

# Political Marketing as Arts and New Media: A Study of Website Usage for Political Marketing

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**Abstract:** As global culture has been penetrating nearly all aspects of life in all around the world the use of new media including website become more ubiquitous. Even it is very common that websites are used to convey visual arts for the purposes of political marketing. The political elite, political parties, and many interest groups usually have their own website to inform and/or to persuade the public in term of political marketing. It could be emphasized in this respect that arts (visual arts) are often utilized to carry political relevance message for the purpose of political marketing including photographs, paintings, video, and film. Having the basis of the such like phenomena the study attempts to examine what characteristic nature of the use of visual arts in the websites run particularly by the three major political parties in Indonesia (PDIP, Gerindra, PKS) during the period of the run-up of the 2019 general election. Media analysis technique is employed in the study by scrutinizing what kinds of visual arts are utilized and the cultural and psychological appeals are applied. The data had been gathered based on the observation which was conducted June - August 2018.

**Keyword:** *political marketing, arts, visual arts, new media, website*

## Introduction

Visual arts become forms of media that are widely used in the educational process because visual arts are considered to make teachers easier to form students' perceptions and provide a good impact in terms of understanding because visual arts are visual images created on the basis of what is felt, imagined, and thought. The ability of visual arts that makes political organizations include or make visual arts as parts of political marketing. Actors from political marketing are political organizations or political elites.

Political organizations or political elites want to reach the youth market where young people are the generation, considered to dominate the upcoming general elections in 2019. Therefore, new media become media that are widely used by political organizations or political elites because new media have the potential to penetrate youth markets with various races and ethnicities. Today, young people prefer digital forms of political communication. (Marshment 2009; Cohen & Kahne 2011).

All types of new media are used by political organizations or political elites to conduct marketing, such as social media and websites. The most commonly used new media are websites. The use of websites for the sake of political marketing has long been carried out, from the 1999 general election up to the present. Although social media are more widely used than websites in political marketing practices, websites remain the most basic or fundamental media used by political parties or political elites (Towner & Dulio, 2012: 100)

The concept of visual arts often be understood as forms of creation which are many varies in their nature including paintings, photographs and even moving pictures. (Esaak, 2018). National Art Education Association define visual arts as traditional fine arts, like drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, and sculpture; and also media arts, such as film, graphic

communications, animation and emerging technologies. Visual arts including photographs based on research are able to help the process of searching data in research. Marin and Roldan (2010) conduct research on visual arts with research focus. They find that photographs can describe problems, explain context, provide and interpret data, indicate cases for findings, and show conclusions. Marin and Roldan's research results show that with visual arts, the research process becomes easier. With the results of their research, the characteristics or uses of visual arts can be applied to other approaches such as education or marketing including political marketing.

Research on arts in a wide sense and visual arts in a narrower sense could be undertaken in a variety of contexts e.g., academic achievement (Gibson and Larson, 2007) focus on academic performance use visual arts in elementary schools with conclusion if classroom teachers are anticipated to integrate art efficaciously and help children grow in this environment then there must be either expressed training in the visual arts for elementary classroom teachers or a requirement for providing art specialists; education (De Kamp, et al, 2012) with aim examine the effects of explicit instruction of meta-cognition on students' divergent thinking and the conclusion said visual arts are building up meta-cognitive knowledge about divergent thinking may improve students' creative processes; and politics or government (Rodner and Preece, 2015) which said governments and art worlds are trying to build a brand narrative for nations, but that these discourse are often at cross-purposes. This research illustrate that it is impossible to separate a consideration of the artwork from the macro-level context in which it is produced, distributed, and consumed. Visual arts have many uses, such as for therapeutic, social, marketing, and political actions (Hope, 2015).

Visual arts particularly photograph has various category with some version. Urby.in said from 32 types of photography, there is urban photography in one of them. Urban photography try to capture people, objects, cityscapes, and the surreal. Urban photography are a visual representation of an idea, a capturing of 'the decisive moment', and also a commentary on contemporary life in an ecological space ([www.urby.in](http://www.urby.in)). Other than that, there is also a genre called Editorial genre. These genres make claims that what has been captured accurately reflects the situation or event as it was witnessed. War, political and news are include in this genre (Larsen, 2018).

