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SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MEDIA GROUPS. AN ENTREPRENEURIAL HORIZON AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EMPLOYMENT

María José Pérez Serrano¹: Complutense University of Madrid. Spain.
mariajoseperezserrano@pdi.ucm.es

Miriam Rodríguez Pallares: Complutense University of Madrid. Spain
mrpallares@pdi.ucm.es

Members of the research group MediaCom UCM (Research and Learning of Media and Communications Management / Research and Teaching Media Management and Communication).

ABSTRACT:

Malleable to time, media groups have realized that communication leadership is also in the hands of those controlling opinion through social networking, Facebook and Twitter being prime examples as well as Tuenti, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest among others. This is the main reason why the media industry demands to be present in those social networks and modifies its organization and work systems in order to report the latest news, concern itself about the public's suggestions and concerns, have contact with potential main customers and, above all, build a close rapport with the consumer. All this

¹ **María José Pérez Serrano**: Bachelor of journalism, Doctor of Information Sciences from UCM, 2006-2007 Extraordinary Doctoral and MBA with the specialty of Financial Management. She is a journalism IV (Information Company) professor at Complutense University of Madrid and a member of MediaCom UCM research group.

Correo: mariajoseperezserrano@pdi.ucm.es

represents, from our viewpoint, an excellent opportunity for employment for our graduates in Communication Studies who must ignore neither the university institutions nor the students themselves if they want to take the lead in a more and more complex and competitive labor market.

KEY WORDS: Media Business - Journalism - Social Networks - Skills – Labor Market - Graduates - Spain

REDES SOCIALES Y GRUPOS DE COMUNICACIÓN. UN HORIZONTE EMPRESARIAL Y UNA OPORTUNIDAD LABORAL

RESUMEN:

Los grupos de comunicación, que pretenden ser dúctiles a los tiempos, se han dado cuenta de que el liderazgo comunicativo también está en manos de aquellos que tienen el poder de la última palabra conseguido a través de las redes sociales (*Facebook* y *Twitter*, principalmente, y Tuenti, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram y Pinterest, entre otras). Este hecho está exigiendo que las empresas de comunicación busquen una fuerte presencia en las redes y se modifiquen sus sistemas de organización y trabajo para hacer llegar últimas horas, preocuparse por las inquietudes y sugerencias de sus públicos, relacionarse –incluso- con sus potenciales clientes y, sobre todo, conseguir una mayor cercanía con su consumidor. Todo ello representa, desde nuestro punto de vista, una oportunidad de empleo para los egresados en Comunicación, que no deben obviar ni las instituciones universitarias ni los propios alumnos, si quieren situarse con cierta ventaja en un mercado laboral cada vez más competitivo y difícil.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Empresa de Comunicación - Periodismo - Redes Sociales - Competencias - Mercado Laboral - Graduados - España

1. INTRODUCTION

On May 18, 2012 the social network that, on February 4, 2004, was founded by Mark Zuckerberg jumped to Wall Street parquet. It was Facebook, which was worth, just before the event, about 104,000 million dollars and had 901 million users. On the other hand, the Spanish Tuenti, which was launched in late 2006 with the aim of serving as a channel of communication for college students and was the work of Zaryn Dentzel, Félix Ruiz, Joaquín Ayuso and Kenny Bentley, as of February 2012, had more than 13 million users. And the 140-character network (Twitter), created by Jack Dorsey in March 2006, had at that time more than

200 million users, generating 65 million tweets a day and handling over 800,000 search queries per day. From these figures to 1,390 million active users on Facebook on February 2015 or 288 million Twitter and escalating Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest, among others, it has been a short time, but it is a communicational event of such importance that must not only be observed from its financial consequences or as part of a technological evolution, but it also raises, from our point of view, a plausible career opportunity for graduates in Communication.

