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The informative purposes of social media updates shared by cybermedia with different media matrix. Analysis of ABC.es, RTVE.es, CadenaSER.com and Lainformacion.com

La finalidad informativa en las actualizaciones sociales de cibermedios con diversa matriz. El caso de ABC.es, RTVE.es, CadenaSER.com y Lainformacion.com

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ABSTRACT: This article examines how the Spanish cybermedia use Facebook and Twitter for their daily informative activity. Based on a content analysis – qualitative and quantitative variables—, this paper studies where the shared URLs link to, the relevance and the thematic profile of the news, and the probability of participation in each case. In addition, the selected sample helps to check if the media matrix influences the informative activity of online media on social platforms. This paper concludes how the socialized information works when it is published on Facebook and Twitter by cybermedia.

RESUMEN: Este artículo analiza el modo en que los cibermedios españoles utilizan Facebook y Twitter para su actividad informativa diaria. A partir de un análisis de contenido cualititativo-cuantitativo, se examina el destino habitual de las URLs, el grado de actualidad y el perfil temático de las noticias, y la probabilidad de participación. Además, se comprueba si la matriz condiciona la actividad informativa de los cibermedios en las plataformas sociales. Este análisis resuelve cómo funciona la diferente información que comparten los cibermedios en sus perfiles sociales.

Keywords: Cybermedia, media matrix, online journalism, Facebook, Twitter, social networks, participation, interactivity.

Palabras clave: cibermedios, matriz, periodismo online, Facebook, Twitter, redes sociales, participación, interactividad.

1. Introduction

The birth, and even more the generalization and ubiquity of social platforms¹ like Facebook and Twitter, have changed the media environment as known so far. Firstly traditional media, and after cybermedia², have integrated several tools for participation, with greater or lesser importance in the productive and informative routines. Now users create their own content and generate the massive traffic intended by the mass media, using for this aim mainly social media engagement tools.

Nowadays, the information published by online journalists has gone into the background³ because it is predominantly free, accessible and plural on the internet. In the meanwhile, media companies try to find a business model that allows them to monetize the growing audience⁴ reached by the free information published online, which is informatively shared and nurtured on Facebook and Twitter. However, mass media should also face a kind of self-criticism period in order to rethink their role as social agents: although they are still a benchmark for society, they are no longer necessary for it to keep informed on current affairs.

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¹ The term "social platform" refers jointly to Facebook and Twitter: the first is considered a social network, while the second is a microblogging service that enables social connection between people through short text messages. See: ROMERO DOMÍNGUEZ, Lorena Rosalía, MANCINAS, Rosalba, et al., "Estructura de la información y redes sociales online", in HERRERO, Julio César and PÉREZ-UGENA, Álvaro (ed.), Materiales para la innovación en estructura de la comunicación, Universitas, Madrid, 2010, p. 495.

² From this point, the term "cybermedia" is used to refer to online journalism, i.e. the electronic media that broadcast their content through the Internet, producing and / or managing reporting, in all its shapes and forms. About the characteristics of the cybermedia, see: LÓPEZ, Xosé, GAGO, Manuel and PEREIRA, Xosé, "Modelos de ciberperiodismo gallego: de la definición a la consolidación de un nuevo entorno", *Zer*, n° 14, May, 2003; ALONSO, Jaime, "Cibermedios: conceptualización y tipologías", in CABRERA GONZÁLEZ, M. Ángeles (coord.), *Evolución tecnología y cibermedio*, Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones, Zamora, 2010, pp. 32-36.

³ Cfr. CEREZO, José M. and ZAFRA, Juan Manuel, "El impacto de internet en la prensa", in *Cuadernos Sociedad de la Información*, nº 3, Fundación Auna, April, 2003, p. 24.

⁴ Cfr. CASERO-RIPOLLÉS, Andreu, "Prensa en internet: nuevos modelos de negocio en el escenario de la convergencia", *El profesional de la información*, vol. 19, nº 6, 2010, p. 595.

2. Theoretical background

Even before their first decade of life, Facebook and Twitter have acquired a significant potential for media, primarily as tools to contact and interact with users and sources, disseminate information, and monitor issues and the own activity⁵. These social platforms, evolved from traditional forms of communication⁶, are able to highlight relationships that would be considered weak in the offline world⁷. In addition, their massive communication tools⁸ help spread information quickly⁹, in order to battle the limitations of consumer attention¹⁰ when consuming information¹¹ on the Internet.

2.1. Social platforms as agents of change for journalism

Some researchers have spent years studying how individual nodes (users) behave and connect together (relationships) in these dynamic environments and in constant evolution known as social platforms. They have become social communication systems based on a philosophy of membership and participation, and on the idea of collaboration and attention that allows the emergence and use of the collective knowledge that characterizes the Web 2.0¹⁵, in which, as it happens on social networks the ultimate goal is sharing the connection of the collective knowledge.

⁵ About the main uses of social platforms in the media, see: HEALD, Emma, "Twitter for journalists and newsrooms: sourcing, publicising, connecting", published on June 29th, 2009, http://www.editorsweblog.org/analysis/2009/06/twitter_for_journalists_and_newsrooms_so.php; Labàpart, "Join the conversation: How Spanish journalists are using social media", Estudio de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M), 2011, http://www.labapart.org/breaking_news.html; HERRERO-CURIEL, Eva, "El periodismo en el siglo de las redes sociales", in *Revista de Comunicación Vivat Academia*, february, year XIV, Special number, 2012, pp. 1.113-1.128.

⁶ About the evolution of social networks, see: LEIVA, Javier, *Redes sociales. Situación y tendencias en relación a la información y la documentación*, Baratz, 2009, http://bibumu2.pbworks.com/f/INFORME+Redes+Sociales.pdf; MERODIO Juan, *Marketing en redes sociales*, 2010. p. 108, http://www.juanmerodio.com/2010/nuevo-libro-marketing-en-redes-sociales-mensajes-de-empresa-para-gente-selectiva/

⁷ About social platforms, see José Luis Orihuela's post "Las redes sociales en Internet", published on October 13th, 2008, http://newlands-2punto0.wikispaces.com/redes+sociales; FERNÁNDEZ, Sonia, "Redes sociales. Fenómeno pasajero o reflejo del nuevo internauta", *Telos*, nº 76, July-September, 2008; LEIVA, Javier, *op cit*, p. 5.

⁸ See *The Economist*, "Too much buzz", published on December 31st, 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/21542154

⁹ Cfr. GILLMOR, Dan, We, the media. Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People, O'Reilly Media Sebastopol (California), 2004, p. 42.

