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**«MARKETING APPROACHES IN POLITICAL BRANDING
DURING ELECTION CAMPAIGNS»**

Performed by: student of the 2nd year of study
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INTRODUCTION

Marketing approach to the organization of election campaigns is a necessity dictated by the competitive nature of modern political life. Here it is crucial to remember the deep essence of marketing approaches and not to reduce the new theoretical and technological approach to propaganda or primitive advertising. Marketing occupies an important place in the activities of any enterprise and in the lives of individuals. Therefore, it is an important level for the strategic and tactical goals not only of the enterprise, but also for people. In today's time marketing makes an impact on the decisions made by people in the daily base, which are based on certain narratives and visual contexts that are broadcast in the media, television, and advertising. And this all is the exact result of marketing "hand" in most spheres of today's life.

According to Philipp Kotler and Kevin Keller, people and organizations, formally or informally, are involved in a wide range of activities that can be attributed to the field of marketing. However, it could be clearly seen that a big part of people's needs and interests are forming a large market, which presents a differentiated choice of product (Kotler/Keller 2011: 98). Due to the high effectiveness of the impact on consumer opinion, marketing approaches began to be used in politics.

The essence of the marketing approach in politics is primarily to identify the political process with the market, which is based on exchange. At one time, Joseph Schumpeter considered democracy in the context of the political market, which became the basis for further research in this field (Schumpeter 1975). That is how political branding could be seen as an alternative theory of alternative voter behaviour, where parties and political candidates can be explored as brands similar to brands in the economic market. But the important element of political brand transactions is the voice of a voter, as a credit of trust in government and politics, not money (as in economics and marketing). Therefore, in German language there is a determination of regular loyal customers who prefer to buy the one brand and only for a long time, known as "Stammkunde ". However, a similar term "Stammwähler" means a person who always votes for the same party and does not want to see any alternatives (Gutenberg 1984: 238). But in recent times with the rising trend of customization both are losing in importance. So it could be seen that the political brand operates directly with civic trust and legitimacy (Kotler/Keller 2011: 112).

Since most marketing approaches focus on building and developing a brand, the era of the concept of political marketing began. In the last two decades of the 21st century, this new approach to explaining election patterns has emerged in marketing and later in political science. Political branding has become an interdisciplinary approach and has significant potential to combine ideas about political science, economics, marketing and cultural aspects of modern electoral behavior and to explain electoral patterns as broadly as possible (French/Smith 2010: 165). As a result, the influence of professional marketing has affected the working style of political parties. Parties became more market oriented and began to frame their programs and policies in tune with opinion polls and market surveys. Information revolution and globalization have played a vital role in changing the pattern and content of traditional political campaigning into one of the most professional and sophisticated marketing tactics (Marshment 2006: 86).

The new virtual reality generated by social media has forever changed our perception of politics. Communication between government and society has become faster and more aimed at the target. Political forces have found new ways to spread their ideas and find like-minded people. The election races in the USA in 2016 showed that digital instruments could be successfully used in election campaigns (West 2016). The appearance of social media has significantly changed political communication, especially during election races. In recent years, there are many cases of the changed way of communication channels in politics. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were seen as effective channels of the campaign in the USA, as the profile of Donald Trump was popular not only among his supporters, but also among opponents worldwide (@DonaldTrump 2016).

Marketing approaches in the election campaigns became a key tool in winning the sympathy and trust of the voter. In the age of digitalization and the emergence of social networks, election campaigns are increasingly moving from the usual billboards and leaflets to the online space. This is where the competition of political brands for the voice of the voter takes place today. Political branding is a part of marketing approaches used during the election campaign. In addition, the creation of the marketing, digital and media strategies, each of which consists of the specific tools in order to involve the audience and keep it interested, belong also to it.

The growing popularity of social networks in Ukraine has opened up new opportunities not only for users but also for politicians. Participants in the 2019 presidential and parliamentary elections, although they relied on television and traditional

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political advertising, experts say that social networks also played an important role in their results. In 2019 in Ukraine, the first digital campaign was running. The party of a presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Sluha Narodu (Servant of People), used marketing approaches for leading political agitation and the election campaign online. In less than four months, a team of this party managed to gather people into hundreds of communities around his candidate online, to engage the audience in interaction by generating many likes and loyal commentators. Search targeting, micro-targeting on social networks (Facebook and Instagram), proper audience segmentation, using artificial intelligence for various data processing methods, using Google advertising and launching various algorithms on the Internet contributed to a positive image to build a strong political brand Zelenskyy. As a result, it led to victory, with a large percentage of young people, namely 30% of voters under 30 years old out of 40% that took part in the election, gave their choice for him (Yuzych 2019).

In 2021, the German federal election showed a high percentage of young first time voters that gave their voices for the FDP, the corresponding index was 21%[1]. However, the FDP was running the digital election campaign at that time too and was presented on social media, above all on TikTok. A good example of this is FDP MP Thomas Sattelberger, who was, with more than 140 000 followers, the most prominent German politician on TikTok at the time. Therefore, times have changed, and the age of digitalization has had a profound effect on politics and the style of campaigning. It is marketing approaches that help to analyze potential voters, their moods and preferences, which leads to the creation of a political brand of a party or candidate.

It should be mentioned that both of the political parties in Ukraine and Germany won the segment of the young generation voters. Young electorate aged 18-24 made their choice in favor of Sluha Narodu and FDP. Moreover, Sluha Narodu was an absolute winner of the people who voted for the first time, simultaneously, The FDP won more young voters than in any other age group: 21% as compared to 12% in all other segments of voters[2]. Due to the fact that the younger generation is an active user of social networks, these social media have become for them a source of information and a place for the formation of political and public opinion. This all raises the question of the role of

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[1] https://www.tagesschau.de/wahl/archiv/2021-09-26-BT-DE/umfrage-alter.shtml
[2] https://www.tagesschau.de/wahl/archiv/2021-09-26-BT-DE/umfrage-alter.shtml

marketing tools in Internet technologies and their impact on the electorate during the recent election campaigns in these two countries.

Research Question: What are the marketing approaches in the digital political communication used in the election campaigns in the Ukrainian presidential race 2019 and in the German federal race 2021? Type of the research question is descriptive.

The **object** of research is the political communication of presidential political party Sluha Narodu in the parliamentary election race 2019 in Ukraine and of the German political party FDP in the federal elections 2021.

The **subject** of the research is to describe marketing approaches in the political communication of the political brand of Sluha Narodu during the 2019 elections in Ukraine and marketing approaches used by political brand FDP party during the 2021 elections in Germany.

Therefore, the **purpose** of the research is to find out the role and importance of marketing approaches in political communication in election campaigns and to highlight similarities and differences between marketing approaches in political branding between the winning parties Sluha Narodu and the FDP.

The **methodology** of this work consists of a comparative analysis to determine differences and similarities by comparing marketing approaches in political branding and communication used in the election races in Ukraine and Germany. The qualitative methods include a secondary research by collecting and reviewing the existing open data on marketing approaches used for political aims in the election campaigns of Sluha Narodu and FDP. The other qualitative method that has taken place in the research is content analysis of the official media resources about the political brand of W. Zelenskyy and FDP during the election campaign in 2019 and 2021 in accordance. Moreover, in order to add to the research quantitative analysis there were used sources of the open data, such as META Ad Library and Google Ad Transparency Library, which provides searchable access to a collection of all ads and its financial expenses among META space and Internet technologies. Talking about the **empirical basis** of work, official accounts in Facebook, Instagram of V. Zekenskyy and Sluha Narodu, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok of the political party FDP would be observed in this paper. Official website of Sluha Narodu as well as the political party FDP would be used for the analysis.

During the election campaign, the digital instruments affect the agenda and build connections between the candidate and the voter. The political branding and the political communication are based on the approaches from the marketing field. Thus, the theory

of media framing by Porismita Borah, the theory of voter's associations about the political brand of Wojciech Cwalina and the theory of political marketing mix of Philip Niffenegger will be developed and used for the comparative analysis in this thesis paper.

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL SCOPE OF WORK

The application of marketing approaches to the study of electoral behaviour in political science is not a completely new phenomenon, because marketing is an enormous field of the social sciences (Fabian 2015: 16). The identification of politics with the market has long been present in the literature. One of the first scholars in this field was Joseph Schumpeter with the modelling of democracy as a market. He also introduced the concept of "political competition", which is defined as rivalry in the field of politics for the possession of power, when the results of the rivalry are determined by someone else. In conclusion, Schumpeter claimed that the choice of voters is formed and its formation is an essential part of democratic processes. This is exactly what the parties do, whose programs and principles resemble the varieties of goods that are sold in the market. Consequently, the psychotechnics of party management, its advertising, promotion campaign, and slogans – all this, according to Schumpeter, seems to be the essence of politics (Winter 1994: 280-300).

Well-known sociologist and researcher of electoral behavior Paul Lazarsfeld also pointed out the similarity of voter and buyer behaviour. While his university colleague was working on soap market research in order to find out customers' features and requirements, Lazarsfeld noticed some of the same patterns of electoral behaviour of voters. In his memoirs about the elections in Austria, he noted that "methodological voting for socialist parties is equivalent to buying soap." (Lazarsfeld 2000: 279).

This view was held later by Pierre Bourdieu. For him, politics was a field in which competition gives birth to meaning, politics is "a place where in the competition between agents who are involved in it, political products are born: problems, programs, analysis, comments, concepts, events, of which should be elected by ordinary citizens reduced to the position of "consumers" (Bourdieu/Wacquant 1992: 119).

The most striking marketing approach in politics is manifested during the election process. In this case, "voters are identified with consumers, and political parties and leaders with entrepreneurs who offer a wide range of services in exchange for votes" (Morozova 2000: 19). As a young, interdisciplinary field, political branding is a promising field of research, as it has a number of unexplored aspects, including the hybridization of marketing approaches and the introduction of new methodologies for researching party and political brands (Pich/Newman 2020: 84).

The use of political marketing has long been a common and integral part of any political activity, whether it is an election campaign or the daily work of a political actor. According to the definition of political marketing proposed by American scholars B. Newman and R. Perloff is the use of individuals and organizations of market principles and procedures in political campaigns, which includes analysis, development and strategic management of candidate campaigns, parties, governments, lobbyists and interest groups that seek to influence public opinion, promote ideologies, win elections, etc., according to the demands and needs of certain social groups (Newman 2004: 18).

Modern scientific political thought identifies 4 main areas of activity in which political parties are active. There are parliamentary, electoral, internal and media spheres (Nord 2006: 15).

● Parliamentary sphere – from the very beginning, the subjects of parliament are members of various parties and political forces. That is why the strategic goal of the parties is to expand and strengthen their influence within the parliament.

● Electoral sphere – the main target in this sphere are the voters, thus getting their support and affection is the main goal for all the actors of this sphere (parties or candidates).

● Internal sphere – includes members and activists of the party. At the same time, the strategic goal is to strengthen and strengthen the political organization from within.

● Media sphere – the main subjects are journalists, editors and specialists in working with media communication channels. The strategic goal is to ensure maximum publicity, create a positive image/political brand and minimize a level of the negative reputation.

In each of these areas of political activity, basic models of attracting the electorate are used, based on the general principles of working with customers in the classic marketing models. That is, the essence of political marketing is based entirely on the principles and concepts of marketing. This is emphasized by the fact that marketing has primarily economic, social and psychological features

In the election race, the winner is the candidate who creates a brighter and more attractive brand for the consumer, i.e. the voter. Candidates or parties that have not established close ties with their constituents will perform much worse. This is well confirmed, for example, in the US presidential election in 2016 and the Donald Trump campaign. His odious style of communication and the apt and vivid slogan "Make

America Great Again" immensely contributed to his success as a presidential candidate using targeting and context advertisements in the online sphere (Groitl 2017: 231). Moreover, another marketing approach was used here – the digital communication via the social network Twitter.

Scholars such as Gareth Smith and Alan French have provided an improved, broad, and comprehensive definition of the concept of a political brand. According to their approach, a political brand is an associative network of interconnected political information and views, stored in memory and available when stimulating the memory of the voter (Smith/French 2010: 749). This interpretation of the marketing approach of political brands has given impetus to a number of studies of brands in the political sphere (Micheletti/Stolle 2015: 31). In particular, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was seen as a charismatic politician with an idealized public image, who managed to increase public interest in politics, especially among desperate voters and undecided voters (Lalancette/Raynauld 2017: 888).

A number of interdisciplinary researchers have tried to conceptualize the "political brand". Among them - S. Nielsen, who in his work "Party Brands and Voting" notes that the political brand is a political image (pictures), which are placed according to certain schemes and which can be identified and distinguished from other political ideas"(Nielsen 2014: 153). According to this definition, under representations we can consider any associations, symbols, names, policies and feelings that are engraved in the minds of a person or voter in relation to a political entity, i.e. party, organization or individual candidate. The main emphasis here is on the very idea, which means the associations and emotions of the voter about a particular candidate of a party or other political organization.

At this particular time, the media is the main channel of political communication. Under political communication it is meant the process of transmission, exchange of political information, which structures political activity and gives it new importance, forms public opinion and political socialization of citizens, taking into account their needs and interests (Holtz-Bacha 2002: 27). Thus, political communication is a kind of socio-information field of policy, which connects all components of the political sphere of society and structures political activity. In a wider context, it is a process of transmitting political information that circulates from one part of the political system to another, between political and social systems, as well as between political structures, social groups and individuals" (Schwartzenberg 1988: 42). In addition, political communication could

be bilaterally, both from citizens to the political power and from government to citizens, where media can be mediators. Over the last decade, there has been a significant development of the technical sphere, which has not only influenced the speed of information dissemination, but also accelerated the communication process. Political communication has undergone significant changes: it has become faster than before, and has become, mostly feedback. However, the work of L. Powell and J. Cowart shows a very accurate quote of J. Korcoron, which states that politicians use information not to transmit the needed information, but to hide or distort it, and any modified information can be easily manipulated (Powell/Cowart 2018). Following this further, an effective instrument for that could be media.