The Communication market is no alien to this scenario. On the contrary, media groups, who claim to be ductile to the times, realize that these changes proceed at such a fast pace that they buffet even corporate foundations and seem to leave no other way but adaptation or failure. In this sense, they realize that now the leadership is in the hands of those who have the power to say the last word through social networks. Thanks to them, the company offers its products in a more innovative way, presents its work almost to the minute and claims that the average consumer will propose ideas, comments and follow it almost like a fan. Similarly, and from other social networks, somewhat more traditional economic structures try to change their image among the younger to reach them in a more dynamic way and achieve expansion of their market niche, or they seek that, through simplicity and brevity, the short messages from a social network may become a reflection of the real-time audience.

All these networks of similar features but different nature and public are demanding that the work systems of the Communication Company be modified. And so, and urgently, they start demanding social network professionals to deal and work with.

2. Objectives

In a scientific research work, whatever their size and identity, the epistemological foundations that identify it are varied, including the objectives and hypotheses (teleological limits), and methodology. On this occasion, the material object of the proposal is based on the Spanish leading communication companies. Specifically, the selected commercial subjects match those whose net turnover in 2013 is more remarkable at national level. To these, also a quantitative discrimination criteria has been added according to the viewing figures and media broadcast headers of said media groups and the Spanish Radio Television Corporation has been joined to them. Thus, our universe is summarized in the following table:

GROUP	MEDIA	TYPE
CRTVE	TVE 1	TV
	TVE 2	TV
	RNE	Radio
MEDIASET	Telecinco	TV
	Cuatro	TV
PLANETA	Antena 3	TV
	La Sexta	TV
	Onda Cero	Radio
PRISA	<i>El País</i>	Press
	Cadena SER	Radio
UNIDAD EDITORIAL	<i>El Mundo</i>	Press
VOCENTO	<i>ABC</i>	Press

Table 1: Universe of analyzed communications and media groups.

Source: Own prepared

We will focus this object from two perspectives that match the lengths to which the title refers, from the viewpoint of the effort of these corporations to adapt to "use" social networks with varying strength, and from the perspective of the possibilities that these actions pose as a career for the future communicator.

1. Methodology

This limited approach draws on a simple correlation analysis and the following hypothesis: increased presence of Spanish-communication-dedicated holdings in social networks opens a possibility for employment for journalism graduates. To refute this initiatory idea or, following Kerlinger and Lee (2002), this "conjectural proposition", the results obtained by MediaCom UCM research group in its Interdepartmental Project on Innovation and Improving Teaching Quality (PIMCD No. 176) have been observed. On that occasion, from official data used in the Center for Employment Guidance and Information (SIOC) responsible for managing the professional activity of students of the UCM, relevant records to students in the Information Sciences Faculty were analyzed, whose contract signatures occurred from January 10, 2012 to December 22, 2013 and which were implemented in the 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 academic years. The valid sample of this research was 1,386 chips of practicing contracts, in which the descriptive data of journalism students who performed professional activities conveyed by the SIOC was collected. At that time, we wanted to know the characteristics that media companies and groups had in mind when seeking professionals among journalism students. To this end, we chose the Tuning methodology in project design (CCT, 2005) applied to the sample and marked the times before.

2. DISCUSSION

3.1 The digital requirement of the communications sector

Not long ago, in order to know the activity of a media company, they had to inexorably resort to the information they recorded in their annual reports and a slight patina of specialized knowledge was required to unravel a strategy of continuity over a period of time from its words. Today, facing the media groups and their performances also leads inexorably and factly to look at their "wall" of Facebook, their Twitter page or their campaigns on YouTube.

This raises two lines of importance: first, that in the late twentieth century society has been demanded an effort to adapt to this

new literacy that is indispensable, and, second, that one of the current features present in the media market is linked to understanding of digital signals. This, besides being a technically relevant innovation, is making media consumption vary and supporting companies get used to a new reality, where as paradigm of changes, there is an outstanding number of ways through which the user can access information or entertainment.

In this context, media groups try to adapt to a digital culture that runs much faster than the chances of the media structures to mutate and only, in some cases and circumstances, they are able to make such a great stride that they can keep pace with it (Pérez Serrano, 2011).

3.1.1. Communication Company and social networking.

At present and in the contemporary communication company, digital culture permeates and reaches everything (from content to resources, relationships, structures, image and values of the media conglomerate behind them) and comes to be the driving force for their business and economic changes.

