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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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- Relevancy of the subject to Web applications
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Mobilising an Obama nation using Web 2.0: “Yes we can”

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Abstract

The 44th US president was massively elected on the 4th of November 2008 after an extraordinary campaign that successfully embraced the social capabilities of the World Wide Web. The Barack Obama “Yes We Can” campaign was impossible to ignore; it was simply everywhere. Additional to the effective use of traditional media such as radio, television and direct mail, their campaign utilised Web 2.0 technologies to reach the masses who could access the web via PCs, mobile devices, gaming stations and other devices. Maximising the use of social web applications such as Facebook, Skype, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn they succeeded to touch and muster people beyond customs and racial hindering, around a message, a program and a leader.

All around the world, as well as in South Africa, every time democracies have to consult populations on important decisions, to gain their adhesion to a painful program of reforms or to campaign for any essential reason, the web is also utilised to disseminate the message; but it doesn't always succeed as expected.

This paper explores the technological trail of the “Yes We Can” campaign by US president, Barack Obama, as a case study in order to identify the underlying success factors to why it was successful in the mobilisation of a nation. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with social media and web experts to gain a better understanding about the “Yes We Can” e-strategy and what lessons could be learnt from this campaign.

In conclusion a set of guidelines are presented for using an e-strategy that will support campaigning for fundraisers, elections, safety and other numerous important social calls where involvement and mobilisation of citizens in communities are crucial.

Keywords: WWW, Web 2.0, online campaigning, online targeting, Social media, social network, Social capital, mobilisation.

1. Introduction

Rag (1995) sees marketing as the identification, stimulation and satisfaction of customer requirements at a profit. A Marketing Campaign would be a communication attempt to get to these goals through the use of media which are the means (Television, radio, newspaper, Internet, etc.) to reach large number of people, according to the Collins English dictionary (2004). And it seems that campaigning for political elections, public consultation, public education or information as well as all the social calls towards engaging and empowering people in communities seek the same ends and follow the same way of doing. The attention here is in doing such a campaign trough the web; especially trough the sometimes called social web, web 2.0 or "Read Write Web" which is the actual trend driving the known World Wide Web; and in how to leverage it to augment chances of success in online campaigns. That shift of the web is now noticeable by it particular capability to engage, mobilise and empower people; literally it seems to be a translation of these "words of mouth": "you are not alone", "You will never walk alone" or "Yes we can". It has changed the way people interrelate or may be has enhanced it. As a matter of fact, the Inter-social networks web has enabled very close new virtual communities which are almost borderless, timeless, without race, age, gender, experience, religion or other hobbling differences consideration between people, in a man to man basis.

The problem is that all around the world, as well as in South Africa, every time democracies have to consult populations on important decisions, to gain their adhesion to a painful program of reforms or to campaign for any essential reason, the web is also utilised to disseminate the message; but it doesn't always succeed as expected. It is just like things are done hoping that they will be helpful or just to follow the "web hype", while there might be underlying reasons and opportunities for failure or success.

However, the 44th US president was massively elected on the 4th of November 2008 after an extraordinary campaign that successfully embraced the social capabilities of the World Wide Web. The Barack Obama "Yes We Can" campaign was impossible to ignore; it was simply everywhere. Additional to the effective use of traditional media such as radio, television and direct mail, their campaign utilised Web 2.0 technologies to reach the masses who could access the web via PCs, mobile devices, gaming stations and other devices. Maximising the use of social web applications such as Facebook, Skype, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn they succeeded to touch and muster people beyond customs and racial hindering, around a message, a program and a leader. Therefore that campaign should have encompassed the recipe of success needed when it will come to utilise the web to effectively reach the masses.

This paper will present the background to this study, will describe the Web 2.0 and its drivers, will follow up the "yes we can" campaign online, will assemble guidelines from the literature, will present the research methodology employed, will collate social media experts point of views on the topic, and finally will suggest a set of guiding principles as

strong recommendations for communities.

2. Web 2.0: Read, Write, Web

The dilemma with Web 2.0 is that it is easier to show it than to define it. Numerous authors have tried the exercise but to no avail. Some saw Web 2.0 as a social media of social networks which are “websites which offer as features, a profile page, and a network of friends, a public commenting system and a private messaging system” (Rigby, 2008). Tim O’Reilly (2005), referred to it as a particular phenomena that is growing in popularity and suggested “to visualize it as a set of principles and practices that tie together a veritable solar system of sites that demonstrate some or all of those principles, at a varying distance from that core”. In all cases, the undeniable is that the web was transformed since 1990s. That transformation came from people integrating the web technology into their lives. The result was new people with their new body part which was growing like them, getting stronger, bigger, larger, whatever the form, as they were doing it; filling and fitting the space to it allocated in their lives.