The influence of media was studied a long time ago by different scientists, sociologists and other political analysts. The effect of the media is the result of communicative influence on the consciousness and behaviour of the audience. In the sociology of mass media, depending on the conceptual orientation, there are several paradigms for studying the effect of mass media. At the first stage (20-60s of the 20 century) the media-centric paradigm of studying mass communications prevailed, according to which strong and active mass media exert a total influence on the consciousness and behaviour of a passive audience, which is a set of weakly connected and atomized (separate) individuals. Within this paradigm, there were theories of total influence (G. Lasswell), the concept of limited communication or selective influence (K. Gowland, I. Janice, P. Lazarsfeld, J. Klepper).

The model of the communicative act proposed by G. Lasswell consisted of five blocks (communicator, message, audience, channel and effect), each block containing variables that mediated the processes of interaction. The communicator wants to influence the recipient, so communication can be seen as a process of persuasion. In line with this theory, P. Lazarsfeld proved that social control through mass communication is mediated by interpersonal communication and group interactions, i.e. the effect of influence is more complex than Lasswell predicted in his model.

After the Second World War, the concepts of limited communication spread, as the influence of the media was seen as mediated by intermediate variables: individual experience and characteristics, level of intelligence, communicative and cognitive style, belonging to a particular social group or subculture (K. Gowland, I. Janice). The analysis focused on the study of the internal psychological structure of the audience, the levels of its "persuasiveness", the system of attitudes and dispositions, etc., which are influenced

by the communicator and the content of the message. From the 1960-80s a human-centric paradigm of studying mass communications was formed, in which the audience is an active and equal partner, a participant in the communication process, and the possibilities of mass media influence are insignificant.

Influential concepts of J. Klepper's amplifying effects and theories of use and pleasure are spreading. According to the concept of amplifying effects, the media can not significantly change the consciousness of the audience, but may reinforce the attitudes of the recipients in the case of coincidence of views of the communicator and the audience. Meanwhile, the theory of use and satisfaction is based on the following provisions: the audience is active and makes their choices according to the motives and expectations of the media; the media serve as a means of meeting daily needs, replacing the relevant realities. Within the human-centric paradigm, typologies of factors that contribute to (hinder) the influence of the mass media (indirect effect), are indifferent (direct effect), as well as typologies of the mass media effect were proposed. at the level of individuals and social groups. Factors mediating communicative influence include: features of the socio-political context in which communication takes place; media properties; individual traits of recipients (socio-demographic and psycho-physiological features, life experience, etc.); interpersonal connections through which information is disseminated and changed in the audience; group norms and opinions of the group leader, which determine the individual's attitude to the activities of the communicator.

The effects of the media are divided into perceptual effects (changes in the opinions of recipients), emotional (changes in the field of emotions) and behavioural (E. Bettinghouse). According to Weiss's classification, the effects of mass media are quantitative (the effect of the channel, individual message, the amount of time spent on a particular channel, etc.) and qualitative (changes in knowledge, understanding, emotions, interests, views, values). Short-term planned effects include individual feedback (change of thoughts, feelings and behavioural intentions on a personal level), media campaign (using several media channels to achieve the goals of informing or persuading the audience); to short-term unplanned - individual reaction (new lifestyles, acts of deviant behaviour, manifestations of fear, etc.), collective reaction (a set of simultaneous individual reactions can cause panic and civil unrest); to long-term planned – dissemination of innovations (planned dissemination of innovations for long-term development), dissemination of information and knowledge; to unplanned – socialization, social control, institutional changes (the result of unplanned adaptation of existing

institutions to the development of mass media, cultural change, transformation of universal values, patterns of behaviour, symbolic forms inherent in individual social groups and society as a whole).

The third stage (1980s to the present) in the study of the effects of mass media is characterized by conceptual pluralism and synthesis of ideas of previous paradigms. Researchers have focused on information processing concepts that study the nature of media language. According to the theory of ranking social events by the media (M.McCombs, D.Shaw), there is a stable correlation between the peculiarities of the presentation of stories in the media and the degree of their importance to the mass audience. Other concepts of leading importance (J.Meirovitz) give techniques and special effects with which to build a message, such as close-ups on television simulate intimate distance, and characters at a distance are perceived through the prism of their social roles.

In the social-constructivist approach, the mass media is seen as a factor that changes social realities and perceptions of them in the mass audience. The authors of the theory of structural interrelation point out that the more unstable a society is, the greater the dependence on mass media information that satisfies society's needs for orientation, definition, prioritization and values (Ball-Rokich, Sandra 1976). The study of the effects of mass media is related to the study of the relationship between the concepts of "effect", "efficiency", "effectiveness" and the empirical study of the effectiveness of mass communications. B. Grushin proposes to distinguish the following groups of effects of mass media:

● effects that depend on the functions-goals of mass media: cognitive (changes in knowledge and cognitive skills), value (changes in orientations, interests, views, etc.), utilitarian (changes in behaviour), psycho-tonic (changes in the emotional and psychological background of life), communicative (changes in the field of contacts and communications);

● explicit (related to behaviour) and latent (lying in the realm of consciousness) effects;

● effects that have informational and non-informational (subject activity of people) nature;

● main (meet the objectives of communication) and non-core (unplanned) effects;

● conscious and unconscious effects;

● effects are direct (immediate) and delayed (Grushin 1979: 122).

The concept of effect differs from the concept of efficiency, which provides only such a result that coincides with the intentions of the communicator. Therefore, there are functional and dysfunctional (negative) efficiency (indicates the achievement of results contrary to the ideas of communication).

The effectiveness of the mass media is evidenced by the adoption by the official authorities of specific measures to address the issues covered by the media. Operational indicators of media efficiency are the size of the audience that positively perceives the message, the time spent on the perception of messages, memorizing the content of the message, the degree of coincidence of the goals of communicators with the results of communicative influence. In modern empirical studies of media effects and effectiveness, there are three groups of methodological problems: the first is to identify the effectiveness of a particular channel, when it is known that the audience uses different channels of mass communication; the second concerns ways to separate the influence of the media on the audience from the influence of social institutions and the realities of everyday life; the third group is related to the need to develop indicators for studying the effective communicative interaction of the communicator and the mass audience.

Currently, the development of technologies and social networks has contributed to the fact that political communication has taken new forms. Government institutions have created websites, social media pages like Facebook, Twitter, and channels on YouTube. Politicians also use social networks such as Facebook and Instagram, which also allows them to form the right image and to build the right communication. Considering the significant influence of social networks on society and their use means that political communication is being transformed, in particular, the way of information transmission during election races is changing.

Analysing changes in traditional society, Manuel Castells identifies modern information and communication technologies as one of the most important factors in creating a new social order. Thus, in his opinion, the strengthening of the network of new media leads to the fact that leadership becomes personalized, and the path to power lies through the creation of a virtual image. Thus, modern information technologies lead to the active development of new forms of political communication, including in the online space.

The development of political Internet communication can be divided into two stages. The first stage is informational. Its essence is to penetrate and store political information in the network. These are primarily news feeds, electronic media, websites

of political parties and public organizations, individual political leaders, as well as directly electronic publications of analytical and research organizations. The second stage is related to the mediatization of politics, the attempt to use the Internet as a tool for political and PR technologies (Castells 2009). A wide range of forms and methods of political communication in the network are aimed at a more dynamic impact on the consciousness and behavior of the audience on the Internet compared to other media. An important argument in favor of this statement is the fact that traditional media operate mainly in the mode of information monologue (one-way communication), through which the relevant structures influence the addressee and maintain control over subordinates.

Computer technology, on the other hand, has opened up the possibility of multifaceted communication. Anyone who has access to the network can act as both a recipient and a sender of information, which allows for effective virtual interaction of communicators with each other and with political structures. This makes the communication process more active and interdependent: both the communication sender and the receiver act as active participants and can influence its development. Such interaction is to some extent able to lead or at least give the impression of being able to overcome the hierarchy of power structures and thus remove some dependence of citizens on institutional intermediaries, party and state organizations, and even allow them to influence. This can be seen in the voter's or, in this case, the spectator's ability to control the voting process in elections, to participate in forums, to answer questions on questionnaires posted on websites, in the exchange of electronic correspondence with representatives of political forces (Morozova 2011: 157). However, the reality of the digitalisation could not be observed in such bright colors, as the communication between citizens and politicians is still much more one-sided than it had been expected.

Politics inevitably needs a mass audience. In modern realities it is impossible to win the struggle for power without access to traditional (electronic and print) media. However, the experience of election campaigns showed that there is a new way to influence the electorate via the Internet. This method has a number of advantages, the main ones being the ease and practicality of publishing any information, the lack of spatio-temporal boundaries of interaction, the ability to form a group of like-minded people around a topic or problem and quick communication to monitor the situation. The share of the virtual information component in politics today has a steady upward trend.

Bruce Bimber claims that the Internet restores the possibility of individual influence on government and its policies. It can ensure that citizens communicate directly

with the government, as well as reduce the dependence of ordinary citizens on elected officials, political parties and groups that defend their economic interests (Bimber 1998: 214). By providing greater opportunities for information exchange, the Internet will, on the one hand, increase the influence of ordinary citizens on politics and, on the other hand, weaken the influence of those who now own the media. That is, the more opportunities citizens have to communicate directly with a political leader, the more likely they are to be involved in politics. Furthermore, the more involved people will be in politics and civilian life, the more attractive they will be as individuals for the candidate or party to reach, because those individuals could be observed as influencers, whose opinion may affect a lot of other potential voters.

The presence of political actors in social networks and the blogosphere of the Internet is a unique opportunity to combine the promotion of politicians and parties and the main feature of the image of any political entity - accessibility. A politician must be unique, but at the same time similar to his voter. In social networks, this side is fully revealed. When a user sees that a politician has filled out a questionnaire and posted photos, regularly updates his/her page, promptly and essentially answers his/her questions, trust in him/her increases (Bigi 2016). In this sense, Internet communication services are the most favourable environment for political activity at various levels. No wonder government officials or those who want to take their place on the political Olympus, as well as simply increase their popularity and influence in the information space, go to social networks and the sphere of influencers.

Therefore, social networks are a powerful tool for communicating a political brand with the voter, and accordingly, for effective interaction with him or her. Researchers of political brands such as Wojciech Cwalina points out that the consumer, i.e. the voter, party or candidate sympathizer, forms in memory a model of a political brand with the help of a node in which a number of associations about the candidate are formed (Cwalina/Falkowski 2008: 146). In accordance, a person who has specific strong associations and emotional bounds to a candidate, becomes the so-called "brand voter", voting for this candidate each time.

Following this further, Sigge Nielsen develops the above-mentioned concept of Cwalina and notes that in such a model, which he calls the model based on memory, "memory-based model", the voter stores and accumulates information about the candidate in the nodes of associations in long-term memory , and when it is necessary to vote, he gets information to the surface, remembers the associations that were established

in memory, and chooses (Nielsen 2015: 92). Scholars A. French and Gareth Smith, supplementing the statement of Sigge Nielsen, point out that the process of gathering information occurs when a voter processes political messages, and they can be news about a person running, or informational reasons and messages created by the candidate (French/Smith 2010: 632). That is why, thanks to digital communication and various network algorithms, where a political brand interacts with a user-potential voter, the effect of the presence of a political leader in the user's life is created, which is a defining tool in the process of political communication.

1.1   Theory of political marketing mix of Philip Niffenegger

Marketing in political activity has an aim at creating, maintaining or changing the behavior of people in relation to certain political ideas, organizations, slogans, beliefs, personalities. Meanwhile, political marketing is concentrated on a promotion in the political market of political goods.

Political marketing became most widespread in the creation of political and election campaigns. They are still the largest and most expensive marketing projects. For many years, politicians and their election headquarters have used a variety of marketing tools to inform voters about themselves, their party, or its political platform. That is why the application of modern marketing approaches in political electoral processes requires significant use and research (Niffenegger 1989: 45).

On the eve of the election, the question of whether each of the candidates corresponds to the image that political technologists are trying to impose on his electorate is becoming increasingly important. Election campaigns in Ukraine are always full of marketing moves, namely, the campaigns of politicians or political parties are quite subtly trying to "sell" the product in the form of an idea or policy that carries it. The peculiarity and main goal of political marketing is the struggle for the votes of voters.

Philip Niffenegger proposed the concept of political marketing for political campaigns, which is based on the theory of the classic marketing mix of "4P", developed by the famous marketer Jerome McCarthy in the mid-twentieth century. Philip Niffenegger claimed that political marketing includes the same components of the marketing complex, known as the "4P" - product, price, place and promotion, which are used to influence the behavior of consumers or voters.

However, advertising is not left out of this process, but is more related to marketing research, in which the process of segmenting the voter market plays an

important role. Obviously, the concept of political marketing of Niffeneger is based on the well-known approach of Philip Kotler to marketing research for non-profit organizations, according to which a political party participating in an election campaign or a candidate running, has to identify needs, interest and voter values in order to meet these requirements and expectations. The crucial instrument for the candidate or party is market research that includes the determination of voter's problems (Niffenegger 1989: 46). After that based on which the political team could create the political brand and create the plan and the strategy of running their election campaign. Therefore, the strategy has to have a target for the different segments of voters, building a strong political reputation in the concrete one or each of them. The scheme of integration of all elements of political marketing and their impact on market research is shown in Figure 1.1 (Niffenegger 1989: 46).

Figure 1.1. Niffenegger Model of the Political Marketing Mix

In this model Niffenegger describes four main and fundamental stages of the marketing mix concept that is used in commercial marketing, but has also a place in political branding.