In our decade, Thomas Davenport and John Beck (2001) suggest that the vast amount of information makes attention the scarcest resource in the business world, scarcer -even- than talent or technology. In the field of the Information Company, Alfonso Nieto (2000a, 2000b) notes that the currency of today's information market is called time. Anyway, "attention" or "time", to which we are referring is the result of a favorable reception by someone who freely chooses one option or another, depositing their respect and giving it part of their most precious and scarce asset in these times (the time available), thus transforming, through a complex but hackneyed with everyday life process, their attention and thus their time into economic flow.

As a catalyst for all this, technological advances, computers, the binary system, digitizing, Internet ... have come to exponentially multiply the offer to that "someone" every time more concrete who seeks, rejects, selects and deposits his interest and undoubtedly his minutes in a possibility among millions, that he ends up discarding.

One of the tasks of media companies is to make recipients choose their content over any other. That election will be the germ of their entrepreneurial and informative (and entertaining) success and here is, often, the reason for their efforts to adapt to the circumstances in which they have to live. And one of the goals of this effort is their interest in hosting and using social networks. They are aware that their business reality almost always lags behind the speed with which practical reality provides the guidelines for theoretical breakthroughs and, if they do not adapt to that reality, the consumer –their client—will leave his road

making his way diverge with all what is implied in their income statement.

The "social networks" have left the analytic field of social sciences to belong to the common language and thereby designate technological tool used by thousands (and millions) of people (natural and also artificial) to establish relations of exchange of information and entertainment using the possibilities of internet as a basis. If, to the more economic-like people, the "social capital" was earlier the sum of the contributions of the partners, now the capital measures the value that an individual

GRoup	MEDIa	TyPe	HEARING (%) / DIFFUSION - PRINT RUN	FACEBOOK		TUENTI		TWITTER	
				Account	Followed by	Account	Followed by	Account	SEGUID.
CRTVE	TVE 1	TV	12´9 / 12´1	La 1 de TVE	97			@La1_tve / @tve_tve	48.480 / 88.429
	TVE 2	TV	2´6 / 2´5	La 2 de TVE	7.658			@la2_tve	47.121
	RNE	Radio	11´8	Radio Nacional de España	2.896			@radionacional	52.721
MEDIASE T	Telecinco	TV	13´5 / 12´6	Telecinco	276.000	Telecinco	31.695	@telecincoes	138.663
	Cuatro	TV	5´5 / 5´9	Puro Cuatro	7.991	iHola! Estás en Cuatro	33.492	@practica_cuatro	76.424

PLANETA	Antena 3	TV	11 '8 / 10 '7	Antena 3	534.499	Antena 3	17.250	@antena3com	242.369
	La Sexta	TV	5 '8 / 5	La Sexta	20.475			@la SextaTV	130.385
	Onda Cero	Radio	18 '8	Onda Cero	79.082	Onda Cero	370	@OndaCero_es	18.344
PRISA	<i>El País</i>	Pre ns a	621903 - 482.984	EL PAÍS digital	137.002	El País / El País de los Estudian tes	2.319 / 2.030	@el_pais	1.422.842
	Cadena SER	Radio	32	Cadena SER	59.525	Cadena ser / Cadena ser Puerta de Andalucí a	18	@serdirecto / @La_SER	24.134 / 116.084
UNIDAD EDITORIAL	<i>El Mundo</i>	Press	433.264 - 321.029			El Mundo	736	@elmundoes	682.377
VOCENTO	<i>ABC</i>	Press	385.002 -			ABC.es	645	@abc_es	123.698

295. 521

Table 2: General map of the presence of some major media in Spain in social media in 2012.

Source: Own prepared

This table lets us know that, in 2012, not all the media had profiles on Facebook and Tuenti, and the number of followers of the latter social network targeting a younger audience was already substantially less relevant than that of its competitors.

