

# WEBSITE CAMPAIGNING IN THE 2014 TAIWAN ELECTION

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## ABSTRACT

*This study adopted content analysis to examine the campaign websites of the 2014 Taiwan election. It investigated four features of online political campaign: informational content, mobilization, interactivity, and personalization. It also compared the strength and weakness of the use of online campaign between the incumbent and the challenger. The finding suggested that there were differences in the constructs of informational content, interactivity, and personalization between candidates. The result indicated that both the incumbent and the challenges were less likely to engage in mobilization on their websites. In general, results of this study revealed that the content presentation of the incumbent's campaign website showed an advantage over the challenger's website.*

*Key words: Campaign website; the 2014 Taiwan election; content analysis; incumbent/ challenger; new media*

## INTRODUCTION

Technological innovation in communication makes new social media a pervasive and important channel for citizens to receive information, learn knowledge, and communicate with others. It not only changes the Audience's behavior in the use of media, but creates a border-transcending platform for political parties and political actors to promote ideals and policies, engage voters, and mobilize supporters (Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2015). Different from traditional media, the features of real-time communication, interactivities, richness and diversity make social media an important electoral tool "adopted by an increasing range of political actor worldwide since it was used by Bill Clinton and Al Gore during the 1992 US presidential election" (Baxter, Marcella, and Varfis, 2011, p. 464).

According to Ponder and Haridakis (2015), people interested in understanding politics and acquiring information relevant to politics have a variety of choices of media sources in the

contemporary new media environment. Traditional medium is not the only channel that provides people with information, news, and knowledge. The rise of Internet and its availability make the Internet an important source for people to obtain information relevant to political candidates, political campaign, and political issues. Wang (2010) further contended that apart from television and newspaper, the Internet has become the most important source of political campaign. In recent decades, an increasing number of political parties and candidates across the globe use websites, Facebook, blogs, and twitter as their important campaign tools to effectively and quickly transmit campaign information, candidates' movement, political views, event mobilization and donation to voters, and further to shape the image of candidates, promoting ideal and electoral policies for garnering support from the voters and winning the campaign.

Shui-Bian Chen, the former president of Taiwan and former Taipei mayor, opened the development of Internet campaign history in Taiwan through establishing "City Information BBS" while he ran for the 1994 Taipei mayor election (Zheng, 2004). Since then, most political candidates in Taiwan establish campaign websites, Facebook, or twitter in an attempt to make use of the new media' rich and diverse characteristics to achieve different campaign objectives (Wang, 2011). Notably, the number of the establishment of campaign websites dramatically increased from its first use in the 1995 Taiwan legislator's election to the 2005 Taiwan county mayor election. This trend makes campaign website an indispensable electoral tool in Taiwan's political elections.

This study examined and compared two candidates' campaign websites of the Taiwan 2014 Greater Tainan City mayor election. This study adopted content analysis method, constructing four constructs: (1) information content, (2) interactivity, (3) mobilization, and (4) personalization to analyze and compare the presence of the content of these two candidates' campaign websites. Additionally, previous studies found that incumbents tended to be less likely to "engage in online campaign" (Gulati and Williams, 2007, p. 446). This study, consequently, aimed to investigate whether the incumbent is less likely to make use of the rich and diverse feature of new media in the campaign website.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *A. Features of the Internet and Functionalities of Campaign Websites*

