

The disco-dancing candidate

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In his youth, he played air guitar to the "French Elvis", Johnny Hallyday . But the once square Nicolas Sarkozy has reinvented himself as a moon-walking, jive-talking disco fiend courtesy of a popular website, discosarko.com

The site, which was launched in December, has attracted about 4,000 hits a day as people click on options such as KC and the Sunshine Band's Shake Your Booty to laugh as a computer-generated Sarkozy delivers a performance somewhere between John Travolta and Mr Bean.

But the mocking site is in fact part of an effort by Mr Sarkozy's marketers to make him seem in touch with the times. It is also a tool for collecting the contact details of potential supporters.

Arnaud Dassier, whose company manages part of Mr Sarkozy's cyber campaign , said the candidate himself gave the green light for his disco alter ego, after asking his wife Cecilia what she thought of it.

A spokeswoman from Mr Sarkozy's office said although the site was run by young "sarkonautes" who supported the candidate, it was "not at all being run by Mr Sarkozy's campaign headquarters".

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