Group	Media	Type	HEARING (%) / DIFFUSION - PRINT RUN	FACEBOOK		TUENTI		TWITTER	
				Account	Followed by	Account	Followed by.	Account	Followed by
CRTVE	TVE 1	TV	13'4	La 1 de TVE**	23.194			@La1_tve	229.891
	TVE 2	TV	2'3	La 2 de TVE**	13.868			@La2_tve	167.462
				TVE**				@tve_tve	328.239
	RNE	Radio	8'9	Radio Nacional de España*	13.437			@rne	161.332
				RTVE.es	459.241			@rtve	793.890

								@rtve.es	148.754
MEDIA SET	Telecinco	TV	18'4 / 12'6	Telecinco	1.049.463	Telecinco	37.402	@telecinco.es	678.981
	Cuatro	TV	6'5 / 5'9	Cuatro	612.329	Cuatro	35.692	@cuatro	407.971
PLANE TA	Antena 3	TV	16'9 / 10'7	Antena 3	1.301.003			@antena3com	840.516
	La Sexta	TV	7'2 / 5	La Sexta	254.708			@laSextaTV	508.304
	Onda Cero	Radio	19	Onda Cero*	174.491	Onda Cero	423	@OndaCero_es	204.661
PRISA	<i>El País</i>	Press	341.447 - 276.883	EL PAÍS	1.633.079	El País El País de los Estudiantes	2.447 2.103	@el_pais	4.002.859
	Cadena SER	Radio	35'7	Cadena SER	319.706			@La_SER	583.098
UNIDAD EDITO	<i>El Mundo</i>	Press	229.741 -	El Mundo	1.113.530	El Mundo	2.989	@elmundo.es	1.655.940

RIAL			156.172						
VOCE NTO	ABC	Press	134.747 - 134.553	ABC.es	464.042	ABC.es	908	@abc_es	715.807

Table 3: General map of the presence of some major media in Spain in social media in 2015.

* It has not been verified

** Static Content without activity. Just provide information on the media.

Source: Own prepared by EGM (February-November for radio and television) and OJD (July 2013-June 2014 to daily newspaper)

Making a comparison between both tables, we observe substantial differences confirming the rise of social networks as a tool and channel of communication and dissemination of traditional media holdings.

Tuenti, as a visibility tool for media content, seems to have been abandoned by mass media companies, literally in the case of Antena 3 (now Atresmedia Television) and Cadena Ser and, in terms of usability, in the case of the other media with a profile in this network because, judging by the numbers, they have not increased their number of followers noticeably. With respect to the other two social networks, Facebook and Twitter, the data show an increase now worth taking into account. Therefore, without going into the details that identify the user profile of each social network as it is not the objective of this piece of research, it does seem that the target audience of the media on social networks focuses primarily on Twitter and Facebook (in that order) and less on Tuenti.

It is important to clarify that these data constantly fluctuate and vary in minutes, so the results shown here were collected at the same time, on May 7, 2012 and March 9, 2015. However, the purpose of these tables is not to provide a detailed analysis of the evolution of the profiles of mass media in social networks but to exemplify, through observation, the increasing presence and activity of the mass media in social networks, which results in a greater engagement of community managers in their payrolls.

3.2 Possibilities for the professional career of the future communicator.

According to the 2014 Annual Report of the journalistic profession (Palacio Llanos, 2015), 9,451 people are unemployed in this sector and, only as regards Journalism, there were 3,170 graduates in 2013 (Palacio Llanos, 2015). These data point to a labor market requiring media professionals able to face the momentous leap taking place in the traditional model of work and also having the capacity to adapt to constant change. Among these changes are the use and exploitation of social networks. As a result, community managers –experts in them-- pose, from the point of view of journalism and communication, a qualitative leap beyond media convergence.

Research, development and dissemination of news are the steps any journalist must complete in his usual practice. But the interactivity of today's journalism has broken up with traditional informative formulas; they have motivated a change in the production routines; they have made it indispensable to redefine the job of the journalist and his proficiency, knowledge, attitudes and skills, and they have demanded that the communicative business organization should rapidly adapt to new circumstances. These changes affecting the communications company make the labor demand different and we can summarize them in two blocks: the former has to do with more external or formal aspects and the latter with work routines.

