

Marketing the mayor: political marketing and the Livingstone4London mayoral election campaign.

Political marketing is commonly regarded as synonymous with the use of persuasive techniques in campaigns to promote both politicians and their policies. The borrowing of professional communication tools, such as advertising and public relations is believed to epitomise the concept of political marketing, as underlined by Kavanagh (1994:8) in his observation, ‘...parties are like businesses seeking to promote their products: one seeks votes, the other sales’. However, Maarek (1992) suggests that political marketing is a broader concept. Maarek (1992:28) emphasises that political marketing includes evaluation and re-design of policy and electoral strategy in the light of studies of the electorate’s concerns, underlined in his assertion;

Political communication no longer means merely designing and printing a message on posters without consideration of whom they are addressed to. It encompasses the entire marketing process, from preliminary market study to testing and targeting.

Concentrating on the Livingstone4London mayoral election campaign, this essay will apply the political marketing and public relations literature to features of the campaign. The three sections of the essay will follow the evolutionary models of political marketing outlined by Wring (1996) and other commentators. The first section of the essay will discuss the propaganda model of political communications, applying the concept to the most overt tools used by the Livingstone4London campaign. The second section of the essay will investigate behind the overt marketing tools of the campaign logo in purple colours and matching purple double-decker campaign bus to discuss the features of the campaign relevant to the ‘...’sales-led’...’ model. The third section will analyse the political marketing concept, investigating the changes in policy and electoral strategy of the campaign. The essay will conclude that the Livingstone4London campaign’s wider appreciation of the political marketing concept contributed to its success.

The Livingstone campaign did not appear to employ the latest persuasive techniques, instead, persisting with direct communications used in the immediate post-war era.

For example, the most visible tactic of the campaign around London was the purple open-topped double-decker tour bus, equipped with PA system and 'Hoot4Ken' written on the side. The tour was supported by an appeal by the Livingstone campaign to "paint the town purple" with posters in household windows. The bus's four week drive around London playing loud music and the purple poster appeal were more typical of tactics used by campaigners in the post war era. The use of direct communications between candidates and the electorate during the post war era is recognised by Norris (1997:79), who stresses that, 'Politics was soap-box retail: face-to-face canvassing on doorsteps. Posters in household windows, leafleting at factory gates'. The use of local party volunteers for distributing leaflets, coupled with regular appearances by Livingstone on the tour bus and a reliance on household windows for advertising may suggest that the Livingstone campaign shunned modern political marketing techniques in favour of old fashioned '...retail politics...' (Norris, 1997:76).

Wring (1996:101) develops the characteristics of '...retail politics...' in his definition of the first phase of political marketing as a '..."production" orientation...' or propaganda approach to communication. For Wring (1996), propaganda is the use of one-directional communication to manipulate an undifferentiated, passive electorate into voting for a candidate. Political marketing in its primitive propaganda phase assumes that minimal encouragement will secure the support of voters. This is underlined by Shama (1976), who emphasises that political marketing in its propaganda phase is founded on the principle that '...increased awareness would increase voter preference'. Furthermore, Shama (1976) highlights that this conceptualisation of political marketing is founded on little research, emphasised in his observation, 'The inputs to the promotional campaign to achieve increased awareness were designed on the basis of guess and intuition'. Political marketing as propaganda does not focus on gathering intelligence on the preferred policies of voters. The electorate is treated as a mass, with no distinguishing segment characteristics identified to better target smaller groups.

Political marketing in its propaganda phase shares similarities to the press agency model of public relations conceptualised by Grunig and Hunt (1984). The press agency, or publicity model describes public relations that perpetuates an extremely

subjective version of an event or product, like the leaflets distributed by political candidates outlining their policy and opinions. The purpose of the press agent is to persuade the public into adopting an attitude, belief and behaviour beneficial to the client. Similarly, propaganda has scant regard for the actual desires of the voter, instead, communications focus on accommodating the needs of the candidate (Wring, 1996:102). Finally, press agents, like propagandists, have meagre regard for formative research, i.e. research conducted to help plan activities and choose objectives. The basis of the press agent's publicity activities is intuitive, rather than scientific.

