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CONTENTS

Transformation of Election Campaigning in India: The Role of Social Media and Digital Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Social media and digital marketing have become central component of modern political strategy. It has fundamentally changed the landscape of election campaigning, influencing how candidates communicate, mobilize voters, and shape public opinion. Campaigns have transitioned from relying heavily on door-to-door canvassing, community-based outreach to leveraging sophisticated tools that allow for precise targeting and efficient message dissemination. By analysing recent election cycles, particularly in context of the Indian Lok Sabha elections of 2014, 2019 and 2024, this paper explores the growing influence of social media platforms and digital marketing in the arena of politics as election campaign medium. First the paper specifically concentrates on the strategies utilized by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its rival, the Indian National Congress (INC), during the Lok Sabha elections. Secondly, this paper also investigates whether traditional election campaigning methods have been supplanted by the emergence and growth of new media, specifically social media and digital marketing. This research can help refine electoral strategies, inform policy decisions, and contribute to a more informed and engaged electorate in India.
KEYWORDS – *Elections, Social Media, Politics, Digital Marketing, Lok Sabha*

INTRODUCTION

Social media are dynamic platforms that allow users to generate, distribute, and collect content within online communities and networks. Social media is not only used by corporations to manage their public relations but has also evolved into a crucial tool for advertising during elections. It has become a powerful platform for expressing opinions globally.

As the world's largest democracy, India conducts elections on a massive scale involving millions of voters spread across vast and varied geographical regions. Election campaigning in India is a vibrant and multifaceted process that plays a crucial role in

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the country's vibrant democracy. From traditional methods relying on massive rallies, roadshows and door-to-door canvassing to the integration of advanced technology and data-driven strategies, the evolution of election campaigning mirrors broader transformation in society and the progress made in communication and information technology. With the advent of technology, Indian election campaigns have adapted to include digital and social media strategies.

Before the 2000s, political campaigns relied heavily on mass mobilization, large rallies, and print media advertisements, reflecting the socio-political context of that era. Studies of election data from before 2000 show a link between the level of on-the-ground campaigning and electoral success. For instance, during the 1979 election, Indira Gandhi's campaign was strategically organized to maximize her interactions with voters across as many constituencies as possible. She spoke at 1,515 public events in 384 constituencies, reaching an estimated audience of around 90 million people through her appearances and broadcasts.[1] Therefore, consistent visibility is not just a strategic advantage but a fundamental aspect of effective campaigning and voter relationship-building because regular interactions and a noticeable presence in the community not only keep a candidate at the forefront of voters' minds but also demonstrate their commitment to addressing local issues and concerns.

The 14th Lok Sabha elections which were held in 2004, led to the formation of Manmohan Singh Cabinet as the analysts concurred that NDA s India shining campaign did not appeal to the rural poor. Zoraand Daniel (2004) was of the opinion that the India Shining campaign was just a pitch to big businesses. Masses found the party campaign calls on landline and mobile phones a nuisance.[2]

A clear contrast can be seen between the 2004 and 2014 Lok Sabha elections. In 2004, the public perceived the BJP's use of landline calls and mobile phones for campaigning as a nuisance. However, by the 2014 elections, the BJP made a significant comeback, largely due to their adept use of social media and technology, which was well-received by the electorate. In this new landscape, viral memes and trending hashtags began to play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and impacting electoral results. Thus, by the end of the first two decades of the 21st century, Lok Sabha elections saw a significant rise in the use of social media in shaping voter perceptions and mobilising support from all political parties. This shift towards digital campaigning reflects broader integration of technology into the electoral process, enabling more targeted and real-time engagement with the electorate.

METHODOLOGY

This paper relies exclusively on secondary data sources. The author has predominantly utilized information from books, research articles, official government websites, and newspaper reports. Using this secondary data, the paper constructs arguments to examine the impact and function of social media in the Indian Lok Sabha elections, particularly in 2014, 2019 and 2024.

THE 2014 GENERAL ELECTIONS: THE DIGITAL BREAKTHROUGH

The 2014 general elections in India stand as a landmark event in the nation's political history, symbolizing a profound shift in how political campaigns are conducted and how electoral strategies are shaped. This election marked the dawn of a new era where digital technology and social media played pivotal roles in influencing public opinion, mobilizing voters, and ultimately determining the electoral outcome. It was the second most expensive campaign in history, following the 2020 U.S. presidential campaign.