¹⁰ AERCO points out that the success or failure of a company doesn't depend anymore on the ownership of the content, but the time and the experiences related for users. This phenomenon is considered typical of the current economy of attention: the scarcest resource is not the offer anymore but the time. Cfr. AERCO and Territorio Creativo, La función del Community Manager. Cómo las empresas están organizándose para crear y hacer crecer sus comunidades, Madrid, 2009, p. 18.

¹¹ DEBROUWERE, Stijn, *Fungible*, published on May 4th, 2012, http://stdout.be/2012/05/04/fungible/12 Cfr. LEIVA, Javier, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹³ Cfr. CAMPOS FREIRE, Francisco, "Las redes sociales trastocan los modelos de los medios de comunicación tradicionales", *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 63, 2008, pp. 287-293.

¹⁴ Ferrera highlights the use of online tools, as Reddit or Digg, that serve to promote news socially and to organize and exploit the collective knowledge. According to Estalella (2005), these tools help in filtering and ranking joint contributions. Cfr.: ESTALELLA, Adolfo, "Pobrecito hablador. Conflictos por la libre

However, the fact that cybermedia use these social media engagement tools does not mean that they employ them in order to improve the conversation with readers¹⁸ or that this use seeks an increase of the quality¹⁹ of the service. In fact, despite the journalistic potential of social platforms, they do not solve the crisis in the media business, more related to a loss of credibility²⁰, which has been irrefutable while access and distribution of information was difficult²¹, unlike the current situation of *infoxication*²².

The diminishing credibility in the journalistic business and the emergence of self-communication tools²³ have resulted in a new interpretation of the social reality: according to the futurist Watts Wacker, nowadays the real meaning of news is based on "knowing what other people think they mean"²⁴. In this sense, Joy Mayer²⁵ points out that, in the current media landscape, journalism should consider identifying and connecting with people as one of their classic professional obligations²⁶. This is because the Internet has evolved from a network of pages to a network of people and relationships, where the direct consumption of media content has been reduced and the interest in interacting with others has increased. The State of the News Media 2012 refers to this when it states: "If searching for news was the most prominent development

participación en una comunidad colaborativa", *Athenea Digital*, nº 7, spring, 2005; PISANI, Francisco, "Web 2.0: Tres ideas sencillas, ocho escalas y un reto mayor", published on October 8th, 2006, http://www.francispisani.net/; FERRERAS, Eva M., "Nuevas herramientas en el ecosistema digital. La promoción social de noticias en castellano. Análisis de Menéame", *Comunicación y Pluralismo*, nº 8, July-December, 2009, pp. 155-167.

- ¹⁵ About the integrative potential of Web 2.0 through mobile technologies, see: HERNÁNDEZ-GARCÍA, Ángel, IGLESIAS-PRADAS, Santiago, *et al.*, "La Web en el móvil. Tecnologías y problemática", *El profesional de la información*, vol. 18, n° 2, March-April, 2009, p. 140.
- ¹⁶ About the differences between online conventional media and other means for self-communication, see: CAMPOS FREIRE, Francisco, LÓPEZ CEPEDA, Ana María, and OTERO SANTIAGO, Lorena, "Tudo redes sociales y personales vs medios convencionales. Diferencias en el tratamiento informativo", *Prisma.com*, nº 12, 2010, p. 2.
- ¹⁷ ORIHUELA, José Luis, "La hora de las redes sociales", *Nueva Revista*, nº 4, 119, 2008, p. 62.
- ¹⁸ Cfr. MESSNER, Marcus, LINKE, Maureen and EFORD, Asriel, "Shoveling tweets. An analysis of the microblogging engagement of traditional news organizations", *ISOJ Journal*, 2 (1), 2012.
- ¹⁹ Cfr. GALLARDO CAMACHO, Jorge and JORGE ALONSO, Ana, "La baja interacción del espectador de vídeos en internet: caso YouTube España", *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, nº 65, 2010; SÁNCHEZ GONZÁLEZ, María, "Efecto de la tecnología sobre la participación de las audiencias", in CABRERA, M. Ángeles (coord.), *Evolución tecnológica y cibermedios*, Comunicación Social, Zamora, 2010, p. 102.
- ²⁰ Cfr. ALMIRÓN, Nuria, "Los valores del periodismo en la convergencia digital. Civic Journalism y quinto poder", *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, nº 61.
- ²¹ Cfr. SKOLER, Michael, "Why the news media became irrelevant and how social media can help", Nieman Reports: *Let's talk: Journalism and Social Media*, Harvard University, vol. 63, n° 3, autumn, 2009.
- ²² José Cervera highlights the economy of attention as a key aspect of the usual infoxication on the internet, where users become intoxicated by an excess of information that keeps them from differentiating between what is relevant or crucial, and the irrelevant or banal. Cfr.: CERVERA, José, "El suicidio más cruel", published on February 14th, 2007, http://blogs.20minutos.es/retiario/2007/02/14/el-suicidio-mas-cruel/
- ²³ Cfr. CAMPOS FREIRE, Francisco, LÓPEZ CEPEDA, Ana María, and OTERO SANTIAGO, Lorena, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- ²⁴ GILLMOR, Dan, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- ²⁵ Cfr. MAYER, Joy, "Engaging Communities. Content and conversation", *Nieman Reports: Links that bind us*, vol. 65, n° 2, summer, 2011, p. 13.
- ²⁶ In the book *The Elements of Journalism*, Kovach and Rosenstiel propose nine principles to restore the credibility of journalists, which are based on the pursuit of truth and verification of information. Cfr. KOVACH, Bill and ROSENTIEL, Tom, *Los elementos del periodismo*, El País, Madrid, 2003.

in the last decade, today news sharing is among the most important", with Facebook and Twitter leading this trend²⁷.

At this juncture, the media are forced to change search for recommendations, since what matters is the content that is shared and redistributed, even if it is consumed outside their own websites²⁸. In addition, new consumer habits affect both business model²⁹ and the composition and hierarchy of the content. On one hand, the media are facing the loss of power as informative gatekeepers replacing the traditional fragmentation of discourse by a fragmentation of the message³⁰, as it happens in social networks where little portions of information become the currency exchange³¹. Thereby, the news is no longer the basic unit of journalism: "the constant flow of facts, data and statements has become the backbone of the current era of postjournalism"³².

On the other hand, online media keep using the social networks –as Facebook and Twitter– primarily to disseminate news, multiply their presence or visibility, and increase websites traffic³³ and interactivity. Furthermore, these platforms allow the media to publish new content for different purposes, such as corporate or promotional³⁴ information, seeking to entertain or even enhance community involvement, among others. This combination of contents helps to satisfy the desire for distraction³⁵ of users who consume news on social platforms, which are expected to serve as a source of information and entertainment –with interesting, rated and reviewed information–³⁶.

²⁷ Cfr. MITCHELL, Amy and ROSENTIEL, Tom, "The State of the News Media 2012", *An annual report on American Journalism*, The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2012.