However, the Livingstone campaign's electoral strategy also embraced the use of market research to better target potential groups of supporters with communications tailored to each segment. The Livingstone campaign's tailoring of communications to persuade different segments of the electorate fits the second phase of political marketing recognised by Wring (1996:105) – the “sales-led” or “media campaigning” approach. The “sales-led” approach incorporates the use of research to target segments of the electorate with more persuasive communications, as underlined by Wring (1996:101), ‘...organisations begin to invest in market research in order to target selected consumer groups with more refined and often stylistic communications.’ The Livingstone campaign developed its communications for younger voters.

The Livingstone campaign deliberately targeted younger voters as, typically, they are the segment of the electorate found to be more likely to be late deciders. Hayes and McAllister (1992:139) find that 37 per cent of 18-24 year old males and 41 per cent of females for the same age group were late deciders. However, they also emphasise that younger segments of the electorate are less likely to be politically knowledgeable and involved. Therefore, in order to target younger voters, the Livingstone campaign focused on messages and channels preferred by the younger target public. Livingstone gave an interview with music magazine *New Musical Express*, in which he condemned the international financial community for killing more people than Hitler. The message was clearly motivated by an attempt by Livingstone to identify with the trend for anti-capitalist attitudes amongst younger voters. Non-directly

political television interviews were used, most notably an interview by Chris Evans on TFI Friday.

Through communicating to younger segments through these channels, the Livingstone campaign successfully attempted to encourage identification with the candidate. Maarek (1992:133) highlights that the use of non-directly political television appearances is a tool to popularise politicians, without turning off younger voters with political discussion;

...the candidate pretends to be close to the recipients of his communication by providing them with a better sense of identification, and thus permit a better penetration of the messages...

Livingstone's appearances in cult television programmes and music magazines involved light political discussion, with a sprinkling of choice questions on his personal life. The de-politicised blend of questions turned Livingstone into a product for younger voters to easily consume so that they identified with Livingstone's personality, as much as his policies.

The packaging of policies in the form of desirable personalities of individual politicians is characteristic of political marketing in its "media campaigning" phase. The increasing emphasis placed on the personalities of candidates in political communications is driven by the demands of television and other mass media coverage for immediacy over issues and visual over the verbal. The influence of the demands of these media on political marketing is recognised by Norris (1997:82) in her observation of the pressures of the mass media on American presidential election campaigns;

...journalists are now focusing far greater attention on personalities than on party policies, party strategies and the 'horse race' coverage of who is ahead and who is behind in the polls, rather than a serious and detailed debate about the issues.

The shift towards the `...personalization...` of campaigns was starkly evident in the Livingstone campaign.

Furthermore, the communications of the Livingstone campaign were also informed by the demands of the mass media for brevity and uncomplicated messages. The selection of the six Livingstone campaign themes highlights an understanding of the requirements of the mass media. For Maarek (1992), political communications should reduce the complexity and diversity of their messages to better tailor them to the demands of the mass media. Maarek (1992:46) recognises the need for campaigns to focus on a limited number of themes or issues, a rule he calls `...simplification...`. Limiting the number of campaign themes allows the transmission of messages through the mass media. The unsuitability of both print and broadcast advertising for communicating numerous complex messages is underlined by Maarek (1992:46) in his advice for the campaigning politician;

To the extent possible he will have to limit the number of different campaign themes to avoid giving his communication recipients the impression of being too dispersed: modern mass media are even less conducive than the older forms to the transmission of complex messages.

