

# The promotional strategy of Netflix and HBO on Instagram in a competition scenario. Analysis of their profiles in Spain and in the US

*La estrategia promocional de Netflix y HBO en Instagram en un escenario de competencia. Análisis de sus perfiles en España y en EE. UU.*

*A estratégia promocional de Netflix e HBO no Instagram em um cenário de concorrência. Análise de seus perfis na Espanha e nos EUA*

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ARTICLE



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## Abstract

This study analyzes the resources and strategies used by the US and Spanish profiles of HBO and Netflix on Instagram. For this, the year 2017 is taken as a reference because it is a period marked by the arrival of HBO in Spain. The content analysis of the 731 messages collected reflects a high internal consistency on the part of Netflix, while on HBO both channels differ significantly. An effort is appreciated by the Spanish profiles to adapt to the Spanish social reality by resorting to social causes or by emphasizing the dimension of the conflict.

## KEYWORDS

Instagram, ANOVA, HBO, Netflix, *Streaming*, Social media.

## Resumen

Este estudio analiza los recursos y estrategias utilizados por los perfiles estadounidense y español de HBO y Netflix en Instagram. Para ello se toma como referencia el año 2017, período marcado por la llegada de HBO a España. El análisis de contenido de los 731 mensajes recogidos refleja una alta coherencia interna por parte de Netflix, mientras que en HBO ambos canales se diferencian notablemente. Se

aprecia un esfuerzo por parte de los perfiles españoles para adaptarse a la realidad social española recurriendo a las causas sociales o a poner el acento en la dimensión del conflicto.

## PALABRAS CLAVE

Instagram, ANOVA, HBO, Netflix, *Streaming*, Redes sociales.

## Resumo

Este estudo analisa os recursos e as estratégias utilizadas pelos perfis norte americanos e espanhol da HBO e da Netflix no Instagram. Para tanto, toma-se como referência o ano de 2017, período marcado pela chegada da HBO à Espanha. A análise de conteúdo das 731 mensagens coletadas refletiu uma alta coerência interna por parte da Netflix, enquanto na HBO os dois canais se diferem significativamente. É apreciado um esforço por parte dos perfis espanhóis para se adaptarem à realidade social espanhola recorrendo a causas sociais ou para enfatizar a dimensão do conflito.

## PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Instagram, ANOVA, HBO, Netflix, *Streaming*, Redes sociais.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Spain presents a mature market in terms of the use of social networks (IAB Spain & Elogia, 2020). With a penetration of 87%, 31.7 million users between the ages of 16 and 65 use this medium, firstly, to chat and send messages and, secondly, to watch videos and listen to music. The most followed sector in networks is entertainment, culture and media. Instagram is the second most used network and it has shown progressive growth in recent years (IAB

Spain & Elogia, 2020). This network is also chosen to follow influencers.

Thus, social networks also play a relevant role for the television industry. Not only do they make watching the small screen a more pleasant experience (Segado et al., 2015) but they also help increase the audience (Cha, 2019). A phenomenon familiar to the digital platforms of conventional television channels or those offered through processes on the network (Over The Top -OTT-), such as Netflix or HBO, which have opted for social networks to get subscri-

bers. These last paid platforms are those that have special relevance since in Spain there has been a constant increase in the penetration of services offered by digital platforms on demand (VOD) (Arrojo & Martín, 2019).

The introduction of video on demand in Spain has been a slow process (Clares-Gavilán & Medina-Cambron, 2018). Netflix arrived in October 2015, opening a new stage in the way of consuming content in the national market together with the telephone operator Movistar+, its main rival during that year (Castro & Cascajosa, 2020). At the end of November 2016, the American cable network HBO joined the streaming subscription offers, and Amazon Prime Video joined in December 2016 (Barlovento Comunicación, 2016). We would have to wait until November 2019 to know the Apple TV Plus offer and March 2020 for Disney+.