In marketing, it offer a product to sell and the product will be advertised. In advertising, an appeal is needed to make the product stand out and have an appeal as well as a political party or political elite in its political marketing activities. Appeal in advertising tries to influence consumer buying behavior, rationally or emotionally. Appeal plays an important role in persuading people to want certain commodities or change their desires from each other. Thinking appeal was defined as appealing to recipient's rationality, and the feeling of appeal was defined as creating moods and attracting emotions (Golden & Johnson, 1983)

The research in this paper focuses on visual arts and politics with new media. This study tries to examine the characteristics of visual arts use on websites run by political parties. The political parties that will be examined in this study are the main political parties in Indonesia, namely PDIP, Gerindra, and PKS during the lead up to the 2019 general election period. Media analysis techniques are used in this study by examining what types of visual arts are used and what cultural and psychological appeals are applied.

## **Method**

This study uses a qualitative interpretive research aimed at examining websites contents of the three political parties: PDIP, Gerindra and PKS. Media analysis method was used in this study. Primary documents on media analysis are the objects of study, e.g., newspaper, magazines, TV newscast, diaries, text messages, photographs /videos, and even archaeological artifacts (Altheide & Schneider, 2012)

Data sources were obtained from news photography at website pdiperjuangan.id (PDIP); partaigerindra.or.id (Gerindra); and pks.id (PKS). The content of messages exposed on the website was analyzed by observing two main aspects: (a) the used type of visual arts, (b) the used kind of appeal (psychologically or culturally). In this case, all of the three aspects of the website were thought of as political marketing efforts carried out by each website owner. Observations began in mid-2018 from June to August. Total observations were passed through for 3 months.

## **Results and Discussion**

This research, as already stipulated, deals with websites run by the three major political parties in the period of run-up 2019 general election namely PDIP, Gerindra, and PKS. In this respect, PDIP has its own website pdiperjuangan.id; Gerindra run the website of partaigerindra.or.id; and PKS run pks.id. Two main aspects are scrutinized in this research namely (a) what kinds of visual arts are utilized, (b) the cultural and psychological appeals are applied. The data and analyses could be presented as follows

### ***The genre of visual arts deployed***

With the term of “genre of visual arts” this means variants of the visual used in political marketing effort run by political parties. As this study deals with political marketing utilized by taking the advantages of news disseminated through website by political parties, the genre of visual arts refers simply genre of photography which are displayed in the news reporting. In this respect, it could be said that there are a number of photography genres (a) majoring political elites, (b) majoring grass-roots people, and (c) majoring objects of visual arts such as landscape and hashtag.

### ***Majoring political elite***

The political elite, be it ruling or governing, refers to a group of highly respected people characterized by extraordinary performance in politics, who effectively exploit or monopolize power and who have a sense of group cohesion and related esprit correspondents. The political elite always excels in the ability to secure power and power (Ekundayo, 2018 : 1).

Depicting political elites is a usual way of political marketing in website run by political parties during the period of run up 2019 to attracting audience in term of political marketing. Photography of having time together involved Jokowi with Megawati is a good example in this respect. Jokowi and Megawati were seen wanting to eat together as Megawati smiled. In the photo, Jokowi is likely holding a smartphone and is seen talking so as to give the impression that in the situation, both are in casual conversation or discussion. These two political elites have shown their closeness through photos uploaded on September 5, 2018 on the PDIP website (pdiperjuangan.id)

Similar to the photos of Jokowi and Megawati, the gestures are also found on the website of the Prabowo and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono Gerindra Party websites as well as in a relaxed picture together with a cup of drink. In addition to the two drink cups being held by SBY and Prabowo, there are also several papers such as documents on the table of these two political elites. The photo illustrates that in discussing important matters, Prabowo and SBY make the atmosphere relaxed. Serious but relaxed as the impression the Gerindra Party wants to convey through photo uploads on its website ([partaigerindra.or.id](http://partaigerindra.or.id)) on July 30, 2018.