The Livingstone campaign displayed its media friendliness through the launch of a simple six-point campaign card on 8 September 1999. The campaign card set out the candidate's main proposals in four key areas of transport, policing, pollution and poverty. To further encourage dissemination of a clear-cut message, the Livingstone campaign created a `...Unique Selling Proposition...` or USP, with an emphasis on non-privatisation of the London Underground (Maarek, 1992:46). Instead of a sell-off of the tube, the Livingstone campaign card promised a New York style bonds issue to raise investment in the transport system. The adoption of the campaign card is a political marketing tool borrowed from the 1997 Labour General Election campaign, as emphasised by Rawnsley (1999), who recognises;

The politician formerly known as Red Ken is campaigning to become Mayor of London with a pledge card of identical size and style to that which New

Labour deployed so successfully at the last election. The only difference is that where Tony Blair offered five pledges, Ken Livingstone brandishes six.

However, it is the campaign strategy focused on a limited number of themes that is the core similarity between the political marketing techniques used by the Livingstone campaign and those applied by the Labour campaign in the 1997 General Election. The limited campaign themes were carefully selected to efficiently emphasise the appeal of Livingstone to all segments of the electorate. Each proposal was designed to show recognition of a variety of voter concerns – peeler Ken promised more police, counter-inflationary Ken said fares would be frozen for four years, techno-boffin Ken touted free Internet access for all. According to Rawnsley (1999), the political marketing approach used by the Livingstone campaign, ‘...learnt from New Labour how to be all things – all Kens – to all men’. Furthermore, the brevity of the messages also demonstrates an understanding of the demands of Londoners, who have an appetite for many, short bursts of information over complicated details. Therefore, political communications with fewer, focused themes avoid confusion towards the politician’s policies amongst the media and the electorate.

The Livingstone campaign also employed celebrities as a more subtle, sophisticated channel to target younger and populist voters. Identifying these celebrities as prime communication targets emphasises the awareness of the Livingstone campaign of the importance of these figures for influencing the opinions of other segments. According to Maarek (1992:36), specific segments of the electorate, such as celebrities, act as ‘...opinion relays...’, giving candidates their personal endorsement through both monetary and vocal support. Maarek (1992) highlights that political communications indirectly disseminated to segments of the electorate through ‘...opinion relays...’ is a guarantee of effective impact. This is underlined in his observation that, ‘The recipients make up their minds only after having heard out the people to whom they concede, consciously or not, an influence in such matters.’ (1992:36). The use of ‘...opinion relays...’ was widely evident in the Livingstone campaign, with media mogul and television presenter Chris Evans’ testimonies receiving extensive coverage in the media. The support of Evans caused controversy as he faced an investigation by the government appointed radio authority for possible breaches of political impartiality rules after he announced his intention to double a

£100,000 donation to the Livingstone campaign live on Virgin Radio on 21 March 2000. Other celebrities, such as comedian Harry Enfield also endorsed the Livingstone campaign at the London premiere of his movie by donning a purple Ken4London T-shirt.

The benefit of indirect communication through specific recipients of information is emphasised by communications theorists Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955). Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) highlight the importance of opinion leaders in their multi-step model of communication. The multi-step model of communication suggests that opinion leaders may influence target publics. Opinion leaders are receptive individuals or groups who exert influence over a target public because of their authority in a specific field e.g. doctors in medical debates. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) also observe that the persuasiveness of information received from other individuals is greater than the influence of the mass media. Windahl, Signitzer and Olson (1992) support their assertion, emphasising that the two-step model, '...demonstrates the superiority of interpersonal communication over mass communication in terms of capacity to influence.'. Windahl, Signitzer and Olson (1992) underline that the advantage of using opinion leaders for any communication is a '...reinforcement through personal trust.'. This realisation emphasises that political marketers need to identify and enlist the support of key opinion leaders, in order to exploit their power over the target public.

The Livingstone campaign's tailoring of communications to specific electoral targets typifies the two-way asymmetrical model of public relations identified by Grunig and Hunt (1994). The purpose of two-way asymmetrical public relations, for Grunig and Hunt (1984:22) is '...scientific persuasion...'. This type of persuasion uses specific activities based on scientific research of the target publics. Grunig and Hunt (1984:22) outline the practitioner's information gathering role, highlighting the importance of research in the two-way asymmetrical model;

They use what is known from social science theory and research about attitudes and behaviour to persuade publics to accept the organisation's point of view and to behave in a way that supports the organisation.

