech on race on YouTube was more effective due to the fact that viewers preferred to watch it through the Internet, instead of television with constantly interrupted television commercials. This fact proves that effective and qualitative political campaigns in Web 2.0 are capable of developing an effective policy 2.0.

Researching into the effectiveness of social Web for the formation of political image constitutes the goal of the present paper. Among mechanisms to achieve this goal are determining the level of penetration of Internet technologies in Ukraine, and analyzing researches devoted to the social Web to form the image of politicians in the global and local context.

The subject of this paper is the formation of political image through social Web, with the object of the paper being policy 2.0.

Internet technology triggers a shift in social interactions. The development of Web 2.0 creates policy 2.0, the development of online and offline policies. That is, policy 2.0 is a kind of virtual reality, adapted to the increased use of Web 2.0. The technology prevailing in Web 2.0 is a more advanced interactive technology whereby social networks, podcasts, and blogs, which could hardly be called feasible in Web 1.0, have become possible [2].

However, it should be noted that despite the successful experience of using social networks by the current U.S. president, Ukrainian politicians, even though trying to emulate his political strategy, are moving weakly in this direction. For example, the majority of Ukrainian politicians' blogging is but a one-way flow of information about the activities of particular politicians, exhibiting themselves in the best light to potential voters through the responsible and relied activity of the hired PR officers. Blog presupposes two-way communication. Yet the blogs of Ukrainian politicians, even of such known figures as Yulia Timoshenko, can merely "stun" the blog visitors by their dead silence. As for representatives of the ruling party, they could hardly be called active bloggers either.

The problem is that blogs have become a fashionable informational and political technology for political campaigns. Consequently, Ukrainian politicians seem to be trying to simulate the appearance of their involvement in all spheres of postmodern society to show the relevance of their political campaign activity today.

This, by no means, implies that participation of a politician in social networks or blogs should be the main type of their activity. However, having decided to become bloggers, they should be aware of the expectations on the side of their potential voters, i.e. their «co-bloggers».

Currently, researchers draw attention to a new trend when self-presentation of politician's personality, their tastes, biography facts and events shift to the foreground compared to their political opinions, preferences, attitudes, and political campaigns as a whole [2].

It is important to note that the Internet blurs the spatial and temporal boundaries, which results in that the territorial, social, linguistic and other differences between communicators cease to have any value at all. In other words, the Internet allows establishing the horizontal communication lines in interpersonal interaction, since the access to the Internet is completely open. However, unfortunately, Ukrainian and other politicians forget about this and instead prefer the communication from the top down, that is, the vertical one. This is definitely felt by "co-communicators" and contradicts the Internet "law", according to which this is a world of global opportunities, so to speak – a world of extreme opportunities which are open to all and a priori are based on universal equality.

One of the objectives of policy 2.0 with the use of Web 2.0 technologies is to make the policy more transparent, which is especially important for Ukraine as it has a very high percentage of distrust for authorities (84% of Ukrainian citizens

do not trust the parliament), but transparency means the visibility of what does exist in reality, not covered with a veil of self-PR.

According to E. Goroshko, research into cyberspace of group policy is based on 5 categories: ease of use; the audience, that is citizens and experts; content that includes photos, speeches, press releases, links to other sites; transparency and interactivity including updates, emails, contact information [1].

In the study of Uanet, according to the Internetworldstat agency, in Ukraine there are about 15,300,000 users of Internet resources. Thus, Ukraine is ranked the ninth among the Internet-Top 10 countries in Europe. However, the number of Ukrainians having wide-brimmed Internet is about 3.2%, which is undoubtedly not sufficient for a qualitative use of Web 2.0 [2].

The data presented by E. Goroshko show that only two candidates (Vasil Protyvsikh and Michael Brodsky) have neither websites of their parties, nor their personal sites. As for V. Yushchenko, A. Gritsenko, O. Moroz, P. Symonenko, S. Tigipko and A. Yatseniuk, as well as many other politicians, they all have in their "arsenal" more or less rating sites with the indicators listed above. The top three positions are occupied by Viktor Yanukovych, Yulia Tymoshenko and Anatoly Gritsenko respectively. Tigipko and Yatseniuk are on the fourth and fifth positions, because in terms of visibility of rankings in the Internet, the popularity and accessibility, they lose the leaders.