In the 2014 general elections, the scale was unprecedented, involving over 815 million eligible voters—making it the largest electoral exercise in history. This voter base surpassed the combined electorates of the United States and the European Union. The election was held to choose 543 representatives to the Lok Sabha, India's lower house of Parliament. The key political parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Indian National Congress (INC) skillfully utilized their social media platforms to manage and promote their campaign activities.

In 2014, India had about 200 million internet users, with about 100 million users active on social media networking sites. Despite the digital divide, the mainstream media's dedicated coverage of social media conversations made the role of social media platforms one of the talking points of the election.[3] This indicates that, despite the increased use of social media for election campaigning, it was the mainstream media—such as newspapers, television news networks, radio, and cable news—that played a crucial role in bringing social media discussions and political party conversations to the attention of a broader audience. This demonstrates that traditional media methods were key in amplifying the impact of social media in the political landscape. While traditional campaigning methods like rallies were still used, technology played a much more central role in the campaign efforts, particularly for the BJP.

Top of FormBottom of FormIt was the BJP and its prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi who best utilised social media platforms to engage with the educated, networked, middle-class Indians, including 150 million first-time voters. Although both the BJP and Indian National Congress (INC or Congress) party extensively used YouTube as their own television channels during the 2014 national election campaign, the Congress party could not compete with the BJP's three-dimensional hologram rallies, gamification of political messages.[4] In political messaging, gamification refers to the application of game-like elements and principles to engage and motivate voters or supporters and holograms refers to virtual three-dimensional images created by the interference of light beams that reflect real physical objects.

Parties now use Twitter, a microblogging service, to reach out to voters. Twitter has been a novel microblogging platform that politicians utilise to entice people during elections. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been using Twitter since 2009 when he was the chief minister of Gujarat (Chaturvedi 2020). While his opponent Rahul Gandhi started using Twitter after his defeat in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. Rahul Gandhi finally realized the significance of Twitter in engaging with the audience.[5] The Congress party has fallen behind the BJP in Twitter engagement and activity. This discrepancy might be

attributed to Rahul Gandhi's late entry onto the platform, as he joined Twitter just after his defeat in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. This late start likely limited his and the Congress party's ability to build a robust social media presence and leverage Twitter effectively for campaigning and engagement, giving the BJP an advantage in online visibility and interaction.

According to the University of California study, the BJP posted 80,981 tweets during 2014 elections, far ahead of any other political parties and the Congress with 2,890 tweets. The study says, the BJP often tweeted the words "thank you" while the Congress's pet phrases included "Gandhi Gandhi" (in a single tweet).[6] By frequently tweeting "thank you," the BJP's social media strategy might have aimed to foster a positive, appreciative atmosphere among their supporters, contributed to enhancing voter engagement and reinforcing a positive image of the party while the Congress's focus on repeating the Gandhi name may have reinforced their brand identity but potentially lacked the engagement and dynamism seen in the BJP's approach.

The rise of political strategy consultancies in Indian election campaigns also signifies a significant transformation in the political campaigning landscape. These firms provide a wide range of services such as data analytics, voter profiling, message development, and coalition-building, all aimed at refining electoral strategies and enhancing the chances of success in elections. Their expertise helps political parties navigate complex electoral landscapes and optimize their approach to achieving victory.

For instance, in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, CAG's innovative strategies, including the "*chai pe charcha*" (discussion over tea) initiative after Congress' Mani Shankar Aiyar heckled Narendra Modi as *Chaiwala* (tea-vendor), effectively engaged voters and bolstered Modi's mass appeal. This approach resonated particularly well with younger demographics and urban voters, including Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), contributing significantly to the landslide victory of the BJP. Chai Pe Charcha is campaign organised by the BJP along with Citizens for Accountable Governance, a political advocacy group founded by election strategist Prashant Kishor.[7] On the other hand, Rahul Gandhi engaged with party workers as well as block, district, and Pradesh Congress Committee presidents via Google Hangout for the first hour, followed by an interaction with the general public. The media viewed this as a response to Narendra Modi's "Chai pe Charcha", where Modi connected with people enjoying tea.[8]

Advertising agencies also played a crucial role in 2014 Lok Sabha elections. These agencies often conduct market research and analyse voter sentiment to tailor their campaigns effectively. They help political parties craft their image, respond to opponents, and maintain a consistent narrative throughout the election period.