Five years after the arrival of Netflix in Spain, OTTs achieved for the first time a greater reach of individuals than traditional payment platforms (Barlovento Comunicación, 2020). Netflix was the most consumed platform, reaching 14.1 million people out of the 16,395,000 who use any platform in this market.

In this ranking is Movistar+ (13.4% of the total) followed by Netflix (12.5% of the total). HBO ranks fifth (2.9% of the total) despite its undeniable importance since, by being the owner of the most viewed series, it has boosted the consumption of paid content in this country (Garza, 2017). In addition, Netflix and HBO are reaching new households that have never had pay TV, complementing and even replacing the paid services of another operator (Kantar Media, 2019).

The boundaries between television channels, telecommunications operators and OTT services are difficult to draw. From the perspective of the audience, the differences between in-

dustries are irrelevant since what they are looking for is the best audiovisual content (Medina et al., 2019).

In this way, the struggle to get subscribers is transferred to social networks, where companies are forced to abandon their traditional corporate discourse rejected by the user (Maciá, 2015). In this scenario, companies must have a strategy that generates content of interest to followers and encourages conversation, avoiding using social networks as another one-way and promotional channel (Pereira-Villazón & Portilla, 2020).

In this sense, Instagram is a useful tool in the communication strategy of television networks to the extent that its success among its users lies in its ability to share images and videos, to which different filters can be added (Lara-Navarra et al., 2018). Likewise, the social network has become one more platform for the distribution of content especially valued by younger audiences (Zeko et al., 2019), in addition to being part of the transmedia universes of serial fiction (Castelló-Martínez, 2020; Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

Understanding the strategies and tactics that these paid platforms employ is of special interest to the audiovisual industry (Del Pino & Aguado, 2012; Fernández-Gómez & Martín-Quevedo, 2018a; Ojer & Capapé, 2012; Pérez-Latre & Sánchez-Taberner, 2016). Competition from Netflix and HBO has forced traditional actors to introduce changes in the creation, production and distribution of audiovisual content (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019). So digital, and specifically social networks, play a fundamental role. In the American case, networks tend to increase the use of social networks to promote and interact with the audiences of their programs (Smith, 2019; Wang, 2016). And although Instagram is one of the platforms to reach younger

audiences and promote and create content, its use is still limited on traditional televisions (Ferguson & Greer, 2016).

## 1.1 MARKETING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Communication in social networks requires a publication strategy to obtain the proposed goals. When publishing, whatever the format, the content originally generated by the brand is the key (Sánchez, 2015; Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021). In this sense, the main challenge that global brands must face is to connect with customers in different markets around the world and, for this, a deep knowledge of the target market is required (Llopis, 2015; Wayne & Castro, 2020).

Previously, communication between brand and consumer was based on highlighting the characteristics or benefits of the product or service. The new communicative context that companies face requires that the focus is on the user and on the emotional relationships that can be established (Segarra-Saavedra et al., 2019). To foster this relational factor, brands must take advantage of new languages, tools and platforms, among which is Instagram (Marfil-Carmona et al., 2015).

As noted in the introduction, Instagram is a social network that continues to grow in number of users. Although in its origins it was considered a channel especially linked to the fashion sector (Segarra-Saavedra & Hidalgo-Marí, 2018), the use by younger audiences has meant that more companies have opted to open a profile on this network.

Instagram is the preferred social network for users between the ages of 13 and 17 (Generation Z). According to the Google study *"It's lit, a*

*guide to what teens think it's cool"* (2017), Netflix is the favorite brand for young people in the US, so it is not surprising that the platform and its rival have opened an account on this network. In addition to Generation Z, millennials are another of the target audiences for subscription-on-demand services (Guerrero et al., 2018; Smith, 2019).

From the academic point of view, there is still little research that addresses the relationship between television and this social network, since Twitter has been the most frequently studied platform in terms of television strategies (Segado et al., 2015).

