

Matrix of Brand Awareness and a Positive Image as a Success Factor in Political PR

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Abstract

The article aims to support political theorists and PR practitioners to bring new or encourage already existed political figures to the top political arena and make them, using this matrix, to plan their future according to the type of awareness and a positive image they already built and the time they spent in political PR and political marketing influencing society and politics. The concept of Brand awareness should be well employed by Political PR. To improve public relations approaches into political PR and employ awareness as a success factor for political competition, we suggest the following Matrix, invented by public relations practitioners and political marketing researchers: Pr.Dr. Kakhaber Djakeli and Thea Tshumburidze in 2011.

Keywords: Matrix, political PR, Public Relations management, brand awareness, political market

Introduction

Building brand awareness and a positive image in political PR is essential for building brand equity. It includes use of various renowned channels of promotion such as advertising, word of mouth, publicity, social media like blogs, sponsorships, launching events, etc. To create brand awareness in political PR, it is important to create reliable brand image, slogans and taglines. The brand message to be communicated should also be consistent. Strong brand awareness leads to high sales and high market share. Brand awareness can be regarded as a means through which consumers become acquainted and familiar with a brand and recognize that brand. The concept of Brand awareness should be well employed by Political PR. To improve public relations approaches into political PR and employ awareness as a success factor for political competition, we suggest the following Matrix, invented by public relations practitioners and political marketing researchers: Pr.Dr. Kakhaber Djakeli and Tea Tshumburidze in 2011.

The article aims to support political theorists and PR practitioners to bring new or encourage already existed political figures to the top political arena and make them, using this matrix, to plan their future according to the type of awareness and a positive image they already built and the time they spent in political markets or other markets influencing society and politics.

1. Building Brand Awareness

The concept of Brand awareness is not new in political PR and marketing. This means the concept measuring consumer's knowledge of a brand's existence.

Brand awareness is the probability that consumers are familiar about the life and availability of the product. It is the degree to which consumers precisely associate the brand with the specific product. It is measured as a ratio of niche market that has former knowledge of brand. Brand awareness includes both brand recognition as well as brand recall. **Brand recognition** is the ability of consumer to recognize prior knowledge of brand when they are asked questions about that brand or when they are shown that specific brand, i.e., the consumers can clearly differentiate the brand as having being earlier noticed or heard. While **brand recall** is the potential of customer to recover a brand from his memory when given the product class/category, needs satisfied by that category or buying scenario as a signal. In other words, it refers that consumers should correctly recover brand from the memory when given a clue or he can recall the specific brand when the product category is mentioned. It is generally easier to recognize a brand rather than recall it from the memory. (Percy, 2008)

Brand awareness is improved to the extent to which brand names are selected that is simple and easy to pronounce or spell; known and expressive; and unique as well as distinct. For instance - Coca Cola has come to be known as Coke.

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What we can say about image? “Corporate image is regarded as ‘the global evaluation (comprised of a set of beliefs and feelings) a person has about an organization’. The important Point here is that an ‘image’ is in the eye of the beholder. The important point about an ‘image’ (whether a company, brand, or anything else) is that it is the Result of processing information. (Larry Percy -“Strategic Integrated marketing communications” Elsevier inc. London 2008). Having cleared that image itself is the result of good and positive awareness; we use awareness as a ground on what success should be built.