Web 2.0 also called, user-created content web, or Read Write Web, is an evolution of the web. The drivers of that development, according to the OECD (2006), were Technological, Social, Economic, Institutional and legal: in other words technology, people and people related activities. The impacts of that shift were on “ICT and other skills, Educational and information, Cultural, Increased user autonomy, participation and communication, Citizenship engagement and politics, Marketing and brands” (OECD, 2006).

The change in technology was emphasized in the methods, in the purpose and in the conception behind the building of artefacts. It was all about collaboration, customers will fit, and to set spaces to allow user modifications. It is for instance eXtreme Programming (XP), Mashups, Service Oriented Architecture (SOA), and/or Software as a Service (SaaS). And on the web, websites became platforms as depicted in the web 2.0 landscape of Future Exploration Network (FEN):

- Web application, limited at a side by *widget/component*, at the other side *aggregation/recombination*. There are sites like Ning, Remember the milk, Feedburner, Thinkfree, netvibes, hypemachine.
- Recommendation/filtering, from side to side *aggregation/recombination* and *collaborative filtering*. There are Pandora, Musicoverly, Findory, Flixter, Blinx, Digg, Google, yahoo, and Techmeme as examples.
- Social network, from side to side *collaborative filtering* and *rating/tagging*. Examples are Reddit, Stumbleupon, Shoutwire, Chacha, Second Life, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Facebook.
- Content sharing, from side to side *rating/tagging* and *widget/component*. Examples are Wikipedia, YouTube, Slideshare, Flickr, Blogger, Twitter, Odeo

The technology empowers people who could learn at will, get thorough information

about a topic, and feel enough confidence to engage on fields like political debates and social calls support; and to participate in the construction of communities they are living in. These powerful people, maybe a generation 2.0 (Rigby, 2008), who “live in social structures that are both virtual and real” (Plummer et al, 2007:180.), are keen to show off about their domain of interest, enabling an environment of “Choice, control and trust” (Plummer et al, 2007:190), which is a combination of “trends of an on-demand environment, a participatory environment, and a re-aggregated environment” (Plummer et al, 2007:188). They are members of a conscious ‘new community’ that raises intelligence and creativity, that follows principle and purpose, and that enables power (Schuler, 2000). That community values would be: Conviviality and culture; education; strong democracy; health and well-being; economic equity, opportunity and sustainability; and information and communication (Schuler, 2000).

This community, network of social networks, is made up of nodes of powerful people and other entities, tied by web applications and services which are their media of communication, the infamous social media, with regards to their interest, values, principles and the purpose of their volition. In order to reach these people without real country, race, age, gender, religion, or time constrains, with a message and mobilise them, Web 2.0 is the mould and social media the channel.

Hence, Web 2.0 is understood in this paper as a phenomenon, a technological and human trend thrust by technological evolution, people taking over of web technology capabilities, and people activities technology demands; changing the way that technology is developed and delivered; making a platform of the web; empowering people and gathering them in new communities over real communities, bound by certain interests, values, and consciousness, through social media, and other web application, web services or simply web compatible technologies, and finally fostering collaboration, interaction, and sharing.

Definitely, following that meaning of Web 2.0, Social networks are places where social capital can be leveraged and used as instruments to get advocacy, mobilisation and votes, as well as other forms of capital like funds, appliances or even estates. It will only depend on the size of an actor network of connections that can be effectively mobilised and the volume of social capital possessed by the other members of the network (Turner, 2006)

3. “Yes we can” e-strategy: Web 2.0 in the campaign

The USA 2008 presidential election campaign saw for the first time candidates using massively Internet with the purpose of helping, let say supporting votes casting. Of course, usual mass communication apparel (Rallies, advertising on boards, television, radio, as well as door to door, and etc) were utilised by contenders; but the web layer took an amazing extent which became critical in the last run and like some authors argued, decided on the man to take the poll. As a matter of fact, Barack Obama won the web with 3 million online donors, 6.5 million online donations adding up to more than \$500 millions, more than 1 billion e-mails sent during the campaign, 2 millions profiles created on the My.BarackObama.com social network website and organizing 200 000

offline events across the country (BSD, 2008).

