The Reality of Virtual Campaigning in Japan

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Acknowledgements

Some years ago, a colleague told me that the act of producing a doctoral dissertation is a lonely and monastic endeavor. He was both right and wrong. While the act of writing may appear solitary, it serves only as the physical product of innumerable formal and informal discussions, thoughts, and input from a number of key people.

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Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1   Introduction

In the past decade, there has been a great deal of debate surrounding the relationship between the internet and political activities on a range of levels. One level focuses on its utilization as an information and communications tool by the public as well as political parties, politicians, and candidates for public office. For the public as a whole, the internet has facilitated engagement in political debate, participation in elections, and has allowed for greater mobilization. The internet also offers political parties, politicians, and candidates the opportunity to assume greater responsibility for information provision and communications with the public, allowing for greater transparency of the political process and potentially altering the relationship that they have with the public.

The mainstream approach to the political use of the internet concentrates on the "internet-politics relationship", wherein the focus is on the medium itself, particularly as an alternative public sphere offering possibilities for widespread communications (through debate, discussion, and participation) and information provision. An outgrowth of early predictions in the mid-1990s concerning the relationship between the internet and politics, it assumes a potentially idealistic role of the internet as an agent of change that can affect political outcomes and alter political realities. That the internet failed to deliver on its promise to influence politics, particularly electoral outcomes, by the early twentieth century, led to pessimism regarding its impact. The "normalization" hypothesis forwarded by Margolis and Resnick in 2000 suggested that "ordinary politics and commercial activity…have invaded and captured cyberspace [and] virtual reality has grown to resemble the real world" (Margolis and Resnick, 2000: 2).

Yet accepting the premature conclusion that "politics as usual" prevails overlooks other crucial dimensions of its use as a political communications and information provision tool. What is "politics as usual"? What factors have an impact on how political actors are actually utilizing the Internet in a particular political environment or "political playing field"? And, what are the long-term implications of their use of the medium? This dissertation argues that there is another perspective in analyzing the political uses of the internet, that of the "politics-internet relationship" wherein it is postulated that critical aspects of the political environment in which the medium is being utilized such

as legal framework, party competition, party organization, political ideology, and party size are key factors. In essence, this approach puts the "politics" back into the "politics-Internet" relationship by first examining the political environment in which it has been adopted and then assessing how political actors are integrating it within their political activities in this environment, particularly during election campaign periods. Only by firmly grounding its utilization within the prevailing political environment – adding a sense of "reality" to virtual campaigning – are we in a position to reflect upon the long-term political implications of the use of the internet by these political actors.

Compared to other countries, Japan's experience with the campaign use of the internet is especially intriguing in this regard. The potential of the internet to 'level the playing field' among major and minor political actors is a concept that developed in advanced democratic countries where election campaigns are relatively unregulated, costs of running political campaigns are relatively high, and political competition is encouraged. However, in Japan, the 'playing field' of election campaigns is already heavily regulated through the POEL (Public Offices Election Law), which has been applied to the use of the internet for political campaigns since 1995. While controlling the costs of election campaigns was one of the original purposes of the POEL, its continued application to online campaigning (or e-campaigning) has also potentially muted the impact of the internet on political campaigns in Japan. Furthermore, the strict regulations of the POEL with regard to campaigning by political parties and candidates have also ensured a role for the government as well in terms of disseminating campaign-related information. This in turn has affected how political parties and candidates have used it as a mass information and communications medium during election campaign periods, as demonstrated through this examination of the websites produced by political parties and candidates in two national election periods during 2000 and 2001.

Japan's experience with the political use of the internet provides an intriguing case study for scholars of both political science and the emerging field of internet studies. By assessing the overall political environment in which the internet is being used for campaign activities, this study highlights the importance of examining the political use of the internet based on country-level conditions. This political environment includes aspects of regulating the internet, in which Japan's case is particularly interesting because legislation in the form of the POEL that was originally intended for other media

formats has been successfully applied to the campaign use of the internet. In addition, such legislation has been specifically aimed at restricting internet use by traditional political actors such as political parties and candidates for public office. Rather than basing this examination of the political use of the internet for campaign purposes on the internet itself, this study shows how certain aspects of a country's political environment have also had an impact on how political actors are utilizing this new medium of information provision and communications. Assessing the political use of the internet from the political aspects—as opposed to a singular focus on the technology itself—provides a more holistic viewpoint for appraising the long-term implications of its relationship with political activities. In essence, what this study hopes to accomplish is to temper the idealism of the impact of the internet on politics with the reality of virtual campaigning in Japan.

1.2   Addressing critical assumptions

Since the early years of the public use of the internet, scholars have focused on this medium as having the potential to change politics. Despite the small but growing user populations in the early 1990s, social scientists optimistically proclaimed that the internet could herald a new era of democracy by allowing the general public to more fully participate in political debates and discussions (Grossman, 1995). 'Digital democracy', "cyberdemocracy", "e-democracy" became common buzzwords used to describe the possibilities of using the internet and related ICTs (information communications technologies) to return to the tradition of reasoned and informed public debate (Grossman, 1995). Other optimistic uses of the technology included allowing citizens to more actively and easily contact elected officials, as well as gain access to a wide variety of political information (Rash, 1997; Benson, 1996).

Yet in the mid- to late 1990s, these optimistic scenarios were tempered with more sober arguments based on mature experiences with the technology. Empirical research conducted mainly in the U.S. and U.K. suggested that political actors were not using it to its full advantage in promoting new forms of political participation (Gibson and Ward, 1998; Kamarck, 1999; Sunstein, 2001). In fact, rather than utilizing the internet in ways that could revolutionize politics, these examinations of the use

of the internet in different political milieu lead to the conclusion that 'politics as usual' prevailed despite the optimism that initially greeted the use of the internet (Margolis and Resnick, 2000).

There are certain reasons for this gap between idealistic attitudes towards the internet in the early years of its use and the reality of its use by political actors. Historically, the advent of new media channels have been accompanied by optimistic predictions regarding their social and political use, as seen with the introduction of the telegraph in the nineteenth century and radio and television in the 20th century. And, certainly, at the time of Al Gore, Jr.'s assertions in 1994 concerning the democratic possibilities of a new "information superhighway", not very much was known about how this political rhetoric would manifest itself (Wiggins, 2000).

One particularly crucial assumption concerning how the internet has been viewed as a political communications and information medium involves the political context in which it is situated. In the early years of widespread internet use in the U.S., political analysts were quick to hail it as a means of reviving democratic ideals through public participation. Embedded within the conventional wisdom concerning the democratizing potential of the internet are features that value not only freedom of speech and individual rights, but also systemic factors within the American political environment such as lack of campaign media regulation and a competitive dual-party structure. As such, the emphasis on the potential of the internet has often overlooked the fact that these features set the stage for its political use. Furthermore, these differences are highlighted only by examining the political use of the internet in other political contexts with different electoral systems and media environments.

Second, most of the attention focused on the political use of the internet, especially in western democracies, has depicted it as a potentially powerful means to give a public voice to political actors such as non-traditional political organizations, minor political parties, independent candidates, and the public. Here again, early perspectives such as those put forward by Hill and Hughes (1998), Rash (1996), Rheingold (1995), and Morris (1999) concerning the democratizing possibilities of the internet have added to its reputation as a means for media-challenged political actors to reach a wider public. Yet, the focus on the internet as a change agent that provides equalizing possibilities for "political have-nots" ignores the "political haves" who may also be strategically using it. To date, little attention has been paid to how major political parties and governments in democratic nations may be

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strategically utilizing the Internet to maintain prevailing political power balances and shape the legislative context in which it is utilized for political communications and information provision.

Lastly, one further element that has been overlooked in the debate concerning the internet's potential impact on politics is a practical assessment of its role as a political campaign tool over a period of time. Prior studies conducted on the campaign use of the internet (Gibson and Ward, 1998; Margolis et al., 1997; Ward and Gibson, 1998) have focused mainly on the campaign itself at the expense of addressing key political factors such as party competition, organization, party, and ideology in addition to assessing the use of the medium over a period of time. These factors are critical aspects for setting the stage of the campaign use of the internet. Rather than evaluating the political use of internet as a means of causing immediate (and positive) changes to political systems, have an impact on electoral outcomes, or provide the means for widespread political participation, there is a critical need to assess its utilization in terms of the political "playing field" in which it is being utilized.

1.3   Research questions and scope

Using Japan as a case study, this dissertation challenges the three conventional notions as set out above regarding the political use of the internet. Japan's political context and experience with the use of the Internet for political campaigning is particularly interesting in this regard. Over the past decade, the internet does not seem to have made an impact on political outcomes in Japan. Given the above considerations and assumptions, the aim of this dissertation is to examine why this has been the case. As such, through an examination of the Japanese political environment, including legislation concerning the campaign use of the internet, political factors inherent in Japanese politics itself, and the campaign-oriented websites produced by Japanese political parties and candidates, I show that rather than the internet itself being an agent of change, it can also be a means for demonstrating political trends.

I do this by focusing on three sets of research questions. First, how have certain regulations initially aimed at other campaign media been applied to the use of the internet especially during election campaign periods in Japan and how have such regulations affected how political actors use the internet? Despite over ten years of experience with the use of the internet, opposition political

parties have been unable to use it to unseat the one-party domination of the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) that has endured throughout most of the postwar period in Japan. In fact, its utilization as a political campaign medium since 1995 has been affected by the government's application of provisions within the POEL to certain content of websites produced by political parties and candidates for public office during election campaign periods. In order to address this question, I delve into the general history of the POEL in Japan, compare its provisions with similar legislation in other countries, and examine how the POEL has been applied to the use of the internet (specifically websites produced by political parties and candidates) during the past decade.

In addition to the legislative framework having an impact on the campaign use of the internet in Japan, I contend that practical goals for utilizing the internet and factors pertaining to the political system may affect how political parties portray themselves on the web. Although the history of the political internet in Japan illustrates some truth in the above-stated conventional wisdom that small political parties would make more active use of the internet than dominant parties, a long-term examination of the political use of the internet in Japan both between and during election campaign periods demonstrates a different scenario. The second set of research questions looks at the goals that political parties have identified as reasons for using the internet and compares party website utilization on the basis of party organization, ideology, and size. What goals do political parties have for utilizing websites? How are these goals related to party competition, organization, ideology, and size? Are there discernible trends among campaign-oriented political party websites in terms of these factors? And, lastly, what do these trends reveal about the long-term implications of the relationship between the internet and Japanese political campaigns? To answer these questions, I utilize the results of a survey of website managers from each political party as well as a content analysis of each party's website during the 2000 general and 2001 Upper House election campaign periods.

The final set of research questions concerns how political candidates are utilizing websites in their election campaign activities, focusing on candidates' official websites during the 2001 Upper House election campaign period. In this analysis and comparison of candidate websites, I have sought to go beyond simply analyzing the contents of websites in terms of election-oriented information and communications with the electorate in two ways. First, in addition to comparing candidates with

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regard to these types of features available on their websites, I also look at how candidates are using their websites to address issues, demonstrate party affiliation, and show affiliations with organizations or institutions through linking strategies. For these aspects, my main research question is: How are candidates using their websites to provide election-related information to the public, communicate with the public, address issues, and show party and organizational affiliations through linking strategies? And, second, I categorize these results in terms of political party and candidate status (new candidate or incumbent) to discern patterns or trends in how candidates of different political parties utilize the web. In this analysis, I address the question: Is there a tendency for candidates of certain parties to have similar features on their websites? Extending the approach used with political party websites in terms of comparing websites in terms of political factors such as party organization and size provides clues to how Japanese political candidates are approaching the use of the web in Japan's political environment.

1.4   Implications

While not underestimating the value of previous studies in other nations concerning the political use of the internet that have been undertaken during or after the occurrence of discreet events such as election campaign periods, this longitudinal approach provides a necessary long-term perspective for assessing the broader implications of the political use of the internet. In this dissertation, I do not argue that election campaigns are unimportant; rather, I show that an awareness of incremental events that occur outside political campaign periods is critical for accurately assessing the long-term relationship between political activities and the internet.

This long-term perspective also allows us to examine the use of the internet as a communications and information provision tool within the regulatory environment that sets the boundaries for political campaign media. In the American political context where the only restrictions on the amount of political advertising available to political parties and candidates for public office involve the depth of their campaign war-chests, assessments of the internet as a political campaign tool have tended to focus on internet itself rather than its use as a political medium within the prevailing legislative context. Certainly, this reinforces trends in the "Americanization" of political media, long

observed to be part of evolving trends in political campaign practices (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha, 1995; Mancini and Swanson, 1996; Farrell and Webb, 2000). However, Japan's experience with political media in general, and the campaign use of the internet in particular, during election campaign periods is rather distinctive. Similar to their counterparts in the U.S. and Europe, Japanese political parties and candidates have embraced the political advertising possibilities found in campaign websites and e-mail newsletters. Yet in contrast, political campaign media legislation originally targeted at other media channels such as newspapers and television, has been applied to the political use of the internet by parties and candidates.

Closely related to the "Americanization" model of political campaign communications is the technological development of political campaigns in general. Previous research examining developments in political campaign communications over the past century have identified certain progressions in campaign styles from traditional to modern through to post-modern phases (Farrell and Webb, 2000). Traditional political campaigns have focused on interpersonal relationships, speeches, and personal appearances by candidates. The growing popularity of television as a mass media channel has shifted much of the onus for political campaign communications to this channel as an intermediary through which political parties and candidates communicate with the electorate. It has been suggested that this modern campaign phase has focused on "selling" politics to the public by providing them with as much political information as possible. The post-modern campaign continues the commercial metaphor by shifting emphasis towards "marketing" politics to the public; rather than addressing the electorate as a whole, political actors are using media in general—and new media technologies such as the internet in particular—to tailor their political messages and campaigns to the specific interests of increasingly smaller segments of the electorate.

This study of the use of the internet as a political campaign medium provides not only a longitudinal examination of the decade-long experiences of Japanese political parties and candidates. However, viewed from a wider perspective, it also illustrates the dual continuums of change in internet diffusion and party use of the internet set against the static background of the POEL and one-party predominance by the LDP. It is hoped that it will contribute to comparison of the use of the internet as a political information and communications medium in various cross-national contexts over time.

1.5   Japan's internet environment

The growth of the internet in Japan has followed a sporadic and uneven path of development in the past three decades**.** In Japan, as in the U.S. and other countries, the internet was first used in academic settings, select local-government projects, and within large organizations. The first networking system in Japan created by individual organizations was the JUNET (Japan Unix Network), which was developed in 1984 and allowed for a means to connect Japanese universities in Japan primarily with those in the United States. Within the following year, the WIDE (Widely Integrated Distributed Environment) project, headed by Professor Jun Murai of Keio University, linked Keio University with the University of Tokyo and the Tokyo Institute of Technology as the first joint project to connect Japanese universities. A number of other Japanese universities soon followed suit, and by 1990, almost all national and public universities in Japan were connected through either expanded intranets or direct connections with other universities throughout the world. Compared to other countries in the Asian region such as South Korea and China (which did not develop networking capabilities outside government, university systems, and organizations until the mid- to late 1990s), Japan's experience with the internet started relatively early.

Early experiments in the networking use of the internet were mainly concentrated in local-level community networks in the mid-1980s. Similar in structure to early American community networks such as The WELL in San Francisco, in 1985, COARA (Computer Communication of Oita Amateur Research Association), a community-led public "bulletin board" project, was established by a group of approximately 30 residents in Oita, Japan. Originally conceived as a database for weather and local business information, COARA received strong support from Governor Morihiko Hiramatsu and the local city council as a means of connecting the community through information and communication exchanges. In addition to local issues, in the mid-1980s, geographically based citizens' groups (referred to in Japanese as *shimin gurupu*) used computer networks to reach out to the outside world. In perhaps the first use of new-media technologies in this regard, in 1985 a citizen's group in the city of Zushi (near Tokyo) used the Metanetwork system (an early bulletin board messaging service) to focus worldwide attention on environmental issues facing the community.

During the first wave of emerging "internet communities", Japanese "netizens" (citizens who used the internet) were highly motivated to use the internet. Yet, access costs, closed network systems, and low user populations prevented internet use in Japan from spreading dramatically until the mid-1990s. In the first half of the decade, Japanese internet users were trying out different forms of utilizing the internet, despite difficulties in transmitting messages across different networks that were not resolved until the early 1990s. As a number of commercial internet service providers emerged during this period, they experimented with different forms of virtual communities, Niftyserve, an early internet services providers, started to offer real-time chat rooms or "forums" to bring together geographically dispersed users also during this first wave of growth in the internet in Japan.

Citizens' groups and local governments in Japan also started to make active use of new communications technologies in the early to mid-1990s. The Great Hanshin Earthquake in January 1995 marked a turning point for NGO and volunteer utilization of the internet. Despite heavy damage to the existing telecommunications infrastructure in the Kobe area, volunteers and government officials were able to use the internet to transmit information from various areas in the city. This utilization of the internet drew widespread attention to the benefits of community networking efforts, not only for ongoing community support, but also as a means of communication and information provision during disasters.

However, in the early 1990s, national-level initiatives to address the growing use of the internet in Japan appeared to lag behind other countries in the Asian region. In the early 1990s, in China, well before connecting to the internet outside universities was possible in China, the Chinese government targeted telecommunications for major infrastructure reform. And, in 1996, the State Council Steering Committee on National Information Structure was created to formulate strategy, principles, rules, and regulations concerning national-level informatization in China. The South Korea government as well in 1993 established a government administration information network, which later evolved into the Cyber Korea 21 project in the late 1990s.

During the late 1990s, there was a growing perception that Japan was lagging behind the U.S. and other Asian nations with regard to the use of the internet, particularly in terms of high-speed data transmission services (Ishii, 2003: 50). In the U.S., low telecommunication costs, relatively high

utilization of personal computers, and growing government awareness of the economic value of the internet helped to encourage its use, yet, in Japan, the situation was somewhat different. Ishii (2003: 50-52) suggests three main reasons for the slow uptake of high-speed internet services in Japan. The first is the dominant, monopolistic stance towards telecommunications taken by NTT (Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation) during the early 1990s which promoted ISDN (integrated services digital network) at the expense of faster DSL (digital subscriber line) services. The second is the low penetration of personal computers in the Japanese market. Until the mid-1990s, the Japanese computer market was dominated by stand-alone dedicated word processor machines with simplified operating systems which were "not suitable for accessing the internet" (Ishii, 2003:51-52). And finally, Ishii points out that a lack of a national-level IT (information technology) policy further hampered growth in the use of the internet, particularly in government offices. While there had been a number of local-level initiatives taken since the 1980s with regard to promoting the use of the internet, "many projects focused too much on hardware and too little on application software" and "many regions worked separately on parallel versions of IT projects" (Ishii, 2003: 51).

Yet, despite the above difficulties, the use of the internet continued to grow in Japan throughout the mid- to late 1990s. Although the user population was only 3 million in mid-1996 (Internet White Paper, 1998: 28), it grew to 10 million by the end of 1997 and 30 million by end of 2000 (Internet White Paper, 2003: 18). The introduction of internet-capable cellular phones in 1999 also spurred growth, and by 2004, Japan's internet user population was estimated to be 62.3 million people (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2004: 12).

With its growing popularity, the Japanese government and politicians began to seriously consider the adoption of a national-level policy concerning the internet. In July 1998, an internal committee of the LDP published a handbook on regional informatization in Japan which included case studies of successful local-level applications of the internet (LDP Internet Committee, 1998). And, commensurate with its increasing importance in the economy and growing user populations, in the mid- to late 1990s, Japan's national government started to take an interest in the internet. Former prime minister Hashimoto Ryutaro led initiatives to create a national-level program in Japan as well, unveiling a nine-point action plan that included deregulation of Japan's telecommunications industry,

expanded provision of government services through the internet, information media literacy, and privacy initiatives in 1999 (Internet White Paper, 1999: 143). The "Action Plan" originally conceived by then-Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro evolved into the "e-Japan program", which was announced by former Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro in 2000 and was originally crafted as part of an overall economic package designed to revive Japan's economy. Shortly before he left office in the spring of 2001, former Prime Minister Mori announced the creation of the Information Technology Strategy Task Force Headquarters, which would manage the "e-Japan program " aimed at creating the infrastructure for an advanced IT society in Japan by 2005 (Internet White Paper, 2001: 184-5).

Although the Japanese user population continued to rise throughout the early 2000s (to 77 million people by the end of 2004 (Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, Japan, 2004: 12), the percentage of people actively seeking politically related information remained fairly low. A survey conducted by CRL (Communications Research Laboratory) in 2002 reported that only a quarter of the internet users surveyed accessed political information through news organization websites (CRL, 2002: 30). Furthermore, the report went on to state that only 5.1% of internet users had viewed political party websites or the websites of individual politicians. Yet despite these rather disappointing figures concerning access to political party and politician websites, a survey released by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in January 2002 reported that websites were the third-most popular (15.4%) medium through which the public wanted to see an increase in election-related information (Tokyo Metropolitan Government Election Management Board, 2002: 18). Thus, this indicates that as Japan's internet user population continues to rise, we may also see an expansion in the number of people who access political party and candidate websites during election campaign periods.

1.6   Definitions

Throughout this dissertation, numerous references are made to technical terms that are associated with the internet. The term "internet" (also known as "the net") itself refers to a global network of millions of computers, and the phrase was used in the early 1970s when the internet was being developed through large-scale networks connecting initially American universities and later

university networks throughout the world (Hafner and Lyon, 1996). Through this network of computers, using various technical protocols, users can exchange e-mail and view hypertext documents on the World Wide Web (also known as WWW, the "web" or the "net"). It is important to note that e-mail communications and websites (a collection of text-based documents written in hypertext markup language that are accessible through hypertext links) are considered functions of the internet, although the phrase "the internet" is often used as a general term to describe these functions. In the early 1990s in Japan in the 1990s, various terms such as *pasokon tsushin* (communications through personal computers), *pasokon nettowaku* (network of personal computers), and later *intanetto* (internet) were used fairly indiscriminately to describe the use of the internet. Within this dissertation, the term "internet" is used in a general sense when warranted, and specific references to websites and e-mail communications are noted as such.

Further clarification may also be necessary with regard to the term "campaign activities". This phrase is often used in the literature concerning the use of the internet by political parties and candidates, particularly within the research that has been conducted to date in this regard in the U.S. and U.K. In other countries where there is are no regulations concerning the **timing** of election-related activities, most researchers use the phrases "campaign use of the internet", "campaign activities", or "online campaigning" to describe political actors' use of the internet in the period leading up to election day. As such, the continued use of this phrase (particularly in Chapter 2 which reviews the relevant research and literature in this field) may confuse native Japanese speakers whose political knowledge is shaped by the Japanese political environment in which there is a distinction between "political activities" (*seiji undo*) and "election-related activities" (*senkyo undo*) under the POEL. During the "official campaign activities period" (*senkyo undo kikan*), certain activities are deemed to be election-related and thus are subject to certain provisions. Other politically related activities that are undertaken outside this period are referred to as "political activities" (*seiji undo*). Although this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, it is important to establish the distinctions at the outset of this dissertation in order to avoid confusion on the part of the reader. In order to ameliorate this situation, where warranted, I have tried to remain faithful to the translations of the original Japanese terms.

1.7   Chapter organization

Following this brief introduction, in Chapter 2, I discuss three major theoretical approaches to the relationship between the internet and politics. The first approach is that of the internet as a democracy-enhancing medium. Early rhetoric regarding the internet focused on its merits, such as high transmission speed, low-cost communications, unlimited information amount, and decentralization could enhance certain features of election campaigning (Abramson, 1988). As a result, political parties and candidates, mainly in the U.S., embraced the medium as an alternative channel for campaign communications by the mid-1990s. However, empirical evaluations of how political actors were actually using the internet during election campaign periods in the U.S. and later the U.K. led social scientists to temper their early optimism. When no direct linkage between electoral outcomes and the use of the internet could be established, researchers suggested a "politics as usual" hypothesis, wherein political actors were utilizing the internet not as a means of involving the public in the political process but rather as a "top-down" political marketing tool (Gibson and Ward, 1998, Margolis et al. 1997). As the internet was rapidly diffusing through the world, researchers sought to look for other factors that may provide clues in assessing its political implications in different political environments by focusing on political culture factors (Ho, et al., 2003). This dissertation suggests a further phase, one "brings politics back in" by examining the political factors on a country-level basis that may affect the utilization of the internet by political actors such as political parties and candidates.

In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodological approach of website content analysis that was used to examine political party websites in the 2000 Lower House and 2001 Upper House campaigns, as well as candidate websites in the 2001 Upper House campaign period. For political parties, a mixed methodological approach was used in this study, due to the small number of political parties whose websites were analyzed in this research. In order to address the second research question of how political parties approached the use of the web in terms of their organizational and ideological background, I devised an exploratory model of party organizational structure and ICT utilization based on a model originally proposed by Lofgren and Smith (2003). This model was expanded by including aspects such as goals for ICT orientation, ICT integration into campaigning activities, cross-media use related to the role of ICTs, and linking strategies, as well as using certain features on websites as

operationalizational variables. To address the third research question concerning candidate use of the web, website-based content analysis was also used as the methodological tool to assess how candidates utilized their websites with regard to providing information to and communicating with the electorate as well as demonstrating personal aspects such as party affiliation, issues presentation, personal information, and associations through linking strategies. A detailed checklist of features was created and used to quantitatively evaluate and compare candidate websites.

In Chapter 4, I discuss regulation of the use of the internet for political campaigns. I first show by example that different nations have taken different approaches to regulating its use as a campaign medium. I briefly discuss the history of the POEL and then examine the history of the relationship between the POEL and the internet, including an outline of the provisions that have been applied to political campaigning conducted by Japanese political parties and candidates for public office. In this chapter as well, I discuss the findings and recommendations of the special commission established in 2001 to review the use of the internet during election periods. This background is necessary to understanding the legislative context that has influenced campaigning on the internet in Japan as well as the approach taken by political parties and candidates towards the use of the internet for political campaigning.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I present the results of the website analysis and surveys distributed to the political parties and the website analysis of candidates. Finally, in the conclusion (Chapter 7), I revisit the research questions posed earlier in this chapter and discuss the implications of this research in terms of potential changes to the POEL and the emergence of the "permanent campaign" in Japan.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1   Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to examine the evolution of research, mainly conducted in the mid- to late 1990s, concerning the relationship between the internet and political campaigning. In its brief history, speculation regarding the campaign use of the internet – particularly its potential for affecting electoral outcomes – has undergone a series of shifts. Early optimism concerning the internet focused on its use as a tool for ideological (mainly democratic) expression, wherein it was suggested that its use could have three main purposes.

The first idealized purpose of the internet is its role in *creating* democracy. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was suggested that the internet could serve as a tool to allow media-challenged political actors and non-traditional political groups to inform and communicate with the public, as well as using the internet for mobilization purposes. The fact that there were a number of successful cases in the late 1980s and early 1990s wherein non-traditional political actors were able to successfully utilize the internet and related ICTs (information communications technologies) to attain their political goals (in some cases, attempts to transform non-democratic political regimes) added to its allure. In this sense, the internet was idealized as a "technology of freedom" with the capability of overcoming political repression through information provision and communications.[1] The second idealized purpose of the internet concerns the role that it could play in *reinvigorating* participatory or deliberative democracy, particularly by allowing a

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[1] The conventional wisdom concerning the impact that the internet could have on politics is based both on the technological origins of the internet and how it was used throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Kalathil and Boas (2003: 2) suggest that the perception of the internet as a liberalizing technology partly grew out of the "strong libertarian culture that prevailed among the internet's early users", particularly those in college campuses where the internet was first used as a means to facilitate scholarly exchange among academicians. It was believed that the relative ease and free flow of information as well as the capability of communicating and exchanging ideas in academic environments could be taken up on a wider scale, which imbued a "political character to the internet itself, rather than focusing on specific uses of the technology" (Kalathil and Boas, 2003: 2). In addition, early practical and successful uses of the internet to thwart repressive political regimes contributed to its early reputation as being a powerful tool for political activities, particularly in supporting or creating democratic outcomes. Kalathil and Boas (2003: 2) point out that the internet is indirectly credited with contributing to the fall of communism in eastern Europe in the late 1980s through information dissemination. Bonchek (1995) also notes the use of the internet by Chinese students as an organizational tool to lobby the American government shortly after the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989. The use of the internet as an information dissemination and organizational means in the hands of the Zapatistas, a Mexican dissident group, was also widely publicized in the early 1990s (Martinez-Torres, 2001).

more fluid information and communications exchange between citizens, their elected representatives, and their government. By giving the public an "electronic voice" in policy determination and stimulating political participation, it was surmised that the technology could assume an important role as a conduit for providing political information and the means for the public to be able to conduct reasoned and deliberative debate.[2] The final idealized purpose of the internet is the potential that its use could have in *promoting* aspects of representative democracy through improving the relationship between political parties, candidates/politicians, and the public, and, subsequently, affecting political – particularly electoral – outcomes. Since the mid-1990s in the U.S., and subsequently in other nations of the world, the popularity of the campaign use of the internet by political parties and candidates spread as these political actors sought ways to effectively use the internet as a campaign marketing and advertising channel.

This chapter focuses on the third idealized purpose of the campaign use of the internet by examining the theoretical and empirical research done thus far with respect to the use of the internet as a campaign information and communications tool by traditional political actors. The following section examines the early years of using the internet for campaign purposes, which focuses mainly on its use by political parties and candidates during the American elections of 1996, 1998, and 2000 and the U.K. elections in 1997 and 2001, as a great deal of the theoretical and empirical assessment of how political parties and candidates utilized the medium centered on its use in these two countries. In contrast to early theoretical optimism concerning the potential for the internet to affect electoral outcomes, the opportunity

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[2] The internet was also credited with vast powers to facilitate participatory or deliberative democracy by allowing by allowing a means for citizens to obtain information, communicate, and exchange ideas and opinions. Grossman (1995: 34) relates this potential of the internet to reinvigorate traditional concepts of Athenian democracy whereby citizens could become involved and participate in the governance of their communities. In this sense, idealistically, locally based networks of "netizens" (citizens who utilized the internet) could use their computers to access community-based information and exchange opinions with other members of their community. Howard Rheingold, an early advocate of the potential of computer networks, suggested that the "political significance of CMC [computer-mediated communications] lies in its capacity to … perhaps revitalize citizen-based democracy" (1995: 14). Early experiments with community networks in the mid-1980s in the U.S. appeared to bear this out. Tsagarousianou et al. (1998: 168) notes that "in the mid-1980s, several American local government authorities … were at the forefront of this shift in the envisaged uses of information and communications technologies … [seeking] to improve contact between the local authority and the citizens, to upgrade delivery of services and … encourage citizen participation in public affairs. Early community networks in Europe, such as those established in Amsterdam, Bologna, and Manchester, were also engaged in experiments in electronic democracy (Tsagarousianou et al., 1998: 168).

to examine the campaign use of the internet through successive election cycles allowed researchers to refine their research questions and methodologies. Discovering that, for the most part, online political activities appeared little different from "offline" campaigning, researchers such as Margolis and Resnick (2000) declared that "politics as usual" was prevailing on the web. The third section of this chapter outlines further approaches to the internet-politics relationship during the early 2000s which have focused on broadening the methodological aspects of website content analysis and the number of countries under review. As internet diffusion continued throughout the world, differences in its use for political purposes in different countries have led researchers to conclude that political environment and political culture variables may have an impact on how the internet is being used for political activities in different political environments. The final section shows how the within research concerning the campaign use of the internet in Japan is a continuation of the current trend of in-depth nation-level studies of the campaign use of the internet yet offers a new perspective on the relationship between the internet and political campaigning. The within research focuses on "bringing politics back in" and suggests ways for analyzing how the prevailing political environment and culture may, in fact, have an impact on the campaign use of the internet in Japan's political context.

2.2   Internet-based campaigning by candidates and political parties

Although activist groups and small, locally based community groups were the first to utilize the internet for political purposes, they were soon joined online by mainstream political actors such as political parties and politician-candidates. In some respects, the early use of the internet by activist and community groups contributed to certain beliefs concerning its properties and possibilities for traditional political actors. As noted above, activist use of the internet focused attention on the fact that the internet was difficult to control and could be utilized as a powerful information and communications tool in order to "level the playing field" between media-advantaged and media-disadvantaged political actors. In addition to these functions, various experiments in community use of small-scale versions of the internet demonstrated that, to a certain extent, the internet could also be used as a means of promoting information

exchange and deliberative political discussion, as well as encouraging participation and mobilization. Assumptions such as these prevailed in the early 1990s, the initial years of widespread internet utilization particularly in the U.S., and greatly influenced how the internet was perceived as a tool for political activities – mainly campaigning – by political parties and candidates.

The internet held a great deal of promise for traditional political actors such as political parties and candidates. From a theoretical viewpoint, it was believed that the internet could strengthen certain aspects of representative or discursive democratic practices in general and have an impact on electoral campaigning in particular. As pointed out by Ward and Gibson et al. (2003: 1-2), in recent years there has been a perceived "crisis" in representative politics due to factors such as decreasing levels of party attachment among voters, a lack of basic information and knowledge about the representative process, declining voter turnout, and declining levels of trust in elected representatives. The possibilities of using the internet to enhance the relationship between traditional political actors such as political parties or candidates and the electorate, its wide-ranging information provision potential, and its communication capabilities held a great deal of promise for ameliorating key political relationships.

Ward and Gibson et al. (2003: 12-13) identify three major aspects in which the internet could be used to effect a closer relationship between the electorate and political parties and politicians. First, the internet could be used as an administrative tool. Through websites and e-mail communications, the internet could act as labor-saving device for providing background information concerning policies and issues, as well as being platform for promoting communications with the electorate. The second aspect focuses on how the internet could be used as a participatory and organizational tool to encourage participation in elections, create an online environment where the public could directly address political parties and candidates through bulletin-board services, mobilize the public to participate in elections through voting, and encourage donations. The final focus is on the use of the internet during election campaign periods. By providing information not available through traditional mass media organizations such as newspapers or broadcasting for reasons of length, time, or expense, websites created by political

parties and candidates could be used to more fully explicate political platforms. The internet could also be used by these political actors to target their information to specific voting groups.

In addition to the use of the internet specifically as a means to streamline administrative practices within political parties and individual candidate organizations, as well as reinvigorate democratic practices, its utilization during election campaigns also suggested a continuation of certain trends in campaigning. These trends, often described as the "modernization" or "professionalization" (also termed "Americanization") of modern campaign practices (Mancini and Swanson, 1996), focus on the practical aspects of campaigning by political parties and candidates as campaign-oriented organizations. In modern election campaigns, the internet could play a decisive role in the organization and control of campaigns, as well as preparation and planning and determining campaign themes and images (Bowler and Farrell, 1992). Farrell and Webb (2000) point to potential uses of the internet to further accelerate trends that originally appeared in the U.S. in the late 1980s involving "permanent campaigns", more direct communications and information flows between political parties, candidates, and the public that bypassed traditional media organizations, and the opportunity to "narrowcast" or specifically target certain voting groups and adapt the campaign message accordingly.

The practical aspects of control of the campaign message provided further incentives that drew political parties and candidates to the use of the internet, particularly in the early years of its use as a campaign tool in the mid-1990s. Selnow (1998: 79-89) points out the advantages of utilizing the internet in particularly clear terms as "it's inexpensive, it's a familiar format, it's familiar content, it's convenient, it's controllable, and it's nondisplacing", as well as allowing political parties and candidates to appear up to date and familiar with new technology. During the early years of the campaign use of the internet, the period in which first American political parties and then their counterparts in other nations initially started to actively utilize the medium, websites could be inexpensively created to bolster campaigns. With regard to American political campaigns, Trent and Friedenberg report that 43% of 270 campaigns surveyed during the 1998 election "had already spent or soon expected to spend, less than $500 [USD] 'designing,

building, and maintaining' their internet site … [and] an additional 38% had already spent, or soon expected to spend, between $500 and $2000 to develop their internet site".

In keeping with the function of providing enhanced information to the public, the format of these early campaign websites was somewhat familiar to voters. Selnow notes that despite being a new medium, the inclusion of text and pictures could remind voters of newspapers formats, and audio or video features were similar to radio and television formats, respectively (1998: 81). The similarity in the content of political websites at this time was simultaneously an advantage and a disadvantage. Most political party websites at the time offered information about the party (including background information), its policies and campaign platform, listings of candidates and constituencies, and additional information or links to state-based party organizations. Candidate websites offered similar features at the candidate level. While the collection of this type of information in one place was convenient for voters quickly seeking information about political parties and candidates, it did lead to early descriptions of political party and candidate websites as being "boring" and "brochureware" (Selnow, 1998: 82).

The internet could also prove to be a particularly convenient means of campaigning for political parties and candidates. Compared to the expense and detail required to produce television and radio commercials or create print-based advertising campaigns, in addition to going through mediated channels, the political party's or candidate's own organization could easily create – and control – the political message that it wanted to relay to the public. In addition, in terms of quantity, campaign-related websites provided political parties and candidates with a means to go into great detail regarding their positions and platforms, an advantage that could not be attained by going through traditional media channels. And, finally, as noted by Selnow, "the web's low cost allowed campaigns to set up a site without putting a dent in the media budget" and did not draw human resources away from other campaign-related activities (1998: 86).

Among traditional political actors in the U.S., the 1992 Clinton campaign was the first to use the internet. As noted by Bimber and Davis, "that year, the campaign placed campaign-related information, such as full texts of candidate speeches, advertisements, position papers, and biographical information

about the candidates, on the internet" (2003: 23). However, given the low numbers of users at that time –

as well as general knowledge regarding the internet in general – little attention was paid to the internet as a

campaign marketing medium. Bimber and Davis note that although a number of candidates developed

websites during the 1994 campaign, it was still an untapped resource for most candidates (2003: 23).

However, as the number of hosting computers in the United States grew from 300,000 in 1990 to over 1

million by 1992 (Zakon, 2006), more people, including political figures, started to take notice of the

internet.

The U.S. election in 1996 is commonly regarded as the first "internet election" and marked a time

for experimentation with the new medium, with much of the focus on the websites created by political

parties and candidates for the U.S. presidential primaries. In 1995, the Democratic National Committee

established its website, closely followed by the Republican National Committee (Rash, 1997: 38-39).

According to Bimber and Davis, "the two major party websites offered users dynamic graphics, clips of

speeches, advertisements, press releases, convention speeches, and other party news (2003: 24-25). Other

minor parties such as the Reform Party, the Natural Law Party, the Libertarian Party, and the U.S.

Taxpayers Party also created websites during this campaign (Bimber and Davis, 2003: 25).

Early in the 1996 presidential election campaign, website utilization among politicians started to

increase. The internet received a major push as a campaign media format from Republican Party

presidential candidate Robert Dole, who announced his website address on national television (Bimber

and Davis, 2003: 23-24). Other Republican candidates such as Patrick Buchanan and the Dole-Kemp

campaign are said to have used the internet aggressively and well during this campaign period (Kamarck,

2002: 85). According to one study undertaken by Campaignaudit (www.campaignaudit.org), 47% of

candidates in senate races (59 candidates out of a sample size of 126) and 16% of candidates running for

the U.S. House of Representatives (222 candidates out of a sample size of 1,380) had established websites

specifically for this election campaign (Campaignaudit, 2004).

Early conjecture concerning the use of the internet during political campaigns tended to focus on

its technological properties as a communications means, its capability for providing a great deal of

information, and its possibilities as a media channel. Davis (1999) theorized that internet use by candidates during this election cycle would emphasize interactivity (allowing candidates and voters to engage in two-way communications or dialogue with voters), extensive discussion of issues, and utilization of the internet by candidates for third and minor parties. In terms of interactivity based on the inclusion of an e-mail address on the websites, candidates scored high, with 75% inviting e-mail comments from users (Davis, 1999: 90). However, he also noted that although 87% of candidates indicated their own opinions of issues, they "usually did not invite specific replies to issue positions or campaign events" (Davis, 1999: 92). As for the internet theoretically offering the potential to "level the playing field" among major and minor party candidates, although a number of challenger candidates created websites for this election cycle, they were somewhat disadvantaged in terms of how users could actually find their websites. "Challengers in 1996 often had to depend on links from organizations that cover politics … such as "Politicsnow…[an American political portal website] … [And] news media coverage of sites favored the well-known candidates" (Davis, 1999: 94). These findings suggest that the 1996 election was mainly a time for experimentation and trial for many candidates on the web.

By the time of the 1998 off-year elections, the number of candidates on the web greatly increased. Kamarck notes that over 70% of the candidates for the 1998 U.S. senatorial and gubernatorial races had created campaign-oriented websites, a figure that grew to over 90% by the 2000 election (2002: 86). In one of the first indepth analyses of campaign website analysis of sites created by candidates running for Congress and in gubernatorial contests in 1998, Kamarck identified 554 candidate-created websites (43% of candidates out of a total of 1296) who had established a presence on the web for campaign purposes (1999: 100). In terms of the administrative function of websites to provide background information concerning the candidates, Kamarck found that although 81% of candidates provided both biographical information and issues-related information on their websites, only 20% included copies of campaign speeches and 49% included updated news regarding recent campaign events (1999: 109). Results of assessing the interactive possibilities on candidate websites also showed rather disappointing figures with 27% of candidate websites noted as being passive (offering no interactive capabilities) and 72% of

websites offering only limited interactivity (users could send e-mail or answer a questionnaire). With regard to attracting voters to the campaign or mobilizing the electorate, 53% of candidate websites included information on contributing to the campaign (by sending contributions through the mail or by allowing for credit card donations online) and only 50% allowed the visitor to the website to sign up for traditional volunteer activity (1999: 115). Finally, Kamarck found that voter mobilization capabilities were also somewhat lacking on candidate websites, as 89% of candidate websites offered no information concerning how to register to vote in the 1998 election (Kamarck, 1999: 117).

Although it was difficult to establish a direct connection between the campaign use of websites and electoral outcomes, certain candidates were able to achieve at least some success in utilizing the internet in their election campaigns. The 1998 victory of Jesse Ventura, an independent candidate for the Minnesota gubernatorial election, was largely credited to "his innovative use of the internet", particularly in terms of fundraising, as the Ventura campaign was able to garner almost 30% of its total campaign fundraising through its website (Kamarck, 2002: 85, 101). Ralph Nader, an independent candidate in the 2000 election, and John McCain, an unsuccessful presidential primary candidate also in the 2000 election, were particularly active on the internet, using their websites as bases of campaign operations and fundraising efforts. While neither candidate was successful in being elected or nominated, their utilization of the web to organize their campaigns and appeal for financing underscored the adaptability of the medium.

During the 2000 election campaign in the U.S., candidate use of the web continued to expand. According to a 2004 Campaignaudit report, the number of candidates running in U.S. senate races in 2000 with websites grew to over 70%, and those in the U.S. House of Representative races to 55% (CampaignAudit, 2004). By this time as well, users of the internet had become somewhat more sophisticated in terms of what type of information they sought in campaign-related websites. The results of an online survey of 1,165 web users presented in a January 2000 report authored by Steven Schneider of NetElection.org noted that 81% of respondents sought information concerning candidate issue positions, 60% were interested in comparative content (such as mentioning the opponent on the top page and explicit

issue comparisons), and 44% looked for archives of candidate-related materials such as press releases, speeches, and advertisements (Schneider, 2000). However, according to the same report, only 75% of House and Senate candidate websites provided issue-related information, less than 20% provided comparative content, and 13% provided texts of candidate speeches. In terms of actual engagement features (those features that would allow users to interact with the candidate or his/her campaign organizations), 68% of candidate websites allowed volunteers to sign up and 44% had some sort of regular e-mail communications (such as an e-mail newsletter). Only 3% of candidates provided a moderated discussion forum, despite 16% of the users polled indicating an interest in the feature (Schneider, 2000).

While the use of the internet among candidates in the U.S. continued to increase in each successive election cycle, by the 2002 off-year elections, it became clear that certain patterns were forming in how candidates approached the use of the web for political campaigning. Foot et al. (2002) in their study of 328 candidate websites during this election period, noted that the majority of candidates continued the trend of offering basic features such as biographical information (88%), issue-related information (83%), and information concerning making donations to the campaign (77%). They also found that candidates tended to adapt traditional practices of campaigning, such as featuring campaign-related news (76%), photographs of campaign events (46%), endorsements (24%), and systems for online contributions (55%). However, they also discovered that candidates were adopting few features on their websites exclusive to the web, such as multimedia content (8%), interactive polls (5%), or electronic paraphernalia (such as downloadable screensavers) (11%) (Foot and Schneider, 2002). Despite the potential for interactivity through the web, it was clear that candidate use of the medium continued to reflect traditional campaign practices.

While research to date concerning candidate use of the web during political campaigns was mainly focused on U.S. races, by the early 2000s, candidate use of the web in other nations also started to attract academic attention. In the U.K., candidates were much slower than their American counterparts to take up the use of the web for election campaigns. Ward and Gibson (2003: 192) report that as of 1998, only 4% of MPs (members of parliament) had live websites and noted the tendency of a number of

politicians to conduct campaign activities through local party websites. In their study of candidate use of the web during the 2001 general election (398 websites), they found that only 25% of candidates/local parties had created election-focused websites and discovered that U.K. candidates appeared to approach the web in ways comparable to American politicians, with high percentages offering basic content features such as biographical information (92.1%), information concerning local and national policy issues (64.4% and 63.9%, respectively), and e-mail (90.9%) (Ward and Gibson, 2003: 195-198). However, they also found that U.K. candidates made little use of the interactive properties of the web, with only 23.4% of candidate websites including any type of interactive feature such as surveys or polls, bulletin boards, or live discussion forums (Ward and Gibson, 2003: 199). Comparable to American politicians, U.K. candidates appeared to be taking a cautious approach to the internet, despite the opportunities that it presents.

In summary, with regard to candidate use of the internet, despite the publicity and the excitement regarding candidate use of the internet for campaign purposes in the mid- to late 1990s, certain problematic elements remained concerning its effective use during election campaigns. The first challenge to the campaign use of the internet appeared to be a gap between the theoretical (and optimistic) role that the internet could play in promoting political participation among the public and the way in which it was being used by candidates. While the web offered various advantages, particularly during election campaign periods, it was noted even in the early years of web-based campaigning that these political actors remained in control of their message – and communications with the electorate – through their websites. In one of the first empirical studies of one hundred American campaign websites, Davis notes that while candidates provided a great deal of information concerning their positions on issues, save for the inclusion of e-mail addresses on their websites, they did not offer a great deal of interactive opportunities through their websites such as BBSs (bulletin board systems) or real-time online "chat" features (1999: 90-96). Davis' early research into the content of candidate websites found that while 75% of candidate websites offered e-mail addresses, very few candidates actually posted the content of such communication on their websites. Davis further points out that although the web theoretically offered a

means to "level the playing field" among incumbent candidates and challengers, incumbents could "rely on their own official government sites" forcing challengers to "create their own sites" (Davis, 2000: 93). In effect, incumbent candidates could utilize two websites – their official government website and, in many cases, websites that they created specifically for the campaign – and enjoyed an advantage in exposure of their websites through other media channels such as newspapers. In contrast, challenger candidates often had to rely on "links from organizations that cover politics" (Davis, 2000: 94).

The second problematic area concerned establishing a direct correlation between the use of the internet and electoral outcomes. Kamarck (2002: 86-87) found that challengers in both the 1998 and 2000 races "were more likely than incumbents to campaign on the internet" suggesting that challenger candidates would make more use of the internet as a means of publicizing their campaigns and gaining name recognition for their candidacies. She found that use of the web in general in 1998 among Senate and House of Representatives candidates was 72% and 35% respectively, and that among candidates in competitive races during the same period of time, website utilization grew to 100% and 57%, respectively, during the same election period. By 2000, the use of the internet by candidates in both houses engaged in competitive races grew to over 90% (Kamarck, 2002:88). While it was clear that by 2000 high percentages of candidates considered the web to be an indispensable media tool in their campaigns, it appeared impossible to directly connect the use of the web with success in election contests.

The difficulty of finding candidate websites was further highlighted by the actual use of the internet by the electorate to obtain election-related information. According to Norris, internet use among the electorate to obtain political information grew only at a marginal rate between 1996 and 2000 (2002: 68-9). In fact, Norris found that "political activists more often went online to engage in political discussions, to contact officials or groups about an issue, or to get specific information about the 1998 campaign" (1999: 80). By comparison, in 1996, 10% of online users specifically sought information concerning the 1996 elections, a figure that grew to only 12% by 1998 (Norris, 2002: 69). Norris also noted a similarly slow rate of growth in the percentage of users who contacted groups and officials regarding political issues in the two election periods. Among online users who specifically sought political

information on the internet during the 1998, only 30% looked for information about a candidate's voting record, 22% received or sent e-mail supporting or opposing a candidate for office, and 13% participated in online discussions concerning the election. These figures grew only marginally during the 2000 election campaign period, and the percentage of voters who participated in online discussions about the election actually fell to 8% (Norris, 2002: 69). Despite the online efforts by political parties and candidates, it appeared that a surprisingly low number of voters were actually utilizing such campaign-oriented websites for information that would assist them in voting or for communicating with politicians.

The focus on traditional modes of campaign information provision and communications that has been exhibited by candidates during election cycles has also been found on political party websites, first in the U.S. and U.K., and then in other nations, as research concerning party utilization of the web has expanded. As mentioned earlier, the web has provided clear incentives for political parties in terms of facilitating party administration, acting as an alternative election campaign media channel, and encouraging participation. Furthermore, it has also offered a certain potential for small and media-challenged political parties to "level the playing field" with major parties. However, for the most part, research has shown that, similar to candidates, political parties have been taking a cautious approach to the internet. And, while small political parties may have enjoyed an advantage in the early years of internet-based campaigning in the mid- to late 1990s, by the early 2000s, they were starting to fall behind major parties in terms of proactive utilization of the internet.

Initial evaluations of political party websites were conducted during the 1996 American election by Margolis et al. (1997). In their description of the initial forays onto the web by political parties, they noted that major political parties such as the U.S. Republican and Democratic parties appeared to have an advantage in utilizing the web. Their initial research led to the formation of the "normalization" or "politics as usual" hypothesis, which they tested during the 1998 off-year election campaign cycle (Margolis et al., 1999). This hypothesis contended that the patterns of communication and information provision offline by political parties would be reflected in their websites. Their review of the contents of major and minor American party websites focused on the update schedule, graphics, search capabilities,

and interactive potential through chat rooms or discussion groups. Their findings showed that while minor parties may have enjoyed an advantage through Usenet groups and mailing lists, major political parties had the human, financial, and technical resources to produce state-of-the-art websites that attracted visitors. Furthermore, they suggested that rather than heralding any major reforms in electoral politics, at least in the U.S., dominant political parties will endure in their media domination (Margolis et al., 1999).

Empirical evaluations of early U.K. political party websites revealed comparable results. In their study of 27 major and minor political parties in the U.K., Gibson and Ward (1998) investigated similar features on political party websites, as well as the contact means (post, telephone/facsimile, and e-mail) that political parties offered on their websites. In addition to comparing website contents, they also administered a survey to the political parties to assess party attitudes towards utilizing the internet. From the results of their website content analysis, they found that political parties appeared to emphasize "top-down" information flows on their websites, that is, with parties providing the bulk of the information on their websites, at the expense of promoting more interactive communications with the public. In addition, they found that almost all parties consistently rated the importance of their websites lower than that placed on traditional mass media channels such as newspapers, television, radio, and direct mail. In terms of party competition, Gibson and Ward found that smaller parties, particularly those "on the fringe" with small figures of parliamentary representation, tended to be overshadowed on the web as well. Major parties tended to produce more attractive websites with a fuller range of features, again suggesting that a "politics as usual" situation was also developing through the web. Their conclusion also suggests that political parties were taking a conservative attitude towards using the internet during this period because of the newness of the medium (Gibson and Ward, 1998).

Direct comparisons among party websites in different national milieux also revealed certain similarities and differences in the approaches that parties took to the web. In a comparison of political parties websites in the U.S. and the U.K. (in the 2000 presidential and 2001 general election, respectively), Gibson et al. (2003) examined differences between the two systems in terms of how parties utilized the web as a campaign tool. Their assessment of party websites in the two countries revealed "basic

similarities in the style and functionality of how parties use the web", save for more of an emphasis on American political party websites on the "glitz" factor (overall website design and multimedia capabilities) (Gibson et al., 2003: 66). Furthermore, they found that party use of the web in both countries tended to demonstrate a "lack of full exploitation of the new media" (Gibson et al., 2003: 67). However, they did note certain differences in terms of party competition in the two countries, particularly in terms of the internet's potential to "level the playing field". In the U.S., there appeared to be less of a divide between major and minor parties than in the U.K. "The larger American parties, while generally more active in campaigning, provided only marginally more functionality on their sites than the smaller parties with similar levels of sophistication in terms of delivery" (Gibson et al., 2003: 67). However, in contrast, trends noted in 1998, in the 2001 U.K. election, "the big three [parties] clearly pulled ahead, outperforming all others in terms of both function and delivery" (Gibson et al., 2003: 67).

Although Gibson et al. (2003) found few differences in overall party use of the web in the U.S. and the U.K., nation-level studies conducted since 2000 have revealed both similarities and differences in party use of the web in different national milieux. In terms of the participatory or mobilization possibilities of the web, party recruitment on websites has been particularly difficult to gauge, as "parties are often reluctant to provide exact figures of online recruitment" (Ward et al., 2003: 30). Yet the prevalence of features found on party websites allowing users to regularly receive e-mail updates or other communication from the party without necessarily joining the party suggests the web may play a role in building short-term participation and interest. Furthermore, almost all studies reviewed thus far concerning the use of the web by political parties have pointed out that parties have underutilized the interactive potential of the web. While party websites offer e-mail communications capabilities, this type of "participation" is little more than the technological equivalent of sending regular mail to the party. The lack of bulletin-board services, discussions fora, or chat features suggests that parties are not taking advantage of the participation and mobilization features of the internet to make contact with the electorate.

With regard to the use of the web as a means of interparty competition, Margolis et al. (2003) found in their overview of U.S. political parties from 1996 to 2001 that "American parties' presence on

the web and in the mass media tend to show major-party dominance rather than a trend toward the equalization of competition among major and minor parties" (Margolis et al., 2003: 66). However, in contrast, in their study of southern European political party systems and the use of the internet in Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece, Cunha, et al (2003) found a different scenario. In their analysis of design/sophistication, accessibility, freshness, and targeting among political parties in each nation, they discovered a lack of major-party dominance, suggesting that "'party-competition leveling' may well remain a distinct possibility (Cunha et al., 2003: 87). Semetko and Kranoboka's research also presents further challenges to assumptions of the political role of the internet in "established democracies" (2003: 91). In their study of political party use of the internet in the Ukraine and Russia, they noted that "'new' political parties in these two countries sometimes have an even greater prominence online and better quality websites than 'old' parties" (Semetko and Kranoboka, 2003: 91), suggesting that political systems may make a difference in how political actors approached the use of the web.

2.3   Campaigns in different political environments

By the early 2000s, the use of the internet by political parties and candidates in different political milieux continued to increase, yet no direct relationship could be forged between its use by these political actors and electoral outcomes. Failing to discern any direct impact on electoral outcomes led researchers to look for other factors that may affect how these political actors were utilizing the web. In their study of the impact of the internet in different political environments, Kalathil and Boas (2003) suggest that state policy, particularly in authoritarian regimes where the state has played a major role in internet development, may be one critical aspect affecting the political use of the internet by various political actors. They also suggested that contextual factors such as economic and social dynamics may also play key roles in determining the extent of internet utilization (Kalathil and Boas, 2003: 5-6). Ho et al. (2003) suggest that political culture may also be a determining factor, despite the difficulty of making quantitative assessments of its impact on the political use of the internet. From the studies conducted to date concerning how political actors such as political parties and candidates were utilizing the medium, it

became clear that further concentrated research is necessary that examines the campaign use of the internet within individual political contexts and environments.

