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Social networks as journalistic paradigm. Spanish media on Facebook

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Abstract: Spain is one of the countries with higher use of social networks in the world. Among them, Facebook is emerging as one of the most significant internationally. If these phenomena are combined with the current transformation of journalism, it is not surprising that some Spanish cybermedia have approached this platform to develop new products for the Web. From this starting point, this article focuses on the recent performances of Spanish cybermedia within social networks, specifically Facebook, with an exploratory study about both the use of native media of Web and media from the print newspapers. This research studies the use of most important Spanish cybermedia from a structured observation. Data are collected through a content analysis with an ad hoc questionnaire. The results point out few cybermedia which seem to take advantage of these networks in terms of participation. This allows us to conclude that we are in a young state of relations on the Web, where spaces and resources are not optimized.

Keywords: cybermedia; Spain; Facebook; interaction; journalism; social networks.

Summary: 1. Introduction: social networks as new To-Do of cyberjournalism. 2. Framework: towards a change of paradigm. 2.1 Changes of use routines. 2.2 Typical content in social networks. 2.3 Advantages of social networks for cybermedia. 3. Methodology. 4. Case study and results. 5. Discussion and conclusions. 6. Bibliography. 7. Annex.

Translated by **Juan Carlos Martínez** (Indiana University, USA)

1. Introduction: social networks as the new "To-Do" in cybermedia

At the beginning of September 2009 the journalist Koro Castellano was announced as member of Tuenti's general management, the most important social network in Spain. Previously, Castellano had held other similar positions in media: on the Internet she had worked as general director for Unidad Editorial and as managing director for EIMundo.es, as well as chairwoman for MediosOn, which is an association which brings together the main digital media in Spain. Journalism's turn into the leisure-entertainment that social networks represent is not surprising if one looks at the flow of the advertising market, which follows the same steps. According to a study by comScore in August 2009 regarding to online advertising, more than 21% of advertisements on the Internet in July 2009 was advertised in these types of platforms, and more than 80% was only advertised on MySpace and on Facebook.

This U-turn should not be surprising. It took television thirteen years to reach one hundred million users, Internet needed four years, and Apple's iPod did it in three years. However, Facebook reached one hundred million users in only nine months (Qualman, 2009). In the mid of September 2009, Facebook's founder, Mark Zuckerberg, announced that the site had reached 300 hundred million active users, and at the same time the site had its first positive turnover.

Besides the economic demand, there are other reasons by which it seems complicated to draw a scenario for cybermedia where living together with social networks is not taken into account. In June 2009 the news agency Associated Press informed their journalists how to behave on these platforms in order to protect their digital reputation. Controlling what to publish on their Facebook walls, avoiding political affiliations on walls and not advancing news by Twitter are some of the most controversial pieces of advice by AP (Kravets, 2009). Afterwards, The Washington Post undertook a similar act, and in September 2009 it published a guide about the precautions and strategies that their journalists should follow when they work with Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter and other social networks.

In this advice guide, The Washington Post (2009) recommends that the journalist don't forget that they are representing the media during their appearances in these sites. The Post also wants them to detail exactly and clearly what their intentions are regarding the topic about which they are obtaining information. Above all, it is highlighted that the personal use of these platforms must not reflect behavior, prejudice, or lack of value which bring into doubt the impartiality of the information published in the Post.

Those responsible for the media refer to a clear idea: no filter is absolutely well in order to limit the spreading of a difficult image uploaded to the Internet, and since the journalist can't completely get rid of the importance that their behaviors can exert on the media image, the only solution is that a "sensitive" material needs to not be uploaded so that many people can't have access to it. The newspaper probably bore in mind the case occurred to the group National Post, which apologized to their readers on February 11th, 2009 (through the blog NP Editors) due to the wrong behavior of one of their editors through their personal Twitter account (NP Editors, 2009).

Since the end of 2008 and 2009 many Spanish cybermedia have placed around a social network, either own or external. Therefore, they are forced to coexist, a situation which will provide interesting synergies. If at the end of August 2009 the already closed media run by Gumersindo Lafuente, Soitu.es, announced the opening of its social network Utoi (<http://utoi.soitu.es>), others have opted to benefit from Facebook Connect, the universal identification system launched at the end of 2008 in order to join Facebook users with any web, using the same login as this social network.