Information gathered concerning the target publics, such as lifestyle and mindset are used to shape the activities of the campaign. The practitioner of the two-way asymmetrical model conducts formative research, in order to identify the needs and demands of their target publics. The role of information gathering in this model probes the target publics so that the public relations practitioner can champion issues in their campaign that he knows touch a nerve. Wring (1996) incorporates research and the tailoring of messages to specific target segments in the “sales-led” approach to political marketing. The use of market research to design more persuasive communications is a characteristic of the “sales-led” approach towards political marketing, as underlined by Wring (1996:105), ‘...political parties began to embrace market research in order to plan better and target potential groups of supporters with more sophisticated advertising communications’. The advent of sophisticated party election broadcasts, such as the RSCG campaign sponsored by the Livingstone campaign are typical tools of the “sales-led” approach.

Norris (1997) highlights that the commissioning of communications professionals, such as RSCG, is a key characteristic of the modern or “sales led” approach towards political marketing. Sponsored professionals and hired communicators have replaced enthusiastic amateurs, as underlined by Norris (1997:78);

...the heart of the modern campaign has been transferred to television newsrooms and discussion programmes, where the core actors are a small team of party leaders, aided by backroom campaign managers at central party headquarters and flanked by an outer circle of paid professional consultants in marketing and opinion polling.

The Livingstone campaign typified the ‘...professionalisation...’ of campaigning with the appointment of advertising agency RSCG recruited to assist in the production of the reported £200,000 election broadcast and creation of billboard advertisements (Kavanagh 1994).

For Kavanagh (1996) the devotion of resources to fund the activities of professionals goes beyond the commissioning of advertising and public relations strategists to

include opinion pollsters. The proliferation of the employment of professional pollsters in political marketing campaigns is underlined by Kavanagh (1996:112);

The new departure in British elections in the last 30 years or so has been the regular employment by parties of opinion pollsters to provide information about public opinion.

The gathering of intelligence on the popularity on candidates amongst different segments of the electorate can inform a redirection of resources to target segments of the electorate where voter preferences were waning. The results of favourable polls are also ideal publicity material for leading candidates. The countless polls published during the mayoral election campaign typified the `...poll saturated...` campaign documented by Crewe (1992). The news coverage of the mayoral election focused on the "horse-race" between the Livingstone and Dobson. The polls announced Livingstone's unassailable lead seven months before the election date, underlined by an ICM poll for the Evening Standard on 16 October 1999 announcing a ``Dream` poll for Livingstone in race for mayor`. The poll of 1,007 voters showed 50% support for Livingstone amongst Labour supporters, compared to 15% support for Dobson in third place behind Glenda Jackson. During the campaign, The Guardian/ICM polls continually contributed to the Livingstone campaign, pronouncing `Livingstone surges ahead` on 16 November 1999. The poll stressed that Livingstone would win the mayoral election, whether he stood as the official Labour candidate or as an independent candidate. The ICM poll showed that if Livingstone was Labour's official candidate he would win the contest with 63% of the vote and would gain 49% of first preference votes as an independent candidate.

However, the use of research has a greater importance than simply informing and providing the content for communications. Wring (1996:101) believes that the third phase of the political marketing concept also includes the use of intelligence gathering to develop changes in policy and electoral strategy. According to Wring (1996:107), research and polling do not just inform promotional tactics but also aid towards formulating policy;

...opinion research, as representative of the electorate, begins to take on an important policy perspective in addition to its existing presentational role.