## 1.2 NETFLIX AND HBO COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The interest in knowing Netflix's strategy lies in its own content distribution model (Fernández-Gómez & Martín-Quevedo, 2018a). In addition, it has become a benchmark from the promotional point of view, since the classic strategies for promoting television series do not serve online streaming services (DeCarvalho & Cox, 2016).

In the US, Netflix has won an award for its social media practices. Its strategy in this country is based on entertainment and humor, as recent studies on the brand in Spain have confirmed (Fernández-Gómez & Martín-Quevedo, 2018a; Fernández-Gómez & Martín-Quevedo, 2018b).

The Spanish Netflix account has already shown that it has a strategy for creating its own content, promoting and reporting on its fiction series and adapting to the language of this social network (Fernández-Gómez & Martín-Quevedo, 2018b) in a coordinated manner with the American account (Fernández-Gómez & Martín-Quevedo, 2018a). Therefore, it is of interest

to know if it also has a distinctive but integrated strategy in Instagram, the channel to connect with younger audiences.

On the other hand, the interest of the North American cable channel lies in its ability to create a strong brand identity through its fictions (Bourdaa, 2014; Cascajosa, 2006; Lasiera, 2012). Thus, HBO's star products, such as the *Game of Thrones* series, are the basis of its communication on Instagram (Martín-Quevedo, Fernández-Gómez & Segado-Boj, 2019). However, we still know little about its strategy in social networks, with the exception of the aforementioned article and the work developed in Spain by Ortega and Santos (2020). The study by Tron (2016) stands out, in which the American network is approached indirectly, as it develops the promotional strategy of Netflix and compares it with that of HBO. Thus, comparative studies are useful for understanding the communication of the audiovisual industry in social networks.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This article seeks to identify the common points of the strategy of paid television platforms on Instagram, as well as to point out the particular strategies of each of the accounts considered. This general objective is specified based on the following research questions:

P1. What resources are commonly used between the Instagram accounts of HBO and Netflix?

P2. What resources are commonly used between the Instagram accounts of these platforms in Spain and the United States?

P3. What resources are specific to each of the Instagram accounts analyzed?

For this, the characteristics of their publications are analyzed and the frequency with which their publications on the social network present the different characteristics analyzed is compared.

The authors manually collected the posts published by HBO and Netflix in the United States and Spain accounts over a period of six months: between May 16, 2017, the start of the activity of the HBO Spain profile, and November 16, 2017. The sample was made up of a total of 731 messages. The comparison between the USA and Spain profiles responds to a double reason. On the one hand, it makes it possible to compare the Spanish market at a very specific time point marked by the arrival of a very relevant new actor with an already consolidated market in which the communication strategies of both platforms were already established. And on the other hand, it allows checking the location of the messages by both companies and if they adapt to the particularities of the Spanish market as a strategy to achieve the interest of the audience, a tactic already used in other Spanish-speaking countries (Cornelio-Marí, 2020).

This sample was subjected to a quantitative content analysis whose variables and categories are listed in Table 1. Two of the authors of the article carried out the coding. To calculate the reliability between the coders, both authors coded 10% of randomly selected messages. From this initial coding, Cohen's kappa was calculated in each category. The values obtained range from "very good" (0.82) to "low" (0.26 in the case of "entertainment") (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Since the dependent variables (number of likes and number of comments) showed a non-normal distribution according to the Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p < .001$  in both cases), a non-parametric test was carried out. Specifically, an ANOVA test