In addition to photographs of the closeness of the political elites with other political elites in one party, or the closeness of the political elites to the coalition party's political elites, an overview of the political elites is also seen in their activities. Megawati's photo shows a bull symbol with her hand in the oration. Seen behind her, many masses follow the style of the hand and also raised the attributes of the campaign in the form of a hand with a bull symbol. Through the uploaded images on the PDIP website ([pdiperjuangan.id](http://pdiperjuangan.id)) dated June 5, 2018, PDIP wants to show that PDIP has many supporters and followers.

### *Majoring grass-roots people*

The grassroots is part of the political pyramid which placed at the bottom, opposite the "establishment," which controls the top. The grassroots includes virtually everyone else, ordinary people who do not need to hold political office and who might even get their first political taste in a particular destination. The fact is, the "grassroots" is not like anything else in politics. Basically, they are very resistant to central control, but they can be very loyal and self-sacrificing ([renewamerica.com](http://renewamerica.com), 2018). Talking about grassroots people which part of political, grassroots people genre is an editorial photography, capture the political elements.

In the time leading up to the general election, the community has shown its support to one of the presidential candidates or parties to be elected later. Mass gathering in the photos is to support their choice. This is in the photo of the mass of supporters of the Gerindra Party who gathered and declared 2019 Change President. The photo shows a lot of crowds gathered in the open (like on the road) with some people wearing T-shirts with the 2019 Change President design. Some people even climb the wall to see the center of attention where there is a party sympathizer talking. The photo uploaded on the Gerindra Party website ([partaigerindra.or.id](http://partaigerindra.or.id)) on August 28, 2018, gives an illustration that the Gerindra Party has many enthusiastic supporters.

The description of support from the community is not only seen on the Gerindra Party website. The PKS website also provides photos of the supporting community. It is seen that a number of Papuans are gathered in a place where there is a symbol of the PKS party. In the photo released on July 14, 2018 on the PKS website ([pks.id](http://pks.id)), two of them have painted their bodies with the PKS symbol. The photo shows the impression that PKS supporters in Papua are totality and fanatical.

This political party not only shows supporters from within the country, but also shows support abroad as in the PDIP website ([pdiperjuangan.id](http://pdiperjuangan.id)) released on June 11, 2018, there is a photo of PDIP supporters from Indonesian migrant workers in Saudi Arabia. In that photo, some party sympathizers sit in a line while listening to one of the members speaking and this photo illustrates that there is an event. The immigrant workers are also photographed together using T-shirts with Jokowi picture and banners reading "BROTHERHOOD NETWORK ON PRO SAUDI ARABIA INDONESIAN MIGRANT WORKERS DETERMINED BY THE PRESIDENT H. JOKO WIDODO IN 2019 ELECTION". This photo implies that the political

marketing efforts or strategies of PDIP in terms of promoting Jokowi as the president in 2019 not only exist in the country but also succeed in inviting Indonesian people who are abroad.

### *Majoring objects of visual arts such as landscape and hashtag*

Objects of visual arts such as landscape and hashtag is an urban photography category that seeks to encapsulate not just people, but also objects and cityscapes.

The form of support can be seen from the campaigned hashtag as well as objects or accessories. In the photo uploaded on August 7, 2018 on the Gerindra Party website ([partaigerindra.or.id](http://partaigerindra.or.id)), there are people carrying shirts with a hashtag #2019GANTIPRESIDEN (#2019ChangePresident) design. The person looks like a t-shirt seller. Through this photo, the Gerindra Party seems to want to show that low-class people such as t-shirts sellers play a role in spreading the slogan or hashtag #2019GantiPresiden. Even though actually, the sellers may do not know whether they really support it or not, or just use the moment for economic needs, but at least with them, help implement the political marketing strategy of the Gerindra Party.

Next, there are also photos of people holding objects such as booklets with the same written hashtag, which is #2019GantiPresiden. The photographed person is a young man. The atmosphere behind him looks crowded and this is possibly in an activity or event. A photo uploaded through the Gerindra Party website ([partaigerindra.or.id](http://partaigerindra.or.id)) on August 2, 2018, can be interpreted as an effort to show that the Gerindra Party is able to attract young people as supporters.

Almost the same with what is released on the Gerindra Party website, there is also a photo of a hat object with a 2019 Change President design on the PKS website ([pks.id](http://pks.id)). The photo released on June 4, 2018 has no object other than a hat. Hat in this photo is focused in this picture. This shows that many objects or attributes are created and distributed. Spreading various objects is one of the strategies of political marketing. Not only that, this photo also implies that as a coalition party from Gerindra, the PKS is ready to support Prabowo as the next President.