Therefore, political marketing must be considered a more comprehensive concept than simply the intelligent use of marketing tools for the promotion of policies. Policies and politicians must undergo a transformation – political marketing demands the re-invention of manifestos, as well as unsuitable advertising copy. The importance of polls and other market research in informing the policies of candidates in recent campaigns is emphasised by Kavanagh (1996). Kavanagh (1996) highlights that, following commercial marketing, surveys of public opinion do not simply inform the construction of promotional messages but inform policies. The use of polls and surveys in the creation of policies is underlined by Kavanagh's (1996:112) description of the important role played by the pollster in recent political marketing campaigns; '...the private pollster's role is like that of the civil servant, party official and special adviser who advise the minister / politician on policy matters'. The importance of the pollster in recent political elections in the UK was emphasised during the 1997 Labour General Election Campaign through Tony Blair's abandoning of policies that were found to be unpopular.

Similarly, the Livingstone campaign also incorporated the pollster in the policy making process. Rawnsley (1999) comments that the Livingstone campaign shifted its policies in accordance with feedback from surveys and focus groups in a strategy reminiscent of Mandelson's manipulation of Labour policies three years earlier;

With a ruthlessness which might even attract the grudging admiration of Peter Mandelson, our Ken has been dumping any ideology, ditching any previous commitment and dropping any policy that might stand between him and power.

For example, negative feedback from meetings with businesses in the City may have influenced the decision to drop the planned higher taxes on office car parking from the Livingstone campaign to gain support of the executive class voters. Furthermore, as well as listening and responding to the concerns of the business community, the Livingstone campaign also bowed to the advice of the train companies that it was not

possible to fulfil the early campaign promise to run commuter trains as often as trains on the London Underground.

The most significant development in policy by the Livingstone campaign to woo City support was the announcement of his unconditional support for the Euro on 2 May 2000. The announcement of support for the Euro was made to an audience of business leaders at the megamerger.com adviser awards in Whitehall. The shift in policy emphasis was an attempt to win the vote of City voters concerned at the impairment of the UK economy by the strength of sterling. The use of policies to position candidates to gain more votes embodies the political marketing concept. The political marketing concept includes a broader consideration of the needs of the electorate, so that policies, as well as promotional messages are centred on the desires of the voter. This holistic approach to political campaigning is underlined by Wring (1996:107) in his acknowledgement that, '...opinion research, as representative of the electorate, begins to take on an important policy perspective in addition to its existing presentational role'. Kavanagh (1996:113) also recognises the wider application of polls and market intelligence to create popular policy in his observation that, '...political parties are behaving more like commercial organisations, positioning themselves (via policies) to gain a larger share of the market (voters)'. The pro-Euro policy successfully positioned Livingstone as the mayoral candidate with the most favourable attitude to City voters. The clever positioning allowed Livingstone to gain a competitive advantage over Dobson, whose policy on the Euro was restricted by the need to recognise the Labour "wait and see" attitude on the Euro.

The Livingstone campaign's shifting of policies in response to the mood of the business community typifies the two-way symmetrical model of public relations identified by Grunig and Hunt (1984). The emphasis of the two-way symmetrical model is on communication, rather than persuasion. Practitioners of the two-way symmetrical model aim to broker mutual understanding, acting as '...mediators between organisations and their publics.' (Grunig and Hunt, 1984:22). The communication takes the form of a balanced dialogue, which aims to facilitate accommodation and co-operation between an organisation and its publics. According to the two-way symmetrical model, pressure from publics is equally as likely to influence a change in organisational behaviour as persuasion on behalf of the

organisation is to shape the attitudes of its target publics, as underlined by Grunig and Hunt (1984:23);

If persuasion occurs, the public should be just as likely to persuade the organisation's management to change attitudes or behaviour as the organisation is likely to change the publics' attitudes or behaviour.

Persuasion and subsequent change is equally as likely on both sides of the communication, with change normally occurring on both parts. The Livingstone campaign's series of meetings with businesses in the City in the two years previous to the campaign epitomised the use of the two-way symmetrical model of public relations. The meetings influenced a reinvention of Livingstone's policies that would see him as the second most popular choice for mayor amongst the City. Furthermore, as Livingstone was seen to be responsive to his erstwhile enemies, the meetings also facilitated a successful re-branding of Livingstone - from a icon of the London "Loony Left" and scourge of capitalism to a politician who can do business with the City.

