

**Generic Functions of Political
Marketing Management**

By
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University of Bath
School of Management
Working Paper Series
2003.19

**University of Bath School of Management
Working Paper Series**

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Generic Functions of Political Marketing Management

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Abstract:

Political parties use marketing instruments as part of their electoral campaign activities. These are usually analysed and categorised using the 4P and marketing mix concept, a perspective anchored in the ‘managerial’ school of marketing theory. However, these concepts have come under considerable criticism. This article uses an alternative perspective, i.e. a functional analysis, to describe the requirements for successful political marketing activities that are fulfilled by using certain political marketing instruments. Eight generic functions of political marketing are identified. Whilst it is not the intention of this article to attempt to systematically operationalise each of these functions, a parsimonious set of interrelated dimensions that may be used in the analysis of political marketing instruments and activities is offered. The focus is on campaign-related political marketing management. The article will close with a discussion of the relevance of the eight generic functions of political marketing for different exchange relationships and submarkets of the political sphere.

Key words:

Political marketing functions; Political marketing instruments; Political marketing requirements; Political market

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Generic Functions of Political Marketing Managementⁱ

Introduction

Political parties use marketing instruments as part of their electoral campaign activities (Kotler and Kotler, 1999; Scammell, 1999). The literature on political marketing has contributed considerable insight into how specific marketing instruments have been utilised to optimise tactical and strategic aspects of political campaigns (Newman, 1994; Kavanagh, 1995; Scammell, 1995; Wring, 1999; Lees-Marshment, 2001; Wring, 2002b). Furthermore, the use of marketing instruments has been observed and analysed for non-campaign purposes of parties, e.g. for fundraising (Steen, 1999), managing party volunteers (Lebel, 1999), constituency services (Butler and Collins, 2001), or the interaction with lobbying organisations (Harris *et al.*, 1999; Harris, 2001a). Besides parties and individual candidates, the employment of political marketing instruments can be noted for grass-roots organisations within a party (Franklin and Richardson, 2002), single-issue groups (Lindsay, 1999), or governments and executive bodies (Newman, 1995; Nimmo, 1999; Buurma, 2001; Newman, 2001; Harris, 2001a).

However, the main focus in the political marketing literature is *how* political actors employ marketing instruments. This article, on the other hand, will be primarily concerned with the question ‘*why* political actors employ marketing instruments’. This question has two different facets: ‘*why marketing instruments?*’ and ‘*why marketing instruments?*’. While the first question addresses how marketing management fits into the political sphere (O’Shaughnessy, 1990; Newman, 1994;

Scammell, 1995; Lees-Marshment, 2001) and the reasons for its appeal to political managers (and researchers) (Cornelissen, 2002), the second question relates to requirements that the instruments' fulfil, and the ends for which they are the means. In this article, a description of political marketing management requirements will be the focal point in order to define the essence of political marketing. To do this, a 'functional' marketing analysis of political management (Hunt, 1991) in the tradition of Shaw (1912), Fullbrook (1940) and Alderson (1957) is used.

This article will commence with an overview of instrumental and functional views of marketing theory. Using these two different perspectives, political marketing management will be analysed by using existing instrumental (means-oriented) interpretations of political marketing activities and derive, as an alternative to this 'managerial' orientation, an ends-oriented categorisation of generic functions that will provide a new way of describing and characterising political marketing management. The functional analysis will be integrated with a holistic view of the relationships of functions and different political submarkets that will exemplify the complexity of the political marketing environment.

Instruments and Functions in Marketing Theory

Current marketing textbooks are dominated by an 'instrumental' view of marketing theory. The so-called '4Ps', i.e. the marketing instruments of Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, as well as the 'marketing mix' concept constitute the cornerstones of (taught) marketing theory (Jobber, 2001; Kotler, 2003). As such, these key texts in marketing follow an 'orientation' or 'school' of marketing that can be called the

‘managerial’ or ‘instrumental school’ (Sheth *et al.*, 1988). Thus, it is not surprising that research on political marketing also takes the methodological lead from the managerial school of marketing (Bannon, 2003; Henneberg, forthcoming). However, the managerial school and the ‘instrumental and mix’ view has been criticised throughout the last decades for some crucial and arguably serious conceptual shortcomings. Critics have argued against this school on three levels:

On the *domain* level (Hunt, 1976; Hunt, 1983), it has been pointed out that the managerial school focuses mainly on consumer products (Sheth *et al.*, 1988). A service offering with the inherent characteristics of intangibility as well as simultaneous ‘production’ and ‘consumption’ (Lovelock and Wright, 2002; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Van Looy, 2003) is often delivered in a very interactive way that can be embedded in exchange relationships (Grönroos, 1994a; Grönroos, 1995). The marketing mix, on the other hand, is about an active seller and a passive consumer; it relates to tangible products and transactional exchanges. While there are attempts to make the 4P concept more relevant to services (e.g. the 7P concept by Booms and Bitner, 1982), many of these underlying shortcomings still prevail. Similarly, the managerial schools can be criticised for an additional problematical aspect, i.e. the failure to cover ‘general’ marketing activities. Business-to-business exchanges, which are often characterised by complex (competitive and cooperative) interactions between many different players that are engaged in direct and indirect relationships, do not fit easily into the managerial school approach (Anderson *et al.*, 1994; Gummesson, 2002). The interactivity of exchange partners as well as the blurring of the boundaries between actor entities in the market has caused business-to-business

marketing theory to look for alternative orientations, e.g. the network paradigm of the Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group (IMP) (Ford *et al.*, 2003).

Criticism with regard to the *historical development* of the managerial school points to inconsistencies in the interpretation of some key concepts and its dependence on assumptions taken from (micro) economics (O'Malley and Patterson, 1998). The 4Ps as part of the marketing mix in its currently disseminated form were first introduced by McCarthy (1960). However, his categorisation of four main marketing instruments which are 'blended' in a mix (Borden, 1964) that coordinates their use, was just one of many theoretical suggestions of how the notion of instrument coordination within marketing ought to look (Grönroos, 1994b)...and anyway, Borden (1964) used twelve different variables (instrument groups) for illustrative purposes, not just four. In fact, the idea of blending was itself a prior notion, introduced by Culliton (1948) as marketing being a 'mixer' of different ingredients. Thus, McCarthy's and subsequently Kotler's understanding of the marketing mix (Kotler, 2003) has been attacked for missing the essence and complexity of the blending metaphor, providing a flawed taxonomy (van Watershoot and van der Bulte, 1992), and being sterile and oversimplified without general explanatory powers (Easton and Araujo, 1994).

Some of the most damning criticism of the 4Ps has to do with *conceptual* issues. It has been argued that the managerial school of marketing contradicts tenets of one of the cornerstones of marketing theory: customer-orientation (Dixon and Blois, 1983; O'Malley and Patterson, 1998). Identifying and consequently satisfying the needs and wants of (target) customers underpins marketing theory axiomatically. While itself not without criticism (Brownlie and Saren, 1992), this concept is incommensurable with a seller-focussed, uni-directional, 'push'-oriented model of marketing which is

generally what the managerial school appears to describe (and sometimes even prescribes) (Grönroos, 1994a).

Marketing practice and teaching, nevertheless, follow largely the managerial paradigm. However, other schools have recently gained importance and an increased 'paradigm competition' within marketing theory has been noted (Pels and Saren, 2003), albeit without reaching the dimensions of a 'paradigm crisis'. For example, network-oriented and relational schools of thought (Anderson *et al.*, 1994; Grönroos, 1994a; McLoughlin and Horan, 2000; Ford *et al.*, 2003) are providing alternative marketing theories and begin to influence theory development especially in services and industrial marketing.

However, for a new research area such as political marketing which is, although now somewhat established, still something of an "*academic parvenu*" (O'Shaughnessy and Henneberg, 2002, p. xiv), the instrumental and managerial perspective of marketing has some advantages: namely, it is established in the practitioners mind (in the sphere of marketing as well as political marketing); it has clear pedagogic advantages (Grönroos, 1994a); and it is relatively easy to transfer to the political sphere (Egan, 1999). For political marketing theory it is therefore advisable to develop its methodological foundation based on the instrumental/managerial school and, at the same time, to integrate and adopt any new conceptual developments in marketing theory to the existing body of knowledge in political marketing. To work around this *paradoxon*, a functional analysis will be used. Marketing functionsⁱⁱ describe the organisational marketing requirements that need to be fulfilled in order to be successful (Sheth *et al.*, 1988; van Watershoot and van den Bulte, 1992). As such, functions clarify the overall strategic goals by providing a set of marketing-related

pre-conditions in terms of activities that ought to be covered. Different marketing instruments are the means to do this. There exists a non-linear relationship between marketing functions and instruments; as one instrument can contribute to different functions, and the requirements of one function can be fulfilled by several instruments. As ‘ends’, a discussion of marketing functions logically precedes an understanding of the use of ‘means’, i.e. instruments (van Watershoot and van den Bulte, 1992). However, both the functional and the instrumental ‘school’ are related in that they share a focus on interactions and economic exchanges (Sheth *et al.*, 1988). Therefore, the literature on political marketing management can gain from a functional understanding without having to relinquish its instrumental analyses and underlying concepts. However, functions of political marketing management constitute an under-researched area, and will therefore be introduced below.

