

2016

3RD GOVERNANCE SOCIAL MEDIA INDEX REPORT

RESPONSIBLE, TRANSPARENT & ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE



John Dramani Mahama

TWEETS 881 FOLLOWERS 234 FOLLOWING 304K LIKES 1

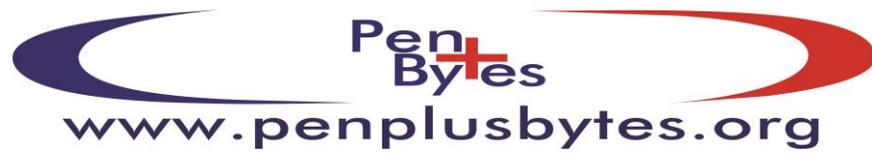
Tweets Tweets & replies Media

Who to follow

The NPP Campaign



The 3rd GSMI reveals a two horse race in social media performance between President John Mahama (NDC) and Nana Akufo Addo (NPP).



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INTRODUCTION

Ahead of the 2016 General Elections, the 7th consecutive elections since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1993, political parties have issued their party manifestos expressing various policy positions to the people of Ghana and embarked on an intensive political campaign to *sell* their messages to the electorate. The campaign message of the NDC hinges on its commitment for “putting people first; creating a strong economy for jobs and transformation; building infrastructure for accelerated development and transparent and accountable governance”. For the NPP, it is about an *agenda for change* through creating prosperity and equal opportunity for all; focusing on rural development and building a robust economy free of deficits. The CPP’s campaign is latched onto “social and economic policies, responsive governance and international relations.

Since June 2016, *Penplusbytes* has issued 2 **Governance Social Media Indices (GSMI)**. The first edition on June 30th, provided a baseline data on the presence of Political party leaders, Political parties and election management bodies on Twitter and Facebook. The 2nd Edition issued on 30th September 2016 measured how the political parties and leaders used social media tools (using the June baseline) for their benefits ahead of the 2016 elections. This edition of the GSMI provides an assessment of which political parties and leaders have the most presence on social media and the level of their engagement ahead of the elections based on Penplusbytes’ monitoring.

Key Findings

All the political party leaders are taking advantage of the real-time, two-way and cheap communication opportunities presented by social media to propagate their campaign messages in a very positive manner. The constant engagement with the youth who are the majority users of these platforms is very positive as it provides an opportunity for the youth to express themselves.

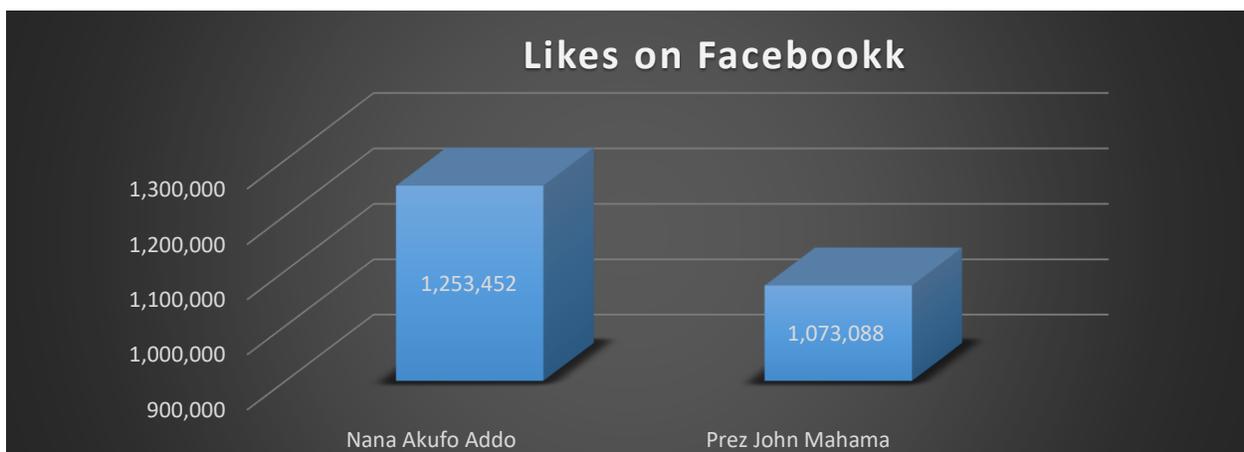
For President Mahama whose Facebook page is managed by the [FH Communications Bureau](#), the period has seen an intense focus of the NDC on the message for peace, affordable education, intended social policies as well as international relations with a focus on the passing of Fidel Castro and the outcome of the Gambian Elections and project commissioning. He has also used his platforms to encourage citizens to vote and go home to wait for the results rather than massing up at the polling stations and remain calm even in the face of any provocation. This is a positive sign