However, the messages of dynamism and openness disseminated by the Livingstone campaign did not exist in isolation. Instead, the campaign was forced to compete with the counter claims and accusations propagated by the Labour Dobson campaign. The Dobson Labour campaign followed the trend towards negative campaigning. Negative campaigning is the tendency to criticise opponents and their policies, rather than emphasising the candidate or party's own political position. The use of adversarial advertising and knocking copy is a characteristic of political marketing campaigns underlined by Kavanagh (1994:11) in his observation that, 'Publicity concentrates at least as much time attacking the defects of opponents as presenting the merits of the sponsoring party.' Butler and Kavanagh (1997) define negative campaigning as, '...pointing to the weaknesses of an opposing party and warning of the dangers of electing it to office...'. During the mayoral election the Dobson Labour campaign was the principal advocate of negative campaigning. On March 30 2000, it was revealed that the Dobson campaign was forced to sideline a series of anti-Livingstone advertising slogans after focus groups rejected them as too negative. The slogans were to feature in a hard-hitting billboard and newspaper advertising

campaign. Although negative advertising was sidelined until the closing weeks of the campaign, Dobson's public relations campaign continually warned against his mayoral rival. On the same day the decision was made to pull the negative advertising slogans, Dobson claimed that electing Livingstone as mayor would cost 100,000 jobs in the capital.

The Dobson campaign also used specialist surveys to question the logic of Livingstone's key policies. A report by David Currie of the London Business School was commissioned and released to the media, which argued that Livingstone's planned public bond issue to fund the London Underground would be 20 per cent more expensive than Labour's plan for part privatisation.

The smear campaign continued on 5 April 2000 with the revelation that Labour's Millbank headquarters had inspired allegations over Livingstone's financial dealings. In a move orchestrated by Millbank, Labour MP Brian Sedgemore wrote to the Trade and Industry department permanent secretary, Sir Michael Scholar demanding a full inquiry into claims that Mr Livingstone had broken criminal law by using a £40,000 loan from his company to buy a holiday home. The lengthy campaign to personally discredit Livingstone was run directly from Millbank with the full backing of Tony Blair. On 7 March 2000, Tony Blair criticised Livingstone for being the personal embodiment of everything that made Labour unelectable during the 1980s and warned that the appointment of Livingstone would be a disaster for London. The unsubstantiated personal attacks on Livingstone were accompanied by warnings of likely costly Livingstone policies, again, voiced by senior figures in the Labour Party. An article was written by Gordon Brown in the Evening Standard to attack Livingstone's taxation policies. The article claimed that Livingstone would introduce six new taxes that would hit the growth of new businesses in London, underlined by Brown's venomous accusation that, `...an 80s-style economic policy and a re-run of the old fights over economic policy...` would return under the mayoralty of Livingstone. The objective of the negative campaigning was to position Livingstone as the same "Red Ken" recognisable from the 1980s, by making him appear untrustworthy as a politician. However, the failure of the campaign was in the number and scale of accusations made against Livingstone, allowing Livingstone to personally condemn the Labour campaign as dishonest.

The electoral strategy of the Livingstone campaign was informed by an awareness of the context of the campaigns of competitors. The campaign positioned Livingstone as a leftwing alternative to the official Labour candidate, Dobson, in the minds of the electorate. The success of this positioning strategy allowed Livingstone to leech support from traditional Labour voters on the left. Analysing the breakdown of the 667,877 Londoners who gave Livingstone their first preference votes, Travis (2000:5) observes that the campaign successfully managed to win the backing of 46% of those who said they would normally vote for a Blair government. By positioning himself as the `...closest substitute...` to the Labour candidate, Labour supporters were more likely to switch their vote to Livingstone (Hayes and McAllister 1996:144). The appeal of the candidate closest to the party towards which voters most identify is underlined by Hayes and McAllister (1996:144) in their believe that,

...the political market may also be intuitively understood in terms of a set of hierarchical submarkets in which a party (brand) competes more directly with other parties (brands) within its submarket.