Senior BJP leaders Piyush Goyal and Ajay Singh managed the media strategy, with a specialized task force focusing on Narendra Modi's Varanasi campaign. Advertising experts like Piyush Pandey from Ogilvy & Mather, Prasoon Joshi of McCann Worldgroup, and Sam Balsara of Madison World contributed their expertise. Soho Square, part of the WPP Group, handled TV, radio, and print campaigns, featuring memorable slogans such as "Ab ki Baar Modi Sarkar" and "Janta Maaf Nahi Karegi". They also produced

the "Achche Din Aanewalle Hai" song and music video on YouTube.[9] On the other side, US-based Burson-Marsteller, JWT and Dentsu India, a Japanese publicity agency, were given contracts to provide an image makeover for the party and its vice-president Rahul Gandhi. The primary focus of the advertising was to portray "Rahul Gandhi as a young, vibrant leader who will deliver on the aspirations of the common Indian".[10]

THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS: CONSOLIDATION OF DIGITAL CAMPAIGNING

The 2019 Indian general elections represented a significant evolution in the use of social media compared to the 2014 elections. While social media played a crucial role in both years, the scale and sophistication of digital strategies expanded dramatically by 2019. The 2019 Indian general election was called the "First WhatsApp Election" in India. In 2014, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leveraged social media to great effect with its innovative approach, but the platform's potential was still emerging. By 2019, however, the landscape had transformed, with all major parties, including the Congress, developing extensive social media operations.

In 2014, the use of social media helped Narendra Modi grow his popularity to eventually be termed, by The Financial Times, as 'India's first social media prime minister'. Unlike in 2014, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had a pioneering advantage, by 2019, other parties had also developed robust digital campaigns. For instance, the Congress employed a research, graphics and professional IT team to counter BJP's social media campaign. However, the BJP was still ahead of the curve with reportedly three WhatsApp groups for each of India's over 90,000 polling booths and 1.2 million social media volunteers. The NaMo app, which tracked every electoral activity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was extremely popular too.[11] The opposition party, Congress had also been using WhatsApp groups to send their messages to voters. Congress had launched the 'Digital Sathi' app, which used digital media to connect directly with voters in polling booths.[12]

Twitter also played a significant role in shaping political influence and enhancing a politician's brand and public profile. Following the announcement of 2019 election, Narendra Modi launched the "Main Bhi Chowkidar" campaign, which proved to be more effective than Rahul Gandhi's "Chowkidar Chor Hai" campaign.[13] Modi's "Main Bhi Chowkidar" (I am also a watchman) campaign was designed to counteract the negative connotations associated with the "chowkidar" (watchman) label, which Rahul Gandhi used to criticize Modi, suggesting that Modi, as a watchman, was complicit in corruption ("Chowkidar Chor Hai" or "The watchman is a thief"). By embracing the label, Modi turned it into a badge of honor and accountability, portraying himself as a protector of the nation against corruption. This strategy likely resonated with voters who viewed the "chowkidar" label as a symbol of Modi's commitment and integrity rather than an insult.

Around 30% of tweets of the BJP's OTH (Official Twitter Handle) were dedicated to youth, whereas only 25% of the tweets of the INC's OTH were focused on youth. It shows that both national political parties also pushed their efforts to influence young voters. At the same time, both parties also directly appealed to the youth to vote in favour of their