2.4   Conclusion: Bringing "politics" back into the "politics-internet relationship"

In tracing the pattern of research concerning political party and candidate use of the internet during political campaigns in other countries, three key aspects for further research have been clarified. The first aspect is the necessity for investigating how these political actors are actually utilizing the internet in the prevailing political environment and contexts, including the possibility that the campaign use of the internet may be subject to legal restrictions. Second, in focusing on political party use of the internet, to date and as shown above, the great majority of research has made assumptions concerning the goals of party use of the internet as being an administrative, participatory, and organizational tool, particularly during election campaign periods. However, little or no empirical, comparative, or longitudinal assessments have been made concerning how party structures may have an impact on how parties present themselves on the web. In other words, further research is needed that concentrates on party goals for utilizing the medium, their organizational structures, and their ideological stances that form the critical background to how they approach the use of the internet. Finally, while there have been a number of studies concerning how candidates utilize the internet based on the internet's inherent information provision and communication properties, few, if any, studies have been undertaken that provide an in-depth examination of how candidates are actually using their websites to address certain issues, demonstrate their attitudes to their parties, or show affiliations to other organizations through linking structures.

The within research concerning Japan takes a step to fulfilling these gaps and furthering analysis into the complex relationship between political parties and candidates, and the internet. Rather than focusing on the technological properties of the web, it demonstrates that there is a critical need for investigation concerning the internet based on how prevailing political environmental conditions act in a mediating role to affect the political actor-internet relationship. Japan's political environment provides an

interesting alternative context to previous studies concerning how political actors approach the use of the internet, as it is one of the few nations to actively restrict campaigning through this medium. Furthermore, through the creation of a model of party internet utilization based on party goals, organization, and ideological characteristics, it is possible to re-assess how political parties are approaching the use of the internet. And, finally, an enhanced examination of candidate use of the web, not only in terms of website content, but also in discerning trends among candidates of major and minor parties – as well as ruling and opposition parties – can provide further insights to how these political actors are broadening their utilization of this medium beyond traditional roles of information provision and communications.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1   Introduction

As noted in the previous chapters, most evaluations concerning how political actors use the internet in various political systems have assessed its use in ideological terms. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, prior to widespread public use, much speculation regarding the internet focused on its democratic potential to allow citizens a more direct means of communicating and exchanging information with various political actors, including political parties and politicians. However, as shown previously, such approaches often contain embedded assumptions concerning the use of ICTs (information and communications technology) for democratic purposes and do not adequately address the "real-world" situation of how political parties and candidates are actually utilizing ICTs not only to inform and communicate with the public, but also as an expression of the political context in which they are situated. Rather than approaching the use of ICTs as a panacea for improving the relationship among political actors, and basing analysis of party and candidate use of the internet on those terms, further attention should be paid to the political context in which political parties and politicians are actually using ICTs and their goals for its utilization within such political contexts.

To address this gap and to offer a new direction for analyzing the use of ICTs in particular political contexts, this dissertation delves more deeply into how Japanese political parties and candidates for public office are using the internet by examining their use of this new medium within the Japanese political context. As set out in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I take the perspective that factors within the Japanese political environment, such as regulations concerning the use of the internet (contained within the POEL, or Political Offices Election Law), goals for utilizing the web, party organizational structure, ideology, and size affect how political parties are portraying themselves on the web. I do this by proposing a modified model of how parties with certain organizational characteristics may include certain content on their websites that reflects their organizational underpinnings. I also explore candidate utilization of the web, moving beyond the information provision and communications functions of campaign websites to delve more deeply into how candidates are addressing issues and demonstrating party-related and other affiliations through their websites.

In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I outlined certain factors in the Japanese political environment that may explain how political parties and candidates approach the use of the web, and in the second chapter, I provided an overview of theoretically and empirically approaches used to date to assess how these political actors are actually utilizing it within their campaigns. Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to elaborate on the mixed methodological procedure used in this study to assess political party and candidate utilization of the web. To assess political party use of the web in the 2000 Lower House and 2001 Upper House election campaign periods, I devised a mixed methodological approach. Because of the small number of political parties under review (six), the within evaluation is based mainly on a content analysis of each party's website during these two election campaign periods, supported through a case study approach based on questionnaires and interviews with key party officials concerning their website contents. The findings of both the questionnaires and the website content analysis were then assessed in terms of certain political factors within the Japanese political environment such as party goals for utilizing the internet, party organizational structure (based on a modified model), party ideology, and party size. The website content analysis approach is also used to evaluate the online presence of candidates in the 2001 Upper House election campaign period with the goals of not only assessing their information and communication strategies through the web, but also going further to address how they are using unique properties of their websites to address issues and demonstrate certain affiliations, not only with their respective political parties but also other groups and institutions.

The analytical starting point for the assessment of how these political actors are utilizing the internet is their online presence, specifically, how they are using websites as platforms to provide information to and communicate with the electorate. The task of surveying exactly what political parties and candidates are doing online is somewhat challenging, given the continuous technological innovations of the internet and its ICT-related functions. To this end, certain methodologies originally developed for other media channels must be adapted and applied to assessments of political activities through the internet in order to answer the fundamental research questions set out in the introductory chapter.

Content analysis aimed specifically at websites (also referred to as website feature analysis) is the empirical methodological approach that was used to explore the website contents of Japanese political party and candidate websites in this research. By discussing the adaptation of content analysis as well as the strengths and weaknesses of this methodology that I used to examine how both political actors utilize the internet during election periods, I show that a research design that combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques can be a constructive approach for dealing with how political parties and candidates are presenting themselves online. In addition, formulating a replicable and robust research methodology for addressing this continuously evolving medium may yield a number of benefits for comparative and longitudinal empirical approaches to the future evolution of the political internet.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section, I define content analysis as a research methodology. During the post-war period, this particular methodology, mainly aimed at written texts (newspapers) and television broadcasting, has been extensively employed by political researchers to assess structures of communication and information content. After briefly tracing the development of content analysis as a political science methodology, I outline the steps and procedures involved in its application. These procedures provide a fundamental basis for adapting content analysis procedures to the web, however, certain points must be considered when adapting these techniques to the online environment in the form of website feature analysis. I also brief touch upon the strengths and weaknesses of previous studies focusing on the political use of the internet that have based their methodologies on content analysis techniques.

In the second section of this chapter, I provide details concerning the qualitative methodology that I used to assess and compare political party websites through two national election cycles in 2000 and 2001. To address the objective of analyzing political party websites with particular reference to their organizational characteristics, an important first step in the analysis of the websites was to create an operationalization model. After explaining this model, I discuss the analysis of political party websites as part of a mixed methodological combination of website feature analysis, questionnaire, and interview techniques. In essence, this case study approach to the use of the internet by political

parties contributed to the depth of the study undertaken and provided a basis for assessing changes in internet-based campaigning over a period of time and relating it to party organization factors.

In the final section of this chapter, I discuss the quantitative methodological approach that I pursued to analyze the websites produced by candidates during the 2001 Upper House election campaign. As no longitudinal data concerning the content of candidate websites over consecutive election cycles is available, this analysis of candidate websites focused on slightly different analytical criteria than those used for the party sites. Website feature and content analysis were the main quantitative approaches that I used to examine how these political actors utilized the internet for campaign purposes during this particular election cycle. This specific study of candidate sites delves beyond how individual candidates were utilizing their websites as information provision and communications platforms to how political candidates used unique properties of the web to address issues and demonstrate certain affiliations. Then, in order to discern political trends in candidate use of the web, these aspects were examined in terms of party affiliation and incumbency status.

3.2   Political content analysis as a research methodology

3.2.1   History of political content analysis

As a research technique, content analysis has been applied to a number of mass media communication channels, ranging from television programs to newspaper articles and advertisements, and, most recently, certain functions of the internet such as newsgroups and websites. According to Krippendorf (1980: 13-20), the use of content analysis as a research methodology dates back to the late 1600s, however, it was not until the late 1900s, with the rise in the production of newspapers and increasing interest in public opinion surveys, that content analysis became popular as a means of objective scientific inquiry. During the 1920s and 1930s, the rise of various social movements sparked increased attention in the spread and effects of propaganda and the potential for the mass media to shape public opinion. During World War II, propaganda institutes in the U.S., such as that headed by Harold Lasswell at the Library of Congress and Hans Speier at the American Federal Communications Commission, played critical roles in defining the scope and processes of content analysis (Krippendorf, 1980: 16-17).

During the postwar period, Lasswell's work in particular stands out as being at the forefront of exploring the use of political propaganda to form public opinion through popular media. Mainly focusing on political propaganda disseminated before, during, and after World War II, he was one of the first modern-day researchers to develop content analysis as a quantitative technique and apply it to various communicative activities (Neuendorf, 2002: 35). As part of the wartime efforts in the U.S., Lasswell as well as other behavioral scientists working with the American government at the time, concentrated on Nazi communications media such as leaflets, speeches, and radio broadcasts as means of discerning troop movements. Such quantitative studies, rooted in the political context of the U.S. during the wartime period, provided the methodological basis for linking popular opinion as a behavioral science to social science during the 1950s.

3.2.2 Definitions of content analysis

During the past half century, commensurate with its application to various social science fields and evolution in media formats, a number of definitions of content analysis have been proposed, in large part due to its wide-ranging applicability to various communication and mass media channels. Early definitions of content analysis were rather vague, reflecting the first forays of its utilization as a means of engendering certain audience effects. For example, Lasswell's rather expansive definition of content analysis, being "*who* says *what* to *whom* via what *channel* and with what *effect*?" (Neuendorf, 2002: 34) focuses on the *effect* role of political communications in shaping public opinion.

As advanced techniques in quantifying mass-media content and media formats underwent major shifts during the 1950s and 1960s, the definition of content analysis further evolved. Systematic analytical techniques based on newspaper texts supported further developments in content analysis research as a behavioral research methodology and attempted to distinguish between the content of communications and their form. Reflecting this shift, Berelson's definition of content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" is perhaps the most widely applied (1952: 18).

The rise of television as a popular new media channel during the 1950s created a need for further distinguishing between the form and content of media messages. Specifically focusing on the

content analysis of text-based messages, Krippendorf (1980: 21) addresses this evolution in content analysis techniques by defining content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from text". Neuendorf (2002: 10) presents perhaps the most detailed definition of content analysis to date as "a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity-intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented".

The evolving definition of content analysis has reflected a greater need for systematizing the steps involved in content analysis applications and their operationalization. Despite the number of different approaches that have been taken in research involving content analysis, there are certain procedural steps that must be followed in designing research frameworks based on his particular methodology. As pointed out by Krippendorf (1980: 49), "for content analysis, more so than for other techniques, the research design as a whole must be appropriate to the context from which the data stem or relative to which the data are analyzed". Krippendorf (1980: 54) outlines a general content analysis procedure as involving the following steps in the following order: Raw observations; unitizing; sampling, recording; data reduction; inference; analysis; and validation. Neuendorf (2002) further adapts this framework by adding additional steps at the outset of the research design involving the initial inquiry and emphasizing the training and validation of coders as a means of enhancing intercoder reliability and data validity.

Neuendorf's (2002: 50-1) basic content analysis framework in the form of a flowchart contains the following items: (1) establishing the theory and rationale that supports the choice of content analysis as a research methodology, including determining research questions and/or hypotheses; (2) conceptualization of variables to be researched in the within study, which also involves clear definition of the items to be measured; (3) operationalization of the variables to ensure a suitable match between the conceptualization of variables and their operationalization or measurement; (4) creating coding schemes (in the case where human coders are used), including a coding form in which all items to be coded are either clearly explained or are evident from context; (5) determining the sample of the study under review; (6) coder training and initial reliability testing, in

which coders are evaluated in terms of coding agreement (in this step as well, any unclear references in the coding sheets or any disagreements can be quickly resolved) and any modifications that may be necessary can be made to the appropriate coding sheets; (7) coding and intercoder reliability testing; and (8) final tabulation and reporting.

The above steps in overall content analysis approach provide the fundamental procedural basis for applying this methodology to the analysis of websites in general. However, it is important to note that the above steps have been formulated based on the application of content analysis techniques to traditional media structures such as newspapers, magazine articles, and television programs. While the basic steps may be the same, adapting content analysis techniques to different media structures is challenging, especially with new and emerging media structures such as the web. As pointed out by McMillan (2000), while the internet as a new media format poses a number of rich opportunities for empirical research, at the same time, it also demands refinement of traditional approaches to analyzing media content.

3.2.3   Content analysis as applied to political websites

In the past decade, commensurate with the rise in popularity of the internet and the increasing number of political actors who have created an online presence, researchers have applied content analysis techniques—often described as "website feature analysis"—to investigations of the political use of the internet by certain political actors. Yet analyzing website contents and relating such features to the larger political context, has proved to be particularly challenging. McMillan (2000: 91) notes although "some studies exhibit creative ways of addressing problems….others seem to have failed to build rigor into their research designs in their haste to analyze a new medium".

As noted in the previous chapter, other empirical research into how political parties utilize the internet has been mainly conducted in the U.K. and the U.S. during election periods. Election campaigns have been the particular focus of empirical studies in this area, as they have been identified as periods when political parties undertake a great deal of media activity and inter-party competition (Margolis et al., 1997, 1999; Gibson and Ward, 1998).

Margolis et al. (1997) conducted a theoretical review of websites constructed by political parties and candidates during the 1996 American primary season leading up to the presidential election in November 1996. This initial survey suggested what they describe as a "normalization" hypothesis: That is, they contended that political parties' patterns of communication on the internet will resemble those found in the real world (Margolis et al., 1999). In order to test for this hypothesis, they narrowed their focus to political parties and their website contents during a 30-day period immediately prior to the 1998 election.

In this project, they made three predictions. The first prediction was that major parties will have a greater presence on the internet than minor parties in terms of number of websites and sophistication in terms of website features. Furthermore, although minor parties had a certain amount of access to traditional mass media organs such as broadcasting and newspaper coverage, this access is much less than that enjoyed by major parties. In other words, they believed that minor parties' "minor" status in the real world will be reflected in their internet activities. Lastly, they felt that the webmasters responsible for constructing party websites would not emphasize features designed to enhance user participation in party policy-making or internal party democracy. Rather than promoting a party-voter relationship, internet functions would be used for internal party organizational purposes such as recruiting new members, communicating with party activists, and promoting candidates and platforms (Margolis et al., 1999).

Using Yahoo! (a major search engine), they selected a total of 632 entries for political parties and analyzed each in terms of "back links" (links to those particular parties included in other websites), site popularity (measured by the number of "hits" or number of times that the websites are accessed), references to the parties in newspapers and magazines, and twelve items that they felt suggested each site's level of sophistication (including update schedule, graphics per page, search capacity, tables of contents, and chat rooms or discussion groups). Their resulting data supports their "normalization" hypothesis that at least in the U.S., the major political parties tend to dominate the internet despite the fact that the minor parties have a greater presence on the internet than in other mass media (Margolis et al., 1999). Furthermore, their research suggests that rather than heralding any major reforms in

politics, at least in the U.S., dominant political parties will endure in their media domination and the prevailing political power structure will remain unchanged (Margolis et al., 1999).

The informal interview data used by these researchers to enhance their site features analysis is particularly important because it attempts to deeply delve not only into the information provision function of websites (mainly provided by the political parties themselves) but also into the overall design of the website in terms of what features are placed on the site in order to make the site more appealing to viewers. And perhaps, most importantly in terms of utilizing the internet as a mass medium, their research emphasized comparison with other mass media channels. Although Margolis et al. (1997, 1999) did not inquire in the interview portion of their study as to the parties' attitudes, motives, or rationale regarding using the internet for this purpose, they did gain valuable insights into how the internet was used as an additional media channel.

Yet, their research does contain some weaknesses. First, Margolis et al. (1999) only used one search engine (Yahoo!) to select their list of political party websites. A better representation could possibly have been found if they had further crosschecked this list with other search engines such as Altavista or Lycos. Second, given the length of time of the American primary season leading up to presidential elections, their research covered a relatively short period of time. They did not compare website features over a period of time or after the election. By failing to do so, they perhaps overlooked an important function of the websites: To make timely information available to viewers. Furthermore, they were unable to examine the parties' commitment to their websites over an extended period of time.

Despite these drawbacks, their research did highlight an important change in internet utilization. In the early days of commercial internet usage (approximately 1993 to 1996, 1993 being the year that the Mosaic browser was invented and made available to the public, and 1994 when the U.S. government allowed commercial access to the internet), it was heralded as a potential vehicle for minor political actors (such as interest groups and minor political parties) with few opportunities to access traditional mass media channels to equally participate with major political actors. At that time, the relatively low cost of establishing websites, providing e-mail communications capabilities, and the ease of accessibility (for those who had computers) made the internet an extremely attractive means

for these groups with few media resources to bypass traditional media channels and communicate their message to the public. Yet by 1997, traditional patterns of media access were also emerging on the internet. Major political parties and groups devoted more effort to creating an attractive presence on the internet by increasing the amount of human and financial resources allocated to their websites (Margolis et al., 1999; Gibson and Ward, 1998).

This trend is supported by the research undertaken by Gibson and Ward (1998) concerning the use of the internet by British political parties. Building on the initial work published by Margolis et al. in 1997, Gibson and Ward conducted a similar evaluation in the U.K. In addition to testing for a similar "normalization" hypothesis in terms of the internet presence of British political parties, Gibson and Ward delved further into the parties' attitudes and motives for using e-mail and websites not only in their communications with the electorate but within the party organization itself.

Although their research was conducted over a similar time period, their research design was slightly different. Rather than using a large sample size, Gibson and Ward concentrated on a relatively small sample size (27 British political parties) and conducted more extensive analysis of these parties' websites. This analysis included site features such as graphics, tables of contents, and available contact information and means (post, telephone/facsimile, and e-mail). In addition, they were more successful in obtaining additional background information from questionnaires administered to the parties, although they received a response rate of slightly less than 50 percent (Gibson and Ward, 1998).

They eventually found that competition among political parties was intensified on the internet; however, their results suggested that parties failed to exploit the feedback opportunities offered by e-mail communications (Gibson and Ward, 1998). Top-down information flows (from the party to the individual voter) were considered more important by parties than bottom-up communications flows or receiving communications from the electorate. Furthermore, almost all parties consistently rated the importance of their websites lower than that placed on traditional mass media tools such as newspapers, television and radio broadcasting, and direct mail (Gibson and Ward, 1998). Their conclusion suggests that political parties took a conservative attitude towards using the internet during this period of time possibly because of the newness of the medium and the relatively low user population in the U.K. in 1997.

Although Gibson and Ward's research design included a much smaller sample size than the American-based studies noted above, they were able to conduct a more detailed analysis into various features within the sites as well as include background information as to parties' attitudes and rationale concerning the use of the internet. This background information is important because it can illustrate the level of importance that the parties attach to the internet as an enduring mass media channel. This may have important future consequences for political parties and other political actors connected with the parties as they continue to refine their media mix during election campaign periods.

3.3 Examining political party websites

3.3.1 Research questions and objectives

One of the main objectives of this study is to use website analysis techniques to assess how Japanese political actors are utilizing their websites during election campaign periods in Japan and relate their website contents to certain factors in the Japanese political environment. As set out in the introductory chapter, these factors include the legislative environment within which the web is being used as a campaign tool and political factors such as party organization, party ideology, and party size which may provide clues in how Japanese political parties and candidates are approaching the use of the web. While the aspect of the legislative environment is dealt with in the following chapter, this chapter focuses on the methodological approach and operationalization of political factors with an emphasis on relating party organization elements to website content analysis.

This type of analysis requires a multi-step approach. The first step is to identify research objectives and research questions for the study. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, prior research concerning party and candidate use of the web, conducted mainly in the U.S. and the U.K. tended to focus on political party and candidate use of the internet at the expense of delving further into political environment factors. I suggest that by first devising an operationalizational model, and then examining and relating party website features to this model that a more complete analysis of the party use of websites during election campaign periods can be devise.

As such, four main research questions were identified to assess how political parties approach the use of the web as follows: (1) What are the goals of political parties to utilize websites, particularly

during election campaign periods? (2) How are these goals related to party competition, organization, ideology, and size? (3) Are there discernible trends among campaign-oriented political party websites in terms of these factors? And (4) What do these trends reveal about the long-term implications of the relationship between the internet and Japanese political campaigns?

To answer these questions, it was necessary to employ a mixed methodological approach consisting of three main steps. The first step was to devise a theoretical and operationalizational model for assessing political party websites, with particular emphasis on determining the features contained in websites that specifically relate to party organization elements. This step provided the theoretical model for establishing a connection between party utilization of ICTs and their historical organizational structure, including direction of information flow, their perceived role of the public, and how they are integrating ICTs into their campaign activities. As not all operationalization elements were readily discernible from analyzing political party websites, after determining this operationalization structure of the model, it was necessary to conduct the second step of surveying the parties to ascertain their goals for creating and utilizing their websites (conducted in September-October 2000). The final step was to analyze the contents of political party websites through two election cycles (June 2000 and July 2001) to determine how party organizational elements were being portrayed through their websites. The next three subsections describe in detail how each of these steps were carried out in the course of this research.

3.3.2   Determining a theoretical model for party organizational characteristics

The empirical studies conducted in the U.S. and the U.K. mentioned earlier in this chapter provided an important foundation for investigating the relationship between political parties, candidates, and their website activity during election campaign periods. However, in almost all of the previous research, the starting point for analysis has been the web itself rather than factors in the political environment that may originally affect the utilization of the web as a campaign-oriented information provision and communications channel. What is lacking in this methodological approach is a thorough consideration of intrinsic factors within the political environment itself that may affect how political parties and candidates portray themselves on the web and envisage their relationship

with the electorate. For this reason, prior to conducting this research, it was necessary to devise a theoretical model that specifically related party organizational elements to the contents of political party websites.

Lofgren and Smith (2003) address the connection between the use of ICTs and party organizational structure by focusing on the potential that ICTs have to create and maintain relationships between party structures and the public. Lofgren and Smith identified typologies for four types of political parties – consumerist parties, grassroots strategies, cartel parties, and mass parties – as the most commonly prevailing party types in a given national political environment. Among these four types, the typologies for cartel parties and mass parties are readily comparable to the party structures found in the Japanese political environment.

As shown in Table 3.1, Lofgren and Smith describe the central forms of ICT-mediated political participation as those that occur in manifestations such as electronic conferences, websites, and personal contact with politicians. They suggest that while both cartel parties and mass parties may use websites, the latter type of parties may use ICTs in a broader manner: Where cartel parties may mainly use ICTs for campaigning, mass parties take a more holistic view of the potential of ICTs and use them to complement other forms of political communications.

Lofgren and Smith use the term "linkage" to address the direction of information flow and the role of the public in terms of ICT utilization. They describe the role played by ICTs as one of facilitating such "linkages", which they define as "a broad term … that centers on the intermediaries or political mechanisms connecting the voters to their leaders, such as elections, opinion polls, mass media and various forms of political associations, which naturally include the political party" (2003: 41). Citing Lawson (1988: 14-16), Lofgren and Smith (2003: 41) identify four areas in which linkage is relevant for political parties as being participatory (where the party serves as a facilitating mechanism between the public and direct involvement in the government), electoral or representative (where the citizenry expresses itself through the political party during elections), clientistic (where there is an exchange of votes for services provided through the party), and directive (where the party serves as an agent of the government to control the public), and emphasize that the first two areas are the most relevant and prevalent in liberal democratic systems. It is clear that ICTs, for example, in the

form of websites that can serve as information provision and communications platforms in the relationship between the political party and the public, can be used to enhance the relationship between political parties and the public particularly in the first two areas.

Lofgren and Smith identify two forms of linkage on party-produced websites that relate to the electoral or representative function. The first is direction of information flow, which can be discerned by assessing the different communication means offered through websites. They suggest that elitist cartel parties may emphasize establishing contacts, reaching out to potential voters in a uni-directional (mainly top-down) manner, and primarily use the web as a means of campaigning (2003: 45). In contrast, parties with mass party structures may underscore personal contact with politicians and present a more bi-directional or synchronous flow of information and communications. The second form of linkage concerns the role of the public as being either potential voters or potential members of the political party itself. Here again, Lofgren and Smith propose that elitist/cartel parties focus on the former, specifically channeling their information and communications during election campaign periods to the public as the potential electorate. The websites of mass/organizational parties may take an alternative approach, using ICTs to seek development of public debate, making connections with the public as potential members rather than voters, and trying to establish a sense of political community.

Finally, Lofgren and Smith also suggest that there are differences in how cartel parties and mass parties approach the overall role of ICTs and how they relate to the party's main goals. For cartel parties, which by their nature have outgrown their previous reliance on membership for financial and volunteer support to become more professionalized and reliant on public funding, ICTs may primarily be used for campaigning. Yet, for this type of political party, campaigning in itself does not occur only during election campaign periods, but becomes synonymous with mass-media utilization by the party. As pointed out by Lofgren and Smith (2003: 47), "campaigning that is professional and well targeted becomes steadily more important as a result of increased competition in the electoral 'market place'…" For these parties as well, their information provision focus may be on the activities conducted by the party itself and its leadership, and ICTs may be used to complement a virtually ongoing campaign for public support. In contrast, mass parties may use ICTs to complement other

forms of political communication and information provision that do not necessarily rely on campaigning. In addition to other forms of information provision and communication, which may span utilization of the mass media, party-produced media, and different forms of communications with the public, these parties emphasize bi-directional information provision and communication with current and potential members. For these parties, ICTs are one means to enhance the bi-directional party-voter relationship.

Table 3.1 Typology of ICT strategies in political parties

Party Type / ICT Utilization	Elite (cartel) parties	Mass parties
Central forms of ICT-mediated participation	Manifestations (political websites), establishing contacts	Electronic conferences, manifestations (political websites), personal contact with politicians
Linkage: Direction of information flow	Uni-directional (top-down)	Bi-directional (synchronous)
Role of the public	Potential voters	Potential members, creating ongoing relationship with the public
Role of ICTs	Campaigning	Complementary to other forms of political communication

(Source: Adapted from Lofgren and Smith, 2003:45)

The model proposed by Lofgren and Smith provides an important theoretical starting point for analyzing party use of ICTs that can be further enhanced in four distinct areas. The first is specificity in terms of ICTs. Lofgren and Smith use the term ICTs in its broadest usage to refer to information and communications technologies based on the internet (2003: 39) and offer a number of examples of party use of ICTs through web-based conferencing systems, bulletin board services, "manifestations" of ICT-mediated participation through websites and telecommunications (2003: 46-8). Although they provide a description of the differences between elite (cartel) parties and mass parties in terms of ICT utilization, their description does not readily lend itself to operationalization. In order to facilitate the analysis of how political parties are utilizing ICTs, in the within analysis, the focus is on the information and communications capabilities provided on political party websites. Narrowing this range of potential ICT-related media to focus on websites is the first step to creating an operationalized model for comparatively assessing ICT use among political parties.

Second, Lofgren and Smith's model theorizes about and describes how parties with different organizational structures may use ICTs, but does not identify their goals for using ICTs – particularly

their use of websites. Examining each party's goals for establishing websites, as one specific and comparable aspect of ICT utilization, may yield significant clues as to how each party intends to use their websites to inform and communicate with the public. For example, parties that expect to use their websites as potential platforms for communicating with the public may incorporate features on their websites for promoting contact with the electorate including response forms, issue or opinion polls, and e-mail newsletters. On the other hand, if parties indicate that they primarily want to provide information to the electorate – be it about the party itself or concerning election campaigns – they may include a broad range of information features on their websites. These features may include election-specific references and features such as the party's platform or manifesto, campaign event schedule, voting information or education, and candidate profiles. This goal identification, the rationale for creating and maintaining websites, is a key point in assessing how parties approach the use of their websites for communicating with and providing information to the electorate both during and outside election campaign period.

The third area in which Lofgren and Smith's original approach can be enhanced is by specifically examining how political parties are integrating websites into their overall campaign-related activities with regard to specific references to election-related content. This includes direct references to the campaign itself and the political actors most directly involved in campaigning, being the parties themselves and their candidates. Features on websites may include general election-related items such as election platform or manifesto, campaign event schedule, targeted voting constituencies, voting information or education, and election-related merchandise. As it has been shown that elite (cartel) parties may tend to focus on the individual candidates themselves, it can be expected that the websites produced by this type of political party may also provide detailed information on the parties' candidates such as a listing of candidates and their constituencies and possibly a party-produced "information page" on each candidate. Alternatively, although mass parties may also incorporate election-related information, they may choose to emphasize the party and its role in the election rather than individual candidate.

The final area of Lofgren and Smith's model that can be enhanced is comparison of party websites in terms of unique properties of the web to provide a cross-media platform and to incorporate

linking strategies. Websites provide a flexible medium wherein other media formats can be integrated, such as images of election-related posters, real-time broadcasts or video/audio clips, and cellular-phone-based versions of the party website. By doing so, political parties can reinforce their appeal to the public, create novel experiences for users in accessing their websites, and potentially expand their reach to the electorate. Through linking strategies, parties can also demonstrate their affiliations to certain political organizations, mass media channels, and other institutions and groups that may or may not be political in nature. This in turn may assist in "positioning" the party in the minds of the viewers who access the party website.

Table 3.2 Modified typology of party organizational structure, ICT utilization, and operationalization

Party Type / ICT Utilization Goal	Elite (cartel) parties	Mass parties	Operationalization
Goals for ICT orientation	Websites, establishing contact	Websites, electronic conferences, personal contact with politicians	Questionnaire responses to rationale for establishing website
Direction of information flow (Lofgren and Smith, 2003)	Uni-directional (top-down)	Bi-directional (synchronous)	Website analysis of contact means, response forms, chat rooms or discussion forums, issue or opinion polls, e-mail newsletters
Role of the public (Lofgren and Smith, 2003)	Potential voters	Potential members, creating ongoing relationship with the public	
ICT integration into campaign activities	Focus on promoting elite candidates	Focus on promoting party policies and platform	Questionnaire responses to party website advertising means and website analysis of election-specific references and features, election platform or manifesto, campaign event schedule, targeted voting constituencies, voting information or education, election-related merchandise, candidate profiles, and candidate listings
Cross-media use related to the role of ICTs	Traditional campaign media channels favored by elites (broadcasting and print)	Extensive cross-media use (to reach as much of the public as possible), complementing other forms of political communication	Website analysis of media-related features on websites such as election posters, TV commercials or audio messages, cellular phone websites
Linking strategies	National institutions, mass media, and support organizations	Mass media, individual supporters, and NGOs/NPOs	Website analysis of links to political, media, and other organizations

Thus, by incorporating the above enhancements to the model originally envisioned by Lofgren and Smith, I propose a modified model of party organization and the use of internet-based technologies (Table 3.2). This modified version is a detailed operationalization model that includes assessment of website use in terms of features that may or may not be present on party websites. The

model also incorporates consideration of the rationale that each party may have for initially creating their websites. Assessing each party's website in terms of election-specific references also allows for targeted analysis of how each party is actually using its website as a platform for communications with and information provision to the electorate. And, finally, this enhanced model tests for how political parties are using their websites as a cross-media resource, reinforcing the use of other election-related media and incorporating unique properties of the web such as linking strategies into their overall web-based presence.

3.3.3   Party ideology

As noted in the previous chapter, rather than mainstream political parties, small political parties and interest groups were among the first early users of the internet – particularly e-mail, bulletin board services, and websites – as alternative media channels. These small political parties and groups, which were often resource-challenged and polarized on the ideological spectrum, were early advocates of the internet as a cost-cutting and inexpensive information provision and communications channel. As noted by Hill and Hughes (1998: 135-6), the web provided two other advantages for these political actors. The first was that these parties and groups did not have to compete for media space and could advance their own perspective without being mediated by traditional mass media channels such as newspapers and television. The second was that the web provided a political space for these political actors to exchange opinions and viewpoints "in order to educate the public to their way of thinking" (Hill and Hughes, 1998: 138).

These perspectives on the use of the internet by ideologically polarized groups led Hill and Hughes to one of the earliest empirical study focusing on the relationship between website contents and political ideology in 1997. Hill and Hughes tested three main hypotheses comparing ideological presence of U.S.-based political parties and interest groups by randomly sampling 100 websites selected through Infoseek (a search engine) that were found under the category of "Parties and Groups" and Excite (another search engine) under the category of "Politics—Miscellaneous" (Hill and Hughes, 1998: 141). These websites were then categorized into one of six ideological groupings, defined as leftist, liberal, neutral, conservative, rightist, and libertarian, and the researchers sought to

discern a relationship between political ideology and production values (size of the site, use of graphics, and links) and the presence of political fringe groups (non-mainstream political groups) on the internet. Their overall goal was to determine if "the web is a political reflection of 'real life'" in terms of each group's access to mass media channels. From prior research, they expected "that conservative Websites would be 'flashier' and larger than liberal or moderate ones" because conservatives participated more often and in more detail in other internet venues such as Usenet and chat rooms, as well as conservative groups' having more financial resources available to create and maintain their sites (Hill and Hughes, 1998).

At the time that their survey was conducted in 1997, their findings were that there was an equal ideological distribution of left- and right-wing groups on the internet in terms of the number of sites; however, conservative sites were larger with more links in their sites. Hill and Hughes also found that conservative sites had higher production values in terms of graphics and professionalism. Last, they found that 21 percent of the sites that they viewed could be categorized as political groups, leading to their conclusion that these groups take advantage of the internet as an inexpensive and easily accessible means to publicize their messages. Ultimately, Hill and Hughes believe that "as more and more people log on and participate in the Net's political forums, politics and society will change the internet" (1998: 184).

From a methodological viewpoint, Hill and Hughes' research is noteworthy because it was one of the first empirical studies to research how political groups used the internet to distribute information as a means of bypassing traditional media channels. However, their study also reflects certain difficulties in handling large amounts of data in internet-related studies. In order to deal with this obstacle, researchers tend to approach studies concerning the internet in two ways. One approach is to choose a large sample size but focus on specific areas such as a limited number of site features. The alternative is to choose a small sample size and conduct a more comprehensive analysis. Hill and Hughes chose the former approach to their study and concentrated on a limited number of site features. However, their research may have been improved by expanding upon this range to include communicative features incorporated within the sites such as chat forums. Neglecting these features

tends to skew their research towards analyzing only the information-provision function of the internet and ignoring its communicative capabilities.

Hill and Hughes research concerning the relationship between ideology and the use of websites provides a basis for assessing Japanese political party use of the web with some modifications owing to the Japanese political environment. As discussed in more detail in the following chapter, the majority of the major Japanese political parties tend to be clustered in the center of the political spectrum, with few political parties operating on the extreme right and left. The predominance of the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) throughout most of the post-war period in Japan up to 1993, and its ability to co-opt popular policies and incorporate them within its political platforms have led to a situation of somewhat muted competition among parties. However, the LDP's loss in the 1993 general election to a coalition of eight small parties proved that circumstances could change and that smaller political parties could pose an alternative to the LDP. Since that time, smaller political parties such as the DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan) have gone through a period of transformation and amalgamation, leading to the potential for a dynamic two-party system with the LDP and the DPJ vying for power. Although both of these parties lean towards the center, other political parties that veer towards the left in political orientation such as the New Komeito (also known as the Clean Government Party) and the JCP (Japan Communist Party) could continue to draw on their traditional support bases and potentially become influential minor parties in coalition governments.

Given the Japanese political environment, despite the absence of clear ideological distinctions between the LDP and the DPJ, assessing the website contents of Japanese political parties in terms of ideology and size may provide indications of trends in party competition in Japan.

3.3.4   Surveying political parties

Through the development of the theoretical and operationalizational model for assessing party organization characteristics as featured on political party websites, it was clear that certain questions could not be answered solely by analyzing and comparing political party websites through election campaign cycles. To determine the goals that parties held for utilizing ICTs and how they are

integrating ICTs into their campaign activities, it was necessary to conduct a survey concerning party use of the internet (Appendix C, Japanese version; Appendix D, English version).

For the purposes of this investigation, the sample size for the survey was limited to six Japanese political parties: the LDP, the DPJ, the New Komeito Party, the Liberal Party, the JCP, and the SDP (Social Democratic Party of Japan). These parties were listed in the 36th edition of the *Seiji handobukku* (*Politics Handbook*) (Center for Political Public Relations, 2000) as being the major parties occupying seats in the Diet. Each party was contacted by telephone, and the person or department responsible for creating and maintaining the party's website was identified. The survey was then sent to the person identified as the manager for the political party's website.

The survey was comprised of four major sections. The first section included questions regarding party website creation and maintenance. The parties were asked when they first created their websites, their reasons for establishing their websites, and if they included the URL (uniform resource locator, or website address) on any other party's other promotional materials. The second set of questions specifically related to the resources that the party devoted to their websites at that particular time; for example, their budget and the number of people that were employed by the parties to maintain their websites. Parties were also asked to provide details about their attitudes towards updating their websites during election campaign periods, what they considered the merits to be of having websites, and how important the party considered utilization of the internet compared to other media forms. And finally, the parties were also asked about their internal party communications through the internet. The survey was administered in September-October 2000, approximately three months following the 2000 general election (held in June 2000) and nine months prior to the 2001 Upper House election, and all six parties responded to the survey.

3.3.5   Website analysis

The final step in the methodological process for surveying party websites was to analyze and compare the websites during two national election campaign periods. In order to do so, a checklist of website features was prepared corresponding to the modified typology outlined in Table 3.2 and

including direction of information flow/role of the public, ICT integration into campaign activities, cross-media use related to the role of ICTs, and linking strategies (Appendix E).

Five features were chosen to evaluate website contents in terms of the direction of information flow and the role of the public. The first was the variety of contact means that the party made available on their websites for receiving comments, opinions, or other forms of communications with the electorate. These included basic items such as the parties indicating their contact telephone and facsimile numbers, postal addresses of the parties, and e-mail addresses on the top pages of their websites. In order to assess if parties were facilitating contact with the public through the websites themselves, websites were also evaluated in terms of whether or not the parties provided a web-based response form. Response forms are a separate page on the party's website with fields that the user can complete with his/her personal information (i.e. name, address, phone number) and usually include a text field for comments and opinions. The user can then click on a "send" button to send this information via e-mail to the party. Chat rooms or discussion forums, the third feature, are a means of promoting communication with the public through allowing users to "post" comments through an online BBS (bulletin-board system). Parties can then respond to these questions on the BBS/chat room/discussion forum page of their websites. The fourth feature assessed on party websites was the inclusion of issue or opinion polls. These short surveys are usually limited to less than five questions; users indicate their opinions or answers to the questions and then click on "send" buttons to send the survey via e-mail to the party. Online issue or opinion polls may serve as a rapid (if not particularly accurate) means of gauging public opinion concerning certain issues. And finally, the party websites were evaluated in terms of whether or not they included a means to allow voters to register their e-mail addresses to receive e-mail newsletters from the party.

Website features pertaining to ICT integration into campaign activities were divided into two subsections: overall election-related features and candidate-related features. Within the first subsection, websites were assessed in terms of their provision of election-specific references such as special sections of the website that focused solely on the election (often accessible through a "click-through banner" on the top page of the party website) or entirely separate websites that were created solely for the purpose of promoting the party in a particular election (a web-based strategy that has been used in

the past by American political parties). Other election-specific features on party websites included the provision of the party's election campaign platform or "manifesto", campaign event schedules, any information that was targeted towards certain demographically based voting constituencies (e.g. young people, women, or specific occupations), information aimed at the specific act of voting ("how-to" guides or voter education guides), and election-related merchandising. The second subsection pertained to information provided by the party concerning their candidates such as candidate listings and candidate profiles. Candidate listings were defined as a list of the names of the party's candidates that may include the names of their constituencies and links to their personal websites (if available). By contrast, candidate profiles are party-produced web pages, typically using an identical template or pattern, that provided detailed background information about the candidate such as photographs, times elected, constituency, educational background, legislative experience, personal messages from the as well as links to the candidate's personal website.

The third and fourth sets of features evaluated on political party websites pertained to unique properties of the web to provide a "multimedia" platform for parties to include a range of media formats on their websites and demonstrate linking strategies, respectively. Unlike other media forms such as traditional broadcasting and print channels, the web offers the potential for multiple media formats to be available through websites. For example, parties can use their websites to reinforce their presence through other media channels by including other campaign-related media such as graphics of their election posters, replay options for television/radio commercials or audio/video messages, and access to cellular-phone-based websites. Although cellular-phone-based websites usually have their own URL, most of the parties that did include this feature on their websites included the cellular-phone-based website within the party's main URL, allowing it to be viewed not only through cellular phones but also on a desktop or laptop personal computer. The range of cross-media media features may demonstrates certain attitudes that the parties have towards their websites. Elite (cartel) political parties may choose to reinforce their message to the public by placing "traditional" alternative media on their websites such as election posters or television/radio commercials. In contrast, mass parties may opt for including a broader range of cross-media channels such as audio/video messages (created

solely for the purpose of being used on the website) and perhaps unique in Japan's Internet environment, cellular-phone-based versions of party websites.

The type of linking strategy that political parties choose to include on their websites can also be indicative of party organizational characteristics. For the purposes of this investigation, a "link" was identified as any hypertext link available on the party website allowing users to access websites external to the main party websites (those links pointing to web pages within the party's main website were not included). Party websites were assessed in terms of eight different link types, and the definitions of these link types are set out in Table 3.3. As noted in the model, elite (cartel) parties may follow a pattern of linking to institutions and groups that reinforce their elite status (such as national-level institutions, including the Upper and Lower Houses of the Diet, the Prime Minister's Office, and national ministries, and mass media organizations), as well as support organizations. On the other hand, mass parties may choose to include links that appeal to a broader section of the public such as the mass media, individual supporters, and non-traditional support organizations such as NGOs/NPOs (non-government organizations/non-profit organizations).

Table 3.3 Link categories and definitions

Link category	Definition
Intra-party apparatus	Offsite links to the websites of politicians affiliated with the party, or regional, local, or block-level branches of the party
Other political parties	Offsite links to the websites of other political parties (both major and minor)
National-level institutions	Offsite links to the websites of the Upper/Lower houses of the Diet, Prime Minister's Office, or national-level ministries
Newspapers	Offsite links to the websites of national newspapers
TV/Radio stations	Offsite links to the websites of television or radio stations
Online election-related websites (election portal websites)	Offsite links to websites that contained information regarding the election that were created/maintained by non-government-related private interest groups or individuals
International	Offsite links to the websites of governments, organizations, interest groups, or individuals outside Japan
Other	Offsite links to other organizations or individuals such as NGOs/NPOs, thinktanks, citizens' groups, or individuals

After preparing the website analysis checklist, the URLs for the official websites for the political parties were identified by conducting a search in Yahoo! Japan for the party name in Japanese (refer to Appendix A for a list of URLs). During the 2000 general election campaign period, the DPJ created an election-specific website, separate from the party's official website, to focus directly on this specific election campaign, and the content of this website was included in this analysis of party websites.

The next steps in the analysis of party websites concerned resolving certain technical aspects of collecting and archiving party websites as well as determining the timing for such activities. Political party websites were archived (using commercially available software, Metaproducts *Offline Explorer*) on a daily basis between May 15 and June 30, 2000 (the period immediately prior to and following the Lower House election) and from July 1 to July 31, 2001 (corresponding period for the Upper House election). This period was chosen with careful consideration to the structure of political campaigns in Japan as set out in the POEL. Although outlined in more detail in the following chapter, unlike political campaigns in the U.S., U.K., or other nations, in Japan there is an established period of time for official campaigning immediately prior to municipal, prefecture-level, and national election campaigns (*senkyo undo kikan*), ranging from 12 to 17 days. For the 2000 general election, the official campaign activities period was June 13 to election day, June 25, and in the 2001 Upper House election, the official period was determined to start July 15, with the election being held on July 29, 2001. At the time of commencing this research, it was unknown if political parties would continue to update their websites with political, election-related, or candidate-related information during the official campaign activities period. As this was an important consideration in previous elections in terms of how major and minor parties were utilizing their websites during periods prior to the election, the decision was made to prepare an archive of the websites on a daily basis starting at a time prior to the official campaign activities period.

Once the websites were collected as the raw data to be used for comparing website features, the websites for all six parties were reviewed to ascertain if there were major changes in website content prior to and during the official campaign activities period for each election. During this review process, it was discovered that none of the parties made extensive changes to their websites in terms of the criteria used for assessing their website content as outlined above. During both election campaign periods, four out of the six political parties (the LDP, DPJ, New Komeito Party, and the JCP) made minor updates to the top pages of their websites with regard to non-election-related news items. As was the case in previous elections, this type of non-election-related updating of political party websites did not indicate a challenge to the POEL. The SDP and the Liberal Party did not make any changes to

their websites during the election campaign activities period in either election, and in fact, the Liberal Party clearly indicated its intention not to update its websites on the top page.

As the preliminary review of the websites indicated no major changes to the websites in terms of the criteria used for comparing and analyzing the websites, arbitrary dates of June 16, 2000 and July 22, 2001 were chosen (both dates within the official campaign activities period for the two respective elections) as "snapshot dates" for applying the assessment criteria to the websites. As the appearance of site features sometimes varies depending on the browser, I decided to use Internet Explorer Version 5.0, which is the most popular browser used in Japan. As in late May, the DPJ created a separate site (with a separate URL address) to specifically address the election (*www.minshu2000.com*) the evaluation criteria were applied to both the main party website and the election-specific site as well.

3.4   Examining candidate websites

In addition to comparing differences in website utilization for political parties during two election campaign periods (the 2000 Lower House election and the 2001 Upper House election), I also conducted an analysis of candidate-created websites during the 2001 Upper House election period. As mentioned in the introductory chapter to this dissertation, this particular election marked the first time that website use by candidates running in national-level contests surpassed 50%. Although political party-produced websites appeared to be the focus of the POEL's rulings regarding the use of the Internet for campaigning in the 1996 and 1998 national election cycles, since the 2000 general election campaign period, individual candidate websites were beginning to garner attention as additional campaign platforms for candidates as well.

The objectives, research questions, and methodology for surveying candidate websites varied slightly from that used for political parties. Rather than approach candidate use of the web through an organizational background (as the objectives and the research questions for evaluating political party websites were based on party organization characteristics), for evaluating candidate websites, I decided to following a more detailed approach. In addition to determining how candidates utilized their websites to provide information about the election and communicate with the electorate, I also assessed candidate websites in terms of what Bimber and Davis identified as three strategies that

candidates could use through their election campaigns: party orientation, issue orientation, and image orientation (Bimber and Davis, 2003: 44-45). To address how candidates were incorporating these strategies within their website contents, I also assessed website features in terms of how they demonstrated party affiliation through their websites (mainly through the display of party logos, links to their party's official websites, and photographs with party leaders), to what extent they included information concerning various issues, and how they presented themselves personally through their websites through the inclusion of personal information features and their personal affiliations or connections with other institutions, groups, or individuals, as demonstrated through linking strategies on their websites. Given the large number of candidate websites, a mixed methodology of surveys and website analysis was not feasible for this portion of the project, and so it was decided to concentrate solely on comparing candidate website features.

3.4.1   Research questions and objectives

As discussed in the previous chapter, to date, much of the academic focus on the content of candidate websites during election campaigns in the U.S., U.K., and other countries tends to focus on the range of information features and the communications-oriented features that candidates included on their websites. However, as I indicated in the introductory chapter to this dissertation, concentrating solely on evaluating political websites based on these features tends to propagate the focus of the political use of websites on their merits of the capability of providing large amounts of information and facilitate communications with the electorate. While these features are important aspects of utilizing websites for political advertising and campaigning purposes, I suggest that a more indepth analysis of candidate website utilization can be gained, one that returns the focus to the political aspects of the campaign, if a broader range of features is scrutinized and then compared in terms of the candidates' political party.

Thus, for the purposes of this investigation, I decided not only to evaluate candidate websites in terms of the features that they included on their websites to address the election and communicate with the electorate, but also to extend this analysis in two directions. First, I sought a deeper analysis of the websites by looking at party affiliation features, the range of issues that candidates were

addressing on their websites, general personal information features, and linking strategies that

candidates utilized on their websites to demonstrate connections with other groups and individuals.

The guiding research question for this portion of the project is: How are candidates using their

websites to provide election-related information to the public, communicate with the public, address

issues, and show party and organizational affiliations through linking strategies? And second, I sought

a deeper analysis of the political implications of candidate utilization of websites by comparing their

website contents in terms of their affiliated political party and their candidate status (either new

candidate or incumbent). The goal in this complementary phase is to identify any trends towards

certain website contents in terms of political party and/or candidate status and relate these trends to the

Japanese political environment. Thus, the second research question addressed is: Is there a tendency

for candidates of certain parties to have similar features on their websites?

3.4.2   Identifying and collecting candidate websites

As the focus of this portion of the project was candidate utilization of the web, the contents of

candidate-created websites provided the raw data for assessment and comparison purposes. In general,

the task of collecting the websites and establishing evaluation criteria was similar to that conducted for

assessing political party websites, however, given the number of candidate websites and the depth to

which they were analyzed for this project, certain modifications were made to the methodological

process, consisting of which is outlined below.

Prior to examining candidate websites during this election, it was necessary to identify which

candidates had created websites in preparation for the 2001 Upper House election. Given the lack of

an official list of candidates' website addresses or URLs, a combination of on- and offline media were

utilized in order to create a list of candidate websites in the month prior to the election date of July 29,

2001. The list of candidates provided on the election 2001 section of the *Mainichi Shimbun* website

(www.mainichi.co.jp/eye/2001senkyo/sangiin/) was used to generate a preliminary list of candidates[1],

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[1] Since the late 1990s, during national election periods, major newspapers in Japan such as the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Asahi Shimbun*, and the *Mainichi Shimbun* have created special sections of their websites focusing on the election. Contents of these websites include articles, interactive maps with candidate lists for each constituency (or prefecture, in the case of Upper House elections) and party (for proportional representation candidates), columns by newspaper reporters, and other election-related information. Links to candidate or political party websites are not provided on any of the major newspaper websites in Japan.

which was then refined by comparison to the official candidate listing provided as a newspaper insert shortly before the election. Candidate URLs were added to this master list by following links to candidate websites using information available on political party websites (for candidates who belonged to or were endorsed by political parties) and also searching for links to candidate websites from lists available on a www.election.co.jp, a third-party political website[2]. Finally, in order to complete the master list of candidate URLs, online searches using two Japanese-language search engines, Google Japan (www.google.co.jp) and Yahoo! Japan (www.yahoo.co.jp) were conducted by entering the candidates' surname, name, and the phrase *senkyo* (election) in Japanese characters to search for any missing or conflicting URLs.

In a limited number of cases, the search procedure resulted in the discovery of multiple websites for certain candidates. In addition to their own "official" website—created by the candidate or his/her candidate campaign organization—some of the more popular candidates also had "fan-club websites" that were established by supporters who may or may not have been officially affiliated with the candidate's campaign organization. For the purposes of this project, only the candidate's "official" website (which, in most cases, was clearly identified as such on the top page of the website), established by the candidate and his/her support organization was selected for the website content survey. Websites hosted on government servers (identified as those with URLs ending in "go.jp"), were not included, as it was likely that these websites were created and maintained by government organizations rather than the candidates themselves or their support organizations. Major political parties such as the LDP, DPJ, and JCP often included one-page "biographies" about their candidates on political party websites at either the local or national level. As this type of website was often generated by the national or local party administration rather than the candidate and his/her support organization, it was not identified as the candidate's official personal website and was not included in the website survey. Broken links and websites identified as being "under construction" were also not included in the overall survey.

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[2] The website www.election.co.jp, a non-partisan website created in 2000 and maintained by two citizens groups in Tokyo and Fukuoka, offers search functions by candidate name, party, and constituency. The website also includes open forums where Internet users can post comments regarding election issues, send messages of support or queries to candidates, vote in online opinion polls, and view election results from national, prefecture-level, and local elections.

Prior reporting the results of the overall investigation of website utilization, it is necessary to review the rather complex Upper House electoral system in Japanese national elections. In Upper House (House of Councillors) elections in Japan, a total of 242 councillors are elected, each serving six-year terms. Half of the councilors are elected in each election, meaning that 121 seats are contested at set three-year intervals. In each election, 73 seats are selected from 47 single-seat constituencies (between one to four councillors per prefecture). Voters cast two ballots, the first of which is for their choice candidate in this prefecture-based single-seat constituency. The remaining 48 seats in each election are selected through a proportional representation system. For the second ballot, voters choose their preferred political party or candidate (according to a ranking created by the parties). Successful candidates in the second ballot are awarded their seats based on party vote totals. Independent candidates may run for single-seat constituency seats, but as they are not affiliated with any political party, are not allowed to run for seats in the proportional representation system. Candidates may run either "single candidacy", races meaning that they are running solely in the prefecture-based constituency or the proportional representation system, or as "double candidates", wherein they simultaneously contest a single-seat constituency and a proportional representation seat. In the case where a candidate is selected in the single-seat constituency voting, he/she gives up his/her place in the party-created ranked list under the proportional representation system. For the purposes of this investigation, these "double" candidates were considered "single-seat constituency" candidates and candidates running solely in the proportional representation system were denoted as being proportional representation candidates.

The data collection and archiving activities for candidate websites were conducted on a weekly basis (four times) during the month of July 2001, prior to the Upper House election date of July 29, 2001. The replication of the data sets was undertaken mainly to resolve any technical difficulties in collecting the websites rather than to assess if there were any changes in the candidates' websites prior to or during the official campaign activities period which commenced on July 13, 2001. In a preliminary review of the datasets, it appeared that candidates did not make any changes to their websites or update their websites during the election campaign activities period. Thus, I decided to use the dataset from the third week of July (July 19 to 25, 2001) for the analysis of candidate websites.

3.4.3   Assessment criteria

In accordance with the research questions for this portion of the study, I identified six major areas in which to assess candidate websites: election-oriented information, communications-oriented features, party affiliation features, issues, personal information features, and linking strategies. I developed a website coding instrument (Appendix F, Japanese version; Appendix G, English version) that was used to examine not only the existence of certain features on candidate websites but also the placement of certain features on the website such as the prominence given to the display of issue-related information. The assessment criteria for each area are set out below.

3.4.3.1 Election-related information

For many candidates, providing additional information regarding elections, their candidatures, and their positions on popular issues is crucially important. This type of political information can be distributed in three main ways: through the mass media, by the political parties with which they are affiliated, and by the candidates themselves and their support organizations. Each of these means have certain strengths and weaknesses. Political campaigning or advertising through the mass media reaches the widest audience, yet is limited in space and can be expensive for candidates. Particularly in the case of Japanese political candidates, the POEL prevents them from directly purchasing political advertising in the mass media, and instead, the government provides each candidate with a set number of newspaper advertisements and television and radio commercials. Although political parties have no such restrictions, they are not allowed to promote individual candidates during the 7- to 20-day "official campaign activities" period immediately prior to an election. In Japan, as a great deal of attention has been paid to the use of websites for campaigning to date, this investigation sought to assess what kinds of election-related features candidates were actually utilizing on their websites.

Election-related information that candidates make available on their websites can take a number of forms. For the purposes of this investigation, I identified seven types of features that candidates could include on their websites to address the election (Table 3.4). The first feature is election-related issues. For the purposes of this investigation focusing on candidate websites in the 2001 Upper House election campaign period, three main issues specifically concerning the election

were identified as the Koizumi administration, the general state of the economy, and restructuring of central government services. As this was the first nation-wide election with the new prime minister in office, it was considered a political bellwether of support for the Koizumi administration. Restructuring the central government and Japanese continuing recession were also considered important issues during this election period.