The Internet has certain unique features which traditional media do not have. These features include transcending the barrier of space, low cost, direct access to the electorate, and diverse and abundant convergence of information. This not only has enabled the Internet to serve as a platform for all industries to do promotion and marketing, but makes it an important channel for diverse audiences to obtain information. For the past two decades, it has also become one of the best strategic campaigning platforms utilized by politicians to establish their public image and promote ideals. Peng (2007) emphasized that the advent of the Internet has turned the past campaign

broadcast method from a unilateral promotional activity where "one speaks and the crowd listens" into a progressive and interactive mode of discussion and mutual understanding. Through the design of the website, the candidate can publish instant messages and campaign information, announce election policies, organize and mobilize events, and interact with the voters. The voters can also use the website to learn more about the activities and policies of the candidate, as well as proactively provide suggestions or feedbacks. Poster (1999) listed the four features of the internet: (1) Possibility for multi-party discussions; (2) Simultaneous reception, interchange and redistribution of cultural content; (3) transmission across borders; and (4) Real-time global interaction makes the society we live in become an information society using the Internet as its foundation (as cited in Wang, 2003). The disparate features of the Internet enable political figures, especially election candidates, to enhance the diversity of their planned campaign strategies. Since the Internet is not restricted by age, group, space, and specific issues, when using the Internet as the new medium for campaign strategies, candidates can overcome the limitations of past traditional media. In his study of online campaign during the 1998 Taiwan three-in-one election, Chuang (2000) pointed out the eight main advantages of Internet campaigning: high level of participation, in-depth level of information, highly cost-effectiveness, high level of motivation, repeated exposure, long-lasting, wide coverage, and wide-spread locality. Thus, the importance and necessity of campaign websites for elections are undeniable.

Davis (1999) stated six major functions of campaign websites in his book on Internet politics. These include shaping the images of candidates, message transmission, setting a benchmark for opinions, strengthening the conviction of voters' choice and mobilizing them, recruiting volunteers and soliciting donations, and stimulating interactions (as cited in Hong, 2010). As an invaluable tool for election campaigning, the advantages of campaign websites are mainly to gain donations, the abundance of resources, low cost, wide transmission for electronic newspapers, and easy to contact with voters (Ireland & Nash, 2001).

Ever since 1992 when the Internet was used as a communications tool for the first time in the US presidential elections and when it was formally adopted in 1994 for US local elections (Hong, 2010), due to the fact that the Internet has the above-mentioned functionalities and advantages which traditional mediums do not have, and through the design of the campaign websites' content and functions, it can rapidly shape the profiles of the candidates and highlight the strong points of the candidates. Furthermore, during the short election campaign period, it can effectively update campaign information, publish instant messages, mobilize and organize activities, and even solicit for online donations. These advantages and functions not only highlight how indispensable the Internet is during campaigns, it also demonstrate the reasons behind why the Internet is so widely used by domestic and overseas political figures for elections.

### ***B. Research Relevant to Campaign Website***

The pervasiveness and significance of campaign website have drawn much attention of

academic from the field of political communication. While some explore factors impacting the presence of website (Standberg, 2009), others investigate and compare the content of campaign websites among different countries, parties, or political actors (Gulati and Williams, 2007; Kruikemeier, Aparaschivei, Boomgaarden, Noort, and Vliegenthart, 2015; Zheng, 2004).

Strandberg (2009), exploring candidates' campaign website during the 2003 parliamentary election, found that the presence of Finnish's major parties' websites is dramatically higher than their minor parties. Moreover, candidates with competitiveness used the websites at a higher rate than candidates with little competitiveness. The results suggested that the size of party and candidate's competitiveness are factors influencing Finnish's parliamentary candidates' website presence. Furthermore, the results found that the candidates' websites primarily were used to provide information and network via hyperlinks, interactivities and voter participation were seldom used by candidates.