"Product" refers to a candidate or party. The participant in the election must be a competitive entity in the political arena and must understand all the responsibilities he has to the voters. Personal skills, professional skills, organizational skills and the ability to speak in public are the main components of a successful candidate. At this stage, everything depends on the person or party, its biography and life path, reputation and stages of the past. Once the team has fully understood its candidate and his/her strengths

and weaknesses, it is time to think about the election strategy and move on to other steps in the marketing mix.

"Place" or "placement" includes the sphere of personal appearance and volunteer programs. This kind of political placement consisting of meetings and volunteer programs may have an influence on the decision to support and choose a candidate and a political party he/she belongs to.

"Price" refers here to the total costs that voters would bear in case the candidate is elected. The person voting for a candidate, subconsciously compares the theoretical consequences of the election and chooses the one that, in opinion, will be more effective and will be more beneficial. Such a moral choice can be compared to the consumer's purchasing behavior, which informs in advance about the product and compares the characteristics with others (Niffenegger 1989: 47). In addition, Niffenegger developed a theory about psychological costs, which also should be taken into consideration. He drew parallels to the price of a product in marketing and equated the choice of a candidate in the political market with the decision to purchase a particular product at the consumer level. The only difference is that the economic market is tangible and the political market is not. Moreover, "price" is about the strategy including the personal appearance program and the scope of work of volunteers and other team members who make a personalized extension of the party or the candidate into local markets. These volunteers and other activists implement direct communication between voters and representatives of the candidate or party. This "door to door" strategy allows to share information and to collect it, such as giving out march staff and brochures with electoral programs. Meanwhile, there could also be organization of the candidate's meeting and different events and engagements with the electorate.

"Promotion" includes all of the advertising methods and efforts in order to involve the public into the acts of the candidate or the party. According to Niffenegger there are 4 different stages of the promotion: concentration strategy (concentration on particular target segment or region), timing strategy (time spending and focusing on the best positions of the candidate), strategy of misdirection (efforts to avoid a frontal assault a stronger opponent) and strategy of negative campaign (a launching of the comparative assault against the position of other opponent candidates). Important here is also the "packing" part that is the main task of political consultants. Here should be used all the instruments to defend the week positions of the candidate or the party and to focus the attention of the voters only on strong beliefs and parts. To convince potential supporters

of the candidate to believe him/her or the whole party is the work of the whole team at this stage. Therefore, a right distribution is a key stimulus to the candidate's ability to get the message and to catch the attention.

Thus, the essence of Niffenegger's model of political marketing is to create and constantly update detailed marketing information systems, collecting and analyzing information based on research of the political environment, segmentation and delivery of the necessary message to the target audience. In this situation, it is also important to develop and implement an appropriate political campaign at the local level, taking into account the specifics of regional voters and the specifics of a particular target audience. All in all, the concept of political marketing of Niffenegger is similar to the marketing concept used in classical marketing to promote a product or service.

All in all, Niffenegger's theory of 4P is a crucial scheme for the analysis of the political brand and political communication of the party Sluha Narodu and the FDP in the further research. In accordance, each of the "4P" would be described and analyzed.

1.2 Theory of voter associations about the political brand of Wojciech Cwalina

The current situation in the world shows that in the era of computer technologies social networks are a powerful tool for communicating a political brand with the voter, and consequently for effective interaction with him. A researcher of political brands such as W. Cwalina points out that the consumer, i.e. the voter, party sympathizer, forms in memory a model of a political brand with the help of a node in which a number of associations about the candidate are formed (Cwalina 2015: 160). Accordingly, the voter becomes the so-called brand voter, voting for the candidate or party as a brand that has specific positive associations.

The theory of Wojciech Cwalina is based on the guide of structural models of voter's behavior developed by Newman. According to this model, there are a few main points for reaching the voter's sympathy such as issues and policies, social imagery, emotional feeling, candidate image and current events, personal events and epistemic issues (Cwalina 2004).

The first category refers to the personal beliefs of the voter about the candidate's thoughts and position on social, economic and other policy issues that represents the rationale for the candidate's platform. Social Imagery is about representing the stereotyping of the candidate to appeal to voters by making associations between the

candidate and selected segments in society. Following this further, emotional feelings give an emotional attitude toward the candidate/candidate party. Candidate Image represents the candidate's image based on personality traits, current events refers to issues and policies which develop during the campaign running, and personal events in its turn are about situations in the personal life of the individual candidate. At the end the epistemic issues–refers to the change of pace value a candidate acquires as a result of novelty, curiosity, boredom, or satiation associated with the election process. All these categories above are components of the block, through the prism of which the voter is influenced and his attitude to the candidate or party is being formed.

This model is demonstrated in Figure 1.2 and includes an implicit assumption that all these domains are independent from each other and, potentially, equally important for determining voting decisions (Newman 1994: 99). However, it is well documented in psychological literature that cognitive and emotional elements should be treated not as separate, but as interactive vectors. The model of Newman does not include the function of the media and election polls as important factors mediating and oftentimes directly influencing citizens' voter behavior (Newman 1994: 100). Wojciech Cwalina reinterpreted and developed further this model of voter's choice behaviors and claimed that it should reflect three primary ways of structural-causal relationships between individual elements.

Newman's scheme illustrates the model assuming causal relationships between cognitive elements. It shows a connection between media and voter behavior, namely, the media affects cognitive domains which, in turn, form the voter's emotions toward a candidate, and after that emotions make an impact on voters' choice (Cwalina 2004: 20). So according to it, there is a strong relation between two variables - candidate/ candidate party and voter. It seems that emotional feelings are an excellent predictor of voting intentions, which means that a voter chooses the candidate who is "warmer" and evokes more positive emotions.
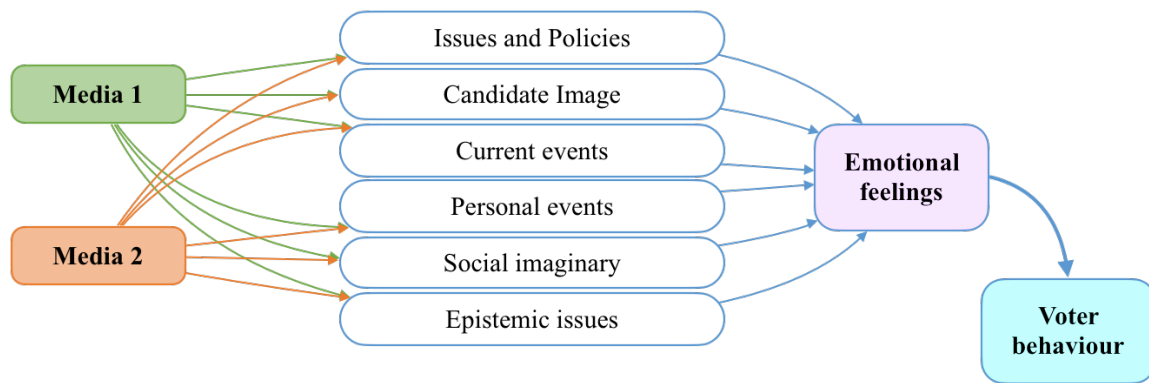
Figure 1.2. The model of Voter's Behaviour Developed by Newman

However, the theory of W. Cwalina assumes that media exert a direct influence not only on cognitive domains but also influence the voter's emotional feelings. Cwalina developed his assumptions and presented them in Figure 1.3 (Cwalina/Falkowski 2015: 159). This model shows that the media is always related to the feelings that are personal and individual for every person. Rationale for this model is that broadcasted messages are often based on preferences and political beliefs of the creators of information programs or owners of a given different media channels of communication. Voters also add their own interpretations of the information they receive, depending on their own knowledge, previous experience and scheme of the perceptions.
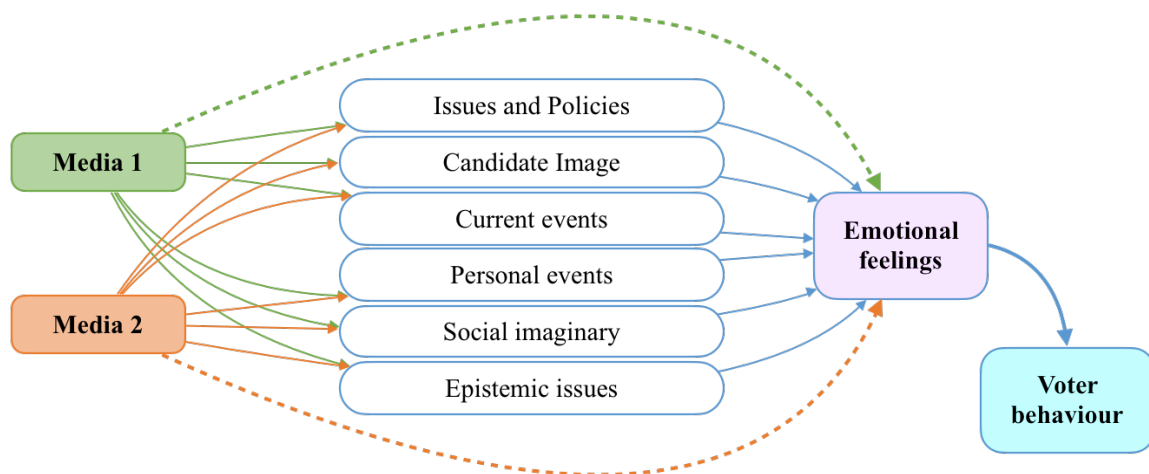
Figure 1.3. The model of Voter's Behaviour Developed by Cwalina

Following it further, a researcher S. Nielsen developed the above-mentioned concept of W. Cwalina and notes that in such a model, which he calls the model based on memory (memory-based model), the voter stores and accumulates information about the candidate in the nodes of associations in long-term memory, and when it is necessary to

vote, he "gets" information to the surface, remembers the associations that were established in memory, and chooses (Cwalina/Falkowski 2015: 201). A. French, supplementing the statement of S.Nielsen, points out that the process of gathering information occurs when a voter processes political messages, and they can be news about a person running, or informational reasons and messages created by the candidate (French/Smith 2010: 462). It could be seen that in the age of digital communication, where the political brand interacts with the user-potential voter and which creates the effect of the presence of a political leader in the user's life, is a defining tool in political communication.

The theory of W. Cwalina could specify the human reactions to the messages people receive consuming media and information products via different channels, such as TV, radio, newspaper, tabloids and also social networks. This theory gives a great explanation of how the voter, as a receiver, gets an information, processes it and stores it in memory in the form of associative nodes. The perception of different narratives, messages and images through the prism of personal emotions allows to influence the voter directly. A reason is in the fact that this is the component of emotional memory, relation to which and connection with which is the strongest. As a result, associations become nodes of entrapment in the voter's head for a long time. Such an impact on the voter during the election campaign took place as well in the Ukrainian parliamentary race and the German federal elections. However, theses nodes in the voter's memory are formed by several factors, and the visual identity of the party's brand and its communication through slogans and messages, are the key ones. These factors based on the theory of voter associations about the political brand of Wojciech Cwalina would be described for the further analysis of Sluha Narodu and FDP.

1.3 Theory of media framing effect by Porismita Borah

Media effects include theories that explain how the mass media influence the attitudes and perceptions of audience members. First, this entry touches on the history of media effects. Second, it gives an overview of the main theories in this area. Finally, using three of the most recent theories within media effects, namely framing effects, agenda-setting, and priming, the chapter explains media effects theory and the psychological mechanisms involved in these three theories.

In the center of framing theory is the understanding that the world is too complex and diverse for any person to be able to comprehend and act on all aspects of reality. This

requires special interpretive schemes that simplify the outside world, pointing only to the specific importance of events or the formation of thought, which later became known as "frames" (Noakes 2000: 658).

Closely related to the statements about the frame is framing, which is a cognitive distortion, in which the form of presentation of information affects its perception by a person. So, the same statement, depending on the wording and semantic accents, can be presented both in a negative and in a positive light, as a gain or loss.

Two main approaches to understanding the process of framing – sociological and psychological approaches, were described by P. Borah. Representatives of the sociological approach are more importantly focused on words, images, phrases, and styles of presenting the central idea or plot line (Borah 2011: 246). Here the frame is seen as a proper scheme of interpretation, as it is created in the process of framing by different groups (elites, journalists or so) or as a part of a supple culture, like a person, in one's own line, one can either accept or resilience.

On the other hand, representatives of the psychological approach are more focused not on creating a frame, but on how it affects the formation of the audience. The main focus here is on how frames affect information processing and subsequent decision-making processes, as focusing on certain considerations in a message can make people focus on those specific considerations and cause them to take further action (Borah 2011: 258). It is also important to mention that framing does not mean manipulating consciousness: the fact that the effects of framing relate to situations where the isolation of a subset of potentially important considerations leads to the fact that individuals are forced to focus on these considerations in decision-making. Thus, here the frame has an internal origin.

However, it is important to note that these two approaches are not mutually exclusive. Such duality and conditionality of both external and internal factors are the defining characteristics of the nature of framing. Indeed, framing is necessary for an individ in order to perceive events in the environment more easily (so as not to form an opinion about similar situations or problems).

The effect of framing is a cognitive distortion of the form of information that affects a person's perception of it, but it is worth distinguishing framing from the concept of similar in meaning "agenda setting" (agenda theory) (Hoffmann 2004: 752). This phenomenon implies that the media cover some events and ignore others, while the news framework covers the event, but deliberately ignores some of its side. A classic frame is

a way of isolating facts to create your own picture of reality in the information field without any deformings.

Media framing, especially in the era of digitalization, may be due to settings on the Internet. The social media platforms provide the several ways to make the potential target voter be placed in the information "bubble". The theory of media framing effect by Porismita Borah will be described and developed in the context of the parties Sluha Narodu and FDP. Based on it the effect of digital instruments in political communication during elections on the case of Ukraine and Germany will be analysed in the thesis work.