Table 3.4 Election-related information features on candidate websites

Feature	Definition
Issue: Koizumi Administration	Statements of any length regarding the Koizumi Administration found on the top page of the website or accessible by internal link from the top page.
Issue: Restructuring	Statements of any length regarding restructuring found on the top page of the website or accessible by internal link from the top page.
Issue: Economy	Statements of any length regarding the economy found on the top page of the website or accessible by internal link from the top page.
Constituency name	Identification of the candidate's constituency (prefecture) on the top page of the website
Information targeted towards or about a particular geographical area or constituency	Statements of any length concerning a particular geographical area or constituency (prefecture) posted on the website.
Speeches	Text, audio, or visual display of the candidate's speeches
Volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign	Statements of any length on the website asking for volunteers to assist with the campaign or offering internship opportunities with the candidate
Campaign event schedule	A list of dates, times, or places for public speaking events held by the candidate posted on the website
Internet and the election	Statements of any length (usually on the top page but could be anywhere on the website) indicating (a) a general statement concerning the candidate's attitude towards using the internet for election campaign purposes; or (b) the candidate's position regarding updating/not updating his/her website during the official campaign activities period

The survey instrument also investigated the presence or absence of geographical or local-oriented information items. Were candidates using their websites to personalize their message to their particular constituencies and include information concerning their constituencies or a particular geographical area? Indicating the constituency name on the top page of the website was deemed important for locally positioning the candidate (appealing to the electorate in a certain constituency) and could be used by current officeholders to reinforce their incumbent status. More detailed information aimed at a particular geographical area or constituency could be used by candidates to reinforce their attachment to their local communities or constituencies (*jiban*), particularly for candidates running in single-seat constituency contests.

Candidate websites were also assessed in terms of whether or not candidates provided text, audio, or visual displays of their speeches. Candidates could also use their websites to publicize their

campaign event schedules[3], appeal for volunteers, or offer internship opportunities with their

campaigns. And, the final feature on candidate websites that was assessed in this feature set is the

presence or absence of any type of statement on candidates' websites regarding the general use of the

internet during the election period—particularly if candidates intended to update or not update their

websites during the official campaign activities period immediately prior to each election. As

discussed in the following chapter, this has been an especially contentious point with regard to the use

of the internet during election campaign periods in Japan.

3.4.3.2 Communications-oriented information

Websites provides a number of means for political actors to establish and maintain

communications with the public through a variety of channels that either use websites as the platform

for communications (such as bulletin-board services or surveys) or those that utilize other functions of

the internet such as e-mail. Although there is no standardized list of communications features that

should be made available on candidate-created websites, it was surmised that candidates would

include as many features as possible to demonstrate a positive attitude towards engaging in

communicative activities with the public using their websites as a base for such communications.

To this end, I identified nine communications-related features that candidates could include on

their websites to engage the public in their campaigns (Table 3.5). The first feature is the inclusion of

the candidate's contact information, which could include his/her address, telephone, or facsimile

numbers (either in the candidate's constituency or through his/her Diet office). The second feature is

the display of the candidate's e-mail address, which could be either his/her personal e-mail address or

the e-mail address of his/her support organization. Candidate websites were also evaluated in terms of

whether candidates specifically invited contact with the public through any means by clearly stating

somewhere on their websites that they would like to receive comments or opinions from the public. To

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[3] As discussed in the following chapter, the POEL has been applied to the posting of campaign event schedules on candidate websites in past election campaigns (specifically the 2000 general election campaign). However, to date, the government's ruling on the inclusion of campaign event schedules on candidate websites has focused on updating such content during the official campaign activities period immediately prior to the election, and not on the question of whether or not it is legal under the POEL to include such schedules on candidate websites. In other words, the current interpretation is that if a candidate had posted his/her campaign event schedule on his/her website prior to the start of the official campaign activities period and did not update the website with new information about his/her schedule, then the inclusion of this information did not contravene the POEL.

facilitate such contact, their websites were also evaluated in terms of whether they included a separate "contact page" or web-based form on their websites.

Table 3.5 Communications-related features on candidate websites

Feature	Definition
Survey regarding election issues and results	Web-based survey of any length and the results of such web-based surveys on the website.
BBS or online discussion forum	A bulletin-board service or discussion forum where viewers could post comments or opinions.
E-mail address	Inclusion of the candidate's personal e-mail address or the e-mail address of his/her campaign organization on the website. Does not include e-mail addresses relating to the management of the website (i.e. "webmaster" e-mail addresses).
Requesting comments from the electorate (any means)	Statements of any length asking viewers of the website to submit comments or opinions through any means.
Contact information	Inclusion of the candidate's contact information (address, telephone number, facsimile number) on the top page of the website.
Separate contact page or form	A web-based form where users could freely indicate their comments or opinions and send them via e-mail a specified e-mail address (usually the candidate's personal e-mail address or that of his/her support organization).
E-mail newsletter (PC based)	A regularly distributed newsletter sent by e-mail from the candidate or his/her support organization.
Cellular-phone-based website	A scaled-down version of the candidate's website created specifically for viewing through mobile devices such as cellular telephones. Could be included within the candidate's PC-based website.
Cellular-phone-based email newsletter	A regularly distributed newsletter sent by cellular-phone-based e-mail from the candidate or his/her support organization.

Candidate websites were also assessed with regard to the inclusion of more technically advanced functions. The inclusion of website-based surveys and results provides an opportunity for the candidate to determine public opinion concerning certain issues, which may or may not be reflected in the candidate's stance concerning issues. For the purposes of this project, I defined "surveys" as any type of polling mechanism present on the website. This item does not include website evaluation surveys, such as those that ask the viewer to give his/her opinion regarding the site design, layout, or overall contents, as such responses pertain more to the construction of the website itself rather than the issues raised by the candidate. Similarly, I defined the presence of "survey results" to be the inclusion of the results of any current or previous website based surveys. Although the inclusion of public opinion polls, even short ones, on websites requires a certain level of technical expertise, they can provide important information to candidates regarding public opinion concerning certain policies and issues. BBS (bulletin board services), chat, or discussion forum functions on a candidate website also may encourage dialogue with and among the electorate. BBS, commonly known in Japanese as *keijiban*, are computer-generated message boards where viewers can read or

post messages concerning any topic. Chat and discussion forum functions are similar in that they allow real-time messages to be posted and written on a page provided by the candidate on his/her website. These interactive communication systems have both merits and demerits: Such systems encourage dialogue with the public and can be used as a public space for debate and exchanging opinions; however, unless monitored, they can also become places where negative or defamatory comments may be posted.

The final three features assessed on candidate-created websites were e-mail newsletters, cellular-phone-based websites, and cellular-phone-based e-mail newsletters. Given the growing popularity of e-mail newsletters (*meru maga*), as well as the high degree of attention paid to the e-mail newsletter produced by the Koizumi administration in the spring of 2001, I wanted to investigate if candidates were also utilizing this means to regularly communicate with the electorate. And, finally, given the popularity of cellular-phone-based websites and e-mail newsletters in Japan for products and services, I sought to assess if candidates were also using these features to communicate with the electorate.

3.4.3.3 Party affiliation features

In addition to election-related and communications-oriented features on candidate websites, this project also assessed how candidates demonstrate party affiliation through their websites. Identification with a particular political party is important for the following reasons. First, candidates identify with party platforms and policies, and through such identification, can demonstrate their stances on issues to the electorate. Second, particularly for new candidates looking to build their images and reputations among voters, party identification provides a vital first impression to the electorate regarding that particular politician's policy stance. Third, in Japan, party identification takes on more importance because of voting procedures. In Japan's mixed electoral system for Upper House elections, voters cast two write-in ballots, one each for the single-seat constituency candidate and the proportional representation candidate. Voters can indicate the latter by writing either the candidate's name or the name of his/her affiliated political party. Successful candidates are chosen on the basis of

their placement in the party's official list of candidates. Thus, for proportional representation candidates, indication of party affiliation may also have practical voting consequences.

Traditionally, party affiliation was demonstrated by candidates by indicating the party name and possibly the party logo as well on written communications with the electorate, such as newsletters, postcards, posters and government-distributed *senkyo koho* (election bulletins) that may include pictures and statements from each candidate. In addition to including the party name and logo, websites offer innovative ways that candidates can use to signify their party affiliation on their websites through a combination of text, graphics, and links. While other campaign media such as posters, postcards, publicly distributed election bulletins, and party-sponsored promotional materials may have certain space and format restrictions, websites have no such limitations. In addition to including the party logo and party name on the top pages, candidates can create links from both of these items to the main party website (Figure 3.1). Candidates can also include visual means of party affiliation and association with the party leader by prominently displaying photographs of the candidate with the party leader or executive (Figure 3.2). If the leader of a particular party is also popular with the electorate, then candidates may also consider using this means to enhance their own popularity as well. As shown below, this was a particularly popular feature of demonstrating party affiliation throughout this particular campaign for some candidates.

Figure 3.1: Examples of party logos

| Democratic Party of Japan | Liberal Democratic Party | Social Democratic Party of Japan |

Figure 3.2 Examples of photographs of candidates with party leaders (top page of website)

Candidate: Nishida Yoshihiro (photographed with LDP leader Koizumi Junichiro)	Candidate: Higuchi Yuichi (photographed with DPJ leaders Hatoyama Yukio, left, and Kan Naoto, right)

For this particular feature set, I specifically looked for indications of candidates' relationships with their respective political parties through the use of text, logos, and graphics on the top pages of their websites. In addition, I also investigated links to either the party's national website or local branch website. Table 3.6 lists the features demonstrating party affiliation.

Table 3.6 Party affiliation features on websites

Feature	Definition
Party logo	Graphic image of party logo on the top page of the website
Party logo and link to party website	Graphic image of party logo on the top page of the website which includes a link to the party's official website
Party name in text	Party name written in text on the top page of the website
Party name in text and link to party website	Party name written in text on the top page of the website and including a link to the party's official website
Photograph with party leader or official	Photograph or image anywhere on the website showing the candidate with the party leader or a member of the executive of the party.

3.4.3.4 Issues

In order to assess if candidates were utilizing their websites to inform the public regarding their issue positions, the website survey instrument was designed to not only record the type of issue that each candidate addressed on his/her website, but also the placement of a particular issue on the website.

Eighteen general issues were identified as potential issues that candidates could address on their websites: the environment, education, welfare, the economy, employment, primary industries (such as agriculture or fishing), foreign policy/defence, gender, small/medium business, industry, community building, information technology, administration/finance, finance/taxation, local

government relations, youth, the constitution, and disaster policy. For each issue, I asked coders to look for expressions indicating the candidate's personal opinions, which were often in sections headed by expressions such as *taisaku* (measures)*, seisaku* (policy)*, iken* (opinion)*, shiten* (viewpoint)*, bishon* (vision)*, omoi* (thought)*, hoshin* (plan)*, teian* (approach or proposal)*, tema* (theme)*, rinen* (idea or philosophy)*, yume* (dream)*, shinjo* (belief or principle)*,* and *teigen* (proposal or recommendation) as constituting candidates' personal opinions or beliefs.

I also noted the placement of statements regarding certain issues on candidate websites by identifying three formats (Figure 3.3). First, candidates may prominently display issue-related information on the top pages of their websites. This has the advantage of attracting attention to their opinions and provides the viewer with a means of quickly understanding the candidate's platform. In addition, candidates may also draw attention to an issue by creating a specific page on their websites that details their position on that particular issue. In many cases, candidates provide links to these pages from the top pages of their websites. Free from any length or format restrictions, candidates may use this means to provide detailed information regarding their positions on specific issues. A third method is to include a "combination page", often accessible by clicking on a top-page link labeled *isshu* (issue) or *seisaku* (policy). The linked page then contains information regarding a variety of issues, which in turn may also be linked to specific pages.

Figure 3.3 Examples of placement of issues-related information on candidate websites

Top page	Specific page	Combination page
Candidate: Suzuki Seiji	Candidate: Sekiyama Nobuyuki	Candidate: Endo Nobuhiko

Comparing the placement of certain issues—on the top page, on a specific page, or on a combination page—provides clues as to how important candidates rate these issues in their overall

platforms. It can be surmised that candidates who place issue-related information on the top pages of their websites want to draw attention to their stances regarding these issues and that they consider them to be important in their campaign platform. Similarly, candidates who provide detailed information regarding issues on specific pages of their websites usually have detailed opinions or policies regarding such issues. Finally, a combination page of issues allows voters to see details regarding issues as a package of attributes that they can use to make their voting decisions.

3.4.3.5 General personal information features

The third potential strategy that candidates can use during election campaigns is emphasize their personal attributes, which includes providing personal information about themselves and demonstrating their affiliation with other institutions, groups, organizations, and individuals. Candidates can use their websites to provide detailed information regarding themselves and their activities. Along with other information, candidates can use their websites as a means of image construction by including photographs of themselves, characterizing themselves through illustrations, and including photographs of their involvement in various personal and professional activities. They may also choose to include reports and photographs of recent news in both personal and professional contexts.

For the purpose of this investigation, general personal information features on candidate websites includes six items: photographs and/or illustrations of the candidate placed n the top pages of their websites, the inclusion of background information regarding the candidate, such as education, work experience, and hobbies, candidate profile, event photographs, recent news, and newspaper articles or press releases (Table 3.7). Photographs or illustrations could be a single photograph of the candidate, the candidate with a group of people, or a characterization of the candidate. Candidate profiles were defined as any type of resume or listing of the details of the candidate's life, such as education, employment, family members, hobbies, and other personal details. Event photographs included any type of photo album or specific section of the website devoted to graphically chronicling the candidate's personal or professional life. A clear distinction was made between campaign-related events—deemed to be politically related or campaign-related events—and recent news. Recent news

items were defined as information pertaining to recent events in the candidate's personal life (for example, concerning family members, interests, or hobbies). By contrast, campaign-related news or events were those undertaken by the candidate during the course of the campaign. And finally, candidate websites were evaluated in terms of whether candidates reproduced or included newspaper articles or press releases on their websites, either by or about themselves.

Table 3.7 General personal information features on websites

Feature	Definition
Individual photograph	Photograph(s) of the candidates on the top page of the website
Individual illustration	Illustration(s) or graphic(s) of the candidate on the top page of the website
Background information about the candidate	Resume, background information, or "profile" information regarding the candidate, including education, work experience, hobbies, family members, etc.
Event photographs	Photograph(s) from recent events, either personal or professionally related
Recent news	Statements concerning any recent news items concerning the candidate (but not related to campaigning activities)
Newspaper articles/press releases	Representations of newspaper articles or press releases, either in text or PDF format, by or about the candidate

3.4.3.6 Links

The sixth and final set of features coded for this project involved examination of the types of hypertext links present on candidate websites. The main purpose of including links is to guide viewers towards additional information either within the website or to websites external to the candidate's websites. For example, links to election-related websites maintained by government agencies give viewers the opportunity to seek additional information regarding voting. However, links can also demonstrate affiliations such as party affiliation or support for other political actors that also have a web presence. In addition to these purposes, links may also serve strategic purposes and differ among candidates in terms of party affiliation and incumbency. For example, ruling party candidates may include links to government offices and Diet institutions such as the upper and lower houses as a means of connecting their candidates in the minds of the voters to these institutions.

For the purposes of this investigation, ten different link types were identified, as shown in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8 Links on websites

Link	Definition
Foreign governments	Links to any foreign government website (i.e. U.S. government)
National government bodies	Links to national-level government bodies such as the Upper/Lower Houses of the Diet, the Prime Minister's Office, the National Diet Library, and ministries
Local governments	Links to municipal, local, or prefecture-based government offices or official websites
Political parties	Links to other political parties other than the candidate's political party or its regional/branch offices
Individual politicians	Links to the websites of other politicians (may or may not be in the same party)
Mass media	Links to the websites of newspapers, television, or radio stations.
Other individuals and citizen's groups	Links to other individuals and citizen groups (may include thinktanks, research organizations, NGOs, and NPOs)
Government-sponsored election-related websites	Links to government-sponsored election-related websites such as the Association for the Promotion of Fair Elections (*Akaruisenkyo*) and local election management boards.
Internet-specific election-related websites	Links to websites with election-related information created by groups or organizations that only exist online (i.e. *Senkyo de go* or www.election.co.jp (Election!). May also be election-related websites created and maintained by individuals or portal websites with specific categories containing election-related news (i.e. www.yahoo.co.jp's categories regarding the election).
Other	Any other link types

Foreign government links are links to foreign governments outside Japan and may include any level of government office. The term "national government bodies" was used to describe national-level government agencies, ministries, and institutions such as the Upper and Lower Houses of the Diet, the Prime Minister's Office, any national-level ministry such as the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, or finally, any agency such as the Board of Audit. Links to local governments were defined as links to the website of any prefecture, city, or village throughout Japan, not necessarily the candidate's own prefecture (although it was found that no candidates linked to prefectures other than their own).

Links to political parties and individual politicians are self-explanatory terms. In the pre-investigation stage of this research, prior to constructing the coding scheme for the websites, it was noted that almost no candidates or politicians included links to parties other than their own or to politician/candidates from other parties. Links to mass media are defined as linking to the websites of television stations, newspapers, radio stations, or any other mass media organization. Candidates' linking practices to other individuals (non-politicians) and citizens groups such as NGOs and NPOs were also assessed for this investigation, as well as a very broad category of "other link types". This

broad category was used as a catchall category for link types not defined elsewhere and could include links to alumni associations or universities that the candidates attended.

While the above link categories describe associations or affiliations that the candidate could have both on- and offline, two other "internet-specific" categories of links were also investigated: links to government-related election websites and internet-specific election websites. The category "government-related election websites" was included to assess if candidates were providing political education or voting education by linking to government-sponsored websites that promoted the election such as the Association for Promoting Fair Elections (*Akarui senkyo*, www.akaruisenkyo.or.jp), a quasi-government body on the national level that aims at promoting participation in elections or any of its affiliates (local election management boards) at the prefecture or municipal level. Links on candidate websites were also assessed in terms of whether or not candidates provided links to "internet-specific election websites", loosely defined as any type of election-related website that existed only on the web without a corresponding offline presence. This category included the discussion boards available through portal sites such as Yahoo! Chat or Yahoo! News (Japanese versions) or individually run websites promoting the election such as *Senkyo de go* (Let's go to the Election, homepage3.nifty.com/makepeace). Only links on specific "links" pages of the candidates' website were examined in this section.

3.3.4 Coding

A detailed coding instrument was devised to incorporate the above categories and features (see Appendix F, Japanese; Appendix G, English). Four of the five coders employed to code the websites were native Japanese-language speaking students and the fifth coder was a near-native Japanese-language speaking student with extensive experience in Japan and the Japanese language. Although intercoder reliability scores were not computed, coders underwent extensive training (at least six hours per coder) and strict definitions were followed for the six categories of features. Any coding conflicts that arise were discussed thoroughly and resolved.

3.5   Conclusion

In this chapter, I described content analysis as a research methodology that has been applied to the web, particularly to the study of the online presence of political parties and candidates in the past decade. I noted significant research trends and pointed out the similarities and differences in research designs that have been conducted in other nations. I then described how I adapted content analysis in two separate projects: the longitudinal case study approach aimed as assessing the websites produced by Japanese political parties during two national election cycles (2000 and 2001) as part of a mixed research design (incorporating questionnaire and interview techniques) as well as the quantitative research design focusing on how political candidates used their websites in the 2001 Upper House election in Japan.

In the following chapter, I discuss the Japanese political environment and media use regulations that have been applied to the use of the internet since 1995. These political, media, and internet contexts form the background for shaping the political use of the internet within Japan by these actors. I also showed that although the internet has evolved technologically throughout the past decade, campaign media regulations concerning its use have not similarly progressed.

Chapter 4 The Internet, Election Law, and the POEL: A Comparative Perspective

4.1   Introduction

Regulating the internet has become a particularly critical topic since the advent of widespread

public use in the last decade. During the 1990s, difficulties in regulating the internet added to its allure

as an information provision and communications channel for many traditional and non-traditional

political actors.[1] As shown in previous chapters, much of the speculation, empirical research, and

findings particularly in the mid- to late 1990s regarding the use of the internet as a political campaign

tool have been undertaken in advanced democratic nations such as the U.S. and the U.K. with few or

no restrictions on media use during election campaigns. However, with the expansion of the internet

into other nations with different political and media-use environments and increasing use by political

actors in these circumstances, different countries have exhibited various approaches to regulating

online campaigning.

The various approaches to examining – and in some cases, regulating – the campaign use of

the internet have revolved around three main issues. The first concerns defining the technology itself.

As mentioned earlier in the introductory chapter, the use of the term "internet" can encompass a range

of technological functions including websites, e-mail, USENET (discussion forums), listservs, and

BBS (bulletin board services). Defining these functions, describing their different uses, and examining

the possibilities for election campaigning through these different media formats has posed a number of

challenges in various countries. The second main issue is that of content. What types of activities

conducted through new media technologies such as the internet constitute campaign activities, and is it

possible to regulate these activities given the ephemeral, potentially anonymous, and rapid

communications capabilities of these technologies? And finally, a third issue is the applicability of

current national election-related legislation to the overall use of the internet for political campaign

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[1] This chapter focuses on the use of the internet specifically for online campaigning, which is a subset of
the overall topic of control of the internet for political purposes. The distinction is critical because a number
of non-democratic political regimes, such as those located in China, Viet Nam, Myanmar, and other
countries, have taken both legal and technical measures through filtering and content blocking to control
the use of the internet within their borders. Refer to Nina Hachigan, "The Internet and Power in One-Party
East Asian States", *The Washington Quarterly*, 25:3, pp. 41-58 and Shanthi Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas,
Open Networks, Closed Regimes (2003), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C.,
for a discussion of the approaches to regulating the use of the internet in these and other countries.

purposes. As discussed later in this chapter, fitting "new" media technologies into "old" campaign formats – in terms of expenditure, participation, and timing – has also posed challenges to legislators in different national milieux.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. The first is to provide an overview of how certain governments have approached the use of the internet during political campaigns. Generally speaking, most governments have taken one of two approaches: Those with few or no regulation of campaign media have tended to maintain this stance with regard to the internet and have allowed political parties, candidates, and other political actors to use the internet freely without restriction as to content or timing. This has been the approach taken in the U.S., U.K., and other democratic countries that led the world in internet penetration during the 1990s. However, other governments, such as those of Singapore and South Korea, comparatively recent newcomers to the internet in terms of internet penetration, have chosen to initiate new legislation to address its rising use by various political actors and the public in general. In contrast to both means of dealing with the campaign use of the internet, Japan's approach of applying existing legislation concerning campaign media to the use of the internet specifically during the official "campaign activities period" is noteworthy both for its impact on campaigning and its success during the past decade. This chapter provides a brief overview of how certain other countries have dealt with the use of the internet by political actors for campaign purposes in order to demonstrate the differences in the approach of the Japanese government to online campaigning.

The second major goal of this chapter is to delve more deeply into the history of Japan's POEL (Public Offices Election Law) by briefly examining its genesis in the early part of the twentieth century and to demonstrate how historical approaches to the dissemination of political media during election campaign periods have been influenced by prevailing political conditions. During the past century, the POEL has been altered a number of times as Japan evolved from an isolated feudal state in the mid-1800s to a modern democratic state in the period following World War II. Examining the changes in the POEL by focusing on two important periods in Japan's political development – the mid-1920s and the late 1940s to mid-1950s – uncovers a critical dynamic. The first is that during periods of critical political change and uncertainty (such as the introduction of universal suffrage in

1925 and radical changes in the political party system in the mid-1950s), there were major alterations in the POEL with respect to election campaign practices in general and the dissemination of political media during election campaigns in particular. Through these amendments to the POEL, the bureaucracy was able to assume greater responsibility in the control and public management of elections. As a result, in Japan, although political parties and candidate-politicians play an active role in election campaigning, their activities are closely monitored through the POEL, which ensures a role for the government as well during election campaigns.

When viewed through this historical background, the brief history of the relationship between the POEL and online campaigning in the 1990s, particularly following the adoption of the new electoral system in 1994, suggests a cautious approach is being taken by Japanese government with regard to the dissemination of campaign-oriented information through various internet functions. Since 1995, rather than allowing unregulated use of the internet as a campaign medium or drafting new legislation to deal with it, the Japanese government has applied existing media-use restrictions in the form of the POEL to its growing utilization as a campaign tool. Throughout each national election cycle since 1995, attempts by political parties and candidates to use the internet as a campaign medium have been met with the swift application of the POEL in a number of different respects. By examining the history of the POEL and chronicling the attempts of political parties and candidates to use the internet during national political campaigns as well as the response of the government during the period 1996 to 2004, it is clear that the POEL, and how it has been interpreted by Japan's bureaucracy, has had a significant impact on online campaigning in Japan.

4.2   Online campaigning in four countries

Dealing with the internet as a new media technology has posed certain challenges to national governments during the past 15 years in three main areas. The first area is dealing with the technology itself. The internet is a particularly fluid medium, simultaneously exhibiting characteristics of a mass media and a personal communications media. Political parties, candidates, and politicians – as well as other political actors such as governments and individuals – may use their websites as platforms for information dissemination. Through their websites, these political actors may distribute political

information in a traditional "top-down" or "one-to-many" manner, taking on an information dissemination role that heretofore was mainly practiced by mass media organizations such as newspapers and television. These political actors may also choose to distribute political information through e-mail such as e-mail newsletters. However, synchronous communications may also take place on the internet through chat rooms or discussion forums, which allow for direct "one-to-one" discussion and exchange, albeit in a public forum. New internet-based technologies such as blogs and audio-visual capabilities also complicate delineating clear boundaries between public and private information dissemination and communications. These examples of various technological features of the internet demonstrate the difficulty of defining the technology. By extension, these multiple functions or capabilities of the internet are also difficult to define within existing government regulations or government bodies that have been established to address the use of public or mass media channels.

The second area of potential regulation is that of content. Many democratic governments such as those of the U.S. and the U.K. interpret free-speech regulations as extending to internet-based communications and have not made concrete steps to regulate political content through the medium. However, as discussed below, the Singapore government has introduced legislation that aims at regulating the content of websites and other forms of internet-based communications.

The final area is the application of internet-based campaigning to existing regulations or the creation of new regulations dealing with campaigning through this new medium. Because the internet offers a means for traditional and non-traditional political actors to participate more actively in information dissemination and communications, different governments have taken diverse approaches to either applying such activities through the internet to existing regulations or drafting new regulations.

The four countries profiled in this section have been chosen to illustrate the range of approaches to regulating the campaign use of the internet in terms of defining the technology itself (and identifying the government agency most directly concerned with its regulation), their approach to regulating the political content of the internet, and, finally, in applying internet-based campaigning to existing or new legislation governing campaigning. Each country has taken a different approach to

online campaigning which can be plotted on a spectrum ranging from little or no regulation to stringent control of the political use of the internet. On one end of the spectrum is the U.S., which poses little regulation of the campaign use of the internet, particularly in terms of the technology and content. To date, the U.S. government has not drafted any new legislation concerning the campaign use of the internet. The U.K. has taken a similar position to that of the U.S., however, has delved further into the issue of online campaigning in terms of its use as broadcasting or publishing media. The South Korean government as well, recognizing the potential of the internet, has taken steps to define the campaign use of the internet in terms of its capabilities as a mass medium. In this nation as well, there is little regulation as to content, but more of an emphasis on defining the nature of the internet as a participatory mass communications channel. Finally, the last country examined is Singapore, which in 2001, passed stringent regulations concerning the content and scale of online campaigning. The approaches of these four nations with regards to identifying the technology, regulating the content, and applying online campaign to existing campaign-related regulations or drafting new regulations are profiled below.

4.2.1   The U.S.

The U.S. has enjoyed a position of leadership in the use of the internet during the 40-year history of the development of the medium. In addition to having the distinction of being the government that originally created the internet (through the Defence Advanced Research Project Agency, or DARPA) (Hafner and Lyon, 1996), American political actors including political parties, politicians, candidates, interest groups, corporations, unions, and politically concerned individuals led the world during the 1990s in utilizing the internet for political campaign purposes. Surges in the online population have been accompanied by a vibrant, growing, and continuously changing political "websphere" that has been allowed to grow with little intervention on the part of the U.S. government to restrict political campaigning through the internet.

As noted above, national governments can take various approaches to regulating the political use of the internet in terms of the content of websites, the technological basis of the internet as a mass media channel, and the application of the internet to existing campaign legislation. American free

speech legislation has been extended to online campaigning in terms of content, not only on the part of political actors such as political parties and candidates, but also the public as well. From the viewpoint of the technology itself, the U.S. has taken a decidedly "hands-off" approach. In the U.S., the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) is involved with the technological use of the internet for campaigning because of the technological similarities that it shares with other mass media outlets. An independent government agency, the FCC was established in 1934 and regulates all interstate and international radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable communications in the U.S. (FCC, 2006). Since 1966, "the FCC has an enduring policy of promoting the development of the Internet by forbearing from regulation …[And] has not held the Internet community to the same requirements that its imposes on broadcast stations and cable systems" (Potter and Jowers, 2005: 246). The FCC has consistently applied a non-regulatory approach to the use of the internet for campaigning since the mid-1990s, despite challenges by different levels of courts and the FEC (Federal Election Commission).

It is with the third area – applicability of the online campaigning to existing legislation – that a number of issues have arisen in the U.S., particularly with respect to the provisions concerning the costing and the value of political campaigning as set out by the FEC. The FEC, established in 1971 by the Nixon administration to address inadequacies under the previous legislation contained in the 1910 Federal Corrupt Practices Act, 1910 is the main government organization that oversees election campaigning by political parties and candidates for public office (Corrado, 2005: 7). The FEC's original mandate was two-fold: The first was to establish ceilings on the amount of campaign contributions that political parties and candidates could spend on their campaigns as well as their campaign spending through the media, and the second was to enforce strict regulations regarding public disclosure of campaign contributions (Corrado, 2005: 20). To comply with FEC regulations, political parties, candidates, and PACs (political action committees) are required to give detailed reports as to the nature and extent of political contributions made to their campaigns. For example, federal candidates are required to report the name, occupation, employer, and address of any individual who donates more than USD $200 during a single election campaign period (with contributions by individuals limited to USD $2,100 per calendar year) (FEC, 2006). In addition to

checks on the amount that they receive, political candidates are also limited in the amount that they can spend on their campaigns. For example, candidates running in the primary system have a national expenditure limit of USD $10 million (they may receive up to 50% of this limit through campaign contributions), and major party candidates have a national limit of USD $20 million (and can receive up to this amount in campaign contributions) (FEC, 2006). The rationale for the strict reporting of campaign finance contributions is to curb illegal campaign spending by political parties and candidates as well as enable the government to calculate the amounts of matching funds.

The issues that have arisen with the advent on online campaigning have mainly focused on the value of online efforts both on the part of individuals and for political actors such as political parties, candidates, and their associated PACs. These traditional political actors are accustomed to reporting schemes that detail the costing of various political activities, including financial donations made by cheque or credit card, the costing of the printing of campaign materials such as posters or flyers, and the creation, printing, and postage costs of direct mailing activities. However, incremental costs of web-sites, such as their creation, maintenance, and capacity to be distributed to (or viewed by) an undeterminable number of people, have proved difficult to evaluate in financial terms.

The FEC broadly interprets online campaigning by individuals, political parties, candidates, and PACs by ascertaining the value of their contributions to campaigns and reporting mechanisms. For example, "individuals may spend an unlimited amount of money creating a website that discusses issues, legislation, and policy – and basically anything else provided that it does not expressly advocate the election or defeat of a federal candidates – without subjecting themselves to regulation by any federal election laws … provided that they do not coordinate with a federal candidate or the candidate's campaign committee" (Potter and Jowers, 2005: 251-2). If they are coordinated with a campaign, then the costs of creating and maintaining the website will count towards the individual's maximum contribution amount of USD $2100 per campaign per calendar year (Potter and Jowers, 2005: 252). To date, there has been no decision regarding the use – or value – of hyperlinks on individual websites. To adhere to the FEC's regulations concerning reporting campaign contributions, political parties and candidates must make efforts to collect as much information as possible from those who contribute online, as well as include disclosure statements on their websites (Potter and

Jowers, 2005: 254). The politically related information on PAC-affiliated websites is also subject to reporting regulations. "Nonconnected PACs may post political speeches that expressly advocate the election or defeat of a specific candidate and need only report the costs of doing so as overhead or operating expenses" (Potter and Jowers, 2005: 253). One particularly interesting development with regard to the use of disclaimers by political parties, candidates, and PACs is that text messages sent to cellular phones are exempt. The reason given by the FEC for the exemption is the fact that cellular-phone-based messages usually have a character-length limitation (Potter and Jowers, 2005: 254).

In conclusion, as shown through the above, the U.S. government has basically followed a liberal approach to online campaigning, adding almost no restrictions that specifically address the use of the internet. Despite various amendments to campaign finance laws, most recently in 2002 with the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, the internet has been largely exempt from direct legislation (Potter and Jowers, 2005: 245). However, this is not to say that there will not be challenges in the future. During the 2000 U.S. election, "vote-swapping" (also referred to as "vote trading" or "vote pairing"), wherein people in different electoral constituencies exchange pledges to vote for certain candidates, captured a large amount of media attention as voters turned to the internet as a means of facilitating such exchanges. The value of individual contributions of time and effort involved in online "meet-ups" (wherein individuals use the internet to organize online and offline group meetings), an important feature in the short-lived campaign of American politician Howard Dean in 2004, are extremely difficult to cost in terms of the FEC's regulations. And finally, the use of blogs (web-based diaries), as a challenge to traditional mainstream media outlets through their potential to advocate the election or defeat of particular political parties or candidates – and the financial value of their contents – may be a further area for FEC intervention in successive election cycles.

4.2.2   The U.K.

Although American political actors have been predominant in their use of the internet for online campaigning since the mid-1990s, they have been closely followed by British political actors. Since that time, commensurate with increased use of the internet both by political actors and the public

at large, certain issues have arisen with respect to online campaigning in terms of the technology, content, and application of online campaigning to current electoral law.

In the U.K., the Electoral Commission, which was established in 2000 under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act, acts as an independent body that reports directly to the British Parliament. Similar to the American FEC, the main task of the Electoral Commission is to oversee all aspects of electoral campaigning in the U.K., including monitoring donations and regulating public spending. According to a discussion paper dated March 2002, the commission is also charged with the "duty to keep under review a range of electoral matters, including political advertising in the broadcast and other electronic media", which it defines as including "the internet, interactive digital television, email and mobile phone SMS [short message service] text messages" (Electoral Commission, 2002: 4).

In contrast to the U.S. government, which, as shown above, has chosen not to closely define the internet in terms of the technology itself, the British government has delved more deeply into its technological boundaries, particularly in terms of "broadcasting" and "publishing". In the U.K., the distinction between the campaign use of the internet as a broadcasting channel and its use as a publishing channel is critical for because two different sets of regulations govern the two functions.

In a discussion paper written for the Hansard Society in March 2001, Ballinger and Coleman point out that "during an election campaign, broadcasters are subject to draconian controls on their output" (2001: 6). The nature of broadcasting, as defined in the Cable and Broadcasting Act 1984, stipulates "wholly or mainly in the sending by any person, by means of a telecommunication system (whether run by him or by any other person), of sounds or visual images or both … for reception … at two or more places in the United Kingdom … in response to requests made by different users of the service" (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 6). The use of the internet, wherein election-related information can be transmitted by multiple senders to multiple receivers (instead of the traditional one-sender-to-many-receivers broadcast mode of operation), greatly complicates the task of overseeing and regulating such information. Although Ballinger and Coleman point out that the Act's reference to visual images and sounds may be technically applicable to the internet, the broader consequences of requiring webcasters to "submit to regulation in the U.K." is not practicable (2001: 6).

If considered a publishing medium, then websites and other internet-based communications would require certain disclaimers under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. This act requires that election material contain "the name and address of the printer of the document; the name and address of the promoter of the material; and the name and address of any person on behalf of whom the material is being published" (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 7). Rather than specifically addressing internet-related campaigning, the wording of this act is a broader interpretation ("election material") than the original Representation of the People Act 1983, which focused on published materials such as bills, posters, and signboards "having reference to an election or any printed document distributed for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate" (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 7).

While there have been no challenges to the use of the internet for political campaigning in terms of the content of political information or communications disseminated through the internet, this is not to say that the possibilities for defamation messages or information do not exist. The Ballinger and Coleman report drew attention to this potential use of the internet by suggesting that the "host of a forum publishing a defamatory message, as well as the Internet service provider (ISP), could be held liable for such content" (2001: 8). The report also suggests that online discussions, because of their interactive potential, may need to be "pre-moderated" and subject to content approval before being posted on discussion boards or on websites (2001: 8), yet stops short of offering clear remedies for this situation.

In terms of the application of existing campaign legislation, particularly in terms of attaching a clear financial value to internet-based campaigning, the U.K. government has wrestled with similar problems to that of the American FEC. As in the U.S., the U.K. government restricts election-related expenditures to ensure that no political party or candidate has the opportunity to unduly "outspend" the opposition and to curb the need for extensive fundraising. According to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act of 2000, each political party can spend a maximum of 15 million pounds and each candidate is allowed to spend up to 5,483 pounds plus 6.2 pence per elector in county constituencies and 4.6 pence per elector in borough constituencies (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 4).

The U.K. government also provides political parties and candidates with a certain number of "free" election-related broadcasts though public television.

The Ballinger and Coleman report outlines four main areas where establishing the cost (and value) of internet-based campaigning may prove difficult (2001: 4). Similar to the U.S., it is difficult for political parties and candidates to establish the cost (and value) of e-mail communications and the creation and maintenance of websites. While the cost of materials, production, and labor may be calculated in paper-based campaign communications, with internet-based campaign communications, the financial calculations are more difficult and may have to include the cost of the provider and connecting to the internet. Establishing a local/national divide – in other words, establishing geographical boundaries to internet-based communications – are a third area that makes valuation of internet-based campaigning difficult. A fourth issue is that of ascertaining the cost (and value) of campaign-related e-mail databases.

A further related concern has arisen in the U.K. with regard to the use of the internet for campaigning in terms of the existing electoral system. Under the present system, once a general election is called, members of parliament "lose" their seats and become candidates (if they are seeking re-election) or ordinary citizens (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 2). According to existing electoral law, "no candidate may present inaccurate information about himself or herself during the election campaign" (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 2). In terms of internet-based campaigns, the Ballinger-Coleman report notes that under these circumstances, candidates are not allowed to use their parliamentary e-mail addresses for the duration of the campaign; they may not use publicly funded websites for campaign purposes; and any links to former members' websites from the official House of Commons website should be withdrawn (Ballinger and Coleman, 2001: 2-3).

The Ballinger-Coleman report of March 2001 outlined major issues that were taken up by the Electoral Commission during the period 2001 to 2003. The commission released a discussion paper outlining the fundamental issues involved in online campaigning in November 2002 and handed down a final report and recommendations on the use of the internet in election campaigns in March 2003. With regard to online campaigning, the commission recognized that "an overly restrictive regulatory response at this early stage in the development of the online campaign environment would not be in

the best interests of the voter" (Electoral Commission, 2003: 2). Among other recommendations, the commission suggested that regulations in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 be introduced that require non-printed election material to include details concerning the originator "should apply to material produced on web pages, email messages, messages sent to mobile phones and any interactive Digital TV information pages" (Electoral Commission, 2003: 2). In addition, the report suggested that the Electoral Commission should offer the opportunity for all registered political parties in the U.K. to post links to their official websites from the Electoral Commission website, so that "electors will be able to verify that any party campaign site they access is legitimate, and will be reassured that campaign material is genuine" (Electoral Commission, 2003: 2).

In conclusion, there are certain parallels in the way that the U.K. and U.S. governments have dealt with online campaigning. Similar to the FEC, the Electoral Commission has refrained from prescribing legislation specifically related to the content of election-related information made available through the internet by any political actor and instead has allowed an atmosphere of free speech to reign. As shown above, both the American FEC and the British Electoral Commission take the stance that overt regulation of internet campaigning would not be in the best interests of the individual voter who may use the medium as an important source of political information. Although the U.K. government has delved more fully into a discussion of internet-related technologies, in attempts to delineate between publishing and broadcasting through the internet, it too has been unable to suggest effective legislation that would specifically pertain to the use of the internet for campaign purposes. One notable difference lies in terms of applying current campaign-related legislation. The American FEC has suggested that currently used disclaimers as to the identity and source of campaign materials be extended to apply to campaign-related materials available on the internet. However, the U.K. Electoral Commission has gone further to suggest changes in current legislation to the same effect to deal specifically with online campaign materials such as websites and e-mail.

4.2.3   South Korea

As discussed earlier, the U.S. and the U.K. governments have taken a decidedly "hands-off" approach with regard to online campaigning, not only by candidates and political parties, but also in

terms of how the public can participate in electoral campaigning through various internet-based functions such as websites, e-mail, and discussion forums. In their approach to online campaigning, these two countries have emphasized the role of political parties and candidates in terms of applying current legislation to online campaigning, primarily in terms of costing the financial contributing on online campaigning.

However, certain nations in South-east Asia have taken a different approach. South Korea and Singapore are profiled here as examples of two countries that have actually enacted new legislation to deal with online campaigning, mainly in response to events that have occurred in online campaigning by non-traditional political actors such as civic groups and politically concerned individuals. While little has been done to curb the rise of internet-based campaigning in certain western nations such as the U.S. and the U.K., challenges posed by internet-based campaigning to centralized media structures in South-east Asian nations such as South Korea and Singapore have been met with legislation. Similar to the U.S. and the U.K., neither country has taken the approach of legislating the technological aspects of the internet, but rather, legislation introduced in these two countries has been aimed at the content and use of politically oriented websites, particularly during election campaign periods.

While much of the attention paid to online campaigning in the U.S. and the U.K. has been focused on how individual politicians and political parties have used the internet during election campaign periods, early political uses of the internet in South Korea were mainly driven by the online activities of individuals and civic groups. Rather than established political actors, the use of the internet as a means for expressing political opinions, disseminating political news, and participating actively in political campaigns by these non-traditional political actors have had a major impact on how the South Korean government has approached the campaign use of the internet.

Commensurate with the rise in South Korea's internet population, during the late 1990s, the medium started to be used as a platform for individual political expression. The three-year period from 1998 to 2001 saw explosive growth in the internet in South Korea, as the user population from slightly over 3 million people to over 22 million (Ooki, 2001: 155). By the end of 2002, internet penetration had reached over 55% of its population of close to 50 million people, making South Korea one of the

leading nations in terms of internet utilization in the South-east Asian region (Internet White Paper, 2003: 390). Challenging South Korea's conservative and hierarchic news media system, politically concerned individuals started to create online journals (also known as cyber journals) as means for disseminating their political opinions to a mass audience. In the late 1990s, online journals such as "Digital Ddjanji" became popular, spawning similar websites critical of political parties, the established media, and the country's big-business enterprises (Byun, 1999). In addition to providing a forum for individual political expression, South Korea's "netizens" also introduced a game aspect to the political use of the internet, as internet-based games featuring politicians also became popular. In mid-1999, a game called "Posdaq", which assigned market values to sitting politicians and invited users to use "cyber cash" to buy and trade shares in these politicians. In an interesting connection to real-life politics, certain politicians saw their values fall and rise in response to their actual activities in South Korea's parliament (*Korea Times*, 1999a).

As the internet started to attract more attention as a political information and communications channel, politicians, political parties, individuals, and civic groups started to utilize the medium more seriously during the period preceding South Korea's general election in early 2000, with both positive and negative results. As a means of offering election and political information, Internet Plaza City, a local internet services provider, established a portal website (www.election.ne.kr), which included links to candidates' websites and discussion forums. However, during this period as well, "candidate sniper" websites that focused on the misdeeds of current politicians also appeared. For example, one such website, www.naksun.co.kr ("*naksun*" means "defeat" in Korean), listed close to 80 sitting politicians and urged users not to vote for these candidates (*Korea Times*, 1999b). While it was difficult to gauge the impact of these types of websites on the voters during the 2000 presidential election, the potential of voters to use the medium in this respect garnered a certain amount of attention from the government.

While the internet may have had an understated impact in the April 2000 presidential election, two years later, the medium played a critical role in the December 2002 presidential election. During the election campaign period in the fall of 2002, presidential candidate Roh Moo Hyun of the MDP (Millennium Democratic Party) was able to mobilize support, particularly from youth voters, in his bid

for the presidential election. In response to "anti-Roh" campaigns generated by the established print media, which threw their support behind Lee Hoi-chang, the incumbent conservative leader of the GNP (Grand National Party), the Roh campaign was able to rally support of "netizens" (citizens who use the internet) and target young Koreans in their 20s and 30s who make up the bulk of South Korea's internet population (Friedrich Naumann Foundation, 2004: 7-8). The Roh campaign used an integrated approach to the use of the internet during this election campaign period. As part of their internal campaign efforts, the MDP set up an "Internet Election Campaign Special Division" within the party, integrating Roh's personal website with the main party website, offering internet-based television and radio broadcasts featuring Roh, a cartoon website, and a cellular-phone-based website (Friedrich Naumann Foundation, 2004: 9-16). Opportunities for political donations were also made available in a variety of means such as credit card payment and mobile phone payment. In addition to the candidate's and the MDP's efforts at mobilizing the public, other non-traditional internet-based news media also played an integral role in Roh's election campaign. For example, internet-based alternative media sources such as Ohmynews (www.ohnynews.com), an internet-based newspaper, and Nosamo (www.nosamo.org), a web-based "fan club" that strongly supported Roh were also particularly active in encouraging online discussions, served as online "meeting spaces" for pro-Roh supporters to gather. That Roh, a dark-house candidate in this election, with "no financial basis and little [initial] support within his own party" (Lee, 2004), was able to mobilize support through the internet marked a watershed point in the use of the medium for election campaign activities, not only by candidates but also through the participation features offered to the public through the medium.

The attention given to these and similar websites did not escape the notice of the NEC (National Election Commission), which oversees all aspects of electioneering in South Korea, including audits and inspections, administration, elections management, public information, and public relations. In the spring of 2004, leading up to the general elections in April, the NEC established the Internet Election New Deliberation Commission with the mandate of "deliberating unfair election reporting, requests for rectifying reports, and fairness about election news" (NEC, 2006). Given the prevalence of "candidate slander" websites in the 2000 and 2002 elections, the commission was particularly focused on challenging slander and propaganda about individual politicians by introducing

strict reporting measures (NEC, 2006). The commission targeted "Internet journalism" websites such as Ohmynews and others whose content was mainly created by potentially hundreds of anonymous users by introducing reporting schemes whereby objectionable content was identified through the "claims of candidates, cooperation of municipal and provincial cyber-monitoring teams and the monitoring team of the Commission" (NEC, 2006). In cases where objectionable content was discovered, the commission would issue warnings and admonitions.

The increasing use of the internet by the public also polarized public opinion concerning its value as a political information and communication channel. On one hand, the internet was seen by some as a liberating and dynamic means of allowing the public—particularly young people who make up the bulk of the online population—to participate in South Korean politics. In response to the clear trend towards online campaigning, the NEC created a cellular-phone based version of its website shortly before the 2004 presidential election. Political parties and candidates also put concerted efforts into online campaigning during this election cycle as well. However, the potential for spreading propaganda and the possibility of defamation through the internet, given the absence of clear guidelines from the NEC, were important demerits in internet campaign culture. The increased government focus on the possibility of slander and defamation on the internet continued in the 2004 presidential contest. A news report in *The Korea Herald* in early April 2004 noted that the number of reported online campaigning infractions rose "tenfold to more than 6,750 cases, compared to the same period in the run-up to the 2000 general elections" (Kim, 2004).

In conclusion, South Korea's experience with the political use of the internet, particularly during election campaign periods, demonstrates certain distinctive features. First, in contrast to the U.S. and the U.K., where political parties and candidates were frontrunners in the use of the internet for campaign purposes, the participation of South Korean citizens – particularly young people – in the election process through the medium influenced online campaigning. Discontented with the political information offered by the traditional, centralized mass media in South Korea and eager to express themselves through alternative channels offered through the internet such as citizen-based journalism websites and discussion groups, politically concerned citizens in South Korea flocked to the internet as a means of political expression. This use of the internet focused government attention on the use of the

medium during election campaigns as the threat of candidate slander websites and the potential for defamatory or libelous information to be spread through the internet drove the adoption of guidelines by the NEC to target certain uses of the medium. Second, Roh's skillful use of the internet within his own campaign organization and own political party shows how powerful the medium can be when applied in campaign organization settings. The multiple thrust of the Roh campaign, which integrated video, audio, and mobile technologies into its internet-based campaign strategy, were effective means of organizing the public to participate more actively in political campaigns.

4.2.4   Singapore

Similar to South Korea, the rise of online campaigning in Singapore has been fueled more by the participation by individuals and politically active groups than by established political actors such as political parties or candidates. These political actors approached the use of the internet as a means of engaging in political discussion and disseminating political opinions that appeared to be lacking in Singapore's "real-time" political environment. The Singapore experience with the political use of the internet actually dates back to the late 1980s and early 1990s when USENET discussion groups such as soc.culture.asean and soc.culture.singapore were first established. In addition to hosting discussions regarding Singaporean culture, these discussion groups also included a certain amount of political content. Shortly after the internet became open to the public in 1995, political advocacy groups created websites such as www.thinkcentre.org, www.sintercom.net, and www.roundtable.org were established "to use a form of online civil society to overcome the lack of political space in Singapore" (Kluver, 2002).

In response to the rising popularity of internet-based political discussion groups based on the internet and websites created by opposition political parties to the PAP (People's Action Party), which has ruled Singapore since 1965, the Singaporean government first brought in legislation aimed at pornographic and political content on the internet in 1996. The SBA (Singapore Broadcasting Authority) Act of 1996 required that political parties with websites or groups that engaged in political or religious discussion on the internet be deemed "content providers". As such, the SBA required that these groups, as well as online newspapers which collect subscription fees or individuals providing

"online content on political or religious issues relating to Singapore", register with the SBA (Tan, 2001c). As a result of this legislation, the creators of politically oriented websites were asked to register their websites with the government.

After the general election of 1997, opposition political parties started to experiment with the internet as a medium for providing political information to the public. The NSP (National Solidarity Party) set up its website in 1998, shortly followed by the Workers' Party website and the SDP (Singapore Democratic Party) (Gomez, 2001). The ruling PAP also developed its own website, first through its youth section and later on as a full-fledged party website. However, among active political parties in Singapore, only the PAP offered any discussion or chat forums on its website to encourage political discussion.

Mindful of the potential for the internet to be used as a means of campaign advertising by opposition political parties, in the summer of 2001, the government intensified its focus on the internet as a political information and communications conduit. Although it was not specifically required to do so previously, in July 2001, the SBA requested that Tan Chong Kee, the registered owner of the www.sintercom.net website, register the website with the SBA as a content provider of political information (Goh, 2001). And, in August 2001, the government introduced amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act specifically targeting online campaigning.

These amendments were particularly far-reaching in their bid to control the use of the internet for campaign purposes by political parties and politically active groups. In addition to the requirement for opposition parties, political groups, and politically active individuals to register their websites with the SBA, the amendments included provisions for website content and e-mail communications conducted during election campaign periods. For registered political parties and candidates, under the new regulations, certain features such as photographs of candidates, party histories or individual biographies, manifestos (election platforms), party publications, calls for members, volunteers or canvassers, meeting notices, discussions forums or chat rooms, and links to both political and non-political websites were deemed to be allowed on websites during political election campaigns, as well as e-mail in support or opposition to candidates for office. However, other potential content features such as election surveys and appeals for donations were not allowed. The new rules also required that

political parties that do host discussion or chat forums on their websites appoint a moderator and "keep logs of all messages" (Tan, 2001d). The bill also introduced provisions regarding e-mail messages, sent both through fixed PC and cellular phone or SMS (short message systems).

Reaction to the detailed contents of the legislation came from journalists, politicians, opposition political parties, and the owners of third-party politically oriented websites. According to an article published in The Straits Times shortly after the proposed bill was announced, members of parliament were split in their reaction to the legislation. Many opposition candidates denounced the restrictions to online campaigning contained in the bill, suggesting that the new rules were designed to "suppress the opposition, keeping it from spreading its messages through the new medium during the election" (Lim et al., 2001). Other MPs noted that the list of allowable website content at last "provided clear guidelines to those involved on what is permissible for election political campaigning" (Lim et al., 2001). The government's response was that the new list of allowable features upheld the government's commitment to curbing the potential for libel and defamation through the internet and that political parties and candidates were free to put up a range of campaign related features such as manifestos and biographies on their campaign-oriented websites.

Although a review of opposition party websites conducted by The Straits Times later that month pointed out that none of the parties included content that could be considered breaching the proposed amendments (Sivakkumaran, 2001), there was some concern about the sending of mass e-mail messages through the internet, particularly by the NSP and the SDP. The then-minister of Information and the Arts said that "while such e-mail messages would be allowed if the sender did not belong to a political party, there was a possibility that the messages may be sent by an individual on behalf of a political party…or a non-political site" (Sivakkumaran, 2001). The owners of third-party politically oriented websites also voiced concerns over the provisions in the bill that recommended moderating discussion-forum postings and keeping logs of all messages. In response to the bill, the communications director of the Think Centre suspended the online discussion forum operated by the think tank on its website, claiming that "the centre did not want to start vetting the messages…because that would take up too much time and would also be against free speech" (Tan, 2001a). Later that month, Tan Chong Kee, the owner of the www.sintercom.net website closed the website (Tan, 2001b).

Despite concerns expressed by opposition parties and third-party website operators, the government maintained that although the "Net could be a tool for constructive debate…Net campaigning must be responsible and accountable" (Soh, 2001) and upheld the amendments, which were later passed in a fall session of parliament. Prior to the election in October, the Workers' Party and the Think Centre group were asked to remove political advertising from their websites, particularly requests for donations that were included on the Workers' Party website (*Straits Times*, 2001).

In summary, through the four profiles outlined above, we can see clear patterns emerging in terms of nation-based approaches to the campaign use of the internet. In terms of the technology itself, none of the nations profiled above have taken steps to regulate the campaign use of the internet. Difficulties in pinpointing the exact nature of the medium can be attributed to the rapid spread of the internet in terms of user populations, as well as equally rapid technological transformations from simple text-based email, bulletin board systems, and rudimentary websites to cellular-phone based home-pages, instant text messaging systems through cellular phones, and the convergence of audio and video capabilities through websites. However, with regard to content, participation, and applicability to existing campaign-related legislation, they do demonstrate some differences. While the U.S. and the U.K. have chosen the policy of not regulating campaign uses of the internet by either traditional or non-traditional political actors, the South Korean and Singaporean governments have introduced new legislation specifically pertaining to online campaigning. In South Korea, this legislation has been aimed at internet-based discussion groups and forums that have posed a challenge to traditional mass media organizations. However, as shown by the success of President Roh in utilizing the medium through his 2002 election campaign, the use of the internet by political parties or candidates has not been challenged. Yet, in Singapore, the government has legislated content-based guidelines to online campaigning that differ according to the political actor involved.

The above profiles also suggest that different political cultures and political environments can affect the campaign use of the internet. The fact that each country has taken a different approach to the use of the medium in political campaigns underscores the importance of assessing the political use of the internet in terms of the political cultures and political environments in which it is being utilized. As

shown in the following examination of the growth of online campaigning in Japan through the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, we can see how the political environment, current campaign legislation, and attitudes towards the internet as a campaign medium have shaped its use in Japan.