A presidential election campaign can be viewed as a marketing campaign of a candidate and his ideas with the intent of casting a majority of votes to get the position. It means building a team, raising funds, mobilising people, organising volunteers, and promoting the candidate image and vision on media. The marketing four Ps can also shape those points: The Product would be the candidate and his ideas; the Price would be donation, time, advocacy and votes from the supporters; the Place would be anywhere they can reach people on the web; and the Promotion would be online advertising and “everything that can be done to make peoples talking” (Sernovitz, 2006:3).

This case study focuses on the uses of the web as medium, particularly Web 2.0, and follows up the framework design behind the USA 44th presidential election winner online campaign strategy. That underlying picture seems to emerge from the emphasis accorded to particular areas which may get all the attention, and were the points where the campaign was noteworthy. They are: Mission, Goals & objectives, Targeting, Planning, Organising, Approach of advertising, Platform, Engage, Measure.

Barrack Obama entered the race within the Democratic Party against all odds. He hadn't a lot of support, was younger, Afro-American, not very well known, and less experienced, compared to his opponents, for instance the then New York senator Clinton H.R. who had them all, “lining up powerful supporters and raising immense sums of money, with a team of consultant highly skilled at manipulating the media” (Stanton, 2009). His campaign focused on the use of the web which was quiet cheap, had shown some strong capabilities since Howard Dean or John Kerry tried it and, was became so Web 2.0. “They knew that online contributions, online activism, and online community-building would be paramount as the race heated up” (BSD, 2009).

3.1. Goals, objectives, & Mission

A presidential election campaign seeks to cast votes. For that purpose the candidate and his message need advocacy and support, engagement and mobilisation to bear the word broadly, in addition to funds to clear advertising and organisation expenses.

On the web, the Obama's campaign interests were on leveraging the social capital in the Web 2.0 for catching and securing votes, fundraising, ground-rooting the campaign in people mind by rendering it personal and ubiquitous, engaging and mobilising people to volunteer and advocate, while keeping the dear principles of collaboration, interaction and sharing, and being comfortable with people interests, values, principles and the purpose of their volition.

3.2. Targeting

The targeting consisted on determining where and how to reach effectively a potential voter, a donator, a volunteer, an advocate (influencer), or an online great social capital holder. The online campaign seems being delivering, in the way they suggested loving

it, to the American voting-age population having a relationship with the web, which means accessing the web in a regular basis in order to find information, publish, communicate, find entertainment, shop, work, and/or socialise (go out there, meet people, comment, etc.) where ever they are geographically, on their favourite websites, web services, and usual platforms.

74% of internet users, which is 55% of American voting-age population (Smith, 2009) were the target of campaigners. They were from all the location on the country shores as well as living abroad, from young adults to elders, and they had their behaviours already monitored by online marketing organisation on the behalf of the websites they were visiting. These marketing companies run studies for their clients and develop metrics and tools to be able to control and leverage influencing people behaviours towards subjected products. Thus they possess huge amounts of information about online consumers which they can present as customer aggregated behavioural data. Using these information's they were able to target the right prospects at the right time, the right place and with the expected message. For instance, they developed almost 7000 customised emails to reach people in a one to one basis. They chosen the most frequented social network sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, myspace, etc), went to communities influencing ones like MiGente for Latino-American, BlackPlanet for African-American, as well as the Asiatic AsianAve. The campaign got even advert spaces in second life, and in video games. Mobile device were not apart with the use of sms (short message service), twitter (A Blogging application on Mobile) and a campaign update manager application for Blueberry, Iphone and other PDA like mobile communication devices. That's how most of the prospects met with the campaign on their usual way to their online interests: the campaign went to them in a "one to one" based approach.

3.3. Planning

The set of actions toward achieving the goals, missions, and objectives of the campaign as visible were hiring an adequate team and specialised cutting edge companies, having use of resilient tools and techniques, building high level relations with most influencing social media organisations, unrolling a prudent approach for social media, supporting the whole campaign using web 2.0 and unfolding organising supporters through social media.

Even though the campaign was almost ubiquitous online, it wasn't in haphazard; but was following a rigorous plan respecting the online targeting, the physical world campaign, the candidate displacements within the country and his apparitions on other media, the web feedback, and the controlled and uncontrolled created content impact.

The first move toward the campaign was to get the right people to do the job and the main choice went to Blue State Digital (BSD) as well as Edelman-Digital Public Affair which were hired with the mission for the first one to "build and manage a state-of-the-art Internet campaign operation and to manage the online fundraising, constituency-building, issue advocacy, and peer-to-peer online networking aspects" (BSD, 2009); and

for the second one to shape messages for online audiences and develop customised campaign achieving public policy objectives (Monte Lutz, 2009). These organisations were involved in the successes of Howard D. and Kerry J. who pioneered successes in online campaigning, in addition to be experimented in elections business.