CHAPTER 2. MARKETING APPROACHES IN POLITICAL BRANDING IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Marketing has actively filled the policy market. For many years, politicians and their election headquarters have used a variety of marketing tools to inform voters about themselves, their party, and their political platform. The same principles that are effective in the commercial market have proved to be relevant to the political arena. Successful political campaigns tend to target a wide range of voters, and their initiators pay close attention to creating added value in the eyes of their electorate by improving the quality of life and maximizing the use of optimal value-added resources in the eyes of their electorate by improving quality of life and creating maximum benefit with the use of optimal resources.

The most striking marketing approach in politics is during the election process, where voters identify with consumers and political parties and leaders with entrepreneurs who offer a wide range of services in exchange for votes (Schumpeter 1975: 119). Political election campaigns have remained one of the largest, most complex and most expensive types of political marketing activities. This explains the growing interest in comprehensive research on political marketing issues and finding common features and tools used in modern political systems and marketing concepts.

In the election race, the winner is not only the candidate who created a brighter and more attractive brand for the consumer, i.e. the voter, but also was able to "sell" it using the right channel of information. However, candidates or parties that have created a political brand but have not been able to connect and retain their constituents by building the right political communication strategy tend to perform much worse.

The basis of the market approach into politics therefore, is consumer analysis. The political party participating in the election campaign or the candidate running for presidential competition should properly identify the needs, interests and values of the voters in order to prove their compliance with these requirements and needs. Political analysis, in turn, is carried out through the behaviour research of potential voters, classifying them into different segments. This allows one to find a key media platform to "meet" the voter and make an impact on his/her opinion, using the right marketing instrument.

In the era of advertising and its instruments, it is impossible to exclude the marketing component and its impact on the successful result of the political election

campaign or the result of an important political lobby. Moreover, one of the main marketing instruments that is the most effective in the era of the spread of information is digital technologies. Digital technologies help to combine Internet opportunities and the profiles of potential voters in Internet and social media platforms. The usage of these technologies and the place of its distribution put together the digital strategy, which is one of the main directions of marketing complex approaches, like marketing strategy and media strategy. Digital strategy is a complex usage of all the existing tools in the media space and channels that are focused on the target audience. A digital strategy is a consistent plan to promote a product, service, or brand. The process of its development can be divided into six stages, such as formulation of the goals, target audience research, selection of channels for promotion, creation of advertising campaigns, media plan and post-campaign analytics. Obviously to mention that at each of these stages there are different digital tools needed. And following this further all these tools could be divided into three major groups as it is presented in Figure 2.1.
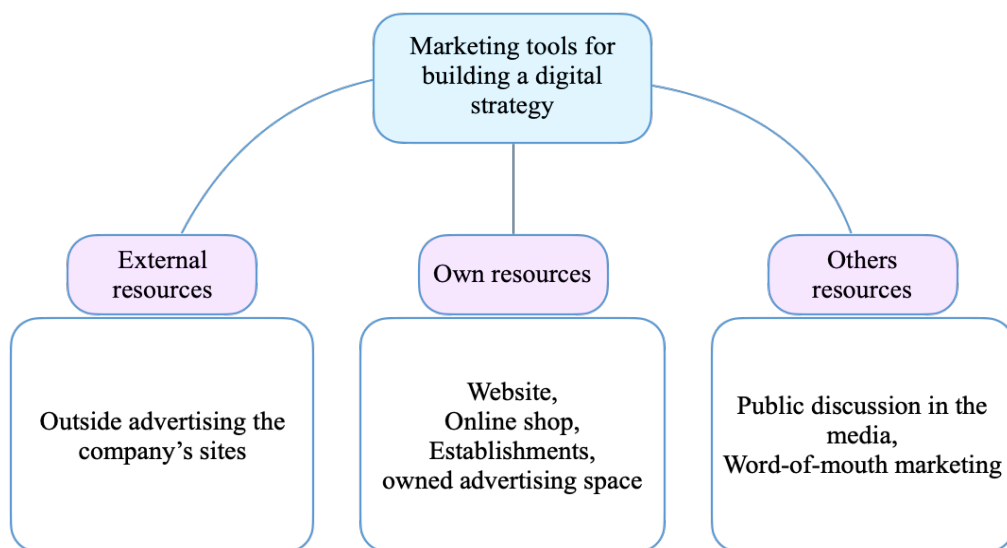
Figure 2.1.. Marketing approach in digital strategy

Each of these groups should be seen in more detail. The first step is describing the marketing digital instruments of spreading the information at the external media platforms. There are digital platforms, such as TV (video advertisements), radio and podcasts (audio advertisements and promotion), social media platforms, opinions of the influencers and bloggers, email and SMS marketing, advertising in applications and

games, interactions in Internet. Here we could also add printed newsletters and interactive platforms (screens and billboards, bunners in public places).

The second group is about promotion via social media platforms and the world of the Internet. SMM ("social media marketing") is the use of social networks and their tools to promote a particular brand or product. A certain activity is built around the brand in order to increase its visibility. It is one of the most "fast" tools that allows you to get a large number of "visitors" for a short advertising campaign. The specificity of this tool is that the tastes of the audience and its localization in different social networks are constantly changing, and for its effective use the marketer must be aware of all trends and formats, and clearly know the tastes and behavior of the target audience. Moreover, the loyal audience is also being formed and, as a result, interest is growing. With a competent strategy, taking into account the growing popularity of social networks, this approach can give even greater results than offline promotion strategies. One more digital tool is SEO that stands for "Search Engine Optimization", which means "search engine optimization". Such search engine optimization is an activity that aims to ensure that the pages of a particular site appear in search engine rankings in response to certain user queries. These are the queries that correspond to the content of the pages of the website. The advantage of such an instrument is that it is long-lasting. Quality content can attract new visitors for a long time, and if its relevance does not decline over time, it is almost forever. That is why during the election campaign, it could be often seen commercials, banners and calls to go and click to the website in order to raise the visibility of a party or candidate.

Social media platforms are the most suitable space for political communication. Through social media and messengers, politicians and organizations can influence political views of people, moreover, the way they think about politics. A Wesley Chair in New Media at the Georgia Institute of Technology Jay David Bolter claimed that

"... when programs such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are used for political messaging, they bring flow along into the political process, even if the messages they carry are truthful and nonconspiratorial. That makes these media a threat to coherent political discourse from the age of print"(Jay David Botler 2019).

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube and Tiktok have become the most effective tools for digital strategies and the most widen media sphere for information exchange.

Instagram is a monopoly in the field of author blogging based on posting photo and video content. This network has the most complete set of tools for brand promotion. If you systematically and competently develop your commercial account, you can achieve an increase in the client base. Moreover, the key feature of Instagram is Stories, an exclusive development of the social network that has become the hallmark of Instagram. The format of 15-second videos, which are valid for only 24 hours, is productive for promoting and maintaining regular interest among subscribers to the author's account. Meanwhile, Facebook has similar features to Instagram, but is more used for text posts. Facebook is unique in its algorithms, which are based on the interests of users, their subscriptions and personal information. Moreover, Facebook's policy on political advertising has also been criticized for a long time. Only in early 2019, the social network obliged customers to indicate who and in what interests pays for such advertising. For instance, in the 2016 US presidential election, an investigation by The New York Times found that Facebook news feeds are shaped by user's political preferences. Such "information bubbles" could well influence people's decisions to support a candidate[3].

Telegram became the main channel of digital political communication, as it has a lot of advantages for quick information spreading. Despite the fact that Telegram was primarily a messenger, at the moment on this platform there are many anonymous and author's channels that produce not always proven content, but at high speed. In recent years, Telegram has established itself as a very practical and secure messenger. However, it is worth remembering that the Telegram is not only a tool of communication, but also a means of campaign manipulation and distribution of fakes. Most politicians use bot farms - specially paid users who create activity under the posts of candidates. Telegram bots are user profiles controlled by an algorithm. These profiles (equipped with an elementary form of artificial intelligence) are able to perform specific tasks and are designed for a variety of activities, thus creating whole "armies" of users with the same message or thoughts.

Twitter is a service for publishing short public messages, using a maximum 140 symbols. Twitter, among the most popular social media, is the most mobile and compact tool. The very compactness of the content is the first competitive advantage, for today's realities.

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[3] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/24/us/politics/facebook-ads-politics.html

TikTok is, in fact, a news feed, not just text, but video. Therefore, TikTok allows you to "pack" serious topics such as politics, local government or public budgeting into an easy-to-understand form. Politicians use TikTok because they want to create the image of "young and progressive". So this is a fashionable topic that politicians can use well for an interesting picture for the media.

All these digital tools are a part of marketing strategy that helps to build a strong political brand and to make it visible at all the possible information platforms for the potential voter.

2.1 Marketing approaches in political branding of Volodymyr Zelenskyy

In 2019, Ukraine held presidential elections, as a result of which Volodymyr Zelenskyy came to power. Mr Zelenskyy was a new face in Ukrainian politics and received significant support from the young electorate aged 18 to 29. This is an interesting situation for the results of Ukrainian elections, because the young generation usually abstain from voting. Following this further, among all voters, 42% had incomplete higher education, ie students[4]. In the second round, support for V. Zelenskyy among young people increased and reached 80%, while the percentage of young people with incomplete higher education increased accordingly: it increased to 77%. The phenomenon of active participation of the young segment in Ukraine in the presidential election requires a more detailed analysis. It is worth noting that the success of the party called Sluha Narodu is due to the brand of Zelenskyy and the approaches used in the parliamentary race were identical. This process of political branding of Zelenskyy and his party Sluha Narodu would be described in detail below. Therefore, there was one common headquarter responsible for the election campaign of Zelenskyy and later for his party's election race.

The potential president himself at that time was a brand hero of the new Ukrainian politics, who had a popular image and was building a new political reputation. The process of the political branding of Zelenskyy started a long time ago, because he was not a politician, but a showman, which made him popular across Ukraine. That in a turn was a development of the branding and PR of Zelenskyy, as a famous Ukrainian actor and showman. One of the key roles was the series "Sluha Narodu", where the formation of the brand personality was born - a set of similar characteristics to every Ukrainian

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[4]https://dif.org.ua/article/dani-natsionalnogo-ekzit-polu2019-shchodo-rezultativ-drugogo-turu-viboriv-prezidenta-ukraini-stanom-na-2000

associated with the brand in the public mind. Another media move was the video greeting of Volodymyr Zelenskyy on December 31, 2019, when the New Year's greeting of the then president was on TV. It was then on one of the popular TV channels (and on which the series was broadcast), Zelenskyy announced that he would run in the election as a candidate. This PR move allowed his personal brand to appear as a bold candidate for the presidency with promises made in the series, where he played the lead role.

V. Zelenskyy's serial image became close enough to his real, non-acting one, that is why it was used during the presidential race. Moreover, the first season of the series, in which Volodymyr Zelenskyy played the main character and which was filmed in 2015, and the third season - March 26, 2019, just 6 days before the first round of elections.

The strategy of the election campaign of Zelenskyy was focused on the creation of a "new face" brand in Ukrainian politics, absolutely different from the previous representatives. So was the aim to create a party of people with no previous background in politics. The demand for transformation and relaunch of the political system, which arose as a result of the political, economic and social situation on the eve of the presidential race, was a call for action to many political headquarters. The advantage of V. Zelenskyy's campaign was the fast reaction to the national demand. Unlike the other opponents his response was clear: to restart Ukrainian politics with the help of people. That is why his election team made a decision to introduce marketing strategy and its tools and tactics in order to demonstrate the voters' impact in changing society and writing a new history, voting for a "new face " of Ukrainian politics.

Talking about the initial concept of political brand building the emphasis of the campaign was focused at building the image of a progressive politician, by using a strategy of rapprochement with the people through proximity and similarity to the ordinary life of Ukrainians. According to the marketing mix 4P of Philip Niffenegger, under "Product" it is considered as a concept, in which the president is a man from the crowd (and so does his political party). The brand building remains the scenario of the serial that is mentioned before. Honesty, sincerity and simplicity as personal features of V. Zelenskyy's image began to be fundamentally established thanks to the media products in which the candidate participated as an actor. Thus, due to a long stay on stage, on TV, in the media, in acting in the series "Sluha Narodu", as well as in other series and films, people who were following his professional life, saw V. Zelenskyy as their old friend, a comedian, who was on TV at all family celebrations, so it did not give a feeling of an unknown and unreachable politician. And this was his clear advantage over his opponents

in a society in which dissatisfaction with the status quo had matured and anti-systemic sentiment had grown. Usually the personality traits of a political candidate are formed into a brand as a result of a long political and non-political process. However, in the context of V. Zelenskyy, the non-political element of building his brand personality, was dominant. In the end, the unexpected appearance of a candidate for the presidency and his future victory in the election race only prove the parallelism of the series' storyline.

Marketing approach in Volodymyr Zelenskyy's campaign concentrates on the using of marketing instruments of building a strong bond to the people. The strategy embodied through a number of tools, which established communication with the people, such as the use of social networks, easy and simple style of communication and vivid visual aesthetics. Talking about the unique style and colors of the campaign and the party, the defining feature of the process of creating a logo, colors and slogans as elements of the visual system of the campaign was the involvement of the electorate. The headquarter and marketing team of the candidate gave potential voters the opportunity not only to choose the best slogans from among the selected alternatives, but also to take an active part in the development of the visual system of the brand. As a result, the style of the campaign became the unique corporate style, which is reflected in the use of a certain color scheme, logo, design and font (Appendix 1). The visual part of the brand is the key element of the marketing strategy and the political branding. The main color of the campaign was green, which clearly correlated with the name of Zelenskyy, as in Ukrainian language green is "zelenyi ". According to research studies, green color is usually associated with novelty, youth, and freshness. It is also the color of the ecological movement that is very progressive nowadays and supported among young people. It is important to emphasize that there was no united logo in the campaign, but there was a kind of constructor with the prefix "Зе!" [Ze] for combining different words according to the situation, such as "Зе! Президент" [Ze president], "Зе! Команда" [Ze team], which was used in the parliamentary race for describing the political party Sluha Narodu. This share performed certain content-forming functions: identified the name of "ZElenskyy", pointed to the brand color of the brand ("ZElenyi") and hinted at the specificity (in english "the") and content of the brand. All this allowed to form in the voter's memory a cognitive "node" of associations regarding brand identity. At the same time, brand identity as a dynamic process created by the mutual influence of brand managers and other social actors - consumers (voters) helps to find out what the brand is in terms of its loyal customers (Da Silveira 2013 :33).