Regardless of the campaign or support for presidential candidates, political parties usually show the achievements of their political elite. The beauty of Surabaya, led by Tri Rismaharini who received the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize award in the Special Mention category. In the photo uploaded on the PDIP website ([pdiperjuangan.id.id](http://pdiperjuangan.id.id)) dated July 13, 2019, it shows the beauty of Surabaya. Taken from the top view, there are many tall trees with thick green leaves and there are also photos of clean rivers and neatly arranged houses. Not only that, PDIP also displays a photo of Tri Rismaharini watering tree plants with a long interval. This gives the impression that Risma is a leader who works hard and not just sits in her desk, but also goes straight out like caring for plants in Surabaya so that Surabaya can get awards. Displaying the achievements of political elites like this can be said to be one of a series of political marketing.

### ***The cultural and psychological appeals are applied***

The appeal becomes an attraction raised by the three parties (PDIP, Gerindra Party, and PKS) through photos uploaded on their respective party websites. There are several appeals that can be formulated, namely (a) history and culture; (b) religion; (c) social-psychological

#### *History and Culture Appeal*

History and culture appeal are showing the identity of a political party including culture, history, or perhaps the nation's journey. It is fundamental and also very important for political

marketing purposes. History appeal can be seen through lineage and party origins. Culture appeal can be seen from habits that are clearly visible from the outside. As shown by PDIP uploaded on the PDIP website in Indonesia, on June 22, it is seen that Megawati is giving a speech on the podium with several people behind her. She is seen with a picture of Soekarno behind her in a large size. In photos uploaded on July 14, 2018, it is also seen that there is Soekarno photo who is together with Megawati photo in the coordination meeting. In the photo, Megawati is giving a speech while raising her hand up. It indicates that as a leader, Megawati gives enthusiasm to fight for party members. Some of the photos described above provide a clear illustration that in each party's speeches or activities, there will be a photo of Soekarno, the first Indonesian President and also the father of Megawati, General Chair of the PDIP. This shows that PDIP is proud and appreciates the history of Soekarno's struggle for Indonesia and wants to continue him.

Wearing black cap in dress is also appeal of history and culture. In terms of history due to Soekarno who popularized black peci (cap) and the cultural side, wearing black peci in terms of dressing is very common in various events and activities in Indonesia. Political elites and party members who carry out various activities, wherever and whenever they are, are often seen using black peci. It is seen that in the photo uploaded by PDIP ([pdiperjuangan.id](http://pdiperjuangan.id)) on June 24, 2018, the political elites in their campaign activities use black peci. Prabowo and Sandi when announcing that they were presidential and vice presidential candidates, photos were uploaded on the Gerindra Party website ([partaigerindra.or.id](http://partaigerindra.or.id)). In the meeting (uploaded on August 28, 2018), it is seen that the three party members are wearing black caps and at the awards ceremony (uploaded on August 17, 2018), Prabowo while receiving the award from Rachmawati Soekarnoputri as The Star of Soekarno is seen using a black peci.

History and culture can be seen not only from the identity of the lineage and style of dressing, but also from respecting the veterans of Indonesia as also a form of appreciation for history. This is seen in the photo uploaded on the PKS website where in the photo, the Indonesian veterans are being given an award from the PKS. All veterans use brown fighter cap in the past (released on [pks.id](http://pks.id). August 17, 2018). An award to veterans is also seen in the photo uploaded on August 13, 2013, a member of PKS Muda (Youth PKS) is giving a plaque to one of the three Indonesian veterans. This implies that PKS youths appreciate the history and fighters of Indonesia in past times.

### *Religion Appeal*

Religion appeal is a touch that contains religious and spiritual elements. Not only in terms of dressing. Recitation or aid activities for orphans. There were many orphans who were invited to the commemoration of the birth of Bung Karno. All orphans sit together while listening to one of the party members speaking (released on [pdiperjuangan.id](http://pdiperjuangan.id). June 11, 2018).

