IMPACT OF POLITICAL MARKETING IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT ON VOTERS REGARDING THEIR AREA OF RESIDENCE

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ABSTRACT

Political parties use market information to influence shaping of a product they are offering. Political marketing is defined as a relationship between the political subject and the market. It refers to those political actors who have realized the importance, effect and techniques of business marketing. It studies relationships between products of political organizations and demands of the market. Political marketing uses techniques of marketing in order to reach its goals. Today's 21st century is marked by the use of electronic media. The Internet is a basis of everyday life. Political marketing has recognized trends and has directed a large percentage of action on digital environment. The greatest advantage of political e-marketing is efficient communication with a large number of potential consumers, in this case, of political subjects with their potential voters. Long-term goal of political subjects is political power. There is no difference between the application of traditional and political marketing in digital environment. This paper presents results of a research whose aim was determining whether political marketing in digital environment has a bigger influence on voters in rural or in urban electoral units. Research sample consisted of voters in the IV and the VIII electoral units during electoral campaign for Croatian Parliament in 2016. Research was conducted using a questionnaire among potential voters. The aforementioned electoral units were chosen due to their differences, the IV being a predominantly rural electoral unit, and the VIII as a predominantly urban electoral unit. The results show that there is no difference between voters in the IV and the VIII electoral units; in other words, that influence of political marketing in digital environment is almost the same regardless of the voters' area of residence. It is necessary to emphasize that the Republic of Croatia is a specific area in which political marketing has a weak influence on voters. This research can aid better understanding of political marketing in digital environment and can become a foundation of marketing strategy of political subjects in the next elections for Parliament.

KEY WORDS: political marketing, e-political marketing, rural electoral unit, urban electoral unit.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a process of creating and exchanging values of market subjects and their consumers. The term marketing denotes a process of creating, communicating and delivering values to consumers in a way that is useful for organizations and their parties of interest. Various definitions of marketing have a common connection – satisfying consumers' needs. Development of technology has changed the model of business and activities of all participants of market competition. A network has been created that changed the flow of information and its influence on daily life. Marketing experts have changed the way of functioning and introduced new methods. The cornerstone of marketing of the 21st century is e-marketing. It is based on a relationship with users via network and is adapted to new technologies and information technology educated population. Each marketing expert uses the fact that users nowadays are always near their mobile phones that are most commonly connected to the Internet. In a dynamic world of Internet technology, mobile marketing has taken the first place in influencing the behavior of consumers and in encouraging a wanted action.

Political action is closely connected to marketing activities. Democracy and multiparty system mean competition among individual parties, programs and candidates on a "political market" of sorts. Such context yields the need for marketing activity that, similarly to well-known activities from the field of economics, or market economy, helps better "sales" of certain ideas, parties and individuals as their bearers (Šiber, 2003:9). Certainly, political communication has always existed in order to fulfill the most important needs of each form of government. Aiming to come to power, politicians

have always communicated their political program and their ideas. Political marketing occurs as the newest tool of political communication and has come out of common blend of general right to vote, democracy and development of the media (Stilin, 2018:2). Each political candidate, or political party, is turned towards voters. Political marketing is a long-term process based on traditional marketing techniques. Political subjects use political marketing to decide what to offer to the public. Defining the process of political marketing is an extremely challenging task that assumes the use of marketing tools: voters profiling, market segmentation and shaping the political product. Strategically speaking, political marketing consists of a number of phases, defined later in the paper. Political marketing has recognized the value of electronic media. Large percentage of political marketing refers to communication via digital platforms.

The greatest advantage of digital political marketing is efficient communication with a large number of potential voters. This paper analyzes the influence of political marketing in digital environment on voters regarding their area of residence; in other words, whether political marketing in digital environment influences more voters in rural or in urban electoral units. Sample consisted of voters in the IV and the VIII electoral unit during electoral campaign for Croatian Parliament in 2016. The paper is using a study conducted by the author (Stilin) who used a part of the study for PhD thesis titled "Political marketing in digital environment". The paper is based on primary and secondary research. Methods of analysis, questionnaire, interview, compilation and synthesis were used.

Research was conducted using a questionnaire among potential voters. The aforementioned electoral units were chosen due to their differences, the IV being a predominantly rural electoral unit and the VIII as a predominantly urban electoral unit. For the purpose of the research, hypotheses were set:

1. Political marketing in the digital environment has more impact on voters in the urban area than voters in the rural area.

2. Residents of rural areas follow the political campaign in digital environment in a smaller percentage than those in urban areas.