party. The BJP tweeted, "All the first-time voters, have you pledged your vote for Modi? "Young people who are voting for the first time are going to vote for Kamal", while the INC appealed through Twitter to save their children from frying Pakoras and votes for Congress for the safety of women. Vote for Congress, vote for you".[14] The phrase about "saving their children from frying pakoras" seems to metaphorically address concerns about job security and economic stability. In this context, it suggests that rather than being forced into low-wage, informal jobs (like frying pakoras), people should support the Congress party, which promises better job opportunities and economic policies.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured a landslide victory in the 2019 elections through a meticulously designed campaign that leveraged data insights from a team of IT specialists. To achieve precise voter targeting, the party enlisted two consulting firms: Jarvis Technology and Strategy Consulting Private Limited, and the Association of Billion Minds (ABM). These firms utilized data analytics to tailor their outreach efforts, specifically focusing on individuals who had benefited from central welfare programs. This included initiatives like Ujjwala, which provided free cooking gas connections to impoverished households, and Swachh Bharat, which facilitated the construction of toilets in homes.[15]Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Social media often acts as a polarizer by amplifying extreme viewpoints and creating echo chambers. Users are frequently exposed to content that reinforces their existing beliefs, leading to increased division and fragmentation among different groups. Lokniti's survey data also suggests that regular social media usage may have made people develop strong feelings of like and dislike towards a political party. The survey revealed that Congress was disliked far more among respondents with high social media exposure than those with no exposure whatsoever. The BJP on the other hand was disliked far more by those with no exposure than those with high exposure.[16]

The role of WhatsApp in the BJP's 2019 general elections victory was significant, as the party effectively utilized social media to engage a broad audience. The BJP's early adoption of these platforms demonstrated their foresight in recognizing the growing importance of technology in elections. In contrast, following their loss in the 2014 general elections, Congress only began to focus on social media in a more serious manner. They tried to match the BJP's strong online presence, but because they started late, they were initially behind in the fast-changing world of online politics.

THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTIONS: ADVANCED DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

In the 2024 elections, traditional campaign methods had merged with advanced technology, altering the nature of political dialogue. With the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the widespread impact of social media platforms, and the broad reach of the internet, political figures utilized digital tools to connect with voters, craft narratives, and, at times, influence perceptions. AI-driven algorithms analyse vast amounts of user

data to precisely target specific demographic groups with personalized political messages. By using this customized approach, political parties can craft communications that resonate with different voter segments, enhancing the overall impact of their campaigns.

In 2019, the BJP used the NaMo app, developed in partnership with Reliance, to measure audience interaction. By 2024, the party persisted in using both the NaMo app and the MyGov app to offer detailed information about government schemes introduced during their administration, thereby boosting their visibility. These apps function as direct platforms for citizens to connect with the government and take part in the decision-making process. Conversely, the Congress party concentrated their efforts predominantly on social media, allocating 70% of their campaign budget to this platform. They engaged three firms—Silver Push, Design Boxed, and Niksun—to manage their social media campaigns. The expenditure for producing these campaign videos varied between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 5 lakhs each.[17]

The BJP launched the website 'My First Vote for Modi,' allowing users to pledge their support for Modi and upload videos explaining their reasons. The site also features several short videos highlighting the development initiatives undertaken by the NDA government. In contrast, the Congress has established a WhatsApp group for Rahul Gandhi, where it is rumoured that he interacts with users and responds to their queries.[18]

One of the most powerful aspects of digital marketing is its ability to collect and analyse vast amounts of data. By leveraging data analytics tools and methods, political parties can gain valuable insights into voter preferences, behaviour patterns, and electoral trends. Arkreach, an AI-driven communications analytics tool, analysed online media coverage of the 2024 General Elections to assess the impact of news about the two main national political figures: incumbent Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indian National Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. The report analysed that PM Modi appeared in 13,848 articles whereas Rahul Gandhi featured in 7,616 articles. PM Modi had broader regional language coverage, appearing not only in Hindi and English but also in Bangla, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Punjabi. The report also found that 19.3% positive news articles were published about PM Modi as compared to 12.7% positive articles about Rahul Gandhi.[19]

The BJP has excelled in social media and campaign effectiveness, boasting a significant presence on X (formerly Twitter) since October 2010, where it has garnered 22.3 million followers. The party's X profile prominently features Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party president JP Nadda, branding itself as the "world's largest political party, representing the aspirations of 1.4 billion Indians." The bio also highlights the hashtag 'Viksit Bharat by 2047,' a key theme in their Lok Sabha campaign this year. The Congress joined X (formerly Twitter) in February 2013 and now has 10.9 million followers. Their profile features leader Rahul Gandhi and party president Mallikarjun Kharge branding itself as "India's Most Vibrant Political Movement".