Analysing Political Marketing Management

In analysing political marketing management, the two different views of ‘instrumental’ and ‘functional’ perspective will be used. While the instrumental perspective will merely collate present existing research on political marketing (Lloyd, 2003) and provide some conceptual input, the functional discussion will provide an innovative point of view. The article proposes that in order to study political marketing in a systematic way, some or all of the generic functions might be considered. However, it is not the intention of this article to attempt to systematically operationalise each of these functions, but rather to offer them as a parsimonious set of interrelated dimensions that may be used in the analysis of political marketing

instruments and activities. The main focus of the following is on campaign-related political marketing management. Therefore, other strategic activities (e.g. market-orientation or a market research function) (Lees-Marshment, 2001) will not be discussed.

The Instrumental Perspective

Most articles on political marketing deal with elements of an instrumental perspective. Many of the seminal contribution of the last fifteen years are devoted to a discussion of the ‘4Ps of political marketing’ (Farrell and Wortmann, 1987; Reid, 1988; Niffenegger, 1989; Wortmann, 1989; Harrop, 1990; O’Shaughnessy, 1990; Newman, 1994; Scammell, 1995; Egan, 1999; Scammel, 1999; Lees-Marshment, 2001; O’Cass, 2001; Henneberg, 2002; Wring, 2002a; Lloyd, 2003).ⁱⁱⁱ Besides being relevant to operational aspects of the use of marketing instruments, such discussions also touch upon the essence of what political marketing is, e.g. discussions of the notion of ‘product’ in a political exchange clearly relate to more fundamental questions about the ‘political market’ and the underlying interactions and value exchanges. However, it has been argued that in these discussions, similarities between commercial concepts and political characteristics can easily become overstated (O’Shaughnessy, 2002; Baines *et al.*, 2003). As a result, the product concept as a political marketing instrument and pivotal element of a theory of political marketing has still not been defined in a generally accepted way (Henneberg, 2002) and constitutes one of the major stumbling blocs for further development of political marketing theory (Scammell, 1999).

Because of the interlinkage of functions and instruments (i.e. functions being the ‘antecedents’ for the targeted and meaningful employment of instruments), the existing body of knowledge on political marketing instruments will be used in the following to inform the development of a functional perspective of political marketing management.

The Functional Perspective

Political marketing functions as requirements or conditions for successful political management are the (desired) ‘outputs’ of organisational behaviour. The following eight functions can be classified as ‘generic’ (Henneberg, 2002), i.e. they are concerned with the main exchange relationships of a political actor (e.g. a political party) in the complex network of political relationships. In the following discussion the exchange between political parties and the electorate in the ‘electoral market’ is used as an example.

Product function: The main condition for an exchange (or exchange-related interactions) is the existence of an ‘offering’, i.e. something that is valued by a recipient (e.g. a voter or citizen) and ‘produced’ by a supplier (e.g. a political party or candidate). Kotler, in an article contributing to the ‘domain’ discussion of marketing, described the offering that a political candidate exchanges with voters as “*honest government*” (1972, p. 47). In a further development, the product concept in political marketing is related to the (brand) image of candidates (Kavanagh, 1995; Kotler and Kotler, 1999; Smith, 2001; Lloyd, 2003). Candidate characteristics are the ‘cues’ that voters assess when considering their voting decision (Sniderman *et al.*, 1991; Popkin, 1994). Contrasting with this, Butler and Collins (1999) as well as others (Reid, 1988;

