

Social media communication management in football national federations

Gestión de la comunicación en las redes sociales de las federaciones de fútbol nacionales

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ARTICLE



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Abstract

Social media have become a main means of interaction for the communication departments of national football federations, improving the loyalty of their supporters. In this study, the management of official accounts in social media of five national football federations were analyzed. The methodology has been based on the observation and content analysis, taking into account the communication department of each federation as a content issuer. The results show great differences in the management of communication according to the issuer and the social media, which is very useful to improve

the strategic management of digital communication in this type of entities.

KEYWORDS

Content analysis, communication, sports, football, social media.

Resumen

Las redes sociales se han convertido en un medio principal para los departamentos de comunicación de las federaciones nacionales de fútbol, mejorando la fidelización de sus simpatizantes. En este estudio se ha analizado la gestión de las cuentas oficiales en redes sociales

de cinco federaciones de fútbol nacionales. La metodología se ha basado en la observación y el análisis de contenido, teniendo en cuenta al departamento de comunicación de cada federación como emisor de contenido. Los resultados muestran grandes diferencias en la gestión

de la comunicación según el emisor y la red social, lo que resulta de gran utilidad para mejorar la gestión estratégica de la comunicación digital en este tipo de entidades.

PALABRAS CLAVE:

Análisis de contenido, comunicación, deporte, fútbol, redes sociales.

1. INTRODUCTION

Football is the most universal of sports and involves a multitude of social derivations. Antezana (2003) emphasizes that football develops inside and outside the court because it is an uninterrupted and multifaceted spectacle (p.88). Studies focused on the analysis of communication, sports and football have grown exponentially in recent years. In this sense, it should be noted that the media and sports as objects of study in the area of communication are two research trends that have not stopped growing (Alonso and Avalos, 2013). The loyalty of supporters or followers is one of the objectives of the entities of the football world. Thrasou, Vrontis and Kartakoullis (2012) agree that football executives are called to develop and use the possibilities offered by marketing and communication to ensure that customers (followers and supporters) revive a holistic experience of football as a product.

1.1. UTILITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL FEDERATIONS

Communication always played an important role in the national football federations and significant progress has been made in recent years in the field of the Internet, specifically in social media. They have become a fundamental tool to get more support from fans, generate

confidence and increase media reach in society. Lobillo and Muñoz (2016) emphasize that social media are very useful for entities related to football as in any other organization and they are used as an organizational communication tool. In addition, they point out that new technologies are constantly used by sports organizations, allowing them to interact immediately and effectively with their audience.

The management of social media represents an important part of the work in the communication departments of football federations. Castillo, Fernández and Castellero (2016), postulate in relation to the importance of the presence of entities in social media that the entities with the highest income in the world develop a 2.0 communication strategy for most of the existing social media. In general, they show adequate adaptation to the creation of social media and digital communication platforms.

Abeza, O'Reilly and Reid (2013) agree that social media represent an important opportunity for the management of sports brands and their relationship with internal and external audiences. Currently, any sports organization can exchange messages with their audience using social media.

In relation to the management of communication in the world of football, Costa (1999) stresses that "these sports entities need to transfer their image to society in order to achieve their

goals, like any other organization, company or institution; so they must resort to communication "(As cited by Olabe, 2010, p.95).

Social media provide various ways to reach audiences. Lobillo and Muñoz (2016) point out that these allow football entities to easily reach a very important audience, not only by quantity but by loyalty. These entities have profiles in the main social networks to communicate with these audiences and their followers. In this way, football entities have already established social channels as communication tools more or less uniformly.

Facebook is the social media that brings together more followers and supporters, that is why the presence of football entities in this leading social network is discussed. The analyzed teams reached an approximate of 50 million fans in this social network at the end of January 2012 (Sotelo, 2012).

On the multimedia integration of these entities, the YouTube social network can offer different content. Entities can offer information and entertainment content to their followers with this network (Ginesta, 2010).

1.2. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN NATIONAL FOOTBALL FEDERATIONS

It is important to have defined communication strategies for any sports entity for the proper performance of their communication departments. Olabe (2015) establishes that the directive function of the communication management of the national football federations is specific to the director of communication (dircom). The Dircom is responsible for the transparency policy of the organization as a way to transmit values and manage digital resources

that were not contemplated to date. These management needs have increased the relevance of the Dircom figure, integrating it into the management structure of the organization and marking the communication strategies for their subsequent execution. The Dircom must perform three basic functions as coordinator of this specific department that is detached from the press office: the journalistic function, the public relations function and the marketing and advertising function.