This decision showed an awareness of the key differences between commercial and political marketing by the Livingstone campaign. Lock and Harris (1996) emphasise several key characteristics in which political marketing is unlike commercial marketing. They observe that winning parties do not continue to dominate share of the vote in the same way that brand leaders hold their market share. Livingstone's policies and personality allowed him to capitalise on the likely reaction against the brand leading Labour Party candidate. The independent campaign also positioned Livingstone outside the brand of the Labour Party. Lock and Harris (1996:24) define a political brand as `...the party name...`, which becomes attached to different policies and politicians. Therefore, the success of the Livingstone campaign's independent electoral strategy is founded on recognition of the willingness of the electorate to switch its vote in local elections, as a reaction against the brand leader.

Furthermore, campaigning outside the Labour umbrella brand allowed Livingstone to maximise the support of voters across the political spectrum. Travis (2000:5) notes that Livingstone also attracted significant support from voters who identified

themselves with both the Liberal Democrats (33%) and the Conservative Party (24%). Livingstone's positioning outside the Labour Party brand appears to be a strategy informed by an awareness of the decline of the importance of the party. Lock and Harris (1996:26) recognise that the '...electoral brand loyalty...' of voters is in decline. The increasing eagerness of voters to switch political allegiances is underlined by Lock and Harris (1996:26), who highlight that,

...the links between the parties and the broader community have tended to decline. Fewer voters identify closely with a particular party or know people who belong to one.

The decline of party identification and subsequent volatility of the electorate's voting patterns is also emphasised by Hayes and McAllister (1996:139), who stress that a quarter of the electorate do not have a set voting preference between elections. The lack of allegiance to a political brand is underlined by Hayes and McAllister (1996:139) in their assertion, 'Put simply, British voters have become less partisan. The strength as well as the incidence of party loyalty has also diminished'. The neglecting of party allegiances and shopping around for candidates is dubbed '...supermarket voting...' by Travis (2000:5). The Livingstone campaign's strategy of differentiation from the Labour Party was a strategy that positioned Livingstone as an acceptable candidate for Conservative voters, as well as Labour voters. The probability of supporters of the major parties shifting their vote during the campaign period due to the political communications of the opposition party is unlikely. This is underlined by Hayes and McAllister (1996:142), who emphasise that the marketing tactics of the major parties have little influence in gaining votes from opposing supporters;

Partisan de-alignment creates the conditions under which voters may defect from the major parties, but not cross the psychologically important dividing line between Conservative and Labour

According to Hayes and McAllister (1996) the allegiance some voters feel during the campaign period towards either the Conservative or Labour candidate prevents them from shifting their attitude towards the alternative candidate. However, campaigning

as an independent candidate with carefully promoted individual policies placed Livingstone as an acceptable alternative to Norris for Conservative voters. Therefore, the Livingstone campaign was informed by an understanding of the electorate's voting habits.

The success of the Livingstone4London election campaign was founded in its broad appreciation and implementation of the political marketing concept. The Livingstone4London campaign differentiated its communications to specific target markets and also developed its market product by shifting the personality and policies represented by its candidate. The variety of features of the campaign embodied characteristics drawn from all three phases of the political marketing concept outlined by Wring (1996). The purple tour bus was a tactic typical of the political propaganda, the targeted television interviews embodied facets of media campaigning, whilst the shifting of policy according to populist concerns showed a comprehensive marketing orientation. The extended influence of the marketing concept on the Livingstone campaign exemplifies the development of political marketing to encompass strategy, as predicted by Butler and Collins (1996:34);

As marketing is increasingly adopted in politics, it will move beyond influencing only tactical matters of communication and presentation, and play a significant role in policy formulation and long-term direction

The success of the Livingstone4London campaign suggests that political marketers must focus on the manipulation of manifestos as well as the tailoring of communications to create a desirable message for the electorate.