Regarding the former, internet requires changes in the following areas:

- In training: it is essential to have an important technological foundation (search engines, HTML, file transfer, Javascript database languages, creation of websites, use of specialized editors) that allows some efficient and flexible production processes. Highly technical and dynamic professionals who continually undergo recycling processes or acquire new skills are needed.
- In production times: on digital journalism, the process of developing news has no defined end, therefore, the production is fed with constant updating, ongoing maintenance and insistent deepening on the topic dealt with.
- In the number of professionals and their ability: this new way of working requires team effort, if anything, even more important than in traditional journalism.

As for the latter, we distinguish the following:

- In the use of sources: as Rosa Franquet says, online editorial information guarantees an information product every day and even at every instant-but sometimes its quality suffers because it is limited to a quick adaptation of the data from the sources (agencies), internet, corporate or institutional communication departments of the different institutions and the media (Franquet,

2004).

- Work Routine: the journalist has little time to prepare his journalistic piece, his work is characterized by immediacy and the need to establish a semantic, semiotic and technological symbiosis of his journalistic record to adapt it to an environment characterized by a multimedia language.
- formal and informal relations: a dynamic person is required, decision-makers, as the decision-making process in the digital environment is looser and less formal than in printed journalism and requires some diligence in the journalistic activity. But, at the same time, it should be fully aware of its jurisdictional boundaries.
- The digital journalist should be an information manager, ie, they should know how to analyze information and put it in a hierarchical order, also from a visual point of view, since the problem with the internet is not the amount of circulating information, but to be able to tell what is significant from what is irrelevant.
- Besides all this, you have to be precise, direct, synthetic, have a direct and immediate contact with what is local without losing sight of the totality; you should know how to provide the information with context.
- Know the limits of intellectual property rights (Falla Aroche, 2006) and respect the reader through the pursuit of informative rigor to establish a link --now possible – of interactivity with him.

In short, there is need for a journalist with proven linguistic and editorial proficiency, practical knowledge, global vision, careful detail, updated, flexible, reflective and dynamic. And from there, the journalists should be aware that their work does not end until the user read it on his screen and sometimes returns a feed-back to the media.

3.2.1 University and the labor market. Possibilities for the future communicator

From our point of view, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is still a good opportunity to respond to that picture we have drawn in the previous section. Actually, people trained in knowledge are needed, but they must also have specific skills and proficiency endowing them with a character of competitiveness and excellence above average and thus putting them in a leading position against direct competitors for a job.

From this statement, two aspects on which we must dwell on are deduced. On the one hand, leadership: previous research dealing with the powers in our studies of Communication (. Pérez Serrano et al, 2012) have yielded results showing that the presence of leadership is practically essential, the average being 87.12%, which corroborates the idea with which we began: the current communicative world requires not only trained professionals but also leaders in an increasingly complex and changing sector. On the other hand, the knowledge acquired: if, as we have seen, media companies have a significant presence in social

networks, which is also demonstrated in their interest to hire interns who know and are familiar with them (Pérez Serrano et. al., 2015), the University should, from the point of view of their curricular approach, enhance this training online, especially knowing that technological innovations bring out new jobs (Rodríguez Pérez Pallares and Serrano, 2015).

Roles		SECTOR / COMPANY TYPE OF COMMUNICATION							
Num. Of order	Community Manager (CM)	PRE ss	RA DIO	TELEVI SION	INFORM ATION AGENCIE S	COMMUNI CATION AGENCIES	ADVER TISING AGENCI ES	ADVERTI SING COMPAN IES	PUBLIC INSTITUT IONS AND PRIVATE SECTOR
1	CM in printed daily newspaper	1							
2	CM in non-daily press online	6							
3	CM not printed daily newspaper	8							
4	CM in non-daily	17							

	press online								
5	CM radio		4						
6	CM on television			13					
7	CM reporting agencies			5	9				
8	CM communication agencies	2				27			
9	CM advertising agencies						8		
10	CM in the advertising sector companies					1		35	
11	CM in public and private institution								66

	S								
TOTAL	FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF THE "COMMUNITY MANAGER" SECTOR	34	4	18	9	28	8	35	66
	Frequency of occurrence of the various functions by sector (Total = 1.367)	384	39	218	74	160	48	137	307
	FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF THE "COMMUNITY MANAGER"	202				14,78%			

Table 4: Manager for journalism students at UCM practices.

