

‘Chasing the Digital Wave: International Perspectives  
on the Growth of Online Campaigning’

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Although web campaigning has been a part of the electoral landscape in a number of nations for up to two decades, we still remain relatively uninformed about its drivers and effects on political parties and voters. Part of this lack of certainty is due to the fast changing nature of the medium itself and the pace of technological innovation that political actors face. In this series of papers, we seek to advance current knowledge about the causes, contents, and consequences of web campaigning for individuals, organizations, and political systems *writ large* by reflecting on the uptake, maturity, and efficacy of Internet campaigning in elections around the world. How widely is it used beyond the national level in state and regional elections? Do candidates see it as a ‘must have’ technology, crucial to their success? Or is it the tool of the ‘weak’ and those who lack more professional campaign weaponry? And finally, how much attention are voters paying to these efforts?

As well as updating our understanding about campaigns and elections in the digital era, the special issue has a wider agenda that speaks to ongoing trends in political environments and particularly the health of advanced industrial democracies. A general election is a unique moment of national political activity: It spurs parties and candidates to innovate and capture voter attention. Parties and politicians appear to be struggling worldwide to generate confidence and trust from their electorates. Considerable attention has been given by academics and those in the media to the capacity of the Internet to arrest some of the democratic fissures that are emerging within society. As citizens expand their use of the medium for political purposes, the time is ripe for a review of global practices in e-campaigns. Is the technology injecting a new participatory element into campaigning and thereby mobilizing new supporters and voters into the political process? Does use by parties’ grassroots challenge the dominance of professional elites? And are smaller parties able to strengthen their voice through cheaper and highly popular social media tools?

Articles should be no more than 8,000 words, including references, and should be officially submitted through the journal’s manuscript submission system (<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/witp>). All manuscripts should follow APA, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition formatting guidelines. The deadline for submission is **June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013**. Please contact the journal with any questions.