According to Pronschinske, Groza and Walker (2012), the strategy conditions the participation of users. The national football federations must have a communication plan established to manage their virtual press rooms and official accounts on social media. Salazar and Prieto (2015) emphasize that any institution that wants to achieve effective communication on Twitter must develop a communication plan that defines the objectives and communication actions that will be carried out. In this sense, Arceo (2003) points in his research of professional football clubs that only two of the ten studied organizations have a communication or public relations plan, six have plans on some occasions and two have no plans.

On the content of football on YouTube, Ginesta (2010) indicates that streaming off the platform is common on almost all the websites of the clubs. In this way, while the clubs that have developed their own television service use the web to broadcast their own videos, others post the videos given by the television stations or directly by the owner of the television rights of the teams. Offering webpages in several languages is one of the internationalization strategies that football entities use in marketing and communication. Ginesta (2010) points out that the Internet is essential when it comes to in-

ternationalizing the image of the organization, since most of the analyzed clubs have another language as an option in their official websites.

Content categories are important in the management of virtual press rooms and official accounts in social media of national football federations. These refer to matches, press conferences and interviews. In this sense, Castillo et al. (2016) clarify from the communicative structure of the football entities that the activities generated in the social networks mainly include the games played, press conferences and interviews with players and the coach. These are the most followed entries with the greatest media coverage. This means that the football media industry needs continuous and daily activities to maintain their media presence.

Another category of content in professional football clubs and national football federations is institutional content. On the success of institutional communication, Olabe (2010) indicates that the effectiveness and success of institutional communication is also measured by the degree of involvement and consideration that the directors of the organization give to this tool.

1.3. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ISSUERS FROM FOOTBALL ENTITIES WITH THE PUBLIC IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

The public relations in the management and use of virtual press rooms and social media by the responsible department of communication in the national football federations should be taken into account. One of the most important objectives of the entities of the world of football in the 21st century is the loyalty of followers and supporters. In this sense, social networks play an essential role to accomplish this objective. There are sectors of fans and followers that are opposed to the implementation of new te-

chnologies as tools to improve the relationship between the institution and the fans. Hutchins (2016) identifies protests of this type at Philips Sport Vereniging NV, one of the most followed football clubs in the Netherlands. There were similar protests to sports entities and clubs in Spain, England, Italy, Germany, France, Brazil, Uruguay, Romania, Norway, Czech Republic, Slovakia, the United States and Australia.

Xifra (2011) emphasizes that all organizations maintain relationships with different audiences. According to this author, the environments of the organizations are composed of a mixture of audiences on which the organization has or can have consequences and vice versa, regardless of the stability of such relationship. There are types of audiences that relate more to organizations and other types of audiences with fewer participation. In most cases, the public with the greatest relationships are the workers, the media, the local community, customers and consumers.

According to Capriotti (2009), the main efforts of the organizations in the institutional part have focused on the issuer and have left aside the study of the receiver and the public.

The national football federations present large numbers of audiences. Regarding the communication cabinets of football entities and their relationship with different types of public, Olabe (2010) emphasizes that these departments give importance to carrying out communicative actions for external, internal and intermedia-te publics, although the media are the most important audience of these institutions for their status as channels for the rest of target audiences. In this sense, the communication departments seek to adapt the agenda of the media, their routines and contents with the use of communication tools and techniques adjus-

ted to their needs of press conferences, press releases, conclusion of interviews, reports and the use of the corporate website with daily content update.

The relationship of sports entities with their public has changed since the appearance of new communication technologies. The media are external public to which the national football federations are directed. Regarding the relationship with the media, Castillo (2010) points out that relations with the media have been presented as the fundamental activity in the field of external public relations. Although true, it is not in its entirety because relations with the media are one of the most important aspects in communication but not exclusive or the end of it.

The football entities are related in the digital environment with different groups of receivers. On the impact of issuing messages to large groups of people, Canelo and Almansa (2013) show in their research that the universalization of the possibility of being a transmitter of messages that reach large groups through the Internet has caused the rupture of the traditional scheme of emitter-receiver. This is the case of social media. Due to the volume of participants and the control conditions over the message, it seems to be an ideal tool to gain supporters and to promote the direct relationship between entities and their audiences.

1.3.1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FOOTBALL FEDERATIONS AND THE PUBLIC ACCORDING TO THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL OR POLITICAL IDENTITY

The message content of the national football federations may vary depending on the identity

of their recipients to help achieve the objectives. Among these recipients are the followers or supporters.