It is clear that this is a strategy of political marketing where political parties are seen to have the support of the religious organization as seen in the photo uploaded on the Gerindra Party website ([partaigerindra.or.id](http://partaigerindra.or.id).) on July 27, 2018, Prabowo hold hands closely with Rizieq Shihab (Leader of the Islamic Defenders Front) and also the Islamic scholars and other Islamic teachers at the Ijtima Ulama dan Tokoh Nasional event. A photo uploaded on July 30, 2018 also gives the same impression. Prabowo with members of his coalition parties (seen Habib Salim Assegaf, Amien Rais, Ustad Abdul Somad, etc.) hold hands closely with the Islamic teachers. This implies that Prabowo and the Gerindra Party are not only nationalists but also religious. In terms of political marketing, Prabowo and the Gerindra Party want to take the heart of the

majority of people in Indonesia because it is known that the majority of the Indonesian population adheres to Islam.

### *Social-psychological Appeal*

The social-psychological appeal is found in activities or movements that take the side of sympathy or empathy for those who see it, such as social activities to show the good side.

There is a lot of visible social-psychological appeal. It is known that a few months ago, Indonesia experienced an earthquake in Lombok. This makes political parties moved to do social activities. Like in the photo released by the PKS Party (pks.id) on August 8, 2018, it is seen that the victims of the Lombok earthquake have received assistance in the form of food items (such as eggs, rice, and other basic ingredients) from PKS party representatives. Delivery of food ingredients is carried out in an emergency tent. PKS shows that in social activities like this, they go directly to the location to provide such assistance. When viewed from the side of political marketing, this matter wants to show that the PKS wants to take the hearts of the people who are in distress and give the impression that they are ready to help to ease the burden on society.

Still in the atmosphere of helping the Lombok earthquake victims, the PDIP website (pdiperjuangan.id.) releases a photo in which a female doctor wearing a vest on which there is a symbol of the PDIP party examines the patients. These patients are victims of the Lombok earthquake. Being outside open with makeshift tents, the doctor examines elderly victims and also examines female patients who are lying on the bed. The photo released on August 8, 2018 can be interpreted as an attempt to attract public attention that PDIP cares about the victims of Lombok, especially from the health side.

Before the earthquake in Lombok in June, it was the atmosphere of Eid and many people went to their hometown by land (homecoming travel). This kind of momentum is used by political parties to get closer to the community by opening a homecoming post. As seen on the PKS website (pks.id on June 19, 2018) uploading a photo of a medical worker, examining the tension of a mother who looks like a homecomer. PKS gives the impression of caring for public health. In another photo uploaded on June 10, 2018, Chairperson of DWP PKS Jawa Timur, Arif HS is testing a homecoming post in Tuban. In the photo, Arif HS is massaged using an electronic massage device with a smile. Through this photo, PKS shows its concern for the comfort of the community. Another side of concern is described in the photo published on June 19, 2018, a motorbike is being repaired at the PKS homecoming post at night. Two people are seen wearing T-shirts symbolized by PKS (indicating that they are sympathizers from PKS) repairing leaking motorcycle tires. The picture implies that PKS (through the PKS Homecoming Post) cares about the safety of the community and is ready to help anytime (even though it is late at night) and anywhere.

Seeing what the political parties do by giving a social-psychological appeal, they want to attract the community psychologically to see the good side of a particular political party so that the community intends to support the political party and succeed in the 2019 general election. This description is the point of view of the political marketing strategy

### **Conclusion**

Visual arts are visual images created on the basis of what is felt, imagined, and thought. The ability of visual arts that makes political organizations include or make visual arts as parts of political marketing. This analysis about photography as political marketing on website during

the run up of 2019 general election period contributes to knowledge in several ways. First, we have explained the genre of visual arts deployed and it could be said that there are a number of photography genres are majoring political elites, majoring grass-roots people, majoring objects of visual arts such as landscape and hashtag. Second, we found the cultural and psychological appeals applies on the photograph. There are history and culture, religion and social-psychological. This research shows that photography (part of visual arts), plays a role in the development of political party branding or marketing. The genre revealed and the appeal applied provides an opportunity for the public to make opinion about the image of political parties and political elites. Opinions formed by people will influence them to make decision to vote during the 2019 general election later.

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