²⁸ Cfr. NOGUERA, José Manuel, "Redes sociales como paradigma periodístico. Medios españoles en Facebook", *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, nº 65, 2010; VARELA, Juan, "Periodismo mutante", *Telos*, nº 86, Fundación Telefónica, 2011.

²⁹ Sobre algunos de los modelos de negocio representativos en los cibermedios nativos, véase About some of the representative business models on native cybermedia, see GARCÍA-AVILÉS, José Alberto and GONZÁLEZ ESTEBAN, José Luis, "Cibermedios nativos españoles: explorando modelos de rentabilidad", *Trípodos*, nº 30.

³⁰ Cfr. LARA, Tíscar, "Personismo de portada en la fragmentación del ecosistema mediático", *Sphera Pública*, nº 10, 2010, p. 95.

³¹ Cfr. CEREZO, José M., "Hacia un nuevo paradigma. La era de la información fragmentada", *Telos*, nº 76, 2008.

³² Bernardo Gutiérrez proposes a "manifesto posperiodístico" to review the current job of the journalists, whose work no longer has the monopoly of production and distribution of information. This report, which sets out the principles that characterize this changing journalism, is updated in a collaborative way on the wiki-document http://piratepad.net/rergptawab. Fuente: GUTIÉRREZ, Bernardo, "Un manifiesto posperiodístico", published on April 28th, 2012, http://www.clasesdeperiodismo.com/2012/04/28/un-manifiesto-posperiodistico/ Cfr. Tyndallreport.com, published on March 1st, 2012, http://tyndallreport.com/date/2012/3/01/

³³ Cfr. BERNAL TRIVIÑO, Ana Isabel, "Redes sociales y medios de comunicación", *IV Congreso de la Cibersociedad: Crisis analógica, futuro digital*, 2009.

³⁴ Regarding these corporative contents, Marina Santin (2006) states that self-referential news are common in the Spanish journalism, not because they are newsworthy, but they serve as a space for self-advertising, designing their public image or branding, and publishing promotions. This study reveals that the topics that lead to a greater number of self-referential contents are: the issue of supplements, the awards granted or received by the group, promotions, meetings and conferences where the own media are involved, new books or editorial products, and audience measurement data. According to Barranquero (2011), unfortunately self-reference is rarely used to show to the audience the "backroom of the media", i.e. the interests of the corporation, their professional routines or to admit mistakes in the journalistic practice. Cfr.: SANTÍN, Marina, "La autorreferencia como estrategia de promoción: Periodismo o publicidad", Zer, nº 20, 2006; BARRANQUERO, Alejandro, "Autorreferencia mediática y sobreabundancia informativa. Un estado de la cuestión", AE-IC Comunicació i Risc, 2012, p. 9.

³⁵ Cfr. DEBROUWERE, Stijn, op. cit.

³⁶ Cfr. CAMPOS FREIRE, Francisco, op. cit.

2.2. The journalistic use of Facebook and Twitter in Spain

Broadly speaking we can conclude that social platforms are changing journalism in three key areas: access to more (and faster) sources, the participation of users and the business model³⁷. As with users, in this connected environment cybermedia initially devoted most of their efforts to Facebook. In 2011, the social network created by Mark Zuckerberg was the preferred social platform to follow the Spanish online media (with nearly three million fans), but the same year Twitter (2.4 million followers of cybermedia profiles) experienced a higher growth. The total number of users, nearly 5.5 million, tripled the previous year's data³⁸.

During the last years, despite the fact that Facebook maintained its leadership in terms of volume of users, Twitter succeed in terms of engagement³⁹ with the cybermedia, mainly informative media as Varela says⁴⁰. In 2011, Spanish journalists and the media business already had a clear preference for the micro-blogging platform⁴¹. However, in 2012 Twitter became the first social platform for Spanish fans of online media on social networks⁴², mainly for informative purposes⁴³.

But Facebook is still interesting for the media, due to its greater number of users and a higher likelihood of clicking on news⁴⁴. However, the facility to propagate real-time information explains why Twitter has become an ideal ecosystem⁴⁵ for spreading breaking news directly from the information sources. As a result, in 2012 the number of followers of Spanish cybermedia on social networks grew significantly⁴⁶.

³⁷ "Cómo influyen las redes sociales en el periodismo", published on January 2nd, 2012, http://www.abc.es/20120102/medios-redes/abci-redes-sociales-periodismo-201201021214.html

³⁸ GAD3, "Informe 2012. Medios de comunicación en redes sociales", 2012.

³⁹ Although there is no single definition for the term engagement, this is often translated as participation, and points to the link that connects users with a brand and encourages them to interact. To calculate the engagement of an account, both Facebook and Twitter offer their own formulas, relating the volume of followers and participation (likes, comments and shares on Facebook, and retweets and replies on Twitter). However, this interpretation ignores the value of those followers committed to the companies, who consume and recommend their information, but do not assess or comment them openly on social networks: they must be taken into account when calculating the ratio of engagement of a brand on social networks, as Steve Buttry stated on a direct and personal Twitter query (March 26th, 2013).

⁴⁰ Cfr. VARELA, Juan, "Twitter cuadruplica el engagement de Facebook para los medios", published on October 3rd, 2012, http://periodistas21.blogspot.com.es/2012/10/twitter-cuadriplica-el-engagement-de.html

⁴¹ Labàpart, op. cit.

⁴² GAD3, op. cit.

⁴³ aDigital, "Uso de Twitter en España 2012", 2012.

⁴⁴ According to a study by Mashable, Twitter users are more likely to share an article before reading, while Facebook users are more likely to click on the article rather than share it directly. See: MarketingDirecto.com, "Para los medios, ¿es mejor compartir sus contenidos en Twitter o en Facebook?", published on March 30th, 2011, http://www.marketing/para-los-medios-%C2%BFes-mejor-compartir-sus-contenidos-en-twitter-o-en-facebook/

⁴⁵ CASTILLO, Carlos, MENDOZA, Marcelo and POBLETE, Bárbara, "Information credibility on Twitter", IW3C2, March-April, 2011, pp. 675-684.

⁴⁶ Gad3, op. cit.

Despite this increase in audiences, users themselves say that consumption of news through social networks is supplementary to search news on media websites⁴⁷, although researching in Spain revealed that it could be leading to a substitute consumption⁴⁸. Anyhow, the effectiveness of content shared on these platforms depends entirely on the strategy set by each online media.

3. Objectives and research methodology

This paper analyzes how a sample of four Spanish cybermedia, each with a different media matrix, use the social media engagement tools, specifically Facebook and Twitter platforms, to meet their daily reporting activities.