2. The Marketing Study

In our study we have used Focused (semi-structured) interview. This approach is used to gather qualitative data by setting up the special situation, allowing respondents in some time and scope to talk about their opinions on a particular subject. The focus of interview was decided by us. Respondents were selected in Face book as “No Politician Subjects” and “No Journalists”. The virtual social site allowed us to gather respondents and to turn them into focus group. 67 respondents were actively involved into interviews. Some 33 other respondents answered not in time frame allowed us to reject their answers. Our objective was to understand the respondent’s points to awareness of different figures, playing some role in politics. We used open ended questions, like “Tell me about your awareness to these persons?” and we were giving to respondent pictures of different political persons. After they were finding some of them without any awareness or with little awareness we have been asking them “please choose some figures from this another pack as a symbol to title group of people having spent little time in politics and having little awareness”. We were quite surprised that 78% of respondents were chosen “mouse”. To the respondent after that we are asking “which person you recognized easily as a political subject?” Respondents usually were choosing pictures of politicians, being recognized by them”. This already was “recognition brand awareness” and we know that this people should be also divided according time they spent in politics. To title with a symbol recognized political subjects for new entrants to politics the respondents choose symbol of “Black Hippopotamus”, to five to ten year recognized political persons – our respondents chosen “cow”, but persons having spent more than 10 year to political scene and being recognized well, our respondents suggest picture of “Camel”, hence it is more patient. The next question to respondents was “which political subject you need to overcome economic, social, criminal, cultural problems of society?” This was already question to category need of respondents. They usually chose some well known political subjects. For such group we asked them to select pictures more closed to politicians, “just entered politics

but having recall awareness”, respondents choose “White hippopotamus”, “having spent five to ten year and having recall awareness”, respondents choose “dice”, and “having spent more than ten years but having recall awareness” – respondents have chosen “chess”, hence they decided that such political subjects are very clever and experienced in strategies. The next question to respondents was “which political subjects from given you have always in your mind? For those political group just entered politics and having top mind awareness, respondents choose the face of “drowsy tiger”. For those who spent some time in politics with such status, respondents choose face of “Zorro”, but for political persons having spent in politics more than 10 years they choose the symbol “golden crown and laurel crown.

3. Types of Brand awareness and political success













According to our public relations study made in Post Soviet country – Georgia, in the capital Tbilisi, during 2010-2011 years, people who were interviewed by independent interviewers distinguished following types of awareness and a positive image to political figures playing some roles in different Georgian political parties and unions:

1. Little awareness or no awareness to political figure.
2. **Brand recognition awareness with positive image** - This means that on mentioning the category, the customers recognize some brand from the lists of brands shown.
3. **Brand recall awareness with positive image** - meaning that people having category need, for example needing encouragement from political figure already recalling one or two political brands.
4. **Top of mind awareness (Immediate brand recall) meaning top positive image too** - This is the political brand what is strongly put in the mind and customer easily recalls him/her.

The relative importance of brand recall and recognition will rely on the degree to which consumers make election-related decisions with the brand present or not. For instance - In a store, brand recognition is more crucial as the brand will be physically present. In a scenario where brands are not physically present, brand recall is more significant (as in case of services and online brands).

Building political brand awareness is essential for building brand equity. It includes use of various renowned channels of promotion such as advertising, word of mouth publicity, social media like blogs, sponsorships, launching events, etc. To create brand awareness, it is important to create reliable brand image, slogans and taglines. The brand message to be communicated should also be consistent. Strong brand awareness leads to high market share in politics. Brand awareness can be regarded as a means through which consumers become acquainted and

Matrix of Brand Awareness as a Success Factor in political market

T I M E S P A N	More than 10 years →	9. 	10. 	11. 	12. 
	5-10 years →	5. 	6. 	7. 	8. 
	New Entrant →	1. 	2. 	3. 	4. 
		No Awareness Or Little Awareness	Brand Recognition Awareness	Recall Awareness	Top of Mind Awareness

familiar with a brand and recognize that brand.

Higher levels of brand awareness and positive brand image are thought to increase the probability of brand choice. (Keller, 1993)

Silverman, Sprott and Pascal have explored the relationship between customer-based and financial/market-based brand equity measurement. (Silverman, Sprott & Pascal, 1999)

They found small, but positive relationship between brand awareness-assessed by familiarity, usage and favorability-and market-based outcomes of brand value-measured by annual sales and Financial World Brand ratings.