2.2 Marketing approaches in political branding and communication of Sluha Narodu during election campaign 2019

It should be underlined that the concept of the election campaign of the Sluha Narodu party was created around the brand of V. Zelenskyy. This is a peculiar feature of positioning the party around the leader, and this is why the development of the political brand of Zelenskyy should be also observed in the context of brand building of Sluha Narodu. Moreover, the name of the party received an identical to the serial name (in which V. Zeleskyy played the main role). All in all, the association to the popular serial in Ukraine and to the brand of Zeleskyy gave the presidential party Sluha Narodu a good strat in the area of the election race.

The marketing strategy of the party election race was based on the political branding of V. Zelenskyy. A characteristic feature of the gathered election campaign of the Sluha Narodu and Zelenskyy was its active interaction with the electorate. The main idea of the strategy was the involvement of people in the whole process of creating the new political program by collecting thoughts and minds of potential voters. Such interaction was achieved through the cooperation of the voter and the candidate party through open dialogues with a brand hero V. Zelenskyy and representatives of his party in the form of public consultations of the headquarters. Moreover, even the formation of physical, visual images of the party was built around the visual identity of Zelenskyy. As it was mentioned before the united headquarter of Zelenskyy and Sluha Narodu gave a chance to create the logo and slogan of the both campaigns. Moreover, especially for collecting ideas and further promotion of the brand of Zelenskyy and his party the hashtags were used. A hashtag is a keyword or phrase preceded by a # symbol and used in social media posts. As a result, the post becomes available to people with the same interests, even if they are not subscribed to any updates related to the topic. A good example of the hashtag building is #zeteam, #зепрезидент (#zepresident) and #зеборд (#zeboard).

Talking about hashtags, the election race in Ukraine was located in two most popular social networks – Instagram and Facebook. These two social networks were specially chosen, because the experts confirmed the dynamic growth in Ukraine in recent years. According to a study by PlusOne, the social network Facebook in Ukraine in early 2019 was used by 13 million Ukrainians. At the same time, last year the number of Ukrainian users of this social network increased by three million, for the last five years - since March 2014 - the growth amounted to +9.8 million, or more than 30,6%. At the
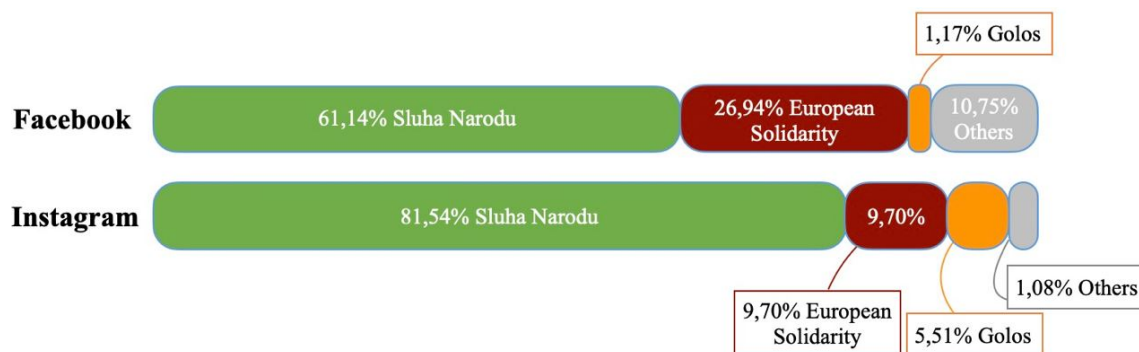
same time, researchers noted that the number of Ukrainian users of the Instagram social network has doubled in the last year - now there are 11 million of them. Therefore, Instagram is the most popular network for the young generation, that is why the main election campaign by Zelensyi and Sluha Narodu was running on these two platforms.

From the very beginning of the election race, the party of former President Petro Poroshenko, called European Solidarity, had a very strong position on Facebook. There the party of Poroshenko had its own electorate, which actively supported, discussed, and criticized its leader, raising the activity of Facebook pages and profiles. Accordingly, Facebook's algorithms encourage the formation of "microgroups" and "information bubbles", creating the illusion of equality of supporters of certain positions. That is the reason why Facebook is polarized[5]. However, the real situation in particular in the 2019 elections showed the balance of power that was completely different. Despite this, user activity appeared before and during the race. The interest in the new political power based on the "new face" in Ukrainian politics was extremely high, because people started to trust Zelenskyy and that is why they automatically asosaicted the party Sluha Narodu with him. Thus, on Facebook, Zelenskyy's party had 17 945 mentions, which was twice as many as the other four competing parties in all posts combined with 9 519 mentions (Figure 2.2). At the time, 8 out of 10 election posts on Instagram concerned pro-presidential power. Significant to claim that Instagram communication is acceptable to the younger generation, the interface is easy to use and provide feedback/reactions, and since the party headquarters set itself the goal of attracting and involvement a young electorate, it is not surprising that this campaign had success, both quantitatively and among "new" party supporters. According to Mykhailo Fedorov there was a sharp increase in followers on social media platforms: 600 000 on Instagram, over 500 000 on Facebook from scratch for political power[6]. These are the largest communities in Ukrainian Meta networks, apart from pages from a personal name.

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[5] https://www.wired.com/story/facebook-vortex-political-polarization/
[6] https://tech.liga.net/amp/technology/interview/pochemu-poroshenko-proigral-intervyu-s-onlayn-strategom-zelenskogo

Figure 2.2. Interest index in the political parties in Ukraine 2019
(main social networks)

Another move in the digital strategy of the Sluha Narodu party was that the main communication was targeted at Instagram, which is known to be a platform used by young people. The key marketing tool was that, unlike other parties, the Sluha Narodu has a large number of profiles that work for its reputation. The number of profiles and pages were created using the constructor (prefix #ze + word) and each of such an account was lightening the information about people of this political party. These are numerous fan clubs, such as ze.country, zeukraine.2019, zelenskyypub, mr.zelenskyy, zelenskyy.95, zelenskyyfans, as well as various accounts dedicated to the studio "Kvartal 95", which was previously created and worked by Zelenskyy himself. By using artificial intelligence based on the program, we can get valuable information from all social networks, creating a hashtag tracking campaign. This allows to determine how the audience interacts with the hashtag on different platforms. The results were done on purpose to analyze data of hashtags interactions of three main parties-competitors during 1 May to 17 June 2019 (Figure 2.3).
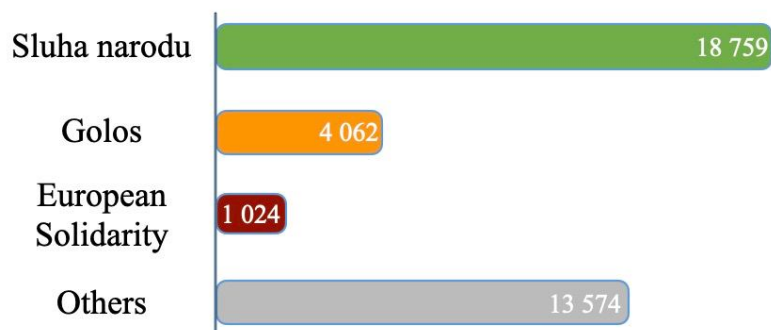
Figure 2.3. Index of popularity of the political parties in Ukraine 2019
(Instagram, quantity of posts with hashtags of parties)

Through social media and messengers, our political views can be influenced - moreover, the way people think about politics could be really changed. Another key digital tool in quick sharing of the information and involvement into the "filter bubble " is a hashtag. A hashtag is a keyword or phrase preceded by a # symbol and used in social media posts. As a result, your post becomes available to people with the same interests, even if they are not subscribed to specific updates. Hashtags, originally created for easy grouping of messages by topic, later became a new medium in Internet communications. In just a few years, hashtags have managed to transform from a completely new concept into a global social trend enjoyed by millions of people.

Talking about the strategy of the headquarter of Zelenskyy and his team (political party Sluha Narodu), worth noting that it was well-developed and focused on maximizing voter involvement. At that time the main focus was directed on the involvement of the young voters, who were ignored by the candidate's opponents, because the percentage of participants were low. However, it included several key digital tactics, namely: developing an online platform to interact with the active electorate, hesitant voters, and supporters of V. Zelenskyy and Sluha Narodu party.

Online website platform of Zelenskyy and his party was a crucial step in the whole marketing and digital strategy. This was created for a better interaction with voters. At that time the campaign team created a website for the party and the candidate, which became one of the main platforms for interaction with the potential electorate and supporters of the candidate. Its novelty was that the entire interface of the site was interactive. Over the course of the presidential campaign, it was filled with videos, hashtags and online challenges – a kind of test that a user had to go through on his social media pages to demonstrate his political position and loyalty to the candidate. The main idea of such a platform, which was used also for the parliamentary election campaign, is to gather a team of loyal voters, which would continue and strengthen the actions of the small official headquarters of the presidential campaign. This idea was implemented as follows: anyone could register on the site, fill out a questionnaire indicating personal demographics (age, gender, place of residence) and how she/he can help the candidate party in the election: be a volunteer at the polls, help maintain official pages and so-called fan accounts of V. Zelenskyy on social networks. After that, everyone received feedback from the headquarters, which would endow the registrant with certain promotional functions according to the size of his desire to be involved in the campaign.

In addition, thanks to this registration on the candidate's website and filling out the questionnaire, V. Zelenskyy's political brand established, first of all, a connection with those voters who were convinced that they would vote for V. Zelenskyy. According to the statements of Mykhailo Fedorov, the head of the digital direction of the election campaign V. Zelenskyy, 510 000 applications from citizens were registered at the end of January[7]. Of these, 310 000 filled out an extended questionnaire, and 68 000 filled out an "open field" where they could indicate how they sought to help Zelenskyy's election campaign. This platform managed to collect a large base of people who joined the team - there are already almost 600 000 volunteers. The data was collected from contact information, e-mail on this platform. As a result, according to M. Fedorov, the team sent a total of 18 million letters to different segments, website traffic is more than 4 million visitors on the site, in Telegram - 160 000[8]. All social networking platforms had fairly large communities and an audience base. More than 2 000 informal communities have also appeared.

In addition, the computer algorithm divided them into 37 groups by type of employment: designers, lawyers, financiers, PR managers, journalists and more. A special communication was built on purpose at target with each of the groups[9]. This move was aimed at those who were ready for action, participation (summitment) and assistance to the campaign. In turn, the headquarters kept in touch with those who did not want to actively support the campaign: they also received regular emails. Using Maurice Duverger's terminology, which he used to study the activities of political parties, Zelenskyy's campaign and his party interacted with both activists and adherents, who may have seldom shown unstable attachments and turned them into the first category of voters, and also wanted those who have not yet decided (Duverger 2000: 538).

A huge part of the election campaign was running in a form of communication with the electorate on social networks through Instagram, Facebook and YouTube accounts by generating interesting, easy text and video content. The interactivity with which Volodymyr Zelenskyy's social media accounts were maintained made him an unusual and distinct figure among other political candidates who relied on traditional

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[7] https://tech.liga.net/amp/technology/interview/pochemu-poroshenko-proigral-intervyu-s-onlayn-strategom-zelenskogo
[8] https://tech.liga.net/amp/technology/interview/pochemu-poroshenko-proigral-intervyu-s-onlayn-strategom-zelenskogo
[9] https://thebabel.net/texts/25043-60-dney-do-vyborov-prezidenta-onlayn-kampaniya-vladimira-zelenskogo-zatronula-bolshe-polumilliona-chelovek?utm_source=page&utm_medium=read_more

channels of communication (television and the press) or ran their pages monotonously, without user involvement.

The interest of political communication of V. Zelenskyy's brand on online platforms was the use of various challenges - such as viral videos or Internet actions, in which the main task of the user is to perform a test on a video camera and post it on their pages on social networks. familiar or unlimited number of users (Petrenko 2017: 3). In general, the political communication of V. Zelenskyy's brand was focused on the distribution of video content, the use of short, exciting videos in the format of video blogging. This format was suitable for doing challenges. The party, along with its candidate, posted a large number of videos on its Instagram, shot without professional equipment and pre-written scripts, and launched challenges, such as a garbage collection challenge or tree planting. Thus, the general style of communication between candidates and the electorate is easy and close to the user of the network, as a result of which interpersonal relationships between the candidate party and voters are worked out and positive associations and loyalty to the candidate emerge in the target audience. The challenge system has a similar function to the hashtag system, it forms a system that involves loyal viewers who communicate with each other, creating a group identity and communicating with their own audiences and expanding the candidate's influence beyond the candidate's fan base and attracting new voters. All of these videos were a tool for uncontrolled communication with the electorate, especially students, who usually watch the vlogs and are followers of the accounts of popular opinion leaders/influencers.

To optimize the work with the samples, artificial intelligence was developed, which processed all the keywords and, based on requests, divided people into 32 segments, according to social roles, social status and needs. For example, lawyers, people who are ready to help with logistics, mothers on maternity leave, and so on. Based on these segments, it was possible to understand who was most interested in the team, who most wanted to interact with. As a result, 7 key segments were sorted out from them in order to work with these groups: IT people, mothers in decree, people who support certain points of the program, etc.