Wring, 2002a) stress the multi-component nature of the political product. They argue that it is linked to the political candidate and the party itself, as well as the underlying ideology. Each of these elements of a political product are interrelated and can therefore be offered (and managed) separately, a fact that pollsters noted relatively early on (Worcester, 1996). Butler and Collins (1999) also stress the alterable characteristic of the political offer: it can be changed in the post-purchase (i.e. delivery) situation. This is taken up by Lees-Marshment (2001) who also posits a more behaviourally-oriented understanding of the political product: it comprises the activities of all relevant actors in a party. Brennan (2003) links different elements of the political product to underlying benefit and value systems and shows the dynamic interaction of these with voters of differing loyalty and/or voting experience. However, Palmer (2002) argues that the political offering has no practical value *per se* for any constituent and is only of a symbolic character. Constrasting this, Dermody and Scullion (2000) link the ‘consumption’ experience of political policies as a crucial value-creating element to the product concept, i.e. replace an ‘exchange’ paradigm with one of “*signification and representation*” (p. 1087). Building on these discussions, the main political ‘product’ can be perceived as a ‘service promise’. The service characteristics of the political offering have been noted by several authors (O’Shaughnessy and Holbrook, 1988; Harrop, 1990; Newman, 1994; Scammell, 1999; Lloyd, 2003). It comprises certain personal attributes (i.e. the characteristics of the candidates as representing the service delivery personnel), certain political issues (i.e. policy intentions), and an ideological framework (i.e. a non-specific umbrella of beliefs and attitudes that guide specific behaviour). Parties need to bring all these service elements together into a cohesive ‘political service brand’ to manage the expectations of voters. This constitutes the main elements of the provision of an

offering and can be seen as the strategic management of a trade-off process between elements of 'leading' or 'following' voter preferences (Henneberg, 2005 forthcoming), as well as balancing the inflexible (e.g. ideology), the flexible (i.e. political agenda), and the semi-flexible elements (e.g. certain characteristics of candidates). As such, the product function does not provide much more than a promise (to be delivered in the future under uncertain circumstances through the distribution function). However, this promise has characteristics of 'public goods', i.e. it is promised to and will be 'consumed' by everyone (not just target segments) (Wortmann, 1989). A dynamic element is added to this view by noting that the offer promise is, firstly, 'underdetermined' (i.e. if a party is not elected, delivery will not be forthcoming), and, secondly, disjunct (i.e. delivery is disconnected, in time, from the service promise, as well as changeable with regards to the original service promise) (Newman, 1994).

Distribution function: Distribution instruments as part of political marketing have sometimes been linked with the rank-and-file members of a party, the political grassroots that provide local electioneering support, like canvassing and leafleting (Harris, 2001b; Wring, 2002a). The 'distribution' of the candidate (as a product surrogate) through speaking events, rallies, etc. has been, likewise, mentioned (Henneberg, 2002). The distribution function is concerned with the conditions regarding the availability of the exchange offer (the political 'product' as described above) to the exchange partner. This function has two aspects, namely the campaign delivery and the offering delivery. The campaign delivery function provides the primary exchange partner, the electorate, with access to all relevant elements of the political 'product'. This includes, for example, the dissemination of information

regarding crucial political policies on important agenda points, ‘placing’ the candidates in the right ‘channels’ (e.g. TV ads or canvassing, party conferences or chat shows), making sure that the distribution medium fits the ideological umbrella, etc. The complexity of this function is expected to increase with the arrival of new media (e.g. e-campaigning, webTV).

The offering delivery aspect of the distribution function refers to the ‘fulfilment’ of political promises (Harrop, 1990; Palmer, 2002). This function comes into play when a political party or candidate has the political and legal means to fulfil their promises, i.e. when they are in a governing position. Wortmann (1989) stresses the ambiguous character of this service delivery due to its inherent characteristics of a ‘public good’. As services are ‘co-created’, i.e. the electorate and the executive powers are enacting and inscribing policies together in a participatory fashion, coordination and monitoring of this offering delivery is crucial for the success of this function. The issue is further complicated as the actual delivery of the political product, i.e. how policies are enacted in the social reality, constitutes part of the ‘product’ expectations by the voters. Many important variables regarding the delivery function that influence the success of the implementation of services are therefore outside the party’s/government’s powers.

Cost function: Pricing as well as costs constitute somewhat of a conundrum to political marketing theorists (Wortmann, 1989) and remain the most elusive political instrument. It is of pivotal importance in economic exchanges where the price of an offering usually constitutes the main sacrifice that a customer has to make in order to realise the value of an offering. Some suggest that there exist no equivalent to an economical price in political exchange (Farrell and Wortmann, 1989). Wring (2002a),

using a concept developed by Niffenegger (1989), perceives price as a psychological construct, i.e. to refer to voters' "*feelings of national, economic and psychological hope or insecurity.*" (p. 179). Reid (1988) and Egan (1999) provide similar considerations. How this understanding is linked to the political exchange and how it could be managed independently of the 'product' characteristics as part of a political offering remains somewhat unclear.