3.1. Object of study

To select the sample, it was taken as a main reference the audience measurement data published by Nielsen Online on January, 2011. However, other aspects regarding the selected cybermedia were taken into consideration: i.e. the commitment to social innovation (exportable and socialized contents), offering different formats and services (a la carte / on demand), or investing in improving participation (leading their own community of users), among other developments. The selected cybermedia –according to their media matrix– were:

- Printed media matrix: ABC.es, http://www.abc.es
- Audiovisual media matrix (television): RTVE.es, http://www.rtve.es
- Radio media matrix: CadenaSER.com, http://www.cadenaser.com
- Online native cybermedia⁴⁹: Lainformacion.com, http://www.lainformacion.com

3.2. Research Objectives

After a first analysis of the documentation and the object of study, we set the following research objectives:

Finding out what kind of news was the most posted on Facebook and Twitter by the selected cybermedia, and how users interacted with such information.

Identifying the differences and similarities in the use of Facebook and Twitter by the selected cybermedia, according to their nature (printed, audiovisual and radio media

⁴⁷ MITCHELL, Amy, ROSENTIEL, Tom, and CHRISTINA, Leah, "What Facebook and Twitter mean for news", *The State of the News Media 2012*, *An annual report on American Journalism*, The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2012.

⁴⁸ Although the volume of users on Facebook is still much higher than on the microblogging service, a study by The Cocktail Analysis (2012) notes that there is a trend among Spanish Internet users to substitute the consume of online media for updates on Twitter. See: The Cocktail Analysis, "4^a Oleada Observatorio de Redes Sociales", 2012.

⁴⁹ The native cybermedia or digital natives are those media born directly on the Internet, without any analog reference (printed or audiovisual media matrix).

matrix, and online digital native), and especially in specific tasks: gatekeeping, purpose of the content, etc.

After analyzing the results, determining the purpose that the selected cybermedia give to their presence on Facebook and Twitter, i.e. as platforms where republishing and reporting, or more focused on relationships, corporate information, service and / or entertainment.

3.3. *Methodology*

Based on the analysis of several qualitative and quantitative values, the activity on Facebook and Twitter of the four selected cybermedia was recorded and classified, for a week (from 17th to 23rd of October, 2011). Using a datasheet created ad hoc for each platform, the information and data needed were collected in a descriptive way —mainly formal and structural aspects of the social profiles, related to the contents published, and the interaction and participation of audiences—.

The profiles analyzed on Facebook and Twitter were:

- ABC.es (facebook.com/abc.es @abc es)
- RTVE.es (facebook.com/rtve @rtve)
- CadenaSER.com (facebook.com/cadenaser @La SER)
- Lainformacion.com (facebook.com/lainformacion @la informacion)

4. Results

Before revising the analysis of social profiles, it is important to explain how the results were calculated and highlight some of the key values that determined most of the findings of the field work.

4.1. How to measure social activity and calculate the participation rate (PR)

Here are some values that summarize the activity and the community size of the selected cybermedia on Facebook and Twitter during the week of analysis, and the volume of updates and tweets published.

Table 1. Results of analysis on Facebook and Twitter profiles

	FACEBOOK		TWITTER				
	Fans	Updates	Followers	Following	Tweets		
ABC	54.365	37	59.021	2.423	193		
RTVE	78.738	38	182.382	65	253		
LaSER	50.345	113	56.173	343	256		
LaINFO	30.037	33	203.751	385	293		

Average fans and *followers/following*; updates/tweets per platform. October, 2011. Source: own elaboration.

It was also necessary to restrict the forms of participation that would be manually recorded on each platform. On the one hand, only automatic retweets where analyzed in Twitter, leaving aside the custom retweets. On the other hand, on the date of analysis Facebook users could only interact with contents by using the like button, commenting and sharing the information with other fans. We also included a fourth way of interaction in Facebook, which refers to the assessment (like) of comments: this option helps users to recognize interesting responses of other readers, and thus assessing the relevance (and depth) of the conversation.

These forms of participation are recorded in order to calculate the average participation rate (PR)⁵⁰ on both platforms, or even to extract more specific PR values, i.e., depending on the purpose of the update or the section of the own website linked to that content. To calculate the PR value, it is necessary to add up the total interactions on the contents of one profile, and then dividing the result by the number of users⁵¹. Those interactions relate to the different forms of participation on each platform: automatic retweets on Twitter, and the likes, comments, likes on comments and shared on Facebook. The relevance of this participation rate is based on the possibility of calculating the number of users needed⁵² to achieve a unique interaction of any kind, and thus to compare the probability of registering participation on the news published by the selected cybermedia on their social profiles.

4.2. Type of content in the shared URLs

One of the initial questions in this research was whether the analyzed social profiles shared interesting or useful links with readers, even if these URLs do not generate more traffic to the own website. The total number of URLs published in each case was considered as a reference to calculate the percentage of URLs that linked to the own website, to own profiles on Facebook or Twitter (self-reference), to own sections or programs (corporative social profiles, blogs, etc..), to external information (not covered by the media), or to connect with other content (i.e., home page, LIVE service, A la Carte...).

The Facebook results show a clear preference for URLs mostly linked to the own websites: ABC.es published two links to its own fan page and one to the fan page of one of its programs/sections; RTVE.es linked once to its own fan page; Lainformacion.com shared its Facebook profile three times, and all the URLs published by CadenaSER.com were linked to its website.

The results on Twitter are not too different, but there is more variety.

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⁵⁰ NOGUERA, José Manuel, *op. cit.*; HERRERO GUTIÉRREZ, Javier, "Los programas deportivos de la radio española en la red social Facebook: espacio de promoción, lugar de encuentro... ¿medidor de audiencia?", *Área Abierta*, nº 28.

⁵¹ Since the analysis was performed for seven days, we calculated the average users during the period.

⁵² To find out the probability of users to participate on a social profile, the PR value must be calculated and divided by 1 (the unit): the result shows the number of users that the cybermedium needs to get at least once a follower participation on their social profile. Thus the higher the PR value, the smaller the number of users needed to obtain an answer and, therefore, the likelihood of participation is greater.

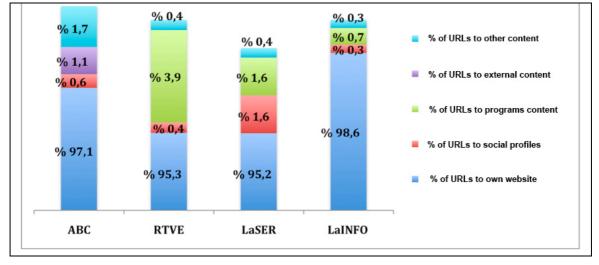


Figure 1. Twitter. Type of content in the shared URLs

October, 2011. Source: own elaboration.