Research contributes better understanding of use of e-marketing in electoral campaigns. Results can be used with a goal of improving political e-marketing, as well as to serve as a framework for further research.

2. IMPACT OF POLITICAL MARKETING IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT ON VOTERS REGARDING THEIR AREA OF RESIDENCE

A question arises whether there is a difference in lifestyle of population in urban and rural areas, that is, the influence of political marketing in digital environment on voters regarding their area of residence is researched. For the start of the research, it is necessary to define political e-marketing, after which the research and conclusions follow. Differences in lifestyle and habits of population in urban and rural areas are disappearing. Characteristic of the 21st century is lowering the number of citizens in rural areas and them moving into cities or towns. Young people leave rural areas and are not interested in spending their lives in the countryside. The fact is, there are fewer family farms. More or less, everything has come down to large agriculturists who handle large areas of fields. Small family farms consist of one employed person, or even none. Small fields are handled by employed families, so agriculture is their second or third source of income.

Apart from that situation, the fact that is going to be a long-term problem for the Republic of Croatia is white plague[1] and aging population. The aforementioned mostly affects rural areas. Unfavorable trend of population movement with poor economic situation is reflecting adversely on a situation in rural areas. Regardless of the place of residence, Croatia has been hit by a wave of emigration. Primarily due to economic situation (low income, high unemployment...), a large number of citizens of the Republic of Croatia has crossed state borders in search of happiness in successful members of the European Union (Germany, Ireland, Austria...).

Opening the borders of labor market has lowered unemployment in Croatia. Most citizenship, young and older alike, due to inability to find a job and develop themselves in the world of business are unable to stay in Croatia and are forced to relocate outside the state or, at least, out of the rural areas. Apart from lowering unemployment in Croatia, the population is lowered, as well as a number of children, schools, kindergartens, jobs, newly started business subjects... The wave of emigration mostly hits rural areas, leaving it without citizens. Certain schools and kindergartens are closed, which leaves purely old population in the countryside. A question arises as to what is going to happen to certain places in ten or twenty years.

Due to old population mostly unable to use the Internet, a hypothesis of this paper arises; political marketing in digital environment has more impact on voters in urban areas.

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[1] birth rate lower than death rate in an area, which leads to decline in population

2.1. Political e-marketing

Introduction of the paper defines that marketing is an activity directed towards satisfying needs and whishes using the process of exchange. Regardless of the object of marketing, the principles do not differ. Certainly, political marketing has a lot of specificities, but also similarities to standard marketing. In a large number of cases, political communication is used as a synonym for political marketing. Political communication refers to:

- all means of communication used by politicians and other participants in politics with a goal of accomplishing specific aims;

- communication directed towards some participants by non-politicians, such as voters and journalists;

- communication about these participants and their activities as they are in reports, editorials and other shapes of media discussion about politics (Bongrand, 1997:8).

As definition shows, political communication refers to verbal, nonverbal and visual means, that is, all elements of communication a political image consists of. Certainly, political communication is not exclusive to politicians, but to peers as well, who inform themselves on the state of politics using media, discussions and other. Its basic characteristic is two-way communication that exchanges political content among various participants in politics. Various channels of communication are used with a goal of achieving certain effects. Political communication is a part of political marketing. It refers to participants in politics who understand value, effect and techniques of business marketing.

Simply speaking, political marketing is defined as using modern techniques of marketing with a goal of achieving political aims. The most accurate definition states: "a collection of techniques used to create a specific picture of the candidate among his electorate, to promote his person with each voter individually, to single him out from his rivals and to gain the maximum number of votes using the lowest level of resources" (Bongrand, 1997:15). Political marketing is a complex process. It consists of the following phases: market research, designing a political product, adapting a product, implementation, communication, campaign, and elections, fulfilling of the program and continuing market orientation.

Political marketing helps political subjects to design their product and decide what to offer on the market. Political marketing should be viewed as a multilayered communicative activity in the phase of research of political issue and needs of the population; in mass-media and public affirmation of their program (goal), while addressing the widest recipient structure; in contact with economic subjects – sources of financial need and in wide range of establishing relationships with individuals, cultural, political, sports and other public institutions with which the political subjects have common interests (Tomić, Spahić, Granić, 2008:39-40). Long term implementation of political marketing yields success. Prior to defining political marketing in digital environment, it is necessary to define basic terms of political marketing:

- product – ideas of candidates or political subjects and the candidate himself,

- market – voting/political public,

- consumer – citizen/voter,

- emphasizing differences – competition among people and ideas,

- sales – organizing and presenting candidate's knowledge and ideas, ensuring votes,

- profit – being elected to perform a public function.