Further more the candidate built relevant advisory relationship with some social media companies executives like Eric Schmidt of Google or Craig Newmark founder of Craigslist, which have the benefice of bringing some big picture management advises and external point of views about the campaign.

According to Lutz (2009), the campaign adopted and followed a “crawl, walk, run and fly methodology approach” which can be depicted into:

- Establish an online presence: getting out there with a website which was www.barackobama.com and monitoring “words of mouth” about it;
- Enrich content: offering more content in terms of articles on the candidate life, achievement, personality, speeches, as well as his program, applications (widget, wall paper, screensaver), a store (Shirts, T-shirts, shorts, hats, etc.) recalling to him, photos, audio/video elements of interviews, rallies programs, tv spots, and games;
- Engage online influencers: Going to people through blogger outreach, blogging and following followers blogs; advertising with pop ups pictures, posters, music, fixed or rolling banners, messages; built his own social network my.barackobama.com; “friending” with big social networks owner, and getting these influencers to the cause.
- Embrace the community: entering the conversation with blogger tour, leadership blog which motivate and tells what to do to followers (e.g. @BarackObama), social networking activities on over 16 selected websites, advocacy support and organisation using myBO, and reaching all web able platforms like gaming station, PDA or mobile phones.

There was an official Obama profile on YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace, Flirck, Fatihbase, Eons, Glee, MiGente, BlackPlanet, AsianAve, MyBatanga, Digg, Twitter, Eventful, and DNCPartybuilder. In the final month of run, the campaign put a thrust on younger and first time voters with a call for “early votes” on sms (Short Message Service) using Boost mobile and ChaCha.com services (Duryee, 2008).

The campaign website www.barackobama.com was the portal to the campaign with a link to contents, store, social networks, donation point, etc; while <http://my.barackobama.com> was the hub and the link to online advocacy, offline events and the organising point for supporters.

3.4. Organise

The organisation here is all about the people and companies behind the machine, and about the way they went to direct, let say to lead people actions (Online and offline). There was at least, among numerous and depending on the strategy and tactics:

- BSD standing for Blue State Digital developed the Web platform for the website (www.barackobama.com) and the social network (my.barackobama.com) capability, a managerial tool providing metrics and measures;
- Edelman shaped the online conversation between the campaign and the online community, as well as integrating online efforts with traditional media and advocacy efforts.
- CakeMail was used in an email based fundraising campaign “An Obama Minute campaign” (<http://www.anobamaminute.com/>) to raise \$1million in one minute.
- Quattro Wireless, ChaCha and Boost mobile were combined in a tactical move toward young voters

3.5. Approach of advertising

The campaign advertising approach was on various web pages (Banners, pop ups, etc), games, adverts, spaces (Boards), e-mail, sms, and “word of mouth” which is defined as the “art and science of building active, mutually beneficial consumer to consumer and consumer to marketer communication” (Sernovitz, 2006:3).

In the beginning of the campaign slogan wasn’t “yes we can”. It started with a humble “Obama for America”, exploded to multiples, each one supporting a particular goal with words like “Fight the smears”, “early vote for change”, “Change we need” campaigns and others, to over arch with the acclaimed “Yes we can”. It is alike that the slogans were adapted to circumstances, platforms and were echoes of an expectation of prospects that were using these expressions in their online discussion.

On mobile one of the most noticeable initiatives was the SMS campaign “early vote for change”, towards young and new voters, which Steven Rosenblatt, VP of Quattro’s Ad Sales, cited by Duryee(2008), summarises with: “We were brought in by the Obama campaign to come up with a media strategy to get the early vote initiative out in key battleground states...They wanted to go after the youth, which is where Boost came into play, and then they also wanted to reach constituents in key battleground states, and that’s where ChaCha was able to reach people on a one-on-one basis.” The campaign also advertised on XBOX games and some online games as well as a Barack Tv channel on YouTube, providing on demand content about the campaign (Clips, speeches, interviews, documentaries, spots etc.).