**Table 1***Categories and variables analyzed*

| Categories                | Variables   | Notes   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Objectives of the message | 1. Inform (0.82), 2. Promote the platform (0.82), 3. Promote specific content (0.82).   | Adapted from: Fernández-Gómez and Martín-Quevedo (2018a)  |
| Post topic                | 1. Specific content: 1.1. Own content (0.8), 1.2. Acquired content (0.82).  | The messages were classified according to the origin of the product (produced by the platform itself or purchased from third parties) |
| Message orientation       | 1. Instrumental: 1.1. Ask for an opinion (0.82), 1.2. Ask for suggestions (0.82), 1.3 Request information (0.82), 1.4. Give opinion (0.60), 1.5. Give suggestions (0.77), 1.6. Give information (0.8); 2. Positive socio-emotional expression: 2.1. Show agreement (0.82), 2.2. Tension relaxation (0.82), 2.3. Show solidarity (0.05); 3. Negative socio-emotional expression: 3.1. Disagree (0.82), 3.2. Shows tension (0.82); 3.3 Shows antagonism (0.82). | Adapted from: Lin and Peña (2011)   |
| Formal aspects            | 1. Links to other social networks (0.82), 2. Hashtags (0.82), 3. Emoticons (0.62).  | Adapted from: Fernández-Gómez and Díaz-Campo (2014); Auverset and Billings (2016).  |
| Personalization           | 1. Use of the second person (0.82), 2. Use of the third person (0.82), 3. Use of the imperative (0.82).   | Adapted from: Lin and Peña (2011)   |
| Images                    | 1. Diegetic (for example, frames of a series) (0.8); 2. Extra-diegetic (actors off set); 2.1. The actor (0.82), 2.2. The actor characterized as the character (0.8); 3. Memes (0.8); 4. Faces/ Close-ups (0.82).  |   |
| Virality                  | 1. Unexpected/surprising (0.8), 2. Elite (0.82), 3. Entertainment (0.26), 4. Humor (0.82), 5. Human interest (0.8), 6. Sexuality (0.77), 7. Children (0.8), 8. Sadness (0.67), 9. Anger (0.57), 10. Fear (0.77), 11. Conflict/violence (0.62).  | Adapted from: Al-Rawi (2017).   |

was carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics 25.0 statistical package to find significant differences in the most used resources among the messages published by each of the analyzed accounts. This test calculates the significance of the differences between the means of the different sets of messages. It is considered that when the significance is equal to or less than 0.05, there are significant differences in the frequencies of certain resources used by each account analyzed. The tables that can be found at <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13386707>

show the result of the significance test, the differences in means between the compared groups and the error deviation in each case. In the cases in which a significant difference is identified, the TukeyHSD and Bonferroni post hoc tests have been carried out.

Table 2 shows the description of the analyzed sample according to each of the accounts included in the study.

