

## ABSTRACT

**mgr Bartłomiej Rafał Białas**

### **“THE IMPACT OF BRAND MANAGEMENT IN POLITICS ON CANDIDATES’ COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS”**

investigated the process of building a strong and appealing political brand and the impact of a well-devised political brand strategy on voters-consumers’ perceptions of the political presidential candidate within the context of the electoral politics in the U.S. There is no doubt that both political and branding processes have a profound impact on virtually all societies (democratic or not and capitalist or not). Politics has a tremendous impact on individuals’ lives, and so too does branding, especially within the context of the excessive nature of overconsumption and hyper-branded American culture. Although applying marketing techniques in politics is not a new phenomenon, in the latter part of the twentieth century commercial branding concepts and theoretical frameworks have been applied to politics with growing sophistication. It has been argued that a brand’s value to voters-consumers is strengthened when it is associated or identified over time with a set of unique elements that define the brand concept. One of the underlying tenets of branding is its ability to reduce voters-consumers’ search costs and perceived risk by establishing coherent, continuous, and singular identity, personality, message, communication, attributes, and promises. As such, brands should strive to maintain their defining and idiosyncratic brand identities. The implications of the concept of political branding are far-reaching and have been thoroughly analyzed and presented in this dissertation. This thesis highlights the various aspects related to the phenomenon of political branding and how it can be applied to increase political capital and cachet. During the length of this thesis, it is also revealed that voters can – and even should – be conceptualized as consumers due to the fact that they look for mental short-cuts (known as heuristics) whereby they could decide which political brand they would prefer over others. In exploring the concept of political branding, the author attempts to understand the essential nature and structure of key success factors in electoral politics using the lens of strategic brand management.