4.3 The POEL

4.3.1 History and overview of the POEL

Compared to other nations, particularly those profiled in the preceding section, the detailed provisions and wide scope of Japan's POEL have served to create an election system that is one of the strictest among the world's democratic nations. The current POEL has its origins in the Lower House election laws that were established in 1878 by the Meiji government as part of its aim to create a modern political system in Japan. From 1890 to 1950, laws concerning the election of members to local-level assemblies and the national assembly were separate, as were regulations concerning the conduct of elections. The first set of three laws was enacted in the period 1878-80, and were aimed at establishing local-level administrative and political structures: the Prefectural Asssembly Law allowed for the establishment of assemblies in each prefecture with the public election of members; the County-City-Town-Village Law established town and village administrative structures, including mayors and council members, as well as assemblies at the local levels with publicly elected members; and the Municipal Assembly Law established assemblies as well in all cities, towns, and villages (Hayashida, 1967: 2). The Meiji Constitution, which also included the establishment of a national representative body (the Diet), was brought into effect in 1890, and with it, the first incarnation of the Parliamentary Election Law.

The focus of the first Parliamentary Election Law was on strict, limited suffrage with "the principle of the sovereign power resting with the Emperor and the subjects supporting the Emperor" (Hayashida, 1967:4). The law explicated the right to vote and to be elected (with the vote only given to Japanese males at least 25 years of age who had paid certain amounts of taxes) and also set out the structure of the national House of Representatives (Lower House), fixing the number at 300, based on the small electoral district system used in the U.K. (Hayashida, 1967:4, 27). The Parliamentary Election Law underwent further revisions in 1900, easing conditions for voting eligibility and

expansion in the number of elected members (to 370), but adopting a new large-district (prefecture-based) electoral system wherein most cities were made independent electoral districts (Hayashida, 1967: 28).

During these early years of experimentation with a formal representative system, the focus of legislation was on two sets of political actors: the role of individuals (the number of eligible voters continued to increase with each amendment of the Parliamentary Election Law) and the bureaucratic structure of the administrative system. Political parties did not exist until the early 1900s and no formal laws were specified for their role in elections until after World War II. As noted by Neary, during the early part of the twentieth century, "political parties became important as channels through which funds could be directed to candidates", yet "they had no coherent ideology or political programme, no manifesto to distinguish them from their rivals" and served mainly as a means of realizing the aims of the civil or military bureaucracy" (2002: 20-21). Election campaigning, mainly conducted by individuals, were relatively free of restrictions in these early versions of the laws, despite gradual tightening of penalties by the bureaucracy with regard to election offenses such as fraudulent voting, bribery, and false statements (Hayashida, 1967: 4-5, 38).

Rapid developments in Japanese society during the early twentieth century forced a re-examination of the Parliamentary Election Law in the early 1920s. While Japan enjoyed a certain amount of international military success during this period, emerging victorious from the Russian-Japan War of 1905 and being on the winning side of the Allies in World War I, domestic politics took a decidedly different turn. The rapid development of capitalism and growing economic and social problems brought about a perceived situation of national crisis, as Japan came to grips with the problems of modernization (Mitchell, 1973: 318). The Rice Riots, closely following the end of World War I and the news of the Russian Revolution sparked concern among Japan's political elites that the country was in a grave danger of anarchist and socialist subversion (Mitchell, 1973: 320-321). This sense of crisis was further fueled by the trial of Tokyo Imperial Professor Morito Tatsuo in 1920 for ostensibly promoting communist-based ideologies.

The threat of communism was taken very seriously by the Japanese government, which deemed it as being at odds with the government's approach of blending "Confucian-style moral

example and Western-style law" (Mitchell, 1973: 324). During the rapid changes in Japanese society through the late 1800s and the early 1900s, the government attempted to uphold a credo of national polity (*kokutai*), which "rested upon the symbolic loyalty of all Japanese" to maintain an integrated country strong enough to withstand modernization (Mitchell, 1973: 319). The first failed attempt by Kondo Eizo to establish a communist party in Japan in 1921 also focused attention on the dangers of new ideologies during this period of upheaval in Japan.

The response of Japan's first party-centered government, led by politician Hara Kei and elected in 1919, was to introduce a series of political reforms. On the surface, the introduction of universal suffrage through the Election Law of 1925 (which extended voting rights to all Japanese males and waived restrictions as to property and income) appeared to expand political rights in Japan. However, the government remained wary of new political ideologies, particularly those of communist sympathizers. In 1922, the government initially proposed a "Law to Control Radical Social Movements", "intended to stem the flow of radical propaganda coming into Japan and prevent Japanese from working in concert with foreign radicals". Although initially defeated when it was introduced in 1922, this law later became the Peace Preservation Law of 1925, which made it illegal to form "societies with the objective of altering the national polity … or denying the system of private property (Mitchell, 1973: 339). The Japanese Communist Party, formed in 1922 prior to the anti-leftist legislation, immediately came under official scrutiny as one of its major platforms was to abolish the emperor, the army, and the military (Mitchell, 1973: 336). The perceived threat of communism to the Japanese state was further heightened by the 1923 assassination attempt of the prince regent by leftist radical Namba Daisuke. The Peace Preservation Law, which would remain in effect until after the Second World War, served to "repress the freedom of press, assembly, and association of the people for the two decades until the end of World War II" (Hayashida, 1967: 39).

In addition to this law checking the potential upsurge of ideologies that challenged the Japanese government, election practices that had increasingly become corrupt also commanded attention, leading to the amendments in the 1925 Election Law that specifically detailed regulations concerning election campaign practices and expenditures. For the first time, restrictions on door-to-door canvassing, limited distribution of election campaign materials such as literature, and caps on

election expenditures were introduced. The government's role in electioneering was further strengthened by amendments in 1934 concerning the "public management of campaign speech meetings [and the] publication of election bulletins (Hayashida, 1967: 39). It is important to note that during the early 1900s and through to the immediate post-war period, no specific legal provisions were made for political parties, which up to this point, served as organizational channels for distributing funds to candidates (Neary, 2002:21).

After World War II, with the enactment of a new Constitution, the electoral system underwent another period of major transformation. The immediate aims of the American Occupation were "demilitarization" (dissembling the military bureaucracy) and introducing "democratization" (Campbell, 1989: 114-115). While reforms to the civil bureaucracy were also targeted, they were somewhat difficult to achieve, as the American Occupation needed to go through the existing government structure to realize their aims. The result was that by and large the Japanese bureaucracy remained relatively intact. In other words, although the overall political system went through major modifications, the laws governing the system were essentially untouched. This in turn allowed the bureaucracy to maintain a major in overseeing and regulating election campaigns.

Although in the immediate postwar period, certain campaign restrictions were initially eased under the new House of Representatives Election Law of 1945, restrictions on door-to-door canvassing and the production and distribution of campaign-related media were retained, and new restrictions were introduced under the Law for Exceptional Cases of Election Campaign Literature, Pictures in 1947. Hayashida points out that the shortage of commodities in the immediate postwar period may have contributed to the tightening of restrictions with regard to campaigning (Hayashida, 1967: 40). However, the restrictions also served to 'even the playing field' among candidates of the same political party vying for seats in the same constituency by not allowing them to outspend each other. Further amendments to the law were made in 1948, which contained limitations in terms of campaigning through the use of vehicles, loud-speakers, election-related meetings and street speeches, repeated calling of candidates' names, and election-day canvassing (Hayashida, 1967:40). The Public Offices Election Law officially came into being in 1950, and through amendments in 1952, 1954, and

1956, increasingly limited the campaign activities of political parties and other political groups, while simultaneously expanding the role of the government in election management (Hayashida, 1967: 40).

The revisions to the POEL with respect to campaign practices in the late 1940s and early 1950s also reflected changes in the electoral system. For the first time, political parties were recognized as playing a role in elections, although the 1945 revisions to the election law prohibited them "from engaging in political activities or election campaigns during the legal period of election campaign[ing]" with the exception of certain activities (Hayashida, 1967: 34). The system of candidate-centered elections was further strengthened through the introduction of the medium-district system in 1945 and 1946, with each district fielding between two and six candidates. As candidates of the same party competed with each other for seats, for many candidates, party sponsorship was less important than building their own individual support organizations (*koenkai*). To ensure fairness and to prevent candidates from the same party outspending their rivals, the POEL set out strict guidelines for the creation and distribution of campaign-related materials such as brochures, postcards, signboards, and publicly distributed election bulletins over a specific geographic area as well as the timing and number of official campaign speeches. In 1964, with the advent of television as a popular medium, provisions were added to the POEL concerning the number of publicly sponsored television commercials allotted to each candidate. In addition, in 1975, the POEL was revised to allow political parties to buy advertising as long as they did not specifically publicize the candidacies of party members or candidates (Pharr, 1996: 7).

The provisions of the POEL are quite detailed concerning the permissible and non-permissible activities of political parties and candidates. One of the most important sets of restrictions contained within the POEL has to do with the timing of election-related activities undertaken by candidates. Unlike election-related legislation in other countries such as those profiled earlier this chapter, the POEL delineates between political activities (*seiji undo*) and election-related activities (*senkyo undo*). Under the terms of the POEL, election-related activities are interpreted to be those "necessary and advantageous activities undertaken with regard to a particular election, aimed at the successful election of a certain candidate, conducted with regard to obtaining votes (or causing such votes to be obtained) though direct or indirect means" (Election System Research Committee, 2001: 162). Once the Diet has

been dissolved, a lower or upper house election must be called within 40 days. During the period of time between dissolution of the Diet and the starting date of the "official campaign activities period" (*koji*), candidates make preparations for waging their campaigns and for submitting their official candidature documents to the local election management board. In other words, during this period of time, prospective candidates are free to engage in any type of campaign-related activities. However, from the date of the "official campaign activities period" (12 days prior to the election for lower house elections and 17 days for upper house elections), candidates are not allowed to undertake election-related activities that are not specified in the POEL. In other words, once they officially become candidates on the first day of the "official campaign activities period", they must adhere to the provisions of the POEL with regard to specific activities relating to the election, such as the use of "soundtrucks" (public loudspeakers mounted on cars that circulate through neighborhoods), public speeches, and the distribution of election-related pamphlets and posters.

To a certain extent, the restrictions on election-related activities have also been applied to those undertaken by political parties. For example, political parties are not allowed to distribute lists of candidates and constituencies, as doing so would violate the fundamental principle of the POEL as outlined above in terms of focusing attention on a specific candidate. However, political parties were allowed greater latitude in their use of mass media channels to conduct advertising campaigns (such as television and radio commercials, newspaper advertising, or, in the case of the internet, banner advertisements) throughout the "official campaign activities period" up to the date of the election. In other words, as long as the parties focus such materials on the election or the party itself, rather than specific candidates, they are allowed to continue such electioneering efforts.

The range of activities that candidates are not allowed to do immediately prior to the election is detailed in Sections 129 through 178 of the POEL. For example, under Section 142(9), they are not allowed to distribute printed matter or illustrations (*bunsho zuga*) other than those sanctioned by the local election management boards that draw attention to their bid for election. A further related restriction is applied to publicly displaying election campaign materials through billboards or signboards (covered in various subsections in Section 143). For example, while candidates may display posters at various locations prior to the start of the "official campaign activities period", after

the start of this period, the only posters allowed are those displayed on poster boards officially maintained by the local election management board. Formal addresses to the public (*aisatsu*) are also regulated during this period up to and including the day of the election. Other restrictions that have been in place prior to World War II include public speeches (*genron*), as well as telephone solicitation and door-to-door canvassing. Activities that could be construed as potentially affecting a voter's choice of a particular political party or candidate are also restricted by the POEL. Section 138(3) prohibits the public announcement of opinion polls results by political parties, political groups, candidates for public office, and other public figures. Although this provision does not specifically refer to the legality of using websites or other new-media techniques to conduct opinion polls, it does call into question making the results of such public opinion polls available through the internet.

Curtis (1971: 218-219) points out that the application of the POEL to election campaign activities by Japanese political actors has both merits and demerits. In a formal sense, the POEL's regulations have ensured fair and equitable production and distribution of election-oriented media such as campaign posters, postcards, and signboards. For example, official candidates (those that have submitted their documentation to the local election management boards) for upper and lower house elections are limited to producing and distributing 35,000 postcards to their constituents. Having a set limit on the production and distribution facilitates budgeting and costing calculations for each candidate's campaign expenditures. In the pursuit of conducting fair and equitable elections, the POEL's regulations have also created a role for local governments in the campaign process. Local government election management boards are involved in the distribution of other campaign-related materials such as posters and *senkyo koho* (public election bulletins). Local election management boards set up a certain number of public signboards in each constituency where each candidate's poster is displayed, and these displays are removed immediately following an election. These local election management boards are also responsible for producing and distributing public election bulletins, which are circulated to each household in the area at least two days prior to the day of the election. Each circular, which allows equal space for each candidate, may include the candidate's name, political party, brief history, and short policy-related statements.

However, as also suggested out by Curtis, the existing system also has certain demerits. He points out that the intent of the POEL was originally to "insure inexpensive and fair elections where no candidate because of political power or economic wealth has an advantage over another in appealing to the electorate for support" (1971: 219). Yet, this has also given rise to a number of practices that "keep such expenditures hidden from public view" and that have "forced the politician to use other means of support mobilization" (Curtis, 1971: 219). In lieu of the candidate him/herself, the candidate's support organization (*koenkai*) may undertake activities on his/her behalf. Curtis also points out that the current system greatly benefits incumbents over new candidates, in that incumbents naturally enjoy a certain amount of publicity through their elected offices, as their names are already well known to the electorate (1971: 220). A third consequence is the role of the voter. Despite having access to a great deal of political information concerning the campaign, the stringent regulations of the POEL do not allow for a great deal of voter involvement in the campaign, other than the act of voting. While the POEL provides great detail concerning permissible and non-permissible activities that may be undertaken by political parties and candidates, it does not include much information concerning what campaign-oriented activities may be conducted by individual voters. Curtis suggests that this may be related to the Election Law of 1925, "which first introduced these provisions in an attempt to prevent universal suffrage from leading to mass movements" (1971: 221).

In summary, this brief review of the history of the POEL and its continued application to modern-day campaigning shows that a number of practices originally put in place during two dynamic periods in Japan's political history have continued to the present day. For the most part, election-related campaigning continues to be centered on the candidates rather than political parties, and the ban on election-related activities during the "official campaign activities period" has also served as a means to forestall political parties making concerted efforts in any one constituency to campaign specifically on behalf of a particular candidate. Furthermore, centralized management of the distribution of election-related materials has also ensured a continued role for the government through local election management boards. To a large extent, the continuation of these practices through centralized media channels, such as the mass media and the government, was possible up to the 1990s. However, as shown in the following section, the advent of internet-based campaigning, through which

political parties and candidates could potentially play a more expanded role in the distribution of campaign-related materials, has not escaped notice of the Japanese government.

4.3.2   The POEL, the internet, and election campaigning in Japan: 1995-2004

Given the strict provisions of the POEL with regard to election campaigning in Japan, how have Japanese political parties and candidates responded to the advent of internet-based campaigning? In contrast to other countries such as the U.S. and the U.K. that have taken a relatively "hands-off" approach to the use of the internet for campaign purposes, or South Korea and Singapore, which have drafted new legislation dealing with the internet, the Japanese government has applied the existing provisions of the POEL to internet-based campaigning for the past decade. However, this application of the POEL to internet-based campaigns has been met with a number of challenges, mainly by opposition political parties and individual politicians.

This section examines Japan's decade-long experience with internet-based campaigning by dividing it into two phases. In the first phase from 1995 to 1999, when internet diffusion figures in Japan were still fairly low compared to other nations, political parties and candidates experimented with the use of web-sites during election campaign periods. Their efforts were met with the swift but at times confusing application of the POEL, particularly during the two national elections in 1996 and 1998. Commensurate with rapidly expanding diffusion of the internet during the late 1990s and the growing awareness of IT (information technology) in Japanese society, the second phase of internet campaigning started in 2000 and saw not only an increase in the number of users online overall, but also saw a major increase in the number of candidates who created websites for election purposes, as well as politically oriented websites established by politically active interest groups. During this second phase as well, the question of the use of the internet for political campaigning grew serious enough to prompt the establishment of an investigative committee led by University of Tokyo professor Kabashima Ikuo to delve into the use of the internet as a political media tool. Similar to the Electoral Commission in the U.K., the investigative committee handed down recommendations in 2002 to change the POEL. From 2003 onwards, the use of the internet for political campaigning has continued to be a major topic, particularly during the 2003 general and 2004 Upper House elections.

Despite repeated calls for changes to the POEL to reflect the growing utilization of the internet, not only by political parties and candidates but by the public in general, the POEL remains unchanged to the present day.

The Japanese experience with regulating the political use of the internet demonstrates similarities and differences with the other nations profiled earlier. In terms of determining the technological boundaries of the internet itself, the Japanese government has refrained from defining the internet strictly as a broadcasting or as a publishing medium. Yet through the POEL, the government has made steps to regulate the content of internet-based campaigning, mainly by interpreting provisions of the POEL originally created for "offline" media to "online" campaigning, particularly with regard to the websites created by political parties and candidates. By following this approach of applying existing legislation to this new campaign medium, the government has been able to avoid changing the POEL to specifically address online campaigning. The result, as shown in detail in the following sections, has been a certain amount of confusion during each national election cycle since 1995 concerning the use of the internet as a political campaign medium.

4.3.3   Early experiences with internet-based campaigning 1995-1999

While American political parties and candidates were the forerunners in using the internet for political campaign purposes during the 1994 elections, Japanese political actors were not far behind. During the summer of 1995, a small number of candidates initially experimented with establishing websites during the 1995 Upper House election campaign period. Similar to minor political parties in the U.S., in Japan, small parties were the first to lead the way on the web in Japan. The New Party Sakigake (*Shinto sakigake*) was the first party to establish a website during the summer of 1995, posting the party's policies and a photo "album" of politicians, as well as asking citizens to post their opinions. Other small parties such as the New Frontier Party (*Shinshinto*) and the Social Democratic Party (*Shakai shiminto*) also opened websites later that summer in preparation for the Upper House election and used their sites to post information regarding party finances and donations. In addition to establishing their own websites, these minor parties also used existing internet-based communications networks to create computer-based communications opportunities with the electorate. For example,

the New Frontier Party used NEC's PC-VAN network to open the "*Shinshinto* Forum". The leaders of these minor parties such as the former head of the Liberal Party, Ozawa Ichiro and the former leader of the New Party Sakigake, Hatoyama Yukio, were early advocates of the use of "*pasokon tsūshin*" (personal computer communications) to make direct contact with voters and to distribute political information (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 6, 1996).

Online forays during the 1995 Upper House election campaign may have served as early tests of the possibilities of online campaigning. By late in the year, more attention was being paid to the web by political parties. According to a survey done late in 1995 by Ichimura, at least 10 political parties had established websites, with their contents showing certain similarities and differences (Ichimura, 1997). Almost all party websites included at least some basic information about the party organization and policies, and four out of 10 posted a current list of councilors. The LDP (Liberal Democratic Party), DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan)[2], New Komeito, Social Democratic, and Liberal League parties also asked for opinions and public commentary through e-mail on their websites. The LDP and New Komeito parties also provided questionnaires on their websites. However, only the New Party Sakigake and the JCP (Japan Communist Party) included any specifics regarding their party finances and donations (Ichimura, 1997).

Even at this relatively early stage of the political use of the internet in Japan, certain trends started to form. The fact that the LDP and the JCP, as Japan's "oldest" political parties, joined small and newly formed political parties on the web gave some credence to the use of the web as a political information and communications channel. Although none of the parties offered online forums or opportunities to discuss policies or platforms in real time on their party websites, other online venues were available through the aforementioned PC-VAN network and Nifty-serve's Politics forum.

Clearly, the campaign web was starting to develop in Japan as during the fall of 1996, political parties and candidates were gearing up for the October 20, 1996 election. However, in late September,

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[2] According to Neary (2002: 96-99), there are two official establishment dates of the Democratic Party of Japan. The party was originally formed in 1996 by some members of the New Frontier Party, the Japan Socialist Party, and the New Party Sakigake and was headed by two brothers, Hatoyama Yukio and Hatoyama Kunio, as well as Kan Naoto, a former member of the Shaminren, a very minor party. However, with the gradual dissolution of the NFP in 1997 and 1998, a number of politicians joined the DPJ in March 1998, creating a party of more than 100 members in the lower house.

the increased focus on the use of the web for campaigning also garnered the attention of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the national ministry that oversees election management in Japan. The initial focus of the MHA with regard to online campaigning was on the content of political party websites, and the MHA suggested early in the campaign season that political parties may be infringing the POEL in a number of areas. For example, the MHA questioned if the posting of candidates' photographs on party websites constituted what was set out in the POEL as a "campaign activity intended to focus attention on a particular candidate". In addition to photographs, it was also questioned whether the display of lists of candidates and their respective constituencies, with or without links to the candidates' individual websites, also could be interpreted in this manner. In addition to these concerns regarding party websites, the MHA also had reservations regarding the contents of individual candidate websites. For example, it was questioned if the availability of public speeches (for example, *aisatsu*, or greetings often used to announce their intentions as candidates) on websites constituted active campaigning and when such speeches should be removed from websites. There was also some confusion regarding displaying candidate URLs on official campaign posters as to whether this constituted an overt call for votes. The MHA indicated that it would look at each situation on a case-by-case basis and recommended that the parties use their own best judgment regarding what content to post on their websites (*Asahi Shimbun*, October 1, 1996).

The parties responded in different ways to the MHA's ruling regarding the contents of their websites. The New Party Sakigake and the Liberal League party deleted pages on their websites that included lists of their candidates. The LDP also took down the portion of its website that included photographs, profiles, and messages from current sitting members and candidates. Citing the reason that upon dissolution of the Diet, its sitting members were no longer officers of the Diet, the JCP also deleted its list of councilors.

Despite the parties' compliance with the MHA's interpretation of the POEL with regard to the contents of their websites, the issue remained of how to apply the POEL to the use of campaign-oriented websites. This led to the submission of an official inquiry by the New Party Sakigake to the MHA in early October, shortly before the start of the official election campaign activities period

leading up to the October 20 election[3]. The official inquiry submitted by the party asked the MHA to clarify what aspects of the use of websites infringed the POEL and the extent of its possible use. It appeared that although the parties complied with the MHA's suggestion that certain aspects of the use of the web could contravene the POEL and altered their websites according prior to the election, small and newly formed parties, led by the New Party Sakigake, were quite serious about the future potential of the web for campaign purposes.

The MHA handed down a ruling at the end of October reiterating that the use of the internet may possibly infringe the POEL, in particular with regard to Sections 142 and 143 of the POEL that deal with the distribution of text and images. The MHA pointed out that as the information found on websites is freely visible by an unlimited number of people, it contravenes the provisions in those two sections concerning limitations on the distribution and display of campaign-related information (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 30, 1996).

Although the MHA's ruling at the end of October 1996 appeared to settle the question of internet-based campaigning by political parties and candidates in the short term, it did not dampen the efforts of opposition parties to effect changes in the POEL. In the spring of 1997, a small group of Diet members led by Shima Satoshi, then a member of the New Frontier Party party, convened a study group to look into the possibilities of changing the POEL. At its first meeting in May 1997, the nine members of the group discussed the use of the internet for election campaign purposes and the merits of providing political information through the internet to voters residing overseas (*Mainichi Shimbun*, April 28, 1997).

As the July 1998 Upper House election drew closer, the issue of the campaign use of the internet surfaced again. In mid-June, the newly re-formed DPJ submitted a proposal to the Diet for changing the POEL to allow internet-based campaigning. The party's proposal specifically targeted Section 142, which includes provisions for the distribution of text and images, and it was pointed out that the internet could serve as a means for voters, particularly those residing overseas, to easily and inexpensively obtain election-related information. However, the official position of the MHA was that

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[3] A copy of the original request for clarification authored by the New Party Sakigake is available on the website of DPJ politician Eda Satsuki at http://www.eda-jp.com/pol/inet/situmonsho.html

the use of websites was not accounted for in the POEL and cautioned self-restraint on the part of candidates to remove or not update the information on their websites during the official campaign activities period (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 17, 1998). The MHA's response was to say that its use for "everyday political activities" lies outside the restrictions, yet upheld its ruling during the previous general election period that the content of websites was to be treated the same as pamphlets or posters (*Sankei Shimbun,* July 4, 1998*).*

As in the previous national election, each political party took a different approach to dealing with this interpretation of the POEL. According to newspaper reports, although the DPJ posted its listing of party-list candidates on its website on the evening of June 24, the party deleted the roster a scant six hours later on the first day of the official campaign activities period, explaining that it was adhering to the official viewpoint of the MHA (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 28, 1998). The JCP followed the lead of the DPJ and within a day deleted their candidate listings from the party website. In contrast to its stance during the 1996 election, the New Party Sakigake did not post any type of candidate listing throughout the period either before or after the official election announcement.

However, the LDP, SDP, New Komeito, and Liberal parties did include candidate listings on their websites, each in different sections. In fact, according to newspaper reports, the LDP included each candidate's name, public pledges, photograph, and personal history on its party website (*Sankei Shimbun,* July 4, 1998*)*, indicating that its decision to include this information was "part of our political activities" (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 28, 1998). The New Komeito Party also included a listing of candidates, noting that posting the names was considered "news of candidate decisions", and the SDP decided that such listings were not considered "campaign activities" (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 28, 1998). Yet although they may have been constrained by the POEL with regard to posting listings of their candidates on their websites, the parties took other opportunities to use the internet for campaigning. For example, the DPJ used banner advertisements placed on newspaper websites to draw attention to the quiz on their website pitting the current party leader, Kan Naoto, against the former prime minister, Hashimoto Ryutaro (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 28, 1998).

Across the country, candidates as well interpreted the strictures of the POEL in different ways. In Okayama, three of five candidates took down their websites, and the remaining two erased any

mention of political activities, invitations to join the candidates' support organizations, and details of its activities (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 28, 1998, Osaka edition). In Hokkaido as well, one candidate's office reported that it withdrew the details of the candidate's activities in the Diet and opinions that were originally posted on the candidate's website prior to the first official day of campaigning, citing that "it was difficult to interpret them as political activities because of the election" (*Sankei Shimbun,* July 4, 1998*).*

Throughout 1999, the issue of the use of the internet for campaign purposes continued to resurface in local level elections, as more politicians started to use this new campaign tool. All six candidates in the 1999 Tokyo gubernatorial election created websites that included their profiles and policy statements (*Mainichi Shimbun*, February 23, 1999). For this and other local elections, the MHA maintained its position that while candidates could utilize websites for political activities, any overt calls for support contravened the POEL (*Mainichi Shimbun*, February 23, 1999). Yet it was clear that the issue would not go away. At a party secretaries' conference held late in November 1999 and attended by members of the LDP, the Liberal Party, and the New Komeito Party, the use of the internet for election campaign purposes was added to the list of discussion topics, yet it was the only issue upon which the parties could not agree. During this conference, an LDP member noted that there were only 16 million internet users among close to 100 million voters and suggested that the use of websites would be unfair to those who did not use the medium, as well as pointing out the potential of defamation through the internet (*Mainichi Shimbun*, December 4, 1999).

Through experimentation with the use of the internet for political campaigning through two national election cycles in the late 1990s, it was clear that opposition parties and candidates were at the forefront of attempts to incorporate this new medium into their political campaign activities. These political actors were well aware of the potential merits of the internets – such as its speed, control over information provision, and that fact that it offered an inexpensive means for getting their message out to the public. However, they were thwarted in their attempts to integrate the campaign use of the internet by continued application of the POEL's legislation designed for other media channels. It was also clear that the ruling political party, the LDP, also did not particularly welcome the use of the internet, quite possibly because of its reputation as a communications and information provision

channel that would likely benefit minor political parties and independent politicians. Although Japan's online population was still relatively small at this time, certain events in 2000 and 2001 concerning the political use of the internet ensured that the issue of internet-based campaigning would not go away.

4.3.4 Internet-based campaigning matures: The 2000 and 2001 elections

With a national general election slated to be called sometime during 2000, opposition political parties and politicians were particularly active in preparing online campaigns. As of February 2000, close to 45% of DPJ politicians in the Diet had established websites, along with nearly half of the politicians in the New Komeito Party. Despite urging by the LDP leader Mori Yoshiro, by March 2000, only 24% of LDP politicians sitting in the Diet had a presence online (*Mainichi Shimbun*, March 25, 2000). Despite the Mori administration's increasing emphasis on the potential of IT (information technology) as one means of lifting Japan out of its decade-long recession, it was clear that the politicians in the party were somewhat reluctant to wholeheartedly embrace online campaigning.

During the spring, opposition parties started to experiment with the content of their websites. The JCP revamped its website in May, shortly after the June election was called. The DPJ and New Komeito parties diverted a great deal of effort into their use of the internet, using their websites to target specific voting groups such as young voters, women, and those dwelling in urban areas. Both parties posted prominent banners with links to specific pages of their websites aimed at these voting groups. The DPJ created an election-specific website (www.minshu2000.com) that included the results of an online issue poll as well as a list of merits of using the internet for campaign purposes. The party also experimented with online broadcasts of speeches, audio messages, and television commercials. The New Komeito Party's "NEXT" portion of their website featured links to their candidates and policy statements. However, the JCP frowned on its candidates opening their own websites, and instead, offered space on the party's website for candidate to post their own individual campaign messages (Efron, 2000).

Politicians of other parties were also experimenting with online campaigning during this election campaign period. In late February 2000, DPJ politician Kumagai Hiro was the first politician to use his website to solicit donations to his campaign. Other opposition candidates also experimented

with ways of circumventing the POEL's ban on the distribution of text and images during the official campaign activities period. One particularly clever utilization of the medium was used by DPJ politician Shima Satoshi, who created an "audio-only" version of the top page of his website. When users accessed his website, the entire top page was a blank image accompanied by an audio track. Ozawa Ichiro of the Liberal Party incorporated e-mail messages into his campaign activities to rally support among voters.

This election campaign period also saw an increase in the number of websites established by non-traditional political actors. Ideologically neutral political portal websites such as *Senkyo de Go* ("Let's go the Election") and *On-line election*, the latter produced by a citizens' group based in Fukuoka and Tokyo, were developed in advance of the 2000 election, offering political information, links to the websites created by major political parties and candidates, and internet-based polls. There were also a certain number of "anti-candidate" websites launched (similar to those produced in South Korea in 1999 and 2000) aimed at posting negative evaluations of individual candidates and politicians. One of these groups, *Shimin ombuduman* (People's Ombudsman) reported access figures of 25,000, and a spokesperson for the group indicated surprise at the level of distrust in politics demonstrated by viewers of the site (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 1, 2000). Other groups such as the *Jumin tohyo rippo foramu* (People's Voting Forum) and the *Seijika hyotei kaigi* (Politician Evaluation Group) posted candidate evaluations as well as lists of politicians' expenditures and sources of revenue.

In response to the growing campaign activity on the internet, the government upheld its stance concerning internet-based campaigns by political parties and candidates throughout the period leading up to the election. Although there were no infractions of the POEL with regard to election-related websites, there was some question concerning internet-based campaign activities by third parties such as political action groups (Efron, 2000). With the great increase in internet-based campaigning, it became particularly difficult for the MHA to regulate online campaigning.

Although the use of the internet for election campaign purposes garnered most of the attention paid to the political use of the internet in Japan up to this point, events later in 2000 demonstrated other political uses of the internet. In November 2000, through his website, LDP politician Kato

Koichi was urged by a show of support by viewers to attempt an unsuccessful non-confidence bid to unseat former Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro. Although the attempt failed, Kato's experience showed that the internet could be used as a powerful political tool to assess public opinion even outside election campaign periods, but it also demonstrated that relying on "virtual" support had its dangers.

A more successful use of the internet was demonstrated by politician Koizumi Junichiro, who used his website as one means of campaigning for the leadership of the LDP in early 2001. After his successful bid for the leadership, Prime Minister Koizumi launched an extremely popular e-mail newsletter that at one point boasted over 2 million recipients. On one hand, Koizumi's success with the medium, as well as his government's IT-based "e-Japan" initiatives signaled an optimistic turning point in the political use of the internet. Mackie notes that the Koizumi e-mail newsletter "represents a relatively sophisticated use of electronically-mediated communication" (2003: 187). However, she also notes that while the newsletter appears to encourage interactivity, "the information flow is largely one-way, without making full use of the potential for 'many-to-many' communication provided by the new communications technologies" (Mackie, 2003: 187).

The year 2000 proved to be a watershed year for the use of the internet by candidates and politicians in Japan. There was heightened focus on candidate use of the internet during the 2000 general election, as well as sharp increases in the online population in Japan, through both fixed personal computers and mobile devices (Internet White Paper, 2001). Prime Minister Koizumi's "e-Japan" initiative, aiming at making Japan an "IT superpower" on par with the United States by 2005, furthered awareness of the social and political aspects of the use of the internet. In addition, the prime minister's use of the internet to distribute political information and commentary during non-election periods, as well as the Kato Koichi experimentation with the internet focused attention on the utilization of the medium by political actors during non-election periods. While the political use of the internet may have been a novelty for many politicians and candidates prior to 2000, user population figures and other politicians' utilization of the medium paved a path for many to follow.

As such, during the 2001 Upper House election campaign period, for the first time, the number of candidates creating and maintaining campaign-oriented websites passed the fifty-percent mark. And, during this election campaign period, the issue of use of the internet during political

campaigns again surfaced with some additional twists. The increased use of e-mail newsletters (spurred by the success of Prime Minister Koizumi's weekly e-mail newsletter) distributed by political parties and candidates, as well as the application of cellular-phone-based websites and e-mail newsletters distributed through cellular phones posed further concerns in regulating online campaigns. Although political parties refrained from updating their websites during this election campaign period, there was some controversy as to whether distributing e-mail newsletters also fell under the purview of the POEL. The successor to the MHA, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (MPMHAPT), maintained its stance regarding the distribution of election-related information through the internet during the official campaign activities period, although it did allow for political donations to be made through the internet and through cellular-phone-based websites. Accordingly, larger political parties such as the LDP and the DPJ took advantage of the ministry's ruling and opened up sections of their PC and cellular-phone based websites to solicit online donations.

Following the 2001 Upper House election campaign period, calls grew for review of the POEL with regard to online campaigning. In October 2001, the government established the "*IT jidai no senkyo undo ni kansuru kenkyukai*" (Research Committee for Campaign Activities in the IT Age), an investigative committee with the mandate to review campaign activities as conducted through the internet. The government appointed Professor Ikuo Kabashima of the University of Tokyo to head the 12-member group, which was also made up of representatives from academia, the election management boards of Tokyo and Yokohama, ISPs (internet service providers), and freelance journalists. The committee had two main goals: First, to explore the possibilities of the use of the internet for election campaigns, and second, to review the POEL to see if any changes were necessary to accommodate the use of the internet as a political campaign tool.

The committee's deliberations focused on a number of aspects of the campaign use of the internet in Japan. Noting the sharp increase in Japan's online population (from barely 5 million users in 1996 to over 55 million users in 2001), the committee recognized that the internet could play an integral role as a means for the public to obtain political information, particularly during election campaign periods (Research Committee for Campaign Activities in the IT Age, *Executive Summary*, 2002: 1). Over the course of 10 meetings throughout 2001 and 2002, the committee reviewed the use

of the internet in election campaigns from various angles. One early meeting of the committee assessed how other nations such as the U.S., the U.K., and France approached the use of the internet in the context of current national electoral law. Another meeting investigated the technological nature of the internet, noting the technical differences in various functions of the medium such as websites and e-mail. Delving more deeply into the campaign use of the internet in Japan, committee reviewed provisions in the current POEL that could be applied to the use of the internet for campaign activities, the role of third parties such as political action groups and individuals, costs of internet-based campaigning, possibilities for defamation, and the spread of "mis-information" through the internet. Similar to the U.K.'s Electoral Commission, the Research Committee for Campaign Activities in the IT Age also examined the role of local election management boards in terms of the possibilities of providing publicly funded websites for all candidates.

After deliberating for close to a year, the committee handed down the following recommendations in August 2002 (Research Committee for Campaign Activities in the IT Age, *Report*, 2002: 37-38). First, the committee recommended that the internet should be recognized as a new means of election campaigning in Japan. This recommendation is particularly important because to date, the POEL does not specifically mention the use of the internet (either websites or e-mail). The stance of the government has been that means of electoral campaigning not specifically referred to in the POEL are not considered to be legal means of campaigning. Second, the committee suggested that campaign activities conducted through the internet be restricted to information provision through websites, and not other internet-related functions such as e-mail. This separation of the technological aspects of internet use is particularly important. Citing the possibility that political actors may send "spam" e-mail messages (the internet equivalent of junk mail), the committee recommended that candidates and political parties be able only to use websites for campaign-related activities. As shown earlier in this chapter, other nations debating the use of the internet for election campaign activities have not made this distinction. Third, the committee recommended that third-party actors (such as individuals and political action groups) be allowed to conduct election-related activities through websites. To date, the POEL does not address the involvement of third-party participants in this manner. Fourth, the committee suggested that candidates include the cost of constructing and

maintaining their websites in their calculations of campaign expenses. Here again, although no provision has been made for accounting for these costs in the current POEL, the committee suggested that in the future, these costs be made public as part of the candidates' campaign expenses and be treated similar to telephone-related expenses. Fifth, similar to the position taken by the American FEC, the committee proposed that websites created by third-party participants in support of certain candidates be considered campaign contributions by individuals. The committee went on to explain that the cost of creating and maintaining these websites should not be considered as part of an individual candidate's campaign expenses. And finally, in response to the possibilities of defamation through websites, the committee advised that the creator of the website post a contact e-mail address or other means of identification on the website.

4.3.5   A continuing "non-issue"? Internet-based campaigning since 2002

Although the final report of the Research Committee for Campaign Activities in the IT Age recommended changing the POEL to recognize online campaigning by political parties, candidates, and third-party participants in election campaign activities, to date the POEL has not been amended. As a result, the issue has resurfaced during national election cycles since 2002. During the 2003 general election campaign conducted in the fall of 2003, the DPJ posted the party's manifesto (election platform) on the party's official website and a number of candidates created links from their individual websites to the party page that contained the manifesto. The government advised in September that while it may be possible to distribute the manifesto through non-electronic channels such as the regular mail system, posting the manifesto on websites maintained by the DPJ and its candidates constituted an infraction of the POEL. In September, DPJ candidate Shima Satoshi submitted an official request for clarification of the distribution means of the manifesto, however, the government maintained its position.

Despite the fact that the POEL prevented politicians from updating their websites during the official campaign activities period immediately preceding an election, candidates continued to refine their use of the internet. During the 2004 Upper House election campaign, an increasing number of candidates experimented with the medium through offering video messages (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June

15, 2004). Candidates also continued to use their websites as platforms for distinguishing themselves from other candidates, particularly in a number of regional contests (*Mainichi Shimbun*, June 26, 2004; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, June 22, 2004). In the 2005 general election campaign, some candidates also started to experiment with blogs as well in efforts to enhance their appeal to the public.

4.4   Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, three major points stand out in how different nations have approached the use of the internet for political campaigning. The first point, initially raised in the second chapter, concerns assumptions on the part of not only the government but also political parties, candidates, and other political actors, that the use of the internet will have a profound effect on politics. As previously discussed, much of the speculation and resulting reputation of the internet's impact on politics has been based on both theoretical and practical assumptions formed in its early days of widespread public use, mainly in western democratic nations. As internet use increased worldwide, governments in different political systems, influenced by these assumptions, have exhibited a certain amount of wariness in terms of dealing with the internet as a political tool.

As shown above, we can see certain similarities and differences in the way that various nations have approached the issue of online campaigning. The five nations profiled have taken steps to interpret the utilization of online campaigning in terms of their own prevailing political environments and cultures, particularly in terms of existing campaign-related legislation. Although none have specifically targeted the technological nature of the internet, the U.S. and the U.K. governments have interpreted online campaigning in terms of establishing the financial cost of campaigns, both in terms of expenditures on the part of candidates and political parties and on the value of online campaigning activities undertaken by individuals. In both of these countries, the internet has been viewed as an extension of traditional campaign practices undertaken by those political actors directly involved in campaigning such as political parties and candidates. Similarly, individuals and third-party groups have also used online means to demonstrate political support. In these countries, the "online campaign" mirrors the "real-life campaign", particularly in terms of content and traditional campaign practices wherein almost any type of campaigning is allowed.

However, in certain South-east Asian nations such as South Korea and Singapore, there has been more emphasis on the social and mass media aspects of online campaigning and how the internet has come to function as a new media channel for political participation by political parties, candidates, and third-party participants. In these nations with traditions of highly regulated political campaigns, the use of the internet for online campaigning by both traditional and non-traditional political actors has been viewed with caution. On the one hand, the internet has offered an additional media channel for political parties and candidates to utilize during election campaign period. Yet, the increased opportunity provided by the internet for campaign involvement by non-traditional participants has given rise to "virtual campaigning". For these countries, where the "real-life campaign" is highly regulated, the "online campaign" has come to represent an alternative campaign media environment. I these two countries as well, the government introduced legislation to temper the effects of "virtual campaigning".

This review of how the POEL has been applied to the use of the internet during election campaigns has demonstrated an alternative approach. Similar to their counterparts in the U.S. and the U.K., among political actors, Japanese political parties and candidates have been at the forefront of utilizing the internet for political campaigning since the mid-1990s, and, comparable to South Korea and Singapore, their use of the internet has been met with legislation on the part of the government. However, when viewed from a historical perspective, particularly in tracing the development of the POEL since the late 1890s, it has been shown that in addition to political parties and candidates, the government plays an active role in disseminating information regarding elections and election management. In this respect, the controversy concerning the role of the internet in political campaigns in Japan is not merely a question of how political parties and candidates are utilizing the medium or how it is allowing civil society actors such as interest groups and interested individuals to participate in the election. In Japan, it has been shown that regulations imposed on its use follow a historical pattern of government and bureaucratic involvement in election campaigns.

A second point concerns the quandary that has faced all governments, namely explicitly quantifying what constitutes the internet and locating it within current media types and formats. As discussed earlier, the inherent nature of the internet, as a fluid and constantly changing media format

comprising a mixture of information-provision and communications technologies, has presented difficulties in terms of legislating its use as a campaign media. As such, the approach of the Japanese government to relate campaign use of the internet to existing campaign-related media legislation is a rather unique interpretation of its capabilities of the medium, and, here again, Japan's attitude to online campaigning during the past decade has been a mixture of the two approaches. Similar to their counterparts in the U.S. and the U.K., political parties and candidates – particularly opposition parties and their politicians – have been at the forefront of online campaigning in the country since the mid-1990s. To date, much of the controversy concerning online campaigning in Japan has been focused on its use by these political actors, rather than the opportunities for the public to be involved through the internet in political campaigning. Although the Research Committee for Campaign Activities in the IT Age separated the functions of websites and email, the government has made no move to apply the POEL to the technical infrastructure of the internet. However, while South Korea and Singapore drafted new legislation to deal with the content of internet-based campaigning, as well as the creators of such content, the Japanese government has consistently applied the existing POEL to online campaigning, particularly in terms of timing. In a sense, relating various functions of the internet to the POEL but not changing the POEL to explicitly address the use of the internet, has resulted in a reinforced legitimacy of the POEL as a regulatory framework and maintained the government's role in the management of election campaigns. This in turn has engendered prolonged wariness on the part of political parties, candidates, and the public as to how they can incorporate the use of the internet within their political campaigns. Application of existing but somewhat ambiguous provisions of the POEL to the internet has minimized its political impact, as both parties and candidates are unsure of the legal boundaries of its use as a campaign medium. For voters, the continued application of the POEL has ensured the continuation of what Curtis refers to as the "observer nature" of election campaigning in Japan, wherein the POEL "effectively prevent[s] popular participation in campaigns" (Curtis, 1971: 221). In this way as well, the "virtual campaign" in Japan can be said to mirror "real-life campaign" activities.

Finally, while the foregoing discussion shows that the use of the internet for campaigning has been subject to a certain extent on prevailing overall political environments and cultures, it also

suggests that the motives of political actors themselves determines how they utilize the medium for campaigning purposes. Particularly in the South-east Asian nations profiled above, the internet has offered new means in terms of informing and communicating with voters and of waging political campaigns. Its utilization by both ruling and opposition parties in South Korea, Singapore, and Japan suggest that for political parties, the use of and attitudes towards the medium lies in how they are organized and their goals for the utilization of this potentially powerful medium. In a sense, this involves not merely assessing the impact of the internet itself on political campaigns, but on how party organization and existing relationship with the electorate influences their deployment of the medium. Roh's successful use of the internet during the 2002 South Korean election campaign also focuses attention on the specific types of information and communications features that individual candidates are offering through the internet, particularly in utilizing their websites as platforms for campaign activities, providing extended information regarding the candidates, and including various means of communicating with the electorate.

This chapter has provided an overview of the campaign use of the internet in terms of prevailing political environments and legislative aspects, particularly with respect to Japan. However, further study is needed to assess aspects of the organizational, information-oriented, and communications-based aspects of the use of the internet for campaign purposes by examining how political parties and candidates are actually deploying the medium during political campaign periods. The following chapter continues this analysis by focusing on how the organizational and ideological character of major political parties and their goals for utilizing the internet are connected to their attitudes and approaches to the medium for election campaign purposes.

Chapter 5 Political Party Use of the Web 2000-2001

5.1   Introduction

The application of the POEL (Public Offices Election Law) to the use of websites for election campaigning in Japan, discussed in the previous chapter, is one example of the institutional political environment that may affect how traditional political actors utilize ICTs (information communication technology) – specifically websites – for campaigning. As also discussed in the previous chapter, throughout the late 1990s, Japanese political parties and candidates experimented with different approaches in their use of websites for political campaigning. While a number of political parties and candidates optimistically embraced the use of the internet during election campaign periods, they also faced the challenge of the POEL with regard to the election-related content that they placed on their websites.

While institutional environment plays an integral role in setting the stage for how political actors are making use of new technological innovations such as the internet in their campaigns, there are other factors as well that affect how these technologies can be deployed. As discussed in Chapter 2, much of the speculation concerning the use of the internet in political campaigns has focused on its democratizing capabilities in terms of promoting more active information and communications exchange between established political actors such as political parties, candidates, and politicians, and the public. And, much of the research done to date evaluating how these political actors are utilizing the internet and other technological means has focused on this democratizing potential use of the technology.

However, adherence to this approach in examining internet utilization for political campaign purposes has overlooked certain critical factors in deploying this new technology. To date, it has been assumed that political parties and candidates, as active participants in election campaigns, will have similar goals for employing the use of the internet within their campaigns. Examining campaign-oriented websites only through a common and assumed set of information-provision and communications-enabling goals overlooks the possibilities that these political actors may have other goals or objectives in utilizing the technology and that these goals may be based on their party organization history and ideology.

This chapter discusses how political parties have adopted these new technologies from three additional viewpoints of initial attitudes towards using websites for campaigning, internal party organization history, and party ideology. The research questions taken up in this chapter are:

1. What are political parties' rationale and goals for creating websites?

2. Do political parties with certain organizational patterns display similar features in their websites during election campaign periods?

3. Do political parties with certain ideologies display similar features in their websites during election campaign periods?

To answer these questions, a comprehensive model of ICT utilization through party websites partially based on previous theoretical research performed by Lofgren and Smith (2003) has been devised (refer to Chapter 3, Methodology). Lofgren and Smith's original analysis includes assessment of the goals of ICT utilization by political parties, which includes direction of information flow and perceived role of the public.

This chapter starts with a brief overview of party organization theories, followed by a section locating Japanese political parties within the prevailing theoretical framework concerning the organization of political parties and ideological stance. In order to answer the research questions posed earlier, I use two means to test the enhanced model of party website use. First, I examine the responses to the survey distributed to the parties in September/October 2000 concerning their goals and reasons for creating their websites. Second, I present and discuss the results of a website content analysis of party websites created during the 2000 general and 2001 Upper House election periods, comparing each party's election-campaign website in terms of communications features, election-related information features, and linking strategies and discussing each of these aspects from the viewpoints of party organization and party ideology. The constructed model shows how each party may have different approaches to using their websites for political campaigning based on their organizational characteristics and party ideology. I conclude with discussing how this comprehensive and longitudinal approach may illustrate trends in political party use of the internet.

5.2   Party organization characteristics

During the past half century, there has been a great deal of research conducted concerning party types and systems, mainly based on experiences in Western Europe. Although a detailed discussion of merits and demerits of different party types and systems is beyond the scope of this overview, it is necessary to briefly set out the literature concerning party organization (including traditional organizations, support bases, and electoral strategies) and their ideological stances, and then, in turn, suggest how these factors may affect how parties view the integration of ICTs into their information-provision and communications strategies with the public.

Ware (1996: 94) categorizes three main approaches to party organization as being based on electoral competition modes, institutional models, and sociological models. The electoral competition model, initially put forward by Duverger in his studies of European political parties in the 1950s, suggests that party organization is based on party competition during election campaign periods (Duverger, 1954). Using French political parties as examples, Duverger proposes that parties will adopt a certain intra-party organization as a result of inter-party competition during election campaigns, and that such organization can be explained in terms of horizontal and vertical planes. These two planes can be further broken down into individual components, which represent the power base of each political party. For example, within the horizontal plane, parties can be composed of either 'direct' or 'indirect' groupings: The former denote "a direct link between the citizen and the national community … [wherein] the members themselves form the party community without the help of other social groupings"; and the latter are made up of "[unions] of component social groups" such as professional groups (Duverger, 1954: 5-6). In contrast, vertical planes refer to intra-party organization and are made up of four basic elements: the caucus, the branch, the cell, and the militia.

The elements that form the basis of the vertical plane structure outlined by Duverger led to his definition of the classic distinction between elite (also known as cadre) and mass parties. Elite parties, as the name implies, are rooted in the caucus element and draw their membership from a select group of elites. Membership in the party is closed save to a small number of members and the party does not actively or massively undertake recruitment drives. The overall strength of the party does not rest on sheer numbers of members, but rather, on the quality of members (Duverger, 1954: 18) and their

capability to serve as powerful foci for political action. As such, in elite parties, rather than the party as the center of attention, the main electoral focus is on individual politicians as elite members. Furthermore, elite parties do not emphasize an ongoing or long-term relationship with the electorate, through either association or membership, but are short term in outlook, mobilizing resources mainly during election periods. Once granted membership in the party, elite politicians within these parties tend to "[draw] certain material advantages from the party, but also [have] a private profession which gives them certain independence" (Duverger, 1954: 19).

In contrast to elite parties, mass parties have a different organizational structure. Mass parties rely on their membership base for two essential activities: Assisting with election campaign activities and providing funding for the party. Rather than appeal to a limited number of elite politicians, mass parties have "strength in numbers" and seek to recruit party members with whom to cultivate an ongoing relationship. Duverger (1954: 63) points out the benefits of this approach by noting that through this method of fundraising, mass parties do not rely on private donors such as specific professional groups or wealthy individuals; rather, they spread the party's campaign expenses over a large number of people through membership drives.

The second model of party organization is based on the institutional approach forwarded by Panebianco (1988). Panebianco's model is a combination of what he describes as the 'Genetic Model' and to what extent the party becomes an institution in and of itself. He argues that the institutionalization process of a party – how a party attains a certain amount of value and reaches its goals – contributes to whether a party becomes either a strong or weak institution. Thus, a party's history, in terms of how its organization originated and how it consolidated, is the most important factor in assessing its organizational characteristics (Panebianco, 1988:50). A further aspect in assessing the character of party organization is the degree of control that each party exercises in terms of its relationships with supporters (Ware, 1996: 99). Parties that exhibit strong institutional characteristics exert a certain amount of control over the supporters, whereas parties with weaker institutional organizations have more give-and-take with their supporters.

Panebianco's 'Genetic Model' incorporates the institutionalization process in terms of three factors: (1) party construction in terms of territorial penetration or territorial diffusion; (2)

presence/absence of sponsoring institutions outside the party; and (3) the presence of a charismatic party leader during the formation of the party (Ware, 1996: 98-99). Panebianco theorizes the following relationships between his 'Genetic Model' and the degree of institutionalization of a party. Founding elites based in a particular territory can in turn help produce strong party institutions, compared to those parties formed in scattered or diverse territories, which tend to be weak. Parties that are sponsored by external organizations (such as those abroad) leverage the degree of influence of other organizations in the society and tend to become strong institutions themselves. And, finally, leadership plays an important role in determining strong or weak institutionalization of a party in that "charismatic leaders tend to resist institutionalization in their party as a threat to their own power" (Ware, 1996: 100).

The final approach to categorizing party organizations is the sociological approach, which suggests that the resources available to parties dictate their organizational forms. For example, the competitiveness of parties during election campaign periods depends on the resources that they can draw on, going beyond human and financial resources to include resources such as popular leaders, networks of contacts among other organizations, and interest group support. Katz and Mair (1995) theorize that utilization of these resources has given rise to the cartel party as a new form of party organization. Cartel parties "are characterized by the interpenetration of party and state, and also by a pattern of inter-party collusion" (Katz and Mair, 1995). With services provided by the state and government on the decrease, parties are increasingly forced to grapple with an expanding range of interests and mediation among civil society groups. In this sense, parties themselves take on characteristics of the state, balancing these competing views and interests in order to appeal to wider forms of electorate support. As they evolve into "cartel parties", which represent a wide range of interests, parties increasingly focus on single-issue campaign strategies and draw on state resources for their support, rather than rely traditional individual membership bases or groups. Cartel parties also seek to form networks or coalitions across party lines.

5.3   Locating Japanese political parties

Where do Japanese political parties fit into these traditional theoretical approaches to party organization? Certain characteristics of party formation and organization, particularly those proposed by Duverger and Katz and Mair, are reflected in the modern history, organization, and traditional support base of Japanese political parties. While a detailed discussion of the evolution of Japanese political party organizational structures is beyond the scope of this chapter, this section provides a brief overview of the organizational history and structure of six major political parties that are active in Japan today. Four of these parties—the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party), the DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan), New Komeito Party, and JCP (Japan Communist Party)—exhibit characteristics of Duverger's classifications of elite and mass parties. The two remaining parties, the Liberal Party and the SDP (Social Democratic Party) do not fit easily into Duverger's traditional classifications and, for the purposes of this investigation, are considered "other" parties[1].

The first two parties listed above, the LDP and the DPJ exhibit characteristics of Duverger's classic definition of elite parties. The LDP, which has held power in Japan for most of the postwar period, was created in 1955 as a merger between two right-wing conservative parties, the Liberal Party (*Jiyuto*)[2] and the Japan Democratic Party (*Nihon minshuto*). With a power base of rural voters, corporations, and business organizations, and working in concert with the Japanese bureaucracy, from 1955 until 1993, the LDP was the ruling party in Japan, leading to characterizations of Japan as a state dominated by a single party. Although the LDP briefly lost power in 1993 for almost one year, it returned to power in 1994 and has continued as the major partner in a series of coalition governments.

Institutional parameters as well have contributed to the characterization of the LDP as an elite political party having a weak party base. The MMD (multimember district) electoral system that was in place prior to 1993, in which multiple candidates of the same party vied for between two and six seats in a given constituency, forced politicians to establish their own local support organizations (*koenkai*). Rather than the party itself being the base of support in electoral contests, or providing the

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[1] The Liberal Party, which was formed in 1998 by former LDP politician Ozawa Ichiro and Fujii Hirohisa, merged with the more moderate social-democratic and liberal DPJ in early October 2003, immediately prior to the October 2003 general election.

