

**STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTY PROMOTION IN
THE DIGITAL SPACE OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN: MECHANISMS
AND PROSPECTS**

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Abstract. This article analyzes the priority areas for enhancing the activity of political parties in the electoral processes of Uzbekistan. The research highlights both traditional and modern methods of promotion and campaigning, as well as effective mechanisms for utilizing the potential of mass media. Furthermore, the scholarly basis for the digital activities of political parties is provided, specifically focusing on establishing feedback with voters via social media, forming a party image, and delivering rapid responses to socio-political realities.

Keywords: political party, mass media, Internet, social networks, promotion, electorate, volunteers, election, voters, online appeal.

Introduction.

Political parties, as a fundamental institution of the modern democratic system, serve as the primary mechanism ensuring the interaction between the state and society. Parties that possess high organizational potential and systematically represent social interests not only achieve significant results in electoral processes but also lead in forming the political elite for public administration and developing alternative programs for strategic progress.

A healthy inter-party competitive environment contributes to strengthening the accountability of the executive branch to the representative body (parliament) and civil society, as well as developing optimal solutions to socio-political problems. In the context of ongoing democratic reforms in the country, the increasing role of political parties is primarily reflected in their expanding participation in the formation of representative bodies of state power and in bringing the "bridge" function between the state and the people to a qualitatively new stage.

Research Methodology. The article attempts to reveal the essence of the main objective set for the research by utilizing methods such as the principle of historicity, comparative analysis, systematization, classification, and the problem-chronological approach.

Analysis and Results. For political parties to become more active, they must, first and foremost, gain the people's trust and create a positive social opinion about themselves. A party

cannot achieve anything by relying solely on its members without its electorate and the support of the people standing behind that electorate. Protecting the interests of the electorate is one of the priority directions of political party activities.

The role of mass media is invaluable in the process of political parties' engagement with the electorate. In the age of information, the correct and rational use of radio, television, the periodical press, and, of course, the Internet assists in ensuring the victory of political parties in elections.

Promotion and campaigning activities hold particular significance in the operations of political parties, as correctly and effectively organized advocacy ensures a party's victory in the political struggle. These activities can primarily be divided into two periods: the inter-election period and the pre-election period. Typically, the activity of political parties intensifies specifically during the pre-election process. However, voters' trust in political parties is formed and tempered over many years. Therefore, it is crucial for political parties to remain active continuously rather than only during specific periods, thereby earning the attention and respect of the electorate.

In order to increase public trust in political parties and strengthen their cooperation, it is advisable for political parties to focus on the following:

1. Establishing direct contact with citizens. In the majority of developed democratic states, significant attention is paid to the institution of citizen appeals. For example, political parties in the United States and the United Kingdom have created opportunities for every citizen to directly contact senators who represent the party. To achieve this, a citizen accesses the party's website and follows a specific algorithm of actions:

- Accessing the “Call a Member of Congress” link;
- Selecting the appropriate category from the list of issues;
- Providing their postal (ZIP) code.

Following this, the citizen is provided with the phone number of their state senator and a link to their account on the Twitter social network [1]. At this point, it should be noted that each senator has an entire team dedicated to studying and analyzing appeals received from citizens. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, both Liberals and Conservatives utilize this practice in their interactions with voters.

While a system for establishing direct contact with citizens has also been created on the websites of Uzbekistan's political parties, there is a fundamental need to improve and refine the

operations of this system. Ultimately, only the people can provide an objective assessment of a political party's activities.

The activity, industriousness, and, certainly, the profound knowledge of party employees (members) hold a special place in the party's operations. Undoubtedly, the presence of such qualities among party staff and the electorate ensures the political party's successful participation in elections. Political party employees (members) must clearly understand their role and responsibilities within the party's life, contribute to the continuous improvement of the party program, possess a deep understanding of its content, and consciously support it. Furthermore, they should engage with party leadership on matters related to the party's position and strive to expand the party's ranks.

2. Active involvement of volunteers in party activities. Historically, volunteers within political parties have served as the driving force behind election campaigns worldwide. Today, volunteer groups occupy a prominent position in the organizational activities of political parties in developed nations. Conducting door-to-door and telephone interviews with voters, distributing promotional and campaign materials, and organizing support events for party candidates are all effective mechanisms for gathering votes that require the participation of active and energetic volunteers. Since volunteer activities do not require financial remuneration, political parties should increasingly utilize various motivational tools to recruit them into party ranks. These include familiarizing them closely with the activities of the parliament and the party's central council, and organizing various political simulations to stimulate their interest in party life and political activism [2].