In a study that used informational content, involvement and engagement, mobilization, and interactivity to analyze and compare the content of the campaign websites of the US Senate and House candidates during the 2006 Congress election, Gulati and Williams (2007) found that the information content and feature of websites between Senate and House have become standardized, but that the campaign websites of Senate "are more sophisticated technologically" (p.443). It is important to note that the result revealed that 98% of Senate candidate's website posted information about candidates' position on electoral issues. In terms of involvement of engagement, the results indicated that there were significant differences in online donation between major- and minor- party candidates of Senate and House. 94% of the major-party Senate candidates had online donation while only 47% of the minor-party Senate candidates provided online donation. As to the House candidates' campaign websites, the percentages of the major- and minor-party candidates that provided online donation were 83% and 38% respectively. In the area of mobilization, this study found that although online volunteer sign-up form was the most prevalent tool provided by candidates, there were dramatic differences between major- and minor-party candidates. 90% of the major-party Senate candidates mobilized voters via online volunteer while only 27% of the minor-party Senate candidates provided online volunteer form. The percentages of the major- and minor-party House candidates that provided online volunteer were 81% and 17% respectively. Regarding interactivity, results demonstrated that "features and functionality that allow citizens to coproduce content and interact in two-way communication are not being adopted widely" (Gulati and Williams, 2007, p.443). Gulati and Williams (2007) suggested that time-consuming, difficult to control the nature and tone of conversation may be the reasons that online interaction was little used by candidates.

Baxter, Marcella, and Varfis (2011) explored Scotland's parties and candidates' campaign website during the 2010 UK general election through the categories of information provision, communication and interactivity, membership and donations, audiovisual features, and other

interactive features, finding that both the campaign websites of parties and candidates engaged in information provision, online donation, and the recruitment of volunteers and members. Moreover, results indicated although majority of parties and candidates used campaign websites, but most of them conducted one-way communication. This finding echoes Gulati and Williams' (2007) research, suggesting that the functionality of interactivity on websites was not prevalent adopted by candidates in their online campaign.

More recently, Kruikemeier, Aparaschivei, Boomgaarden, Noort, and Vliegenthart (2015) examined party and candidate website of Germany, Romania, Hungary, The Netherlands, and Great Britain from the constructs of mobilization, interactivity, and personalization, finding that "differences in party and source characteristics explain variation in levels of mobilization, interactivity, and personalization" (p. 2). In general, the results indicated that party's websites inclined to mobilize voters while candidates' website was adopted to do candidates' self-promotion. Importantly, there were no significant differences in interactivity and personalization between Eastern Europe and Western Europe. But, the results revealed that the functionality of mobilization on Western European countries' website was higher than Eastern European countries. Moreover, the results indicated that candidates' website have more interactivity functions than parties' websites; whereas oppositional parties have more interactivity functions on their website that ruling party. Furthermore, oppositional parties used more personalization functions than ruling party.

In Taiwan, research in this area began with a study conducted by Zheng and Chuang (1996), in which they analyzed the online campaign in the 1994 Taipei Mayor election. Since then, many scholars in Taiwan are devoted to studying the issues relevant to online campaign. One of the most influential research conducted by Zheng (2004), exploring candidates' campaign website during the 2000 Taiwan presidential election through examining the constructs of friendliness, interactivity, information, and instrument, found that there were difference in presence of website's content between three presidential candidates. Among them, Chen's website was more abundant in the content than his rivals, Len and Song. Len's website was more focus on visual effect, but lacked creativity. In contrast, Song's website used too many words and had poor visual effect.

Furthermore, in his study of investigating candidates' campaign websites in the 2005 Taiwan county mayor election, Chuang (2009) found that the number of candidates' websites increased and the use of websites was more prevalent than before. But, most of candidates' websites appeared to lack appropriate online-marketing strategies and proactive promotion. Additionally, the candidates didn't update their website content periodically.

## **METHOD**

### ***A. Content Analysis***

Adopting content analysis, the Greater Tainan Mayor candidates' campaign websites of the

2014 Taiwan election were examined. Data were collected from two candidates' campaign websites: (1) the incumbent mayor Lai Ching-Te's Website and (2) the challenger Huang Hsiu-Shuang's Website.

### ***B. The Unit of Analysis***

Candidates website's pages are the unit of analysis. Therefore, two candidates' website pages were collected and downloaded from November 1, 2014 to November 28, 2014, the day before election, for coding and analysis.