[2] The name of this party (established in the 1950s) is the same as the aforementioned political party created in 1998 by former LDP politician Ozawa Ichiro and Fujii Hiroshisa. Throughout the history of party politics in Japan, similar party names have been used in different eras.

means for an ongoing support and resource relationship with the electorate, local support organizations have provided the essential power base for LDP candidates. Once elected, politicians usually joined not only the main party but also one of five factions. The leader of the LDP, and the position of Prime Minister, is chosen through negotiation among these five factions. Again, this fits the classic Duverger definition of elite parties, as politicians drawing certain advantages for their constituents through the party, yet attaching high priority to the immediate needs of their constituents.

The LDP can also be described as a modern cartel party. In 1993, a culmination of a series of political scandals involving its politicians, as well as blame for the bursting of Japan's bubble economy, resulted in the LDP losing power for almost a year to a coalition of eight smaller parties led by Hosokawa Morihiro. The LDP returned to power in 1994, as the major partner of a coalition government that was also made up of the JSP (Japan Socialist Party) and the New Party Sakigake. Since that time, the LDP has retained power through a series of coalition governments with various smaller parties, most recently the New Komeito Party and *Hoshuto* (Conservative Party), the latter which disbanded in 2003 with its politicians being absorbed into the LDP. Successive coalition governments led by the LDP have forced the party to broaden its policy initiatives, reaching beyond its traditional rural and corporate power bases, to appeal to an increasingly urbanized and skeptical electorate.

Policy stances of the LDP place it slightly to the right of center in terms of party ideology. With its members coming from varied political and ideological backgrounds, the party itself has few well-defined ideological principles. After the consolidation of the two conservative right-wing parties in 1955, the LDP focused on following economic growth policies during the 1960s and 1970s in close cooperation with the bureaucracy, Japan's major corporations, and critical business organizations such as the Japan Business Federation (*Keidanren*), the *Nikkeiren*, the Japan Association of Corporate Executive (*Keizai Doyukai*), and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Nissho*) (Neary, 2002: 61). With regard to defense and foreign policy, the party has emphasized close cooperation with the U.S. At various times throughout the post-war period, particularly in the 1960s, 1980s, and since 1994, the party has made various initiatives in streamlining government bureaucracy and

administrative reform. The 1990s has also seen the LDP promoting closer contact and cooperation with other Asian nations (Neary, 2002: 173-4).

Japan's other elite party is the DPJ, which can trace its establishment to the realignment of political parties and the emergence of small political parties during the 1993 election that forced the LDP from power. The DPJ was originally established in 1996, as an amalgamation of four parties that were originally part of the eight-party coalition government led by Hosokawa Morihiro that defeated the LDP. The four parties were a previous incarnation of Democratic Party of Japan, the Good Governance Party (*Minseito*), the New Fraternity Party (*Shintoyuai*), and the Democratic Reform Party (*Minsei kaikaku rengo*). The three original leaders of the DPJ were from similarly varied backgrounds. Hata Tsutomu was the former leader (along with Ozawa Ichiro) of the *Shinseito* (Japan Renewal Party), which played a major role in the eight-party coalition that ousted the LDP briefly in 1993. The two other original leaders of the DPJ were Hatoyama Yukio, a second-generation former LDP politician who established the New Party Sakigake and whose father was a former prime minister during the 1950s; and Kan Naoto, another New Party Sakigake politician who served as health minister during the 1990s. As the New Frontier Party (NFP) dissolved in 1998, a large number of members joined the DPJ, making it the largest opposition party to the LDP in the late 1990s. In 2003, the DPJ merged with the Liberal Party (*Jiyuto*) led by Ozawa Ichiro, to become the largest opposition party in Japan with, as of 2005, 113 seats in the lower house and 83 seats in the upper house of the Diet.

Despite being a smaller party, the DPJ shares a number of similarities in party structure with the LDP in terms of the background of its politicians. The fact that a significant number of politicians left the LDP to join the DPJ when it was originally established allows characterization of this party as an elite party. The party leans slightly farther to the left than the right-center position of the LDP, and, with its wide range of policy stances, can be described as a "center" party. However, the DPJ is less hierarchical than the LDP and only has an informal faction system. Although it is the largest opposition party to the LDP, it has never actually held office in Japan as a single party. The DPJ's support base rests on the increasing number of urban-based voters, as well as unions, blue-collar workers, and women.

Japan's New Komeito Party and the JCP can be classified as mass parties. Both parties share strong membership bases, tight organizational structures, international connections, and continuous communication with supporters through publications and communications. As its name implies, the New Komeito Party (also known as the Clean Government Party) is an amalgamation of the "old" Komeito Party, which was originally established in 1964, and the New Peace Party. Shortly after the 1993 election, the "old" Komeito Party was one of the eight parties that formed the Hosokawa coalition government and was also an important force in the creation of the NFP (*Shinshinto*) in 1994. Although the NFP was heralded as a having the potential to act as a strong opposition party to the LDP and did well in the 1995 upper house election, the party fell apart after the 1995 general election, splitting into two separate political parties that eventually merged in 1998 to become the New Komeito Party in its present incarnation.

Although it is currently part of the ruling coalition government along with the LDP, the New Komeito Party's characterization as a mass party lies in its support base. According to the party's website, the *Soka Gakkai* (a Buddhist lay organization which aims at promoting Soka Buddhism as Japan's state religion) has provided the party with "electoral endorsement" throughout its history and was the original support base for the "old" Komeito Party. Although the party indicates on its website that it "severed all organizational affiliation" with the organization in 1970[3], this group continues to play a major support role for the party. During electoral contests, members of the *Soka Gakkai* have undertaken canvassing and other mobilization activities to organize support for New Komeito Party candidates on the local level. As a result of these successful local mobilization efforts, according to the party's website, there are over 3000 New Komeito Party politicians in various levels of local, municipal, and prefecture-based assemblies in Japan, as well as a combined 58 members in the upper and lower houses of the Diet. The party's policies are firmly concentrated on playing an ombudsman or consulting role, calling for increased transparency in the public sector, reduction in arms, and greater opportunities for women (Hrebenar, 1986: 162).

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[3] For further information regarding the relationship between the New Komeito Party and the *Sokka gakkai*, refer to the New Komeito party website at http://www.komei.or.jp/en/about/view.html.

The second mass party in Japan is the JCP, which also enjoys the distinction of being Japan's oldest political party, having been established in 1922. Although the JCP has not played a decisive role in post-war politics in Japan, it has "more active members, more affiliate groups and front organizations, a larger budget, many more subscribers to its party publications, and a better organization than most other parties in Japan (Berton, 1986: 116). According to the JCP website[4], the party has approximately 400,000 members, and a subscription base for its daily newspaper, *Akahata*, of 1.7 million people. Its operations are financially supported through its large active membership as well as its publications and donations to the party. Similar to the LDP, the JCP is particularly well organized on the local level in Japan, and usually fields a candidate in every constituency during major elections. Many JCP supporters are young, and the party is well known for actively encouraging participation in politics by young voters, and particularly women.

From a policy and ideological perspective, the JCP is the most left-wing oriented political party in Japan. The JCP is often the choice of the "protest vote" among the electorate and, particularly since the mid-1990s, styles itself as the only political party to play a watchdog role in the Japanese political environment. The party actively opposes Japan's relationship with the U.S. and advocates "breaking away from the Japan-U.S. military alliance" (JCP, 2006). According to Berton, "the JCP occupies that awkward middle ground in which it is not revolutionary enough for the radical fringe and not trustworthy enough for the adherents of democratic socialism" (1986: 139).

The final two parties whose websites were investigated in this project are the Liberal Party (*Jiyuto*) and the SDP. The Liberal Party, which was established by Ozawa Ichiro, a former LDP politician, was formed in 1997. The party, which was considered to be the farthest "right" of Japan's major political parties before it merged with the DPJ in 2003, was founded on the basis of Ozawa's book *Blueprint for a New Japan*, which advocated a wide range of structural and fiscal reforms in the Japanese government (Neary, 2002: 98).The SDP, which along with the JCP, occupies the left-wing perspective in Japanese politics, is the most recent incarnation of the former Japan Socialist Party (JSP). Although the JSP was successful in gaining seats in the Diet during the immediate post-war period, it fell apart in the early 1950s due to internal debate concerning San Francisco Peace Treaty

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[4] The JCP website can be found at http://www.jcp.or.jp

and the Security Treaty of the American Occupation (Neary, 2002: 78). The merging of the two conservative parties in 1955 that formed the LDP effectively routed the JSP, JCP, and other parties of the left wing in Japan until the early 1990s. The JSP changed its name to the SDP in 1996, enjoying a brief surge in popularity when the party became one of the eight small parties that formed the coalition government that briefly came to power in 1993-94. When the LDP returned to power in 1994, it could only do so by entering into a coalition government with the SDP, and it leader, Murayama Tomiichi, became the first socialist prime minister since 1948. The participation of the SDP in the coalition government with the LDP cost it a great deal of support, and since that time, the party has gradually lost seats in successive Upper and Lower House elections.

5.4   Methodology

Two specific research strategies were used to test the proposed model for comparing party website use: The first was an analysis of the websites themselves and the second was a prepared questionnaire that was distributed to all political parties involved in this investigation. Described in more detail in Chapter 3 (Methodology), the first step was identifying the political parties to be surveyed. The selection of the parties was based on their presence in the Diet as of January 1, 2000 and on their willingness to be surveyed and interviewed for this project. Although politicians from seven parties (the LDP, DPJ, New Komeito, JCP, Liberal, SDP, and Conservative Party) held seats in the Diet at that time, the creators of the website for the Conservative Party declined to participate in this project, leaving a total of six political parties. Party websites were identified as the official website of a particular political party and did not include websites constructed by supporters or "fan-club" websites. However, a features assessment was conducted of official election-specific websites (such as *www.minshu2000.com*, which was created by the DPJ for the 2000 general election campaign period).

The data required to test the proposed model consisted primarily of the website contents of each political party. Using website caching software (Offline Explorer Pro), the websites for each party were collected and archived during the period June 10 to June 20, 2000 (prior to the general election date of June 25, 2000) and July 16 to 25, 2001 (prior to the Upper House election slated for July 29, 2001). The software captured a "snapshot" of each party's website, which created a

permanent record of each website at that particular point in time. The websites were then assessed and compared in terms of the operationalization items set out in Table 3.2. In September 2000, after the first election, a survey was prepared and distributed to the administrators responsible for the creation and maintenance of each party's websites. The appropriate person in each party was identified through a telephone call to each party's headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, and the survey was then mailed or faxed to this person (see Appendices C and D for Japanese and English language versions of the survey, respectively). In the survey, the administrators were asked if they would participate in a follow-up interview, and all administrators agreed to be interviewed for this project during October and November 2000.

To address the first research question, that is, each party's goals for creating their websites, the administrators for each website were asked when they created their websites and their major reasons for establishing their websites. Respondents could indicate multiple responses among nine questions concerning use of the websites for election-related purposes, party image, collecting contributions, and to exchange information and promote communications internally and externally.

Results from the website feature survey were used to answer the second and third research questions. A checklist of website features pertaining to direction of information flow and role of the public (communications-oriented features), ICT integration into campaign-related activities (focusing on the election), cross-media use related to the role of ICTs, and linking strategies was prepared and the features for each party website during each election period were assessed. Where appropriate, additional information from the questionnaire distributed to each party's website administrator was also used for reference purposes. The results from these analyses were then grouped and compared on the basis of each party's organizational structure and overall ideological stance.

5.5   Results

5.5.1   Goals for ICT orientation

As discussed in the previous chapter, compared to their counterparts in the U.S. and other advanced democratic nations, Japanese political parties were rather slow in establishing websites. In the questionnaire administered to the website coordinator in each political party in September/October

2000, the parties were asked when they established their websites, and the results are shown in Table

5.1.

Table 5.1 Establishment dates for Japanese political party websites and responsible section

Party Organization	Elite		Mass		Other	
Party	LDP	DPJ	New Komeito	JCP	Liberal	SDP
Date of web-site establishment	January 1, 1996	1998[1]	August 1996	April 1996	1998[2]	June 29, 1995
Section within the party responsible for the website	Public relations	Public relations	Media information	Home-page management	Public relations	Public relations

[1] *The dates given here for party web-site establishment are based on responses to the questionnaire distributed to the parties in September/October 2000. The dates for the DPJ and Liberal Party web-site establishment differ from those noted in newspaper articles concerning the October 1996 General Election. At that time, it was reported that both the DPJ and Liberal Party had web sites, and it is possible that the website administrators who completed the survey were unaware of the history of their party's websites.*
Source: Questionnaire data

The two elite/cartel parties, the LDP and the DPJ established their websites relatively early, compared

to the two mass parties, the New Komeito and the JCP. However, as discussed in the previous chapter

and similar to the situation in the U.K. and U.S., smaller political parties such as the SDP and other

minor parties (such as the New Party Sakigake, which eventually became the DPJ) led the way in

creating a web presence for the party. Where the initial responsibility for website creation and

management was placed within the internal party organization apparatus is also somewhat revealing.

Although the two elite parties and the "other" parties located their website operations within their

public relations divisions, the two mass parties either placed such responsibilities within their media

information section or their home-page management section. In interviews with those party officials

responsible for the websites, the officials indicated that they obtain most of their dynamic web-site

content from their other party publications such as *Komeito Shimbun* (in the case of the New Komeito

Party) and *Akahata* (the JCP). The New Komeito spokesperson explained that their party maintains a

database of articles that are used both for their party newspaper and for the website. Save for changing

some headlines and editing the stories for length, close to 30 percent of the articles published in their

newspaper are recycled for use on their website. Viewing the results from the point of view of party

ideology, similar to their counterparts in the U.K. and the U.S., parties from the left (the SDP and the

JCP in Japan) were relatively early adopters of ICTs.

Table 5.2 Reasons for establishing websites

Party Organization	Elite		Mass		Other		Total
Party/Reason	LDP	DPJ	New Komeito	JCP	Liberal	SDP	
Election-campaign related							
To provide information to voters	○	○	○	○	○	○	6
To promote two-way communication with voters or to communicate with voters	○	○	○	○	×	×	4
To especially provide information regarding elections	○	×	○	×	×	×	2
Internal-party-organization related							
To facilitate information exchange within the party (among staff, party officers, supporters, etc.)	×	×	○	○	×	×	2
To exchange information among groups that support the party or are affiliated with the party	×	×	×	○	×	×	1
Other							
To demonstrate that the party has a appealing image	×	×	○	×	×	×	1
To gather volunteers and supporters	×	×	×	×	×	×	0
To solicit contributions/donations	×	×	×	×	×	×	0
Total	3	2	5	4	1	1	

Source: Questionnaire data

Table 5.2 shows each political party's reasons for establishing their websites, as indicated in the survey administered to the parties. In terms of reasons, the top overall answer, indicated by all parties, was to provide general information to voters. Two-thirds of the parties also indicated that they envisioned using their websites to promote two-way communications with voters. By contrast, few parties appeared to use their websites for internal organizational purposes or image appeal. The fact that none of the parties indicated that they intended to use their websites to solicit contributions or donations or to gather volunteers and supporters is somewhat revealing, especially as these two aspects of the campaign web have received a great deal of publicity in other countries such as the U.S. and the U.K. When asked about the possibility of using their websites to solicit contributions or donations, some of the individuals responsible for the websites in their particular parties indicated a reluctance to use their websites for this particular purpose, mainly because of the POEL, but also because overt requests for political donations were not part of the Japanese political culture at the time. The POEL was also indicated as a reason for not aiming to gather volunteers and supporters through the websites.

There were noticeable differences in the approaches of elite and mass parties in terms of the purposes of their websites, which can be roughly grouped into "election-campaign-related" reasons, "internal organizational" reasons, and "other" reasons. Earlier it was suggested that elite parties would use their websites to focus on the electorate, and the results of the questionnaire bear this out, as the two elite parties, the LDP and the DPJ, indicated an emphasis on using their websites to inform and communicate with voters. The LDP appeared especially interested in using its website to provide election-related information.

The two identified mass parties, the New Komeito and the JCP, also indicated similar reasons for using their websites for election-related purposes, but also expressed interest in utilizing their websites as platforms for ongoing communications with the public outside of election campaign periods. The JCP in particular indicated that facilitating information exchange both within the party organizational apparatus as well as groups that support the party or are affiliated with the party were important reasons for establishing the party's website. Of all six parties, only the New Komeito Party indicated that "image" was an important reason for establishing its website. And, although none of the parties indicated that soliciting contributions or donations was a major reason for establishing its website, it was revealed later in the website analysis portion of this investigation that parties actually did utilize their websites to differing extents for financial appeals (see next section). For reasons associated perhaps with the rather small number of personnel assigned to the creation and maintenance of their websites, the smaller political parties (the now-defunct Liberal Party and the SDP) indicated information provision only as the main reason for establishing their websites.

Finally, in order to gauge the importance that parties attached to their websites in terms of promoting the use of the web, the parties were asked to indicate how they advertised their websites through other media channels (Table 5.3 Party web-site advertising). The results demonstrate few differences among the parties in terms of party organization or ideology. The most popular means of advertising party websites were party-produced materials and newspaper/magazine advertising, suggesting that the parties tended to view the web as perhaps an upscale electronic version of their print publications rather than an interactive medium.

Table 5.3 Party website advertising

Party Organization	Elite		Mass		Other		Total
Party/Advertising Means	LDP	DPJ	New Komeito	JCP	Liberal	SDP	
Party-produced brochures and pamphlets	○	×	○	○	○	○	5
Loudspeaker vehicles (used during election campaign periods)	×	×	×	×	×	×	0
Newspaper and magazine advertisements	○	○	○	○	○	○	6
Candidate websites (promoting putting the party URL on candidate websites)	○	○	○	×	×	○	4
Television and radio commercials	×	×	×	×	×	×	0
Total	3	2	3	2	2	3	

5.5.2   Direction of information flow and role of the public

Were party websites structured in an asynchronous (uni-directional or top-down) manner or did the parties provide means on their websites to promote synchronous (two-way) communications with the public throughout the two election campaigns? And did the parties perceive the public as potential voters (highlighting means of participating in the election through party websites) or as potential members (focusing on drawing the public into the party as potential members and creating an ongoing relationship with the public)?

Table 5.4 Communications-related features on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election periods (party organization)

Party organization	Elite				Mass				Other			
Party	LDP		DPJ		New Komeito		JCP		Liberal		SDP	
Communi-cations features	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
Contact means	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone facsimile e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone facsimile e-mail	○ Address telephone facsimile e-mail	○ Address facsimile e-mail	○ Address facsimile e-mail	○ Address e-mail	○ Address e-mail
Response forms (membership, volunteering, publications subscriptions, other)	○ Membership, publications, opinions	○ Membership, publications, opinions, financial contributions	○ Membership, publications, opinions, financial contributions	○ Membership, publications, opinions, financial contributions	○ Opinions	○ Inquiries	○ Financial contributions (new building), party publications	○ Membership, publications, volunteer info	○ Membership (print & facsimile /send options)	○ Member-ship (print & facsimile /send options), opinions	○ Membership, party news subscrip-tions	○ Membership, party news subscriptions (1)
Chat rooms or discussion forums	△ (2)	×	○ (election site) (3)	×	○ forum results posted	×	×	×	×	○	×	×
Issue or opinion polls	×	×	○ (election site)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
E-mail newsletters	○	○	×	○	○	○	×	×	○	○	×	×
Total Features	4	3	4	3	4	3	2	2	3	4	2	2

Note (1): The SDP posted select opinions regarding the party, its television commercials, and other topics on its website.
Note (2): According to a notice posted on its website, the party had a bulletin board service (BBS or *keijiban*) on its website prior to the dissolution of the Diet in preparation for the election but closed it until election day (June 25, 2000).
Note (3): The DPJ created a separate website for the election in addition to the main party website (*www.minshu2000.com*).

Table 5.4 shows the results of assessing communications features on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election campaign periods in terms of party organization. All parties whose websites were assessed for this project demonstrated a preference for uni-directional communications with the public, with communications means with the party being strictly structured in formats outlined by the parties through the response mechanisms available on their websites. With respect to the overall popularity of certain communications-oriented features on websites, the most popular forms of communicating with the electorate among all parties were the inclusion of their postal addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses – all which could be interpreted as uni-directional or asynchronous communication means. And, although all parties included some type of response form on their websites, the purposes and content of such forms differed markedly. Elite parties (the LDP and the DPJ) and "other" parties (the now-defunct Liberal Party and the SDP) clearly focused on drawing members into their parties by placing membership information on their websites. These parties also used response forms on their websites to highlight the parties' publications and subscription to these publications, which could also be interpreted as an indirect form of soliciting donations or contributions to the parties. Particularly during the 2001 Upper House election campaign period, quite possibly to reflect changes in the POEL regarding campaign contributions, the LDP and the DPJ actively promoted such financial contributions on their websites. In contrast, the New Komeito Party only solicited opinions regarding the party on its website, and the JCP asked for contributions to its building fund and subscriptions to *Akahata*, the party newspaper. However, the JCP was the only party to actively use its website to solicit volunteer participation in the election during the 2001 election campaign period.

The inclusion of real-time synchronous channels provided through websites such as chat rooms, discussion forums, or BBS (bulletin-board services) as well as issue or opinion polls, have opened up new means for the public to actively communicate with parties and participate in the election, as well as allowing parties to quickly and inexpensively gauge public opinion. Yet, as the results in Table 5.4 demonstrate, these features were not fully utilized by all political parties, regardless of party organization. The LDP briefly experimented with a BBS on its website prior to the 2000 election, but the party staff expressed in an interview for this project that too many responses on

the bulletin board tended to criticize the party rather than offer constructive debate, and as a result, the discussion forum was discontinued once the Diet was dissolved prior to the 2000 election campaign. The party official also indicated that there were no immediate plans to revive this service on the LDP party website in the near future. The DPJ, however, did offer a discussion forum not on the party's official website but on the party's election-specific website, www.minshu2000.com.

Another marked difference in communications-related features on party websites concerns the provision of e-mail newsletters. Ideally, e-mail newsletters provide a means for the party to maintain continued contact with the electorate, highlighting recent party news and policies. However, in reality, this means of contacting the electorate is in itself a computerized version of uni-directional or asynchronous communications distributed by the party to each individual voter and does not allow for voters to contact each other horizontally to discuss issues, party policies, or platforms. Furthermore, as discussed in the preceding chapter, there has been some controversy in Japan regarding the distribution of party-produced e-mail newsletters during the official campaign activities period. As shown in Table 5.4, during the 2000 election campaign period, only half of the parties provided this service on their website; this figure increased to two-thirds during the upper house election campaign the following year. This increase in the use of this means to communicate with the public may be explained by the growing popularity during the year between elections of e-mail newsletters, led by the great success enjoyed by the e-mail newsletter distributed by Prime Minister and LDP party leader Koizumi Jun'ichiro.

This longitudinal comparison of communications features on the websites suggests two trends in website contents of elite, mass, and other political parties. First, the number of communications features on the websites of the elite parties, the LDP and the DPJ, decreased from four to three, a trend that was also seen in the New Komeito Party and now-defunct Liberal Party websites. In looking at the types of communications features available (or unavailable) on the websites, all parties showed a distinct trend to asynchronous rather than synchronous communications, suggesting that they wanted a certain amount of control over the communications with the electorate that they undertook through their websites. Second, the websites of the elite parties in Japan, the LDP and the DPJ, showed exact similarities in terms of communications features, and the mass parties, the New Komeito and the JCP,

only differed in their use of e-mail newsletters. This suggests that the parties may have been experimenting with various communications features during the 2000 election but settled into a certain pattern during the 2001 election campaign period.

Table 5.5 shows a different perspective of communicative features on party websites when examined through the spectrum of party ideology. Parties of the right/center and left ideological orientation (the now-defunct Liberal Party, the LDP, the SDP, and the JCP) actively sought to increase their number of party members through their websites during both election campaign periods. And these parties as well experimented with other communication-oriented features on their websites throughout both election campaigns. In fact, these parties demonstrated the highest number of combined communications features on their websites. However, while parties of the left (the SDP and the JCP) did provide a certain number of contact means and response forms on their websites, they did not take the further step of utilizing their websites more fully for discussions, issue-related polls, or e-mail newsletters during these two election campaigns (although the SDP did post select opinions regarding the party, its television commercials, and other correspondence with the electorate on its website).

These findings are indicative of the trend first noted by Hill and Hughes (1998) concerning the increased presence of right- and center-ideologically oriented groups and political parties in the U.S. in the mid- to late 1990s. In contrast to the early reputation of the internet as being a tool of liberally oriented political parties and groups, Hill and Hughes (1998) found that conservative groups and political parties had a greater presence on the web than their activist counterparts. This trend was also noted by Gibson and Ward in their studies of U.K. political parties during the 1997 general election (Gibson and Ward, 1998). This "mainstreaming" of the Internet not only indicates greater acceptance of the use of the web as a campaign tool by these groups but also suggests that small or minor political parties that lie on the fringes of the political ideological spectrum are being "outspent" by their more right- and center-oriented counterparts in terms of human, informational, and financial resources in creating and maintaining their websites.

Table 5.5 Communications-related features on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election periods (party ideology)

Party Ideology	Right/Center				Center				Left			
Party	**Liberal**		**LDP**		**DPJ**		**New Komeito**		**SDP**		**JCP**	
Election	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**
Contact means	○ Address facsimile e-mail	○ Address facsimile e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone facsimile e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address telephone e-mail	○ Address e-mail	○ Address e-mail	○ Address telephone facsimile e-mail	○ Address telephone facsimile e-mail
Response forms (mem., volunteering, pub. subscriptions, other)	○ Mem	○ Mem	○ Mem., pub., opinions,	○ Mem., pub., opinions, financial contributions	○ Mem., pub., opinions, financial contributions	○ Mem., pub., opinions, financial contributions	○ opinions	○ inquiries	○ Mem., party news subscriptions	○ Mem., party news subscriptions,	○ Financial contributions (new bldg.), party pubs.	○ Mem., pubs., volunteer info
Chat rooms or discussion forums	×	○	△(1)	×	○ (election site) (2)	×	○ forum results posted	×	×	×(3)	×	×
Issue or opinion polls	×	×	×	×	○ (election site)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
E-mail newsletters	○	○	○	○	×	○	○	○	×	×	×	×
Total Features	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	3	2	2	2	2

Note (1): According to a notice posted on its website, the party had a bulletin board service (BBS or *keijiban*) on its website prior to the dissolution of the Diet in preparation for the election but closed it until election day (June 25, 2000).

Note (2): The DPJ opened a separate website for the election with a different URL (*www.minshu2000.com*).

Note (3): The SDP posted select opinions regarding the party, its television commercials, and other correspondence on its website.

5.5.3 ICT integration into campaign activities and cross-media use

In order to assess how parties integrated ICTs in their overall campaign strategies, their website contents were also analyzed in terms of how they provided election-related, candidate-related, and media-related information features. The results for the 2000 and 2001 election campaign periods are shown in Table 5.6. In terms of overall popularity of certain features, all parties included their election platform or manifesto and candidate listings. One particularly interesting point concerned the inclusion of links to candidates' individual websites, given the background of the ongoing debate concerning the POEL and the inclusion of such links. During the 2000 election campaign period, the LDP was the only party to offer such links; during the 2001 campaign period, the SDP was the only party that did not. Most parties also posted campaign event schedules for party leaders and cross-media features such as video clips of their television commercials or audio messages on their websites. In contrast, few parties engaged in promoting the election and their party through merchandising or featuring voting information or education on their websites.

Table 5.6 Election-related features on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election periods (party organization)

Party Organization	Elite				Mass				Other			
Party/Feature	**LDP**		**DPJ**		**New Komeito**		**JCP**		**Liberal**		**SDP**	
Election-related information features	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**
Separate election website or section within main website referring specifically to the election	○	○	○	○	○	○	×	○	×	×	×	×
Election platform/manifesto	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Campaign event schedule	○ (scant)	×	○	○	○	×	○	×	○	×	×	×
Statement regarding Internet and the election	○	×	○	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Targeted voting constituency info	○ women, workers, youth, disaster victims	○ women, workers, youth, disaster victims	○ women, workers	○ women, workers	○ youth	○ women, youth	×	○ women	×	×	×	×
Voting information/ education	×	○	×	×	○	○	○ (1)	○	×	×	×	×
Election-related merchandise	×	○	○ (2)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Candidate-related information features												
Candidate profile (party template)	○	○	×	○	○	○	○	○	×	×	○	○
Candidate listings (* shows links to candidates' personal websites)	○*	○*	○	○*	○	○*	○	○*	○	○*	○	○
Media-related features												
Election posters	×	×	×	×	×	×	○	○	○	×	○	×
Cross-media (TV commercials or audio messages)	○	○	○	○	○	○	×	○	○	○	○	○
Cellular phone websites	×	○	×	×	○	○	×	○	×	×	×	×
Total Features	8	8	8	7	9	8	6	9	5	3	5	4

Note (1) Voting information primarily aimed at overseas voters.
Note (2) Free offer to send mini-CD ("D'ear Card") to voters.

In addition to the above, the elite parties of the LDP and the DPJ, as well as the New Komeito Party, included further features to focus attention squarely on the election, particularly the 2000 lower house election. For the 2000 election, the DPJ experimented with an election-only website specifically targeting the election (www.minshu2000.com), a technique that was also used by American political parties during 2000. The election-specific website was prominently advertised on the top page of the main party website and featured images of the party's leader, Hatoyama Yukio, as well as the party's election platform (manifesto), support messages from young voters and women, statements regarding the internet and elections in Japan, and an interactive game. The DPJ also made a foray into marketing by offering to send viewers a free D'ear Card (mini-CD) which included profiles of the candidates and links to their individual websites. During the 2001 upper election campaign period, the party dispensed with the concept of a separate website, but did set aside part of the main party website to address the election with less detailed contents. The LDP actually had two separate sections of their website devoted to the 2000 election. In the section for candidates, users could click on an interactive map of Japan to see a list of constituencies and candidates as well as access the candidates' individual websites. The party also made its list of candidates available in a downloadable spreadsheet format. The other election-specific section of the LDP website featured the party's detailed election platform spanning such areas as diplomacy, security, employment, welfare and social services, urban planning, and the environment. Both parties specifically targeted certain voting constituencies such as women and urban workers (as well as youth and disaster victims, in the case of the LDP) by displaying click-through banners on the top pages of their websites to specific sections within their respective websites aimed at these groups. The LDP was also the only party to undertake direct merchandising on its website, mainly through the marketing of various "goods" featuring the lion character representing Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichiro that became the party's unofficial mascot during the 2001 election campaign period. The party also included a history of the character as well as interactive games on the 2001 election campaign version of its website.

Although the contents of the campaign-oriented websites of the identified elite parties tended to resemble each other, this was not completely the case for the two identified mass parties in Japan, the New Komeito Party and the JCP. The New Komeito Party pursued an aggressive web-oriented

campaign, including even more campaign-related features on its website than the two elite parties during the 2000 election campaign. Similar to the LDP, this party set aside a section of its main party website to include standard campaign information such as party platform and candidate listings and created an interactive map of Japan through which users could find out more information regarding candidates. The party also consistently targeted young voters, both through a separate page on its website aimed at youth-related policies and by being the only political party to offer a cellular-phone version of its website. Further contrasts between the New Komeito Party and the JCP websites were mainly found in the integration of cross-media features, and it was in this area that the 2000 and 2001 versions of the JCP website showed the most significant changes. While the 2000 election campaign version of the JCP website only offered images of election posters, the 2001 version included other cross-media elements such as TV commercials and a cellular-phone version of the party website. In fact, the JCP was the only party to include all three media-related features on its website during either election campaign period. However, these parties also showed some distinct similarities in their website contents that set them aside from the elite and "other" parties. Except for the 2001 version of the LDP website that offered a brief outline of voting procedures (as the new ballot method for upper house elections was changed in late 2000), the Komeito Party and the JCP were the only political parties to consistently offer voting information or education on their websites, including detailed information on balloting and how overseas voters could participate in the election.

From an ideological perspective, Table 5.6 shows that center-oriented parties such as the LDP, DPJ, and New Komeito tended to focus attention on the elections through their websites, particularly the latter two parties that created election-specific website content. These parties were also more likely to appeal to a wider demographic range by including content specifically aimed at women, workers, and young voters. Save for the JCP, the parties to the extreme right and left (the now-defunct Liberal Party and the SDP) appeared to be less proactive in addressing the election. In fact, save for posting an election platform or manifesto and candidate listings, these parties did not include a great deal of election-related content on their websites. However, the JCP, particularly during the 2001 election, made refinements to their website, such as including more information targeted specifically to women voters and started promoting their website through other cross-media channels.

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Table 5.7 Election-related features on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election periods (party ideology)

Party Organization	Right/Center				Center				Left			
Party/Feature	Liberal		LDP		DPJ		New Komeito		SDP		JCP	
Election-related information features	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
Separate election website or section within main website referring specifically to the election	×	×	O	O	O	O	O	O	×	×	×	O
Election platform/manifesto	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Campaign event schedule	O	×	O (scant)	×	O	O	O	×	×	×	O	×
Statement regarding Internet and the election	×	×	O	×	O	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Targeted voting constituency info	×	×	O women, workers, youth, disaster victims	O women, workers, youth, disaster victims	O women workers	O women workers	O youth	O women youth	×	×	×	O women
Voting information/ education	×	×	×	O	×	×	O	O	×	×	O(1)	O
Election-related merchandise	×	×	×	O	O(2)	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Candidate-related information features												
Candidate profile (party template)	×	×	O	O	×	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Candidate listings (* shows links to candidates' personal websites)	O	O*	O*	O*	O	O*	O	O*	O	O	O	O*
Media-related features												
Election posters	O	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	O	×	O	O
Cross-media (TV commercials or audio messages)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	×	O
Cellular phone websites	×	×	×	O	×	×	O	O	×	×	×	×
Total Features	5	3	8	9	8	7	9	8	5	4	6	8

Note (1) Voting information primarily aimed at overseas voters.
Note (2) Free offer to send mini-CD ("D'ear Card") to voters.

5.5.4 Links

As noted earlier, three main types of linking strategies found on party websites were assessed during this investigation of party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election campaign periods. The first set of politically-oriented links include any type of linking from the main party website to the party's individual politicians and block organizations throughout the country, links to other political parties, and links to other bodies within the national government apparatus such as the upper and lower houses, the prime minister's office, and various ministries. Media-related links comprise the second set, and specifically refer to other media bodies such as newspapers, television or radio stations, web-based election portal websites, and candidate comparison websites. The final set includes international (links to individuals, organizations, or governments outside Japan) and other links.

Table 5.8 Links on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election periods (party organization)

Party Organization	Elite				Mass				Other			
Party	**LDP**		**DPJ**		**New Komeito**		**JCP**		**Liberal**		**SDP**	
Election	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**
Intra-party apparatus (politicians, block organizations)	○	○	○	○	○	○	×	○	○	○	○	○
Other parties (major and minor)	×	×	○	○	×	○	×	×	×	×	○	×
Within government apparatus (upper and lower houses of the Diet, prime minister's office, and various ministries)	○	○	×	○	×	○	×	○	○ (1)	○ (2)	×	○
Newspapers	○	○	×	×	×	×	×	×	○	○	×	×
TV/Radio stations	○	○	×	×	×	×	×	×	○	○	×	×
Election portals	×	×	×	○	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Candidate comparison *(rakusen)* sites	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
International	×	×	×	×	×	○ (3)	×	×	×	×	×	×
Other	○ (4)	○ (5)	○ (6)	○ (7)	×	×	○ (8)	×	○ (9)	×	○ (10)	○ (11)
Total link types	5	5	3	5	1	4	1	2	5	4	3	3

Note (1) Link to MOFA (overseas voter information)
Note (2) Link to MOFA (overseas voter information)
Note (3) Link to the EU and major American political parties
Note (4) Links to prefecture web sites
Note (5) Links to prefecture web sites
Note (6) Links to "*nakama*" at the block and local levels, and citizens' groups
Note (7) Links to "*nakama*" at the block and local levels, and citizens' groups
Note (8) Links to labor groups, NPOs, and environmental groups
Note (9) Links to NPOs, organized groups, and thinktanks
Note (10) Links to NGOs, citizens' groups, labor groups, and website accessibility information
Note (11) Links to NGOs, citizens' groups, labor groups, and website accessibility information

Table 5.8 shows the results of comparing linking strategies on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election campaign periods. In terms of the politically oriented links, the most consistently linked area was that of intra-party apparatus, with all parties including these links on their websites during both election campaign periods, except for the JCP in 2000. The elite political parties of the LDP and the DPJ were the most proactive among all parties in including these types of links to their websites, quite possibly because of the personal networks developed by their candidates and politicians. However, while the DPJ also consistently included links to other political parties, the LDP instead focused on linking within the national government apparatus. In comparison, the mass parties of the New Komeito Party and the JCP did not appear to have a definite linking strategy, particularly in the 2000 election, but changed their strategy radically during the 2001 election campaign period. For the second set of link types, those related to media organizations, the LDP and the Liberal Party were consistent in linking to newspapers and other traditional media organizations, and the DPJ were the only party to link to any type of online election portal website.

An examination of the final link category, "international" and "other" links shows definite strategic differences in terms of party organization. The elite parties of the LDP and DPJ mainly linked to official local websites or those organizations or individuals related to the party, respectively. In contrast, the mass and "other" parties offered a wider range of links. The New Komeito Party included links to the EU and major American political parties, the JCP linked to a variety of labor groups, NPOs, and environmental groups, the Liberal Party linked to similar organizations and thinktanks, and the SDP linked to NGOs, citizen's groups, labor groups, and website accessibility information.

Table 5.9 shows the breakdown of links available on political party websites in terms of party ideology. Among parties on the far ends of the ideological spectrum (the Liberal Party, the SDP, and the JCP), the Liberal Party included the widest range of links on its website, quite possibly due to the connections of its leader, Ozawa Ichiro, and other politicians in the party. In fact, save for the LDP choosing to include links to various government organizations, these two parties of the right and right/center have very similar linking structures on their websites that remained fairly constant over the course of the two election periods. In contrast, the linking strategies of the two centrist parties

changed during the one-year period between elections. Both parties expanded their link listing to provide links to various central government institutions and agencies, and the New Komeito Party added links to other political parties. Parties of the right and center were more likely to include links to media organizations such as newspapers and television stations, as well as links considered to be in the "other" category such as NPOs, NGOs, and thinktanks. The JCP website was noteworthy for providing the fewest number of links, and among the parties in 2000, was the only political party not to include links to its intra-party apparatus (such as prefecture-based party offices).

Table 5.9 Links on party websites during the 2000 and 2001 election periods (party ideology)

Party Organization	Right/Center				Center				Left			
Party/Feature	Liberal		LDP		DPJ		New Komeito		SDP		JCP	
Election year	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
Intra-party apparatus (politicians, block organizations)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	×	○
Other parties (major and minor)	×	×	×	×	○	○	×	○	○	×	×	×
Within government apparatus (upper and lower houses of the Diet, prime minister's office, and various ministries)	×	×	○	○	×	○	×	○	×	○	×	○
Newspapers	○	○	○	○	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
TV/Radio stations	○	○	○	○	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Election portals	×	×	×	×	×	○	×	×	×	×	×	×
Candidate comparison *(rakusen)* sites	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
International	○ (1)	○ (2)	×	×	×	×	×	○ (3)	×	×	×	×
Other	○ (4)	×	○ (5)	○ (6)	○ (7)	○ (8)	×	×	○ (9)	○ (10)	○ (11)	×
Total	5	4	5	5	3	5	1	4	3	3	1	2

Note (1) Link to the EU and major American political parties
Note (2) Link to MOFA (overseas voter information)
Note (3) Link to MOFA (overseas voter information)
Note (4) Links to prefecture websites
Note (5) Links to prefecture websites
Note (6) Links to prefecture websites
Note (7) Links to "*nakama*" at the block and local levels, and citizens' groups
Note (8) Links to "*nakama*" at the block and local levels, and citizens' groups
Note (9) Links to NGOs citizens' groups, labor groups, and website accessibility information
Note (10) Links to NGOs citizens' groups, labor groups, and website accessibility information
Note (11) Links to labor groups, NPOs, and environmental groups

5.9 Conclusion

Returning to the research questions posed at the beginning of this chapter, this chapter discussed political parties' rationales and goals for creating websites, as well as assessing how political parties utilized their websites during two election campaign periods with regard to offering election-related information to the public, the potential for communications with the electorate, and the linking strategies that they demonstrated on their websites. Party websites were also analyzed and compared to discern if there were any apparent trends in how parties approached the use of the web (both in attitude and content) in terms of party organizational structure and party ideology.

In terms of the first research question – the goals for establishing websites – almost all parties indicated that the main reason was to provide information to voters regarding the election, with some parties also indicating that two-way communication with voters was also important. However, none of the parties stated that they sought to use their websites to gather volunteers and supporters or to solicit contributions or donations.

With regard to discerning trends in website contents in terms of party organizational features, overall it appeared that elite parties such as the LDP and the DPJ were more proactive than mass parties (the New Komeito and the JCP) in providing communications features on their websites during the two successive election campaign periods. Although comparisons in number of election-related information features between the two sets of parties showed little difference, the breakdown of such features (election-related, candidate-related, and media-related) varied among the parties. Elite parties targeted a number of specific voting groups such as women, workers, youth, and – in the case of the LDP – disaster victims. In contrast, mass parties targeted a narrower range of the electorate, mainly women and youth, but provided detailed voting information on their websites addressed at the general public, and included more cross-media applications on their website to appeal to a wide range of the electorate. However, in comparing linking strategies among the parties, the elite LDP provided the most political and media-related links on their website, yet the other elite party, the DPJ, offered more links to citizens' groups such as NGOs, NPOs, and thinktanks.

Perhaps because the ideological stance of Japanese political parties tends to be clustered towards the center, fewer clear-cut differences were noted among the parties in terms of ideology.

Parties with right/center and center ideologies appeared to include more communications features on their websites than parties than parties of the left. These parties also used their websites to draw members into the party by publicizing official publications and benefits as well as extensive information on their websites concerning joining the party. In terms of ICT integration into campaigning, parties at either end of the ideological spectrum had few election-related features, but this figure was quite high for parties that are ideologically centrist, suggesting that centrist-leaning parties were more proactive in using their websites for campaigning than ideologically polarized parties. However, interesting differences were noted in linking strategies. In fact, overall the number of links decreases and the range of links becomes narrower when linking strategies are compared across the ideological spectrum moving from the right (the Liberal party and the LDP) to the left (the SDP and the JCP).

Overall, it is clear that at this stage in the early 2000s, parties were experimenting with their websites. Unable to draw a clear connection between the use of the web and electoral outcomes, political parties – particularly opposition parties – attempted various features on their websites in order to attract a varied audience. The major opposition political parties such as the DPJ and the New Komeito Party appeared particularly proactive in utilizing their websites for election-related purposes during both election periods and clearly sought to compete with the LDP through their websites. In contrast, minor political parties such as the Liberal Party and the SDP (two parties that are also ideologically polarized) appeared to put less effort into their websites, quite possibly because they did not have the human, financial, or informational resources to remain competitive on their websites. Among all political parties, the website of the JCP changed the most over the one-year period, with the party starting to offer election-specific information, information targeted to a certain voting demographic (women), and more cross-media applications in the 2001 election cycle.

In conclusion, the results of the website analysis over these two election cycles utilizing a model based on party organization demonstrates that certain trends in website use can be ascribed to party organizational characteristics. In addition, in summarizing the major changes in the websites over the two election periods, we can also discern trends wherein parties are "marketing" the election rather than using websites to communicate on an interactive basis with the electorate. This is shown

through a focus on providing increasing amounts of election-related information through party websites and a decrease in offering interactive capabilities. Certainly one reason for this decrease in communicative capability is difficulty of managing "real-time" or synchronous communications through websites. Parties appeared to use their websites as channels for managing their relationship – mainly through information provision – with the electorate rather than utilizing their sites to encourage citizen input.

In addition, this analysis suggests that small political parties on the extreme ends of the ideological spectrum such as the SDP and the (now-defunct) Liberal Party are being "crowded out" of the web, possibly because of a lack of human, information, and financial resources to compete with larger parties on the web. The websites of these parties on average appear to contain fewer features overall than those of other parties that have more financial and information resources. A notable exception among small political parties however is the JCP – but this party is well organized, has the human resources and the information-related sources (such as the party newspaper *Akahata*) to provide content for its website. Among smaller parties as well, the JCP was the only party to actually increase the number of information features on its website over the course of two election cycles.

Chapter 6 Candidate Websites 2001

6.1   Introduction

For many political candidates, the internet offers new means of informing and communicating with the electorate. Unrestricted by content, format, or length, candidate websites may include a virtually unlimited array of political and personal information. Similar to their counterparts in other advanced democratic nations, since the mid-1990s, among traditional political actors, Japanese political candidates for national office, have experimented with the utilization of websites to convey a range of information to the public and to offer various means of communication.

However, as discussed in Chapter 4, unlike the situation in other nations, the efforts of Japanese political candidates—particularly at the national level—at online campaigning have been met with the swift application of the POEL (Public Offices Election Law) in terms of content, specifically that relating to electioneering during the crucial "election campaign activities" period immediately preceding national, prefecture-based, and civic elections. Through a number of election cycles, candidates have repeatedly challenged the dictates of the POEL with regard to online campaigning in efforts to use their websites as platforms for campaigning. Throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, much of the attention with regard to online campaigning has focused on this point. And, to a certain extent, this attention is warranted, as we have seen in Chapter 4 that the prevailing political environment, including the regulation (or non-regulation, as the case may be) of online campaigning in a number of countries has had an impact on how political actors approach the use of the internet as a campaign medium.

Uncertainty with regard to the boundaries of the POEL, particularly during the late 1990s, may explain why Japanese political candidates have lagged behind their counterparts in other countries in utilizing the internet for campaign purposes. During the 2000 general election campaign, only 28.4% of Japanese candidates (399 out of 1404) had created campaign-oriented websites (Yamamoto, 2003). By comparison, in the American off-year elections of 1998, 72% of senate-seat candidates, 35% of House of Representative candidates, and 95% of gubernatorial candidates had maintained campaign-oriented websites. By the time of the 2000 election in the U.S., over 90% of senate and gubernatorial candidates had websites, and the percentage of House of Representative

candidates with websites almost doubled to 66% (Kamarck, 2002). During the 2001 Upper House election period—the period investigated in this chapter—the number of Japanese candidates with campaign websites almost doubled to 55%, marking the first time that the use of the web had reached critical mass levels among candidates. Despite continued uncertainty regarding the POEL and how it has been applied to campaign-related websites, the rise in the number of candidates with websites is commensurate with rapid increases in the overall Japanese user population in the period 2000 to 2002, as well as intensified focus on the political use of the internet by Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro and other politicians.

The issue of the use of the internet for political campaign purposes in Japan prior to 2001 mainly centered on the POEL and on what is not allowed on candidates' campaign websites. Yet this focus overlooks the possibilities of what candidate websites can offer in terms of detailed information regarding election-oriented information and communications with the electorate. Candidate websites can also demonstrate candidates' attitudes towards their parties, provide detailed information regarding issues in a length and format not available through other media channels, offer in-depth information about candidates, and illustrate affiliation with other organizations. In Japan's heavily regulated election media environment, where the POEL and traditional campaign media use already "levels the playing field" among candidates, websites can serve as an important means to distinguish among candidates.

How are candidates actually using their websites for providing information to and communicating with the electorate during election campaign periods? What kinds of issues are they focusing on? What type of personal information and linkages are they showing through their websites? These are the questions that are taken up in this chapter, using data from website analysis of candidate websites during the 2001 Upper House election campaign in Japan. In addition to these detailed questions, this chapter also provides an overall assessment of candidate websites in terms of party affiliation and incumbency, in order to discern any trends among candidates of the same party or same status in terms of utilizing the internet. Although some studies have been undertaken in Japan regarding candidate websites in the early 2000s, (Okamoto, 2002, 2003), this research focuses on whether or not candidates of certain political parties established websites, particularly during the 2000

general election campaign period, and not on specific content of websites. In the Japanese political environment where the use of the internet has reached critical mass levels among candidates, more in-depth studies into the actual contents of candidate websites and how these websites are being used by candidates is necessary to gauge the impact that the internet may have on political media campaigns in Japan and, in addition, what candidate use of the internet tells us about the current state of Japanese politics.

In order to investigate how candidates are utilizing the web in their campaigns, it is first necessary to briefly examine the range of media that is available to them in Japan's heavily regulated campaign media environment. After locating the use of websites within this environment, I then outline general candidate use of the web during this election campaign period by examining who's online in terms of overall candidate presence on the web and provide a breakdown of candidate websites by party, status, gender, and age. Then, in the following sections, I examine the findings of the website survey in six main categories of website content: election-related information, communications with the electorate, party affiliation, issues presentation, personal information regarding the candidates, and linking strategies. Finally, I close this chapter with a brief discussion of how the results of the website analysis in the six categories point to trends in the use of the web as a campaign tool overall and also note certain characteristics with regard to web-based campaigning in the Japanese political environment.

6.2   Campaign media use by Japanese candidates

As discussed in Chapter 4, Japan's POEL contains a detailed range of regulations concerning what candidates can and cannot do during election campaign periods. In order to locate the use of the Internet among the use of other campaign-related media, this section provides an overview of the range of media that candidates are allowed to utilize in their election campaigns. The POEL restricts media use not only in terms of type of media that candidates may utilize but also in terms of timing, with media use before the official campaign activities period and media use after the formal announcement of their candidatures being restricted[1].

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[1] In the case of Upper House elections, once the Diet is dissolved, the government must call an election within

Prior to the first day of the official campaign activities period, candidates are allowed to undertake certain activities relating to their election campaigns. For example, they may establish, conduct recruitment drives and hold meetings with their personal support organizations (*koenkai*). They may also make speeches and make personal appearances at the meetings of other third-party organizations. Candidates also make arrangements for renting a campaign office, which may not be closer than 300 meters from the nearest polling station. Because the POEL does not allow candidates to directly purchase television, radio, newspaper, or magazine advertising, candidates appeal to voters mainly through printed matter, personal appearances, and using the network of the members of their support organizations[2].

Posters are one type of media that candidates use extensively. Candidates may choose to create four types of posters, each with its own specifications according to use. For example, *jimae* ("before") posters can be created and posted at any public location, however, these posters must be taken down prior to the first day of the official campaign activities period. Posters featuring the candidate's party and the candidate, called *niren*[3] may also be used, but with a similar set of restrictions. A third set of posters are those that can be freely hung within candidates' campaign office. Finally, candidates create a fourth set of posters that serve as their "official posters" that are posted on the official poster boards erected and managed by the local elections management board. In addition to differences in terms of utilization and timing, any posters, signboards, or notice boards used either inside or outside candidates' offices must conform to certain size dimensions.

Postcards (*hagaki*), newspaper inserts (*chirashi*), pamphlets or handouts (*bira*), and publicly distributed election bulletins (*senkyo koho*) produced by the local elections management board can

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30 days (within 40 days in the case of Lower House elections). Within this 30-day period, a certain amount of time is set aside that is designated as the "official campaign activities period", which runs for 12 days immediately prior to lower house elections and 17 days prior to upper house elections. Candidates formally kick off their campaigns on the first day of the official campaign period (called *koji* in the case of upper or lower house elections or *kokuji* in the case of prefecture-level or municipal elections) by submitting formal announcements to their local election management boards.

[2] Although candidates cannot directly purchase television, radio, newspaper, or magazine advertising, they are provided with two publicly funded newspaper advertisements and two television appearances that are broadcast along with other candidates in the area. Some politicians also appear in their personal capacity on "wide shows" (general affairs programs) and political opinion programs.

[3] *Niren* posters are posters with one-third of the space devoted to the candidate by displaying a photograph of his/her face and name, one-third of the space displaying the name of the leader or an important person within the candidate's political party, and the remaining one-third of the space illustrating the logo of the candidate's sponsoring political party.

also be utilized by candidates, but these as well must confirm to certain specifications in terms of number and timing when they can be distributed. For example, candidates in Upper House elections running for single-seat constituencies may distribute 35,000 postcards and those running for proportional representation seats may distribute 150,000 postcards. Once candidates obtain the necessary permission for their candidates from the local election management board, they receive permission to distribute these postcards free of charge through the post office. Postcards should be posted to arrive at least two full days prior to the election. Specifications for pamphlets or handouts (*bira*) vary according to size specifications and quantity. Candidates in Upper House elections in single-seat constituencies are allowed to create and distribute between 100,000 and 300,000 sheets, and candidates in the proportional representation system may distribute 250,000. The local elections management board also prepares an election bulletin (*senkyo koho*) that is included as an insert in newspapers and distributed approximately one week prior to the election. Each candidate is allowed a set amount of space for displaying his/her name, photograph, personal history, and may also provide details of his/her policies and contact information[4].

Candidates formally start their election campaigns by submitting their official announcements to their local election management boards on the first day of the official campaign activities period. In addition to submitting their formal announcement to the board, candidates must also submit a copy of their family registers, documents indicating that they are the official or recommended candidate from a particular political party (not necessary for independent candidates), and proof that they have paid their deposit to run as candidates (3 million yen for upper or lower house candidates). Once candidates have submitted the documentation and obtain approval from the local elections management board, candidates receive a variety of election-related materials to use in their campaigns. These materials include nameplates or signboards for their official campaign office, use of one "election car" (usually a small van with powerful loudspeakers), placards for public speeches, and permission to distribute their postcards through the post office. During the official campaign activities period, candidates are

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[4] As a personal observation, few candidates appear to include their website addresses in their *senkyo koho* statements. When an official from the local elections management board in Tsukuba, Ibaraki was interviewed about this, he indicated that the inclusion of a website address in a candidate's *senkyo koho* statement may be construed as an overt call for votes, which would place it in the restricted category under the POEL.

allowed to ask for support among their circle of acquaintances and friends, use the telephone to solicit votes, and make speeches in public places. Candidates are not allowed to solicit votes by calling on voters in their homes or create or solicit petitions for their candidacies.

Thus, in general, we can discern certain patterns in the use of campaign-related media. One pattern is in terms of timing, and how certain media can be used before and after the official campaign activities period in Japan. A second pattern is that to date, almost all media that can be utilized by candidates can be calculated in terms of number and cost (for example, the number of postcards or campaign posters and their cost of production and distribution). And finally, a third pattern is that almost all of the printed and broadcast media available to date to political parties and candidates has certain restrictions in terms of format and length. For example, candidate information in official election bulletins distributed by local election management boards must conform to space limitations. Postcards as well can only convey a certain amount of information because of space restrictions of the medium. Comparing these traditional campaign media to the use of websites and their unique properties in terms of being viewable by a potentially unlimited—and incalculable—number of voters over an unspecified geographic range and lack of restriction on format and space, it is understandable that the use of the media has posed certain challenges. The value of e-mail communications in the form of e-mail newsletters and regular e-mail messages distributed by political parties and candidates, also complicate the concrete calculation of costs, as well as issues pertaining to the management and appropriateness of such communications.

Given the detailed restrictions concerning the range of media that are available to candidates both before and during the official campaign activities period, the internet has posed challenges not only in terms of locating its management within the POEL but also how candidates and political parties can effectively utilize it as a means of informing and communicating with the electorate. As discussed in Chapter 4, unlike other campaign-related media, the POEL does not include specific provisions for the use of political party or candidate websites or e-mail messages or newsletters produced and distributed by these political actors, regardless of timing. Instead, the government has consistently interpreted the use of the Internet within existing POEL restrictions specifically pertaining to banning the updating of websites and distribution of e-mail newsletters during the official election

campaign activities period. Political parties and candidates, already contending with locating the use of the medium within the government's current interpretation of the POEL, must also deal with gauging how to effectively utilize it as a means of informing and communicating with the electorate in the absence of clear guidelines—either put out by the government itself or through experience with the medium.