Juxtaposition of the terms yields a conclusion: there is no significant difference between the approach of traditional marketing and political marketing. Unlike traditional marketing, which is focused on the realization of a specific product that meets one or more human needs, the result of successful political marketing is a change in the total, or for the most part, social living conditions, from economic conditions to business, education, healthcare, retirement, but also the international position of the country and relations with others. Internet has changed all aspects of living.

New technologies affected development of new shapes of advertising. Each Internet and smartphone user as e-mail access and access to other information channels 24/7. Potential of spreading information via Internet is increasing daily. People, potential voters, spend more time connected to the Internet, so Internet connection is defined as a basic human need. Form of political marketing over the Internet has an enormous potential. Basic advantage of the Internet is that it can transfer a large amount of information at any given moment to every corner of the world. E-business is a general concept that encompasses all shapes of business transactions or information exchange done by using information and communication technology among companies, companies and their customers, or companies and public administration

(Sić, 2007:3). Political subjects cannot afford to lead a campaign and to act without a web page, social networks profiles and other Internet presence based techniques. Using these channels, political subjects get closer to voters, while voters have a more direct contact with them. It is important that citizens can, in a couple of mouse clicks, analyze political programs of competing parties and ask questions to which they want to find an answer. Nowadays all candidates use political e-marketing in all shapes of communication of political marketing. Internet has become ideal for performing relevant tasks valuable for campaign success (Tomić, 2014):

- Organization of pre-election campaign – simple use that enables effective and quick communication, flow of information and material. It enables sending advertising material, invitations, coordination of tasks... It increases efficiency of political work and perfects the process of preparation.

- Mobilization of members – Internet is good for mobilization of party members and voters, recruiting volunteers and sending messages as to why their engagement is important and relevant for campaign success.

- Raising money for campaigns – Internet is used for raising donations for pre-election campaign. The aforementioned mostly refers to the United States of America. In the Republic of Croatia pre-election campaigns are funded by the party's budget, donations, memberships...

- Information resources for media and voters – political parties and candidates use their Internet presentation largely for their media action. Using the Internet, they prepare press releases and other media. Using web pages of political subjects, they publish comprehensive information as archive material.

- Segmenting voters by beliefs – Internet enables market segmentations, that is, communication with potential voters. Political subjects create content that attracts their politically like-minded people. The goal is to attract users and make them interested in the political program, which can result by a vote on the elections.

It should be emphasized that the Internet, as a new communication channel and a means of political marketing, promotes, protects and safeguards democracy by disseminating a wealth of information. Strategically driven political marketing in a digital environment can help political entities to deal with external and internal public. According to the available information, about three million of Croats is connected to the Internet daily, while each third citizen is a member of Facebook social network. Other popular networks are Youtube, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. Political candidates who use political marketing in digital environment have more chance to reach their goals, that is, to win on the elections. Using social networks, citizens communicate with political subjects, which creates great opportunities for all participants of political marketing.

2.2. Research

Research hypotheses are:

- Political marketing in the digital environment has more impact on voters in the urban area than voters in the rural area.

- Residents of rural areas follow the political campaign in digital environment in a smaller percentage than those in urban areas.

Research includes voters from the IV and the VIII electoral units during campaign for Croatian Parliament in 2016. The influence of political marketing in digital environment is analyzed with regard to area of residence, that is, whether political marketing in digital environment impacts more voters in rural or urban electoral units. The hypotheses mentioned are set with the assumption that rural areas have older population that uses the Internet in a smaller percentage, and by that, the influence of political marketing in digital environment is lesser. As mentioned in the introduction, results of research conducted by the author (Stilin) are used, which are a part of the author's PhD thesis titled "Political marketing in digital environment".

Research was conducted using a questionnaire among potential voters. Promocija plus from Zagreb used CATI system during the political campaign for elections for Parliament in August 2016 to conduct a questionnaire on a representative sample of participants in the political process in the IV and the VIII electoral unit. The goal of the questionnaire was to research on a sample of Internet users their voting intentions, as well as to keep track of election campaigns for these two electoral units. The sample is defined as a stratified sample. The process of stratification was conducted on a county

basis and the size of settlement for individual electoral unit. Two units were chosen due to their differences; the IV being a primarily rural and the VIII as a primarily urban.