### ***C. The Construction of Categories***

Based on incorporating domains or areas of campaign websites constructed by three studies – Zheng's (2004) study of the 2000 Taiwan president election, Gulati and Williams's (2007) research of the 2006 US congress election, and Kruikeimeier et al's. (2015) exploration of party and candidate website among Western- and Eastern- European countries, four main constructs including informational content, interactivity, mobilization, and personalization were established for analysis in this current study. These four constructs with diverse categories were briefly described as below.

#### ***1). Informational Content***

Integrating Zheng(2004) and Gulati and Williams's (2009) studies, categories of the construct of informational content include the introduction of candidate, news provision, campaign news, email address provision, campaign schedule, campaign political views, and candidate's position on issues and news.

#### ***2). Mobilization***

The ultimate goal of campaigning is to garner supporter's committeemen and to win the election. Gulati & Williams (2007) suggested that "transforming those committed supporters into activists or advocates for the campaign is what may be needed to carry the candidate to victory" (p. 455). Thus, the construct of mobilization primarily focused on tools that have the functionalities of mobilizing voters, expressing support, and influencing supporters to convince other to support the candidate. Integrating the studies of Gulati and Williams (2007) and Kruikeimeier et al. (2015), categories under the construct of mobilization consisted of online volunteer recruitment, downloadable materials, tell a friend, online voting, online donation, online member recruitment, registrations for activity participation and foreign language content.

#### ***3). Interactivity***

Kruikeimeier et al. (2015) pointed out that "although there although there is no consensus on the conceptualization of interactivity, scholars do agree that interactivity is a multidimensional construct" (p. 11). Two-communication is a dimension that scholar from different fields will mention while discussing or elaborating the dimensions of interactivity (Kruikeimeier et al., 2015). Gulati and Williams (2007) define interactivity as the possibility of direct interacting with candidates. Based on the above discussion, the construct of interactivity primarily focused on tools

that enable users to proactively engage with activities and enable candidates and users, users and websites, users and users to connect and communicate. Consequently, integrating the studies of Gulati and Williams (2007), Zheng (2004), and Kruikemeier et al. (2015), categories of the construct of interactivity included message/comment board, real-time chatting room, links to social media, invitations to respond to a post, contact link or contact information, and registrations for activity participation.

#### 4). *Personalization*

Kruikemeier et al. (2013) demonstrated that the features of the Internet and social media offer politician a great opportunity to profile themselves personally. Kruikemeier et al. (2015) further argued that politician's personal competence, characteristics and private life gradually attract voter's attention and interest. I applied each of Kruikemeier et al.'s (2015) categories under the construct of personalization to this study: candidate's pictures, pictures of candidate's family and friends, hyperlinks to the candidate, and textural reference to the candidate.

The four main constructs with categories were summarized as Table 1.

Table 1. Four constructs and their categories

Constructs	Categories
<b>Informational Context</b>	introduction of candidate; news provision, campaign news; email address provision; campaign schedule; campaign political views; candidate's position on issues and news
<b>Mobilization</b>	online volunteer recruitment; downloadable materials; tell a friend; online voting; online donation; online member recruitment; registrations of activity participation; foreign language content
<b>Interactivity</b>	message/comment board; real-time chat room; links to social media; invitations to respond to a post; contact link or contact information; registrations for activity participation
<b>Personalization</b>	candidate's pictures; pictures of candidate's family and friends; hyperlinks to the candidate; textural reference to the candidate

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study examined the campaign websites of the 2014 Tainan City mayor election candidates, Lai Ching-Te and Huang Hsiu-Shuang, from four constructs including informational content, mobilization, interactivity, personalization. The presentation and differences in the website contents between two candidates were analyzed and discussed below:

### A. *Informational Content*

The categories of the informational content includes introduction of the candidate, news, campaign news, email account, event schedule, campaign political views, and stance on

election-related issues.