**Table 2***Frequency and percentage of characteristics of the analyzed messages*

|                        | HBO SP |        | HBO US |       | Netflix SP |       | Netflix US |        |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------------|-------|------------|--------|
|                        | n      | %      | n      | %     | n          | %     | n          | %      |
| Content                | 404    | 99,02  | 123    | 77,36 | 78         | 82,98 | 60         | 88,24  |
| Own content            | 240    | 58,82  | 103    | 64,78 | 77         | 81,91 | 57         | 83,82  |
| Acquired content       | 108    | 26,47  | 19     | 11,95 | 1          | 1,06  | 4          | 5,88   |
| INFORMATION            | 340    | 83,33  | 58     | 36,48 | 39         | 41,49 | 23         | 33,82  |
| HBO OR NETFLIX PROMO   | 24     | 5,88   | 41     | 25,79 | 16         | 17,02 | 7          | 10,29  |
| CONTENT PROMO          | 413    | 101,23 | 116    | 72,96 | 77         | 81,91 | 70         | 102,94 |
| OPINIONS               | 64     | 15,69  | 13     | 8,18  | 0          | ,00   | 3          | 4,41   |
| SUGGESTIONS            | 145    | 35,54  | 0      | ,00   | 1          | 1,06  | 0          | ,00    |
| SOLIDARITY/EMPATHY     | 0      | ,00    | 70     | 44,03 | 54         | 57,45 | 25         | 36,76  |
| DISAGREEMENT           | 0      | ,00    | 0      | ,00   | 0          | ,00   | 1          | 1,47   |
| TENSION                | 0      | ,00    | 13     | 8,18  | 12         | 12,77 | 0          | ,00    |
| ANTAGONISM             | 0      | ,00    | 3      | 1,89  | 2          | 2,13  | 0          | ,00    |
| SOCIAL MEDIA LINK      | 0      | ,00    | 78     | 49,06 | 18         | 19,15 | 32         | 47,06  |
| HASTHAG                | 398    | 97,55  | 151    | 94,97 | 74         | 78,72 | 16         | 23,53  |
| EMOTICON               | 20     | 4,90   | 9      | 5,66  | 7          | 7,45  | 13         | 19,12  |
| MEME                   | 6      | 1,47   | 0      | ,00   | 0          | ,00   | 3          | 4,41   |
| IMAGE                  | 676    | 165,69 | 81     | 50,94 | 60         | 63,83 | 52         | 76,47  |
| Diegetic               | 235    | 57,60  | 34     | 21,38 | 26         | 27,66 | 12         | 17,65  |
| Faces/Close-ups        | 198    | 48,53  | 1      | ,63   | 0          | ,00   | 2          | 2,94   |
| VIDEO                  | 99     | 24,26  | 79     | 49,69 | 33         | 35,11 | 15         | 22,06  |
| Preview                | 6      | 1,47   | 7      | 4,40  | 4          | 4,26  | 1          | 1,47   |
| Trailer                | 29     | 7,11   | 7      | 4,40  | 6          | 6,38  | 0          | ,00    |
| Promo                  | 56     | 13,73  | 42     | 26,42 | 21         | 22,34 | 11         | 16,18  |
| Positive content       | 35     | 8,58   | 122    | 76,73 | 65         | 69,15 | 50         | 73,53  |
| Unexpected or surprise | 87     | 21,32  | 20     | 12,58 | 8          | 8,51  | 10         | 14,71  |
| Celebrities            | 56     | 13,73  | 30     | 18,87 | 9          | 9,57  | 8          | 11,76  |
| Entertainment          | 210    | 51,47  | 36     | 22,64 | 3          | 3,19  | 4          | 5,88   |
| Social magnitude       | 15     | 3,68   | 30     | 18,87 | 1          | 1,06  | 4          | 5,88   |
| Humor                  | 25     | 6,13   | 55     | 34,59 | 36         | 38,30 | 36         | 52,94  |
| Useful                 | 8      | 1,96   | 34     | 21,38 | 27         | 28,72 | 7          | 10,29  |
| Conflict               | 52     | 12,75  | 11     | 6,92  | 14         | 14,89 | 2          | 2,94   |
| YOU                    | 114    | 27,94  | 25     | 15,72 | 27         | 28,72 | 10         | 14,71  |
| HE/SHE                 | 41     | 10,05  | 37     | 23,27 | 15         | 15,96 | 9          | 13,24  |
| THEY                   | 32     | 7,84   | 23     | 14,47 | 3          | 3,19  | 7          | 10,29  |
| IMPERATIVES            | 103    | 25,25  | 0      | ,00   | 2          | 2,13  | 0          | ,00    |

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 RESOURCES COMMONLY USED BY HBO AND NETFLIX

Regarding the objectives of the posts, there is a clear difference between HBO and Netflix. On the one hand, there is no common strategy between the profiles of HBO Spain and the United States, both differ completely in the volume of posts to report (significance of 0.00), to promote the platform (0.00) or the content (0.00). These being the three most present aspects in the communication in social networks of these profiles. This is a clear sign of a lack of cohesion in the strategies of both profiles. For their part, the two Netflix profiles, Spain and the United States, do show high levels of agreement in terms of reporting (0.987), but not so much in terms of promoting the platform (0.540), and much less in content promotion (0.098).