While this paper was in progress, it was announced the closing of the cyber media Soitu.es. Due to the cut from the bank BBVA, which was the main investor and sponsor, the media run by Gumersindo Lafuente informed on October 27th, 2009 that it didn't continue, after twenty two months of existence. However, its death didn't come along with its social network in microblogging, Utoi. Borja Echevarría stated in his personal Twitter account that Utoi continued because "it is in the users' hands and the machines are still on. And Soitu is going to sleep..." (@borjaechevarria, October 28th, 2009).

These types of movements shouldn't turn out to be strange to those who have checked the progressive transfer of certain informative content to this type of social networks. These contents were previously covered by the traditional media. This is a process which can be seen especially in news such as terrorist attacks. After a bomb explosion placed by ETA at the University of Navarra on October 30th, 2008, the main Spanish media opened the traditional programs for citizens to participate in order to hear the first witnesses.

Nonetheless, the objective public, college students, hardly participated in comparison with other previous similar events. What was happening at that moment? Didn't the young feel the need to communicate what they had seen? Yes, but they were doing so in other spaces. "They haven't called radio stations, nor haven't they published their photos in the services of 'citizen journalism' of the big newspapers" (López and Rodríguez, 2008). They were broadcasting on Tuenti their fears, experiences, doubts or tranquility messages. Almost everything was being broadcast through Tuenti.

To sum up, together with the structural and economic limitations, the debate about the role of the emerging social network on Internet has also arrived to the editorial departments of the main media. Not only to face a new type of sources at the journalist's disposal or to suggest them minimum rules of behavior of the editors, but also to give a new dimension to the role of the media as administrator and mediator of the contents of the Net. The development of this last stage seems to be distant considering the prospect in which the media that has an account in the main current social network (Facebook) has hardly outlined their first policies and strategies. Anyway, in regard to the great debate of the challenges of the cybermedia (Parra et al., 2008), the need to draw this relation with the spaces that represent the social networks on the Web is clear.

According to the aforementioned, this paper suggests a hypothesis related to the presumption that the Spanish cybermedia, since their start in social networks such as Facebook, has yet to suggest other uses than the mere duplication or redundancy of contents. Therefore, we are in a stage of presence and consolidation of the brand in these platforms. Coming from this hypothesis, the main goal the study plans is to sketch the general prospect of actions of the Spanish cybermedia on Facebook. In addition, it also plans the following secondary goals:

- Identifying differences of use between cybermedia coming from writing media and those Net native media.
- Presenting an ad hoc analysis card to study the profile of the media on Facebook, mainly in terms of connection, participation and dynamization of communities.
- Highlighting the emerging field of social networks for cyberjournalism. These networks are led by Facebook in this study, where the specific uses can't just stay with mere content duplication.

Studying thoroughly with natural manner and exploiting the journalistic possibilities of social networks to the utmost is still an unresolved task, it is something To Do in cyberjournalism which will cause more conceptual efforts than technical ones. The reason for these efforts may be due to the re-definition of journalism, which is at stake. While this is not achieved, we will continue at a stage of mere meta-information in press about these networks, information about information, fascination for the forms without studying thoroughly in order to know the usefulness of the contents and the own narration of the new formats and channels. The fact is that in the evolution of the figure of the journalist (Luzón, 1999) the technical conditioning factors have marked its development, but paradoxically, Internet entails more attitude challenges than those based on mere technological aptitudes.

Facebook went from less than a hundred mentions in the US press in 2004 to almost six thousand two years later (Uskali, 2009: 16). At present we are still with a constant media presence of the networks, an image which is often commonplace and too much centered in the edge of the extravagance. In spite of this increasing interest, it seems that the media still doesn't manage to find the uses of the social networks for journalism.