The cost function in political marketing refers to the management of actual and perceived attitudinal and behavioural barriers on the part of voters'. This suggest redefining 'price' as an element of 'costs or sacrifices' (Henneberg, 2002). Inhibitions, e.g. caused by opportunity cost considerations, can prevent voters from implementing their intentions. Therefore, facilitating the political exchange process in terms of cost, implies for the political party to minimise the opportunity costs of voters' decision-making process as well as of the electoral act itself. In addition, it can also mean enhancing the benefits from political involvement and the voting process as a symbolic act as well as from the participatory elements of enacting policies. Understood in these general terms, campaign management can try to reduce the necessary (monetary and non-monetary) efforts for voters to process political information, form opinions, evaluate alternatives, and participate in political discourse in the wider sense.

Communication function: Communication serves the function of informing the primary exchange partner(s) of the offer and its availability. It is often seen as defining the essence of political marketing (Harrop, 1990; O'Shaughnessy, 1990; O'Cass, 2001; Harris, 2001b; Palmer, 2002). While communication is at the heart of many campaigns, the fallacy of this restricted view of political marketing has been

argued elsewhere (Scammell, 1994; Henneberg, forthcoming). For political parties this means providing political content, political images and cues but also aiding the interpretation and sense-making of a complex political world (Kotler and Kotler, 1999). Often the communication function involves simplification of political messages: succinct political stances at its best, soundbites at its worst (Wortmann, 1989; Harris, 2001b). The communication function interacts with the campaign delivery aspects of the distribution function: the latter provides the medium while the former defines the content (derived from the product function). The communication function prescribes a dialogue with the exchange partners, i.e. a multi-directional flow of information and shared agenda-setting. While this is often not fulfilled within the set of existing political marketing instruments, the advent of more interactive e-enabled media might bring this participatory aspect of the communication function to the fore.

News-management function: This function represents a communication function, too. However, it is targeted at secondary exchange partners, i.e. intermediaries, of which the media are of foremost importance. Wring (2002a) calls this ‘free’ communication activities which are concerned with managing publicity that is not directly controlled by the political organisation (Wortmann, 1989), i.e. public relations activities and what is commonly called ‘spin’ (Harris, 2001b). Information-interpretation and agenda-setting aspects are crucial requirements of managing ‘the news’. As much political discourse with the electorate is mediated through (independent) third parties, as great importance can be attributed to it. News-management includes utilising distribution channels with inherently high credibility levels. However, the communication itself can not be ‘managed’ in the sense of controlling it, it can only

be influenced. The exchange partners of the news-management function are mostly journalists and other opinion leaders (Franklin, 1994). This function has gained considerable attention as part of the discussions around ‘spin-doctoring’, an ill-defined concept that has now usurped ‘explanatory’ power in many discussions on political marketing management (Henneberg, forthcoming).

Fund-raising function: ‘Fund-raising’ in the commercial world is integral to the price/cost function. Within the framework of a non-economic primary exchange process in the political sphere, no reciprocal pecuniary revenue arrangement exists. Therefore, in order to provide the political actor with appropriate resources, a distinct fund-raising function needs to be addressed. Political candidates and parties depend to a varying extent (depending with the arrangements of the political system) on membership fees, donations, free services, etc. In some party systems, e.g. in the USA, fund-raising efforts constitute, arguably, the most important activities of a political candidate (Himes, 1995).

Parallel-campaign management function: This function describes the requirement of co-ordinating the campaign management activities of a political party with those of ‘parallel’ organisations such as single issue groups that perceive an overlap of their agenda with that of the party (e.g. Greenpeace and many European Green parties, or unions and the Social Democrat parties). Co-ordinated and synergetic use of managerial activities allows for a more efficient deployment of campaign resources. Furthermore, the use of parallel campaigns and the endorsement by other organisations can increase the perceived trustworthiness of the political messages. Campaign coordination in the political sphere must be seen as a generic function

because of the possible network effects of working together with other relevant actors in the political market.