which indicates that the Ghanaian leader understands his audiences who are mainly youth and the fact that this segment of the population is very vulnerable to negative influences.

The NPP Flagbearer is mainly mobilizing his followers for the elections by urging them to carry on the campaign for change through the hashtag #ChangeIsComing to ensure his message reaches a wider audience in every *nook and cranny* of the country; revival of *collapsing industries* in line with the party's agenda for jobs; education on the proper *thumbprinting* of the ballot paper and a call for young voters to ponder the future of Ghana before they cast their ballots and invitation to campaign rallies. Penplusbytes sees this as positive in view of the fact that inappropriate thumb printing of ballots which contributes to the phenomenon of *rejected ballots* in Ghana's elections has assumed a worrying proportion... The following is the summary of the 3rd Governance Social Media Index.

SUMMARY OF THE 3RD GSMI

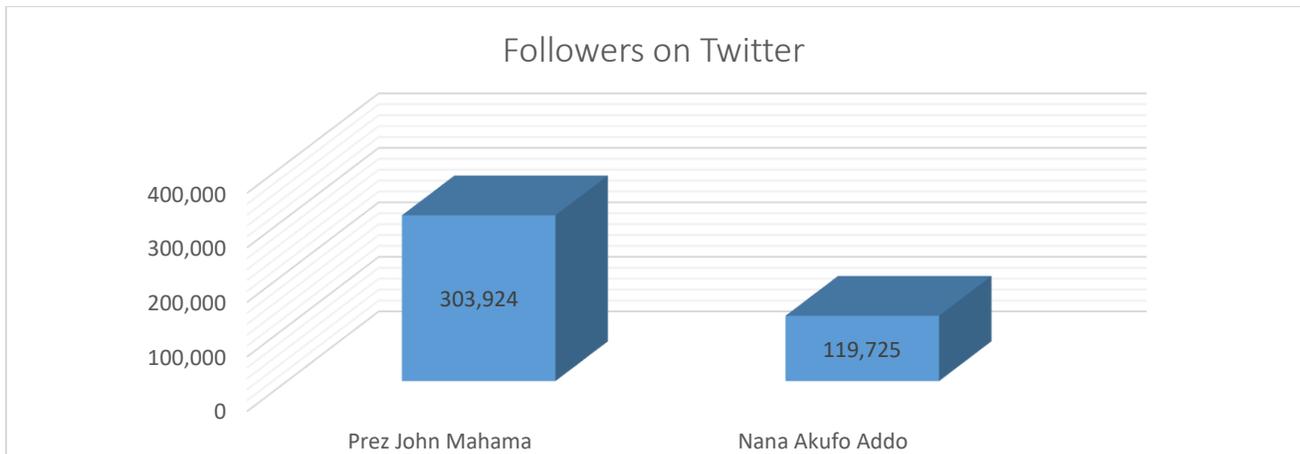
The 3rd GSMI reveals a two horse race between President John Mahama (NDC) and Nana Akufo Addo (NPP). As at 4th December, 2016, the opposition leader, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo was ahead of other presidential candidates with 1,253,452 likes on Facebook. Nana Akufo Addo's lead on Facebook gives him a larger audience who can receive his message at any given point in time for a maximum impact. He is closely followed by President, John Dramani Mahama with 1,073,088 likes on Facebook.



Nana Addo's lead on Facebook indicates that a larger audience appreciates him and can receive his message at any given point in time.