According to Figure 1, most of the URLs shared by the cybermedia on Twitter linked to their own site, but also to social profiles and websites of programs and sections. ABC.es was the only one that published an external link: it shared the social profile of the television channel Al Jazeera (@ AJEnglish), after the death of Gaddafi and the dissemination of images of his death.

4.3. Objectives and topics when selecting news

In order to know the type of information shared on social platforms by the cybermedia, we analyzed all updates for seven days and made a double entry of data: all updates were classified according to their informational purposes and the theme section where news were published on the web. The results of participation in each update served also to estimate user interest for different contents.

4.3.1. *Informational purposes and participation in social updates*

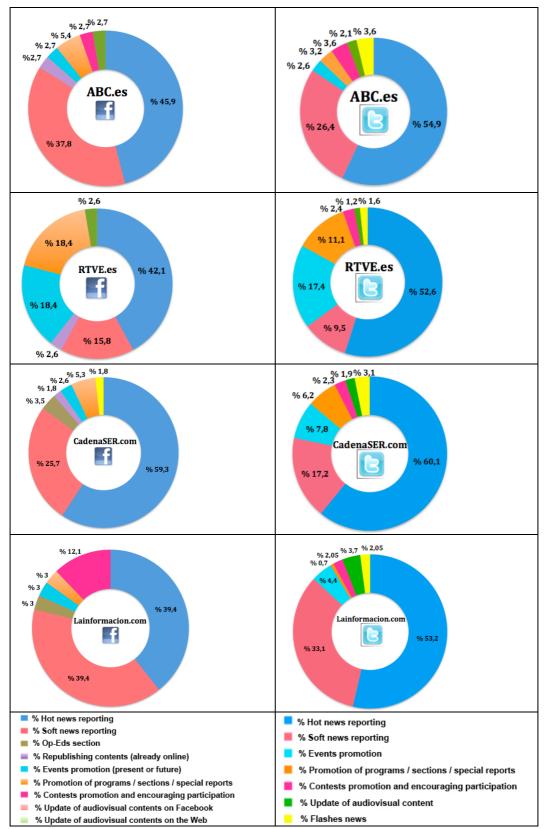
The following list of objectives was established in order to classify the informative purposes of cybermedia when publishing content on Facebook and Twitter, from breaking news to contests promotion messages. This has led to group similar contents on each media.

- Hot news reporting (agenda setting, hard news)
- Soft news reporting (timeless or lighter news)
- Broadcasting or promotion of Op-Eds section
- Republishing contents already online (adding or not new information)
- Events promotion (digital interviews, online meetings...)
- Promotion of services and products of the holding company
- Promotion of theme sections, special editions and programs of the media group
- Contests promotion and encouraging participation (ads, questions, etc.)

- Update of audiovisual content formats (on Facebook, Twitter or the website)
- News flashes
- Other

The updates on Facebook and Twitter were classified considering the categories listed above, although not all of them appeared in the results of each online medium. The same analysis of updates was developed on Facebook and Twitter, in order to be able to compare the way in which cybermedia inform through the social networks, and also to check if they modify and adapt their objectives —apparently— on each platform. Below it is the distribution of categories related to the reporting activity on both platforms.

Figure 2. Facebook and Twitter. % Informative purposes



October, 2011. Source: own elaboration.

4.3.1.1. Facebook results: objectives and trends in the social updating

According to the Figure 2, some conclusions arise about the informative purpose of cybermedia when publishing on Facebook:

CadenaSER.com mainly published hot news on Facebook. Beyond the use for information dissemination, it seems likely that this trend is due, in part, to the interest manifested by its followers to consume and discuss current issues on this fan page – against those who consider this platform for soft news and purposes less related to the media agenda—. The other big percentage of its updates are more timeless, but also relatively related with today. The remaining updates refered to programs, op-eds contents, and some entries to encourage participation on present or future events of the online media, such as digital interviews or online chats with celebrities and well-known people.

ABC.es and Lainformacion.com recorded a similar behavior regarding the publication of information on Facebook: most of their updates were hot news and other news more timeless or with less attachment to the media agenda. However, there was a significant difference between the two profiles for all other topics. ABC.es used the remaining percentage to output a variety of contents somewhat disjointed, while Lainformacion.com seemed to follow a more concrete and defined strategy: over a 12% of the remaining percentage was dedicated exclusively to encourage participation, with surveys promotion, digital meetings on Facebook or Twitter, or simple and addictive games related in someway to soft news or timeless issues.

Finally, RTVE.es standed out from the rest of the sample as most of its updates refered to four categories: hot news, promotion of programas and future events, and some timeless news. It is important to highlight that, despite it might work as one single, independent and autonomous profile, RTVE.es follows a different strategy: representing and giving visibility to all parts of the company. Although this strategy at the corporate level may be appropriate, it may also cause some reluctance among followers who perceive that this profile is used more to promote spaces and programs, than to report on current issues, talk to its massive audience –since it represents a public corporation– or entertain fans with more timeless but attractive content.

4.3.1.2. Twitter results: objectives and trends in the social updating

According to the Figure 2, some conclusions arise about the informative purpose of cybermedia when publishing on Twitter:

ABC.es reported mainly about current issues, although the percentage of soft news and hot news remained similar on both platforms. However, on Twitter it posted news flashes, increased the number of updates to encourage participation and reduced the promotion of theme sections, probably because on this platform these sections report and relate with their own followers more independently from the main profile —as it happens in Facebook—.

Regarding RTVE.es, the contents distribution and informative objectives remained relatively the same for both platforms, although the analysis revealed a different behavior on Twitter. RTVE.es was the second cybermedium in the sample with the largest increase of hot news on Twitter, mainly by reducing timeless content: in this sense, it is important to remark that one of the purposes of this online media on Twitter is becoming a source of breaking and hot news. Another number that decreased in the

microblogging platform was related to the promotion of programs, which was reduced from almost 20% on Facebook to a little over 10% on Twitter. One reason for this change may be the less attention these programs need on Twitter, where they inform and interact directly with their followers, more independently from the main account, while in Facebook RTVE.es acts as an umbrella for all activity of the Corporation. Besides, on Twitter RTVE.es maintains its effort to attract the fans interest, give visibility and drive traffic to –present or future– events, which are developed by the cybermedium and that ocasionally include promotional messages, contests or other actions that encourage participation.

When analyzing the activity of CadenaSER.com on Facebook and Twitter, it seemed significant that the effort to communicate hot news on both platforms was apparently the same. This result helped to justify, or explain, the interest on current issues shown by its followers on Facebook, where it reached the highest levels of participation. The rest of its Twitter activity could be summarized in four main changes: more news flashes, less timeless content, and mainly more promotion of programs and events: while the rest of the sample didn't show any important change on this value, CadenaSER.com tripled the number of updates about own events or related to the media company. One possible explanation for this could be that these programs have their own fan page, their own user community on Facebook and call their own fans to events, although the fan page of CadenaSER.com helps also to increase their visibility. However, on Twitter the activity of these programs was based more on the distribution of contents and less on the community, so the main social profile is also responsible for promoting programs activities, on the web or on air.