Talking about Neffenger's model "4P", the "product" in this case was Sluha Narodu, as a new political party, whose strategic goal was to embody the course of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. In its turn, Zelenskyy's first victory in the election confirmed the thesis "Content is King " by Bill Gates, as Volodymyr was not an expert in politics before and never had any relevant experience. This means that with the

help of content he created the image of an expert and a man with huge ambitions. The same principle was used in setting the brand of the whole party. Millions of their voters consider Zelensky their leader, so they trusted people from his party. So, the party's brand was built exclusively around Zelenskyy's brand, which is why the party's campaign cannot be separated from the candidate's campaign. The marketing approaches used to build Zelenskyy's image had a positive effect on his entire party, which is why the party's political communication was conducted to the same audience and segments.

The other component of the "product" category is the election program. It should be noted that the program of the party Sluha Narodu was closely connected with the program of the President, namely it has the same base. Thus, V. Zelensky, who started the presidential race without any political program, asked Facebook users to help compile it. Under the post, everyone could write five problems that worried him and the rest of the Ukrainians the most and needed an immediate solution. Taking into account the formulated problems, a unique political program was written, which aimed to take into account the interests of the people, and was submitted by both the presidential candidate and his party.

Considering the "place", it should be mentioned that during the election campaign of Sluha Narodu, the headquarters focused on creating convenient platforms for coordination and communication with volunteers. A person could leave his/her contact details on the website, as well as fill out a questionnaire, according to which the distribution of activities took place, which could be joined as a volunteer. Moreover, after the processing of forms for further planning and communication, the main platform was Telegram. One of the key projects was launched there – a volunteer contact center. Primarily, their task was focused on helping to promote the brand of this political party and its candidates in social media, in particular, these volunteers were creating informal communities on social networks. At this stage, an important element of the campaign should be meetings with the electorate. However, there were very few such offline meetings in the campaign of Sluha Narodu, instead short videos with important messages on social media became an effective alternative. Thus, a successful full-fledged two-way communication was built, where the voter had the opportunity to participate in public discussions with representatives of the party.

The Sluha Narodu party's budget for the digital campaign was spent mostly on targeted advertising on Facebook and Instagram, followed by Google search advertising. The result was high traffic and high reach of the audience Search ads worked very well

to promote the party's brand. Search ads worked very well to promote the party's brand. Both the videos and the political advertising of the party and V. Zelensky on social networks adapted the messages to different target groups. Inventing a right slogan is not just formulating a vivid expression. First of all, it is an emotional manifestation of the main messages of the campaign, which, through Niffenegger's model, flow directly to the feelings of a potential voter. In particular, the campaign used the technique of micro-targeting, where two days before each round of elections customized, adapted, paid posts and selected specific target audiences.

The main platforms of Sluha Narodu for interaction with voters were the official site, profiles in Facebook, Instagram, Telegram. Moreover, Sluha Narodu has also used high-developed Telegram chat bots, which were processed with the help of Artificial Intelligence. Following this further, the digital team used the features of each social media platform in the right direction. For instance, they created in Telegram a chatbot for volunteer's coordination, another chatbot for finding the nearest polling station (45 000 installations) and also 16 campaign sticker packs for Telegram (100 000 downloads)[10]. They also created interactive frames for Facebook profile avatars and several "Insta Masks" for Instagram's users.

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[10] https://tech.liga.net/amp/technology/interview/pochemu-poroshenko-proigral-intervyu-s-onlayn-strategom-zelenskogo

CHAPTER 3. Marketing approaches in political branding and communication during German federal race 2021

In Germany 86,5% or 72,6 million people use social media, a further increase of 10 percent compared to the previous year. 86 % of the German population actively uses social media. The average user has five different social media accounts that are used regularly. Through the most popular social media TikTok is the big winner here. WhatsApp (83% of Internet users), Facebook (60,7%)[11] Instagram (33%)[12] are still the most used social networks. However, Twitter remains a favorable platform for wide-spreading of the political context, 12 million Germans follow the discussions and read news in this social network[13].

This quick shift to the Internet was accelerated by Corona Pandemic, but even without the pandemic, the parties would be ill-advised if they did not use social media platforms. After all, the electorate is just a click away: According to a 2020 study by the Leibniz Institute for Media Research, more and more people are using social media as a source of news: last year it was 37 percent of those surveyed, in 2019 it was 34 percent. In the group of 18 to 24 year olds, 56 percent even used social media in 2020 to find out about world events[14]. According to the survey, this corresponds to an increase of 6% compared to the previous year.

Furthermore, social media has established itself as a variety of political communication. The campaigns for the 2021 federal elections in Germany have demonstrated this with varying intensity. Across all channels, the communication effort of parties and politicians has increased, in some cases significantly, compared to 2017 (Hügelmann 2021). This is reflected not only in the intensity of use, but also on the part of the organizations. The separation between digital and analogue communication, which was problematic in the context of the 2017 campaign, seems to have been largely overcome in 2021, at least on the part of the party headquarters.

With regard to the competence to implement digital communication measures and strategies, the first cracks are emerging along different organizational levels. While digital

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[11] https://wearesocial.com/de/blog/2022/02/digital-2022-report-726-millionen-deutsche-nutzen-social-media/
[12] https://www.shopify.de/blog/instagram-statistik
[13] https://www.internetworld.de/social-media-marketing/social-community/aktuelle-social-media-nutzerzahlen-in-deutschland-weltweit-2649131.html
[14] https://www.hans-bredow-institut.de/uploads/media/default/cms/media/66q2yde_AP50_RIDNR20_Deutschland.pdf

competence has been built up in the party headquarters, it is up to the candidate teams in the constituencies to be able to meet the requirements of a digital and modern election campaign. It is true that parties provide support in order to develop skills in the constituencies in terms of personnel. Nevertheless, the federal election campaign showed that not everything that is technically and conceptually possible and appropriate could be implemented evenly across different organizational levels. This is mainly due to the fact that the requirements for candidates, which go hand in hand with the channel-specific use of social media, have increased significantly.

During the election campaign 2021, social media communication took place primarily on the usual platforms, i.e. on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Following this further, enough attention and resources were paid to offline promotion of the German party's candidates and their values and ideas. In addition, new channels and forms of communication such as TikTok were tried out. Live streaming formats such as Twitch or audio-only content still played a subordinate role in this election summer. Overall, in relation to all social networks, the SPD is the social media leader in terms of posting frequency, followed by the FDP. The top candidate for the SPD is Olaf Scholz and for the FDP Christian Lindner. It is also worthy to add the fact that there was also not only a trend of using fake profiles in the networks, "bots", but also of using desinformation to blackmail the other candidate. Thus, after the announcement of candidacies for chancellors, Annalena Baerbock (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) became the object of misinformation.

According to an analysis by fact-checking organization Correctiv[15] Annalena Baerbock was the politician most affected by misinformation in 2021. Newsguard, a company that rates websites based on their credibility and operates a disinformation tracking system, also came to the same conclusion. According to their analysis, the Grüne suffered the most from disinformation, followed by CDU/CSU and SPD. For example, fake quotes are being circulated, such as the alleged demand to ban pets[16]. With another fake quote, she was accused of wanting to expand the fiber optic network to charge e-cars

[15] https://correctiv.org/faktencheck/hintergrund/2021/09/21/schmutziger-wahlkampf-desinformation-bundestagswahl/
[16] https://www.br.de/nachrichten/deutschland-welt/haustier-zitat-von-gruenen-spitzenkandidatin-annalena-baerbock-ist-ein-fake-faktenfuchs,SVOraFm

in the country[17]. In accordance with the analysis,provided by Correktiv, both quotes were wrong and that is why it was seen as a fact of disinformation against the party Grüne.

The other important marketing approach is the usage of influencers. An influencer is a person who is able to attract the attention of a huge number of people to his account in social networks (Sorgatz 2018). Compared to celebrities who are also actively followed, influencers inspire more trust, because they have less distance to the user of the social network. This is what attracts marketers of companies, brands, and firms in a wide variety of areas that seek to use the popularity and trust of followers of influencers for brand promotion and advertising. The same trend is rising in political marketing. Since the 2017 federal election Influencers have already played a rather subordinate role. Apart from individual YouTube formats, there was little overlap between the creator scene and the political establishment. The situation was different in the summer of 2021, however, according to the experts for two reasons. First, before the election, a number of public figures spoke out in favor of a specific election recommendation. An election call of this kind was basically nothing new, but it showed how relevant Twitter in particular played for the broad response to the "#diesmalgruen" campaign[18]. Second, in the weeks leading up to the election, the YouTuber Rezo published a three-part video series that critically examines the actions of the federal government in recent years. After the YouTuber had already dealt very critically with the CDU in the spring of 2019 with the so-called "destruction video", the videos before the election day received a not inconsiderable amount of media attention. Of course, this was also reflected in a corresponding reception on the common social media platforms. The associated virality of political contributions from a hybrid media spectrum is something that for the first time developed a noteworthy relevance in this election campaign.

Another social media phenomenon complements and changes the political discourse, namely the growing relevance of party-affiliated influencers. These influencers are usually younger sympathizers or members who build a bridge between party politics and young people interested in politics through their own communication in the sphere of social networks. Influencers close to the party hold enormous potential for recruiting new members, mobilizing party supporters, the party's ability to engage in discourse in the digital space and, last but not least, for developing digital competence in individual

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[17]https://correctiv.org/faktencheck/2021/09/07/nein-annalena-baerbock-hat-nicht-gesagt-dass-es-mehr-glasfaser-geben-muesse-um-e-autos-auf-dem-land-zu-laden/
[18] https://sh-gruene.de/diesmalgruen/

state/district associations. Be it Lilly Blaudszun for the SPD, Nora Zabel for the CDU or Christian Storch for Bündnis 90/Die Grünen - all three have shown how ongoing commitment to their own party in the digital discourse increases the parties' ability to campaign in the future (Hügelmann 2021).

Instagram was able to establish itself as a constant in political communication in this federal election in 2021. In 2017, the platform was still used for inexperienced trying out of individual candidate teams, but in 2021 the image service enjoyed widespread popularity. The advantages of Instagram are obvious: By focusing on images, candidates have the opportunity to play a key role in shaping their own image. Instagram makes it possible to supplement the public image with additional, private components in order to communicate political content on a more personal level. From a strategic perspective, the associated development of a political personal brand is worthwhile: Political candidates become advertising ambassadors for their parties without interested users having to go through the party accounts. This trend towards the personalization of politics will continue to influence internal party selection processes and the overall perception of politics in the years to come. The ability to build your own community and to use it to accumulate political capital will be one of the key competencies of future politicians. This was already evident in the general elections of 2017, when Christian Lindner led the FDP back into the Bundestag through the extensive use of personalized communication.

Twitter played a central role in the media interpretation of the election campaign. The spins developed on the platform regularly shaped parts of the reporting. The associated struggle for the sovereignty of interpretation of one's own campaign presented the responsible heads in the campaign teams with great challenges. As a result, practically all parties resorted to the same means, namely the targeted influencing of the discourse by party members, employees and supporters. This was particularly visible during the three TV trials: in this time, the interpretation of the performance of the three candidates was debated on Twitter. However, the fate of bots and fake followers in Twitter during the German federal election race were proved by Fabian Pfaffenberger and his colleagues from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. They claimed strong evidence that bots were used more frequently than has been widely reported so far. The researchers used algorithms to identify over 200 particularly active and "suspicious" accounts from almost 250 000 Twitter accounts, each of which distributed tweets with very similar content[19].

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[19] https://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/bundestagswahlen-beeinflussung-durch-bots-und-fake-followers-ld.1443905

From a normative perspective, the role of Twitter is to be viewed ambivalently: On the one hand, the news value on the platform organizes itself continuously under the conditions of virality. On the other hand, this is definitely part of the overall analysis, politically motivated user groups repeatedly resorted to a strategy of deliberately decontextualized misunderstanding in order to give the respective spin the necessary jump-start with the greatest possible outrage. The Grüne have the most followers on Twitter and Instagram. While Twitter is dominated by media professionals, Instagram is used a lot by younger people. They tend to lean more towards green points of view, are interested in climate protection, anti-racism or feminism, for example. Young politicians like Aminata Touré combine green messages on Instagram with personal things and a look behind the scenes of politics. In this way, they reach people who would not necessarily follow the main account of the Grüne. Even TikTok, as the youngest platform, is only suitable for party communication from above to a limited extent. Personalities are successful on the video app, which is why there are more individual members of all parties and ages who produce political content - as authentically and self-deprecatingly as possible, such as the 72-year-old FDP member of the Bundestag Thomas Sattelberger or Lilly Blaudszun, the 20- years social media expert of the SPD.

Politicians and parties also want to reach young people and first-time voters before the federal elections. That is why they are increasingly where they suspect this target group to be. In contrast to the CDU/CSU and SPD, the electorate of the FDP and Grüne is also significantly younger. That is why the social web therefore offers them a larger target group. The parties were also trying to involve voters directly by conquering digital spaces that until recently were reserved for private communication: messenger services. Almost all parties now use Telegram. For instance, the SPD party relies on its own Telegram bot, which provides interested parties with party content. Recently there has also been an election campaign group, the virtual "Sozenbande".

The fact that young people and first-time voters are also to be addressed in a targeted manner via social media channels during the election campaign is actually nothing new. But something has changed since the last federal election in September 2017: Young people under 25 are now mainly on TikTok – the video app from China is currently one of the three top dogs among social media platforms, alongside Instagram and YouTube.

So it's no wonder that more and more politicians and parties are staying there. After all, according to estimates by the Federal Statistical Office, there were around 2.8 million first-time voters for the Bundestag elections - and they should have been reached.

