Political Parties and Political Marketing 'Strategies'

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Full Paper

Track: Retail and Marketing

February 2009

Word Count: 5049

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Abstract

This conceptual paper focuses on political marketing '*strategies*' in the context of major British political parties. There is consideration of the underlying drivers that are encouraging the adoption of the political marketing approach. It is debated whether political parties actually have political marketing 'strategies'. The difference between political marketing and political campaign strategy is explored. There is also consideration of the impact of human and financial resource limitations with respect to political parties' use of political marketing 'strategies'. It is argued that there is a need for clear strategic leadership when introducing political marketing.

Keywords: politics, marketing, strategy.

Introduction

There has been a substantial literature that asserts that marketing can be applied to politics and political parties (e.g Bowler and Farrell, 1992; Lees-Marshment, 2001; 2004; Maarek, 1995; Newman, 1994; Newman and Sheth, 1985; 1987; O'Shaughnessy, 1990; O'Shaughnessy and Henneberg, 2002). Research into political marketing of a conceptual and empirical (quantitative and qualitative) standpoint has emerged into four main tracks; (i) studies of the impact of political marketing in terms of electoral choice and opinion (e.g Ben-Ur and Newman, 2002; Cwalina et al, 2004; Newman, 1985; 1987; O'Cass, 2002; Reeves and de Chernatony, 2003); (ii) studies of political marketing communication techniques and impacts (e.g Dermody and Hanmer-Lloyd, 2005; Harris et al, 2006); (iii) public policy implications and critical discourse in relation to the use of political marketing practices (Banker, 1992; O'Shaughnessy, 1990; Scammell, 1995), and; (iv) the use of political marketing strategies internally within political parties (O'Cass, 2001a; Reeves, 2007; Wring, 1997). The research tends to draw from a wide variety of literature to build theory. Whilst the principal literary emphasis of such research is marketing and politics, literature is also commonly used from management theory, economics, psychology etc. Moreover, the research base is becoming increasingly international with contributions from scholars around the globe (e.g Lilleker and Lees-Marshment, 2005; Chapman and Luck, 2003; Falkowski, and Cwalina, 2004; O'Cass, 2001a; 2001b; Schneider, 2004; Yannas, 2005).

Despite the ever growing literature in political marketing, there are fundamental conceptual considerations which remain somewhat under-researched. Whilst in Baines and Lynch (2005) and Lynch et al (2006) there are valuable contributions in relation to the duality of political marketing and strategic management, there remains much to do in relation to this merged conceptual framework. This researcher believes that political marketers need to give greater consideration at a conceptual level, in relation to what political marketing '*strategy*' means, from the perspective of political parties. Researchers cannot just assume that political parties utilise political marketing strategies without understanding the framework conditions behind its use. Moreover, there should be clear consideration on rigorous definitional bases, as to whether or not political parties do have political marketing '*strategies*'. Only when political marketing '*strategy*' is accurately conceptualised, can research determine the challenges that political parties may face when implementing political marketing strategies in terms of resourcing issues, and the approach required for strategic leadership of a political marketing programme. This paper attempts to address at a conceptual level, these fundamental questions.

<u>Structure of the Paper</u>

The paper comprises six main sections. The first section considers what factors are driving a political marketing approach in British politics. The second section debates whether political parties have political marketing '*strategies*'. The third section considers the conceptual differences between modern political marketing strategy and more traditional campaigning strategy. In the fourth section, there is consideration of human and financial resource limitations when political parties adopt political marketing strategies. In light of these resource limitations, the paper argues in the fifth section that there is a need for clear and appropriate strategic leadership when a

political party utilises political marketing. The paper then draws to a close by offering conclusions.

The arguments in this paper are predominately grounded in the context of major U.K based political parties, although the comments which are made, may have theoretical and practical relevance to other political parties in other countries, when context specific factors have been considered.

1. What is Encouraging the Political Marketing Approach in Britain?

There needs to be some debate as to who or what are the principal drivers of the political marketing approach. It can be articulated that the academic political marketers are the main individuals who are advocating a political marketing approach to explain contemporary politics. It is political marketing academics that pursue the idea most vehemently, using it as an explanatory framework for politics, and advocating its greater expansion into the political practice domain. The reasons for this are essentially two possibilities. The first is that they view political marketing as a force for good, which aims to hold political actors to account in terms of more adequately meeting the needs of voters. Hence it is a catalyst for greater democratisation within civil societies; a view that this researcher holds. A second more cynical interpretation is that political marketing is another means by which the powerful force of marketing can broader its grip over societal functioning.