As mentioned previously and shown in Chapter 4, a great deal of the discussion concerning the use of the Internet by political parties and candidates as a political campaign medium has concentrated on the legalities of its use in terms of the POEL. This aspect of the use of the web for online campaigning in Japan, as well as previous research done by Okamoto (2002, 2003) and Yamamoto (2005) with regard to the establishment of candidate websites has provided a useful starting point for further investigations regarding candidate use of the web. With greater numbers of candidates establishing websites, it is also necessary to assess how they are actually utilizing the web as a campaign medium not only as a means of informing and communicating with the electorate but also how they are demonstrating their attitudes towards its use and how they are portraying themselves through their websites. Thus, this assessment of candidate websites during the 2001 Upper House election campaign period has been undertaken in order to understand more fully how candidates are utilizing this medium as a means of providing election-related information, communicating with the electorate, demonstrating party affiliation, discussing issues, incorporating personal information features, and showing affiliations with other organizations through linking strategies.

6.3   Who's online in 2001

On the whole, out of a total of 487 known candidates, with a breakdown of 292 candidates running in the single-seat constituency system and 195 candidates running in the proportional representation system, a total of 271 websites were identified. As shown in Table 6.1, out of a total of 292 candidates running for single-seat constituency seats, 161 (55.1%) had functional websites as of July 20, 2001, and 110 (56.4%) candidates out of a possible 195 running in the proportional representation system had websites.

Table 6.1 Overall candidate presence on the web in the 2001 Upper House election

		Single-seat constituency		Proportional representation	
		% of candidates	N	% of Candidates	N
Websites collected	Total individual websites[1]	55.1%	161	56.4%	110
Invalid	No website	42.1%	123	42.6%	83
	Dead link	0.3%	1	0%	0
	Local party website	1.7%	5	0.5%	1
	Other	0.7%	2	0.5%	1
	Total	100%	292	100%	195

[1] A small number of websites (20 and 23 at the single-seat constituency level and the proportional representation level, respectively) were not analyzed for this project due to technical problems in archiving websites with frames and other technical issues.

As discussed in Chapter 4, one feature of earlier elections, especially the 2000 Lower House election, has been the greater use of the web by opposition-party candidates such as those from the DPJ, New Komeito Party, and the JCP. During that campaign period in particular, LDP candidates lagged behind their counterparts in other political parties in establishing election-based websites. Combined with the conventional wisdom that a presence on the web held certain merits for media-challenged candidates from small political parties or independent candidates, it was expected that a higher percentage of opposition party and independent candidates would establish websites.

During this particular election cycle, there were distinct and statistically significant differences in party affiliation and website utilization among candidates, as shown in Table 6.2. The results of the breakdown of website presence by party affiliation show that LDP candidates were certainly not reluctant to establish websites during this election campaign period, as almost all candidates had personal websites. As expected from the situation in previous election campaigns, high numbers of opposition party candidates such as those from the DPJ, Liberal Party, SDP (Social Democratic Party of Japan), and New Komeito Party continued to be active in creating a presence on the web.

However, by contrast, a number of candidates from less well-established political parties such as the Women's Party and Liberal Union Party, as well as independent candidates, did not appear to use the web for campaigning during this election cycle. In fact, in contrast to the major political parties, higher proportions of candidates from these parties did not have personal, campaign-oriented websites. The suggestion that the web could serve as a means to "even the playing field" among candidates from small political parties and independent candidates was not supported, as shown by the fact that only approximately half of the independent candidates in the single-seat constituency system established websites during this campaign. These figures as well may be indicative of a long-term trend in the

sophistication of the web, particularly by mainstream political parties and candidates. Instead of the web offering a means for independent and minor party candidates to "level the playing field" in order to compete with their major-party counterparts, the expense of creating and maintaining attractive websites, both in terms of human and financial resources, may be out of the reach for such parties and their candidates.

Although not reflected in Table 6.2, an interesting trend was noted with regard to the websites created by JCP candidates, local JCP chapters, and the national party organization. In contrast to the strategy adopted by other political parties such as the LDP, DPJ, and SDP, wherein the national party organization provided detailed information concerning candidates on the national party website in the form of one-page "biographical pages" as well as links to the candidate's individual website (if available), the JCP adopted a different approach. Quite often local JCP chapters in each prefecture would devote at least a portion of their local websites to information concerning their candidates. In addition to the 18 JCP candidates who maintained their own personal websites during this election campaign period, a number of JCP candidates also campaigned online through these websites. (As noted above, these local-party websites were not analyzed for the purposes of this research.) Therefore, although the figures shown in Table 6.2 may indicate that JCP candidates were disadvantaged overall on the web, this was only the case in terms of candidates' establishing personal websites versus campaigning through websites maintained by the party at the local level. Yet even so, that the JCP chose to take this approach to providing information concerning their candidates suggests that the strong centralized internal party structure that characterizes the JCP in general prevails in the party's overall approach to the web as well.

Table 6.2 July 2001 Upper House election candidates with websites (by party)***

Party	Single-seat constituency									
	LDP	DPJ	Liberal	JCP	SDP	New Komeito	New Liberal Party	Other parties[1]	Indepen-dent[2]	Total
Website	48 (96.0%)	34 (97.1%)	10 (71.4%)	18 (37.5%)	15 (68.2%)	5 (100%)	6 (13.6%)	3 (11.5%)	22 (45.8%)	161 (55.1%)
No website	2 (4.0%)	1 (2.9%)	4 (28.6%)	30 (62.5%)	7 (31.8%)	0 (N/A)[3]	38 (86.4%)	23 (88.5%)	26 (54.2%)	131 (44.9%)
Total	50	35	14	48	22	5	44	26	48	292
	Proportional representation									
Website	26 (100%)	22 (95.7%)	10 (66.7%)	4 (16.0%)	10 (100%)	10 (58.8%)	17 (36.2%)	11 (34.4%)	0 (N/A)	110 (56.4%)
No website	0 (N/A)	1 (4.3%)	5 (33.3%)	21 (84.0%)	0 (N/A)	7 (41.2%)	30 (63.8%)	21 (65.6%)	0 (N/A)	85 (43.6%)
Total	26	23	15	25	10	17	47	32	0	195

[1] Includes the Women's Party (*Joseitō*) and Liberal Union Party (*Jiyurengō*) at the single-seat constituency level; includes the Women's Party (*Joseitō*), Liberal Union Party (*Jiyurengō*), and the Conservative Party (*Hoshutō*) in the proportional representation system.
[2] There are no independent candidates in the proportional representation system.
[3] N/A = Non-applicable
*** = sig. P = 0.000

Comparing candidate presence on the web overall in terms of status—either incumbent or challenger—also yielded statistically significant results. As shown in Table 6.3, although less than half of the new candidates at the single-seat constituency and proportional representation levels (42.7% and 47.8%, respectively) had websites during this election cycle, in contrast, website utilization among incumbents for both systems was surprisingly high at over 90%.

Table 6.3 July 2001 Upper House election candidates with websites (by status)

Status	Single-seat constituency			Proportional representation		
	New candidates	Incumbents[1]	Total	New candidates	Incumbents[1]	Total
Website	96 (42.7%)	65 (97.0%)	161 (55.1%)	75 (47.8%)	35 (92.1%)	110 (56.4%)
No website	129 (57.3%)	2 (3.0%)	131 (44.9%)	82 (52.2%)	3 (7.9%)	85 (44.6%)
Total	225	67	292	157	38	195

[1] Includes two former office holders at the single-seat constituency level and three former office holders in the proportional representation system.

There are a number of possible explanations for these results. For new candidates overall, there may be certain barriers to creating a presence online. These candidates, most likely in the early stages of their political careers, may not have the human or financial resources required to establish and maintain websites. In addition, these candidates may have chosen to expend limited campaign resources on other means of attracting attention to their candidacies rather than choosing to invest resources in an as-yet unproven medium. In contrast, incumbent candidates most likely have established campaign organizations in place as well as more resources (both in terms of information and human resources) to create and maintain website content.

In a broader perspective, the high figures for incumbents are also indicative of a possible shift in attitudes towards using the web for campaigning. Despite the fact that the POEL has not been changed to allow for internet-based political campaigns, the rate of adoption of the internet by candidates as a political campaign medium suggests that the use of the web among politicians is gradually becoming legitimized through practice. The gradual increases in the numbers of candidates online in each ensuing election cycle suggest that while its use may not be causing dramatic shifts in election outcomes as yet, the web is a campaign medium that is progressively becoming more accepted at least among current politicians.

In terms of personal factors such as gender and age, no statistically significant differences

were found as to the candidates' likelihood of having a functioning website (Tables 6.4 and 6.5).

Although the number of female candidates with or without websites was fairly close in both electoral

systems, gender was not a significant predictor of whether or not a candidate established a website

during this election campaign period.

Table 6.4 July 2001 Upper House election candidates with websites (by gender)

Status	Single-seat constituency			Proportional representation		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Website	123 (57.7%)	38 (48.1%)	161 (55.1%)	85 (59.0%)	25 (49.0%)	110 (56.4%)
No website	90 (42.3%)	41 (51.9%)	131 (44.9%)	59 (41.0%)	26 (51.0%)	85 (43.9%)
Total	213	79	292	157	38	195

[1] Includes two former office holders at the single-seat constituency level and three former office holders in the proportional representation system.

The breakdown of candidates in certain age ranges revealed that age as well makes no

difference in candidates' establishment of websites. In fact, the results of this survey belied the

conventional wisdom that the web is mainly used as a tool for younger candidates. The age breakdown

of candidates with and without websites shows that younger candidates in their 30s in the single-seat

constituency races certainly utilized websites as part of their campaigns, but their counterparts in age

in the proportional representation electoral system appeared particularly reluctant to establish websites.

However, candidates in the highest age group—older than 60 years of age—demonstrated particularly

high levels of proactive use of the web during this election period, regardless of the electoral system.

Table 6.5 July 2001 Upper House election candidates with websites (by age)

Single-seat constituency					
Age Range	30-39 years of age	40 to 49 years of age	50 to 59 years of age	60-plus years of age	Total
Has website	30 (58.8%)	35 (46.1%)	55 (55.0%)	41 (63.1%)	161 (55.1%)
No website	21 (41.2%)	41 (53.9%)	45 (45.0%)	24 (36.9%)	131 (44.9%)
Total	51	76	100	65	292
Proportional representation					
Has website	9 (33.3%)	17 (45.9%)	46 (60.5%)	38 (69.1%)	110 (56.4%)
No website	18 (66.7%)	20 (54.1%)	30 (39.5%)	17 (30.9%)	95 (45.6%)
Total	27	37	76	55	270

There are a number of possible explanations for these results. Similar to the situation faced by

many new candidates, younger candidates as well may be in the initial stages of their political careers

and either not have the human or financial resources necessary to establish and maintain websites. In contrast, older candidates—particularly incumbents—may already have support organizations in place that can assume the responsibility of creating the candidates' websites. Another possible explanation is that older candidates may want to appear technologically savvy, and one way to do so is to create a presence on the web. In this sense, websites can serve a as a means of attracting young voters to the campaign.

In summary, the fact that more than half of the candidates in the election chose to establish websites suggests that, similar to their counterparts in other countries, the web is becoming a standard campaign tool for Japanese politicians. It appears as well that through this standardization or legitimization process, candidates from smaller parties and independent candidates may have lost the advantage that they had in the early years of the use of the internet as a political campaign medium, as candidates from established parties such as the LDP, DPJ, Liberal, SDP, and New Komeito were particularly proactive in using the web during this campaign period. In the long term, as more candidates and politicians start to utilize the web, focus will likely shift from the numbers of candidates online to what type of information and communications features they are offering on their websites. We now turn our attention to these features of utilizing websites in the next section.

6.4   Election-oriented information

Did Japanese candidates in the 2001 Upper House election actively utilize their websites for political campaigning by providing election-related information regarding the election? Table 6.6 shows the breakdown of occurrences of these features on candidate websites.

Table 6.6 Election-related information-oriented features on candidate websites (by electoral system)

Feature	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Single-seat constituency candidates (N=141)	Proportional representation Candidates (N=87)	Total (N=228)
Issue: Koizumi administration **	**40 (28.4%)**	**10 (11.5%)**	**50 (21.9%)**
Issue: Restructuring	12 (8.5%)	5 (5.7%)	17 (7.5%)
Issue: Economy	12 (8.5%)	2 (2.3%)	14 (6.1%)
Volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign *	**38 (27.0%)**	**14 (16.1%)**	**52 (22.8%)**
Campaign event schedule	89 (63.1%)	61 (70.1%)	150(65.8%)
Constituency name (on top page)	69 (48.9%)	N/A[1]	69 (48.9%)
Information targeted towards or about a particular geographical area or constituency **	**27 (19.1%)**	**7 (8.0%)**	**34 (14.9%)**
Speeches (text, audio, or visual) *	**20 (14.2%)**	**22 (25.3%)**	**42 (18.4%)**
Internet and the election	27 (19.1%)	18 (20.7%)	45 (19.7%)
Average number of election-related features	2.37	1.69	2.11

[1] Proportional representation candidates run national-level campaigns.
* = sig. P. <0.05; ** = sig. P. <0.01

The results show overall that the majority of candidates did not use their websites to inform the electorate about their opinions and stances regarding major election issues. However, of the three issues coded, the Koizumi administration was the most popular issue among candidates in both systems with 28.4% of single-seat constituency level and 11.5% of party-level candidates stating their opinions regarding the administration on their websites. Although slightly over one-fifth of all candidates had some opinion regarding the administration, single-seat constituency candidates were more likely to address this issue than their party-level counterparts to a significant extent (sig. P. <0.01).

Another popular information-related feature on candidate websites—at least among single-seat constituency candidates—was the inclusion of the constituency name on the top page, with almost half of these candidates (48.9%) posting this information on their websites in order to identify with their target voting group. However, only one-fifth (19.1%) of candidates in the single-seat constituency system actually included information either about their constituencies or targeted towards their constituencies. Although not shown in Table 6.6, a further breakdown revealed that even fewer candidates targeted certain voting groups such as women (10.1% or 23 candidates) or youth (2.6% or 5 candidates).

The most common election-related feature among all candidates was the inclusion of their campaign event schedule, with over 60% of the candidates in both systems offering this information on their websites. In many cases, this involved a simple listing of the location, time, and date of

campaign-related events such as public speeches and rallies. Although current interpretations of the POEL suggest that updating this information on websites during the official "campaign activities period" immediately prior to the election contravenes the law, posting this information prior to this period is legal. As long as candidates refrain from updating their speaking schedules during the campaign activities period, posting their schedules poses no infraction of the POEL.

Using their websites as a means for eliciting support in their campaigns through volunteer or internship involvement was also a fairly popular feature among candidates, although here again the results of the website survey demonstrate some discrepancy between candidates running in the two electoral systems. While slightly over a quarter of single-seat constituency candidates used their websites to attract volunteers for their organizations or their campaigns, less than a fifth of candidates running for proportional representation seats did so. And, perhaps as a means of directly addressing the use of the internet for political campaign purposes, almost 30% of the candidates included some type of statement on the top pages of their websites regarding updating the site during the official election campaign period.

Examining the occurrences of these features on candidate websites in terms of party and status also provides further information of candidates' attitudes towards using their websites for active campaigning. As shown in Table 6.7, there were significant differences in what features were popular among candidates of certain parties.

Table 6.7 Election-related information-oriented features on candidate websites (by party)

	LDP (N=66)	DPJ (N=50)	Liberal (N=18)	JCP (N=21)	SDP (N=18)	New Komeito (N=14)	Cons. (N=3)	New Liberal (N=10)	Ind. (N=22)	Other (N=4)	Total (N=228)
Issue: Koizumi administration **	**21 (31.8%)**	**11 (22.0%)**	**0 (0%)**	**5 (23.8%)**	**4 (22.2%)**	**0 (0%)**	**1 (33.3%)**	**0 (0%)**	**4 (18.2%)**	**4 (66.7%)**	**50 (21.9%)**
Issue: Restructuring	6 (9.1%)	4 (8.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (9.1%)	1 (16.7%)	17 (7.5%)
Issue: Economy	4 (6.1%)	4 (8.0%)	0 (0%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.5%)	1 (16.7%)	14 (6.1%)
Volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign **	**7 (10.6%)**	**18 (36.0%)**	**4 (22.2%)**	**5 (23.8%)**	**4 (22.2%)**	**0 (0%)**	**1 (33.3%)**	**3 (30.0%)**	**8 (36.4%)**	**2 (33.3%)**	**52 (22.8%)**
Campaign event schedule	35 (53.0%)	40 (80.0%)	10 (55.6%)	16 (76.2%)	12 (66.7%)	10 (71.4%)	2 (66.7%)	7 (70.0%)	14 (63.6%)	4 (66.7%)	150 65.8%)
Constituency name (on top page)	27 (40.9%)	13 (26.0%)	8 (44.4%)	9 (42.9%)	8 (44.4%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (20.0%)	6 (27.3%)	1 (16.7%)	77 (33.8%)
Information targeted towards or about a particular geographical area or constituency	10 (15.2%)	10 (20.0%)	2 (11.1%)	2 (9.5%)	2 (11.1%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	1 (10.0%)	5 (22.7%)	1 (16.7%)	34 (14.9%)
Speeches (text, audio, or visual)	12 (18.2%)	14 (28.0%)	1 (5.6%)	4 (19.0%)	3 (16.7%)	2 (14.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.6%)	2 (33.3%)	42 (18.4%)
Internet and the election	9 (13.6%)	13 (26.0%)	1 (5.6%)	3 (14.3%)	3 (16.7%)	7 (50.0%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (10.0%)	6 (27.3%)	1 (16.7%)	45 (19.7%)
Average number of election-related information features on candidate websites	1.98	2.54	1.44	2.24	2.11	1.64	2.67	1.50	2.23	2.83	2.11

N/A = Non-applicable

** = sig. P. <0.01

Did candidates of certain political parties demonstrate trends in the inclusion of election-related information on their websites? As discussed earlier, posting their campaign event schedule and indicating their constituency name on the top page of their website were the two most popular features among candidates. The website analysis of these two features found a pronounced difference among candidates in terms of political party, demonstrating that this feature was more often used by candidates from opposition parties and independent candidates than those from the ruling LDP. In fact, only slightly more than half of the LDP candidates (53.0%) made this information available on their websites—the lowest percentage among candidates of all parties. There were also minor differences among parties in terms of the identification of candidates' constituencies on the top pages of their websites. While close to 40% of candidates from the LDP, JCP, SDP, and Liberal parties included this information, less than 30% of DPJ and independent candidates did so on their websites.

Candidates also differed in terms of using their websites to publicize volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign. Candidates from the two ruling coalition parties, the LDP and the New Komeito Party, were the least likely to offer this type of information on their websites (10.6% and 0%), suggesting that candidates from these parties utilized other, more traditional means of involving the electorate in their campaigns. In contrast, candidates from major and minor opposition parties, particularly the DPJ (18 candidates or 36.0%), were much more proactive concerning using their websites for this purpose. A similar percentage of independent candidates (8 candidates or 36.4%) also used their websites to appeal for campaign staff.

Among the three main election issues, Koizumi administration was the most consistently addressed by all candidates. As perhaps expected, this was the most popular issue not only among LDP candidates but also candidates from opposition parties, particularly the DPJ, JCP, and SDP. Independent candidates and candidates from small political parties were also likely to address this issue compared to the other two issues. Also, while less than 20% of

candidates overall included the text, audio recording, or visual display of their speeches on their websites, candidates from certain parties appeared to include this feature more often than those from other parties. For example, close to 30% of DPJ candidates put their speeches on their websites, compared to slightly less than 20% of the LDP or JCP candidates.

There were also some differences among candidates of certain parties in terms of addressing the issue of the internet and the election. More than one quarter of the DPJ and independent candidates as well as half of the New Komeito Party candidates included a statement on their websites regarding their policy towards updating their websites. In almost all cases, these candidates included a statement on the top pages of their websites indicating that they were complying with the POEL in not updating their website contents during the "official election campaign activities" period. However, in contrast, less than 15% of the candidates from the LDP, Liberal, JPC, or New Liberal Party candidates included such a statement on their websites.

Looking at election-related information features available on candidate websites in terms of party organization also revealed certain similarities and differences among candidates of similarly constructed political parties. The only noticeable similarity among candidates from the LDP and DPJ (identified in the preceding chapter as elite political parties) in terms of election-oriented features contained on their websites was that they both addressed issues such as restructuring and the economy. Save for addressing the issue of the Koizumi administration, DPJ candidates were more likely to include all other kinds of election-oriented information features on their websites. The differences between the website contents of mass parties such as the JCP and the New Komeito Party were even more striking. None of the New Komeito candidates chose to address any of the three identified issues on their websites, and neither did they appear to use their websites as a means of mobilizing volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign. On the other hand, JCP candidates appeared more proactive in utilizing their websites to address the issues and to provide information to the public regarding getting

involved in their campaigns.

Comparing election-related website content among candidates in terms of status also demonstrated certain differences (Table 6.8). Among incumbent candidates, two distinct trends were identified. First, incumbents were much more likely to address the issue of the Koizumi administration than new candidates. This suggests that identification with—or opposition to— the Koizumi administration was considered an important issue for these candidates. Second, a significantly higher percentage of new candidates used their websites to offer volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign. The latter trend is of particular interest, as it suggests that a significant number of new candidates are utilizing their websites as a means of mobilizing the public and establishing their support organizations.

Table 6.8 Election-related features on candidate websites by status

Feature	Status	
	Incumbents (N=89)	New candidates (N=139)
Issue: Koizumi administration *	**26 (29.2%)**	**24 (17.3%)**
Issue: Restructuring	8 (9.0%)	9 (6.5%)
Issue: Economy	6 (6.7%)	8 (5.8%)
Volunteer or internship involvement in the campaign *	**14 (15.7%)**	**38 (27.3%)**
Campaign event schedule	61 (68.5%	89 (64.0%)
Constituency name (on top page)	36 (40.4%)	41 (29.5%)
Information targeted towards or about a particular geographical area or constituency	13 (14.6%)	21 (15.1%)
Speeches (text, audio, or visual)	20 (22.5%)	22 (15.8%)
Internet and the election	17 (19.1%)	28 (20.1%)
Average number of election-related features	2.26	2.01

* = sig. P. <0.05

While this website analysis mainly dealt with election-related information content of candidate websites, what type of information was missing or rarely present on candidate websites is also noteworthy. Only four candidates included any type of voting education information on their websites, detailing procedures on completing write-in ballots. This was a rather surprising finding, given changes to the POEL in October 2000 that allowed for voters to write either the name of the candidate or his/her political party on the write-in ballot for proportional representation candidates. Furthermore, only 16 candidates (7%) posted contribution information on their websites such as bank account details. At first glance, this

figure appears surprisingly low, compared to the publicity given to American candidates and their use of the web for campaign fundraising. However, as noted with political party websites as well, and confirmed in interviews with party officials, direct solicitation of funds is not a commonly used campaign tactic in Japanese election campaigns. Technological and organizational explanations are also possible to account for the low number of candidates offering information regarding campaign donations on their websites. Finally, other than targeting their own constituencies or a certain geographical area, a high percentage of candidates did not target any other traditional voting groups through their websites such as women, youth, or any other demographically based voting group. In fact, compared to the almost 15% of candidates who targeted certain geographical areas or their constituencies, only 10.1% (23 candidates) and 2.6% (6 candidates) set aside part of their websites especially for women or youth voters, respectively.

In summary, candidates demonstrated certain differences in their use of websites as means for disseminating election-related information in terms of electoral system and party, and to a lesser extent, in terms of position. Candidates for single-seat constituency seats demonstrated much more proactive attitudes towards using their websites for providing election-relation information than their counterparts running in the proportional representation system. This suggests that proportional representation candidates relied more on their relationship within the internal organization of the party during their political campaigns than on their existing or potential relationships with the voters. In fact, candidates in the proportional representation system appeared to use their websites mainly as a means of detailing their campaign event schedules and little else. While there were some minor differences in their attitudes towards utilizing their websites for providing election-related information, candidates from opposition parties and independent candidates tended to provide a wider range of information on their websites than those from the ruling LDP party or its coalition partner, the New Komeito Party.

6.5   Communications with the electorate

In addition to providing politically oriented information concerning the election, candidates may also use their websites as a means for communicating with the public, both as an extension of traditional means of communications such as post, telephone, or facsimile, and/or through the websites themselves as platforms for online communications. Unique properties of websites such as interactivity and speed, and the possibilities for low-cost communications such as email, provide new means for candidates to promote or maintain contact with the electorate. For example, candidates may encourage traditional communications with the electorate by providing their telephone and facsimile numbers as well as their addresses. They may also use their websites as a medium for communications through email newsletters, interactive surveys, and discussion forums. To particularly address the Japanese internet environment, wherein cellular phone utilization is high, in addition to traditional fixed-PC potential means of communications, this survey of website features also assessed if candidates provided cellular-phone-based versions of their websites and cellular-phone-based email newsletters. In addition to offering a further alternative for communications with the electorate in general, the utilization of these features on candidate websites could indicate interest in attracting youth voters. Were candidates in this election cycle proactive about using their websites to promote direct communications with the electorate? Table 6.9 shows the overall popularity of communications-oriented features on candidate websites in terms of electoral system.

Table 6.9 Communications features on candidate websites (by electoral system)

Feature	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Single-seat constituency candidates (N=141)	Proportional representation candidates (N=87)	Total (N=228)
Survey regarding election-related issues *	**3 (2.1%)**	**7 (8.0%)**	10 (4.4%)
Results of survey	2 (1.4%)	5 (5.7%)	7 (3.1%)
BBS[1] or online discussion forum	26 (18.4%)	16 (18.4%)	42 (18.4%)
Email address	124 (87.9)	75 (86.2%)	199 (87.3%)
Requesting comments from the electorate (any means)	26 (18.4%)	11 (12.6%)	37 (16.2%)
Contact information on top page (address/phone/fax)	59 (41.8%)	27 (31.0%)	86 (37.7%)
Separate 'contact page' or form	27 (19.1%)	13 (14.9%)	40 (17.5%)
Email newsletter (PC-based)	21 (14.9%)	10 (11.5%)	31 (13.6%)
Cellular-phone based website	13 (9.2%)	11 (12.6%)	24 (10.5%)
Cellular-phone based email newsletter	3 (2.1%)	3 (3.4%)	6 (2.6%)
Average number of communications features	2.16	2.05	2.11

[1] BBS=Bulletin Board Service

* = sig. P. <0.05

The results show that less than half of the candidates in either electoral system provided information regarding communications with the electorate through traditional channels such as telephone, facsimile, or through the post (contact address). Candidates in the proportional representation system were less likely than single-seat constituency candidates to include this information on their websites (31.0% versus 41.8%, respectively). Alternatively, candidates were far more likely to encourage contact through their email addresses, although in many cases, it was unclear if such contact was with the webmaster (the person or organization who maintains the website) or the candidate him-/herself. Almost a fifth of the candidates in both systems provided a separate 'contact page' or form on their websites to facilitate contact with their political organizations.

Although email newsletters offer the means of regulating communicating with the electorate, both during and outside election campaign periods, this means was not a particularly popular feature among candidates. This is somewhat surprising, given the attention paid to the success of Prime Minister Koizumi's email newsletter. Part of the reluctance for candidates to include this feature on their website may be attributed to the lack of clarity in the POEL regarding whether or not email newsletters, similar to the updating of websites, fall within the parameters of campaign activities that are banned during the official campaign activities period

immediately prior to the election. From an organizational standpoint as well, the task of creating and regularly updating political content that could be disseminated through this means may be beyond the informational or human-resource-related capabilities of some candidates' election campaigns.

Although 18.4% of candidates used their websites as platforms for interaction with the electorate through BBSs or discussion forums, very few candidates provided interactive surveys and the results of such surveys on their websites. Despite the widespread utilization of cellular phones in Japan, cellular-phone based means of informing or communicating with the electorate—either through cellular-phone based websites or email newsletters—were not popular means of establishing communications with the electorate for candidates of either electoral system.

Table 6.10 shows a further breakdown of communications features on candidate websites in terms of affiliated political party. As with information-oriented features, there are distinct differences in the communications-oriented contents of websites in terms of both party and feature. Overall, in terms of differences according to political party, candidates from opposition parties such as the DPJ, Liberal, New Komeito, and Conservative parties, as well as independent candidates, were more likely to provide a fuller range of communications-oriented features on their websites compared to their counterparts in other parties, particularly the LDP and the JCP. Save for SDP candidates, the candidates from these two political parties provided the lowest average number of communications-oriented features on their websites. On the other hand, challenger parties such as the DPJ, Liberal, SDP, and New Liberal Party, independent candidates, and candidates from minor political parties were more likely to include features aimed at establishing and maintaining communications with the electorate.

In terms of party organization, candidates from elite parties such as the LDP and the DPJ appeared to have similar attitudes towards connecting with the public through their websites. Some candidates experimented with surveys and results of surveys, as well as BBSs,

discussion forums, and e-mail newspapers. Slightly higher numbers of DPJ candidates were more likely to provide a cellular-phone based website, and, similar to LDP candidates, none distributed a cellular-phone-based e-mail newsletter.

While it may be expected that candidates from mass parties may include a fuller range of communications-oriented features on their websites, seeing that their support is based on appeal to the public, candidates from the identified mass parties, the JCP and the New Komeito Party, showed some surprising differences in how they used their websites in this regard. Similar to elite party candidates, New Komeito Party candidates were more likely to experiment with online surveys and BBSs or discussion forums. In contrast, only one JCP candidate hosted a BBS or online discussion forum. However, both JCP and New Komeito Party candidates appeared proactive in utilizing cellular-phone-based means of connecting with the public.

Despite the popularity of cellular phones in Japan, particularly among young people, few candidates (10.5% overall) created specific websites for this medium, and even fewer candidates (6 out of a total of 228, or 2.6%) created e-mail newsletters using this medium. Candidates from larger and more established political parties such as the LDP, DPJ, JCP, and New Komeito Party were more likely to incorporate a cellular phone strategy into their campaigns than candidates from smaller political parties. As with the case with e-mail newsletters in general (those generated for fixed-PC use), ambiguity within the POEL regarding this medium and the possibilities of "spam" (unwanted and unsolicited e-mail communications) may have contributed to these low figures.

Table 6.10 Communications features on candidate websites (by party)

	LDP (N=66)	DPJ (N=50)	Liberal (N=18)	JCP (N=21)	SDP (N=18)	New Komeito (N=14)	Cons. (N=3)	New Liberal (N=10)	Ind. (N=22)[2]	Other (N=6)	Total (N=228)
Survey regarding election-related issues	3 (4.5%)	3 (6.0%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	3 (21.4%)	0 (N/A)	1 (10%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	10 (4.4%)
Results of survey	1 (1.5%)	3 (6.0%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	2 (14.3%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	7 (3.1%)
BBS[1] or online discussion forum *	**7 (10.6%)**	**8 (16.0%)**	**7(38.9%)**	**1 (4.8%)**	**4 (22.2%)**	**2 (14.3%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**4 (40%)**	**6(27.3%)**	**3 (50%)**	**42 (18.4%)**
Email address	60 (90.9%)	43 (86.0%)	15(83.3%)	18(85.7%)	14 (77.8%)	10 (71.4%)	3(100%)	9(90%)	22(100%)	5 (83.3%)	199(87.9%)
Requesting comments from the electorate (any means)	8 (12.1%)	9 (18.0%)	4 (22.2%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (5.6%)	2 (14.3%)	1(33.3%)	1 (10%)	7 (31.8%)	1 (16.7%)	37 (16.2%)
Contact information on top page (address/phone/fax)	22 (33.3%)	16 (32.0%)	10(55.6%)	6 (28.6%)	7 (38.9%)	2 (14.3%)	1(33.3%)	5 (50%)	13(59.1%)	4 (66.7%)	86 (37.7%)
Separate 'contact page' or form	13 (19.7%)	15 (30.9%)	2 (11.1%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (5.6%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (N/A)	2 (20%)	2 (9.1%)	0 (N/A)	40 (17.5%)
Email newsletter (PC-based)	7 (10.6%)	9 (18.0%)	2 (11.1%)	4 (19.0%)	0 (N/A)	3 (21.4%)	1(33.3%)	0 (N/A)	3 (13.6%)	2 (33.3%)	31 (13.6)
Cellular-phone based website **	**5 (7.6%)**	**7 (14.0%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**3 (14.3%)**	**1 (5.6%)**	**5 (35.7%)**	**2(66.7%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**1 (4.5%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**24 (10.5%)**
Cellular-phone based email newsletter ***	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**2 (9.5%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**3(21.4%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**1 (4.5%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**6 (2.6%)**
Average number of communications features on candidate websites	1.91	2.26	2.28	1.90	1.56	2.43	2.67	2.20	2.50	2.50	2.11

N/A = Non-applicable

[1] BBS=Bulletin Board Service

[2] Independent candidates running for single-seat constituency seats only

* = sig. P. <0.05; ** = sig. P. <0.01; *** = sig. P. <0.001

Although incumbent candidates included more features on their websites in terms of election-specific information, we see a different situation when looking at the range of communications features in terms of candidate status (Table 6.11). Overall, new candidates on average provided a slightly higher average number of communications features on their websites.

Table 6.11 Communications features on candidate websites (by status)

Feature	Occurrences on candidate websites (N=228)	
	Status	
	Incumbents (N=89)	New candidates (N=139)
Survey regarding election-related issues	6 (6.7%)	4 (2.9%)
Results of survey	4 (4.5%)	3 (2.2%)
BBS[1] or online discussion forum *	**10 (11.2%)**	**32 (23.0%)**
Email address	79 (88.8%)	120 (86.3%)
Requesting comments from the electorate (any means) *	**13 (14.6%)**	**24 (17.3%)**
Contact information on top page (address/phone/fax)	33 (37.1%)	53 (38.1%)
Separate 'contact page' or form	15 (16.9%)	25 (18.0%)
Email newsletter (PC-based)	12 (13.5%)	19 (13.7%)
Cellular-phone based website	8 (9.0%)	16 (11.5%)
Cellular-phone based email newsletter	3 (3.4%)	3 (2.2%)
Average number of communications features	2.06	2.15

[1] BBS=Bulletin Board Service
* = sig. P. <0.05

As shown in Table 6.11, new candidates were particularly more proactive than their incumbent counterparts in their use of BBSs or online discussion forums and requests for feedback or comments from the electorate. This shows that they may be more interested in using the internet to obtain feedback from the electorate regarding their policy or issue positions. Although in percentage terms, incumbent and challenger candidates utilized other communications features on an equal basis, in terms of raw numbers, challenger candidates were more likely to offer their e-mail addresses, put contact information on the top pages of their websites, and have a cellular-phone-based website. This suggests that these candidates may be more proactive about incorporating the internet into their campaign communications strategies in efforts to broaden their support base.

In summary, overall, candidates appeared proactive in utilizing their websites to

encourage communications with the electorate, yet the nature of this communications was decidedly one-way. Although one unique property of the Internet is its possibility for encourage two-way simultaneous communication, less than 20% of candidates provided any type of discussion forum or two-way communication space on their websites. Even fewer candidates used their websites to directly appeal to the public for comments either through their websites or by traditional means of post, telephone, or facsimile. While extensive use of cellular-phone-based means of informing or contacting the public through websites or e-mail newsletters designed specifically for this medium, again, few candidates took advantage of this means to more fully involve the public in their campaigns. Differences in attitudes regarding communication features were also noted among candidates in terms of party affiliation, as it appeared that opposition party candidates such as those from the DPJ, Liberal, New Komeito, and Conservative parties were more likely to include communications-oriented features on their websites compared to LDP candidates. Independent candidates were also more likely to include these features on their websites.

6.6 Party affiliation on websites

Five features were selected for investigating how candidates demonstrated their party affiliation on the top pages of their websites[5]: party logo only; party logo with a link to the main party's website; party name in text[6]; party name and text with a link to the party website; and photograph(s) of the candidate with the party leader or well-known member of the party executive. These five features were calculated separately and exclusively. Table 6.12 shows the frequency of these features on the websites of candidates from both electoral systems.

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[5] In some cases, candidates also included links to party websites (their own and other parties) in a different location on their websites such as a "links" page. For the purposes of this investigation, only links related to party affiliation on the top page of the website were analyzed.
[6] The JCP did not have a logo during this election campaign period. Instead the party used a stylized, distinctive three-color rendering of its initials.

Table 6.12 Party affiliation features on candidate websites (by electoral system)

Feature	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Single-seat constituency candidates (N=141)	Proportional representation candidates (N=87)	Total (N=228)
Party logo	33 (23.4%)	25 (28.7%)	58 (25.4%)
Party logo with link to main party website	22 (15.6%)	16 (18.4%)	38 (16.7%)
Party name in text	30 (21.3%)	25 (28.7%)	55 (24.1%)
Party name in text with link to main party website	15 (10.6%)	7 (8.0%)	22 (9.6%)
Photograph with party leader or executive	21 (14.9%)	13 (14.9%)	34 (14.9%)
Average number of party affiliation features	0.86	0.99	0.91

Overall, the results in Table 6.12 show that fairly low percentages of candidates in either system indicated their party affiliation on their websites through any means. Although it may have been expected that "double candidates" on the single-seat constituency level or proportional representation candidates would emphasize their ties with their affiliated political parties, less than a quarter of all candidates on average included such features on their websites. Despite the ease of attaching a link to the party's website through either text on the top page or the party logo, candidates appeared reluctant to use this means of demonstrating affiliation to their political parties.

Table 6.13 Party affiliation features on candidate websites (by party)

	LDP (N=66)	DPJ (N=50)	Liberal (N=18)	JCP (N=21)	SDP (N=18)	New Komeito (N=14)	Cons. (N=3)	New Liberal (N=10)	Ind. (N=22)	Other (N=6)	Total (N=228)
Party logo ***	14 (21.2%)	20 (40.0%)	10 (55.6%)	2 (9.5%)	7 (38.9%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	3 (30.0%)	1 (4.5%)	1 (16.7%)	58 (25.4%)
Party logo with link to main party website ***	3 (4.5%)	15 (30.0%)	4 (22.2%)	0 (N/A)	4 (22.2%)	2 (14.3%)	2 (66.7%)	3 (30.0%)	2 (9.1%)	3 (50.0%)	38 (16.7%)
Party name in text ***	15 (22.7%)	6 (12.0%)	3 (16.7%)	14 (66.7%)	5 (27.8%)	6 (42.9%)	1 (33.3%)	3 (30.0%)	0 (N/A)	2 (33.3%)	55 (24.1%)
Party name in text with link to main party website **	1 (1.5%)	5 (10.0%)	2 (11.1%)	7 (33.3%)	0 (N/A)	1 (7.1%)	0 (N/A)	3 (30.0%)	2 (9.1%)	1 (16.7%)	22 (9.6%)
Photograph with party leader or executive ***	17 (25.8%)	2 (4.0%)	8 (44.4%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (5.6%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (N/A)	1 (10.0%)	0 (N/A)	1 (16.7%)	34 (14.9%)
Average number of party affiliation features on candidate websites	0.76	0.96	1.50	1.24	0.94	0.71	1.0	1.30	0.23	1.33	0.91

N/A = Non-applicable
*** = sig. P. <0.001

Upon closer examination, however, a breakdown of these features as shown on candidate websites in terms of political party yields significant variations in how candidates of certain political parties used their websites to demonstrate affiliation, as shown in Table 6.13. Candidates from challenger political parties such as the DPJ, the Liberal Party, the SDP, and New Liberal Party were likely to include their party logo on the top pages of their websites. However, among these parties, only the DPJ, Conservative, and the New Liberal Party candidates chose to go one step further and attach a link from this logo to the party's main websites. Perhaps as a demonstration of strong party loyalty, JCP candidates were more likely to include their party's name in text on the top pages of their website as well as a link to the main party website. Comparatively high percentages of candidates who were affiliated with political parties that have well-established leaders, such as the LDP (Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro) and the Liberal Party (Ozawa Ichiro), chose to feature a photograph of themselves with the party leader. This suggests that for these candidates, rather than identifying themselves with a particular political party, they sought to identify with the leader of the party.

Differences in party organization may also explain these findings. As discussed in the previous chapter, candidates or politicians from elite parties tend to have looser ties with their parties than those of mass parties because they are less tightly bound by ideology or support considerations. This has certainly proved the case in Japan with candidates and politicians mainly from the LDP and, to a lesser extent, the DPJ (mainly because the DPJ itself was created by a number of disgruntled former LDP politicians). The fairly low percentages and the low average number of party affiliation features included on the websites of LDP and DPJ candidates suggests that party affiliation may not be particularly important for these candidates.

Conversely, given their strong internal party organization, candidates from mass parties such as the JCP or the New Komeito Party may be expected to provide more features illustrating party affiliation on their websites. Yet it appears from the website feature survey that candidates from these two parties were overall even less likely to include these types of features on their

websites. One potential explanation is that candidates from these two parties may be choosing to downplay their party affiliations, possibly because of the reputations of these two parties—the JCP with its communist ideological bent and the New Komeito Party with its ties to the Buddhist lay organization, the Soka Gakkai.

As suggested earlier, party identification may serve as a means for new candidates in particular to demonstrate an ideological stance to voters. Bimber and Davis (2003) suggest that incumbents may be reluctant to emphasize their party connections, and rather, rely on an image-based strategy. The results of assessing party affiliation features in terms of status, as either incumbents or challengers, bear this out, as shown in Table 6.14.

Table 6.14 Party affiliation features on candidate websites (by status)

| Feature | Occurrences on candidate websites (N=228) | |
| | Position | |
	Incumbents (N=89)	New candidates (N=139)
Party logo	20 (22.5%)	38 (27.3%)
Party logo with link to main party website	14 (15.7%)	24 (17.3%)
Party name in text	20 (22.5%)	35 (25.2%)
Party name in text with link to main party website	6 (6.7%)	16 (11.5%)
Photograph with party leader or executive*	**18 (20.2%)**	**16 (11.5%)**
Average number of party affiliation features	.88	.93

* = sig. P. <0.05

Overall, new candidates were more likely to include party affiliation features on the top pages of their websites. However, incumbent candidates were far more likely to include photographs of themselves with their respective party leaders. This suggests a trend wherein new candidates, possibly because of their inexperience as professional politicians, seek to initially identify with a particular political party. It also suggests a continuation of the trend of "image politics" in Japan wherein certain candidates tend to identify with the image of the party leader.

In summary, in terms of the overall frequency of party affiliation features, it appears that candidates during this particular election pursued a strategy of emphasizing their individual candidatures rather than choosing to identify strongly with their political parties. There were demonstrated differences in the way that candidates chose to indicate their party affiliation on their websites. While almost a quarter of all candidates included at least the party logo or the

party name in text on their websites, a surprisingly few number of candidates went one step further to include links from their websites to those of their affiliated parties. This is surprising, given the relative technical ease with which links can be created. Prior to conducting this survey, it was surmised that candidates from parties with strong internal organizations such as the New Komeito Party or JCP would demonstrate their affiliation with their parties through linking to these parties' websites. While this proved true for JCP candidates, who, on average, included at least 1.24 indications of party affiliation on the top pages of their websites, it was not the case for New Komeito Party candidates, who, among all candidates save for independent candidates, demonstrated the least propensity to include their party's name or logo on the top pages of their websites. On the other hand, the average number of party affiliation features indicated by candidates from parties with relatively looser internal organizational structures, such as the LDP and the DPJ (0.76 and 0.96 features, respectively), was close to the overall average of 0.91 features, with DPJ candidates more likely to feature the party logo on their websites. Candidates from parties with prominent or famous leaders, such as the LDP (Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro) and the Liberal Party (Ozawa Ichiro) were also more likely to use this means of illustrating an association with their party or party leader.

6.7   Issues presentation on candidate websites

In Japan's highly regulated election campaign environment, the web can be an important campaign tool as a means for candidates to provide personal information about themselves. In fact, one of the most attractive merits for using the web for campaigning is that unlimited amounts of information can be presented in an unstructured format, and candidates can include any type of information they wish on their websites. Relatively unhindered in comparison to other campaign media formats such as posters, postcards, or publicly distributed election bulletins, candidates have a great deal of freedom to construct their own personal images in order to differentiate themselves from their opponents. As candidates are unable to

directly obtain advertising through the broadcast or print media, candidates can utilize their websites to provide detailed information about their stances regarding certain issues and personal information, about themselves, as well as demonstrate affiliations with other individuals, groups, and organizations through linking strategies. In this sense, the web serves not as a platform for leveling the playing field among candidates, but rather, as a means of personal image construction and a way to distinguish themselves from other candidates.

In addition to using issue positions as a means of differentiating themselves from other candidates, the selection of issues that candidate choose to address on their websites is also important from the point of view of reflecting concerns of the electorate in general. Are the issues that candidates address on their websites similar to those issues indicated by the public as being important topics? According to a poll conducted by the Association for Promoting Fair Elections concerning the 2001 Upper House election campaign, the top seven issues during this campaign were the economy (54.0%), welfare (43.5%), taxation (25.4%), finance (22.5%), administrative reform (19.3%), and the environment (16.9%), and education (16.5%) (Association for Promoting Fair Elections, 2002). In addition to assessing the overall presence of their opinions and policies concerning certain issues, the website survey examines if the issues addressed by candidates are the same as those indicated by the public as being important.

Table 6.15 shows the results of comparing the placement of issues on candidate websites. Issues such as the environment, education, welfare, the economy, and government administration/finance were the top five issues that were mentioned on the top pages of candidate websites, and these appeared to closely reflect the opinions of the voters according to the Association for the Promotion of Fair Elections survey. In a number of cases, candidates provided links to more detailed information regarding these issues on other sections of their websites, particularly with regard to the first three issues. Candidates also went into detail through specific pages of their websites concerning these issues as well as employment and gender policies. However, the majority of candidates constructed pages that included statements

regarding a combination of issues, here again focusing on issues such as the environment,

education, welfare, the economy, and Japan's employment situation.

Table 6.15 Presentation of issues on candidate websites (by prominence)

Issue [1]	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Top page of website (N=228)	Specific page on website (N=228)	Combination page (with other issues) (N=228)
Environment (6)	13 (5.7%)[2]	55 (24.1%)	61 (26.8%)
Education (7)	13 (5.7%)	63 (27.6%)	76 (33.3%)
Welfare (2)	17 (7.5%)	75 (32.9%)	88 (38.6%)
Economy (1)	10 (4.4%)	34 (14.9%)	60 (26.3%)
Employment	4 (1.8%)	38 (16.7%)	45 (19.7%)
Primary industries	4 (1.8%)	26 (11.4%)	32 (14.0%)
Foreign policy/defence	4 (1.8%)	27 (11.8%)	26 (11.4%)
Gender	5 (2.2%)	31 (13.6%)	38 (16.7%)
Small/medium business	0 (0.0%)	8 (3.5%)	15 (6.6%)
Industry	0 (0.0%)	14 (6.1%)	16 (7.0%)
Community building	7 (3.1%)	27 (11.8%)	32 (14.0%)
IT (information technology)	4 (1.8%)	17 (7.5%)	26 (11.4%)
Administration/finance (5)	12 (5.3%)	25 (11.0%)	42 (18.4%)
Finance/taxation (3) (4)	4 (1.8%)	7 (3.1%)	29 (12.7%)
Local government relations	5 (2.2%)	18 (7.9%)	28 (12.3%)
Youth	4 (1.8%)	8 (3.5%)	9 (3.9%)
Constitution	8 (3.5%)	23 (10.1%)	34 (14.9%)
Disaster policy	3 (1.3%)	5 (2.2%)	8 (3.5%)

[1] Bracketed numbers indicate the relative importance of the issue ranked according to the results of the Association for the Promotion of Fair Elections survey undertaken in 2002.
[2] Shaded cells indicate the top five to seven issues mentioned on websites

In addition to assessing the relative importance given to issues on their websites, the

website survey also sought to discern any patterns among single-seat constituency or

proportional representation candidates in terms of the issues that they addressed on their

websites. As the constituency area for single-seat constituency candidates is primarily the

prefecture itself, it was expected that, in addition to the popular national-level general issues

noted above, these candidates may also provide detailed information concerning specific local

issues such as welfare, primary industries (including agriculture), administration/finance on the

local level, local government relations, and disaster policies. Table 6.16 shows the results of the

survey with regard to issues based on the electoral system. On average, single-seat constituency

candidates were more proactive in addressing the issues on their websites, as they included

information regarding an average of 5.35 issues compared to 3.97 issues for proportional

representation candidates. General issues such as the environment, education, welfare, and the

economy were popular among all candidates, regardless of electoral system. Single-seat

constituency candidates also chose to address issues that may be considered as relating

specifically to their prefecture-based constituencies such as primary industries, community

building, and local government relations. Yet some surprising differences were noted among

candidates of different electoral systems. Single-seat constituency candidates were more likely

to address education policy, the details of which are usually decided on the prefecture level, and

proportional representation candidates were more likely to include their stances regarding youth

policies.

Table 6.16 Presentation of issues on candidate websites (by electoral system)

Issue[1]	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Single-seat constituency candidates (N=141)	Proportional representation candidates (N=87)	Total (N=228)
Environment (6)	65 (46.1%)[2]	40 (46.0%)	105 (46.1%)
Education (7) **	**93 (66.0%)**	**38 (43.7%)**	**131 (57.5%)**
Welfare (2)	97 (68.8%)	49 (56.3%)	146 (64.0%)
Economy (1) *	**64 (45.4%)**	**25 (28.7%)**	**89 (39.0%)**
Employment *	**52 (36.9%)**	**21 (24.1%)**	**73 (32.0%)**
Primary industries **	**45 (31.9%)**	**11 (12.6%)**	**56 (24.6%)**
Foreign policy/defence	29 (20.6%)	17 (19.5%)	46 (20.2%)
Gender	47 (33.3%)	20 (23.0%)	67 (29.4%)
Small/medium business	13 (9.2%)	8 (9.2%)	21 (9.2%)
Industry	18 (12.8%)	9 (10.3%)	27 (11.8%)
Community building **	43 (30.5%)	12 (13.8%)	55 (24.1%)
IT (information technology)	26 (18.4%)	14 (16.1%)	40 (17.5%)
Administration/finance (5)	52 (36.9%)	25 (28.7%)	77 (33.8%)
Finance/taxation (3) (4)	24 (17.0%)	11 (12.6%)	35 (15.4%)
Local government relations **	**36 (25.5%)**	**11 (12.6%)**	**47 (20.6%)**
Youth *	**7 (5.0%)**	**12 (13.8%)**	**19 (8.3%)**
Constitution	35 (24.8%)	17 (19.5%)	52 (22.8%)
Disaster policy	9 (6.4%)	5 (5.7%)	14 (6.1%)
Average number of issues	5.35	3.97	4.82

[1] Bracketed numbers indicate the relative importance of the issue ranked according to the results of the Association for the Promotion of Fair Elections survey undertaken in 2002.
[2] Shaded cells indicate the top five to seven issues mentioned on websites.
* = sig. P. <0.05; ** = sig. P. <0.01

Among candidates of specific political parties, here again, the environment, education,

the economy, and welfare consistently placed among the top five popular issues, and in regards

to the popularity of these issues, no major differences were seen among the candidates (Table

6.17). However, candidates from certain parties did demonstrate differences in how they

approached other issues, for example, based on traditional party support lines. In addition to the

major issues listed above, almost one-third of the LDP candidates chose to address primary industries, including agricultural interests which have been the traditional LDP support base. Roughly the same percentage of JCP and independent candidates also addressed this particular issue.

Opinions regarding certain issues were also split along coalition lines. In terms of average number of issues, candidates from the four main opposition parties, the DPJ, Liberal, JCP, and SDP, as well as independent candidates, appeared to include more information on their websites, compared to candidates from the ruling coalition of the LDP, New Komeito, and Conservative parties. In terms of specific issues, LDP and New Komeito Party candidates were more likely to address local-level issues such as community building. Candidates from these two parties also appeared to address similar issues such as gender, small/medium business, IT (information technology), and finance/taxation. However, they did differ in addressing employment, foreign policy/defence, and youth policies. Relatively high percentages of opposition parties such as the DPJ, SDP, and New Liberal Party, as well as independent candidates, choose to address gender relations and gender-related policies (at least 40% for candidates of each party), perhaps again in a bid to appeal to women voters. Administration/finance policies were also targeted policies mainly by opposition parties, as large numbers of LDP and SDP candidates appeared to avoid mentioning these issues on their websites. Candidate opinions and policies regarding the constitution, which is a particularly contentious issue among political parties, also demonstrated certain differences along party lines. JCP and independent candidates were much more likely to address this issue (38.1% and 45.5%, respectively) than candidates of other political parties, regardless of coalition membership.

Table 6.17 Issues on candidate websites (by party)

Issue[1]	LDP (N=66)	DPJ (N=50)	Liberal (N=18)	JCP (N=21)	SDP (N=18)	New Komeito (N=14)	Cons. (N=3)	New Liberal (N=10)	Ind. (N=22)	Other (N=6)	Total (N=228)
Environment (6)	30 (45.5%)[2]	22 (44.0%)	10 (55.6%)	7 (33.3%)	11 (61.1%)	7 (50.0%)	0 (N/A)	**3 (30.0%)**	13 (59.1%)	2 (33.3%)	105 (46.1%)
Education (7)	35 (53.0%)	32 (64.0%)	14 (77.8%)	8 (38.1%)	8 (44.4%)	10 (71.4%)	2 (66.7%)	**4 (40.0%)**	15 (68.2%)	3 (50.0%)	131 (57.5%)
Welfare (2)	44 (66.7%)	32 (64.0%)	11 (61.1%)	11 (52.4%)	12 (66.7%)	11 (78.6%)	1 (33.3%)	**8 (80.0%)**	13 (59.1%)	3 (50.0%)	146 (64.0%)
Economy (1)	27 (40.9%)	17 (34.0%)	12 (66.7%)	8 (38.1%)	7 (38.9%)	3 (21.4%)	2 (66.7%)	**3 (30.0%)**	9 (40.9%)	1 (16.7%)	89 (39.0%)
Employment *	**10 (15.2%)**	**22 (44.0%)**	**8 (44.4%)**	**9 (42.9%)**	**7 (38.9%)**	**7 (50.0%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**2 (20.0%)**	**5 (22.7%)**	**3 (50.0%)**	**73 (32.0%)**
Primary industries	20 (30.3%)	9 (18.0%)	4 (22.2%)	6 (28.6%)	5 (27.8%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (N/A)	1 (10.0%)	8 (36.4%)	1 (16.7%)	56 (24.6%)
Foreign policy/defence	9 (13.6%)	12 (24.0%)	6 (33.3%)	6 (28.6%)	1 (5.6%)	5 (35.7%)	0 (N/A)	2 (20.0%)	4 (18.2%)	1 (16.7%)	46 (20.2%)
Gender	15 (22.7%)	20 (40.0%)	5 (27.8%)	3 (14.3%)	6 (33.3%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (N/A)	4 (40.0%)	9 (40.9%)	2 (33.3%)	67 (29.4%)
Small/medium business	4 (6.1%)	3 (6.0%)	2 (11.1%)	4 (19.0%)	3 (16.7%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (N/A)	2 (20.0%)	2 (9.1%)	0 (N/A)	21 (9.2%)
Industry	11 (16.7%)	7 (14.0%)	2 (11.1%0	1 (4.8%)	1 (5.6%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (N/A)	1 (10.0%)	3 (13.6%)	0 (N/A)	27 (11.8%)
Community building	17 (25.8%)	10 (20.0%)	4 (22.2%)	7 (33.3%)	5 (27.8%)	5 (35.7%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	6 (27.3%)	1 (16.7%)	55 (24.1%)
IT (information technology)	12 (18.2%)	12 (24.0%)	6 (33.3%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (5.6%)	3 (21.4%)1	1 (33.3%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (9.1%)	1 (16.7%)	40 (17.5%)
Administration/finance (5) *	**14 (21.2%)**	**22 (44.0%)**	**6 (33.3%)**	**5 (23.8%)**	**3 (16.7%)**	**5 (35.7%)**	**2 (66.7%)**	**6 (60.0%)**	**11 (50.0%)**	**3 (50.0%)**	**77 (33.8%)**
Finance/taxation (3) (4) *	**4 (6.1%)**	**6 (12.0%)**	**7 (38.9%)**	**9 (42.9%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**1 (7.1%)**	**1 (33.3%)**	3 (30.0%)	**3 (13.6%)**	**1 (16.7%)**	**35 (15.4%)**
Local government relations *	**9 (13.6%)**	**19 (38.0%)**	**8 (44.4%)**	**1 (4.8%)**	**3 (16.7%)**	**1 (7.1%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**6 (27.3%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**47 (20.6%)**
Youth *	**5 (7.6%)**	**3 (6.0%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**4 (19.0%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**4 (28.6%)**	**1 (33.3%)**	**1 (10.0%)**	**1 (4.5%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**19 (8.3%)**
Constitution *	**3 (4.5%)**	**12(24.0%)**	**2 (11.1%)**	**8 (38.1%)**	**11(61.1%)**	**1 (7.1%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**2(20.0%)**	**10(45.5%)**	**3 (50.0%)**	**52 (22.8%)**
Disaster policy *	**7 (10.6%)**	**1 (2.0%)**	**1 (5.6%)**	**1 (4.8%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**4 (28.6%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**14 (6.1%)**
Average number of issues	4.18	5.22	6.0	4.71	4.67	5.29	3.33	4.30	5.45	4.17	4.82

[1] Bracketed numbers indicate the relative importance of the issue ranked according to the results of the Association for the Promotion of Fair Elections survey undertaken in 2002.