Followers on Twitter

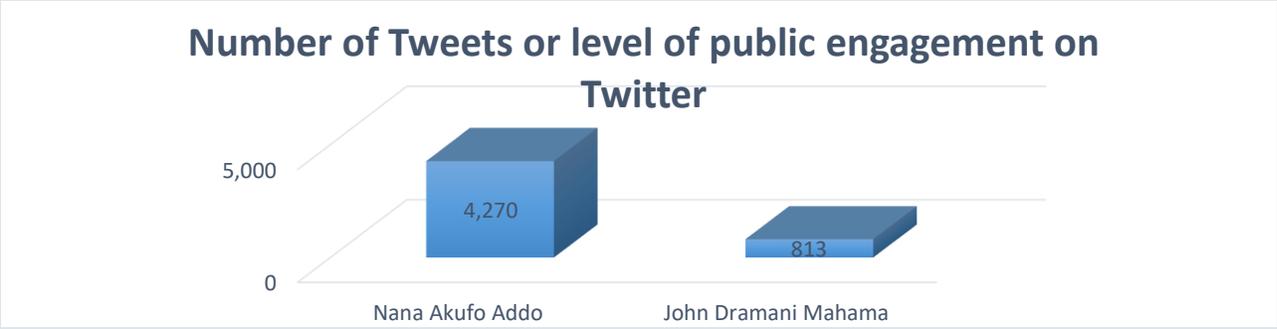
On the other hand President John Dramani Mahama has a commanding lead on Twitter with 303,924 followers, followed by Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo with 119,725 followers. This lead on Twitter gives the President a clear opportunity to make the critical impact through his messages because of the wider audience at virtually no cost to him.



This lead on Twitter gives the President a clear opportunity to make the critical impact through his messages because of the wider audience.

Use of Social Media for Public Engagement

In terms of the use of Twitter for public engagement, Nana Akufo Addo leads with 5372 Tweets on his platform followed by President Mahama's 881 Tweets on his page. The high engagement by Nana Akufo Addo on Twitter indicates his recognition of the fact that social media presents the cheapest opportunity for interaction with his constituents in real time. This is a positive development in Ghana's body politic particularly because cost of campaigns constitutes a huge drain on the resources of political parties.



On Facebook, all the presidential candidates recorded increased number of followers though the gains do not constitute any significant change from the 2nd GSMI. The increases, from first to the last in percentage terms are as follows: Mr Ivor Kobina Greenstreet gained by 261%; Dr Edward Mahama, 99%; Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings, 63%; Nana Akufo-Addo, 38%; President John Dramani Mahama, 14%; and Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, 3%. The gains made by Mr Ivor Kobina Greenstreet as noted in the 2nd GSMI is worthy of note as it suggests the CPP candidate has perhaps decided to pay more attention to his social media assets because of his peculiar situation as the only physically challenged person in the presidential race.

The performance of the candidates in terms of real numbers from the first to the last are as follows: John Dramani Mahama, 126, 975; Nana Akufo Addo 265,341; Ivor Kobina Greenstreet 21,732; Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings 11,199; Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom 7, 057; Dr Edward Mahama 3,377; Dr Hassan Ayariga 3,113.

The gains made by political party candidates on Twitter from first to the last in percentage terms is as follows: Dr. Hassan Ayariga, 450%; Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings, 131.46%; Ivor Kobina Greenstreet, 77.18%; John Dramani Mahama, 20.30%; Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, 15.41%; and Nana Akufo-Addo, 15.26%. The gains or performance from first to last in real terms is as follows: President John Dramani Mahama 45,430; Nana Akufo-Addo 14,352; Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom 6,721; Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings 280; Ivor Kobina Greenstreet, 254; Dr. Edward Mahama 115; Dr. Hassan Ayariga, 36. However, Nana Akufo-Addo has engaged more with the public or his followers on Twitter with, 4,637 tweets while the President Mahama has only tweeted 842.

CONCLUSION:

In the 2008 elections in the US, candidate Obama's high engagement on Twitter, Facebook and others gave him a huge advantage that translated in his historic victory in that election. Clearly, the advantages of social media such as its availability and its openness to a two way interaction in real time unlike the traditional media can achieve unprecedented results political contests. However, it remains to be seen if the high use of social media would benefit the Political Parties in the 2016 Elections as was the case in the US in 2008.