3.1 Marketing approaches in political branding and communication of FDP during the election campaign 2021

The development of the political brand of FDP was a long creation process. The way of FDP representatives to the parliament was not always successful as the latest result of the federal elections 2021. It is better to look at the history of this party's path to parliament. Following the resignation of the late former Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle from the leadership of the Free Democratic Party in May 2011 and its defeat in the Bundestag elections in November 2013, the situation of this political force seemed almost hopeless. Without joining the new Bundestag, the Free Democrats lost more than half of their state funding. Accordingly, the ability of the new FDP leader, Christian Lindner, to "breathe new life" into his own political power was under significant question, given both the image loss and the reduction in financial opportunities.

The second wave of doubts about the electoral success of the Free Democrats arose during the migration crisis, when they supported Chancellor Merkel's course to establish a flexible "ceiling" on the number of refugees. However, in mid-2016, the situation with the FDP rating began to level off, and in the 2017 regional race, the party "added" 2% to 4% to previous results and entered the parliaments of Schleswig-Holstein and North Rhine-Westphalia[20]. In addition, the election results in Dusseldorf (capital of North Rhine-Westphalia), where the campaign was led by the party leader himself, was one of the highest in the history of the FDP and amounted to 12%, and free Democrats received a "golden share" to form a government. That is how the "Lindner effect"[21].

The peculiarity of Lindner's effect is that, since the last elections to the Bundestag, he has managed to reset the party, losing the image of the "party of elites and businessmen", as well as mobilizing young voters. Moreover, the FDP election program, unlike the Christian Democrats and the SPD, FDP looks quite specific and addresses a range of issues, from the digital economy, tax liberalization and access to education, to improving migration policy and protecting human rights on the Internet.

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[20] https://www.wz.de/politik/landespolitik/liberale-in-nrw-setzen-voll-auf-einen-lindner-effekt_aid-30407133
[21] https://rp-online.de/nrw/landespolitik/der-lindner-effekt_aid-13711691

The successful branding has come to the party with the start of the cooperation with the local marketing agency called "Heimat", which won the federal party's budget before the first federal election 2017 and thus took on perhaps the most difficult work in the political advertising industry. The agency had not an easy task – to create a great image and a strong reputation of the FDP party. The focus was on creating a brand that could be attractive to the young generation of voters and people who believe in a future of the German economy, which by the way is the base of the FDP election program.

Analyzing the FDP's election campaign 2021 the attention has to be paid on the previous election race in 2017. That was the moment when the party relaunched its communication and began re-building its political brand. A huge part of the strategy was to be presented more in social media and to form the whole communication around strong and very well known leader – Christain Lindner. Usually, politicians are people who can be found particularly often in media reports and who - compared to other public figures - are observed and evaluated extremely critically by the media. The greatest attention is paid to the politicians and in particular to the top candidates of the parties in the election campaign. In addition, the media portrayal of politicians in the run-up to elections becomes more relevant, because the way in which the media reports on the top candidates also influences how the candidates are perceived by voters. However, the brand of Lindner has an influence on the brand building of the whole FDP party. So the entire campaign is geared towards him, and its style and imagery are clearly reminiscent of the FDP's advertising from the 2017 federal election campaign. The only difference could be seen in the slogan, in 2017 the claim was "Let's think new" (originally "Denk neu")[22]. The motto this time is: "There was never more to do" (originally „Nie gab es mehr zu tun")[23]. Under this motto, the Free Democrats were also starting a campaign in the 2021 election race. The party leader Christian Lindner is at the center of the election campaign as well, as he was in the election campaign in 2017. In comparison to 2017, the latest campaign shows an obviously mature Christian Lindner, who this time is again deliberately intended to appear unfiltered and up close.

In order to confirm serious intentions of the party about future changes in German politics, the headquarters created and released a short promo video in the style of

[22] https://www.horizont.net/agenturen/nachrichten/DenkenWirNeu-FDP-praesentiert-Wahlkampfmotive-von-Heimat-159484
[23] https://www.horizont.net/marketing/nachrichten/fdp-manager-volker-wissing-und-heimat-cco-matthias-storath-im-interview-da-darf-nicht-jeder-reinquatschen-192801

Lindner's documentary day, called "Dark Diaries of Lindner"[24]. The motif shows Lindner at night while he is working in his office. The motif fits perfectly with this year's FDP election campaign motto "There was never more to do". The motif is completed with a longer text, an inventory of the Federal Republic, which makes it clear: "Now is the time to do something." Incidentally, the motif is just one of the more than one hundred photos that were published in the course of the election campaign. In addition to the first large-format format, the election campaign film that tells the story behind the poster has now also been released. The campaign film, which was initially broadcast on social media and then on TV from August 25, shows numerous new images from the report on Christian Lindner, which provide insights into the work of the party leader. The creators attach great importance to the fact that all image material is unfiltered and unedited. After all, the film should "show what is". Significant to add that the music that accompanies the film was created by Paul van Dyk, who in this case is one of the most famous DJs in the world and has been a member of the Free Democrats since this year[25].

Talking about the visual imagery of the campaign, the 2017 race also should be observed. The idea of the visual identity was to show a leader Lindner with clear solid messages and bright letters appeared on a black-and-white background. Most of these information posters were used both as posters for offline promotion, as billboards, boards etc., and in the online sphere – social media. Following this further, the concept was to capture Lindner's everyday affairs, at that time Christian Lindner was photographed during the listening to music in the earphones or during the shaving process, showing his belonging to society and close accessibility to people (Appendix 2). It is important to note that the film's visual style matches the black and white renderings of the entire advertising and marketing campaign. Thus, the 2021 election campaign was a continuation of the old media strategy with the same motifs being kept in black and white, only the FDP logo stands out in color, with a new slogan, and more confident image of a mature leader (Appendix 3).

The FDP performed particularly well among young people: almost a quarter of those who voted first voted for the Liberals. The younger the age group, the higher their election results: the FDP won 23 percent of the votes in the federal elections among first-time voters. No other party did better here. Only the Grüne were able to get more votes

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[24] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btYzvvmphJA&feature=youtu.be

[25] https://www.n-tv.de/leute/Paul-van-Dyk-ist-jetzt-FDP-Mitglied-article22478112.html

in this group, namely 22 percent. The SPD follows with 15 percent, the Union with 10%, the left with eight and the AfD with seven percent.

For the political scientist Uwe Jun, there are four reasons why young people vote for the FDP: digitization, educational equality and presence in social media[26]. The first three reasons are understandable, as it proves the fact that young people monitor and check the party's program before making a final decision to vote. Instead, the factor of social media is caused by marketing instruments of digital political communication. However, even the topic of digitalization, which is a winning part of the FDP's election program, concerns primarily the rights and security of Internet users, especially active consumers of social networks.

Especially among the younger generation, social media makes a significant contribution to opinion-forming and interest in the elections. The advantages of this medium are obvious: easy accessibility for users within their usual environment, low costs for the advertising parties and the content presented is very up-to-date. What is also attractive is the opportunity – in contrast to billboard advertising or conventional appearances – to maintain contact with the voters even after the election campaign.

The FDP has had a strong presence on internet platforms like Instagram and Tiktok used by young people and adults, and, furthermore, has found a receptive audience among young voters, namely, the first-time voters. For a good social media presence and good political communication, FDP and its politicians should be represented on as many social networks as possible. To generate voters and to reach a large mass of people. Thus, in the time period from early June to mid-November 2021, the FDP is the frontrunner with a large follower number (Figure 3.1).

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[26] https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/btw21/fdp-erstwaehler-101.html
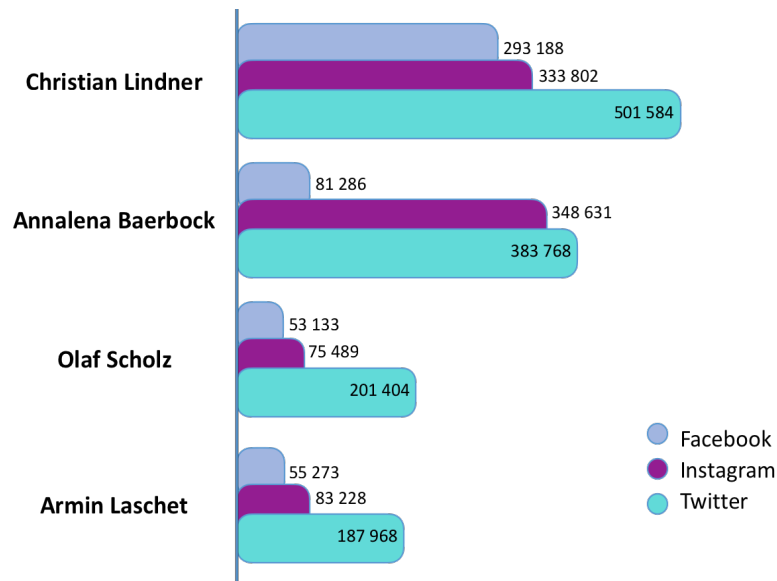
Figure 3.1. The quantity of followers of the most popular political candidates

According to this chart, it can be seen that the FDP and the Grüne are leading in the number of subscribers. It should be noted that according to the final results of the 2021 elections, these two parties had the winning positions in the category of first-time voters, who in this case, are main users of the social networks.

In contrast to the older platforms Facebook and Instagram, there are not that many politicians on TikTok who have private accounts there. But the FDP was the first party, which was not afraid of their presence in this social media. Moreover, two FDP politicians from Bavaria were leading on TikTok: Thomas Sattelberger and Wolfgang Heubisch reached millions with their videos. Interesting to add that these two party's representatives belong to the older generation, Sattelberger was at that time 72 years old and Heubisch was 74 years old.

Thomas Sattelberger is one of the oldest members of the Bundestag and at the same time the German politician with the most TikTok fans. He reaches a lot of people who would otherwise never be interested in politics. From the very beginning of the election race, his strategy was to promote himself in order to collect a lot of votes for himself and the FDP in the federal elections in the South region of Germany. Additionally, the first This video on the politician's TikTok channel during the election campaign has already been viewed more than half a million times[27]. Sattelberger reached people who do not approach other politicians. With over 130,000 followers and more than

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[27] https://www.tiktok.com/@thomas_sattelberger

2.6 million likes on the video platform at the time of 2021, the 72-year-old has the largest following of all German politicians there, which gives privilege to the image of the whole party brand.

Former Bavarian Minister of Science, today FDP member of parliament and Vice President of the Bavarian state parliament Wolfgang Heubisch is one of the most successful German politicians on Tiktok, as well. The 74-year-old FDP politician makes fun of his opponents with very creative videos. For instance, the TikTok video "How I read through an AfD application" is the most famous and the most successful one and has been viewed 2.4 million times at the time of the election race[28] . More than 58,000 people have subscribed to his videos there. With the active presence on the TikTok plattform Heubisch wants to increase young people's interest in politics on Tiktok, according to his interview[29], this is the only way to reach the young target group.

A political expert Martin Fuchs explains why these two politicians in particular manage to appeal to young people with their videos: "They understood that very well. They understood the logic, the culture at TikTok". He claimed that personalities as themselves, not parties, work on TikTok and this is attractive and interesting for young people[30]. This also means that politicians on TikTok should not come across as serious and reputable, instead, they should be presented in the most common and comfortable spheres of the electorate.

According to the research about budget expenses on the digital tools in the political communication of parties before and during the election campaign, in general, the FDP spent 6,5 million euro on the party's promotion, advertisements during the election campaign[31]. With the help of Ads Transparency by Google — a huge data tool that collects users' experience and shows the amount of money spent on political advertisements in Google in the format of Google Ads. This is a paid Google contextual advertising, with the help of which the visibility of the site on the first pages of Google at the top and bottom of the page could be achieved. Accordingly, the FDP spent approximately 900 000 euro on META[32] (including more than 200 000 euro on Facebook)

[28] https://www.tiktok.com/@wolfgang.heubisch
[29]https://www.rnd.de/politik/tiktok-und-politik-ueber-2-4-millionen-aufrufe-fuer-fdp-abgeordneten-wolfgang-heubisch-NZMSKPFKIVGYFOGWCMLQTVZNPY.html
[30]https://www.br.de/nachrichten/bayern/mehr-als-unterhaltung-wahlkampf-bei-tiktok,SdFWlbO
[31]https://www.basicthinking.de/blog/2021/09/10/online-wahlkampf-bundestagswahl-2021/
[32] https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/report/

and over 356 000 euro on Google Ads[33] in the time period from 25 July 2021 till 26 September 2021. Facebook Ads make the text/video/graphic post promoted in order to gain a target audience or to reach more network users. Following this further, over 54 177 euro for Instagram and Facebook Ads were spent on Chrsitian Lindner social media profiles, as a leader of the party and its brand face. The post formats and their number, produced by the FDP from 25 July 2021 till 26 September 2021, are presented in the graph below (Figure 3.2).