According to the above results, the audiovisual media matrix seems to influence on the social strategy of RTVE.es and CadenaSER.com: there is a clear interest in disseminating and promoting programs and corporate events. However, the most significant when crossing the conclusions obtained for each online media refers to the different way they approach this goal. On the one hand, RTVE.es used Facebook to give more visibility to the products of the medium (or the business group), while on Twitter RTVE.es reduced its efforts on corporate promotions and focused in becoming a source of breaking news and hot information. On the other hand, CadenaSER.com reversed this strategy: programs activity required greater support on Twitter, where the visibility of the cybermedium helped to disseminate updates about events and magazines, while on Facebook these programs had closed communities, with engaged users, making it less necessary to broadcast events from the main account.

Finally, Lainformacion.com was the media that recorded the highest increase in the volume of hot news posted on Twitter, up nearly by 14% comparing to Facebook. Although it showed a clear cut in the number of timeless content, the most significant changes were in the other updates. While the Facebook strategy encouraged participation, published more opinion content (humor, blogs, etc..) and promoted events and theme sections, on Twitter the strategy was more diffuse and complex: promoting events increased, contents of theme sections decreased and opinion articles were removed, while including news flashes and updating frequently with audiovisual content formats, what works best on the internet. Besides, it is possible that Lainformacion.com's preference for Twitter⁵³ as a reporting tool may affect the other sections on this social platform, which behaved more independently from the main account, contrary to what happened in Facebook.

⁵³ VARGAS, Esther, "Así maneja las redes sociales Lainformacion.com", published on January 17th, 2010, http://www.clasesdeperiodismo.com/2010/01/17/asi-maneja-las-redes-sociales-lainformacion-com/

4.3.1.3. Facebook and Twitter results: probability of participation according to the objectives in the social updating

In order to check how the posted contents actually worked for the selected cybermedia, it was necessary to previously calculate the participation rate by category, by adding all demonstrations of each category and dividing all by the followers average. The resulting number must be divided by one in order to estimate the number of users that every cybermedium needs to get at least one demonstration of participation on Facebook or Twitter.

Table 2. Facebook y Twitter. Probability of participation according to objectives of updating. Estimated number of users based on the participation rate

*	ABC		RTVE		LaSER	1	LaINFO	
	F	B	F	B	F	B	F	B
hot news	28	35,7	18,5	34,1	7,2	24,2	38,7	109,7
reporting soft news	26	ŕ						ŕ
reporting broadcast /	34	72,2	100	220,5	20,7	98,2	97,8	215,8
promotion of Op- Eds section	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	194,4	N/A	639,1	N/A
republishing	196,3	N/A	4.144,1	N/A	812	N/A	N/A	N/A
events promotion	1.132	2.270	225,6	436,3	184,4	302	2.145	2.953
promotion of programs / sections	293,9	378,3	133,7	430,1	90,5	488,5	1.201	33.958
contests and participation	394	556,8	N/A	1.403	N/A	5.617	411,5	16.979
update of audiovisual content								
formats on Facebook	823,7		1.968,5		N/A		N/A	
update of audiovisual content formats on the web	N/A	430,8	N/A	3.441	152,1	387,4	N/A	2.953
news flashes	N/A	166,3	N/A	80,2	N/A	141,1	N/A	309,7

^{*} This figure represents the number of users that every cybermedium needs to get at least one demostration of participation, i.e., using the *like* button, commenting or sharing the post. October, 2011. Source: own elaboration.

According to the Table 2, the activity of ABC.es on Facebook got good results with both hot and soft news, and also its fans greatly appreciated when republishing content-compared to the rest of the sample-, the contests and actions to boost participation. However, its followers on Twitter did not see much interest in timeless contents, though comparatively got the best results. Also regarding Twitter, ABC.es increased the number of updates to stimulate participation and got the best results in this category–encouraging participation—, despite its news flashes had the lowest results of the sample. ABC.es should decide and clarify if what it expects from this platform is actually what it is getting: even if ABC.es obtained good results of participation in general, users did not seem to be as interested in this profile for the latest information, an aspect that frequently is extremely important to the online media.

Regarding RTVE.es, the data show that both the profile on Facebook and Twitter were much more active with hot news that softer issues, with which the users found it hard to connect on both platforms. RTVE obtained the best results of participation on Facebook when promoting events and programs, whereas on Twitter the response of its followers to the news flashes was the most positive of the sample. This analysis confirms that Twitter followers choose RTVE.es especially as a source of the latest information and breaking news.

CadenaSER.com is the online media that performed best when publishing both hot and soft news on Facebook, although it is possible to confirm that its followers prefer Facebook to discuss about current issues. The timeless contents were less attractive on Twitter, where, however, CadenaSER.com obtained the best results when promoting present or future events, and good numbers when reporting audiovisual updates on the web and with the publication of news flashes.

Finally, Lainformacion.com obtained one of its best results on Facebook as fans reacted positively to the contests and dynamic actions, although in other categories remained the last of the sample. However, its followers on Twitter were interested mainly in timeless content, where it got similar values to RTVE.es, a better known cybermedium than the digital native. Although there was still a significant distance from the rest of the sample, Lainformacion.com was able to connect with its users better than ABC.es when promoting events on Twitter.

4.3.2. *Issues covered and probability of response in updates*

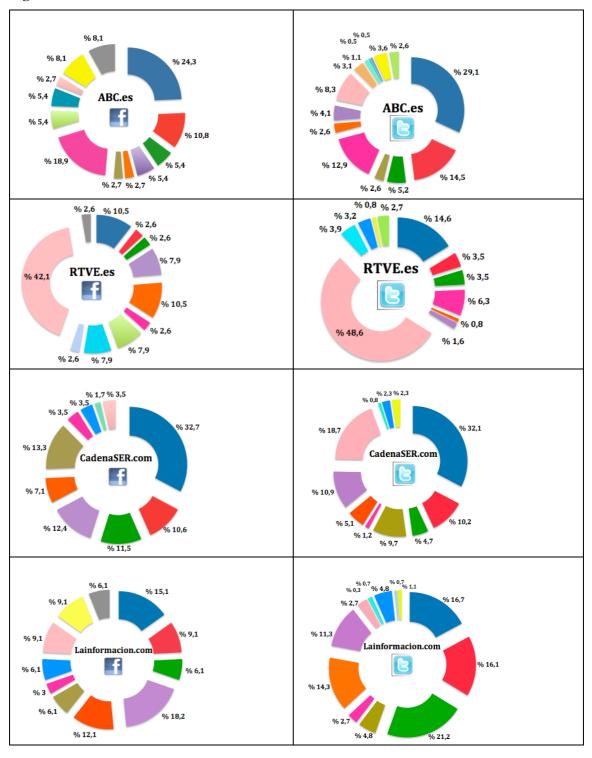
Beyond information purposes when updating social profiles, the selected cybermedia linked up mostly to sections or contents of their websites. However, not all did the same selection of information when updating their social accounts, or linked in the same proportion to the sections of their site. Besides, although their objective in each platform was a condition, this selection of information got also influenced by the social platform features and the interests of their community in certain topics. It is important to remark that any cybermedia can identify a better or worse behavior by monitoring news.