It could be argued that academic political marketers are either consciously or sub-consciously pursuing a vision of society which is influenced by the neo-liberal economic agenda that permeated British society since the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979; and arguably persists to the present day. In these terms, academics' thought processes and theorising is contingent upon, to some extent, the political 'ideological' paradigm of the neo-liberal political-economic macro-framework of the last three decades.

It can be asserted that the electorate who reside in a marketing dominated world are willing to accept, or perhaps even 'expect' politics to be conducted from a marketing perspective. This is because they are in a brand driven society, where they are continually exposed to marketing messages (Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan 2006), and thus it can be asserted that the ways in which they make choices about their commercial consumption behaviour may replicate itself sub-consciously into their political choices (Newman and Sheth, 1985; 1987; Reeves and de Chernatony, 2003; Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan; 2006). This therefore encourages political parties to adopt (at least in theory) political marketing approaches.

It can be argued that the media is the catalyst through which a marketing driven society is encouraged, given that so much entertainment media is driven by the idea of consumerism, image and celebrity. This therefore exacerbates the underlying framework conditions for a political marketing perspective. It should however be recognised that the media operates within a broader political-economic context, and thus itself is conditioned by the neo-liberal economic policies of successive governments over the last 30 years. It should however be noted that the news media tends historically to be more critical of the political marketing idea; comparing it to

negativities such as spin and media management[1]. It can be suggested that the level of media criticality with respect to political marketing issues seems to be reducing somewhat in recent times.

It is sometimes asserted that political marketing in Britain has resulted from the importation of U.S electoral techniques into British politics. This is over-stated, as the scholarly evidence suggests that British politics has not become overly influenced by American campaign practices (Baines, Scheucher and Plasser, 2001), as there is a distinct 'school' of U.K political marketing.

There is a certain degree of irony that despite the reasons advanced in this section in relation to the drivers behind political marketing in Britain, it is not immediately clear to the observer whether political parties do, in actual fact, have political marketing 'strategies'. This idea will be explored further in the next section.

2. Do Political Parties in Britain Have Political Marketing 'Strategies'?

Despite political marketing academics' conceptualisations of politics from such a standpoint, it however remains somewhat contestable whether major political parties have political marketing strategies. Despite this there has been some literature that has highlighted the interfaces between strategy, marketing and politics (Baines and Lynch, 2005; Butler and Collins, 1996; Lynch et al, 2006). It can be asserted that there is limited available evidence of political parties having detailed political marketing plans (at central party level[2]) which set out a long term direction for their organisation directly from the political marketing perspective and vocabulary. This is a statement that cannot be expressed with absolute certainty, as if such documents did exist, it is questionable whether they would be in the public domain and / or be available to researchers. Baines, Harris and Lewis (2002) conducted qualitative interviews inside political parties in Britain on the 'political marketing planning process', but they did not seem to find any direct evidence that political marketing plans were in existence. Rather, they presented a useful model of how a political party might develop a political marketing plan with particular emphasis on the targeting of specific electoral constituencies.

Mintzberg (1977) asserts that formal plans do not determine whether an organisation has a strategy or otherwise. Quinn (1978) argues that strategies do not need to be in one written document, as strategies can to some extent be "fragmented, evolutionary, and largely intuitive… which tend to evolve, as internal decisions and external events flow together to create a new widely shared consensus" (Quinn, 1978, p. 7). Mintzberg (1977) suggests that strategy should be defined in general terms as a: "pattern in a stream of decisions... [and]when a series of decisions related to some aspect of an organisation exhibits some consistency over time" (Mintzberg, 1977, p. 28) (a position which is also adopted in Narayanan and Fahey's (1982) influential paper). In these terms, political parties adopting a political marketing orientation would not necessarily have a formal plan. Thus as long as there has been within a

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[1] Moloney (2001) provides a useful conceptual discussion of 'spin' in the context of politics and political parties.
[2] In this paper, political marketing plans are viewed in terms of an overall strategic plan for the entire party organisation. It is not focused on political marketing plans which may, or may not, exist at lower scales within the organisation, or for specific interest groups within a party.