The geographical link with the football federations can have a very important influence on the content of the messages and their follow-up relationships. "One of the elements that seems to have the most influence in the identification with a football team is the geographical link. Then, the familiar and social environment appear and in third place is the interest since childhood" (Llopis, 2013, p.242). According to Rowe (2003), sporting events have a significant political content with great scope beyond what happens on the field.

It should be taken into account that: "Football, as a cultural fact, represents local identities in some way". (Benítez, López and Cid, 2015, p.83).

"The feeling of belonging to a certain region can also influence a person to be follower or supporter of a certain football entity" (Llopis, 2013, p.248).

On the comparison between football entities in relation to the claim of the nationality of a certain community, González (2008) points out that we must take into account that the football scene is set by national clubs and is composed of different National teams. In this sense, globalization processes have contributed to add elements that make this increasingly multicultural scenario more complex in terms of the scope of national and international club competitions.

On the other hand, Xifra (2008) relates the concept of civil religion with Fútbol Club Barcelona and the Catalan nationalist community as a social phenomenon, promoting changes in the local and regional values of the community to which it belongs. This author points to Fútbol Club Barcelona as a new constituted religious form.

In this sense, national federations may have similarities with what the researcher proposed for a football club.

2. METHODOLOGY

The techniques used in this study have been observation and content analysis. It is important to clarify with respect to the content analysis that “it involves systematically applying previously fixed rules that serve to measure the frequency with which the elements appear and study some of the aspects that seem useful according to the purposes of the investigation” (Berganza & Ruiz, 2005, p.213). Observation becomes a scientific technique when it serves a formulated research objective. It is planned systematically and is related to more general theories in such a way that it does not remain as a set of curiosities. It is controlled and tested with criteria of validity and reliability (Ruiz, 2012).

The social networks analyzed in the research were Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. The analysis was conducted from April 1 to April 30, 2015. The purpose of this study is to analyze the management of the social networks of the national football federations from CONMEBOL and UEFA. The selection criteria of the football federations in this study was made according to the ranking of historical results of the federations of each confederation.

Three UEFA federations have been selected: Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio (Italy), The Football Association (England) and Real Federación Española de Fútbol (profile of the Spanish National Football Team). Two federations of the CONMEBOL were chosen following the same criteria of selection: Asociación del Fútbol Argentino y Confederação Brasileira de Futebol (Brazil).

The access to each page, profile or official account on social media has been obtained from the official website of each federation:

- Asociación del Fútbol Argentino: <http://www.afa.org.ar>
- Confederação Brasileira de Futebol: <http://www.cbf.com.br>
- Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio: <http://www.figc.it>
- Real Federación Española de Fútbol: <http://www.sefutbol.com>
- The Football Association: <http://www.thefa.com/England>

The research methodology has followed the following analysis template:

The amount and type of content of each official Facebook page, official Instagram profile, official Twitter account and the official YouTube channel of each federation have been analyzed. A questionnaire was established to determine the types of content generated by each football federation in each account as variables. The variables in this case will be classified based on the type of content of each publication that is shared in the analyzed social media.

For registration, the title, URL, date and time of emission of certain content in the corresponding analysis sheet have been recorded.

The content of each social network analyzed has been classified in the following categories:

- “Institutional”: Information on events with the presence of the board of the national football federation. Public relations with professional football clubs or other national football federations, participation in campaigns with the image of the national football federation, relations with other public or private com-

panies or institutions, public statements by the president or directors, corporate social responsibility, publications related to the stadium or venue and historical events.

- “Training”: Information related to the training or organization of the work of the national teams. Content related to recovery and injury information is included in this category.
- “Pre-match”: Informative publications prior to a match, previous announcements and promotion, matches prior to the season, raffles of the competition or travel plans for a specific match. In addition, information related to the rival team is included in this content category.
- “Match”: Informative content related to the development of a match. Includes description of plays, goals, faults, warnings or other incidents of matches played by national teams.
- “Post-match”: Publications that deal with the analysis of a finished match. The photo galleries and video summaries of the disputed matches, classifications and statistics of the played matches are included.
- “Press conference”: Declarations of the staff members and technical staff of the national teams at the official press conferences.
- “Interviews”: Statements that are not given in the previous category. Includes interviews through social media.
- “Players”: Information related to the members of the staff of the national team. It includes information on international calls, signings, public events and individual awards received by players or members of the coaching staff with statistics or special data about them.
- “Youth Categories”: Informative content referring to the coaching staff and players of the

youth categories of each national football federation.