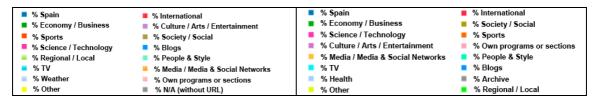
4.3.2.1. Facebook and Twitter results: sections covered

Below it is the contents distribution obtained from the analysis of all the updates on Facebook and Twitter by the four cybermedia in the sample. To do this it was necessary

to visit each of the links posted, in order to register the theme section that included or gathered such news. Note that the way cybermedia organize their own site greatly influences on this distribution —so a topic can be published in the Society section of a medium and in the Business section of another—. Also, the category "Other" acted as a multidimensional option, as it hosted URLs that linked to more general spaces or outside the site, such as the homepage or special reports, surveys on Facebook, a Twitter profile, etc.

Figure 3. Facebook and Twitter. Sections covered





October, 2011. Source: own elaboration.

According to the Figure 3, some conclusions arise about the sections covered by the selected cybermedia when publishing on Facebook and Twitter:

ABC.es maintained a similar selection of information on both platforms. In fact, the main difference was the greater volume of contents on technology –and from the *Medios y Redes* section– it posted on Facebook, where information from International and Spain sections was reduced; it also showed a greater interest in regional or local contents, usually closer to users. On the other hand, on Twitter ABC.es enhanced the publishing of international and Spanish information. Anyway, the cybermedium usually kept a similar selection of content on both platforms, and also the percentages were similar. Besides, ABC.es repeatedly shared on both platforms the link to its special report *ETA*, *medio siglo de Terror* (*ETA*, *half a century of Terror*).

Regarding the public corporation, RTVE.es adapted its thematic selection to each platform. On Facebook national informations were common –although less than on Twitter–, but also contents related to Culture, Sports, regional or local news, and specially about Television. Meanwhile, on Twitter RTVE.es increased the number of stories about Spain, Technology and, to a lesser extent, Sports, International, and blogs. Anyway, on both platforms most updates linked to own programs or web sections, as *A La Carta* (A La Carte service) or *Encuentros Digitales* (Digital Meetings), but also to special reports already shared sharply on both social platforms, about Spanish issues (like *Fin de la actividad armada de ETA –End of activity of the armed ETA*–, *Elecciones 20N –Elections 20N*–, and *Premios Príncipe de Asturas –Prince of Asturias Awards*–), and other international (*Revueltas en el mundo árabe –Riots in the Arab world*–).

CadenaSER.com also maintained a similar distribution in the content published on both platforms, with even similar percentages regarding the Spanish and international information. While most of the contents on Facebook refered to cultural, economic, social and sports news, on Twitter such information occupied less space due to the large percentage of tweets that tried to drive traffic to the web, for example to the audio section, surveys, live player, or special reports like *ETA*, *el final (ETA, the end)*.

Finally, also Lainformacion.com adapted its informative selection to each platform. On the one hand, most of its updates on Facebook refered to Culture but also to Spanish issues and the Sports section, and to a lesser extent related to international topics, blogs, and to some own spaces on the site, like the comic section or some special reports, like *Debate Joven 20N (Youth Debate 20N)* and *En territorio Bildu (In Bildu's territory)*. On the other hand, on Twitter Lainformacion.com focused on the Economy section, but also on national and international issues, sports and, to a lesser extent, cultural information. However, in contrast to the simplicity of its Facebook strategy, the rest of the activity on Twitter was distributed among several sections, even if some of them did not even have a presence on its Facebook, such as information on television or People & Style section.

4.3.2.2. Facebook and Twitter results: section participation

After analyzing the trends of the informative selection, it is shown below the estimated participation according to the theme of the publications. That is, it was calculated the greater or lesser likelihood of users to participate in contents from different sections, posted by the selected cybermedia.

Table 3. Facebook y Twitter. Section participation
Estimated number of users –needed to get at least one interaction– according to the section linked

section iniked									
Ť	*	ABC		RTVE		LaSER		LaINFO	
		f	B	f	B	f	B	f	F
İ	l Spain	60,7	64,9	97,8	218,4	10,2	41,9	78,8	332,4
Ī	International	163,3	100,4	661,7	810,6	59,9	116,1	164,1	510,7
Ť	Economics / Business	244,9	663,2	749,9	1.414	49,8	460,4	345,3	244,3
Ť	/Entertainment	214	670,7	152,6	2.568	84,9	416,1	326,5	792,8
Ť	Sports	572,3	1.405	132,3	36.476	89,3	195	177,7	623,1
Ţ	Society	632,2	1.135	NA	NA	44,2	121,8	509,1	1.050
Ī	 Science Technology	58,6	120	324	249,2	453,6	1.276,6	938,7	2.953
Ť	Own program or section	415	211,5	26,2	39,8	52,7	80,9	349,3	3.513

^{*}This figure represents the number of users that every cybermedium needs to get at least one demostration of participation, i.e., using the *like* button, commenting or sharing the post. October, 2011. Source: own elaboration.

Definitely CadenaSER.com was elected by a large majority of users to be up-to-date on what's current: this cybermedium standed out as a leader due to its ability to get participation and response in all categories. According to the above table, it was more likely that CadenaSER.com fans interacted with its information on Facebook than for other online media. Besides, users showed their preference for national affairs, Society and Economy news, some own sections, International issues, and to lesser extent sports information. On Facebook, only the Technology section kept being unsuccessful in terms of participation.

However, on Twitter the leadership of CadenaSER.com was significantly reduced, although its participation results were even better than most in the sample. Thus, the national information published kept attracting a lot of interest, though comparatively performed worse than on Facebook. Its fans prefered also to participate in the tweets of some own sections —as live broadcast—, and interact with International, Society and Sports news. But the interest went down with cultural and economic contents, and even less with scientific and technological information, which had the worst participation results for this online media on Twitter.