On May 31, 2024, following the conclusion of the Lok Sabha elections, the Indian National Congress (INC) made a notable claim on social media, particularly Twitter. They asserted that they had surpassed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in terms of views

and likes on social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Congress attributed this shift in social media dynamics to its stronger connection with the public and the ability to understand public sentiment. It is plausible to argue that the Indian National Congress (INC) achieved increased social media engagement partly due to the success of its Bharat Jodo Yatra, which began in September 2022. It was indeed a traditional form of political campaigning that have been used to build grassroots support, connect with voters directly, and energize party workers.

But this Yatra was executed with modern twist. It was accompanied by extensive social media coverage updates and live streams that played a crucial role in amplifying the campaign's reach and engaging a wider audience beyond traditional media.

ROLE OF INFLUENCERS AND CONTENT CREATERS IN SHAPING ELECTORAL OUTCOMES

A decade ago, the term "influencer" was rarely used to describe people, but today, according to Vinay Deshpande, co-founder of Rajneethi, a political management consulting firm, it has evolved into a profession. Akash Banerjee, a former journalist and creator of the YouTube channel The DeshBhakt, contends that influencers have the ability to push boundaries beyond what traditional media can achieve. He explains that while influencers might not always verify every detail like traditional journalists, they have a responsibility to alert the public to looming issues. By looking beyond immediate concerns and highlighting significant developments, influencers can motivate people to take action, such as voting, to address these emerging challenges.[20]

The trend of political leaders giving interviews to influencers ahead of elections underscores the evolving landscape of political campaigning. Influencers have become crucial in reaching and engaging voters in the digital age, reflecting a shift towards more personalized, targeted, and interactive political communication strategies. BJP leaders like S Jaishankar, Smriti Irani, Piyush Goyal, and Rajeev Chandrasekhar have given interviews to podcaster Ranveer Allahabadia, who has over 7 million followers on his YouTube channel known as 'Beer Biceps'. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also joined Kamia Jani, founder of Curly Tales, a travel and food video podcast, for a candid conversation over a meal.[21] Additionally, this year, the MyGov portal introduced an influencer award, recognizing figures such as Ranveer Allahabadia with accolades from PM Modi.[22] The award reflects the government's recognition of the significant role influencers play in shaping public opinion and engaging with citizens. Influencers have become powerful figures in digital media, and acknowledging their impact highlights the importance of their contributions.

By leveraging social media platforms with vast reach and engagement, influencers have bridged the gap between traditional political messaging and the electorate, especially among younger demographics. Their ability to create viral content and engage in real-time conversations has amplified campaign messages and countered misinformation more dynamically than conventional methods.

However, this influence also presents challenges, including concerns over the

authenticity of endorsements, the potential for spreading misinformation, and the ethical implications of commercialized political content. As the line between personal opinion and sponsored content blurs, the need for transparency and regulation becomes increasingly apparent to ensure that the democratic process remains fair and informed.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR ELECTION CAMPAIGNING

The integrity of the electoral process is heavily influenced by the ethics of campaigns and the conduct of the parties, candidates, and their supporters. When campaign behaviour is unethical or when actions are taken that distort the election outcome or the process, it undermines the fairness, freedom, and credibility of the election. It is the channels through which false or misleading election-related information spreads and the reliability of democratic system is undermined.

WhatsApp, India's leading messaging platform, emerged as a major conduit for spreading misinformation and propaganda especially in 2019. The 2019 Lok Sabha elections were dubbed the "WhatsApp elections" due to the platform's extensive use during the campaign. However, this reliance on WhatsApp also led to a significant spread of misinformation and fake videos.

The highest spikes in misinformation occurred in mid-February 2019 following the Pulwama terrorist attack, which killed 40 Indian CRPF members, and again in late-February 2019 after the Indian Air Force bombed Balakot. During these events, misinformation spread rapidly, often amplified by social media. The sheer volume of images shared—1500-1800 during the Pulwama attack and over 2000 during the Balakot airstrike—reflects the intense interest and emotional reactions, but also the challenges in verifying the authenticity of such content.[23]

The Economic Times referred to 2019 as the "year of fake news." Pratik Sinha, the founder of Alt News, noted that there has been a significant rise in the amount of misinformation that needs to be debunked this year. This increase has been particularly notable around major events such as Balakot, Pulwama, JNU, Kashmir, and the Kathua rape incident. He pointed out that any issue that garners national attention tends to attract a surge in misinformation.[24]