[2] Shaded cells indicate the top five to seven issues mentioned on websites.

N/A = Non-applicable

* = sig. P. <0.05; ** = sig. P. <0.01; *** = sig. P. <0.001

Finally, an examination of the issues raised on candidate websites in terms of status demonstrated little difference among candidates in terms of the five most popular issues of the environment, education, welfare, the economy, and employment. However, as shown in Table 6.18, incumbent candidates were more likely to address a wider range of issues overall compared to new candidates. Due perhaps to experience or understanding of local communities, incumbents also addressed issues that pertained to their constituencies such as primary industries, industry in general, and disaster policy.

Table 6.18 Issues on candidate websites (by status)

Issue[1]	Occurrences on candidate websites (N=228)	
	Status	
	Incumbents (N=89)	New candidates (N=139)
Environment (6) *	**50 (56.2%)**	**55 (39.6%)**
Education (7)	50 (56.2%)	81 (58.3%)
Welfare (2)	60 (67.4%)	86 (61.9%)
Economy (1)	36 (40.4%)	53 (38.1%)
Employment	27 (30.3%)	46 (33.1%)
Primary industries	25 (28.1%)	31 (22.3%)
Foreign policy/defence	16 (18.0%)	30 (21.6%)
Gender	27 (30.3%)	40 (28.8%)
Small/medium business	8 (9.0%)	13 (9.4%)
Industry	14 (15.7%)	13 (9.4%)
Community building *	**15 (16.9%)**	**40 (28.8%)**
IT (information technology)	15 (16.9%)	25 (18.0%)
Administration/finance (5)	31 (34.8%)	46 (33.1%)
Finance/taxation (3) (4)*	**8 (9.0%)**	**27 (19.4%)**
Local government relations	19 (21.3%)	28 (20.1%)
Youth	7 (7.9%)	12 (8.6%)
Constitution	18 (20.2%)	34 (24.5%)
Disaster policy *	**9 (10.1%)**	**5 (3.6%)**
Average number of issues	4.89	4.78

[1] Bracketed numbers indicate the relative importance of the issue ranked according to the results of the Association for the Promotion of Fair Elections survey undertaken in 2002
[2] Shaded cells indicate the top five issues mentioned on websites
* = sig. P. <0.05

However, despite the focus by incumbent candidates on issues relating to their immediate constituencies, new candidates were significantly more proactive in addressing the issue of community building (16.9% for incumbent candidates versus 28.8% for new candidates). New candidates as well were more likely to discuss finance and taxation issues as well as their opinions regarding amendments to Japan's constitution.

In summary, it is clear that candidates in this election were proactive in utilizing their

websites to convey their positions on a range of issues. Fairly high percentages of candidates overall included at least some information regarding various issues on their websites either on specific pages of their websites or on combination pages. Issue presentation in terms of party lines demonstrated some difference among candidates of different parties. While almost all candidates chose to address certain safe (and popular) issues such as the environment, education, welfare, and the economy, opposition party candidates and independent candidates appeared more proactive than candidates from the ruling coalition to address potentially contentious issues such as the constitution, administration, finance, and taxation. Overall, the range of issues addressed on candidate websites reflected those identified by the public as being important during this particular election campaign period.

6.8   General personal information features

In addition to using their websites to provide information regarding their personal opinions and policies regarding a range of issues, candidates can also use their websites to detailed information regarding themselves and their activities. Along with other information, candidates can use their websites as a means of image construction by including photographs of themselves, characterizing themselves through illustrations, and including photographs of their involvement in various personal and professional activities. They may also choose to include reports and photographs of recent news in both personal and professional contexts.

For the purpose of this investigation, general personal information features on candidate websites includes six items: photographs and illustrations on the top pages of candidate websites; candidate profile, event photographs, recent news, and newspaper articles or press releases. Photographs or illustrations could be a single photograph of the candidate, the candidate with a group of people, or a characterization of the candidate. Candidate profiles were defined as any type of resume or listing of the details of the candidate's life, such as education, employment, family members, hobbies, and other personal details. Event photographs included

any type of photo album or specific section of the website devoted to graphically chronicling the candidate's personal or professional life. A clear distinction was made between campaign-related events—deemed to be politically related or campaign-related events—and recent new. Recent news items were defined as information pertaining to recent events in the candidate's personal life (for example, concerning family members, interests, or hobbies). And finally, candidate websites were evaluated in terms of whether candidates reproduced or included newspaper articles or press releases on their websites, either about themselves and their candidacies or written by themselves.

Some candidates took interesting approaches to including personal information in the form of photographs or illustrations on their websites (Figure 6.4). Miura Issui, an incumbent LDP candidate running in Kumamoto prefecture, included nine photographs of himself on his website, arranged in a traditional "whack-a-mole" game (*mogura tataki gemu*) style, with six of the illustrations containing links to other sections of the website such as his personal profile, activity report, and his positions concerning certain issues. Yamazaki Tsutomu, another LDP incumbent running in Aomori prefecture, stylized his website as "Yamachaneru" and included four illustrations of himself on the top page with links to other sections of the website such as his profile (the baby illustration on the bottom left) and his activities in his prefecture (the apple-polishing illustration second to the bottom right).

Figure 6.1 Screenshots of the top pages of candidate websites

Candidate: Miura Issui   Candidate: Yamazaki Tsutomu

Certain candidates also provided a great deal of information regarding recent events, including

photographs, on their websites (Figure 6.5). Muneta Hiroyuki, vice-chair of the JCP policy

committee running in Kanagawa prefecture, included details and photographs of recent news

and activities that he performed during the year prior to the election. Viewers could click on the

links to open a page devoted to a specific event. Other candidates posted copies of newspaper

articles or press releases on their websites. Former television reporter and councilor for Tokyo's

Meguro Ward, Sudo Jinichiro, a DPJ candidate running in the proportional representation

system, copied articles about his activities directly from newspapers and posted them on his

website.

Figure 6.2 Screenshots of the recent news page and newspaper article page of candidate
websites
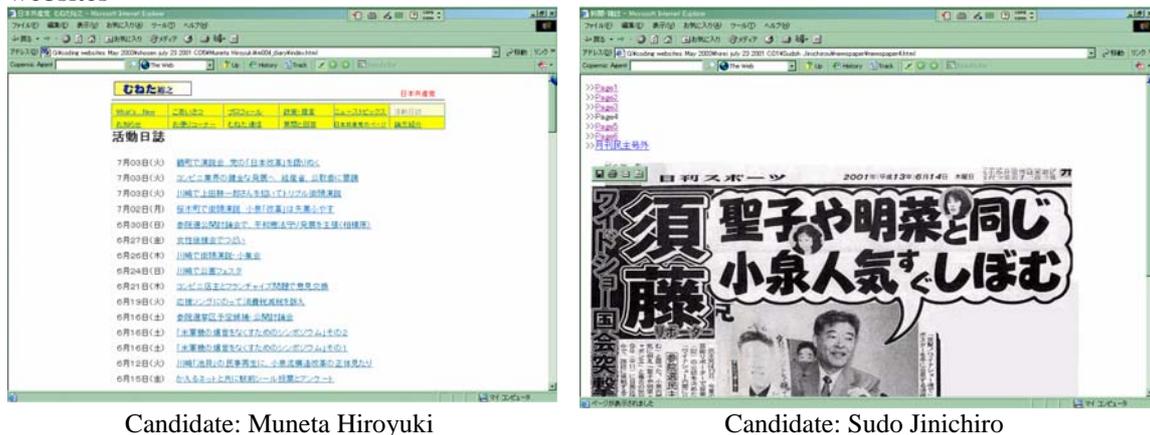
| Candidate: Muneta Hiroyuki | Candidate: Sudo Jinichiro |

Table 6.19 shows the breakdown of personal information features found on candidate

websites by electoral system. Over 80% of all candidates included a photograph of themselves

on the top pages of their websites as well as profiles dealing their personal histories. However,

fewer than 20% of candidates used illustrations of themselves on their websites or posted

newspaper articles or press releases. On average, proportional representation candidates

included a higher number of personal information features than their single-seat constituency

counterparts, which could be explained by the fact that they were running in larger electoral

constituencies and therefore could not as easily benefit from name recognition on the prefecture

level. That over 70% of all candidates included at least three of these six features on their

websites suggests that candidates recognized that their websites could serve as an effective

means for relaying this type of information to the electorate. Two LDP proportional

representation candidates, Kondo Takeshi and Takemi Keizo, even included all six features on

their websites.

Table 6.19 Personal information features on candidate websites (by electoral system)

Feature	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Single-seat constituency candidates (N=141)	Proportional representation candidates (N=87)	Total (N=228)
Individual photograph	118 (87.3%)	74 (85.1%)	192 (84.2%)
Individual illustration	22 (15.6%)	10 (11.5%)	32 (14.0%)
Profile	132 (93.6%)	85 (97.7%)	217 (95.2%)
Event photographs	95 (67.4%)	57 (65.5%)	152 (66.7%)
Recent news **	**40 (28.4%)**	**40 (46.0%)**	**80 (35.1%)**
Newspaper articles/press releases	21 (14.9%)	20 (23.0%)	41 (18.0%)
Average number of personal information features	3.04	3.29	3.13

** = sig. P. <0.01

Further evidence of the prevalence of candidates' utilizing their websites as a means of

conveying personally oriented information is shown when comparing personal information

features in terms of political party (Table 6.20). Candidates from challenging parties such as the

DPJ and the New Komeito Party, as well as candidates from smaller political parties, included

the highest average percentage of personal information features on their websites. High

percentages of candidates from these parties included their photographs, recent news features,

and copies or texts of newspaper articles or press releases on their websites. This suggests that

these candidates sought to use their websites as an alternative to traditional mass media channels.

Candidates from the other major political parties, particularly the Liberal JCP, SDP, and New

Liberal parties appeared less likely to include personal information features on their websites.

Table 6.20 Personal information features on candidate websites (by party)

	LDP (N=66)	DPJ (N=50)	Liberal (N=18)	JCP (N=21)	SDP (N=18)	New Komeito (N=14)	Cons. (N=3)	New Liberal (N=10)	Ind. (N=22)	Other (N=6)	Total (N=228)
Individual photograph	52 (78.8%)	48 (96.0%)	13 (72.2%)	16 (76.2%)	14 (77.8%)	13 (92.9%)	3 (100%)	9 (90.0%)	19 (86.4%)	5 (83.3%)	192 (84.2%)
Individual illustration	9 (13.6%)	9 (18.0%)	2 (11.1%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (11.1%)	1 (7.1%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (9.1%)	2 (33.3%)	32 (14.0%)
Profile	64 (97.0%)	47 (94.0%)	18 (100%)	19 (90.5%)	17 (94.4%)	13 (92.9%)	3 (100%)	9 (90.0%)	21 (95.5%)	6 (100%)	217 (95.2%)
Event photographs	51 (77.3%)	36 (72.0%)	10 (55.6%)	10 (47.6%)	11 (61.1%)	10 (71.4%)	3 (100%)	5 (50.0%)	12 (54.5%)	4 (66.7%)	152 (66.7%)
Recent news	22 (33.3%)	22 (44.0%)	4 (22.2%)	5 (23.8%)	5 (27.8%)	9 (64.3%)	0 N/A	3 (30.0%)	8 (36.4%)	2 (33.3%0	80 (35.1%)
Newspaper articles/press releases	11 (16.7%)	13 (26.0%)	4 (22.2%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (11.1%)	3 (21.4%)	0 N/A	1 (10.0%)	2 (9.1%)	2 (33.3%)	41 (18.0%)
Average number of personal information features	3.17	3.50	2.83	2.67	2.83	3.50	3.33	2.80	2.91	3.50	3.13

N/A = Non-applicable

Finally, in terms of assessing the occurrence of personal information features on candidate websites in terms of candidate status, here again, few differences were noted among incumbent or new candidates. Incumbents were more likely to include event photographs on their websites, as well as provide "recent news" items, the former to a significant degree. The difference suggests that incumbents with experience in running in election campaigns valued these features as a means of demonstrating their eagerness for campaigning and publicizing their event schedules. However, on the other hand, new candidates were more likely to post newspaper articles or press releases on their websites, implying that these candidates used their websites as a potential means of legitimizing their campaigns by indicating cross-references to other media channels.

Table 6.21 Personal information features on candidate websites (by status)

Feature	Occurrences on candidate websites (N=228) Status	
	Incumbents (N=89)	New candidates (N=139)
Individual photograph	76 (85.4%)	116 (83.5%)
Individual illustration	13 (14.6%)	19 (13.7%)
Profile	85 (95.5%)	132 (95.0%)
Event photographs *	**67 (75.3%)**	**85 (61.2%)**
Recent news	38 (42.7%)	42 (30.2%)
Newspaper articles/press releases	11 (12.4%)	30 (21.6%)
Average number of personal information features	3.26	3.05

* = sig. P. <0.05

In summary, among the various uses of candidates websites investigated thus far, the analysis of the inclusion of personal information features on candidates showed the least number of differences among candidates in terms of electoral system, party affiliation, and status. The consistent use of personal information such as individual photographs, personal profiles, event photographs, and, to a lesser extent, recent news, suggests that these features are becoming standard information items to include on candidate websites.

6.9   Links

The final category of features analyzed in the comparison of candidate websites is linking strategies. As discussed in Chapter 3, unlike other features that have been examined thus

far, hypertext links are a unique property of the web. Loosely defined as references to other documents on the web, the availability of links on a website can transform individual websites into a network, illustrating relationships among websites and, by extension, by the owners of those websites.

The inclusion of links on candidate websites has certain merits and demerits. By including links to the websites of specific individuals or organizations, candidates can demonstrate their affiliation or approval of such individuals or organizations. In addition, such links provide viewers with the opportunity to easily access these websites. However, links to other websites also may potentially draw viewers away from the candidate's main website, which may explain why none of the candidate websites assessed in this investigation linked to the websites of their opponents. And, while examining the linking strategies on candidate websites may provide information regarding candidates' affiliations, it should be remembered that not all organizations or individuals with which the candidate is affiliated have websites. Thus, although assessing linking strategies gives some indication of the candidate's personal network, it cannot provide a complete mapping of all the associations or affiliations of a particular candidate.

For the purposes of this investigation, ten different link types were identified: Foreign governments, national government bodies, local governments, political parties, individual politicians, mass media, other individuals and citizen groups, government-related election websites, internet-specific election-related websites, and other link types. As set out in the methodology chapter, foreign government links are links to foreign governments outside Japan. The term "national government bodies" was used to describe national-level government agencies, ministries, and institutions such as the Upper and Lower Houses of the Diet, the Prime Minister's Office, any national-level ministry such as the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, or finally, any agency such as the Board of Audit. Links to local governments were defined as links to the website of any prefecture, city, or village throughout

Japan, not necessarily the candidate's own prefecture (although it was found that no candidates linked to prefectures other than their own).

Links to political parties and individual politicians are self-explanatory terms. In the pre-investigation stage of this research, prior to constructing the coding scheme for the websites, it was noted that almost no candidates or politicians included links to parties other than their own or to politician/candidates from other parties. Links to mass media is defined as linking to the websites of television stations, newspapers, radio stations, or any other mass media organization. Candidates' linking practices to other individuals (non-politicians) and citizens groups such as NGOs and NPOs were also assessed for this investigation, as well as a very broad category of "other link types". This broad category was used as a catchall category for link types not defined elsewhere and could include links to alumni associations or universities that the candidates attended.

While the above link categories describe associations or affiliations that the candidate could have both on- and offline, two other "internet-specific" categories of links were also investigated: links to government-related election websites and internet-specific election websites. The category "government-related election websites" was included to assess if candidates were providing political education or voting education by linking to government-sponsored websites that promoted the election such as the Association for Promoting Fair Elections (*Akarui senkyo*, www.akaruisenkyo.or.jp), a quasi-government body on the national level that aims at promoting participation in elections or any of its affiliates (local election management boards) at the prefecture or municipal level. Links on candidate websites were also assessed in terms of whether or not candidates provided links to "internet-specific election websites", loosely defined as any type of election-related website that existed only on the web without a corresponding offline presence. This category included the discussion boards available through portal sites such as Yahoo! Chat or Yahoo! News (Japanese versions) or individually run websites promoting the election such as *Senkyo de go* (Let's go to the Election,

homepage3.nifty.com/makepeace).

As a final note before examining the results of looking at linking strategies, it should be noted that only links on specific "links" pages of the candidates' website were examined in this section. Links on the top page of the site (for example, to political parties) or on other pages of the website were not assessed for this investigation. Over half of the candidates (56.1% or 128 candidates) included a specific links page on their websites.

Table 6.22 shows the overall popularity of certain link destinations as well as the results of comparing linking practices between single-seat constituency candidates and proportional representation candidates.

Table 6.22 Links on candidate websites (by electoral system)

Link type	Overall occurrences on candidate websites		
	Single-seat constituency candidates (N=141)	Proportional representation candidates (N=87)	Total (N=228)
Foreign governments	0 (N/A)	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.4%)
National government bodies	44 (31.2%)	23 (26.4%)	67 (29.4%)
Local governments **	**30 (21.3%)**	**4 (4.6%)**	**34 (14.9%)**
Political parties	75 (53.2%)	40 (46.0%)	115 (50.4%)
Individual politicians	42 (29.8%)	25 (28.7%)	67 (29.4%)
Mass media	10 (7.1%)	5 (5.7%)	15 (6.6%)
Other individuals and citizen groups	29 (20.6%)	25 (28.7%)	54 (23.7%)
Government-related election websites	5 (3.5%)	1 (1.1%)	6 (2.6%)
Internet-specific election-related websites	5 (3.5%)	2 (2.3%)	7 (3.1%)
Other link types	27 (19.1%)	16 (18.4%)	43 (18.9%)

N/A = non-applicable
** = sig. P. <0.01

Overall, the most popular linking destinations on candidate websites were to organizations or individuals that were directly concerned with politics, such as political parties (50.4%, the highest percentage on average overall) or to individual politicians (29.4%). The fact that proportional representation candidates were somewhat less likely to link to their own political parties is a rather surprising revelation, given the fact that voters could choose to write either their preferred candidate's name or his/her political party on their ballots. Relatively high percentages of candidates also chose to link to established administrative organizations,

including national and local government bodies. As perhaps expected, however, given the local nature of their election campaigns, single-seat constituency candidates were more likely to link to various websites directly concerned with their own prefecture such as the main prefectural website or municipally run websites to a significant degree. Links to other individuals and citizens groups were also fairly popular (23.7%).

Examining the unpopular link destinations is also revealing. Few candidates chose to link to mass media organizations, government-related election websites, or web-based election-related websites. The lack of links to mass media-related websites suggests that candidates may not have wanted viewers to view information regarding other candidates or coverage of the election itself, and instead wanted to focus the viewers' attention specifically on their own candidacies.

Table 6.23 illustrates the breakdown of candidate linking strategies in terms of political parties. Here, differences were noted in linking strategies in terms of party organization, party size, and current membership as either part of the ruling coalition or as opposition parties, as well as among candidates of different political parties. Candidates of elite political parties such as the LDP and the DPJ included a number of links to national government bodies, political parties, and candidates, perhaps demonstrating or reinforcing their connections with these political and administration organizations in the minds of the voters. LDP candidates, among candidates of all political parties, were more likely to include links to local government bodies, possibly demonstrating their strong affiliation with their traditional local support base. However, DPJ candidates were more likely to demonstrate political ties through their links, with high percentages linking to political parties (66.0%) and individual politicians (42.0%). Candidates from mass political parties such as the JCP and the New Komeito Party, appeared to have broader linking strategies that included other individuals and citizen groups. Both the JCP and the New Komeito Party candidates demonstrated high percentages of links to national government bodies, political parties, and individual politicians, yet JCP candidates were more

likely to link to local governments, and New Komeito Party candidates to other individuals and citizens groups. This suggests that candidates of these two political parties sought to use their websites to demonstrate and potentially broaden their support bases.

A definite difference was noted in linking strategies between candidates of large, established political parties (parties with the high numbers of seats in the current Diet) and small political parties. The results of the survey show that candidates from the LDP and the DPJ, the parties with the highest numbers of Diet seats appear to demonstrate more affiliations overall, particularly with local governments, political parties, and individual politicians, than candidates from smaller political parties such as the Liberal, JCP, SDP, and New Komeito Party, as well as minor parties without Diet seats. Candidates from the New Komeito Party and very minor parties in particular included the highest percentage of links to the websites of other individuals and citizens groups.

Table 6.23 Links on candidate websites (by political party)

Link type	LDP (N=66)	DPJ (N=50)	Liberal (N=18)	JCP (N=21)	SDP (N=18)	New Komeito (N=14)	Cons. (N=3)	New Liberal (N=10)	Ind. (N=22)	Other (N=6)	Total (N=228)
Foreign governments	0 (N/A)	1 (2.0%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	1 (0.4%)
National government bodies	26 (39.4%)	16 (32.0%)	4 (22.2%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (16.7%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (9.1%)	2 (33.3%)	67 (29.4%)
Local governments *	**19 (28.8%)**	**7 (14.0%)**	**2 (11.1%)**	**5 (23.8%)**	**1 (5.6%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**34 (14.9%)**
Political parties *	**33 (50.0%)**	**33 (66.0%)**	**8 (44.4%)**	**14 (66.7%)**	**8 (44.4%)**	**9 (64.3%)**	**1 (33.3%)**	**2 (20.0%)**	**4 (18.2%)**	**3 (50.0%)**	**115 (50.4%)**
Individual politicians *	**12 (18.2%)**	**21 (42.0%)**	**7 (38.9%)**	**8 (38.1%)**	**4 (22.2%)**	**6 (42.9%)**	**2 (66.7%)**	**1 (10.0%)**	**3 (13.6%)**	**3 (50.0%)**	**67 (29.4%)**
Mass media	4 (6.1%)	1 (2.0%)	1 (5.6%)	2 (9.5%)	3 (16.7%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	2 (9.1%)	2 (33.3%)	15 (6.6%)
Other individuals and citizen groups	11 (16.7%)	14 (28.0%)	3 (16.7%)	4 (19.0%)	6 (33.3%)	6 (42.9%)	0 (N/A)	3 (30.0%)	4 (18.2%)	3 (50.0%)	54 (23.7%)
Government-related election websites *	**0 (N/A)**	**1 (2.0%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**3 (14.3%)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**0 (N/A)**	**1 (4.5%)**	**1 (16.7%)**	**6 (2.6%)**
Internet-specific election-related websites	1 (1.5%)	1 (2.0%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (N/A)	0 (N/A)	1 (7.1%)	0 (N/A)	1 (10.0%)	2 (9.1%)	0 (N/A)	7 (3.1%)
Other link types	11 (16.7%)	10 (20.0%)	3 (16.7%)	4 (19.0%)	2 (11.1%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (N/A)	1 (10.0%)	8 (36.4%)	1 (16.7%)	43 (18.9%)

N/A = Non-applicable

* = sig. P. <0.05

Finally, in turning to an examination of linking strategies in terms of candidate status, the results show that incumbents were significantly more likely to link to national government bodies than new candidates (Table 6.24). This implies that candidates may be using their current affiliation with national government bodies, such as the Upper or Lower House or Prime Minister's Office, as a means of electoral strategy, reinforcing their incumbent status in the minds of the voters.

Table 6.24 Links on candidate websites (by status)

Link type	Position	
	Incumbents (N=89)	New candidates (N=139)
Foreign governments	0 (N/A)	1 (0.7%)
National government bodies***	**40 (44.9%)**	**27 (19.4%)**
Local governments	18 (20.2%)	16 (11.5%)
Political parties	51 (57.3%)	64 (46.0%)
Individual politicians	24 (27.0%)	43 (30.9%)
Mass media	5 (5.6%)	10 (7.2%)
Other individuals and citizen groups	18 (20.2%)	36 (25.9%)
Government-related election websites	2 (2.2%)	4 (2.9%)
Internet-specific election-related websites	3 (3.4%)	4 (2.9%)
Other link types	21 (23.6%)	22 (15.8%)

N/A = Non-applicable
*** = sig. P. <0.001

Incumbents were also more likely to include links to local governments and political parties as well, again perhaps in a bid to reinforce their status to the electorate. New candidates, perhaps by the very fact that they were in the beginning stages of their political careers, included more links to individual politicians and other individuals and citizen groups.

In summary, this analysis of candidate linking strategies shows certain trends in how candidates are demonstrating their affiliations through their websites. Most candidates overall are linking to politically or administratively related websites, which suggests a strategy of reinforcing their connections in the minds of the electorate, rather than appealing to a broader based public. The lack of links to web-based information, either that provided by the government or internet-specific websites, also may also imply that candidates are using their websites more as a means of demonstrating personal or organization affiliation rather than

mobilization or political education.

6.11   Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to assess how Japanese political candidates are actually utilizing their websites in a nation-level election campaign by focusing on candidate websites established during the 2001 Upper House election campaign period. In addition to assessing the overall online presence of candidates with regard the actual number of candidates online, website utilization by candidates was also assessed in terms of their party affiliation and incumbency status. Delving more deeply into the actual contents of the websites themselves and how candidates utilized the internet as a campaign tool, this chapter examined six sets of website features: what kind of information they are providing on their websites regarding the election, the communications capabilities available for interacting with the public, the issues that are taken up, as well as party affiliation features, personal information features and linking strategies.

The assessment of candidate use of the web demonstrates four major trends in the campaign use of websites by political candidates. The first major trend identified is that the web is becoming a standard tool in political campaigns, which is shown by the increase in the number of candidates fielding websites during this election campaign period when compared with similar figures in the 2000 Lower House election campaign period. The 2001 Upper House election campaign period marked the first time that the number of candidates establishing websites reached over 50%. Yet although figures for candidate establishment of websites almost doubled from the previous national election campaign period, the breakdown of the number of candidates by political party reveals that candidate use of the web has mainly been taken up by those candidates of major parties or established minor parties such as the LDP, DPJ, the Liberal Party, SDP, and New Komeito Party. Candidate use of the web by those candidates from minor parties such as the New Liberal Party, the Women's Party, and Liberal Union Party, as well as

independent candidates, remained under the 50% mark, which contradicts the conventional thinking of the web as a means of "leveling the playing field" among major-party and minor-party or independent candidates. These trends in Japan are similar to those identified in the U.S. in the late 1990s (refer to Chapter 2).

The second notable trend seen in candidate websites during this election campaign period is the provision of election-related information in a "top-down" manner from the candidates to the electorate, and relatively few opportunities for the electorate to engage in two-way communications with the candidates. As shown in Table 6.9, while high percentages of candidates posted their e-mail addresses on their websites as well as contact information, the vast majority of candidates were not taking full advantage of the interactive capabilities of the internet to engage in online discussions and neither were they using their websites to actively solicit comments or invite interaction with the public. Furthermore, despite the prevalence of cellular phone utilization in Japan, few candidates chose to develop cellular-phone-based versions of their websites that could be used as a cross-media application to engage the electorate.

Third, candidates appeared to be polarized in terms of party as to what kinds of issues they addressed on their websites. Most candidates – particularly those from major political parties – tended to address relatively safe, mainstream issues such as the environment, education, welfare, the economy, and employment. However, candidates from minor parties such as the JCP and independent candidates appeared more likely to take up contentious issues such as administration/finance, local government relations, youth policies, and the constitution on their websites. These differences in the type of issues addressed suggests that mainstream candidates are "playing it safe" on the internet and are not using it as a platform to address a wide range of social issues facing Japan.

The final trend noted on candidate websites is the use of their sites as a means of building their personal image. There were very few differences among candidates regardless of

political party or incumbency with regard to including personal information features on their websites, however there were differences with regard to party affiliation features. LDP candidates were less likely to include party affiliation features such as the party logo or the party name in text on their websites, but rather, save for Liberal Party candidates, the candidates from the LDP were the most likely to include a photograph of themselves with the party leader (at the time, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro) on their websites. This suggests an overall campaign style pursued by these candidates as one of identifying with the party leader (and perhaps his popularity) rather than identifying with their party. In this regard, the campaign style mirrors the internal organization of the LDP as a party of individual politicians who are not particularly linked by ideology or policy. By contrast, DPJ, Liberal Party, New Komeito Party, and particularly JCP candidates were more likely to include party affiliations such as logos or the party name in text on their websites, suggesting that these candidates identify more strongly with their party and are using that identification as part of their campaigning strategy.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

Through this comparative analysis of political party websites in the 2000 and 2001 Lower and Upper House elections, as well as candidate websites in the 2001 Upper House election, this dissertation has advanced our understanding of the relationship between the internet and political activities, particularly how websites have been used for political advertising campaign purposes in Japan's heavily regulated political media environment. The perspective taken within this dissertation is not that the internet affects electoral outcomes or changes politics. Rather, the historical examination of Japan's POEL (Public Offices Election Law) and how it has been applied to the contents of political party and candidate websites since the mid-1990s shows that there actually has been a continuation of election campaign practices and regulations that were in place well before the advent of the internet. In addition, the analysis of the content of political party websites during these two election cycles from the perspectives of party organization and ideology demonstrates that trends in party relationships with the electorate are being maintained through websites. As such, this dissertation advances our knowledge of the internet, not as a separate "virtual" or idealized public sphere, but actually as a mirror image of "offline" political activities.

The within study was introduced in the first chapter by addressing critical assumptions concerning the use of the internet for political campaign purposes. For a number of years, research concerning the campaign use of the internet has focused on its utilization in countries where there are few or no regulations concerning campaign media use. And, the internet has been heralded as a potentially powerful resource in the hands of disadvantaged or non-mainstream political actors. A third critical assumption is that little attention has been paid to the campaign use of the internet over a period of time, which is necessary to assess its utilization as a political media channel in the long term. Three sets of guiding research questions were posed, focusing first on examining how campaign regulations in the form of the POEL, originally aimed at other media channels, have been applied to the use of websites as political campaign media during the past decade. The second set of research questions focused on the goals that political parties have for using websites and how these goals are related to party organizational characteristics, party ideology, and size. The final set of research questions delved more deeply into how political candidates are utilizing websites not only in terms of

providing election-related information and communicating with the electorate but also in terms of addressing issues, showing party affiliation, and demonstrating organizational affiliations through linking strategies.

The second chapter provides an overview of previous research concerning the internet and politics. It was shown that early idealism regarding the use of the internet as a tool for promoting democracy through public participation and deliberation has established a theoretical benchmark for assessing how political actors approached the medium in the early and mid-1990s. However, with the rapid expansion of the medium, and empirical studies concerning how political parties and candidates were actually using the internet during election campaign periods, early optimism gave way to more realistic evaluations of the Internet. Rather than a panacea for ailing democracies, it was postulated that "politics as usual" prevailed, as parties and candidates grew more sophisticated in manipulating the medium and crafting their political message through the web (Margolis and Resnick, 2000). In continuing to strive to discern the linkage between the use of the internet and political activities, researches then turned to country-level analyses of the use of the internet in various political milieux. Instead of focusing on the "internet-politics" relationship, these studies suggested that a combination of difficult-to-define "political culture" elements and internet diffusion factors may affect how political actors approach the political use of the medium (Ho, et al., 2003).

In order to explore these factors further, the third chapter outlined the methodological approach that was used in this study. Due to the small number of political parties whose websites were analyzed in this research, a mixed methodological approach combining surveys and website-based content analysis was taken with regard to the websites created by these political actors. In order to address how political parties approached the use of the web for campaign activities, an enhanced typology of party organizational structure and website content was created based on an exploratory model of party organizational structure and ICT utilization originally proposed by Lofgren and Smith (2003). In order to more fully assess how political parties are approaching the use of the internet, Lofgren and Smith's model was expanded by adding breadth (looking not only at direction of information flow and role of the public, but also goals for ICT orientation, ICT integration into campaign activities, cross-media use related to the role of ICTs, and linking strategies) and by defining

certain features contained within websites in order to operationalize these multifaceted approaches to the use of websites during election campaign periods. Political party websites were also compared in terms of ideological perspectives to examine if parties located at the extreme left and right were utilizing their websites as alternative media channels or to promote inter-party competition through the web. Website-based content analysis was also used as the methodological tool to assess how candidates utilized their websites not only with regard to providing information to and communicating with the electorate but also to demonstrate personal aspects such as showing party affiliation, addressing issues, providing personal information, and describing associations through linking strategies. A detailed checklist of features was created and used to quantitatively evaluate and compare candidate websites.

After describing the methodological tools used for evaluating political party and candidate websites, the first research question was addressed in Chapter Four. Two aims were identified for this chapter. The first aim was to locate Japan's regulatory approach to the use of the internet through a comparison with other countries. Four countries (the U.S., the U.K., South Korea, and Singapore) were selected to demonstrate a spectrum of campaign internet regulation that ranged from little or no regulation through to light regulation and strict regulation, respectively. While to date, the U.S. and the U.K. have mainly taken a "hands-off" stance in dealing with the campaign use of the internet, the primary emphasis on regulatory aspects of the use of the internet during campaign periods by political parties and candidates in these countries has focused on assessing its financial value in terms of campaign contributions. In contrast, in the early 2000s, certain South-east Asian nations such as South Korea and Singapore have taken different regulatory approaches by introducing legislation aimed at monitoring the content of citizen-created political websites and legislation focusing specifically on the content of websites created by opposition parties and candidates, respectively. Through this examination, it was shown that while Japan's approach of applying campaign media-use regulations through the POEL that were originally created for other campaign-related media is rather unique, other nations are also struggling to determine how the use of the Internet fits into traditional campaign practices.

The second aim of the fourth chapter was to chronicle the history of the POEL, with particular focus on its genesis during the early part of the twentieth century to investigate how it has been applied to elections in the past. This historical examination revealed that the government has played a role in election campaigning in campaign information dissemination through increasingly strict provisions within the POEL concerning campaign activities by political candidates. This chapter also discussed how the POEL has been applied to the campaign-related use of websites first by mainly opposition political parties and later by opposition candidates during the mid to late 1990s, and how despite recommendations by a special investigative committee in 2002, the POEL remains unchanged in terms of addressing the campaign use of the internet.

The results from the survey and website analysis of political party websites are presented in Chapter Five. Using the enhanced model of party organization factors and ICT utilization, the contents of websites produced by political parties during the 2000 Lower House and 2001 Upper House election periods were compared and certain trends were identified.

The party surveys and website content analysis demonstrated certain differences in the approaches of elite-oriented and mass-oriented political parties in Japan in terms of their goals for utilizing websites and their website contents during two election campaign periods. Elite-oriented parties such as the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) and DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan) indicated that their goals were primarily providing election-campaign-related information to and promoting communications with the electorate; in other words, establishing contact with the electorate. To these ends, these two political parties provided a great deal of uni-directional (top-down) information concerning the election on their websites, ranging from creating certain sections of their websites (or completely different websites) focusing on the election, including the party's platform on their websites, and emphasizing their candidates by including party-created profiles of candidates and links to candidate websites. These parties also chose to use their websites to attract certain targeted voting groups such as women voters and white-collar workers. They also utilized their websites to include certain traditional campaign media channels such as television commercials or audio messages. These parties tended to include links on their websites to intra-party organizations (such as politicians and

block organizations), national-level institutions such as the Upper and Lower Houses of the Diet and the Prime Minister's Office, and traditional media outlets such as newspapers and television stations.

Mass parties such as the New Komeito Party and the JCP (Japan Communist Party) also indicated election-related reasons for creating their websites, but also specified intra-party organizational goals for their websites such as facilitating information exchange within the party and, in the case of the JCP, exchanging information among groups that support the party. Among the six political parties surveyed, only the New Komeito Party indicated that one of the goals it had for creating its website was to improve the party's image. While both parties invited contact with the public through a variety of means, the New Komeito Party did not use its website to actively recruit members to the party in either election and the JCP only started to do during the 2001 election period. In fact, rather than appeal to potential supporters of the parties, these two parties appeared to use their websites to maintain their current membership base. This information-oriented approached extended to the provision of voting information and education features on their websites during both election cycles. These two parties were also among the most proactive of the six political parties surveyed in terms of cross-media applications; the New Komeito Party included both television commercials or audio messages on its website as well as creating a cellular-phone based version of its website during both election periods and the JCP included these features as well as graphics of its campaign posters in the 2001 election campaign period.

Certain trends were also noted in party websites when assessed from an ideological perspective. On the whole, parties on the extreme right (the Liberal Party) and the left (the SDP, or Social Democratic Party, and the JCP) had almost the same number of communications features on their websites as centrist parties. But in term of election-related features, the Liberal Party and SDP websites had markedly fewer features than those on the websites of the other parties. Interestingly enough, the JCP was particularly active during both election campaign periods in providing election-oriented information on its website. And, finally, moving along the spectrum from parties of the right/center (the Liberal Party and the LDP) through the center (DPJ and the New Komeito Parties), finally to the left (the SDP and the JCP), showed a gradual decline in the range of links provided on party websites.

Chapter Six presented the results from the evaluation of candidate websites from the 2001 Upper House election. An average of 55% of candidates in this election had created campaign-oriented websites, marking the first time that over half of the candidates in a national election utilized the medium. The high percentage of incumbents with websites compared to new candidates also suggested that the web is becoming a mainstream political campaigning tool, despite uncertainties regarding its use in terms of the POEL. As noted in the third chapter concerning methodology, candidate websites were evaluated in terms of six sets of features (election-related information, communications, party affiliation, issues, personal information, and link strategies), and then these features were compared by electoral system, political party, and candidate status.

In terms of electoral system, the results demonstrated that overall single-seat constituency candidates were more likely to include election-related information, particularly regarding the Koizumi administration, volunteer/internship opportunities with the campaign, and information targeted to certain voting constituencies. By contrast, proportional representation candidates were slightly more likely to demonstrate party affiliation features on their websites, most likely because their electoral success depended on their relationship with the party.

Certain trends were also identified in terms of political party. Candidates from the major political parties made up the largest percentage of candidates on the web in Japan during this election: Over 90% of the candidates from the LDP, DPJ, and New Komeito Party had websites. Overall, rather than trends in terms of party organization or ideology, candidate websites appeared to vary along the lines of party in power (the LDP), challenger parties (the DPJ, Liberal, JCP, SDP, and New Komeito Party), and minor parties. On average, candidates from challenger parties included a higher number of election-related, communications, and party affiliation features on their websites. In other words, they appeared to "try harder" on the web than LDP candidates or candidates from minor parties. But little difference was noted among candidate websites in terms of the issues that the candidates addressed or with regard to personal information features.

Through the course of conducting the within research and assessing the results, two implications concerning the campaign use of the internet in Japan became clear.

The first implication concerns the POEL. The examination of the history of the POEL illustrates how this legislation has played a critical function in determining the roles played by political actors such as political parties and politicians and the government, particularly the bureaucracy. While traditionally this legislation served as a means of "leveling the playing field" and promoting fairness in election spending by setting strict guidelines, it has also set out a vital role for the government itself – through local election management boards – in disseminating information concerning elections.

Despite calls for changing the POEL to address web-based campaigning (usually most vocal during periods immediately prior to elections), why has the POEL not been changed to reflect the growing use of the internet for political campaigning by political parties and candidates? The clearest and most obvious reason for not changing the POEL is that doing so would lessen the current role played by the government in the dissemination of election-related information. By maintaining the stance that the internet contravenes the current POEL and by not amending the POEL to address internet-based functions such as websites or e-mail, the bureaucracy can maintain a certain amount of control over the election-related information distributed by political parties and candidates. In fact, by not clearly stipulating the boundaries of the POEL with regard to online campaigning, the government has contributed to the cautionary approach towards using the internet demonstrated by political parties and candidates to date.

In addition, when considering the rapidity of technological advancement of the internet, the approach taken by the Japanese government in applying "old" legislation to this new media format and not changing the POEL may be the best way to deal with a constantly evolving medium such as the internet. If the POEL were to be changed to address the use of the internet, it would require clarifying certain functions of the medium such as websites, e-mail, and, more recently, audio, video, mobile technologies and other technical innovations that now constitute the internet. For example, if the POEL were changed to allow (or disallow) candidates to include video or audio messages on their websites, the regulations concerning candidates' not being allowed to purchase commercial television advertising may also have to be addressed. With an increasing number of converging internet functions, the internet may force us to rethink our definitions of traditional campaign advertising.

Assessing and analyzing political party, candidate, and politician websites in terms of their use of convergent technologies such as audio, video, and mobile telecommunications may provide revealing results in terms of the popularity of these innovations.

The second implication that was revealed through this research is the potential rise of the "permanent campaign" in Japan, despite regulations in the POEL concerning the timing of election campaign activities. Sparrow and Turner characterize the permanent campaign as

> "requiring a permanent market research programme, integrating techniques to provide information to aid strategic thinking within parties" … "The continuous nature of the permanent campaign and the media domination of politics have shifted the emphasis of party strategy towards image and presentation; parties themselves becoming more like commercial organizations in suing a wider range of market research techniques in order to project their messages" (2001: 985-6).

As websites and other functions of the internet are being utilized by businesses to attract and maintain customers, we may start to see increased application of net-based marketing techniques to campaign websites. At this time, political parties are in the best position to make use of such advanced techniques, given the human, financial, and information resources that they can deploy to a web-based campaign. However, candidates may also make use of these techniques as well in their websites. In the future, there will probably be a growing emphasis not only on content but also on design features as both of these political actors, aware of the importance of "packaging" their message to the public through their websites, strive to enhance their websites to create favorable impressions in the minds of the electorate. In order to examine this implication more fully, the website content analysis used as a methodology in this particular project could be enhanced to address political marketing factors and applied not only to campaign-oriented websites but the websites of sitting politicians.

Appendix A
URLs of Japanese Political Party Websites 2000-2001

Party Name   URL

Democratic Party of Japan   http://www.dpj.or.jp
Democratic Party of Japan Election Site (2000 only)   http://www.minshu2000.com
Japan Communist Party   http://www.jcp.or.jp
Liberal Democratic Party of Japan   http://www.jimin.jp
Liberal Party of Japan   http://www.jiyuto.or.jp
New Komeito Party   http://www.komei.or.jp
Social Democratic Party of Japan   http://www.sdp.or.jp

Appendix B
URLs for Japanese Candidate Websites 2001 Upper House Election

Name (English)	Name (Japanese)	Website URL
Abe Sachiyo	阿部　幸代	http://www.abe-sachiyo.gr.jp/
Aichi Jiro	愛知　治郎	http://www.a-jiro.jp/
Arai Kazuo	荒井　和夫	http://www.araikazuo.net/
Arai Shogo	荒井　正吾	http://www.araishougo.net/
Arakaki Shigeo	新垣　重雄	http://www2.ocn.ne.jp/~shinsya/01saninsen/arakaki/arakaki.htm
Arimura Haruko	有村　治子	http://www.arimura.tv
Aso Shigeki	阿曽　重樹	http://www.asoshigeki.com/
Baba Hiromitsu	馬場　洋光	http://www6.ocn.ne.jp/~jimusyo/index.html
Bannai Yoshiko	坂内　義子	http://www1.ocn.ne.jp/~y-bannai/
Danmoto Yukio	段元　幸男	http://www.danmoto.gr.jp
Date Chuichi	伊達　忠一	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~t.date/index.html
Den Hideo	田　英夫	http://www.ne.jp/asahi/den/hideo/
Fudesaka Hideyo	筆坂　秀世	http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/~mf2j-snhr/
Fujii Motoyuki	藤井　基之	http://www.mfujii.gr.jp/
Fujino Kimitaka	藤野　公孝	http://home.tn-japan.ne.jp/~fujino-kimitaka/
Fujioka Kazumi	藤岡　和美	unrecorded
Fujiwara Katsuhiko	藤原　勝彦	http://www.fujiwarakatsuhiko.com/
Fujiwara Masashi	藤原　正司	http://www.fujiwaramasashi.gr.jp/
Fukushima Keishiro	福島　敬史郎	http://www.f-keishiro.gr.jp
Fumimoto Junichi	福本　潤一	http://village.infoweb.ne.jp/~fukumo/
Furukawa Tadashi	古川　忠	http://www.furukawa-chu.com/
Futamure Masahiro	二牟礼　正博	http://www.futamure.com/
Goto Hiroko	後藤　博子	http://www.coara.or.jp/~jimyoita/
Goto Katsuhiko	後藤　勝彦	http://fish.miracle.ne.jp/jcp-smn/
Hara Naoko	原　直子	http://www.jiyuren.or.jp/sangiin/haranaoko.html
Hasegawa Michio	長谷川　道朗	http://www.mcc.spacetown.ne.jp/~has-mic/
Hashimoto Seiko	橋本　聖子	http://www.seiko-hashimoto.com
Hata Kei	畑　恵	http://www.k-hata.or.jp/
Hata Yuichiro	羽田　雄一郎	http://www.t-hata.net/yuichiro/index.html
Hayakawa Tadataka	早川　忠孝	http://www.big.or.jp/~tawns/index.html
Higuchi Keiko	樋口　恵子	http://www.ilpeer-net.com/
Higuchi Yuichi	樋口　雄一	http://www.you1-h.com/
Hirata Kenji	平田　健二	http://www.netlaputa.ne.jp/~ken2net/
Hirono Tadashi	広野　ただし	http://www.nsknet.or.jp/sysdn/hirono/tadashi.htm
Hirota Sadaharu	広田　貞治	http://www5.sdp.or.jp/central/topics/saninkouho/hirota.html
Hosaka Sanzou	保坂　三蔵	http://www.zou3.com/
Hoshino Tomoichi	星野　朋市	http://www5.justnet.ne.jp/~harakei/
Hoshino Tomoko	星野　智子	http://www.moko-net.com/
Ikeguchi Shuji	池口　修次	http://www.s-ikeguchi.com/index.html
Imaizumi Akira	今泉　昭	http://imaizumi.room.ne.jp/
Ishida Mie	石田　見栄	http://www.harenet.ne.jp/ishidamie/
Ishikawa Yumiko	石川　由美子	http://www.zephyr.dti.ne.jp/~yumikom/
Itou Mototaka	伊藤　基隆	http://www.ito-mototaka.com/
Iwai Kuniomi	岩井　國臣	http://www.kuniomi.gr.jp/chikudo/

Name (English)	Name (Japanese)	Website URL
Iwaki Nobuko	井脇　ノブ子	http://www4.ocn.ne.jp/~iwaki.n/index.html
Iwamoto Susumu	岩本　晋	http://www4.ocn.ne.jp/~siwamoto/index.html
Iwamoto Tsukasa	岩本　司	http://www.iw-tsukasa.com/
Jinnouchi Takao	陣内　孝雄	http://www4.ocn.ne.jp/~jinnouch/
Kageyama Shuntaro	景山　俊太郎	unrecorded
Kajiwara Keigi	梶原　敬義	http://www.k-kajiwara.net/
Kajiya Yoshito	加治屋　義人	http://www3.ocn.ne.jp/~kajiya-y/index.htm
Kamamoto Kunishige	釜本　邦茂	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~kamamoto/
Kamano Shoji	鎌野　祥二	http://www3.kcn.ne.jp/~jcpnara/kamano/index.html
Kameya Hiroaki	亀谷　博昭	http://www.d8.dion.ne.jp/%7Eh-kameya/
Kanda Kaori	神田　香織	http://www.ppn.co.jp/sangi/
Kaneda Katsutoshi	金田　勝年	http://www.kaneda-k.com/
Kanou Yasu	狩野　安	http://www1.odn.ne.jp/~aac64460/KanouYasuHome.htm
Kashimoto Keiji	柏本　景司	http://www.kaname.gr.jp/lion/
Katayama Toranosuke	片山　虎之助	http://www.tvt.ne.jp/toranosuke/
Kato Masako	加藤　真砂子	http://www.joso.co.jp/masako/
Kato Shoki	加藤　将輝	http://www.shoki-kato.com/
Kawada Masanari	川田　昌成	http://www.m-kawada.org/welcome.stm
Kawakami Yoko	河上　洋子	http://www.kawakami-youko.com/
Kimura Fuminori	木村　文則	http://www.naxnet.or.jp/~fuminori/
Kimura Kanji	木村　かんじ	unrecorded
Kimura Kiyoshi	木村　清志	http://www.tk2.nmt.ne.jp/~kimura/
Kinjo Hiroshi	金城　浩	http://www6.ocn.ne.jp/~jiren/
Kishino Masami	岸野　雅方	http://www.jusei.gr.jp/kishino/new-index.htm
Koba Kentaro	木庭　健太郎	http://homepage2.nifty.com/kobaken21/
Kobayashi Moto	小林　元	http://www5.plala.or.jp/kobayashimoto/
Kobayashi Yutaka	小林　温	http://www.kobayashiyutaka.com/
Koda Shamin	幸田シャーミン	http://www.seiji.co.jp/koda/
Koga Junichiro	古賀　潤一郎	http://www.jun-koga.net/
Koga Takaaki	古賀　敬章	http://members.jcom.home.ne.jp/jiyu.koga/
Koizumi Akio	小泉　顕雄	www5b.biglobe.ne.jp/~a_koizumi/
Komiyama Yasuko	小宮山　泰子	http://www.yasko.net/
Kondo Takeshi	近藤　剛	http://www.t-kondo.com/
Konoike Yoshitada	鴻池　祥肇	http://www.kounoike-web.com/
Kosehira Toshifumi	小斉平　敏文	http://www.kosehira.com/
Koso Kenji	高祖　憲治	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~k.kouso/
Kouyama Mariko	香山　真理子	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~k-mariko/
Koyama Mineo	小山　峰男	http://www.koyama.gr.jp/
Kunii Masayuki	国井　正幸	http://www.kunii.ne.jp/
Kurata Hiroyuki	倉田　寛之	http://www.kurata-hiroyuki.org/
Kuroiwa Chizuko	黒岩　秩子	http://www.c-kuroiwa.net/
Kusajima Yasuharu	草嶋　安治	http://www.kusajima.com/
Kusakawa Shozou	草川　昭三	http://www.kusakawa.gr.jp/
Kutsukake Tetsuo	沓掛　哲男	http://www.incl.ne.jp/kutukake/
Maeda Takeshi	前田　武志	http://www.maetake.com/whatsnew/index.html
Maekawa Tadao	前川　忠夫	http://www.t-maekawa.com/
Majima Kazuo	真島　一男	http://www.info-niigata.or.jp/~majima/

Name (English)	Name (Japanese)	Website URL
Masubuchi Kenichi	増渕 賢一	http://www.toshikazu.tv/
Matsu Akira	松 あきら	http://www.m-akira.com/
Matsui Kouji	松井 孝治	http://www.matsui21.com/
Matsumura Ryuji	松村 龍二	http://www.ryuji-m.net/
Matsutake Nobuyuki	松竹 伸幸	http://homepage2.nifty.com/na-yoshiko/sanin/matsutakekoho.htm
Matsuyama Masaji	松山 政司	http://www.matsuyama-masaji.org/
Mieno Shigeko	三重野 栄子	http://www.infoqshu.ne.jp/mieno/index.html
Miura Issui	三浦 一水	http://www.miuraissui.com/
Miwa Hirohisa	三輪 博久	http://www.jiyuren.or.jp/sangiin/miwahirohisa.html
Miyauchi Satoshi	宮内 聡	http://www.jcphkdbl.gr.jp/miyauti.htm
Mizote Kensei	溝手 顕正	http://www.mizote.gr.jp/
Mizushima Yutaka	水島 裕	http://www.ymizushima.org/
Mori Yuko	森 裕子	http://www.geocities.co.jp/WallStreet-Stock/3653/yukohp_001.htm
Morimoto Miyoji	森元 美代治	http://www.chibariyo.com/
Morimoto Tsuneo	森元 恒雄	http://www.t-morimoto.com/
Morioka Chieko	森岡 智恵子	http://www.hokuriku.ne.jp/chieko-m/
Muneta Hiroyuki	宗田 裕之	http://www.horae.dti.ne.jp/~muneta/
Muraki Yayoi	村木 弥生	http://www.yayoi-net.org/
Nagamine Motoi	長嶺 基	http://www.m-nagamine.com/
Nagura Midori	名倉 美登里	http://www.nagura-midori.com/
Nakahara So	中原 爽	http://www.nakahara-soh.com
Nakajima Mahito	中島 眞人	http://www.nakajima-mahito.com/
Nakajima Makoto	中嶋 誠	http://homepage2.nifty.com/nakajima-makoto/
Nakamura Kumi	中村 久美	unrecorded
Nakashima Hiro	中島 啓雄	http://www.nakasima.com/hiroo/
Nakayama Motoko	中山 朋子	http://home.catv.ne.jp/ss/nakayama/
Nihi Sohei	仁比 聰平	http://www.mmjp.or.jp/jcp-ozawa/new_page_18.htm
Nishida Yoshihiro	西田 吉宏	http://www5b.biglobe.ne.jp/~nishiday/
Nishikawa Masahito	西川 将人	http://potato2.hokkai.net/~masahito/
Nishikori Atsushi	錦織 淳	http://www.nisikoori.com/main.html
Nishime Junshiro	西銘 順志郎	http://www.okinawa-web.com/nishime/
Nogami Kotaro	野上 浩太郎	http://www.kotaro.net/
Nomura Setsuko	野村 節子	http://www1.odn.ne.jp/sestuko/
Norikumo Junyu	法雲 俊邑	http://www.biwa.ne.jp/~dpjshiga/norikumo.html
Ogasawara Shinmei	小笠原 真明	http://www5c.biglobe.ne.jp/~osin/
Ogata Yasuo	緒方 靖夫	http://www.ogata-jp.net/
Ogawa Katsuya	小川 勝也	http://www.ogawa-k.net/
Ogawa Kimiko	小川 貴美子	http://ha7.seikyou.ne.jp/home/jcp-ngsk/ogawa.htm
Ogi Chikage	扇 千景	http://www.venus.sannet.ne.jp/chi-oogi/
Ohashi Kyosen	大橋 巨泉	http://seiji.co.jp/kyosen/
Ohno Tsuyako	大野 つや子	http://www.oono.net/tsuyako/
Ohta Masahide	大田 昌秀	http://www.cosmos.ne.jp/opri/index.html
Ohta Masataka	太田 正孝	http://203.174.72.113/ota-masataka/
Ohta Nobumasa	太田 述正	http://www.ohtan.net/
Okamura Mitsuyoshi	岡村 光芳	http://www1.biz.biglobe.ne.jp/~okamura/
Okazaki Hiromi	岡崎 ひろみ	http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~ichigo-o/
Okura Yumi	大蔵 由美	http://www.sunriseinc.co.jp/yumin/
Onizawa Keiichi	鬼澤 慶一	http://www.onizawa.net/