- “Fans”: Content about followers. Informative publications on the sale of tickets for matches and trips to accompany the national team to a match as a visitor are included.
- “Marketing”: Publications related to sponsors and commercial commitments of the national football federations.
- “Retweets”: This category refers to publications that are a copy of the content issued by another user. This category only exists in the case of analysis of the content categories in the official Twitter accounts.

3. RESULTS

First, the obtained results are presented in relation to the followers that the federations have in the social media analyzed.

The official Facebook pages of the national football federations have the following “likes” according to the data collected on the date of analysis: Asociación del Fútbol Argentino 1,946,491 followers, Confederação Brasileira de Futebol 7,141,727 followers, Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) 2,258,450 followers, The Football Association 4,767,069 followers and Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio 3,247,489 followers.

The official Instagram profiles of the national football federations have the following numbers of followers: Confederação Brasileira de Futebol 347,390 followers, Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) 121,154 followers, The Football Association 119,069 followers and Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio 54,794 followers. The data of the

federations from Argentina and England could not be verified.

The official Twitter profiles of the national football federations have the following numbers of followers according to the data collected on the date of analysis: Asociación del Fútbol Argentino 1,019,428 followers, Confederação Brasileira de Futebol 2,352,129 followers, Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) 978,325 followers, The Football Association 580,150 followers and Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio 283,239 followers.

The official YouTube channels of the national football federations have the following numbers of followers according to the data collected on the date of analysis: Asociación de Fútbol Argentino 2,296 followers, The Football Association 139,277 followers and Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio 41,369 followers. There was no access to the data of the Confederação Brasileira de Futebol and the Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) (Table 1).

3.1. MANAGEMENT OF OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS ON FACEBOOK

Below is the data of the social network Facebook. The official Facebook page of the Asociación del Fútbol Argentino has used the different content categories as follows: "Institutional" 3 publications, "Training" 2 publications, "Pre-match" 3 publications, "Post-match" 4 publications, "Youth Categories" 7 publications, "Players" 23 publications and "Fans" 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Confederação Brasileira de Futebol has used the different categories of content as follows: "Institutional" 6 publications, "Pre-match"

Table 1. Followers in social media of the official accounts of football federations.

	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	Youtube
Asociación del Fútbol Argentino (CONMEBOL)	1.946.491	-	1.019.428	2.296
<i>Confederação Brasileira de Futebol</i> (CONMEBOL)	7.141.727	347.390	2.352.129	-
<i>Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio</i> (UEFA)	3.247.489	54.794	283.239	41.369
Real Federación Española de Fútbol (UEFA)	2.258.450	121.154	978.325	-
<i>The Football Association</i> (UEFA)	4.767.069	-	580.150	139.277

Source. Official accounts in social media of football federations.

2 publications, "Post-match" 1 publication, "Youth Categories" 2 publications, "Players" 2 publications and "Fans" 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The official Facebook page of the Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio has used the different content categories as follows: "Institutional" 5 publications, "Post-match" 2 publications, "Interview" 1 publication, "Youth Categories" 11 publications and "Players" 6 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) has used the different con-

Table 2. Content management in Facebook of the official accounts of football federations.

	Asociación del Fútbol Argentino (CONMEBOL)	Confederação Brasileira de Futebol (CONMEBOL)	Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio (UEFA)	Real Federación Española de Fútbol (UEFA)	The Football Association (UEFA)
Institutional	3	6	5	5	3
Training	2	0	0	1	0
Pre-match	3	2	0	1	0
Match	0	0	0	0	0
Post-match	4	1	2	2	2
Press conference	0	0	0	0	5
Interview	0	0	1	1	0
Players	23	2	6	6	4
Youth categories	7	2	11	28	27
Fans	1	1	0	0	0
Marketing	0	0	0	3	10
Total	43	14	25	47	51

Source. Official accounts in social media of football federations.

tent categories as follows: "Institutional" 5 publications, "Training" 1 publication, "Pre-match" 1 post, "Post-match" 2 publications, "Interview" 1 publication, "Youth Categories" 28 publications, "Players" 6 publications and "Marketing" 3 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The official page in this social network of The Football Association has used the different categories of content as follows: "Institutional" 3 publications, "Post-match" 2 publications, "Press conference" 5 publications, "Youth Categories" 27 publications, "Players" 4 publications and "Marketing" 10 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used (Table 2).