### **1). *Lai Ching-Te's Website***

On the homepage menu of Lai's campaign website, there is a live news function which provides daily real-time news as well as election related news. Related event schedules can be found on the drop-down menu of the news to provide the time and place of campaigns or rally events. Campaign political views are also found on the homepage campaign political view menu. Lai's election political views are clearly categorized. The content covers the development plan for the Greater Tainan area to specific development plans for infrastructures of the various regions. However, the candidate's introduction, email address, and the stances of the candidate on campaign related issues are not provided on the website.

### **2). *Huang Hsiu-Shuang's Website***

The introduction of the candidate can be found under "About Hsiu-Shuang" from the menu on the campaign website homepage. It includes photos of Huang as well as Huang's education and work experience. The official announcement menu on the homepage shows the latest announcements and news reports. Election news is mainly divided into "Public Political Viewpoints" and "Public Speeches". Campaign political views are found under "City Government Blueprints" from the menu on the homepage. The white paper on political stances is mainly on social benefits, economy and transportation, culture and healthcare, security, flood control and environment management. However, Huang's campaign website does not provide her email address nor any information on the candidate's stance on election related issues, the website also does not provide event schedules.

### **3). *Comparison of the Two Websites***

Overall, Lai's campaign website provides better content and presentation of political views than Huang's extensive and summarized content form. Lai's campaign website provides clear and detailed content on announcements of event schedules. When compared to Huang's website which does not have this function, Lai's has a better campaign advantage. Each candidate has their own unique features on providing the latest daily news as well as campaign-related news. For example, Huang's website classifies and archives the daily news reports and also archive the news by month; these are categorized under "News Reports", "Latest News", "Public Political Viewpoints", and "Public Speeches". Both parties did not provide their email address or information regarding their stance on campaign-related issues on their campaign website.

## **B. Mobilization**

This construct includes recruitment of volunteers, downloads, tell to friends, online voting, online fundraising, recruitment of online members, registration for participation in activities, foreign language content.

### **1). *Lai Ching-Te's Website***

For mobilization, apart from the online fundraising function, other functions do not appear on

Lai's website. For the online fundraising function of Lai's website, the information provided includes name of bank, account number and name of account holder. Notably, early on in October 2014, the objective of raising NT\$10 million of funds had already been achieved. Therefore, on the function interface this notification message appears, "The fundraising account is closed as the amount has already reached NT\$10 million, thank you for your support".

### 2). *Huang Hsiu-Shuang's Website*

Similarly for Huang's website, for mobilization, only the online fundraising function is provided; the information includes a post office remittance account number and the name of account holder.

### 3). *Comparison of the Two Websites*

Both candidates appear to be indifferent to the mobilization aspect of their websites. As mentioned earlier, transforming the promises of the supporters to actions is one of the key tenets to winning the campaign. The fact that both candidates did not pay particular attention to the mobilization aspect of their websites is something worth exploring.

## **C. Interactivity**

The interactivity construct includes message boards, real-time chat rooms, invitation to respond to posts, links to social media, contact link/contact information, and registrations for activity participation

### 1). *Lai Ching-Te's Website*

Lai's campaign website provides contact numbers and address as a communication channel for the voters to voice their opinions. At the same time, Lai's official campaign website also provides his official Facebook fan page link. However, there are no message board or chat room functions, nor is there a registration for event participation function.

### 2). *Huang Hsiu-Shuang's Website*

On Huang's website, under each article or piece of information is the comment function for the voters to respond to the content. But this is limited to just interaction between the user and the website system; other users are not able to use this function to see other users' comments or responses. The website also provides contact numbers and address; voters' opinions or suggestions for the government can be made through these channels. In addition, there is a drop-down menu on the homepage, which includes "Comments of the Online Users" as a platform for voters to voice their opinions. Furthermore, Huang's campaign website homepage also provides a hyperlink to the official Facebook page. But the website does not provide a real-time chat room or the registration for events function.

