Social Marketing at the Presidential Level

The 2008 election is being played out across new media. From the YouTube debates to the Facebook pages every candidate seems to have. I heard recently that Chelsea Clinton is asking everyone to “friend” her on Facebook, presumably so she can then have an email list of potential supporters for her mother. Today, I saw something very interesting. John McCain (or rather one of his campaigners) posted a question on LinkedIn. LinkedIn has a great tool called Answers. Through it, people can ask for advice and experts can share their knowledge. McCain used the Answers feature to ask what issues are top priority for Americans. I think this is brilliant on his campaign’s part. First, the campaign will receive some honest answers from Americans around the United States, some who probably would not have this type of access to a campaign. McCain will also create interest and some good will, because he is asking what is important. It makes his campaign look new media savvy as well.

In short, 2008 will show us just how effective social marketing can be. Obviously, campaigns think it is important. It helps raise visibility. The test will be in November and to see how many voters turn out, and why they turned out.