Total amount - 357 000 Euro

- Graphic posts
- Video posts
- Text posts
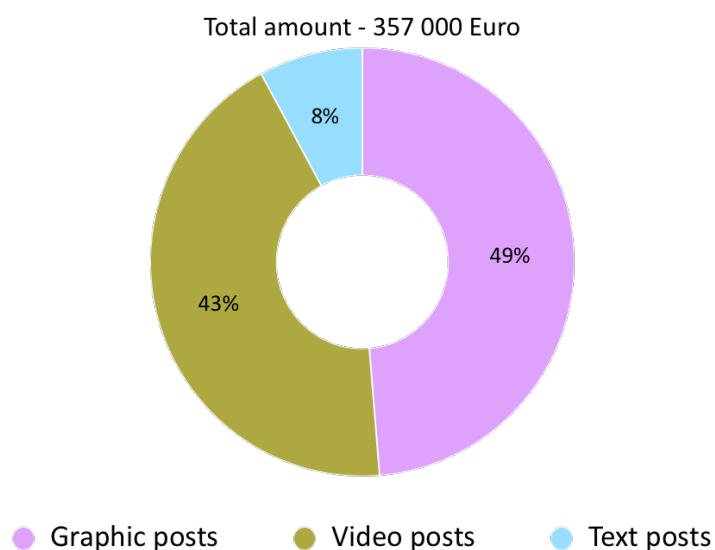
Figure 3.2. Expenses on the formats of the posts of the FDP

As a result, the FDP reached most people with paid postings. The algorithms of Facebook, Google or Twitter allow users to show posts based on certain interests. For the election campaign, this means that private corporations decide which parties are reported to us more and which less. So it is not unlikely that this practice actually influences our opinion-forming. In addition to official appearances by parties and candidates, numerous other profiles appear politically in social media, however, not everything that is published there is really true. As a result, a user, who is, simultaneously, a potential voter, falls into the "filter bubble", which limits the amount and type of information, thus causing a framing effect.

The next step for analyzing is the involvement of people to the posts they reached. So-called "impressions" indicate how many people saw a post in their news feed, for example, while they were online. These "impressions" consist of "likes", comments and

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[33]https://adstransparency.google.com/advertiser/AR06083976068484562945?political=&region=DE

shares. All "impressions" of the paid postings added together show that the FDP reaches the most people overall (Figure 3.3). The liberals have invested significantly less money on Facebook and Instagram than the Union and the Grüne.
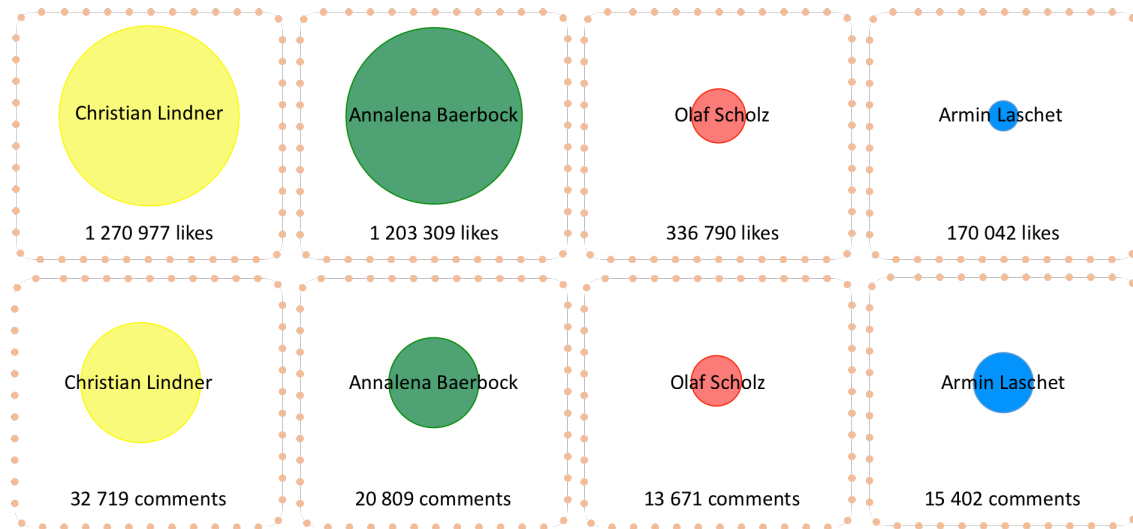
Figure 3.3. Impressions on the posts of German leaders

(Instagram, 15 November 2021)

It is important to mention that the interactions in Instragram were much higher than in Facebook. A reason for that is the fact that the younger generation in Germany prefers Instagram (80% people 14-29 years are Instagram users in comparison to 52% 14-29 years using Facebook (Onlinestudio 2021)). Political advisor Martin Fuchs sees a possible explanation for this in the fact that the FDP is trying to address specific target groups that are close to the party in a much more targeted manner[34]. The party with it could serve small target groups with different, niche topics that would be highly relevant for their target group.

Making an analysis in accordance with Neffenger's model "4P" in the context of the German federal election 2021, the "product" was the party's face and its leader Christian Lindner, who already had a fairly successful reputation and was able to lead the party to parliament. However, despite the fact that the party was associated with Lindner, some local party politicians also created unique images. Looking at the FDP, this party has entered the election race with the idea of resolving the economy after the corona crisis. To this end, the FDP program, as always, focuses primarily on tax breaks and red tape in

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[34] https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/wahlkampf-2021-socialmedia-bundestagswahl-100.html

its election program. Key topics such as increasing digitalisation, climate policy and changes in the education system were also mentioned. Because the FDP pays special attention to digitalization, the idea of establishing a Federal Ministry of Digital Transformation has been lobbied for. Accordingly, proceeds should be invested in digital infrastructure, and Free Democrats want to strengthen the right to privacy, including in the digital space. This approach to digitalization and climate policy was one of the key issues for the young segment of voters. All in all, the excellence of the program, access to it on all media channels of the party, the availability of infographics and relatively easy to understand content – could ultimately affect the choice of the voter. In the German federal election 2021, the party's face was its leader, Christan Lindner, who already had a fairly successful reputation and was able to lead the party to parliament. However, despite the fact that the party was associated with Lindner, some local party politicians also created unique images.

Talking about the "place", the FDP also created a platform for those who wanted to help the party in its political advancement. On the site you could fill out the form on the same principle as on the website of the Sluha Narodu Party. Artificial intelligence was not used in this case, but there was a clear division into categories of activities that could be joined. It should be added that at the beginning of the election campaign, party leader Christian Lindner posted a video on his Facebook page asking volunteers to become part of the FDP's election campaign. The FDP also held traditional meetings with voters, and local deputies and party representatives held meetings to discuss issues related to the blocs of the election program and to explain their main points. Thus, the election program was presented in the format of bilateral communication as well.

About the budget it should be added that the headquarter of the FDP party spent most of the digital strategy budget on Google search and contextual advertising, as well as on promoting the posts of its leader Lindner. It was on his accounts in social media platforms that a huge investment was allocated, namely, approximately 54 000 euro. In turn, this gave a successful result, Lindner's post coverage was the highest among its competitors, and as a result, it was possible to reach the younger generation. To sum up, the expenses on the digital strategy of the Ukrainian party was 200 000 euro, and the FDP spent approximately more than 1,3 million euro. To conclude, it can be assumed that the price of a Sluha Narodu's voter cost 19 UAH, which is 0,61 euro (for now), and the price of the German party FDP's voter is 1 euro.

The main platforms of FDP for interaction with voters were the official site, profiles in Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Significantly to add the fact that the FDP did not use the potential of each social network separately, instead the network profile bots were noticed behind them. The use of fake profiles on its own social networks reached 35,4% on the common party pages and 29,1% on the personal pages of Christian Lindner. In addition, the role of hashtags was underrated in the campaign FDP in comparison with the result of its usage by Sluha Narodu.

Generally, the election campaign of the FDP party was discussed and positively rated by creative experts and political consultants. Founder and creative director Stefan Schmidt commented on and evaluated the campaign in terms of marketing approaches: "The FDP has presented one of the best works ever done for political parties to sell their product." For instance, the chief director of the marketing agency A&B One Rupert Ahrens commented on the election campaign of the FDP:

"Politics as a brand is nothing new. But never has a politician looked more stylish. New versus old. Young versus old. impatience with administration. attack versus defense…5 stars for strategy…" (Ahrens 2021).

All in all, the election campaign of FDP reached the goals and aims they were wishing to achieve. Taking into consideration the whole marketing approach, usage of digital tools to provide political communication in online space, this campaign was successful. A great result in the end, the presence in the parliament, the member of the coalition, a very recognizable politician Christian Linder and the engagement with the young electorate is a great success for the party, which has come a long and difficult way.

CONCLUSIONS

In the modern information world, social networks have become a key tool of society, where public opinion is formed, news is formed and problems are raised. With the development of the Internet, social networks have become a meeting place for voters and any political force. Political branding is on the verge of economics, marketing, sociology, behavioral and political science, and this approach has the potential to expand the research tools of a political scientist and allow him to look more comprehensively at the object and subject of research. The influence of social networks on the election campaigns is significant, because at this particular time they play a crucial role and have already changed political communication. Citizens make their electoral choices under the effect of various factors: information in the media, campaigning of candidates, parties, the immediate environment, but only social networks reduce the distance between politician and voter, could provide a form of feedback. This is why it became a new horizontal political communication. Political marketing is also gradually moving from external media ato the space of the Internet, due to its accessibility and ability to reach the target audience (age, geography, financial constraints, etc.)

The above in this thesis could conclude that political branding as an interdisciplinary approach combines political, economic, marketing and cultural aspects to study the electoral behavior, especially of the young electorate. The advantage of the brand concept is its ability to explain the irrational, flexible mechanisms of voter behavior. Awareness of the theory and practice of political branding can equip politicians with influential tools to influence electoral behavior by building the capital of trust, emotional attachment and voter loyalty to the political actor.

The research of this thesis describes and defines marketing approaches in the political communication used in the election campaigns in the Ukrainian presidential race 2019 and in the German federal race 2021. Comparing and looking for similarities between the marketing approaches used during the election campaign, it is important to note that first of all there is a big difference in the electoral behavior of Ukrainian and German voters, which is based on several factors, primarily social and cultural.

The Ukrainian party Sluha Norody is the leader among voters in all age groups, but most of all in the 18-29 age group and among voters with incomplete higher education, which actually indicates that this segment consists of students. In general, the index of young supporters of the Ukrainian Party was 58.8% of voters. The similar

situation could be observed in the results of the federal elections in Germany, where in 2021 first-time voters made their choice on the FDP. Moreover, 23% of the 18-24 age group voted for this liberal party.

It could be claimed that these two election races were using Internet technologies to increase the electorate pool in both countries and, as a result, to involve active social media users. Moreover, on the example of the Ukrainian party Sluha Narodu and the German party FDP their policial brands and political communication have been analyzed. Following this further, a study was conducted on use of digital marketing instruments in the running of the election campaigns of both parties. This work describes the brand identity and visual aesthetics of the political brands of Sluha Narodu and the FDP. Following this further, it was generalized the digital strategy of the political brand with its communication of these parties with the young generation of voters at different media sites. It was found that the main common platforms for interaction with voters were official websites and Instagram profiles for both parties. Moreover, the Ukrainian party also used YouTube as one of the channels of communication, instead FDP candidates actively used several Tik Tok accounts.

In this thesis it was found out that the role of marketing approaches in political communication in election campaigns is very important, as it has a direct influence on the potential voter and that is how the voter's preferences could be formed. Therefore, the similarities in marketing instruments in political branding and political communication between the winning parties Sluha Narodu and the FDP were highlighted and underlined. A characteristic feature of brand communication of both parties was the desire to build trust between an ordinary citizen and a political party-candidate, and therefore all the content was emotional, funny, simple terminologically and meaningfully. Therefore, the emphasis in the headquarters of the Ukrainian party was on involving citizens in the challenges, which were launched personally by Volodymyr Zelenskyy and members of the party. This stimulated the audience to comment, like and repost. Significantly to add, the activity of the users on the Christian Lindner's account during the election campaign was also quite high, his profiles in Instagram had the strongest interactions with network users, compared to other candidates. All this gave the parties and their candidates a huge coverage of the electorate, in particular the young audience aged 18 to 24. Both FDP's and Sluha Narodu's digital communication during the parliamentary elections was filled with non-standard tactics and methods that facilitated and diversified political communication with the voter. A characteristic feature of brand communication was the

desire to build trust between an ordinary citizen and a political candidate, and therefore all the content was emotional, sometimes entertaining, simple terminologically and meaningfully.

There were also similarities in the approaches of the visual identity. The colors of the election campaign also played a key role. In the Ukrainian party, the color is green, which combines the associative part of Zelenskyy's surname ("zelenyi"), and is also perceived as the color of youth, lightness and environmental friendliness. Speaking about the German party, the campaign begins in black and white tones with bright slogans in pink and yellow. Such contrasts are associated with strong intentions, the party is going to enter the election race, bold actions and a well-focused plan for the future. Both colors have an influence on the perception of potential voters, as well as impress the younger generation.

There is no denying that the brand identity of both political parties in digital communication was aimed at fixing young voter associative nodes in long-term memory. In the case of the Sluha Narodu, the focus was on fixing that the party is based on Zelenskyy's personal brand, his team and his alternative to the politicians and old faces in the new parliament. In the case of the FDP, the focus was also on the strong leader Christian Lindner, but there was also a clear message that FDP finally has a clear course and is ready to fully represent the interests and demands of its people.

In general, both campaigns used marketing approaches to create their own political brand. Both parties have focused heavily on the use of digital tools in political communication, which has allowed them to enter the interests of the young people aged 18-24. To conclude, this audience segment was particularly on target of the both researched parties and, as a result, 40,3% and 23% of the young generation voted for Sluha Narodu and FDP in accordance. The usage of marketing approaches, political branding and digital political communication was created and was directed on getting the young electorate involved in making political choices and taking part in political decisions. However, there is still a significant difference in cultural and social characteristics between Ukrainians and Germans, the level of media knowledge and the use of social networks among the younger generation. That is why when some approaches and patterns worked well in one country, they did not show the same output effectively in another.

All in all, marketing approaches in political branding and political communication during the election races should be observed as a crucial part of the campaign. This can

provide political candidates and party-candidates with effective instruments for influencing electoral behavior in the electoral race, highlighting target segments and finding the best methods for the agitation and promotion. In addition, political branding also offers an opportunity to build strong bilateral communication through emotional attachment leading to long-term voter loyalty and be an effective "ground" for the next elevation races.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Self-building logos of the election campaign of Sluha Narodu

Appendix 2. Election campaign 2017

Appendix 3. Election campaign 2021