3.6. Platform

The almost purely technology aspect of the online campaign was the artefact through which people were accessing the web, the application which was bringing them to the information, or the information to them. There are Personal Computers, Mobile devices and Gaming stations; Social network and social media websites and applications. It is important to see the web as a platform, because a social network website allows sending and receiving messages (IM and mails), to emit calls (VoIP) and to get news

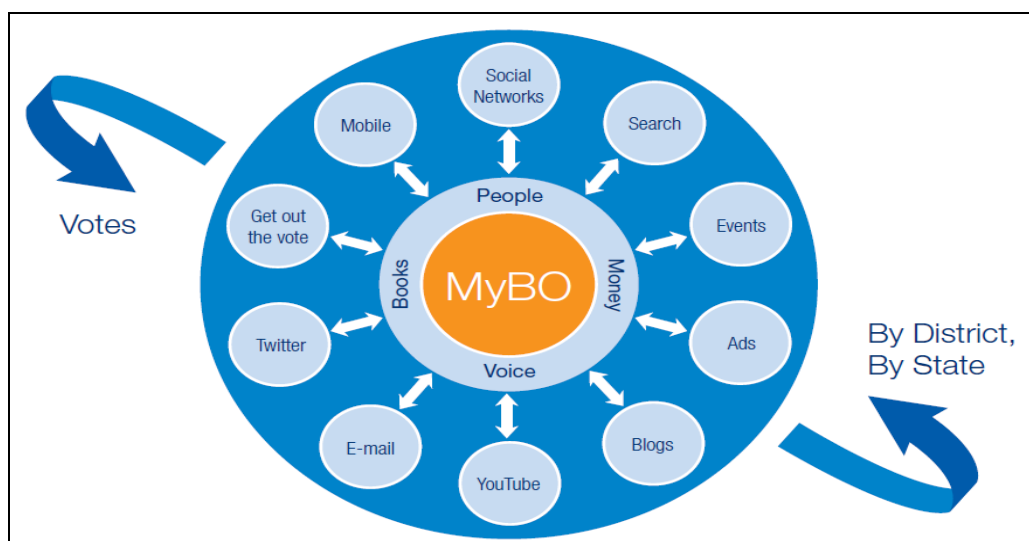
updates. In a sense, it would mean to get to the web, on a social network, to access the web of information and communication. Hence the campaign went to constituents on their social network platform, on their gaming station through their games or the website they were going to play, on their mobile device through SMS and applications, on their desktop and laptop connected to the Internet.

3.7. Engage

The campaign recruited people online to advocate by befriending them, giving away some control, adopting their values, updating their knowledge of the race, directing their actions, rewarding their involvement, sharing with and embodying them.

The constituent engagement and organisation process, let say befriending, inform, listen, update, share values, embody, leverage (donation, content generation, online advocacy, offline events hosting, etc.), and tracking, was conducted using the social network website of the campaign. It was sounding and bearing a spirit of “this is not the Mr. Obama campaign but the community campaign”. If you were looking for an event in your locality on MyBO (see Figure 1) you had the place, the attendants and someone connected to talk to about it. If you wanted to know the candidate life, program, displacements agenda, or anything about him, the community was there, behind the website, to answer you, with an attention to verifying the source and links to help you make your own way digging for the truth. If you wanted just to chat, there was always someone on MyBO to talk with. That social network was the machine that organised 200 000 offline events promoting the candidate throughout the USA and helped to leverage the formidable energy of the momentum which brought the victory.

Figure 1: my.barrackobama.com/organising for America Source: Edelman report, (Lutz, 2009)



3.8. Measures

The tools provided by the companies involved in the campaign, as well as online audience measurement companies like ComScore Networks, research organisations like the Pew Research Center, and other tools offered on social media websites like rating, tagging and analytics systems, were presenting the performance of the campaign instantaneously or regularly. The metrics were numerous and relevant to the need whether finance, impact evaluation, etc. There were things like CPA (Cost Per Action) , ROI, ROMO (Return On Marketing Objectives), amount raised; number of page views, followers, active supporters; , , customer generated media, created Groups on social networks, etc.

President Barack Obama “Yes we can” online campaign was an unprecedented success. It followed a noticeable framework which led it to make history and like some authors argue, changed politics which would settle online politics, online democracy, as part of their new normal environment: as far as the virtual crowd can impose its president, stop a text of being enacted, and other amazing things. This case study went throughout its trail to see where the success trigger was lying. A direct answer would be the people behind the machine, or better, people with their empowering machine part. It appeared that the use of web 2.0 was critical to that campaign success. It stuck on the trend principles, values, used the technology and leveraged the underlying social capital, the wonderful power that brought ahead the unexpected. Campaigners would care about it because the power people lost in real life seems has come back to them online. Let say something activist: “the power is online”.