The IV electoral unit, chosen as a rural one, encompasses Virovitica – Podravina and Osijek – Baranja county, while the VIII electoral unit, chosen as primarily urban, encompasses: Istra county and western part of Primorje – Gorski Kotar county (cities and municipalities: Baška, Cres, Crikvenica, Dobrinj, Kostrena, Kraljevica, Krk, Lovran, Mali Lošinj, Malinska – Dubašnica, Matulji, Mošćenička Draga, Omišalj, Opatija, Punat, Rab, Rijeka, Vrbnik). Table 1 and Table 2 show size of settlement in the IV and the VIII electoral units according to sample structure.

Table 1. Settlement size of surveyed respondents of the IV electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	**%**
Up to 1,000	203	28,9%
1,001-5,000	141	20,1%
5,001-10,000	129	18,3%
10,001-20,000	79	11,2%
50,001-100,000	151	21,5%
Sample (N)	**703**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Table 1 shows that 703 respondents from the IV electoral unit were surveyed. Majority lives in settlements with up to 1,000 inhabitants, after which settlement of 50,001 to 100,000 and settlement of 1,001 to 5,000 inhabitants follow.

Table 2. Settlement size of surveyed respondents of the VIII electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	**%**
Up to 1,000	171	24,4%
1,001-5,000	129	18,4%
5,001-10,000	72	10,3%
10,001-20,000	21	3,0%
50,001-100,000	100	14,3%
100,001-200,000	207	29,6%
Sample (N)	**700**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Table 2 shows that 700 respondents from the VIII electoral unit were surveyed. Majority lives in settlements of 100,001 to 200,000 inhabitants, after which settlement of 1,000 inhabitants and settlement of 1,001 to 5,000 inhabitants follow. The difference is relevant in size of cities that belong to the mentioned electoral units.

The next category surveys using the Internet and social networks. With a goal to research the impact of political marketing in digital environment, it is necessary to define how often the respondents use the Internet.

Table 3. Internet usage and its frequency, the IV electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	%
I use the Internet and social networks on my computer and smartphone	397	56,5%
I use the Internet and social network only on my computer	70	10,0%
I use the Internet and social network only on my smartphone	23	3,3%
I use the Internet, but not social networks	213	30,3%
Sample (N)	**703**	**100,0%**
I am online all day	46	6,5%
A couple of times per day	325	46,2%
Once a day	204	29,0%
Once in three days	73	10,4%
Once a week	38	5,4%
Less than once a week	16	2,3%
I do not know	1	0,1%
Sample (N)	**703**	**100,0%**
A number of everyday users	575	81,9%
Sample (N)	**702**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Respondents in the IV electoral unit in percentage of 81,9% use the Internet daily. It is necessary to emphasize that data is extremely high and Croatia does not have classically rural areas predominantly engaged in agriculture anymore.

Table 4. Internet usage and its frequency, the VIII electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	%
I use the Internet and social networks on my computer and smartphone	335	47,9%
I use the Internet and social network only on my computer	74	10,6%
I use the Internet and social network only on my smartphone	19	2,7%
I use the Internet, but not social networks	272	38,9%
Sample (N)	**700**	**100,0%**
I am online all day	42	6,0%
A couple of times per day	373	53,3%
Once a day	185	26,4%
Once in three days	66	9,4%
Once a week	21	3,0%
Less than once a week	10	1,4%
I do not know	3	0,4%
Sample (N)	**700**	**100,0%**
A number of everyday users	600	86,1%
Sample (N)	**697**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Table 3 and Table 4 compared yield a conclusion that there is no large difference between respondents of the IV and the VIII electoral unit. In the VIII electoral unit 86,1% of respondents use the Internet every day, while in the IV electoral unit 81,9% of respondents use the Internet every day. Detailed analysis shows that respondents in the VIII electoral unit more often use the Internet, but the differences are insignificant.

After the analysis of Internet use and its frequency, basic determinants of the research will be surveyed, based on which the set hypotheses will be accepted or rejected.

Table 5. Influence of election campaign, the IV electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	%
I made the decision before the campaign	539	76,7%
I made the decision during the campaign	75	10,7%
I have not made the decision yet	58	8,3%
Campaign will not influence my decision	18	2,6%
I do not know	11	1,6%
I do not want to say	2	0,3%
Sample (N)	**703**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Table 5 shows results of surveyed impact of election campaign on the IV electoral unit. A devastating fact is that 76,7% of respondents made the decision about their vote before the election campaign. That confirms that most citizens are in some way members of a certain party, party supporters, or have direct benefit from the certain party. A very small percentage is singled out, according to which only 10,7% of respondents make a decision about voting during the campaign.