The same phenomenon occurs with respect to the promotion of self-produced content or purchased content. Netflix follows the same guidelines both in Spain and in the United States (0.994 in promoting its own content and 0.849 in purchased content), but more marked differences appear on HBO. Although they are not significant when promoting their own content, they do exist in terms of posts of acquired content where the divergence is absolute (significance 0.00).

There are fewer divergences in terms of message orientation. As in the previous case, the two Netflix profiles show a notable homogeneity without appreciable differences in the different sections (0.998 for suggestions and 0.870 for positive content). Regarding HBO, the messages are not oriented in a significantly different way, although it is the case with those aimed at making suggestions for new content (significance 0.00) or expressing positive emotions

(0.00). Again, much of this difference is due to the promotional strategy of HBO Spain, focused on *Game of Thrones*, in which an emotional tone of drama and the generation of intrigue predominate.

There is less homogeneity in terms of the formal aspects and resources used in the message. Both in the case of Netflix and HBO, there are substantial differences between their US and Spanish profiles in the use of links to social networks (significance of 0.00 in both cases). At this point, as will be seen later, the nationality of the profile weighs more than the platform. On the other hand, there is a relatively homogeneous strategy in HBO about the use of hashtags between its two profiles (0.687), inversely to what had been observed in other parameters. This changes in Netflix, in which there is a total mismatch between Netflix United States and Netflix Spain (0.00). The guidelines to maintain consistency between the two profiles seem to focus more on content than on formal aspects.

Regarding personalization, the only appreciable divergence is between the profiles of HBO Spain and the United States in the use of the third person and imperatives (significance 0.00), while among the Netflix profiles the cohesion is much greater. This could again point to a personal style difference between the respective Community Managers, in the absence of a coherent strategy.

On the other hand, there are differences between the two HBO profiles in the use of images (significance 0.00), but great internal coherence between the Netflix profiles (0.976). Not only that, but the images used also vary. There is no match between the HBO profiles in the use of diegetic images (0.00), use of faces and close-ups (0.00). This could respond to the greater access that HBO U.S. has to extradie-

getic images, especially in spaces of own production. The hypothesis is reinforced because, although with more internal coherence, the coincidence between Netflix profiles is far from perfect in terms of the use of diegetic images (0.525).

In terms of virality, there are also divergences between the HBO profiles in the use of positive content (0.00), entertainment (0.00), social magnitude (0.00) and humor (0.00). For their part, Netflix profiles do present similarities in all sections.

### **3.2 COMMON RESOURCES BETWEEN THE ACCOUNTS OF EACH COUNTRY**

The differences between profiles from different countries appear mainly on HBO. Regarding the objectives of the posts, there is a high coincidence between the US profiles of HBO and Netflix at the time of informing (0.987), but an absolute divergence between the Spanish profiles (significance 0.00). Curiously, Netflix Spain has more in common with HBO United States (0.898) and Netflix United States (0.820) than with HBO Spain.

HBO differs from all the others in terms of promoting the platform itself. The US profile shows its divergence from HBO Spain (0.00), Netflix United States (0.04) and Netflix Spain (0.145). For its part, HBO Spain only presents coincidences with Netflix United States (0.711). The same dynamic appears in the promotion of content: HBO United States moves away from the other American profile (0.02) and the Spanish profiles do not coincide with each other (0.18).

This differentiation of HBO Spain seen in previous sections is more noticeable in relation to the orientation of the message. Specifically in terms of suggestions, the two US profiles completely coincide in their strategy (1.00) and also

to a large extent with Netflix Spain (0.996 for HBO United States and 0.998 for Netflix United States). On the other hand, HBO Spain does not present any coincidence with the rest of the profiles (0.00 in all cases). The same phenomenon occurs in terms of positive content: while HBO Spain is totally different from the rest of the profiles (0.00), they present a high similarity to each other (0.870 or higher in all cases).