2. Theoretical frame: towards a change of paradigm

Once we have taken on the general principals of the so-called social web, if one revises the scientific production in the last years, a change of communication paradigm about cyberjournalism can be suspected. Research has moved from the emphasis about the audience participation and its consequences in the writing routines (Bowman y Willis, 2003; Gillmor, 2004) to study in depth about the spaces in which this relation with media can be better developed, seeing the incipient social networks not just as mere tools but like new journalistic ecosystems and a metaphor of the new

relations (Campos, 2008; Cerezo, 2008; Lara, 2008; Flores, 2009; Lariscy, 2009; Overholser, 2009). Nieman Foundation's monographic report *Let's Talk: Journalism and Social Media* (2009) is a significant reflection of this new tendency.

Lariscy and others (2009) remember that there are still few researchers that undertake studies about the use of the social media understood as a whole that journalists do, and not from partial approaches centered in blogs, comments, microblogging or any of the aspects that make up the social character of the Web. Bearing in mind this lack and although the present paper could be understood as one more partial research, the fact of choosing the field of the networks as aim of study isn't random.

These networks exemplify the convergence as few platforms do it on the Web and, there may exist killer-apps more appropriate to detail exactly, for instance, the influences of the micronarratives in journalism (Twitter), but there doesn't exist a better space than networks like Facebook in order to observe fully the results of incorporating microblogging, video, blogging, images and other communicative forms. The multitask and the re-mixing of narratives is the routine of these adding spaces by nature.

On the other hand, if cyberjournalism wants to approach to the social networks in order to optimize its journalistic performance, there will be a need of studies that, as this one expects, outline those practices that offer an added service to the audiences and don't fall in the mere duplication of contents for different platforms. From this knowledge, which we could call social networks storytelling, the media would stop falling in the mistake of embracing a concept of theoretical form, but without hardly putting it into practice in a whole and convinced way, as it happens in the case of social networks (Lariscy, 2009: 316) and as it also happened previously with the adoption of blogs (Noguera, 2008).

Not in vain, the approximations of the media to the social networks out of mere habit or fashion could derive in serious consequences not only in regard to the useless use of the new spaces, but even in the own nature of the cybermedia in itself. That is, in the sketch of the aims and goals of the media as a whole. In this way, Cervera (2009) connects the closing of Soitu.es at the end of 2009 with the fact that "sometimes it sinned for feeling too much like being in fashion and trendy. The weight of the (undoubtedly excellent) technical department turned out to be excessive in its strategic decisions, and was influenced by popular current (like the ones of the social networks) but not clearly integrated in the journalistic product".

Due to this lack of knowledge about the way in which journalism can join naturally with these platforms, a clear reality can be derived, which is that "the media has an unresolved matter with the social network: adapting itself in order to survive must be the maxim. The proliferation of social media has to cause a reaction in the journalistic companies" (Flores, 2009: 81).

For these reasons, with the aim of designing efficient strategies to promote the integration of the social networks in the field of journalism on the Net, it is necessary to take a significant photography of the current prospect, highlighting what actions and contents can redound on a clear added value of the media for their public in these new spaces. As a first unavoidable step, it would be good to indicate what is being carried out in the social networks at the moment.

2.1 Changes in the consumption routines

When it is referred to the way through which the youngest public gets informed (and therefore the adult audiences in the future) it is usually highlighted wrongly that they get informed less than other generations. Actually this information is arriving through other ways which don't have necessarily the media as filters, mediators or tolls. Therefore, if certain news doesn't arrive to these publics it usually is because it hasn't been spread in the information spaces adopted by the youngest people. And the social networks take up an important role in those spaces.

From the media's point of view, there exists a potential audience in these spaces for whom the added value is no longer only in the information, and their character of "social" media make them "provide with spaces of communication and socialization to their audiences" (Lara, 2008). All this with the paradox that, in many cases, they must do it outside of their corporative domains. The economy of the attention, which has an elevated price on the Internet, makes the media accept that their content be moved, published or even mash-up and like that, easy to find, although it is in exchange for the toll of not being on the front page and accepting the consumption by alternative ways of traffic, which still haven't been exploited efficiently by advertising.

Among the new generations a new model of consumption based on the fragmented information prevails, which is made up of "snippet of reality of a few bits, news which in seconds spreads in the interconnected world in order to make time for also only seconds in the magma of information in which we live" (Cerezo, 2008).