### 3). *Comparison of the Two Websites*

Overall, it can be seen that both parties provided contact details and a means of communication for the voters. But Huang's campaign website is clearly far superior to Lai's in the voter's comment

function which was provided. Apart from the provided contact information, voters can use the "Comments of the Online Users" and the comment function under each article to communicate with the candidate and voice their opinions. But even so, there was no obvious interactive function directly between the candidate and online users; with the advent of interactive communications technology today, this is a shortcoming of the interaction aspect which is evident on both websites.

#### ***D. Personalization***

The personalization includes photographs of the political candidates, photographs of the political candidates' friends and family, hyperlinks to the candidate, and textual reference to the candidate.

##### *1). Lai Ching-Te's Website*

On the personalization of politics aspect, Lai's website includes results from implemented policies, related reports, as well as a video on an interview of Lai under the video selection from the menu. The statistical data of polls from Lai's campaign website and the hyperlink to the Tainan City Government is provided on the implemented policies menu. Through the link function, voters are able to gain sufficient information and understanding of Lai's achievements in policy implementation and level of satisfaction on the policies implemented. However, apart from Lai's official photo, there are almost no photos on friends and family.

##### *2). Huang Hsiu-Shuang's Website*

On Huang's website, pertinent to the "About Hsiu-Shuang" and "Official Announcements" portions found under the homepage menu, there are many photographs of Huang and events provided, but no particular focus on photographs of friends and family. Furthermore, the website also provides a link to Huang's official Facebook page. Relevant articles on the political candidate are presented in the news reports section under "Official Announcement" of the homepage menu. But apart from the link to the Facebook page, hyperlinks to other content related to the candidate are not present.

##### *3). Comparison of the Two Websites*

There is significant difference present in the respective websites of the candidates in the category of personalization of politics. Lai presents his abilities and unique characteristics through presentation of policy implementation achievements, related reports, and videos under the menu selections. His political achievements, personal image and leadership charisma are fully showcased. In comparison, competitor Huang only uses personal and event photographs which are not enough to showcase her characteristics and charisma to the voters.

From an overall perspective, Huang's campaign website is lacking in the event schedule function in the information content category. Even though Lai's campaign website does not provide campaign website email address, voters are still able to access Lai's email address through the hyperlink to the city government website. Therefore, Lai's campaign website is slightly more superior than Huang's website in the presentation of information content. Moreover, in the aspect on

personalization of politics, Huang's campaign website provides personal photographs of Huang as well as event pictures and related articles on the candidate. However, when compared to Lai's campaign website which provides policy implementation achievements, related news reports, interview video, as well as a hyperlink to the Tainan City Government, Lai's website provides more information on more diverse subjects and it achieves the objective of showcasing Lai's credibility and personal charisma. In this particular aspect, Lai's website is significantly superior to Huang's website in the contents provided. In the interaction category, although neither candidate's website has the chat room function, Huang's campaign website offered the comment function under each article. The homepage also offers the menu selection of "Comments of the Online Users". In comparison to the lack of function on Lai's website, Huang's campaign website is significantly better than Lai's in the interaction category. Finally, both parties do not have sufficient presentation of the mobilization aspect, and are equally lacking in this respect.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study adopted the content analysis, using the four major constructs of information content, mobilization, interaction, and personalization to analyze and compare the campaign websites of the Greater Tainan City mayor candidates Lai Ching-Te and Huang Hsiu-Shuang during the 2014 Taiwan elections. Furthermore, study compared strengths and weaknesses in the utilization of the campaign websites by the challenger and the incumbent based on the research results from the four constructs.

### *A. Content Presentation and Differences of the Campaign Websites*

From an overall perspective, apart from the mobilization aspect, both parties' websites performed differently in the other three aspects. But both had been able to use the advent of media technology and convergence trends in their respective websites to achieve the objectives of their campaign strategies. For the informational content construct, both parties showed their own unique features in the presentation of real-time news and campaign news. They also placed an emphasis on contents regarding political viewpoints. Unfortunately, neither party provided their stance on related issues on their campaign website; this differs significantly from Gulati and Williams (2007) results from their study on the 2006 US congressional elections. According to the research of Gulati and Williams (2007) on the aspect of informational content presentation, the candidate's stance on issues is most commonly found on the campaign websites of the House of Representative candidates. It is possible that cultural differences between the US and Taiwan as well as the difference of campaign levels contributed to the completely different research results.