Name (English)	Name (Japanese)	Website URL
Ono Kiyoko	小野　清子	http://www.onokiyoko.com
Ooe Yasuhiro	大江　康弘	http://www.oh-yass.com
Osanami Hirokuni	長南　博邦	http://www1.ocn.ne.jp/~nsp/osanami.htm
Otsuji Hidehisa	尾辻　秀久	http://www.otsuji.gr.jp
Ozawa Kikuko	小澤　喜久子	http://www.f-top21.gr.jp/ozawa/
Sago Hiroaki	佐護　宗哲	http://www.sago35.com/
Saitou Tsuyoshi	斎藤　勁	http://www.gpn.co.jp/tsuyoshi/
Sakamoto Hiroshi	坂本　洋史	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~jcpsaka/index.html
Sakurai Shin	桜井　新	http://www2.gol.com/users/sakurai-shin/
Santo Akiko	山東　昭子	http://www.santo-akiko.com/
Saotou Nobuyuki	斎藤　宣行	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~nnn/sub1.html
Sasaki Nagahide	佐々木　長秀	http://www.sdp.or.jp./~akita/nindex.htm
Sasano Teiko	笹野　貞子	http://www5.ocn.ne.jp/~sasano/
Sato Michio	佐藤　道夫	http://www.satomichio.gr.jp/
Satou Setsuko	佐藤　節子	http://www.janis.or.jp/users/sis-sato/
Satou Taizou	佐藤　泰三	http://www.satotaizo.com/
Sekiya Katsutsugu	関谷　勝嗣	http://www.k-sekiya.gr.jp/
Sekiyama Nobuyuki	関山　信之	http://www3.ocn.ne.jp/~sekiyama/
Sekou Hiroshige	世耕　弘成	http://www.newseko.gr.jp/index.htm
Shimakawa Takashi	島川　崇	http://www.shimakawa31.com/~ehime/index.html
Shimizu Kayoko	清水　嘉代子	http://www.shimizukayoko.gr.jp
Shimizu Sumiko	清水　澄子	http://www5.sdp.or.jp/central/topics/saninkouho/simizu.html
Shinba Kazuya	榛葉　賀津也	http://www.k-shimba.com/
Shirahama Kazuyoshi	白浜　一良	http://www.k-shirahama.net/index2.html
Shirakawa Katsuhiko	白川　勝彦	http://www.liberal-shirakawa.net/index.html
Shoji Hiroshi	庄司　寛	http://www.eps4.comlink.ne.jp/~seijikah/
Sudou Jinichiro	須藤　甚一郎	http://i.am/sudoh/
Suehiro Makiko	末広　まきこ	http://www.makiko-s.com
Sugekawa Kenji	菅川　健二	http://www.sugekawa.gr.jp/
Sugita Yukiko	杉田　幸子	http://www.sikasenbey.or.jp/~shamin/index.html
Suzuki Kan	鈴木　寛	http://www.suzukan.net/html/index_new.html
Suzuki Seiji	鈴木　政二	http://kids.aimnet.ne.jp/seiji/seiji.html
Tajima Yoko	田嶋　陽子	http://www.interq.or.jp/sun/thesnake/
Takagai Chiyoko	高開　千代子	http://homepage2.nifty.com/c~takagai/
Takahashi Chiaki	高橋　千秋	http://www.chiaki.gr.jp/
Takahashi Michitsuna	高橋　三千綱	http://member.nifty.ne.jp/michitsuna/
Takahira Shoji	高比良　正司	http://www.s-takahira.com/
Takamatsu Kazuo	高松　和夫	http://www.takamatsu-kazuo.org/
Takami Yuichi	高見　裕一	http://www.takami-yuichi.com/
Takano Hiroshi	高野　博師	http://www.takano-hiroshi.com/index2.html
Takemi Keizou	武見　敬三	www.takemi.net/fla.html
Takemura Yasuko	竹村　泰子	http://www.yasuco.com/
Takeyama Yutaka	竹山　裕	http://www.repm.co.jp/takeyama/
Tamamoto Kazuo	玉元　一夫	http://www5.justnet.ne.jp/~tamamoto5/
Tamazawa Tokuichiro	玉澤　徳一郎	http://www.tamazawa.com/
Tamura Hideaki	田村　秀昭	http://www.tamura-hideaki.com/index2.html
Tamura Kouhei	田村　公平	http://www03.u-page.so-net.ne.jp/qj8/t-kohei/index.html
Tanaka Ryota	田中　良太	http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/~tq8r-tnk/

Name (English)	Name (Japanese)	Website URL
Tanaka Yoshiko	田中　良子	http://www5c.biglobe.ne.jp/~y_tanaka/
Tanigawa Shunzen	谷川　秀善	http://www.syuzen.jp/
Tanimoto Takashi	谷本　巍	http://www.st21.co.jp/tanimoto/
Taura Tadashi	田浦　直	http://www.taura-tadashi.com/
Terayama Toshio	寺山　智雄	http://www.d1.dion.ne.jp/~tera1967/
Teruya Kantoku	照屋　寛徳	http://oak.zero.ad.jp/~zad83435/
Toda Jiro	戸田　二郎	http://www5.sdp.or.jp/central/topics/saninkouho/toda.html
Toda Kuniji	戸田　邦司	http://www.todakuniji.com/
Toyama Kiyohiko	遠山　清彦	http://www.toyamakiyohiko.com/
Tsuji Yasuhiro	辻　泰弘	http://www.d-wa.co.jp/tsuji/
Tsuneda Takayoshi	常田　享詳	http://village.infoweb.ne.jp/~tsuneda/
Tsunoda Giichi	角田　義一	http://www5b.biglobe.ne.jp/~gtsunoda/
Tsurunen Marutei	ツルネン　マルテイ	http://member.nifty.ne.jp/yugatsuru/
Uchida Junko	内田　洵子	http://homepage2.nifty.com/uchida-junko/
Ueda Keiko	上田　恵子	http://www.ksp.or.jp/sdpkanagawa/keiko.htm
Ueda Tetsu	上田　哲	http://www.bekkoame.ne.jp/~t-ueda/index.htm
Uonaga Tomiyuki	魚永　智行	http://members.jcom.home.ne.jp/jcpsimo/
Uozumi Hirohide	魚住　汎英	http://h-uozumi.com
Uozumi Yuichiro	魚住　裕一郎	http://www.uozumi.gr.jp/
Wada Hiroko	和田　洋子	http://www.wada-hiroko.org/
Wada Shizuo	和田　静夫	http://www.wadashizuo.com/
Wakabayashi Hideki	若林　秀樹	http://www.wakahide.com/
Watanabe Bungaku	渡辺　文学	http://homepage2.nifty.com/wa_bunngaku/
Watanabe Emi	渡部　絵美	http://www.02.246.ne.jp/~skateemi/
Watanabe Takao	渡辺　孝男	http://www.watanabetakao.net/
Watanabe Yoshiko	渡邊　義彦	http://www.liberal10.com/
Yamaguchi Natsuo	山口　那津男	http://www.n-yamaguchi.gr.jp/
Yamaguchi Norihisa	山口　典久	http://www.upup.co.jp/yamaguchi/
Yamamoto Ichita	山本　一太	http://www.ichita.com/
Yamamoto Kanae	山本　香苗	http://www.y-kanae.net/
Yamamoto Takashi	山本　孝史	http://www.y-takashi.com/
Yamamoto Tamotsu	山本　保	http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~tamotsuy/
Yamane Ryuji	山根　隆治	http://r-yamane.com/
Yamashita Yoshiki	山下　芳生	http://www.yamashitayoshiki.net/
Yamazaki Tsutomu	山崎　力	http://www.yamachannel.gr.jp/
Yasuda Setsuko	安田　節子	http://www2.neweb.ne.jp/wd/yasuda/hope/index.html
Yatabe Osamu	矢田部　理	http://www.yatabe-o.com/
Yoda Tomoharu	依田　智治	http://homepage2.nifty.com/tomoharu/
Yoshida Hiromi	吉田　博美	http://www.yoshida-hiromi.com/
Yoshida Masatoshi	吉田　正敏	http://www.sdp.or.jp/~miyagi/yosidaindex.html
Yoshikawa Haruko	吉川　春子	http://www.haruko.gr.jp/
Yoshikawa Mayumi	吉川　真由美	http://www.m-yoshikawa.jp/

Appendix C
Survey of Japanese Political Party Websites
September-October 2000 (Japanese)

アンケート

Ⅰ. 政党のホームページを作成・維持する活動について

1. いつホームページを開設されましたか？　１９＿＿＿＿年＿＿＿＿＿＿月頃　(1.1)

2. 開設の主な理由は何ですか？（複数回答可）

<table>
<tr><td>(2.1)</td><td>☐</td><td>有権者に情報を提供するため</td><td>(2.5)</td><td>☐</td><td>寄付を集めるため</td></tr>
<tr><td>(2.2)</td><td>☐</td><td>双方型のコミュニケーション、もしくは有権者からのコミュニケーションを受け付けるため</td><td>(2.6)</td><td>☐</td><td>党内の情報の共有とコミュニケーションのため（党組織、党役員、党員・党支持者間、など）</td></tr>
<tr><td>(2.3)</td><td>☐</td><td>ホームページがあるという心理的なアビール効果のため</td><td>(2.7)</td><td>☐</td><td>友好団体、関連団体との情報の共有とコミュニケーションのため</td></tr>
<tr><td>(2.4)</td><td>☐</td><td>特に、選挙に関する情報を正確に伝えるため</td><td>(2.8)</td><td>☐</td><td>ボランティア・人材を募集するため</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(2.9)</td><td>☐</td><td>その他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿</td></tr>
</table>

3. ホームページはどなたが作られましたか？（アイディアと実際の作成作業を含む）

- (3.1) ☐ 政党事務所スタッフ
- (3.2) ☐ 専門業者
- (3.3) ☐ 政党事務所スタッフと専門業者
- (3.4) ☐ その他　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

4. インターネット上のホームページ以外に、どのような媒体を広報活動に使っていますか？

<table>
<tr><td>(4.1)</td><td>☐</td><td>折りこみ広告/ビラを配布</td><td>(4.5)</td><td>☐</td><td>テレビ</td></tr>
<tr><td>(4.2)</td><td>☐</td><td>電話・ＦＡＸ</td><td>(4.6)</td><td>☐</td><td>ラジオ</td></tr>
<tr><td>(4.3)</td><td>☐</td><td>宣伝カー</td><td>(4.7)</td><td>☐</td><td>その他１
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿</td></tr>
<tr><td>(4.4)</td><td>☐</td><td>新聞・機関紙</td><td>(4.8)</td><td>☐</td><td>その他２
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿</td></tr>
</table>

5. 使っている媒体を通じてホームページのアドレスを知らせていますか？（または、印刷や発声などを通じていますか？）

<table>
<tr><td>(5.1)</td><td>☐</td><td>折りこみ広告・ビラ</td><td>(5.5)</td><td>☐</td><td>テレビのＣＭ</td></tr>
<tr><td>(5.2)</td><td>☐</td><td>宣伝カー</td><td>(5.6)</td><td>☐</td><td>ラジオのＣＭ</td></tr>
<tr><td>(5.3)</td><td>☐</td><td>新聞・機関紙の宣伝</td><td>(5.7)</td><td>☐</td><td>その他１（Ｑ４に答えた活動）
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿</td></tr>
<tr><td>(5.4)</td><td>☐</td><td>候補者の個人ホームページ</td><td>(5.8)</td><td>☐</td><td>その他２（Ｑ４に答えた活動）
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿</td></tr>
</table>

6. ホームページへの一週間の平均アクセス総件数を書いてください。（わかる範囲で結構です）
（＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿件）(6.1)

ⅠⅠ．政党のホームページの出費・人的資源

7. 政党内で、ホームページを作成・維持する担当部を、教えてください。

_____(7.1)

8. 政党の経営費の中で、ホームページを作成・維持するパーセントを書いて頂けますか？

_____% (8.1)

9. ホームページを作成・維持する人数は何人ですか？

(9.1) ☐　政党内
(9.2) 　　職員（_____人）
(9.3) 　　非常勤（パートタイム）
　　　（_____人）

(9.4) ☐　政党外
(9.5) 　　維持契約職員（_____人）
(9.6) 　　非常勤（パートタイム）
　　　（_____人）

ⅠⅠⅠ．選挙中政党のホームページ活動

10. 選挙の準備活動中、および選挙行動中の間、ホームページがどの程度更新されましたか？

	更新されなかった	更新された	どの程度	主な変化
2000年5月15日以前	☐ (10.1)	☐ (10.2)	週____回 (10.3)	_____(10.4) _____(10.5)
2000年5月16日～6月13日	☐ (10.6)	☐ (10.7)	週____回 (10.8)	_____(10.9) _____(10.10)
2000年6月14日～6月25日（選挙日）	☐ (10.11)	☐ (10.12)	週____回 (10.13)	_____(10.14) _____(10.15)
2000年6月26日以降	☐ (10.16)	☐ (10.17)	週____回 (10.18)	_____(10.19) _____(10.20)

11. ホームページは、他の媒体を通しての広報活動と比較してどのようなメリットがあるとお考えですか？またはどの点が魅力だと思われますか？（複数回答可）

(11.1) ☐　コストが低い

(11.2) ☐　双方向性がある

(11.3) ☐　他の媒体とは違った人々層にアピールできる

(11.4) ☐　他の政党ももっており、現代の時代に対応しているとのイメージを与えることができる

(11.5) ☐　24時間中発信しており、即時性がある

(11.6) ☐　世界中に発信しており、影響の範囲が広い

(11.7) ☐　その他
_____

(11.8) ☐　その他
_____

12. 有権者とのコミュニケーション方法の中で、それぞれの重要度を○で指摘してください。
（1は、重要ではない；5は、とても重要である）

		重要で はない		ある程度で 重要である		とても重 要である
(12.1)	郵便で（手紙・はがきなど）	1	2	3	4	5
(12.2)	電話	1	2	3	4	5
(12.3)	ＦＡＸ	1	2	3	4	5
(12.4)	政党大会	1	2	3	4	5
(12.5)	後援会大会	1	2	3	4	5
(12.6)	ホームページ上で提供する申込書	1	2	3	4	5
(12.7)	ホームページ上でフォーラム	1	2	3	4	5
(12.8)	ホームページ上でアンケート	1	2	3	4	5

13. マスコミ媒体の利用と比べて、それぞれの重要度を○で指摘してください。（1は、重要で
はない；5は、とても重要）

		重要で はない		ある程度で 重要である		とても重 要である
(13.1)	折りこみ広告・ビラ	1	2	3	4	5
(13.2)	宣伝カー	1	2	3	4	5
(13.3)	新聞・機関紙	1	2	3	4	5
(13.4)	政党新聞・機関紙	1	2	3	4	5
(13.5)	インターネット	1	2	3	4	5
(13.6)	テレビ	1	2	3	4	5
(13.7)	ラジオ	1	2	3	4	5
(13.8)	その他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	1	2	3	4	5
(13.9)	その他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	1	2	3	4	5

ＩＶ．政党内のコミュニケーション

14. 政党内で、以下の方々のＥメールやインターネット上でのコミュニケーションが利用されて
いますか？

(14.1)	個々の国会議員	はい	いいえ
(14.2)	ブロック支部	はい	いいえ
(14.3)	都道府県支部	はい	いいえ
(14.4)	議員秘書などスタッフ	はい	いいえ
(14.5)	地方議員	はい	いいえ
(14.6)	地方議員秘書などスタッフ	はい	いいえ
(14.7)	その他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	はい	いいえ
(14.8)	その他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	はい	いいえ

15. 私の今後の調査において、より詳しい面接調査に応じていただけますか？(15.1)

○　はい　　　　　　　　　　○　いいえ

連絡先　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
電話番号　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

ご協力ありがとうございました。

Appendix D
Survey of Japanese Political Party Websites
September-October 2000 (English)

Ⅰ．**Party Web Site Creation and Maintenance**

1. When did your party establish its web site? _____ (1.1)

2. What were the reasons for establishing your party's web site? (please indicate all that apply)

(2.1) ☐ To provide information to voters

(2.2) ☐ To promote two-way communication with voters or to communicate with voters

(2.3) ☐ To demonstrate that the party has a appealing image

(2.4) ☐ To especially provide information regarding elections

(2.5) ☐ To solicit contributions/donations

(2.6) ☐ To facilitate information exchange within the party (among staff, party officers, supporters, etc.)

(2.7) ☐ To exchange information among groups that support the party or are affiliated with the party

(2.8) ☐ To gather volunteers and supporters

(2.9) ☐ Other _____
_____

3. Who established the party's web site? (including the initial idea and the initial design or creation of the site)

(3.1) ☐ Party administrative staff
(3.2) ☐ Web-site design company
(3.3) ☐ Party administrative staff and web-site design company together
(3.4) ☐ Other _____

4. Besides the Internet, what other kinds of media does the party use for mass communications? (please indicate all that apply)

(4.1) ☐ Brochures and pamphlets
(4.2) ☐ Telephone/facsimile
(4.3) ☐ Publicity vehicles

(4.4) ☐ Newspapers and magazines

(4.5) ☐ Television
(4.6) ☐ Radio
(4.7) ☐ Other 1
_____

(4.8) ☐ Other 2
_____

5. Is your party's URL either printed or communicated in the following media? (please indicate all that apply)

(5.1) ☐ Brochures and pamphlets
(5.2) ☐ Publicity vehicles
(5.3) ☐ Newspaper and magazine advertisements
(5.4) ☐ Candidate web sites

(5.5) ☐ Television commercials
(5.6) ☐ Radio commercials
(5.7) ☐ Other 1 (same as 4.7)
_____

(5.8) ☐ Other 2 (same as 4.8)
_____

6. How many hits does your web site receive in an average week? (approximately)
(_____hits）(6.1)

ⅠⅠ. Party Web Site Budget and Human Resources

7. Please indicate the internal department or section of the party organization that is responsible for creating and maintaining the party's web site.

_____(7.1)

8. Approximately what percentage of the party's operating budget is spent on creating and maintaining the party's web site?

_____ % (8.1)

9. How many people are responsible for creating and maintaining the party's web site?

(9.1) ☐ Internal party staff
(9.2) Full time (_____ people)
(9.3) Part time (_____ people)

(9.4) ☐ Outsourced support
(9.5) On a contract basis (_____ people)
(9.6) Part time (_____ people)

ⅠⅠⅠ. Party Web Site Activities During Election Periods

10. How often was the party's web site updated prior to the election, during the campaign activities period, and after the election?

	Not updated	Updated	Times/Week	Major changes
Prior to 15 May 2000	☐ (10.1)	☐ (10.2)	_____ (10.3)	_____(10.4) _____(10.5)
Between 15 May and 13 June 2000	☐ (10.6)	☐ (10.7)	_____ (10.8)	_____(10.9) _____(10.10)
Between 14 June and 25 June 2000 (Election Day)	☐ (10.11)	☐ (10.12)	_____ (10.13)	_____(10.14) _____(10.15)
After 26 June 2000	☐ (10.16)	☐ (10.17)	_____ (10.18)	_____(10.19) _____(10.20)

11. Please indicate what your party considers to be the merits of having a web site compared to other forms of communications and information provision media. What specific points are important to your party? (please indicate all that apply)

(11.1) ☐ Cost effectiveness
(11.2) ☐ Two-way communications

(11.3) ☐ Ability to reach people who do not use other mass communications media

(11.4) ☐ Other political parties have web sites, so our party should also have a site to maintain its image

(11.5) ☐ 24-hour accessibility
(11.6) ☐ Information can be transmitted worldwide (borderless)
(11.7) ☐ Other 1
_____

(11.8) ☐ Other 2
_____

12. In terms of communications with voters, how important is each of the following forms of communications? ("1" = not important at all; "5" = very important)

		Not important at all		Neither important or unimportant		Very important
(12.1)	Postal communications (letters, postcards)	1	2	3	4	5
(12.2)	Telephone	1	2	3	4	5
(12.3)	Facsimile	1	2	3	4	5
(12.4)	Party conferences	1	2	3	4	5
(12.5)	Local party organization meetings	1	2	3	4	5
(12.6)	Subscription/application forms provided on the party's web site	1	2	3	4	5
(12.7)	Chat rooms or forums provided on the party's web site	1	2	3	4	5
(12.8)	Polls or questionnaires provided on the party's web site	1	2	3	4	5

13. In terms of other forms of mass media, how important is your party's Internet utilization and strategy? ("1" = not important at all; "5" = very important)

		Not important at all		Neither important or unimportant		Very important
(13.1)	Brochures and pamphlets	1	2	3	4	5
(13.2)	Publicity vehicles	1	2	3	4	5
(13.3)	Newspapers and magazines	1	2	3	4	5
(13.4)	Party newspaper and publications	1	2	3	4	5
(13.5)	Internet	1	2	3	4	5
(13.6)	Television	1	2	3	4	5
(13.7)	Radio	1	2	3	4	5
(13.8)	Other 1_____	1	2	3	4	5
(13.9)	Other 2_____	1	2	3	4	5

ⅠⅤ．Internal Party Communications

14. Do the following staff, members, politicians, or organizations within the party regularly use e-mail and the Internet? (please circle "yes" or "no")

(14.1)	Individual politicians	Yes	No
(14.2)	Block party organizations/offices	Yes	No
(14.3)	Regional party organizations	Yes	No
(14.4)	Diet member administrative staff	Yes	No
(14.5)	Local politicians	Yes	No
(14.6)	Local member administrative staff	Yes	No
(14.7)	Other 1_____	Yes	No
(14.8)	Other 2_____	Yes	No

15. Would you agree to an interview concerning further details about your party's utilization of the Internet? (if "yes", please provide your name and contact phone number)

Yes   No

Contact name   _____

Contact telephone number **_____**

Appendix E
Checklist for Japanese Political Party Websites 2000-2001

1. Direction of information flow

Feature	Present on website	Not present on website
Contact means	☐	☐
Response forms (membership, volunteering, publications subscriptions, other)	☐	☐
Chat rooms or discussion forums	☐	☐
Issue or opinion polls	☐	☐
E-mail newsletters	☐	☐

2. Election-related information features

Feature	Present on website	Not present on website
Overall election-related information features		
Separate election website or section within main website referring specifically to the election	☐	☐
Election platform/manifesto	☐	☐
Campaign event schedule	☐	☐
Statement regarding Internet and the election	☐	☐
Targeted voting constituency info	☐	☐
Voting information/education	☐	☐
Election-related merchandise	☐	☐
Candidate-related information features		
Candidate profile (party template)	☐	☐
Candidate listing (and links to candidates' personal websites)	☐	☐
Media-related features		
Election posters	☐	☐
Cross-media (TV commercials or audio messages)	☐	☐
Cellular phone websites	☐	☐

3. Links

Feature	Present on website	Not present on website
Intra-party apparatus (politicians, block organizations)	☐	☐
Other parties (major and minor)	☐	☐
Within government apparatus (upper and lower houses of the Diet, prime minister's office, and various ministries)	☐	☐
Newspapers	☐	☐
TV/Radio stations	☐	☐
Election portals	☐	☐
Candidate comparison *(rakusen)* sites	☐	☐
International	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐

候補者ホームページ分析
レスリー　タック　川﨑
2003/07/15

一般的な情報

候補者・政治家の名前を書いてください。（漢字・読み方）

_____

Coding Date: _____
Coder Name: _____
Browser: _____ (preferably IE 5.0+)

第1部　一般的なサイト情報

Q1.1　名前の書き方(いくつでもOKです)

漢字で名前が書かれている (例：田中一郎)	☐	Q1.11
ひらがなで名前が書かれている（例：たなかいちろう）	☐	Q1.12
カタカナで名前が書かれている（例：タカナイチロウ）	☐	Q1.13
英語・ロマジで名前が書かれている（例：Tanaka Ichiro）	☐	Q1.14
漢字・かなで名前が書かれている（田中一ろう）	☐	Q1.15
他（書いてください）_____	☐	Q1.16 text

Q1.2　性別（ひとつだけ）

男性	☐	Q1_21_1	男性明記	☐	Q1_21_3
女性	☐	Q1_21_2	女性明記	☐	Q1_21_4
他_____	☐	Q1_22 Text			

Q1.3　年齢

30-39歳	☐	Q1_31=1	60-69歳	☐	Q1_31=4
40-49歳	☐	Q1_31=2	70-79歳	☐	Q1_31=5
50-59歳	☐	Q1_31=3	80歳以上	☐	Q1_31=6

他の年齢に関する情報

誕生日（書いてください。） _____ （年・月・日）	☐	Q1_32=1 Q1_33 (text)
他_____	☐	Q1_34

Q1.4 職歴（今の選挙のため）（ひとつだけ）

現職（有席）	☐	Q1_41=1
新人	☐	Q1_41=2
元職	☐	Q1_41=3
他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	☐	Q1_41=4 Q1_42=text
サイトのコンテンツからわからない。	☐	Q1_41=0

Q1.5 政党・公認・推薦

属している政党	公認	コード
自民党	☐	Q1_51=1
民主党	☐	Q1_51=2
自由党	☐	Q1_51=3
新党平和	☐	Q1_51=4
共産党	☐	Q1_51=5
社会党・社民党	☐	Q1_51=6
改革クラブ	☐	Q1_51=7
公明党	☐	Q1_51=8
保守党	☐	Q1_51=9
自由連合	☐	Q1_51=10
新緑風会	☐	Q1_51=11
国会改革連絡会	☐	Q1_51=12
無所属の会	☐	Q1_51=13
護憲連合	☐	Q1_51=14
無所属	☐	Q1_51=15
他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	☐	Q1_51=16 Q1_51a=text

推薦されている政党	推薦	コード
自民党	☐	Q1_52a=1
民主党	☐	Q1_52b=1
自由党	☐	Q1_52c=1
新党平和	☐	Q1_52d=1
共産党	☐	Q1_52e=1
社会党・社民党	☐	Q1_52f=1
改革クラブ	☐	Q1_52g=1
公明党	☐	Q1_52h=1
保守党	☐	Q1_52i=1
自由連合	☐	Q1_52j=1
新緑風会	☐	Q1_52k=1
国会改革連絡会	☐	Q1_52l=1
無所属の会	☐	Q1_52m=1
護憲連合	☐	Q1_52n=1
無所属	☐	Q1_52o=1
他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	☐	Q1_52p=text

各派に属しなくて政党にも推薦されていない。	☐	Q1_53

Q1.6 他のホームページ

携帯用ホームページがある	☐ (Q1_61=1)	携帯用ホームページがない	☐ (Q1_61=0)

携帯用メールマガジン	☐ あります (Q1_612=1)
	☐ 一般 (Q1_621=1) ☐ i-mode (Q1_622=1) ☐ Tu-Ka (Q1_623=1) ☐ J-Phone (Q1_624=1) ☐ ezweb (Q1_625=1) ☐ 他 ＿＿＿＿ (Q1_626=1)
携帯用メール マガジン発行	☐ 発行するが、不定期 (Q1_631=1)
	☐ 発行するが、☐ 月＿＿＿＿回 (Q1_632=1) Schedule を書いてください。 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q1_633=text)

第2部 トップページデザイン情報

Q2.1 トップページの最新更新

トップページに書いてある。	☐	Q2_1=1
月日＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿(書いてください。)	☐	Q2_11=Text

Q2.2 トップページのカウンター

はっきりトップページにカウンターが付けられることがわかる。	☐ 有	Q2_21=1
カウンターの数が見える場合、数を書いてください。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿		Q2_22=Number string
カウンターが付けられているが、途切れたリンクなどで見えない。	☐ 有	Q2_23=1

Q2.3 トップページのグラフィクズ（背景ではない）
写真

候補者（一人）	☐ 有 (Q2_31)	＿＿＿個	Q2_311
候補者と他の人	☐ 有 (Q2_312) 状況を書いてくだい。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q2_314)	＿＿＿個	Q2_313
その他の写真	☐ 有 (Q2_315) 状況を書いてくだい。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q2_317)	＿＿＿個	(Q2_316)

イラスト

候補者（一人）	☐ 有 (Q2_32)	＿＿＿個	Q2_321
候補者と他の人	☐ 有 (Q2_322) 状況を書いてくだい。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q2_324)	＿＿＿個	Q2_323
その他の写真	☐ 有 (Q2_325) 状況を書いてくだい。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q2_327)	＿＿＿個	(Q2_326)

Q2.4 トップページでの政党ロゴ・リンク

政党との関係の証明がある。	☐ 有	Q2_4
政党ロゴ**のみ**（クリックすると、リンクではない）。	☐ 有	Q2_41
政党ロゴ・リンク（クリックすると、政党ホームページに接続する）。	☐ 有	Q2_42
政党の名前（テキスト**のみ**）。	☐ 有	Q2_43
政党の名前（テキストとリンク付け）。	☐ 有	Q2_44
上記以外で政党との関係（写真・イラスト・シンボルなど）（状況を書いてください。）＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	☐ 有	Q2_45

Q2.5 トップページでの選挙区・事務所の住所

小選挙区が書かれている。	☐ 有	Q2_51
｛有｝の場合は、書いてください。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿		Q2_52

比例代表区（政党でも）が書かれている。	☐　有	Q2_53
〔有〕の場合は、書いてください。＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	Q2_54	
事務所の住所が書かれている。	☐　有	Q2_55

Q3 イッシュウーについて（いくつでも**OK**です）

注意！Please see attached coding instructions

イッシュウー		個人の意見 (see Note 1)			個人の公約 (see Note 2)			政党の政策・対策など（はっきり○○党の対策・政策として）（サイト内）(See note 3)			政党サイトにリンクする (_10)
		トップ (_1)	専用 (_2)	一般的 (_3)	トップ (_4)	専用 (_5)	一般的 (_6)	トップ (_7)	専用 (_8)	一般的 (_9)	
Q3_1	環境	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_2	教育	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_3	福祉	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_4	景気・経済	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_5	雇用	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_6	農林漁業	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_7	外交・防衛	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_8	男女共同参画	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_9	中小企業対策	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_10	産業	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_11	まちづくり	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_12	ＩＴ関連	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_13	行政・財政	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_14	金融・税制	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_15	地方分権	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_16	若者	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_17	憲法	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_18	防災・災害	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_19	他 _____ (Q3_19_AA)	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_20	他 _____ (Q3_20_AA)	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_21	他 _____ (Q3_21_AA)	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐

Q4 プロフィール	テキスト配置ページ （複数書いて可）		テキスト量 （○を付けてください）			
Q4 立候補者のプロファイール（経歴・人柄）	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q4_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q4_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q4_1c

Q5 – 7 選挙争点になっている問題に関する見解について	テキスト配置ページ （複数書いて可）		テキスト量 （○を付けてください）			
Q5 小泉内閣についての程度	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q5_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q5_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q5_1c

Q6 構造改革	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q6_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q6_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q6_1c

Q7 経済政策	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q7_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q7_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q7_1c

Q8 インターネットと選挙	テキスト配置ページ （複数書いて可）		テキスト量 （○を付けてください）			
Q8 選挙期間中のインターネットによる情報提供について	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q8_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q8_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q8_1c

Q9 ボランティア情報	テキスト配置ページ （複数書いて可）		テキスト量 （○を付けてください）			
Q9 ボランティア・インターンシップ情報	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q9_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q9_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q9_1c

Q10 – 15 政治家の日常の政治活動	テキスト配置ページ （複数書いて可）		テキスト量 （○を付けてください）			
Q10 イベント・活動スケジュールまたは日記	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q10_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q10_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q10_1c

Q11 イベント・活動の写真	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q11_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q11_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q11_1c

Q12 リーセント・ニュース（最近の出来事など）	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q12_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q12_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q12_1c

Q13 新聞発表・プレスリリース Texts of newspaper articles and press releases	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q13_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q13_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q13_1c

Q14 スピーチ（テキスト・録音など） Texts or recordings or speeches	1.トップページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q14_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q14_1b
	3. 他のページ	□ 有	1	2	3	Q14_1c

Q15 他（書いてください）	1. トップページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q15_1a
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q15_aa)	2. 専用ページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q15_1b
Example: audio/video materials, posters, etc.	3. 他のページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q15_1c

Q16 – 20 特定有権者への情報

特定有権者への情報	テキスト配置ページ （複数書いて可)		テキスト量 （○を付けてください)	
Q16 女性の有権者	1. トップページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q16_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q16_1b
	3. 他のページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q16_1c

Q17 若者の有権者	1. トップページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q17_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q17_1b
	3. 他のページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q17_1c

Q18 特定の職業（例：サラリマンなど）	1. トップページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q18_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q18_1b
	3. 他のページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q18_1c

Q19 特定の地域（地方・都市・ 選挙区など）（書いてください） ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	1. トップページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q19_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q19_1b
	3. 他のページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q19_1c

Q20 他（書いてください） ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (Q20_aa)	1. トップページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q20_1a
	2. 専用ページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q20_1b
	3. 他のページ	□　有	1　2　3	Q20_1c

Q21 献金・ホームページでの献金応募（いくつでもOKです）

ホームページで献金募集情報が載せられている。	□　有	Q21=1 (yes)
郵便で献金できる（振替情報・番号など）。	□　有	Q21_1
銀行振込で献金できる（銀行の情報・口座など）。	□　有	Q21_2
オンラインでクレジットカードで献金できる。	□　有	Q21_3
他の方法で献金できる（書いてください）。 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿(Q21_4a)	□　有	Q21_4
オンラインプライバシー対策の情報（文書・SSLお知らせなど）。	□　有	Q21_5

Q22 有権者とのコミュニケーション（いくつでも**OK**です）

3.5.1	選挙争点などになっている問題についてのアンケート		☐	3.5.1
3.5.2	選挙争点などになっている問題についてのアンケートの結果		☐	3.5.2
3.5.3	BBS・掲示板で意見や要望を伝えたり、議論ができる機能		☐	3.5.3
3.5.4	メールアドレスまたはメールリンク		☐	3.5.4
3.5.5	有権者からのメッセージやコメントが載せている（メール・郵便などで）		☐	3.5.5
3.5.6	トップページで住所・連絡情報 （電話・FAXなど）を載せている		☐	3.5.6
3.5.7	専用連絡ページ(例：”Contact”などのフォーム)		☐	3.5.7
3.5.8	メールマガジン		☐	3.5.8
3.5.9	メールマガジンがあったら、メールマガジンの配達すること	☐ 不定期 ☐ 月_____回		3.5.9
3.5.10	他 （状況を書いてください） _____		☐	3.5.10

3.6 リンク情報（いくつでも**OK**です）

3.6.1	特定のリンクページがあります	☐	3.6.1

リンク類		ある	数	コード
3.6.2	海外政府	☐	_____個	3.6.2
3.6.3	官公庁（例: http://xxx.xxx.go.jp）	☐	_____個	3.6.3
3.6.4	地方自治体	☐	_____個	3.6.4
3.6.5	政党	☐	_____個	3.6.5
3.6.6	個人（政治家）	☐	_____個	3.6.6
3.6.7	マスコミ・メディア	☐	_____個	3.6.7
3.6.8	個人や市民団体（一般）	☐	_____個	3.6.8
3.6.9	官公庁の選挙に関するサイトなど （例：明るい選挙・選挙管理委員会など）	☐	_____個	3.6.9
3.6.10	市民団体・個人以外の支持団体 （例：農協・医師会など）(professional associations)	☐	_____個	3.6.11
3.6.11	選挙に関するインターネットでの政治専門サイト （例：election.co.jp, vote.com、個人など）			
3.6.12	他（状況を書いてください） _____	☐	_____個	3.6.13

コメントがあれば。。。
このホームページについて、面白くて印象的な内容があると思うなら、コメントを簡単にお書きください。

Supplementary Coding Sheet
Coding Notes
July 13, 2003

テキスト量 **3.1** (バーション２)の説明		
（１）50 文字以下の例	（２）51 文字～200 文字の例	（３）201 文字以上の例
海外在住の日本人が衆参両院選の比例代表で投票できるようにする在外選挙法（改正公職選挙法）が２４日午前	海外在住の日本人が衆参両院選の比例代表で投票できるようにする在外選挙法（改正公職選挙法）が２４日午前の参院本会議で賛成多数で可決、成立した。１９８４年に政府が法案を提出してから１４年ぶりに在外選挙制度が実現、約５６万人の在外有権者が２０００年以降の国政選挙で投票できることになる。政府は年内をめどに、具体的な投票手続きなどを定める政令を策定する方針。ただ、今回の制度改正では選挙区選挙は見送られており	（２）よりも多い

Abbreviations:

トップ：トップページでこのイッシューに関する文書・リンク（サイト内）
専用：このイッシュについて、専用ページがある（サイト内）
一般：一般的な対策・政策・視点・ビションなどのリストでこのイッシューについて文書が含まる（サイト内）

Sample Words

個人意見：対策、政策、意見、視点、ビション, 想い思い、方針、提案、テーマ、理念
夢、信条、提言、など
公約：　公約、約束

Note 1

Politician uses phrases such as "と思う" or "を考える" → these are not 公約 or promises, but any length of text regarding the politician's opinion/thinking about specific issues. May also be words such as 視点・ビション・主張・理念. Please code appropriately using the following questions:

■ Is his/her opinion on the トップページ？（○○について、私の考え。。。）
■ Is his/her opinion on a 専用ページ for **each** issue？（例：農林漁業についての専用ページ）
■ Is his/her opinion about these issues on a 一般 (general) issues page with his/her opinion about other issues as well?

Please check the check box ☐ if "yes", then please estimate the amount of text using the 1-2-3 scale.

Note 2

■ Public promises (公約), while difficult to describe, are usually are identified as such. These are not as common as phrases that describe the politicians' individual opinions (see note 1 above) and are more 具体的. Example (English): "If I am elected I will …..".

Note 3

■ The policies (政策・対策) are **clearly** marked as being those of the party. For example, "○○党の候補者として、○○党の○○に関する対策を維持する。。。 "

Please ask yourself the following questions to help you code:

■ Does the candidate have the 政党の政策・対策 on the トップページ？（○○について、○○党が○○を考え。。。or a banner/button to ○○党の政策・対策）
■ Does the candidate have the 政党の政策・対策 on a 専用ページ for **each** issue?（例：○○党のイッシュー1の専用ページ、○○党のイッシュー2の専用ページ）
■ Does the candidate have the 政党の政策・対策 on a 一般 (general) issues page along with other issues??
■ Is there a direct link to the 政党の政策・対策のホームページ？

Note 4

■ I understand that 3.1.16 (地方分権) and 3.1.17 (若者) may overlap with 3.3.2 and 3.3.4, respectively. That's okay. Please continue to check 3.3.2 and 3.3.4 as well, if that's the case.

Note 5

■ These three categories (個人の意見、公約、政党の政策・対策) are **not** mutually exclusive. A candidate **may** have one, a combination of two, all three, or none on his/her web-site.

Note 6

■ In regards to issues, one of the matters that came up was how to code Q-and-A sections of the site. The decision was made as follows:

■ If the candidate has clearly specified that the questions have come from the public, or if it is unclear, then it is coded as "public comments" in the section for communications with the electorate.

■ If the candidate has clearly specified that (s)he is asking himself these questions (self interview?), then it is coded as issues.

Appendix G
Checklist for Japanese Candidate Websites 2001 (English)

Candidate Website Analysis
Leslie Tkach-Kawasaki
2003/07/15

General Information

Please write the candidate name here.（Kanji・Romaji/Hiragana）

_____

Coding Date: _____
Coder Name: _____
Browser: _____ (preferably IE 5.0+)

Section 1 General Website Information

Q1.1　How is the candidate's name written? (Multiple answers OK)

Name written in kanji （Example：田中一郎）	☐	Q1.11
Name written in hiragana　（Example：たなかいちろう）	☐	Q1.12
Name written in katakana（Examle：タカナイチロウ）	☐	Q1.13
Name written in English/romaji（Example：Tanaka Ichiro）	☐	Q1.14
Name written in a mixture of kanji and kana（Example: 田中一ろう）	☐	Q1.15
Other (Please indicate）　_____	☐	Q1.16 text

Q1.2　Gender　（Please select one answer only）

Male	☐	Q1_21_1	Identified as male	☐	Q1_21_3
Female	☐	Q1_21_2	Identified as female	☐	Q1_21_4
他_____	☐	Q1_22 Text			

Q1.3　Age

30-39 years	☐	Q1_31=1	60-69 years	☐	Q1_31=4
40-49 years	☐	Q1_31=2	70-79 years	☐	Q1_31=5
50-59 years	☐	Q1_31=3	Over 80 years	☐	Q1_31=6

Other information concerning age

Birthdate（Please write） _____ （Year・Month・Day）	☐	Q1_32=1 Q1_33 (text)
Other_____	☐	Q1_34

Q1.4　Candidate status　（in this election）　（Please select one only）

Incumbent（currently sitting）	☐	Q1_41=1
New candidate	☐	Q1_41=2
Previous held office	☐	Q1_41=3
Other_____	☐	Q1_41=4 Q1_42=text
Cannot discern from site contents	☐	Q1_41=0

Q1.5 Political Party・Official Candidate・Recommended Candidate

Official Political Party	Offc.	コード
Liberal Democratic Party	☐	Q1_51=1
Democratic Party	☐	Q1_51=2
Liberal Party	☐	Q1_51=3
New Peace Party	☐	Q1_51=4
Japan Communist Party	☐	Q1_51=5
Social Democratic Party	☐	Q1_51=6
Kaikaku Club	☐	Q1_51=7
New Komeito Party	☐	Q1_51=8
Conservative Party	☐	Q1_51=9
Liberal League	☐	Q1_51=10
Shin Midori Kaze Kai	☐	Q1_51=11
Kokkai Kaikaku Renkaku Club	☐	Q1_51=12
Independents Party	☐	Q1_51=13
Constitution Party	☐	Q1_51=14
Independent	☐	Q1_51=15
Other_____	☐	Q1_51=16 Q1_51a=text

Recommending Political Party	Rec.	コード
Liberal Democratic Party	☐	Q1_52a=1
Democratic Party	☐	Q1_52b=1
Liberal Party	☐	Q1_52c=1
New Peace Party	☐	Q1_52d=1
Japan Communist Party	☐	Q1_52e=1
Social Democratic Party	☐	Q1_52f=1
Kaikaku Club	☐	Q1_52g=1
New Komeito	☐	Q1_52h=1
Conservative	☐	Q1_52i=1
Liberal League	☐	Q1_52j=1
Shin Midori Kaze Kai	☐	Q1_52k=1
Kokkai Kaikaku Renkaku Club	☐	Q1_52l=1
Independents Party	☐	Q1_52m=1
Constitution Party	☐	Q1_52n=1
Independent	☐	Q1_52o=1
Other_____	☐	Q1_52p=text

Not official candidate/recommended by any political party	☐	Q1_53

Q1.6 Other websites

Has cellular phone website	☐ (Q1_61=1)	No cellular phone website	☐ (Q1_61=0)

Cellular phone e-mail newsletter	☐ Yes (Q1_612=1) ☐ General (Q1_621=1) ☐ i-mode (Q1_622=1) ☐ Tu-Ka (Q1_623=1) ☐ J-Phone (Q1_624=1) ☐ ezweb (Q1_625=1) ☐ Other _____ (Q1_626=1)
Distributes cellular-phone based e-mail newsletter	☐ Yes, but schedule is irregular (Q1_631=1)
	☐ Yes, ☐ _____ times/month (Q1_632=1) If other, please write here. _____ (Q1_633=text)

Section 2 Top Page Design Information

Q2.1 Refresh/Updating date written on the top page

Yes, written on the top page	☐	Q2_1=1
Latest update date _____(please write)	☐	Q2_11=Text

Q2.2 Counter on the top page

Can clearly see that there is a counter on the top page	☐ Yes	Q2_21=1
Can see figures of the counter. Please write them here. _____		Q2_22=Number string
Counter on the top page, but there is a broken link and the numbers cannot be read	☐ Yes	Q2_23=1

Q2.3 Top page graphics（Other than background）
Photographs

Candidate by him/herself	☐ Yes (Q2_31)	Number ____	Q2_311
Candidate with other people	☐ Yes (Q2_312) Please describe. _____ (Q2_314)	Number ____	Q2_313
Other photographs	☐ Yes (Q2_315) Please describe. _____ (Q2_317)	Number ____	(Q2_316)

Illustrations

Candidate by him/herself	☐ Yes (Q2_32)	Number ____	Q2_321
Candidate with other people	☐ Yes (Q2_322) Please describe. _____ (Q2_324)	Number ____	Q2_323
Other photographs	☐ Yes (Q2_325) Please describe. _____ (Q2_327)	Number ____	(Q2_326)

Q2.4 Party logo/link on top page

Party affiliation clearly shown on top page.	☐ Yes	Q2_4
Party logo only on top page (not a link).	☐ Yes	Q2_41
Party logo with a link to the party's website.	☐ Yes	Q2_42
Party name only.	☐ Yes	Q2_43
Party name in text with link to party website.	☐ Yes	Q2_44
Any other means of demonstrating party affiliation (photograph, illustration, symbol mark, etc.). Please describe here. _____	☐ Yes	Q2_45

Q2.5 Constituency and office address on top page

	☐ Yes	Q2_51
Constituency name (prefecture) written on top page.		
If yes, please write here. _____	Q2_52	
Proportional representation district (party name) written on top page (demonstrating that the candidate is a proportional district/party-list candidate)	☐ Yes	Q2_53
If yes, please write here. _____	Q2_54	
Office address written on top page.	☐ Yes	Q2_55

Section 3 Site Contents

Q3 Issues（**multiple answers, OK**）

Note: Please see attached coding instructions

Issue		Personal opinion (see Note 1)			Campaign platform (see Note 2)			Political party policies/measures, etc.（Party's policies are clearly written within the candidate's website）(See note 3)			Link to party website (_10)
		Top (_1)	Specific (_2)	General (_3)	Top (_4)	Specific (_5)	一般的 (_6)	Top (_7)	Specific (_8)	General (_9)	
Q3_1	Environment	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_2	Education	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_3	Welfare	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_4	Economy	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_5	Employment	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_6	Primary Industries	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_7	Foreign policy/defence	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_8	Gender	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_9	Small/medium business	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_10	Industry	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_11	Community building	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_12	Information technology	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_13	Administration /finance	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_14	Finance/ taxation	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_15	Local govt. relations	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_16	Youth	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_17	Constitution	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_18	Disaster policy	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_19	Other_____ (Q3_19_AA)	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_20	Other_____ (Q3_20_AA)	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐
Q3_21	Other_____ (Q3_21_AA)	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐ 1 2 3	☐

Q4 Profile/background information	Page where text is written (multiple answers OK)		Amount of text (Please circle)			
Q4 Candidate profile (background information)	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q4_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q4_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q4_1c

Q5 – 7 Views on election-related issues	Page where text is written (multiple answers OK)		Amount of text (Please circle)			
Q5 Koizumi Administration	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q5_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q5_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q5_1c

Q6 Structural Reform	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q6_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q6_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q6_1c

Q7 The Economy	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q7_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q7_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q7_1c

Q8 Internet and the Election	Page where text is written (multiple answers OK)		Amount of text (Please circle)			
Q8 Any type of statement regarding the use of the Internet during election campaign periods in Japan.	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q8_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q8_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q8_1c

Q9 Volunteer/Internship Information	Page where text is written (multiple answers OK)		Amount of text (Please circle)			
Q9 Volunteer or internship information	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q9_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q9_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q9_1c

Q10 – 15 Daily activities of politicians	Page where text is written (multiple answers OK)		Amount of text (Please circle)			
Q10 Event, activity schedule, or diary (may be related to campaigning)	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q10_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q10_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q10_1c

Q11 Photographs of events or activities	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q11_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q11_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q11_1c

Q12 Recent news (personal, non-politically related news, i.e. family)	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q12_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q12_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q12_1c

Q13 Texts of newspaper articles or press releases	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q13_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q13_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q13_1c

Q14 Texts or recordings or speeches (not greetings)	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q14_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q14_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q14_1c

Q15 Other（Please write） _____ (Q15_aa) Example: audio/video materials, posters, etc.	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q15_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q15_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q15_1c

Q16 – 20 Information targeted to voting groups

Information targeted to voting groups	Page where text is written (multiple answers OK)		Amount of text (Please circle)			
Q16 Women voters	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q16_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q16_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q16_1c
Q17 Youth voters	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q17_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q17_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q17_1c
Q18 Specific occupations (i.e. white-collar workers)	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q18_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q18_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q18_1c
Q19 Specific geographic area (area, city, constituency, etc.) （Please write） _____	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q19_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q19_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q19_1c
Q20 Other (Please write) _____ (Q20_aa)	1. Top page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q20_1a
	2. Specific page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q20_1b
	3. Other page	☐ Yes	1	2	3	Q20_1c

Q21 Political Donations/Donations Through Websites （Multiple answers, OK）

21. Donation information posted on the website	☐ Yes	Q21=1 (yes)
21-1 Information regarding donating through post office bank account (account details, etc.)	☐ Yes	Q21_1
21-2 Information regarding donating through bank account (account details, etc.)	☐ Yes	Q21_2
21-3 User can donate online using a credit card.	☐ Yes	Q21_3
21-4 Donations through other means (please write) _____ Q21_4a)	☐ Yes	Q21_4
21-5 Online privacy policy (either statement or secure server)	☐ Yes	Q21_5

Q22 Communications with the electorate (Multiple answers, OK)

22-1	Online surveys regarding election issues	☐	Q22_1
22-2	Results of online surveys regarding election issues	☐	Q22_2
22-3	BBS or online discussion forums	☐	Q22_3
22-4	Mail address or mail link	☐	Q22_4
22-5	Posting/requesting comments from the electorate (any means)	☐	Q22_5
22-6	Contact information on the top page (phone/fax/address)	☐	Q22_6
22-7	Separate "contact page" or form	☐	Q22_7
22-8	E-mail newsletter	☐	Q22_8
22-9	Details regarding distribution of e-mail newsletter	☐ Irregular ☐ __times/month	Q22_9
22-10	Other （Please write） _____	☐	Q22_10

Q23 Linking information （Multiple answers, OK）

Q23_1	Specific link page (list of links)	☐	3.6.1

Link Types		ある	数	コード
Q23_2	Overseas governments/foreign governments	☐	_____個	Q23_2
Q23_3	national-level government bodies (Example: http://xxx.xxx.go.jp）	☐	_____個	Q23_3
Q23_4	Local government bodies	☐	_____個	Q23_4
Q23_5	Political parties	☐	_____個	Q23_5
Q23_6	Politicians/candidates	☐	_____個	Q23_6
Q23_7	Mass media	☐	_____個	Q23_7
Q23_8	Individuals and citizens' groups	☐	_____個	Q23_8
Q23_9	Government-run websites focusing on election-related news/education/information（Example: *Akarui Senkyo,* websites of local elections management boards）	☐	_____個	Q23_9
Q23_10	Groups other than citizens' groups (i.e. professional associations)	☐	_____個	Q23_10
Q23_11	Internet-specific websites that focus specifically on the election/political information （Example：election.co.jp, vote.com.jp, websites run by individuals）			Q23_11
Q23_12	Other (Please indicate) _____	☐	_____個	Q23_12

Any comments? If you notice any interesting features on the website (i.e. audio/video, manga/anime, etc.), please write them here.

Supplementary Coding Sheet
Coding Notes
July 13, 2003

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Explanation/examples of text amounts
(used for estimating text length)</td></tr>
<tr><td>（１）Example of under 50 characters</td><td>（２）Example of between 51 and 200 characters</td><td>（３）Example of over 200 characters</td></tr>
<tr><td>海外在住の日本人が衆参両院選の比例代表で投票できるようにする在外選挙法（改正公職選挙法）が２４日午前</td><td>海外在住の日本人が衆参両院選の比例代表で投票できるようにする在外選挙法（改正公職選挙法）が２４日午前の参院本会議で賛成多数で可決、成立した。１９８４年に政府が法案を提出してから１４年ぶりに在外選挙制度が実現、約５６万人の在外有権者が２０００年以降の国政選挙で投票できることになる。政府は年内をめどに、具体的な投票手続きなどを定める政令を策定する方針。ただ、今回の制度改正では選挙区選挙は見送られており</td><td>（２）よりも多い</td></tr>
</table>

Abbreviations:

Top：Refers to information about a certain issue(s) on the top page of the website (not the entry page/introduction page). May include links to other pages within the site for more information.
Specific: There is a specific page on the website devoted to that issue.
Other：Refers to pages that may have a list of issues/information (more than one issue on a page of the website).

Sample Words

Personal opinion: Policy, political measures, opinion, vision, perspective, aspiration, thoughts, objectives, thoughts, proposals, themes, concepts, dreams, beliefs, principles, recommendations, etc.
Campaign promises：Public pledge, promise

Note 1

Politician uses phrases such as "*to omou*" or "*o kangaeru*" → these are not public pledges or promises, but any length of text regarding the politician's opinion/thinking about specific issues. May also be words such as *shiten, vision, shucho, rinen*. Please code appropriately using the following questions:

- Is his/her opinion on the top page?（for example XX-*ni tsuite, watashi no kangae…*）
- Is his/her opinion on a specific page for **each** issue?（Example：A specific page devoted to agricultural policy）
- Is his/her opinion about these issues on a general issues page with his/her opinion about other issues as well?

Please check the check box ☐ if "yes", then please estimate the amount of text using the 1-2-3 scale.

Note 2

- Public promises (*koyaku*), while difficult to describe, are usually are identified as such. These are not as common as phrases that describe the politicians' individual opinions (see note 1 above) and are more concrete. Example (English): "If I am elected I will …..".

Note 3

- The policies (*seisaku・taisaku*) are **clearly** marked as being those of the party. For example, "*XX to no kohosha toshite…XXto no YYni kannsuru taisaku o iji suru…*"

Please ask yourself the following questions to help you code:

- Does the candidate have the party policies, etc. on the top page？（Example: *XXni tsuite…YY-to ga JJ o kangaeru*, or a banner/button link to the party's policies）
- Does the candidate have the party policies, etc. on a specific page for **each** issue？（Example: a specific page for each issue, emphasizing that the information is the party's information about the issue）.
- Does the candidate have the party policies, etc. on a general issues page along with other issues??
- Is there a direct link to the party policies, etc. on the party website?

Note 4:

- These three categories ([personal opinion, public pledge, party policy) are **not** mutually exclusive. A candidate **may** have one, a combination of two, all three, or none on his/her web-site.

Note 5:

- In regards to issues, one of the matters that came up was how to code Q-and-A sections of the site. The decision was made as follows:
  - ➤ If the candidate has clearly specified that the questions have come from the public, or if it is unclear, then it is coded as "public comments" in the section for communications with the electorate.
  - ➤ If the candidate has clearly specified that (s)he is asking himself these questions (self interview?), then it is coded as issues.

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