political party a series of decisions that point to a political marketing ethos, then it can be asserted that political parties are utilising a political marketing strategy. This is where matters however become slightly more intellectually challenging, as there is actually limited evidence that political parties utilise the vocabulary of political marketing on a regular basis. This could be an inherent weakness of political marketing academics' arguments in that critics could assert that there is very limited evidence that political parties are actually utilising political marketing strategies. However, more recently the Conservative Party, under the leadership of David Cameron, have become more clear that they are adopting a political [brand] marketing approach (Charter, 2005); with the term 'brand' in ever common usage. Where political marketing strategies have not been so well discernible, recent research has shown that political party actors are willing to acknowledge that they utilise political marketing strategies, although this tends to be conflated with notions of political campaigning (Reeves, 2007). Thus whilst strategies may be 'intended' in that they are 'formulated' before a 'conscious' decision is made (Mintzberg, 1977); as is arguably the case in the Conservative's branding strategy, they can also be 'formed' as 'patterns' of "decisions converge into a strategy" (Mintzberg, 1977, p. 29). It can be said that the latter is typically truer of how political marketing strategies 'emerge' inside political parties. This has led Baines and Lynch (2005) to suggest that political parties tend to follow the principles of 'emergent' strategy development (See Mintzberg and Waters, 1985) with respect to political marketing.

It can be argued that political parties are gradually realising that the campaigning approach needs to be to a greater extent influenced by marketing, but this is comparatively new territory for them, so change is slow and incremental (Quinn, 1978). It can be asserted that political marketing strategy can only influence (rather than replace) campaign strategy, as campaigning is so engrained in the organisational culture of political parties. It is the case that it would be near impossible (at least at present and indeed some way into the future) for the language of political marketing to replace the language of campaign strategy. However, language can have an important signalling role in terms of communicating, that over time, that there will be a change of strategy from the traditional (or 'old') strategy to a new strategy (Pettigrew, 1977). Despite this, until there is enough organisational capacity and 'will' with respect to political marketing, party strategists are perhaps sensible to, and be advised to keep the strategy 'implicit' (Mintzberg, 1977; Peattie, 1993). In the meantime, there is likely to be a tendency for political parties to conflate political marketing strategies with campaigning strategies. The next section will demonstrate that this is unfortunate as they are two separate conceptual entities.

3. The Difference Between Political Marketing Strategy and Campaign Strategy

The paper will now attempt to explain the difference between political campaigning and political marketing strategies. It can be argued that there are just semantic differences between the two phenomena, whilst alternatively it may be suggested that they are fundamentally different approaches. This debate has not been well engaged with within the political marketing literature, with the exception of Baines and Egan (2001), who have attempted to draw out the differences between political campaigning and political marketing based upon the views of U.S political consultants.

This author is of the view that political marketing and campaigning are fundamentally different phenomena. The problem in drawing a clear distinction however rests upon the fact that political campaigning has adopted the principles of marketing to the extent that political marketing and campaigning have become conflated together. It can however be asserted that campaigning is not suitable for describing contemporary politics, as it points towards what Lees-Marshment (2001) termed a 'product oriented party[3]' or alternatively a 'sales oriented party[4]. The word 'campaign' seems to imply what Baines and Egan (2001, p.28) call a 'supply side' approach to politics; which is consistent with the 'product' and 'sales' models of Lees-Marshment (2001). In other words, it is a form of politics which is ideologically driven, and one which is ill suited to contemporary society. This is because contemporary British society can be interpreted from the 'demand side' (Baines and Egan, 2001, p.28), in that the electorate are accustomed to the neo-liberal consumer society in which they exist, and thus call for a 'market oriented party' (Lees-Marshment, 2001) approach to politics[5]. It can be suggested that strategies inside political parties are essentially evolving (albeit very slowly) from the terminology of campaign strategy, to the new paradigm of political marketing strategy. This transition is important and necessary, as it can be argued that the very notion of campaigning hints towards a sales oriented or ideologically driven model of politics. This is ill-suited to the marketing driven society in which we live, whereby consumer choice is paramount, and where political parties should try to meet consumer needs, rather than 'sell' a party through persuasive communication techniques (Lees-Marshment, 2001; Reeves, 2007; Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan, 2006).