4. Research methodology

The purpose of this study was to suggest a set of guidelines which will enhance online campaigning for social calls. A qualitative design approach was used to comprehend a literature review on the topic, the analysis of the compliance of a successful case to the framework depicted in the literature and semi-structured interviews of social media experts. Collected data will be presented enclosed in “critical areas of concern” suggested by this study: Mission, Goals & objectives, Targeting, Planning, Organising, Approach of advertising, Platform, Engage, Measure.

Qualitative researches aim to interpret phenomenon in a way that satisfy the epistemic imperative of scientific knowledge. This approach accommodates the flexibility needed to describe the subject at a given time, from a singular point of view which would be slightly different from other referential. It implies to utilise rigorous methods of collection and analysis of argumentative data.

The semi-structured interviews allows digging the complex stock of knowledge of interviewees to reconstruct the subjective theory about the topic under study, using open questions with guiding implicit assumptions (Flick, 2006:155). The contribution

here will rise from a discussed confrontation and will induce the formation of a scientifically reliable set of guidelines.

4.1. Guidelines for online campaigning

Table 1: Literature guidelines for online campaign

| Area of concern | Monte Lutz, 2009 (Edelman report) | Ben Rigby, 2008 | Plummer et al, 2007 | Andy Sernovitz, 2006 |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Goals, objectives, & Mission | | Build a list of actions | Determine your online advertising goals Make sure they are realistic Ensure that they are measurable | 5 Ts: Talkers, topics, tools, taking part, tracking |
| Targeting | Going where the people are | Identify group and individual motivations and then craft your campaign to guide both leaders and followers without condescension or marketing spin. | Targeting strategies must support your marketing objectives” (Plummer et al, p31) One to one targeting | Find out who the talkers are |
| Planning | Establish online credibility and trust through a stepped approach Building the online operation to scale | Fit Social Networking into Your “Ecosystem” Create mechanisms to motivate offline action. Build Your Own Social Network, Figure Out Friending Built social tools around a network of people who were already online and | Learn while you are doing Take full advantage of the desire and competencies of Internet users to reach the right people with right message rather than the most people and the same message. | Learn which topics are working Join in the conversation Listen to tell a friend forms and message boards |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| | | <p>engaged with their organization.</p> <p>Add social features to your existing Web site.</p> <p>Build credibility by enhancing the community.</p> <p>Tell a Story</p> <p>Define multiple ways in which supporters can take action and meet each other.</p> | | |
| Organising | Choosing the right team | <p>Be an Organizer</p> <p>Identify and develop leadership and encourage supporters to reach out to each other.</p> <p>Show supporters why they should advocate for an issue and then encourage them to do it.</p> <p>Form a mutually beneficial social networking coalition.</p> <p>Spend Time on Your Social Network</p> | | <p>Encourage member interaction</p> <p>Foster self expression or communication</p> |
| Approach of advertising | <p>Providing source materials for user-generated content</p> <p>Using tools people are familiar with</p> <p>Ensuring that people can find your content</p> | <p>Make staff time for becoming an actively participating member of this community, or enlist a volunteer who is already engaged in the network.</p> <p>Consider an advertising strategy</p> | <p>Permission-based model, centred on engagement, not exposure.</p> <p>Consumer empowerment where both the time spent with messages and even the generation of messages or word of mouth emanate from the</p> | Put yourself out there |

| | | | | |
|----------|--|---|--|---------------------------|
| | | | consumer Advertising as a service to consumers (Plummer et al, p173) | |
| Platform | Mobilizing supporters through mobile devices | | | |
| Engage | Laddering support through tiers of engagement Empowering super users Providing source materials for user-generated content Mobilizing supporters through mobile devices | Encourage Participation Let go of control Get comfortable with negative comments Discuss issues among your staff and share your thoughts with supporters | There are many keys to success in digital marketing, but the most fundamental is understanding the consumer (Plummer et al, p184) | Encourage feedback |
| Measure | Harnessing analytics to constantly improve engagement activities | Measure Results Develop metrics based on your list of actions. Keep track of staff time and dollars spent on your social networking campaign | be certain to have the right metrics to measure your objectives” (Plummer et al, p230) Customer satisfaction Business process improvements Financial indicators | Use online tracking tools |

These guidelines were extracted from enumerated productions published with the intent to be authorities in the field of online campaigning. They are different authors' perceptions and approaches of the subject under study here. There are Public relation

organisation professional, marketing specialist, Information Technology scientist and web activist. However, the coherence and the similarity in their words suggest the adherence to a common sense, understanding and knowledge of online campaigning.