3.2. MANAGEMENT OF OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS IN INSTAGRAM

In this section, the data from the social network Instagram is presented. The Asociación del Fútbol Argentino has used the different categories of content as follows: "Institutional" 3 publications, "Pre-match" 1 publication, "Post-match" 4 publications, "Youth categories" 9 publications, "Players" 26 publications and "Fans" 3 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Confederação Brasileira de Futebol has used the different categories of content as follows: "Institutional" 9 publications, "Youth Categories" 7 publications and "Players" 2 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio has used the different content categories as fo-

Table 3. Management of Instagram content in the official accounts of football federations.

	Asociación del Fútbol Argentino (CONMEBOL)	Confederação Brasileira de Futebol (CONMEBOL)	Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio (UEFA)	Real Federación Española de Fútbol (UEFA)	The Football Association (UEFA)
Institucional	3	9	4	2	1
Entrenamiento	0	0	0	0	0
Pre-partido	1	0	0	0	0
Partido	0	0	0	0	0
Post-partido	4	0	2	1	2
Rueda de prensa	0	0	0	0	2
Entrevista	0	0	0	1	1
Jugadores	26	2	4	6	3
Categorías inferiores	9	7	6	8	2
Afición	3	0	1	0	1
Marketing	0	0	0	1	1
Total	46	18	17	19	13

Source. Official accounts on Instagram of football federations.

llows: “Institutional” 4 publications, “Post-match” 2 publications, “Youth Categories” 6 publications, “Players” 4 publications and “Fans” 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) in its official account in the analyzed social network has used the different content categories as follows: “Institutional” 2 publications, “Post-match” 1 publication, “Interview” 1 post, “Youth Categories” 8 publications, “Players” 6 publications and “Marketing” 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The official Instagram account of The Football Association has used the different content categories in the following way: “Institutional” 1 publication, “Post-match” 2 publications, “Press conference” 2 publications, “Interview” 1 publication, “Youth categories” 2 publications, “Players” 3 publications, “Marketing” 1 publication

and “Fans” 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used (Table 3).

3.3. MANAGEMENT OF OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS ON TWITTER

Below are the results obtained from the official accounts in the social network Twitter. The Asociación del Fútbol Argentino has used the different content categories in the following way: “Retweet” 4 publications, “Institutional” 9 publications, “Pre-match” 18 publications, “Match” 40 publications, “Post-match” 11 publications, “Press conference” 8 publications, “Interview” 5 publications, “Youth categories” 95 publications, “Players” 468 publications and “Fans” 2 publications. The rest of the content categories were not used.

The Confederação Brasileira de Futebol has used the following content categories on the social network Twitter: “Institutional” 45 publica-

tions, "Pre-match" 18 publications, "Post-match" 29 publications, "Interview" 1 publication, "Youth Categories" 41 publications, "Players" 1 publication, "Marketing" 6 publications and "Fans" 2 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The official account of Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio on the social network Twitter has used the different content categories as follows: "Retweet" 6 publications, "Institutional" 20 publications, "Pre-match" 14 publications, "Post-match" 17 publications, "Press conference" 2 publications, "Interview" 3 publications, "Youth categories" 77 publications, "Players" 45 publications, "Marketing" 3 publications and "Fans" 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) in the social network Twitter has used the different categories of content

as follows: "Retweet" 1 publication, "Institutional" 13 publications, "Training" 5 publications, "Pre-match" 17 publications, "Post-match" 13 publications, "Press conference" 1 publication, "Interview" 5 publications, "Youth categories" 85 publications, "Players" 49 publications, "Marketing" 14 publications and "Fans" 9 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Football Association in the social network Twitter has used the different categories of content as follows: "Retweet" 31 publications, "Institutional" 30 publications, "Pre-match" 8 publications, "Post-match" 5 publications, "Press Conference" 11 publications, "Interview" 35 publications, "Youth categories" 241 publications, "Players" 44 publications, "Marketing" 59 publications and "Fans" 25 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used (Table 4).

Table 4. Management of content on Twitter of the official accounts of football federations.

	Asociación del Fútbol Argentino (CONMEBOL)	Confederação Brasileira de Futebol (CONMEBOL)	Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio (UEFA)	Real Federación Española de Fútbol (UEFA)	The Football Association (UEFA)
Institutional	9	45	20	13	30
Training	0	0	0	5	0
Pre-match	18	18	14	17	8
Match	40	0	0	0	9
Post-match	11	29	17	13	5
Press conference	8	0	2	1	11
Interview	5	1	3	5	35
Players	468	1	45	49	44
Youth categories	95	41	77	85	241
Fans	2	2	1	9	25
Marketing	0	6	3	14	59
Retweet	4	0	6	1	31
Total	660	143	188	212	489

Source. Official Twitter accounts of football federations.