The case of ABC.es was significant on Facebook, as its most successful section covered Technology and Science, which got even greater participation than the national information. Apart from these sections, its Facebook fans found it harder to connect and

engage with contents: international news, cultural and economics were attractive to readers, and to a lesser extent some of its own sections. However, ABC.es should consider whether the fact that sports and social contents did not work properly is a consequence of the features of its user community, or perhaps this is due to the focus or content of news. Instead, Twitter followers were interested in other contents: mainly national issues achieved good results, then international affairs, and finally the technology information, and some own section. But the participation rate on Twitter was much lower: only economic and cultural contents got a third of the response they obtained on Facebook, while tweets on social and sports generated almost no interactivity.

Moreover, it is surprising the level of participation achieved by RTVE.es on Facebook when publishing corporative contents, although it is true that it uses this platform as the main channel to broadcast contents produced by all means of the Corporation. Although it ranked last on the graph in terms of participation on national contents, these were ones that worked best on its case, and to a lesser extent, sports, cultural and technological information. However, users were not interested, either by the form or the content, on international and business news: the public nature of this online media should encourage RTVE.es to take a change, at least to face the lack of interest on business issues, and to explain and disseminate basic economics to citizens through networks, creating better content as other cybermedia, social Lainformacion.com.

Additionally, RTVE.es followers on Twitter showed a different preference: own sections remained the most participated contents, then national information—less interesting than on Facebook—, and Technology news, more appealing for the community on this platform. The other sections did not obtain positive results: although international information is interesting for readers, their likelihood to participate was greatly reduced on economic and cultural news, and especially with Sports tweets, that received little response.

The only digital native got results much more moderate and difficult to compare with other online media, probably because of the difference in popularity and tradition on the Spanish citizens' minds. Its Facebook community was mainly interested in national news, and a little less on Sports and international information. It is important to stress that this cybermedium standed out by producing compelling and adapted contents – more visual and with infographics—, such as sports news⁵⁴. Its fan page also obtained relevant results when shared cultural and economic issues, some own sections like Comics –though less participated—, and social contents. However, despite the geek or techie profile usually attached to its readers, the science section is undoubtedly the least interesting on Facebook, or at least the least participated.

Regarding Twitter, Lainformacion.com reduced the probability of participation in all categories compared to Facebook. On the one hand, this could be positive the interest in national contents, and to a lesser degree international news, Sports and Society. However, Business became the star section on Twitter: the results confirmed that economic data published by Lainformacion.com was the most appreciated, since the probability of participation was comparatively higher than the rest.

⁵⁴ From the beginning, Lainformacion.com went for sporting and economic contents (González, 2010). On the sports news, analysis, tactical vision and technical explanations are combined with graphics and video as key elements of the sections. See GONZÁLEZ, José Luis, "Los medios nativos digitales en España", in HERRERO, Julio César and PÉREZ-UGENA, Álvaro (eds.), *Materiales para la innovación en estructura de la comunicación*, Universitas, Madrid, 2010, pp. 669-701, published on September 9th, 2009, http://blogs.lainformacion.com/proyectoi/

5. Conclusions

After analyzing the social activity of the four cybermedia, it can be said that they are committed to those contents that work best for each medium and its audience on both Facebook and Twitter. However, it seems that they seek to adapt information to the social habits of users instead to the real needs of the audience and society, which hopes to improve the content with their contributions.

Also, as noted in the objectives, it is possible to classify these cybermedia, with different media matrix, according to their informative purpose on Facebook and Twitter. From a general standpoint, the social activity of ABC.es reveals a clear commitment with social platforms as spaces where more intensely offer content that the community chooses. Thus, it might be considered that its Facebook activity mainly seeks to encourage socialization through entertainment, although the current affairs have a significant weight.

On Twitter, ABC.es introduces itself as a profile on current issues, mainly national but also international and technological, and its users interact differently with the online media. On this platform, ABC.es followers participate in sections that are ignored on Facebook, and they are more interested in the cybermedium as a source of current topics, even though the results are not positive when it comes to last minute tweets or breaking news.

Before analyzing the two cybermedia with audiovisual matrix, it is interesting to refer to some differences in the way they approach their social strategy, clearer reflected in the analysis of the theme selection. According to the results, both RTVE.es and CadenaSER.com publish more frequently corporative or institutional contents. This is probably one of the most obvious consequences of having an audiovisual media matrix: the division into autonomous programs requires an extra boost by the main social profiles of the cybermedia in order to increase the visibility of the sections or individual spaces.

As above, the strategy developed by RTVE.es on Facebook seems to respond to mainly corporative purposes as almost half of its links drove traffic to the programs website. Although the public entity obtains good results when sharing current news, the probability of receiving feedback is higher in updates about own programs, even more than with national news, the second best section. However, although RTVE.es publishes similar contents on both platforms, the proportion varies: on Twitter it prioritizes current affairs, and gets the best results of participation in the sample with flashes news. So, RTVE.es on Twitter might be considered as an account with informative purposes. These findings should alert the cybermedium of the risk of not being perceived as an interlocutor by its social community, which does not even interact with its news, despite the successful promotion and participation on entertainment contents.

Furthermore, CadenaSER.com stands out in the analysis of the social profiles. Just on Facebook, it far exceeds the volume of participation in all subject categories compared to the rest of the sample: users choose this fan page to debate and conversate on current affairs. This purpose –eminently informative– of its strategy on Facebook could be conditioned for different reasons. On the one hand, the platform features make it a suitable space for the dissemination of audiovisual formats of information, as user can check the multimedia contents directly on the social network. Moreover, traditionally the radio sector has prioritized its activity on this platform, where, on the other hand,

CadenaSER.com has bet heavily for disseminating news, unlike most online media and also the ones of the sample. In fact, the amount of hot news and soft news on its Facebook page far exceeds the same figure on the microblogging service.

Although on Twitter CadenaSER.com keeps an informative purpose, it substantially increases the effort to link to other programs of the medium: it enhances corporate strategy and promotes both programs and events —online and offline— developed under the brand of the medium (online interviews, broadcasting programs from different locations, etc.). Note that these sections or programs directly connect with their users primarily on Facebook, as their activity on Twitter is focused on spreading information. Finally, Lainformacion.com develops a clearer strategy on each platform, although in both cases hot news and soft news make up the bulk of its activity. Regarding Facebook, the cybermedium prioritizes community involvement with lighter contents and contests promotions. But this purpose, close to entertainment, varies on Twitter, where it mainly publishes current information on the media agenda, but compiled with many visual updates that provide a wider range of gender and type of messages.

This study confirms that the cybermedia primarily use Facebook and Twitter to spread news –already posted on their websites–, which also tend to be published by their analog media matrix. It is also possible to confirm that the media matrix influences the social activity of the cybermedia, specially when it comes to audiovisual media companies, as their activity on Facebook and Twitter –through the main social accounts– depends on the autonomy and the communication strategy developed by the own programs and sections on the social platforms.

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