4.2. Social media expert interview

The semi-structured interviews were conducted over the Internet via Skype for a part, and face to face for the other part. The questions were to guide the conversation and to get an idea what experts in the industry were thinking of the role of Web 2.0 in online campaigning. Local and international experts were interviewed and interviewees were requested to answer to these questions spontaneously, honestly and in the best of their expertise:

- What does Web 2.0 mean to you? (E.g. Social media, social networks)
- What was the role in your opinion of Web 2.0 to the success of the US presidential campaign?
- What would you describe as being key guidelines to campaigning online?
- Would these guidelines be relevant for campaigning online for social causes in a developing country like South Africa?

Some of the views by experts to what Web 2.0 is were “gathering and democratisation of content”, “web publication shared, discussed and controlled by the masses not by editors”, “its about conversations”, “everybody can own media platforms, enabling listening and talk” and it’s a trend of “user empowerment”.

The economy of their answers is collated in Table 2 below according to area of concern that emerged in the literature:

Table 2: Social media expert semi-structured interviews output

| Area of concern | Expert1 | Expert2 | Expert3 | Expert4 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Goals, objectives, & Mission | | Know the goals very well | | Should be clear |
| Targeting | Use niche | Determine the audience | | Understand where your audience are |
| Planning | Reach people on their platform | Be patient the Follow targeting, | Go one step at a time Be patient | Understand the platforms your audience are |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | | Spend wisely | Go to people Speak as much as you listen Be part of the conversation | engaging on Don't try to control the conversation, but be part of it. Plan according to your goals and execute |
| Organising | | | Bring people together Hire youngster, Google generation | |
| Approach of advertising | Campaign as a conversation Invite people Be responsive | Adjust the message to people Be relevant | Provide Information Use people language | Digital inclusion |
| Platform | Any suitable platform | Chose the platform according to a ratio of cost on impact | Any suitable platform | Focus should be on the platform where the people are |
| Engage | It's all about conversation, engage to promote the cause, evangelise Share and discuss the content | Give people the voice Get involve in the community | Foster community spirit | Bottom-up and user participation Respect the space and don't sway into areas |
| Measure | Twitter search Google analytics Number of comments | Metrics on goals Measure on the go Cost per person | Use web metrics and measures | Assess your goals |

The above indicates a resemblance and coherence in the concepts and essential knowledge from both the literature and the experts' panel words. Further more they are from the marketing and the information technology sectors, but their statements show some time completion and most of the time unity. For instance, when it is about "Mission, goals & objectives" marketing folks are more dissert and emphasise the approach marketing area which would be just not be taken lightly; and when it comes to "engage" both parties agree in the necessity of gathering and empowering people.

4.3. Findings: Online campaigning framework by critical area of concern

President Obama's "Yes we can" election campaign followed the state of the art in online campaigning, unleashed the incredible potential that was lying there, and brought along the success against all odds. That campaign steps, matched with the body of knowledge in the literature, in addition with experts' contributions, allowed drawing a framework of guidelines. These guidelines (See Table 3) shines some light on particular critical areas of concern about online campaigning; suggesting doing this in these areas would augment the chances of success.

Table 3: Online campaigning guidelines

| Area of concern | Guidelines for online campaigning |
|------------------------------|---|
| Goals, objectives, & Mission | Determine carefully the online campaign mission, goals, and objectives: they should be SMART (Simple, Achievable, Measurable, Time effective) and able to accommodate the conversation |
| Targeting | Target the audience where it is or go online, according to your goals and objectives, in a one to one basis |
| Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be patient and spend wisely Go for a prudent stepped approach Put your brand out there Go to people Make friends (Can build your own social network) Build credibility and trust by adding to the community (Information, value adoption, help) Get into the conversation (Speak and talk) and learn while you are doing Call for action (advocacy), gather people and suggest simple ways of taking actions (Organise action) Let go of control Prepare your online operation to scale Keep track of every thing (Conversation, money, people, etc.) |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Organising | <p>Choose a team that understand, feel and participate in social networking</p> <p>Go for generation 2.0 people' (Google generation, etc.)</p> <p>Identify influencers, and other supporters</p> <p>Gather them, encourage them to take action and tell them what to do</p> <p>Foster self expression, communication and interaction</p> |
| Approach of advertising | <p>Conversation (Word of mouth)</p> <p>Engagement</p> <p>Provide sound, useful and relevant information to people</p> |
| Platform | <p>Use any platform where the audience can be met according to available resources (Social network websites, mobile devices, PCs, and other games)</p> |
| Engage | <p>Be authentic</p> <p>Bring information and open the conversation</p> <p>Let go of control (Empower people)</p> <p>Let people talk and listen and talk</p> <p>Build a community around your words</p> <p>Use people voice to push your words out (Evangelise)</p> |
| Measure | <p>Develop metrics to measure your goals and objectives</p> <p>Measure people satisfaction, your finance and your processes</p> <p>Use web metrics and measures (Sometimes free like surveys, online analytics tools, etc.)</p> <p>Keep tracks</p> |