It can be argued that there are also fundamental differences between campaigning and political marketing, in that campaigning seems to imply a short term transaction approach (Baines and Egan, 2001) in terms of winning a vote in a given election campaign, whilst political marketing is concerned with the long term relationship building and satisfaction of the electorate (Bannon, 2005; Butler and Collins, 1996). Moreover, the term 'campaign' seems to be somewhat anachronistic and old fashioned. It seems also to be a term which is quite aggressive, almost militaristic, presumably reflecting the mentality that there is only one winner in an election 'battle' (Baines and Egan ,2001; Butler and Collins, 1996; Smith, 2006). This is to some extent understandable given the competitive nature of politics in Britain, but there is a danger than the political parties may be viewed not solely as campaigning against each other, but 'campaigning' to voters, rather than attempting to meet their needs in a way that political marketing suggests. There is a risk that 'campaigning' will be viewed by voters as a victory for a political party's agenda, but not necessarily a victory for their wants and needs as citizenry. It is political marketing that can only go some way to meet the needs of the electorate, whereas campaigning is more suited

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[3] A 'product oriented party' is a political party which "argues for what it …believes in. It assumes that voters will realise that its ideas are the right ones and therefore vote for them" (Lees- Marshment, 2001, p.28)

[4] A 'sales oriented party' is a political party which "focuses in selling its arguments to voters. It retains its pre-determined product design, but recognises that the supporters it desires may not automatically want it. Using marketing intelligence… the party employs the latest… communication techniques to persuade voters" (Lees-Marshment, 2001, p.29)

[5] This is where a political party "designs its behaviour to provide voter satisfaction … and uses market intelligence to identify voter demands, then designs its product to suit them" (Lees-Marshment, 2001, p.30).

to an ideologically driven 'product' or 'sales' era of politics (Lees-Marshment, 2001; Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan, 2006).

4. Political Marketing Strategies: Human and Financial Resource Limitations

One of the biggest barriers to introducing political marketing strategies more vehemently surrounds resourcing issues. The limitation and competition for resources is a theme frequently relayed in relation to strategic change initiatives inside organisations (Dale, 1972; Miller, 1997; Miller and Friesen, 1978; Pettigrew, 1977). In political parties, these resourcing issues are both financial and human resource limitations, and are both to some extent inter-connected. It is well known that political parties in the U.K face limitations in terms of resourcing. This paper does not seek to consider the public policy implications of regulations and restrictions on party financing, as this is debated well elsewhere (e.g Harris, 2002; Harris and Lock, 2005). The end result however is that political parties have finite resourcing, especially given the grand scale of their activities covering the length and breadth of the country, and covering every potential aspect of the electorate's lives. As a result of this limited financial resourcing, political parties are operating in a resource constrained environment.

When implementing political marketing strategies, it would seem, at first glance, a greater professionalization of political parties enables the framework conditions to exist for a political marketing approach to be adopted, since there are professionals within a party. This has been facilitated by a move towards what Panebianco (1988) termed the 'electoral professional' model of political party governance, whereby 'careerists' in the central party assume ever greater importance in the political party apparatus. However, whilst professional political campaigners are highly skilled and committed, they arguably do not have the skills or perhaps 'will' to implement the political marketing concept in the 'pure' way in which is advocated by political marketing academics. Therefore political marketing is operating and competing against the more readily accepted idea of campaigning. It can thus be argued that to redeploy resources away from the campaigning function to the newer idea of political marketing is inherently challenging to any political party. This is because of a number of reasons. The first is related to human resourcing, as whilst political parties have large numbers of highly valued and experienced 'campaigners' throughout the different hierarchical and geographic tiers of the party, there are very few that would admit and be willing to be 'rebadged' as political marketers. Whilst they may have indirectly built up the skills of political marketing, they would not recognise and feel comfortable (because of historical-cultural reasons) with having their campaigning title being replaced by a new notion of political marketing. However, it has to be made clear that the postulated resistance by people inside political parties to become 'political marketers' may in theory not be only a semantic objection. This is because inevitably there are likely skills limitations within the organisation with respect to political marketing. At strategic levels of the party, there may be an unwillingness for campaigners to further their skills from a political marketing perspective, as they regard themselves to be 'expert campaigners' with tried and tested models of political campaigning that deliver results for the party. This view obviously has value, as it can be asserted what would be the point of taking risks in political marketing when political campaigning has served a party so well in the past? Whilst many

campaigners have a deeply grounded commitment to the party, often taking poor salary levels and operating in a highly stressful environment, one however must critically evaluate whether such objections are always on the grounds of protecting a party's interest, or whether campaigners are a little nervous that if political marketing were to take root in their organisation, that then their power base and authority (and resultant resource allocation) would be diminished (Reeves, 2007). Thus individuals (or coalitions of individuals (Cyert and March, 1992; Eisenhardt and Zbaracki, 1992;Narayanan and Fahey, 1982)) may claim that their way is the best for the organisation, but in reality the claim made may be to protect "their personal turf and power bases" (Noble, 1999a, p. 121; 1999b; Peattie, 1993; Pettigrew, 1977). As Ansoff (1987) asserts: "resistance occurs whenever an organizational change introduces a discontinuous departure from the previous behaviour, culture and power structure" (Ansoff, 1987, p.236-237).