Regarding the formal aspects, these divergences are especially marked in the use of links to social networks. While the US profiles of HBO and Netflix largely coincide (0.972), the Spanish profiles differ completely (0.00) both with each other and with the Americans. An explanation for this can be found both in the language and in the impact of the North American accounts. Therefore, the trend is to dispense with these types of resources.

Regarding the use of hashtags, as noted, the only consistency exists between HBO accounts (0.687). All the other profiles act in a totally different way, without presenting any other similarity (0.00 in all cases).

Regarding personalization, there are no clear correlations in the use of the third person. Although HBO United States is very different from HBO Spain (0.00), it does not have similarities with Netflix United States (0.183) or Netflix Spain (0.360). For their part, the Spanish profiles are not very similar either (0.437). The opposite occurs in the case of the imperative: HBO United States presents a high coincidence with both Netflix United States (1.00) and Netflix Spain (0.960). However, HBO Spain is totally different from the rest of the profiles, regardless of nationality (0.00).

Regarding the use of images, there are clear similarities between the two US profiles (0.795), and of these with Netflix Spain (coincidence of 0.955 with HBO United States and 0.976 with

Netflix United States). HBO Spain differs notably since it does not match any other profile (0.00). The phenomenon is repeated, although to a lesser extent, in the specific use of diegetic images: a 0.944 coincidence between US profiles, and somewhat lower with Netflix Spain (0.724 with HBO United States and 0.525 with Netflix United States). For its part, HBO Spain is, again, totally different from all the others (0.00). The same happens with the use of close-ups or images of faces: HBO United States, Netflix United States and Netflix Spain coincide with each other with at least 0.962, while HBO Spain is completely different from all other profiles (0.00).

Regarding virality, the American profiles show a fairly high coincidence (0.927), while the Spanish ones are totally different (0.00). In entertainment there are no notable coincidences either between the US profiles (0.39) or the Spanish profiles (0.00). The figures are even lower in the case of humor (coincidence of 0.004 among North American profiles and 0.00 among Spanish profiles). However, in terms of social magnitude, there is little coincidence in the American profiles (0.002), but much higher in the case of the Spanish (0.788).

### 3.3 SPECIFIC RESOURCES FOR EACH ACCOUNT

Regarding the specific resources of each profile, the HBO profiles stand out due to the absence of use of certain resources. HBO Spain stands out precisely for the lack of posts dedicated to informing (0.00), while these have a high presence in the other accounts. The same occurs with respect to the objective of promoting the chain, which is absent from HBO United States (0.00), despite having a significant presence in the other profiles.

Regarding the topic of the post, something similar happens with the promotion of content. Although the self-produced promotion is approached by all platforms with relative frequency, the differences appear in terms of the content acquired: Netflix United States and Spain (0.849 in both cases) and HBO United States (0.676) use it much more often than HBO Spain (0.00), which seems to have renounced this resource. The same is true for the orientation of the message. HBO Spain seems to have renounced the use of posts dedicated to giving suggestions (0.00) or that use positive content (0.00), the use of imperatives (0.00) and the use of images (0.00), whether diegetic (0.00) or close-ups (0.00); resources that are present in the rest of the profiles. All this speaks of a very basic and not very varied Instagram strategy.

As mentioned before, links to social networks are an exclusive resource of US profiles, while they are completely absent in Spanish profiles (0.00 in both cases). A similar division occurs with the use of hashtags, which are specific resources of HBO profiles, while no use of them is seen in Netflix (0.00).

## 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Although each of the profiles analyzed started from a different position in their respective media market, they did not cease to belong to a common company, HBO and Netflix. However, their capacity to establish a common and cohesive strategy at the international level was very different. Netflix, which has stood out to a great extent for its ability to create its own style in social networks regardless of specific content (Pereira-Villazón & Portilla, 2020), was the one that maintained a more homogeneous communica-

tion in its profiles both in the topics chosen as in the resources used.