4.4. Findings discussion: Limits and mobile technology opportunity

Limits to online campaigning

- Online campaigning is intimately linked to technology cover of the given geographic area (No cellular network for mobile communication, no mobile communication; no pc or no internet infrastructure, certainly no social media user);
- The culture of technology, or the technology penetration, let say the size of technology in the culture of the concerned population (Who has the knowledge to manipulate the technology artefact, and how deeply are these objects present in their lives?);
- Governments endeavours to harness electronic or online freedom (DPI: Deep Packet Inspection initiatives);
- Campaigner inclination to break into private data that threat privacy, security, and ownership of data (BI, customer behavioural data usage), as well as the reliability of the web platform as a resilient bastion of cyber culture (What web without freedom?);
- The next generation of the web (Web 3.0) with new technologies, new concepts and/or new approaches.
- More over, it doesn't replace a campaign on traditional media, but rather supplement it, reducing it cost and enhancing it reach.

The mobile technologies opportunity

Mobile technologies are the fast growing platform for accessing the web. It merits an emphasis because "generation 2.0" (Rigby, 2008), as well as the generations before, are adopting it. South Africa is the seventh largest mobile internet user network in the world, in term of percentage. The four operators (MTN, Vodacom, Cell C and Virgin Mobile) share a market of over 30 millions users in a population of more than 47 millions of inhabitants, encompassing more 9.6 million mobile internet users. The network infrastructure covers the entire country surface, and is getting enhanced to accommodate bandwidth demanding services like videoconference. The mobile is the online campaign and advertising opportunity for SA. It is at the level to advance that any use over that platform is alike to get very good result.

5. Conclusion

Campaigning online, all around the world as well as in South Africa is not considered very efficient. When it comes to do it for social calls, public information, education, and other political issues, it is just an act of faith: if it helps, great; if it was significant, at least something was tried then. It is clear that expensive traditional media will guarantee, in comparison, a net success with regard to resources invested: the techniques are very well mastered in our days. Hence using the web, even though it is reputed relatively

cheap, do not cast wide amongst campaigners. Only some marketing gurus and web fans see something. There is a need for defining strong guidelines which will augment the chances of getting more result: because it works so well that the 44th USA president is the candidate that knew how to use it the most.

The opportunity is with the Web 2.0 which is a trend over the World Wide Web on technology, people and people relative activities, empowering people and gathering them in new communities over real communities, bound by certain interests, values, and consciousness, through social media, and other web application, web services, and finally fostering collaboration, interaction, and sharing. It set a space for social capital leverage over social networking and through social media website.

President Barack H. Obama of United States of America election campaign utilised so powerfully the web 2.0 instrument that it succeeded to touch and muster people beyond customs and racial hindering, around a message, a program and a leader. At the inception, the campaign was running against all odds. But when it went strongly on the web, paying attention to precise concerns, it reversed the bets and won the poll. This study followed the trail of the "Yes we can" online campaign under the grid of areas of concerns in order to withdraw the winning guidelines which are summarised.

The outputs of the case study, was matched and discussed with a literature review and social media expert's semi-structured interviews, and provided a set of guidelines conform to the epistemic requirement of scientific knowledge. These guidelines are not magic formula, not even absolute guarantee of success, but a way of online campaigning more alike to bring success. However, even though campaigning online would get more efficient now, such a venture is limited by hindering like technology penetration, governments attempts to take over the web, or the still very truth that it doesn't replace a traditional campaign, but rather support and supplement it.

In all cases, campaigning online for social calls could benefit from this knowledge, particularly in South Africa because of the opportunity of mobile technology which penetration cover almost the whole country. That platform was found particularly suitable for online campaigning and for advertising, with a fast growing usage worldwide. Is it the maturation of the current era, the premises for a new one, or isn't it only the way for deeper embodiment of technology?

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