Table 6. Influence of election campaign, the VIII electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	%
I made the decision before the campaign	539	77,0%
I made the decision during the campaign	72	10,3%
I have not made the decision yet	67	9,6%
Campaign will not influence my decision	17	2,4%
I do not know	4	0,6%
I do not want to say	1	0,1%
Sample (N)	**700**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Table 6 shows that there is no difference in influence of political campaign on respondents in the VIII compared to the IV electoral unit. Similar percentage of respondents makes a decision about voting during the campaign.

Table 7. Following the political marketing in digital environment, the IV electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	**%**
I actively followed the campaign on the Internet	108	15,4%
I saw the campaign on the Internet, but I did not follow actively	222	31,6%
I did not see the campaign on the Internet	369	52,5%
Campaign on the Internet does not affect me	4	0,6%
I do not want to say	0	
Sample (N)	**703**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Respondents from the IV electoral unit followed the political campaign on the Internet in a small percentage. Interesting data is that 52,5% of respondents did not see the campaign at all.

Table 8. Following the political marketing in digital environment, the VIII electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	**%**
I actively followed the campaign on the Internet	106	15,1%
I saw the campaign on the Internet, but I did not follow actively	190	27,1%
I did not see the campaign on the Internet	399	57,0%
Campaign on the Internet does not affect me	4	0,6%
I do not want to say	1	0,1%
Sample (N)	**700**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Similar to previous questions, there is no significant difference between respondents of primarily urban and primarily rural area.

It is interesting that a large number of respondents from urban area did not see the political campaign on the Internet compared to respondents from rural area. Ratio is 57% versus 52,5%.

Table 9. Impact of political marketing in digital environment, the IV electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	**%**
Yes, only in the campaign did I find out things about candidates	40	12,1%
No, they did not affect me	288	87,3%
I do not want to say	2	0,6%
Sample (N)*	**330**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Item 9 applies only to respondents who saw the political campaign on the Internet, that is, to those who saw political marketing in digital environment. Only 12,1% of respondents say that political marketing influenced their opinion and decision about voting. On other hand, 87,3% of respondent say that political marketing in digital environment does not affect them.

Table 10. Impact of political marketing in digital environment, the VIII electoral unit

	TOTAL	
	N	%
Yes, only in the campaign did I find out things about candidates	23	7,7%
No, they did not affect me	270	90,9%
I do not want to say	4	1,3%
Sample (N)*	**297**	**100,0%**

Source: Created by the authors based on the research done.

Item 10 shows results of influence of political marketing in the VIII electoral unit. 90,9% of them say that political marketing on the Internet did not affect them. Only 7,7% of respondents answer affirmatively on questions how political marketing in digital environment affected them and their preferences regarding voting on the elections. The research yields conclusions according to which hypotheses are accepted or rejected. A small influence of political marketing on voters in Croatia is visible, regardless of their place of residence.

2.3. Discussion

It is necessary to accept or reject the set hypotheses based on research results. The first hypothesis is; "Political marketing in the digital environment has more impact on voters in the urban area than voters in the rural area". Analysis of the results rejects the hypothesis. Respondents from primarily urban electoral unit say that political marketing in digital environment did not impact them in percentage of 90,9%. On other hand, respondents from primarily rural electoral unit say that political marketing in digital environment did not impact them in percentage of 87,3%. The aforementioned is a devastating fact for political campaign managers. It is necessary to say that respondents in question noticed the political campaign on the Internet, but it did not affect them.

A question arises about the quality of content and knowledge of strategic marketing. Political subjects on Croatian market still have a goal to be present. Campaign leaves an impression that it is self-sufficient, that is, that marketing process managers just have to fulfill items that are relevant: web page, social networks, banners, radio, television, billboards... Contemporary marketing experts must create content that will intrigue visitors and attract potential voters to the candidate's or party's web page. It is interesting that results show influence is stronger on respondents from rural areas, but due to a big percentage, one can conclude that political marketing in digital environment does not affect voters in both rural and urban areas.

The other hypothesis was: "Residents of rural areas follow the political campaign in digital environment in a smaller percentage than those in urban areas". Based on the results yielded, this hypothesis is rejected as well. Respondents from the IV and the VIII electoral unit in similar percentage did not actively follow the political campaign on the Internet, and in the same percentage did not see the campaign at all. It is interesting that respondents from rural areas say that they actively followed the campaign in percentage slightly bigger than of those in urban areas.