3.4. MANAGEMENT OF OFFICIAL CHANNELS ON YOUTUBE

The results obtained from the official channels of the federations in the YouTube social network are presented in this section. The Asociación del Fútbol Argentino has not published content on the dates that the investigation was conducted.

The Confederação Brasileira de Futebol has used the different categories of content as follows: "Institutional" 34 publications, "Post-match" 13 publications and "Youth categories" 2 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio has used the different content categories in the following way: "Institutional" 10 publications and

"Players" 1 publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The official YouTube channel of the Real Federación Española de Fútbol (Spanish National Team) has used the different content categories as follows: "Institutional" 2 publications, "Interview" 3 publications, "Youth categories" 31 publications and "Players" "1" publication. The rest of the content categories have not been used.

The Football Association has used the different content categories in the following way: "Institutional" 5 publications, "Pre-match" 1 publication, "Post-match" 34 publications, "Press conference" 1 publication, "Interview" 3 publications, "Youth categories" 16 publications, "Players" 10 publications and "Fans" 2 publications. The rest of the content categories have not been used (Table 5).

Table 5. Content management on YouTube of the official channels of football federations.

	Asociación del Fútbol Argentino (CONMEBOL)	Confederação Brasileira de Futebol (CONMEBOL)	Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio (UEFA)	Real Federación Española de Fútbol (UEFA)	The Football Association (UEFA)
Institutional	0	34	10	2	5
Training	0	0	0	0	0
Pre-match	0	0	0	0	1
Match	0	0	0	0	0
Post-match	0	13	0	0	34
Press conference	0	0	0	0	1
Interview	0	0	0	3	3
Players	0	0	1	1	10
Youth categories	0	2	0	31	16
Fans	0	0	0	0	2
Marketing	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	49	11	37	72

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Social media are used differently by national football federations. Of the networks studied in the analyzed period, the social network with the most publications issued by the national football federations is Twitter with a great difference over the rest of the social networks. It has been observed that the social network that had the least amount of content published was YouTube.

The issuers, which in this case are the national football federations, publish different content. The content of the Asociación de Fútbol Argentino has been highlighted in this study.

A different behavior of content emission from the federations was also observed according to the used social network. The issuer that published most frequently on Facebook was The Football Association, while the one that least published content was the Confederação Brasileira de Futebol. Regarding Instagram, the federation that published the most was the Asociación de Fútbol Argentino, while the one that published the least was The Football Association. On Twitter, it was observed that the number of publications was much greater than in the rest of analyzed social networks with a

quite remarkable difference. The analyzed issuer that published more in this network was the Asociación de Fútbol Argentino. In contrast, the federation that had the least number of publications was the Confederação Brasileira de Futebol. In YouTube, the federation that shared the most publications in its channel was The Football Association, while the one that least published was the Asociación de Fútbol Argentino. This did not use its official channel during the analyzed period, showing a behavior very different in relation to the rest of the analyzed media.

The study shows that the most commonly used content categories were "Players", "Youth categories" and "Institutional". After breaking down the content categories by social networks analyzed, those that had the highest level of use by the issuers were "Players" on Instagram, "Institutional" on YouTube, "Youth categories" on Twitter and "Players" on Facebook. The contents with the lowest level of use were "Training", "Fans" and "Marketing".

The analyzed official accounts use different categories of content at the time of publication in each analyzed network. The Asociación de Fútbol Argentino stands out as the great issuer of the content category "Players", while it has barely used "Training", "Match" and "Marketing".

The Confederação Brasileira de Futebol stands out in the use of institutional contents.

The Real Federación Española de Fútbol and the Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio were the only federations that published content in all the social networks. Both issuers stand out in the use of informative content about their youth categories. The Football Association stands out in the management of content on Facebook and YouTube, emphasizing the content of their younger players like the federations of Spain and Italy.

New research lines could be opened to deal with the areas around the analysis of the hearings of national football federations according

to the classification of Webster (1998) and citing Berganza and Ruiz (2005) or in relation to the effects on the recipients of the content that is issued according to the classification of Berganza and Ruiz (2005). All this can be done taking into account the social networks Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube as communication means according to the classification of Berganza and Ruiz (2005), considering the content issued and sorted into categories according to the classification of Igartua and Humanes (2004) and taking into account the results of this research.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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