4. How the concept of Brand awareness and a Positive Image should be employed by Public Relations Management?

Having carried out above mentioned survey and shared the knowledge and advice of PR practitioners, marketing experts, scientists, professors, and opinion of those people who have great knowledge and experience in the political marketing issues, we created the following matrix of success in political PR and are pleased to suggest it to you.

5. Matrix of Brand Awareness and a Positive Image

According the time spent by political figures in politics or in other markets affecting political decisions and awareness they built to society, we divided them in 12 different types and titled them by different names.

1. Mouse – A new entrant of the matrix is a beginner, which is on career path to somewhere. It should show dis-

tinguished characteristics. The political figures which are united under the image of “Mouse” need to work hard, and to show some market aggressiveness. They need to have purpose and mission. They should create themselves with their own method and use of PR technologies which very important.

2. Black Hippopotamus – This is a new figure in the political market, which has brand recognition awareness. Its appearance is really noticeable. The politicians which belong to the image of “Black Hippopotamus” have good chances for going forward.

3. White Hippopotamus – Another political figure in our matrix is distinguished because of success in its previous business, sport, or art and this political figure achieved certain popularity in the eyes of the public. White Hippopotamus are unprofessional politicians, but noticeable persons. The Society monitors (observes) them and they really are able to achieve a great success if they set missions and purposes, and also the will to possess the whole political arena. Otherwise, they will be remained as a peaceful white hippopotamus.

According to the book of Larry Percy, there are brand recognition awareness and brand recall awareness. What we see under the symbol of black hippopotamus, this is brand recognition awareness, but under white hippopotamus we emphasize brand recall awareness.

4. Drowsy Tiger – Sometimes we call it newly waking up tiger. On Georgian example, such kind of personality can be well-known businessman and public figure Bidzina Ivanishvili which achieved greatest recognition because of his charitable activities. After setting or outlining their political program, such “drowsy tigers”, achieve great success in the political arena, however, they have a

need to overcome a resistance, due to those active politicians which see a great danger in them and they will do everything possible to neutralizing this danger. (These opposing active politicians are likely to forget previous battles and unite to fight against him). Drowsy Tiger should understand the requirements of political PR which exists in front of this figure (Tiger) and must be able to conduct a sophisticated battle against its opponents. This figure should not be deceived, because according to history, such kind of drowsy tigers don't achieve their goals in terms of wrong political PR management and wrong political marketing.

White hippopotamuses and black hippopotamuses as well as other type of politicians have usually opponents, but Drowsy Tigers, hence they are very popular, can have excessive number of clear and unsought opponents than others, showed in our matrix as new entrants in politics. This was also emphasized by respondents.

5. Beetle - Is a political figure with experience from 5 to 10 years. Despite its time spent in the political market, politicians under the image of "beetle" possess no awareness or little awareness. They are often associated with "beetle", because when this resident of the city appears, everyone is scared, but after disappearance everyone forgets about it. People carefully caulk cracks in order it (beetle) not to appear anymore. We should not suggest them making some aggressive marketing activities at all. We suggest them to improve their skill to some level and increasing awareness to brand recognition level. We suggest them to make personal plan how to achieve brand recognition awareness in some period, for example one year.

6. Cow – Being in the political market for 5-10 years, this political figure possesses brand recognition. "Cow" has an opportunity to make its viewers surprise, on the one hand with its political experience and on the other hand with its febleness. These political figures are not able to attract public attention and can't maintain this attention for a long period of time. All the time they are avoiding shows, media, and press. Often the public is unclear what they are doing. We would like to advice these political figures to take into consideration and understand that the public has tired from waiting, and they must make at least one heroic and clever job. Maybe not just heroic but some fabulous, brilliant action should be undertake by such "Cow" political subjects, to improve their awareness and distinguish themselves from competitors.

7. Dice – Possessing an excellent recall awareness, "dice" is in the political market for 5-10 years. When people need to get a category need, they remind about such kind of political figures. The same happens when the society needs a centrist politician with public administration and it immediately flares up their minds. You may be wondering why we called such kind of political figures the "dice". We call it because, very often, they are betting their political awareness into the failure of the government or

the opposition. And such betting (in both cases) from their turn, socially damages the state and they look as gamblers in the eyes of the public. The society remembers them but they don't look at them seriously. We would advice such leaders to go away from this gambler position and use their political capital for real political purposes.