Internal-cohesion management function: Besides outside-oriented exchange processes, the internal structure and cohesion of a political party needs to be managed as well. This function is concerned with the relationships with party members and party activists as well as all the ‘touch-point’ agents of the party, e.g. front-benchers, spokespeople. This ‘internal marketing’ function serves a critical role in securing internal stability and therefore the credibility of the party regarding its outside image (‘unified stance’) which has implications for their assessment by the voters. However, a too ‘monolithic’ appearance of the party would give the impression of an ‘undemocratic’ decision-making process within and not enough influence by grass-root members. As such, “*one can exercise power over others only by satisfying their needs and expectations; one thereby paradoxically submits oneself to their power.*” (Panebianco, 1988, p. 22).

Functions and Instruments of Political Marketing Management: A Different ‘Marketing Mix’

The importance of coordination between political marketing instruments has been noted (Wortmann, 1989) without given further consideration except for general remarks regarding timing, instrument substitution and conflict issues, and target hierarchies. Usually a mere enumeration of instruments is equated with the political marketing mix itself (e.g. in Harris, 2001b). Lloyd (2003) attempts a re-conceptualisation of the political marketing mix. However, while more appropriate to the political market(s), it remains purely descriptive. In conclusion, the “*easy*

adaptation” of marketing concepts to politics (Egan, 1999, p. 497) does not seem particularly easy after all, at least not on an instrumental level. However, in a functional analysis the ‘marketing mix’ assumes some additional dimensions. Functions and instruments interlock. While functions describe the necessary managerial foci, instruments provide ‘tangible’ ways of achieving functional outcomes. A ‘blending’ approach as envisaged in the original literature on the marketing mix explicitly acknowledges this distinction (Borden, 1964). The mix is therefore concerned not just with a co-ordination on an instrument level but with the attribution of certain activities and instruments to specific functional requirements. As discussed above, certain managerial activities can fulfil different functions. For examples, because of the service character of the political offer, classical ‘product instruments’ are important for the product, communication, and (campaign) delivery function. Blending therefore becomes important in order to manage the trade-offs between instruments that sometimes have negatively correlated effects on the fulfilment of different functions. As such, the political marketing mix needs to be understood as being driven by functional requirements (the relative importance of individual functions as well as the relationships between them). Only a strategic understanding of the interplay of functions allows a resolution of the instrumental political marketing mix (in the sense of determining instruments’ use, timing, intensity, etc.) (Lees-Marshment, 2001).

Political Marketing Functions and the Political Market(s)

Functions as antecedents of the use of political marketing instruments ought to cover all necessary exchange relationships and their management by political actors (or ‘power brokers’ in Newman’s terminology) in a variety of different ‘submarkets’, based on value exchanges (Miller and Lewis, 1991; Newman, 1994; Kotler and Kotler, 1999; Dean and Croft, 2001). Taking the political party again as the focal point and the relationship with the electorate as the focal relationship, one can distinguish three submarkets of electoral politics:

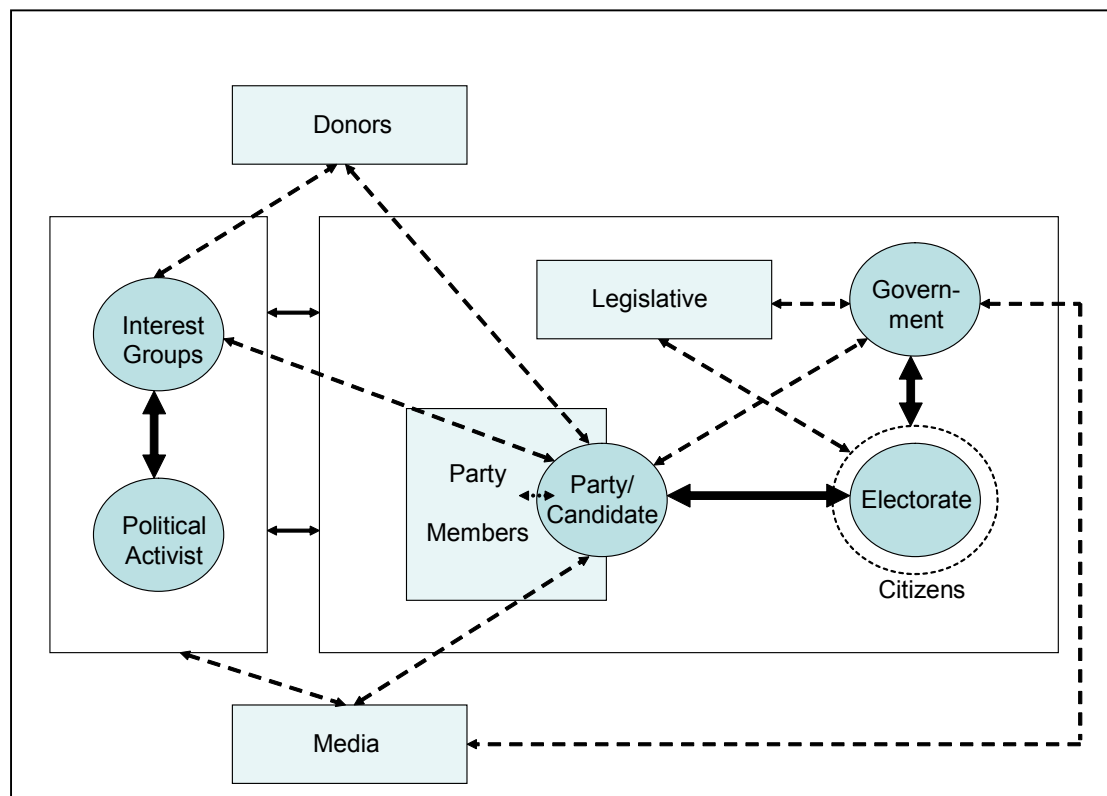


Figure 1: The political ‘supra-market’ (adapted from Henneberg 2002, p. 114)

The *electoral market* is characterised by the main exchange relationship between parties (and their candidates) and the electorate. However, parties also ‘connect’ with

party members and activists as well as donors in order to secure the necessary funds to compete in the electoral market. Communication and interaction between party and electorate is, moreover, not limited to a direct exchange but can also happen in a mediated way, i.e. via media. The *governmental market* focuses on the main exchange relationships between the government (and its executive bodies) on the one hand and the citizens (incorporating the electorate). This process is mediated through legislative institutions. The third political submarket can be described as the *market for political activism*. (Single) Interest groups compete in this market for the resources of political activists. Secondary exchange relationships are formed with donors as well as the media, and governments and parties.

Figure 1 depicts the political ‘supra-market’ (Henneberg, 2002), i.e. a schematic description of the interplay of all three submarkets. In this high-level form, the relevant exchange relationships can be associated with political marketing management requirements in the form of generic functions as outlined above. Thus, it becomes clear that political marketing management is more than merely managing the direct campaign interactions between political parties and candidates on one side and voters on the other. A wider perspective of the political network of actors (a ‘network picture’) is necessary to fulfil the diverse functional prerequisites of political marketing management.

Figure 2 depicts the association of generic functions with the main exchange relationships in the political market. Note that such an association does not imply a ‘market-structure-conduct-performance’ relationship as proposed by Baines *et al.* (2003) for political markets. Several functions refer to multiple relationships, e.g. the distribution function is associated with the party-electorate exchange but also with

government-citizen. This is due to the ambivalent role of parties and candidates as successful campaigning transmogrifies them into a part of the executive (government) without losing their attachment to a political party.