HBO was marked by unfavorable circumstances. On the one hand, the American profile is a consolidated chain that has been reconvered over the decades but maintains enormous prestige. The Spanish profile, on the contrary, had to publicize a new platform in the country, while the American profile focused on promoting its content. Furthermore, HBO Spain still did not have a prominent community of followers around it, which is evidenced by the low response levels of its initial posts. The advantage of Netflix over HBO was to have a consolidated brand community, a fundamental element to achieve the trust and loyalty of users (Coelho et al., 2018), which helped ensure that the arrival of the new pay television operator did not cause a transfer to the new profile. This lesson has been learned by Disney+, which has chosen to launch a mass communication campaign that will promote the creation of this community even before its official arrival in Spain and the start of broadcasts, aware of the importance of having a strong start in a much more contested market for OTTs such as that of 2020 (Puro-marketing, 2020).

Another of the fundamental conditioning factors for this different behavior of HBO Spain was the smallness of its initial catalog. The selection of available content was much smaller in Spain than in the United States, which forced the Spanish profile to focus its efforts on the product that worked best: *Game of Thrones*, as well as classic HBO series such as *The Sopranos* or *Rome*. These are products that have a markedly adult tone, inherited from the media scene in which they were conceived precisely to move away from the familiar tone of the mainstream media of the 2000s (Winter, 2016). For this reason, they impose a communicative strategy based on highlighting moments of tension

more than nostalgia, the exotic or children and humor, resources that work very well to reach the general public and that are present in some of the most successful series from Netflix.

In addition to the deficiencies of the HBO Spain catalog, a scarce variety of resources must be added. It focused on diegetic images and screen captures of the series or films in question, leaving aside other resources that contributed variety to the message, although they were not the majority in the rest of profiles. All this shows a strategy that is still vague and poorly directed by HBO Spain.

On the other hand, Netflix Spain also had to face some difficulties derived from its specific catalog in the country, especially the challenge of developing an effective strategy to promote contents that are originally produced by the American company but whose broadcasting rights in Spain are totally or partially in the hands of other platforms, such as Orange is the New Black and Movistar+.

Despite this, the differences between the Netflix profiles of both countries focused on the content to be promoted rather than on strategies or resources. This was not the case with HBO, in which the Spanish profile appeared to have little support from the US profile. Thus, it had much less localized audiovisual material for the Spanish market. This could be partly due to a lack of efforts to translate and adapt material from the US profile to Spanish. On Netflix, both the texts and the voices came from the Spanish versions or were translated into Spanish. In HBO, it was decided to keep the original audio of the videos and add subtitles in Spanish. This could explain why images and videos were used in almost equal measure in HBO United States, while HBO Spain used still images up to 3 times more than videos (Martín-Quevedo, Fernández-Gómez & Segado-Boj, 2019).

This difficulty of Spanish profiles to access resources in English was also manifested in the lower frequency of the use of the link to social networks than the US accounts of both HBO and Netflix, but they were frequently used to connect with famous actors or the pages of the series. To a large extent, this is due to the low production of both platforms in Spain at that time. In the period studied, almost the entire catalog was of American production and this made it easier for North American profiles to connect with them both by language and by visibility. Later, the Spanish productions were included (*Las chicas del cable*) or the rights were bought to include them in the catalog (*Velvet*). Almost all the material regarding the profiles of the series is in English, which again makes it difficult to connect with other profiles, especially since they would answer these mentions in English.

Definitely, there were certain strategies that define the imprint of the mother brand represented by the profile in the US, more in the case of Netflix than of HBO. However, new markets also require an adaptation of both resources and strategies, sometimes due to market peculiarities and other times as a way to overcome an initial offer that is more precarious than that of the parent company. This was the case of Netflix Spain, which in February 2019 had a million followers on Instagram, far from HBO Spain (100,000 followers), and even close to HBO United States (2.2 million).

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