An alternative interpretation would be that campaigners are not sure where they could gain greater political marketing expertise. For example, most political marketers are academics and thus have limited experience in the internal dynamics of political parties. In addition, most consultancy expertise is not specifically focussed on political marketing, as marketing / strategy consultants tend to have expertise from predominately commercial or public sectors and there are broader fundamental questions as to the appropriate transferability of many such models (Dale, 1972) into the political party arena (Butler and Collins, 1996; Luck, 1969). Moreover, most of the specialist political consultancy is very much focussed on political campaigning rather than political marketing[6]. In these circumstances, it may indeed be rational for a financially resourced constrained political party not to purchase political marketing training solutions from external advisors, as the advice, training and guidance they provide may not be entirely 'fit for purpose' for the political arena, and the context of the political party in question. Moreover, even if appropriate learning opportunities with respect to political marketing could be facilitated (as is recommend more generally for any strategic change initiative (Dale, 1972), and is encouraged in the wider organisational learning literature (Argryis and Schon, 1978; Claycomb and Miller, 1999; Huber, 1991; Hult, 1996, Sinkula, 1994; Sinkula et al, 1997; Slater and Narver, 1995)), there is the added complexity of how this information could be relayed throughout the party. It would not be financially viable for significant numbers of individuals to receive formal political marketing training, and so the party would be reliant upon the 'campaigners' to cascade the political marketing information throughout the party via training events, guidance material etc. This is likely to therefore lead to a further conflation of political marketing with campaigning, as the political campaigners 'impart' either intentionally or unintentionally their political campaigning expertise onto the training materials that they provide.

It may seem that the obvious thing to do would be to employ political marketers within the party. This is where another problem arises in that most political marketers, other than a few highly specialised consultants, are academics. Whilst academics may be able to offer consultancy expertise on a part time basis, it is questionable whether

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[6] It should be noted that political consultancy advice in the U.K is fairly limited. Whilst significantly more political consultancy services are available in the U.S, the focus of this advice tends, in general, to be more focussed on political campaigning, rather than political marketing. (See Johnson (2001) for an interesting review of the type of services operated by the political campaigning industry to political parties in the U.S)

many would be willing to devote their careers full time to this. In any case, insiders within political parties may be sceptical whether academics (or indeed any other consultant) can understand the context and culture of the party organisation they would be operating in. Moreover, at present there is no real means to qualify as a political marketer, due to a lack of academic qualifications in this area. Thus there is a lack of graduates (other than those with doctorates in the area, who mostly become academics) who have the formal academic training in the area. For these reasons, it is very difficult for political parties to employ 'political marketers'. As a result the adoption and promotion of political marketing practices in political parties is severely restricted.

It should be recognised that a political party is reliant on party members who typically have limited experience of marketing, other than where individuals have experience indirectly through education or through their careers (Reeves, 2007). Political parties have traditionally developed training, guidance, support systems, and communication systems (most notably e-communication systems (Gibson and Ward, 1999)) around the idea of campaigning. There are thus in political parties a series of both formal and informal mechanisms by which campaigning specific information and training is relayed. For a [political] marketing strategy to be implemented effectively, there would need to be adequate communication and dissemination of the relevant information throughout the entire organisation (Lynch et al, 2006; Miller and Friesen, 1978; Reeves, 2007; Schlosser and McNaughton, 2007; Sterling, 2003) As a central professional party is restricted in terms of its resources, it is impossible for it to provide training opportunities widely within the party. Accordingly, if the central party were to offer political marketing training, then it would be reliant on the formal and informal networks to further cascade the political marketing information within the party. This creates a number of potential problems. First, there is a danger that the wider party would view political marketing as a centrally imposed initiative that may fuel resentment and apathy perhaps to the entire process. Second, since political marketing is likely to be a new idea, the political marketing programme may not be consistently implemented because of a lack of skills and resourcing. Third there is a danger that those individuals who do not understand political marketing may feel alienated, and believe that they cannot any longer make a full contribution to the party. Therefore the implementation of political marketing inside political parties faces a number of likely dangers because of financial and human resource limitations. As a result of such resourcing limitations, the need for effective political marketing leadership is essential.