Furthermore, the parties exhibit significant differences in the presentation of the interaction content. The campaign website of the incumbent Lai Ching-Te did not provide any functions for the voters to comment on articles directly on the website or express their opinions. In contrast, his

competitor Huang Hsiu-Shuang's campaign website provided different platforms for the online users to express their opinions. Worth mentioning is the fact that both parties' websites did not provide a real-time chat room or a direct interaction interface between the voters and the candidate. This is clearly lacking and insufficient for new media which emphasize on interactive functions. This particular research result corresponds with those of the research of Gulati and Williams (2007). Even if the candidate is able to provide clarification on issues or establish their personal image through instant interaction, but as an individual, for the candidate to respond to the masses would be very time-consuming. Also, if they are not able to communicate clearly and accurately and cause misunderstandings or even lose control of the situation, it puts the candidate at a disadvantage for the campaign.

On the presentation of the personalization, the research results show that the campaign website of the current incumbent Lai incorporated policy implementation results, relevant news reports, and personal interview videos. All of these placed emphasis on Lai's political achievements in the last four years and it highlights Lai's characteristics such as his abilities and leadership charisma to successfully create an outstanding image for Lai. Huang's campaign website, in contrast, was at a disadvantage regarding the presentation of this particular aspect. The analysis results obtained by Kruikemeier et al. (2015) on the comparison of campaign websites of candidates from political parties of five European countries show that the larger the political party, the more significant the level of presentation for personalization of the candidates. If we go from the perspective of the size of the political parties, the results obtained in this research present the inverse. But the research of Kruikemeier et al. (2015) had a larger sample size which was also more diverse, while this research is more of a case study. Even so, if the level of approval rate for the incumbent is high and there are significant political achievements, this type of presentation for personalization of politics is generally more advantageous.

Finally, the results show that on the campaign websites of both candidates, there is not much work evident for the mobilization aspect. This result may be due to the significant difference shown in the poll conducted before the election. Also, it is possible that the parties of both candidates had already used other channels and mediums for mobilization. A notable point is that on Lai's campaign website, the online fundraising function was closed due to the fact that the fundraising objective of NT\$ 10 million had already been achieved. It also expressed gratitude to the different sectors for providing support. This study believes that through this action, Lai's image of honesty, corruption-free, and caring for the people had become more effective in reaching out to the public.

### ***B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Competitor and the Incumbent***

Out of the four major aspects, the incumbent Lai's campaign website content showed a clear advantage over his competitor Huang's campaign website in the constructs of informational content and personalization. Huang's campaign website showed an advantage over the incumbent Lai's campaign website in the interactivity aspect. There was an insufficient presentation of mobilization

in the websites of both parties, with no clear advantage or disadvantage for either website. In conclusion, from an overall viewpoint, the content presentation of Lai's campaign website showed an advantage over Huang's website. In other words, the incumbent performed better in the website campaign than his competitor. The research results differ from past studies. Apart from the information on the incumbent and the advantages of his political achievements, the fact that the poll conducted before the election showed that Lai was significantly in the lead when compared to Huang was a key contributor to the research results.

### ***C. Suggestions for Future Research***

- 1). Future research on candidate's campaign websites can be expanded to include the analysis and comparison of the campaign websites of the candidates from other regions. Research could also be done through examining different elections.
- 2). Future research can include differences of political parties and regions as variables for comparison.
- 3). Different constructs can be established from different aspects for the analysis and comparison of the candidates' websites in future studies.
- 4). The content analysis method can be used for analysis and comparison of the candidates' campaign website and other new media, such as Facebook or blogs.

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