Currently, the institution of volunteering is considered a vital mechanism for the success of party election campaigns globally. Unfortunately, this institution is underdeveloped in our country and is largely absent from the activities of most political parties (with the exception of UzLiDeP, which has reached agreements regarding cooperation with volunteers during election processes).

3. The Political Party's Appeal. The objective of a political party's appeal is to express its views on societal issues to the voters and present the program the party intends to implement to resolve them. In other words, a party appeal is a concise and clear exposition of the fundamental principles and priority directions defined in its political platform. It serves as a compact and accessible presentation of the core tenets and rules established within the party's political framework. This appeal must be persuasive, brief, succinct, lucid, and unique (innovative), incorporating positive statements. Political party leaders and activists must seek

ways to disseminate the ideas and concepts expressed in the appeal and achieve public support. Furthermore, such appeals should be conducted systematically, not only during pre-election campaigns but also during regular periods [3].

Consequently, a political party's ability to convey its future-oriented policies, programs, ideologies, and directions of activity to the population in an understandable and clear manner is one of the key factors for its electoral victory.

4. Promotion of Political Party Symbols (Paraphernalia). In an era of intense political competition, every political party seeks to distinguish itself from others. In this regard, the promotion of a specific image or brand plays a crucial role. Selling or distributing products featuring party logos serves as a strategic tool to enhance party recognition among the population.

Political parties in many developed countries have successfully commercialized products bearing their symbols for many years. U.S. political parties are considered the most active in this field. American Democrats (symbolized by the donkey—a representation of stubborn persistence and endurance) and Republicans (unofficially symbolized by the elephant—a representation of power) produce a wide range of merchandise for almost all occasions, including clothing, glassware, watches, and eyewear, all featuring their respective symbols.

Similarly, the British Labour Party (symbolized by a rose) and the Conservative Party (symbolized by a tree) offer an extensive assortment of branded products. In Italy and Poland, political parties also sell consumer goods that display their official imagery [4].

It is well known that a logo is a tool that demonstrates the ideology and mission of a political party. A logo assists in manifesting the party's ideas, goals, and the priority directions of its political course. All political parties in Uzbekistan have developed logos based on their party objectives and ideologies. However, in 2021, they introduced certain changes in this regard; specifically, all political parties operating in our republic updated their logos during the pre-election processes. We hope that these new logos will have a positive impact on the public support of political parties among our people. This is particularly relevant as some citizens struggle to distinguish not only between party logos but also between the parties themselves.

5. Improving Party Websites. Political party websites play a crucial role in their overall operations. A high-quality website, enriched with reliable and up-to-date information, not only enhances the efficiency of a political party's activities but also strengthens public trust, expands its social base, and helps resolve issues regarding citizens' access to the party's information resources.

In the contemporary world, the Internet, as a primary medium of communication, plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of a country. Its rapid evolution significantly influences political processes as well. Internet connectivity is especially critical for political parties. Skillfully shaping and promoting one's image through modern information technologies—integrated within the Internet environment and its interactive service systems—is a fundamental aspect of competitiveness in today's reality. Furthermore, political parties should ensure accessibility on their websites, creating necessary conditions for visually impaired individuals to stay informed about party activities. In this information age, modern technologies must become the primary tool in the promotion and campaigning activities of political parties.

When making any significant decisions, political parties should pay particular attention to supporting their members or followers and discussing problems with them. In implementing such actions, as well as in obtaining answers to all questions of interest to party supporters or members, gaining more comprehensive information, and increasing trust in them, the internet websites of political parties serve as essential facilitators. Furthermore, political parties can express their opinions and stances through electronic petitions (collective appeals).

6. Extensive Use of Social Networks and E-mail. Many countries worldwide have already begun effectively utilizing the primary advantages of the Internet. Specifically, communicating through e-mail and social networks is considered among the most effective methods.

These methods enable parties to inform the public about their ongoing work, attract more supporters and members to their ranks, and ascertain the opinions and feedback of their electorate on specific issues. In this process, the following actions can be implemented: to facilitate communication via e-mail, political party websites invite visitors to register with their contact details and e-mail addresses, subsequently sending them information regarding party activities through these channels.