Source: Own prepared and PIMCD, no. 176 (V. § 2)

As shown in the table above, media companies are striving to hire experts who work for them to attain a strong presence in social networks, achieve a significant closeness with his audience and manage and promote their visibility. They are the community managers, a figure midway between the journalist and the publicist, whose "primary function is to communicate with customers through social networks and collect everything they say to help internally improve the company" (Baladrón and Correyero, 2010, p. 211).

The term Anglo-Saxon springs from the experience of users in understanding social networks and it seeks to eliminate the unidirectional informational borders to make it two-way, participatory and interactive communication, where the public can provide input, enter contests , register on private profiles and keep abreast of any news proper to the program or specific media.

The manual of the Spanish Association of Responsible Persons for Communities Online defines community managers as follows:

the person responsible for or in charge of sustaining, enhancing and, in a way, defending the company's relations with its customers in the digital realm, based on knowledge of the needs and strategic plans of the organization and the interests of customers. A person who knows the objectives and acts accordingly to achieve them (AERCO, 2009)

In addition, the same association states that the main tasks of this professional profile are five: listen; circulate information internally; explain to the community the position of the company; find leaders, both internally and externally; find ways of collaboration between the community and the company. And whose technical skills are sensory knowledge; knowledge of marketing, advertising and corporate communications; writing; a geek point; creativity; experience in online communication; Culture 2.0 (AERCO, 2009).

In conclusion, it is pertinent to note that although the *White Paper of Degree Titles in Communication* (ANECA, 2005) already speaks about community managers, an employment niche in this sector is detected. Communication companies and their communication products, as we have seen, are increasingly present in the networks and, therefore, they begin to demand a professional with complex and comprehensive training who meets the requirements of a recently created professional profile for which there is not yet an extensive work experience. This implies that management of social networks can be configured as a remarkable opportunity for a job which focuses on the future employment of the young just graduated from the Faculty of

Communication who, for their own tastes and need for communication exchange, have become excellent users and browsers of the already well known and developed web 2.0.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Internet has made many editorial and organizational aspects of the media companies vary. But if a field has had a substantial reflection, it has been the journalistic practice. As we have seen, the development of digital technology has also led to new demands for media professional, needs to be inserted in an organization based on the people who work there. And as a bonus to all this, social networks use the media as sources of information, but those media also take advantage of social networks to give more publicity to their news and strengthen their own brand within the Network (Rodríguez Fidalgo et al., 2010).

With this step forward, the professional must become a full supplier and "manufacturer" of content and, since their university education, we must insist on the need for them to get maximum performance in their expressive, technical and conceptual possibilities. Because, also, the future journalist is to be inserted into a media group composed of diverse systems and supports and his stability will also depend on his ability to adapt to novelty and change.

Now we talk about the possibilities of the networks, but evolution does not stop and, in a twist, technology precedes theory and soon will require, for sure, other suitable and fast redefinition of the role of the journalist.

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AUTHORS:

María José Pérez Serrano

BA in Journalism, Doctor of Information Sciences at the Complutense University of Madrid, 2006-2007 PhD Prize and MBA with specialization in Financial Management. She is a professor at the Department of Journalism IV (Briefing Company) of the Complutense University of Madrid and member of MediaCom UCM research group. Her career and scientific output is linked to the study of the Information Company and specifically to the concentration of media and their influence on pluralism. ID No. researcher / Researcher ID = K-9837-2014.; ORCID = 0000-0002-2190-7619 code and personal profile on Google Scholar = <http://scholar.google.es/citations?user=zJeGeYgAAAAJ&hl=es>.

Miriam Rodríguez Pallares

PhD in Journalism from the Complutense University of Madrid ('Analysis of current models for content management and knowledge in large Spanish Broadcasting chains: SER, Onda Cero, COPE and RNE'). Master in Journalism from the UCM and Diploma in Library and Information Science at the University of Salamanca. Member of MediaCom UCM research group and, since 2010, Honorary Collaborator at the Department of Journalism IV (Briefing Company). ID No. researcher / Researcher ID = 3303.; ORCID = 0000-0002-5486-0298 code.