3. CONCLUSION

Parliamentary democracy means competition of individual parties, programs and candidates on a "political market" of sorts. The need for marketing activity that aids better "sales" of certain ideas, parties or individual is called political marketing. According to the definition, political marketing has a goal to contribute the adequacy of a candidate with regard to his potential voting body. Basically, there is no big difference between political parties and business subjects. Political parties and candidates are turned to voters compared to business subjects who are turned to potential customers. Basic terms of political marketing are: product – ideas of candidates or political subjects, as well as the candidate himself, market – electoral/political public, consumer – citizen/voter, emphasizing differences – competition among people and ideas, sales – organization and presentation of candidate's knowledge and ideas, ensuring in such way profit – being elected for a public function. It is necessary to say that political marketing is a long-term process. Political marketing in digital environment is a basis of political marketing. The term refers to using e-marketing techniques in political marketing. That being said, political marketing has a goal to reach each person that has access to a smartphone, social networks or the Internet.

Potential voter can, at any moment, analyze candidates and compare their programs. The biggest competitive advantage of e-marketing and e-political marketing is mobility and data availability. Research was conducted using a questionnaire among potential voters. Research results show the situation in which political marketing in digital environment has a bigger impact on voters in rural areas compared to voters in urban areas. It is necessary to emphasize that political marketing does not impact voters neither in rural, nor in urban areas. Impact on voters in rural areas is insignificantly bigger, but conclusion is that Croatian political market is due to many reasons very specific.

Most potential voters make a decision about their vote prior to elections. There is an impression that political parties and candidates use marketing in order to be present, but not with a strategic goal because political marketing at this point does not have an impact on voters in the Republic of Croatia. Croatian citizens who want changes have either emigrated or do not vote on the elections, while on the other hand, citizens who have direct or indirect benefit from politics if they vote. A party that has managed a strategically meaningful campaign has not yet occurred on the Croatian political market. Based on research results political subjects can prepare their activities for the next elections in Croatia.

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UTJEČAJ POLITIČKOG MARKETINGA U DIGITALNOM OKRUŽENJU NA BIRAČE S OBZIROM NA MJESTO STANOVANJA

SAŽETAK

Političke stranke koriste tržišne informacije kako bi utjecale na oblikovanje proizvoda kojeg nude. Politički marketing se definira kao odnos između političkog subjekta i tržišta. Odnosi se na one aktere politike koji su shvatili važnost, učinak i tehnike poslovnog marketinga. Proučava odnose između proizvoda političke organizacije i zahtjeva tržišta. Politički marketing koristi tehnike marketinga kako bi ostvario svoje ciljeve. Današnje 21. stoljeće obilježava korištenje elektroničkih medija. Temelj svakodnevnog života je Internet. Politički marketing je prepoznao trendove, te je usmjerio visoki postotak djelovanje na digitalno okruženje. Najveća prednost političkog e-marketinga je efikasna komunikacija s velikim brojem potencijalnih potrošača, u slučaju političkih subjekta potencijalnih glasača. Dugoročni cilj političkih subjekta je politička vlast. Nema razlike između primjene tradicionalnog i političkog marketinga u digitalnom okruženju. U ovom radu su prikazani rezultati istraživanja čiji je cilj bio utvrditi utječe li politički marketing u digitalnom okruženju više na glasače u ruralnim ili urbanim izbornim jedinicama. Ispitni uzorak su bili birači u IV. i VIII. izbornoj jedinici prilikom izborne kampanje za Hrvatski sabor 2016. godine. Istraživanje se provelo kroz anketni upitnik među potencijalnim biračima. Navedene izborne jedinice su izabrane zbog svojih različitosti, IV. kao pretežito ruralna izborna jedinica i VIII. kao pretežito urbana izborna jedinica. Rezultati istraživanja su prikazali kako nema razlika između birača IV. i VIII. izborne jedinice, odnosno kako je utjecaj političkog marketinga u digitalnom okruženju gotovo jednak bez obzira na područje u kojem birači žive. Potrebno je istaknuti kako je Republika Hrvatska specifično područje u kojem politički marketing ima nizak utjecaj na glasače. Ovo istraživanje može doprinijeti bolje razumijevanju političkog marketinga u digitalnom okruženje, te može postati temelj marketinške strategije političkih subjekata za iduće parlamentarne izbore.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: politički marketing, e-politički marketing, ruralna izborna jedinica, urbana izborna jedinica.