Currently, social networks are significantly more widespread than e-mail, and all political parties in Uzbekistan have established their own channels on social media platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube). Through these channels, they communicate not only information about party life but also report on important national news and express their stances on them. Another crucial feature of social networks is that political parties can gauge citizens' opinions and attitudes toward specific problems through online surveys.

As the institutional foundation of a democratic society, political parties play a central role in the formation of representative bodies of state power. In the current stage of Uzbekistan's development, the transformation of party activities is directly linked to the improvement of electoral legislation. Specifically, the transition to a mixed electoral system (majoritarian-proportional) has become "a significant factor serving to increase the political weight of parties in society and strengthen their position in parliament" [5; P. 78].

One of the most crucial directions for enhancing party activity is the qualitative renewal of pre-election promotion and campaigning efforts. Today, alongside traditional methods of advocacy (meetings, leaflets), utilizing the potential of digital technologies is gaining priority. As researchers emphasize, "the participation of political parties in the virtual space is not merely the dissemination of information, but a strategic mechanism ensuring continuous communication and feedback with the electorate" [6; P. 45].

In particular, communicating party news and stances through social networks (Facebook, Telegram, Instagram) has become the fastest method of influencing the political consciousness of voters. In this process, political parties are utilizing the following mechanisms:

1. **Creating a Media Image:** Developing "human-centric" content through the personal social media pages of party leaders and candidates.
2. **Rapid Response:** Announcing the party's position on current social events within seconds. This demonstrates that the party is a "living and active institution" [7; P. 112].

The competitive environment among political parties is also decisive in ensuring the government's accountability to parliament. Professionally organized pre-election campaigns allow parties not only to collect votes but also to propose alternative programs for societal development. This, in turn, "serves as a bridge that balances the relations between the state and society on a democratic basis" [8; P. 204].

Conclusion and Recommendations. In our view, it would be appropriate for every political party to establish online connections with its members through social networks, provide them with regular updates on party news, and study their opinions on crucial matters of party life via online surveys. Given that the youth in our country are extensive users of the Internet, particularly mobile Internet, developing specialized mobile applications for young people can significantly enhance public access to information about political parties.

As demonstrated above, the strengths of social networks as a medium for information dissemination are as follows:

First, the experience of effectively utilizing modern information technologies enables active Internet users to build and shape a political career through social media platforms.

Second, social networks offer several undeniable advantages, namely the ability to communicate with any individual regardless of their physical location. This capability allows politicians or political parties to stay informed about national and global news while simultaneously gauging citizens' reactions to these events.

Third, there is an opportunity to find creative solutions to existing problems. For instance, social networks enable the effective use of **crowdsourcing**. Crowdsourcing (derived from English) refers to the involvement of a wide range of individuals in solving specific innovative or production-related problems on a voluntary basis, utilizing their creative abilities, knowledge, and experience through information and communication technologies.

Fourth, social networks significantly accelerate the process of interpersonal and social communication. Today, video conferencing has become an integral part of effective operations, enabling the online resolution of interstate and international issues, the training of citizens and employees, and many other vital tasks.

Thus, in today's increasingly information-driven society, political parties must continuously refine their technologies for engagement through social networks. In this regard, the following methods are particularly significant:

1. **Expanding coverage** of the activities of party leaders and primary organizations through their websites, providing analytical and visual data;
2. **Fully implementing the online appeal system**, providing detailed responses to information requested by citizens regarding party activities;
3. **Establishing close ties and cooperation with bloggers** to promote the party's activities;
4. **Providing online debates, electronic surveys, and promotional videos** related to party activities to the population during election campaigns;
5. **Presenting interesting information** on websites and social networks not only about the party's own activities but also about the operations of analogous political parties in developed countries;
6. **Studying the social media experience of leading global political parties** and broadly applying it to the activities of parties in Uzbekistan;
7. **Developing party anthems** (a well-prepared anthem with professional lyrics, music, and video sequences serves to broaden the party's recognition among the population).

As evident from the above, modern means of communication significantly influence the improvement of information flows and the transformation of the information landscape as a whole. Political parties, as subjects of socio-political relations, cannot remain outside these processes. At the same time, the results of information efforts directly depend on the parties' alignment with modern trends and challenges. Foreign experience also demonstrates the strengthening role of Internet resources and social networks in expanding the social base of political parties.

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