From the year 2024, India has entered fully into the age of Artificial Intelligence. The 2024 national election marks the first time that AI technology is being utilized. For instance, actors Aamir Khan (left) and Ranveer Singh have both been the subject of deepfakes during the 2024 Indian election for publicly criticizing the Indian prime minister and lending their support to the Congress, the main opposition party. As per reports by Reuters (2024), in a 30-second video featuring Aamir Khan and a 41-second clip with Ranveer Singh, the two Bollywood stars are shown allegedly criticizing Modi for not fulfilling campaign

promises and neglecting crucial economic issues during his two terms as prime minister. Both AI-generated videos conclude with the Congress party's election symbol and the slogan: "Vote for Justice, Vote for Congress."[25]

AI and deepfakes are increasingly distorting perceptions of reality in Indian elections. These technologies are being used to create highly convincing but entirely fabricated images and videos of political figures, blurring the line between truth and illusion. In a recent example, a deepfake of Muthuvel Karunanidhi, the late former chief minister of Tamil Nadu, was used in a campaign event, despite his death in 2018. Such advancements in AI are raising significant concerns about the manipulation of political discourse and voter perception.

To uphold the integrity of the electoral process, the Election Commission of India (ECI) plays a pivotal role. As an autonomous constitutional authority, the ECI is tasked with overseeing and ensuring free and fair elections at both the national and state levels. It is responsible for the administration of elections, including the preparation of electoral rolls, the management of polling stations, and the enforcement of election laws and codes of conduct. The ECI also implements measures to prevent and address electoral malpractices, such as monitoring campaign finance and regulating political party activities.

In response to the spread of false information and distorted content on social media and through AI-generated means, the Election Commission of India emphasized to political parties the crucial need to follow existing laws and regulations. These include the Model Code of Conduct, the Information Technology Act of 2000, and the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules of 2021.

The Election Commission of India has specifically instructed political parties on several important points: they must avoid using social media to spread misinformation or any content that is obviously false or misleading, refrain from impersonating others—including other political parties or their representatives—on social media, and not post or endorse derogatory content about women. Additionally, political parties should ensure their social media accounts do not share or propagate deepfake audio or video content that breaches current regulations. If such deepfake content is detected, it must be removed from their platforms within a maximum of three hours.[26]

However, it seems that the Election Commission struggles to effectively address the problem of fake news during elections. According to Reuters, election officials have reported that while they can request social media platforms to remove specific content, they are often left at a loss if the platforms decide that the posts do not breach their own internal guidelines.[27]

It sounds like the election officers are dealing with a frustrating situation where they have limited control over social media platforms' content policies. If these platforms have their own rules and don't view certain posts as violations, it can leave authorities in a tough spot, especially when trying to manage misinformation or inappropriate content during an election. This can make it challenging to ensure fair and secure elections if platforms don't act on removal requests.

CONCLUSION

Technological advancements driven by the digital revolution are transforming election campaigns and party organization in India. While the BJP has been at the forefront of online strategies, other parties are increasingly investing in IT and social media to enhance their digital presence.

This study underscores a notable progression in the technological landscape of election campaigning, highlighting a transformative shift since 2014. Initially, political parties leveraged foundational social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook to broaden their outreach and engage directly with voters. Over time, this approach has evolved significantly with the integration of advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. The adoption of AI represents a significant leap forward, providing political parties with sophisticated tools for data analysis, voter targeting, and personalized engagement. As political parties continue to adapt to emerging technologies, the role of AI and advanced digital tools will likely grow, offering new opportunities and challenges in shaping electoral outcomes.

The study also reveals that these digital innovations do not replace traditional campaigning methods. Instead, they complement and enhance them. While social media and digital tools offer powerful means for outreach, engagement, and targeted messaging, they work most effectively when integrated with conventional methods of campaigning. Political parties should aim to leverage these technologies in a measured manner, ensuring that they enhance, rather than undermine, the democratic process. Responsible use of digital media will not only uphold the credibility of the campaign but also contribute to a more transparent and trustworthy electoral environment.

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