5. The Need for Strategic Leadership In Political Marketing

The need for clear and effective leadership is frequently relayed in the management (e.g Hrebiniak, 2006; Miller, 1997; Noble, 1999a), and marketing literature (e.g Ind, 2001, Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2003a; 2003b; 2005). More specifically, Lynch et al (2006) introduces a debate into the need for leadership in political marketing. Therefore it follows that that there is a need for clear strategic leadership if political parties wish to significantly further their use of political marketing strategies. It can be asserted that this leadership should come from the party leader and other senior elected politicians in order to ensure that a political marketing strategy has legitimacy inside the party, and in the public arena. By democratically elected political party leaders being seen to support a political marketing strategy, they are making it clear

that this is the direction that the organisation will take. In other words, it acts as a way to communicate and support a political marketing initiative and signals to audiences externally (but most importantly internally) that the language of political marketing is accepted in the party environment. Leadership support for a political marketing strategy acts therefore to signal cultural change inside the organisation, and thus reduces the potential negativity and resistance to the introduction / implementation of political marketing inside a political party. This involvement of the elected party leadership in political marketing therefore enables human and financial resources to be reapportioned more effectively to meet the needs of the political marketing approach. The unelected party officials and staff should have a supporting role to the leadership when implementing political marketing programmes. It can be argued that a political marketing approach led by party professionals without democratic party leadership is likely to fail as its introduction will lack democratic legitimacy, thus undermining its capacity for effective implementation.

6. Conclusions

It is clear that there are a number of potential causal factors which facilitate the framework conditions for political marketing strategies to be utilised by political parties in Britain. They include the impact of neo-liberal economic policy in terms of (i) the ontological and epistemological bases of academics' theory building; (ii) the consumerisation of society and its resultant impacts on electoral choice; and; (iii) the presentation and perception of media content by society. Despite the existence of such framework conditions for political marketing, it is matter of some debate as to whether political parties actually have political marketing 'strategies'. There is certainly limited evidence of formal strategic planning by political parties in relation to political marketing, but it is asserted that political marketing strategies can be deemed to exist where there is a "pattern in a stream of decisions... [and] when a series of decisions related to some aspect of the organisation exhibits some consistency over time" (Mintzberg, 1977, p. 28). The paper suggests that there is a 'mixed picture' with respect to the adoption of political marketing strategies by major political parties. For example, whilst in the case of the Conservative's visual brand identity renewal there was evidence of an 'intended' strategy that was 'formulated' (Mintzberg, 1977), it is more typical for political marketing strategies to be ' formed' as "patterns of decisions converge into a strategy" (Mintzberg, 1977, p.29). It is suggested that, on balance, political marketing is informing the processes of campaigning, yet it is a slow and incremental change process (Quinn, 1978), given that the notion of campaigning is so engrained in the organisational culture of British political parties.

It is argued that there is a tendency to conflate political marketing with campaigning, and that this is conceptually inappropriate. This is because campaigning is more suited to an ideologically driven 'product' or 'sales' orientation (Lees-Marshment, 2001) that is governed by a 'supply side' (Baines and Egan, 2001) ethos to political communication. This is ill suited to contemporary political marketing which commands, if done effectively, a 'demand sided' (Baines and Egan, 2001) long term approach that satisfies the electorate through the adoption of a 'market oriented' party model (Lees-Marshment, 2001). Furthermore, it is asserted that a campaigning approach to politics seems to be short term, transactional, anachronistic and creating a

sense of paramount importance of victory for a party and its manifesto (Baines and Egan, 2001).

The paper suggests that the adoption of political marketing by British political parties is constrained by human and financial resource limitations. It is suggested that there is limited financial resourcing to support political marketing activities especially given the broad scope and scale of political party activities. At the human resource level, a critical issue which emerges is whether 'campaigners' inside political parties can implement political marketing in the 'pure' form advocated in the political marketing literature. This may be because there is some degree of anxiety and nervousness amongst political campaigners in relation to the adoption of political marketing techniques, because of perceived skills inadequacies, which are difficult to update given the lack of learning opportunities via education, training and consultancy expertise in relation to political marketing. It is identified as a particular problem that if a political marketing strategy were to be introduced that it would be reliant on campaigners to communicate and disseminate it through the party. This could have resultant implications in relation to the further conflation of political campaigning with political marketing.

It is clear that given the complexities in introducing a political marketing strategy inside a political party, there is a need for clear strategic leadership. This should be really led via the democratic party leadership to give the political marketing strategy legitimacy in the party. Unelected party professionals should provide a supportive implementational role. This is because the senior elected politicians in the party are best placed to legitimise change with respect to political marketing adoption, and facilitate appropriate resource allocation.

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