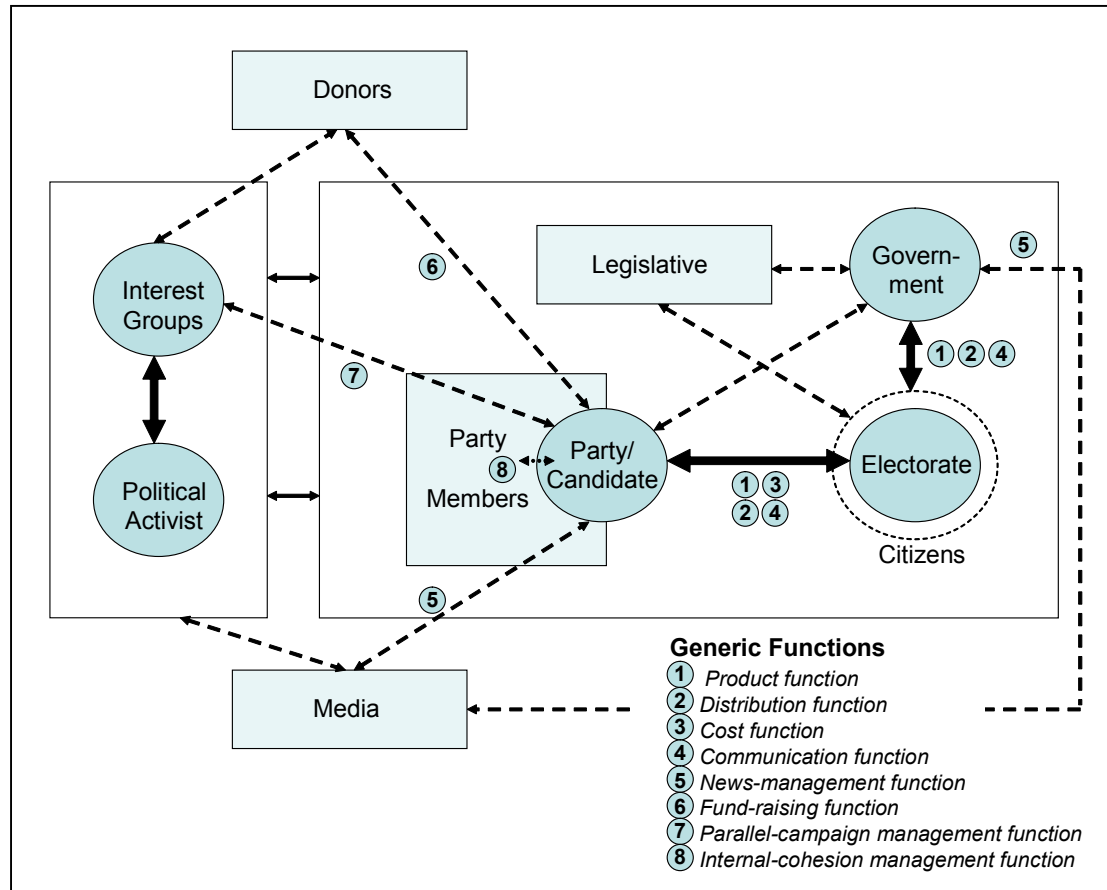


Figure 2: Generic functions of political marketing management in the political market (adapted from Henneberg, 2002, p. 123)

Findings and Conclusions

The functional analysis of political marketing management provides an alternative perspective to the managerial typology of marketing instruments. An analysis of political marketing requirements shows eight generic functions that are concerned with exchange relationships with several stakeholders, operating in several submarkets. Such a functional analysis provides political marketing theory with a

prescriptive instrument to conceptualise political marketing management. A functional view directly relates political marketing with an assessment of management performance, i.e. the question of important marketing outcomes. Such an assessment precedes a more instrumental view that is concerned with the quality of the fulfilment of these outcomes via the deployment of appropriate marketing activities.

As such, a functional analysis of political management demonstrates a particular and distinctive perspective to the field and therefore satisfies Cornelisson's (2002) requirements for analogous use of marketing concepts in politics. It is in line with demands to explore and apply the conceptual and theoretical depth and breadth of political marketing (Lees-Marshment, 2003) and provides a fresh way of categorising political marketing phenomena.

However, the proposed parsimonious set of generic functions needs to be validated empirically in further studies. One problem that researchers in political marketing face is the fact that political parties do not always consciously make 'marketing' decisions although one might be able to classify certain activities or processes as marketing management. Therefore, an exploration of the conceptual linkages between the proposed political marketing functions and the existing literature in political science and communication studies on organisational prerequisites for success can provide a first step towards empirical clarification of the concept. This would allow a systematic operationalisation of the political marketing functions. Further developments need to broaden the functional analysis beyond a mere campaign-focus and would need to include other focal actors beyond political parties and candidates, for example, single interest groups and governments.

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ⁱ This article constitutes the latest development of a concept first introduced by the author at the Political Marketing Conference, University of Cambridge, 27-29 March, 1996. The author would like to thank Professors N. O’Shaughnessy and B. Newman for their suggestions and critique.

ⁱⁱ Marketing functions are not to be confused with ‘the marketing function’ in an organisation, i.e. usually the marketing department. A more strategic orientation of marketing (Webster, 1992) would deny marketing a ‘functional’ home in the organisation as it is an ‘orientation’ and therefore becomes the strategic responsibility of everyone.

ⁱⁱⁱ Building on the traditional definition of the 4Ps (product, price, place, and promotion) Newman (1994) proposes a radical redefinition of the meaning of the 4Ps in the context of political marketing. He suggests an alternative categorisation: product (the campaign platform), push marketing (grass-root efforts), pull marketing (mass media communication), and polling (market and competitor research). While this scheme focuses on some of the pivotal activities of political campaigning, this view is still linked to a traditional managerial understanding of instruments within a marketing mix.