However, the website of Tigipko's Party "Strong Ukraine" is a leader in the use of social media for it is the most active user of Web 2.0 sites. Also, a high level of interactivity is characteristic for the site of the former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. One can also note that the very site of Gritsenko has a high quality design and interactivity. But the fact that site is available only for Ukrainian speakers, with no English or Russian versions, convincingly constitutes its disadvantage. A similar approach to creating a website, in our opinion, not only limits it, but can be partly considered inconsistent with the era of globalization and postmodernity.

It is quite interesting to look at the investigation of the site of Viktor Yushchenko and that of Viktor Yanukovych, which was carried out twice: before and after the 2010 elections. Before the elections, the political leaders of both sites were approximately at the same level and had approximately the same rating. However, after the elections, which took place in 2010, their sites became significantly different. Thus, Yushchenko's site was extended by a great deal of links to Web 2.0, with much more interesting facts concerning his life and his immediate involvement in political activity appearing. In contrast, the site of Viktor Yanukovych came to include less interactive elements. At the same time there appeared too many speeches and films associated more with the president himself than his party in particular.

Of course, due to the fact that the Internet is a relatively new phenomenon in the human history, typical of the late XX - the early XXI centuries, the availability of imperfect methods of its use is viewed as a completely natural problem. It is really so if we take into account rather "young" age of Web 2.0. Accordingly, following the Internet, the successively emerging spheres such as

Internet-commerce, online education, online politics and other areas in the Internet environment are just beginning to gain experience through the method of trial and error.

However, in addition to this complexity, there are a number of other issues in policy 2.0. Thus, we can say there is an obvious problem of a fairly low level of penetration of Internet technologies in Ukraine, which a priori reduces the effectiveness of policy 2.0. The second in order, but not in the meaning, is the problem of the already formed and deep-rooted distrust in policies 2.0 by the Ukrainian citizens (and not only by them). In our opinion, this problem can be divided into two aspects. The first one refers to distrust that the bloggers are not the politicians themselves, but specially hired people, which can hardly be questioned, because this is what in fact happens quite often. As the second aspect we would identify the distrust of the fact that policy 2.0 is the manipulation of potential voters by means of agitation, self-public relations, self-presentation and persuasion in the course of interpersonal communication and through other methods.

Another problem is the lack of direct feedback. It means that communication is a one-sided, and a politician does not comment on blog posts, and therefore remains invisible. So visitors and bloggers cannot have any interest in staying on the politician's site or the site of the related political party, nor they are interested in being participants of the site. This is quite understandable: unlike a diary, blogs are presupposed to receive a respond from the person whom the message is addressed or just feedback from anyone who may be interested. In any case, bloggers' expectation is a two-way communication.

It can be concluded that the policy 2.0 may be called a natural phenomenon for the information and communication society of the XXIst century. The emergence of a parallel world of global communications has contributed to the natural development of the social spheres in the Internet community. Moreover, watching the relentless pace of the global network development, we can anticipate its stunning future. In a while, the Internet will become an integral part of the globe, and in turn the world will become a part of the Internet. Speaking about the prospects of policy 2.0, it should be noted that in the first place changes are to happen in the perception of the Internet by the politicians themselves. Similarly, awareness of the fact that the state and society of the XXIst century are partly "based" on the universal web and that the policy 2.0 in this world is a natural phenomenon rather than a forced one. In addition, the politicians themselves should be aware of the tremendous opportunities that can be provided by access to the Internet, without denying these opportunities, but transforming the latter into the most effective practices. However, as we see it, the roots of the problems in any sphere lie in its foundation. Hence we should speak about the problems of politics as such, rather than about the policy issues online or offline.

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