8. Zorro – this noticeable political figure is in the political market from 5 to 10 years. Everyone thinks about him and hope that he will save them; therefore, he has the image of Zorro and Robin Hood. The society expects a lot from him and over time he must show his goals to the public, identify his mission and objectives; the key is to find support, to act with maximum energy in order to achieve his goal, otherwise, on his next stage, competitors will make him the second-class brand.

There are a lot of political subjects have not used well their Brand Awareness and lost their popularity. In some period such brand can be forgotten. Napoleon Bonaparte was also Zorro, after his military expedition to Italy and Egypt, if he had not been improving his political power he could be thrown to recycle bin of history and forgotten.

9. Stray Dog – Despite more than 10 years of political experience, its awareness is very low. Such political figure feels that it has lost a lot of time, nothing was discovered and provided in the market by this figure, and accordingly it is wandering like a stray dog. Their future is vague.

10. Camel – political figures which are united under the image of "camel" are prominent only in case if people find them with some formulated political leader or in a political group. They have great energy and political experience, but are not able and don't have skills to use this experience wisely. That's why it is necessary to use them under strict supervision and management in order to strengthen a political team. It is important for most politicians to work with a political team, they should be team leaders and team players, the people which are interviewed in Georgia, in a small Post Soviet Republic, have low awareness of teaming and team at all.

11. Chess-player – chess-player in our matrix, is an experienced figure in political market, possesses recall awareness, but doesn't have carriage. Despite this chess player is distinguished with its clever ability to play chess. Political figures under "chess-player" image are deep-minded and possess variety of initiatives. In the free political market this figure has less chance of becoming president, but has an opportunity to become influential expert on political issues.

12. CROWN- at the Top of the Matrix is located Crown, which is submitted in two forms.

1) Laurel Crown- a political figure which is united under the image of "laurel crown" is the most recognized politician in his political segment, among right-wing politicians, left-wing politicians, or among centrists. He has ability to have great influence on the country's social,

economical, or political life. Laurel crown can turn into Golden Crown.

2) Golden Crown – a political figure under the image of - Golden Crown – is a Top political governor of the country, supreme leader.

As an advice to Golden Crown, it can be said, that such leaders should finish their work with dignity, in order to turn again into “laurel crown”, and to become the most esteemed political figures.

As for Laurel Crown, the figure under this image, if it has not been a top leader yet, it must once again remind its voters, about its missions and goals, organize its supporters, start fundraising very strongly, to find the money, to develop strategy using political PR technologies, and in case of compelling enough resources, it should have desire to turn into a Golden Crown.

However, the current “Golden Crown” needs to take into consideration that the most important thing he should be able to do is to become the “Laurel Crown” - the most esteemed political figure in the political market. This is the situation when political subject goes up to the political step, and he becomes Golden Crown, but he/she should think if he/she should prepare himself/herself for laurel crown.

Conclusion

As a conclusion part of our article, we would like to say that the newly created matrix will be very effective for start-up politician, or experienced but struggling political PR figures who must plan their own political brand development, in order to go through all the steps that will pull them to the political arena and help them to reach higher position according our matrix.

If this start-up politician tries his best and his quest will be productive political PR activity, which is not limited to his career, in this case he will receive the most esteemed Honorary Award – Laurel Crown.

Matrix divides political subjects according time they spent in politics and according awareness, they gained. Sure more brand awareness is better. To understand which is good position and which is bad position we use the factor of efficiency. Efficiency means less time spent for much awareness. Which is good according efficiency to awareness, we clarify in suggestions. Generally we don't intend to say which is good and which is bad.

We assume that the matrix will be very effective and helpful for politicians PR practitioners for brand planning.

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