Thus, while the press and the traditional media can find their opportunity in the spaces of reflection and deep analysis, the new media seems to be closer to the mixing of narratives, the consolidation of new relations or the creation of formats typical of the Net, aspects which aren't necessarily linked to journalism but to which undoubtedly the media will have to adapt on the Web.

For the aforementioned characteristics, the social networks have taken an important role, as potential adding spaces and administrators of others' contents have unrivaled. The capture of a greater public is proof of this. The media has realized that "the immersion of users in these networks and the time spent on them is increasing" (Lara, 2008), therefore its attempt of adaptation to these new routines of consumption of the information has arrived, but rather than trying to bring these audiences, it is arriving to where they are.

2.2 Characteristic contents in social networks

Since they are spaces which are essentially administrators of others' contents and not producers, the efficiency and the success of the social networks usually come determined by their simplicity and intuition to add hypertext, video and image, among other resources. That is, due to their easiness to present multimedia content in a way of personal relations. So, a logical sequence has started, where all contents derive towards attempts of socialization (contacts are called "friends", "fans", "followers"...).

Thus, undoubtedly the content that adapts best to these aims is the entertainment and current information. As Campos (2008) remembers, "the generalist networks distribute their orientation or specialization between the entertainment, which is generated by the own users or third sources, and the information of valued and mentioned interest".

On the other hand, the networks have recovered the graphic character of the Web, with greater importance than what it is exclusively textual, and it is predictable that there is a peak of the video like a predominant content in these platforms in short term (Cerezo, 2008). From this point of view, it will be important to watch what relations and agreements are produced between the great platforms of video on Internet and those networks that want to present them from an added value for their users. Those initiatives that go in the direction of integrating accounts to design a unique web profile (as Facebook connect allows partly) will facilitate these agreements.

According to Randi Zuckerberg, who is responsible for designing relations between Facebook and the media, from a global perspective and beyond the individual activity of each user in their profile, what people are doing in the platform is broader and more important than paying attention to what the media publishes. "Facebook users join groups in order to debate the matters, topics and activities which are important for them. They become fans of famous people, brands, celebrities and companies" (O'Connor, 2009). All this at the same time that they update with applications, contents and news.

Thus, the debate about the current information can be considered somewhat inherent to all the generalist, adding social networks of contents, and will be produced apart from whether the media want to participate or not. Therefore, the duty of designing global strategies to act in these networks depends on the media, beyond simple "fashion", to incorporate it in its writing routines with multiple goals: attraction of sources, feedback of the Last Hour publication, creation of spaces of multiple authorship, tracking and monitoring of conversations, to establish point of contact with the audience, etc.

2.3. Potentialities of the networks for the cybermedia

Of the aforementioned changes of consumption of information in the youngest population, which reflect an increasing confidence in the social media and in the recommendations (also of news) that arrive from their contacts (Universal McCann, 2008), an opportunity in the media to also create their identity within the social networks is derived. Not only does it deal with that "the media interests in creating its own social network to catch and cut in segments groups of population that can be of commercial interest" (Lara, 2008), but it also deals with an obliged connection with a different public so that a break between those audiences who stopped using old media and those media which refused to go into new spaces doesn't establish.

The war for the audience in cyberjournalism includes a battle for being the best prescribers, and the presence of external content which is not related to the site is used to collect the best in the Web, wherever it is. In this respect, the role of these networks is important for the media, since "the new prescribers will be the best interconnected nodes, the access and the transmission of information in the future will be connected much to how the social networks behave and develop" (Cerezo, 2008).

The networks, with their behavior and their audiences, have convinced the media that it can't reach new public if they don't abandon the wrong premise of keeping the reader, literally, under its domains on the Web. As Randi Zuckerberg remembers, "each time I see more companies which understand the importance of letting people consume contents whatever it is the place where these contents are on the Web, and not only those which are in sites of the company" (O'Connor, 2009). The express resignation to the conception based on the walled gardens, which is traditional of the first media that in the middle of the nineties uploaded their first editions to the Web, is clear in the affirmation of Zuckerberg. Keeping the same opinion, many press publishers have understood the transverse and open nature on the Net, where adding spaces of contents such as cybermedia and social networks must have many points of convergence.

Once the frontiers are crossed, the importance of using new prescribers is related to the virality that obtains a piece of advice coming from pairs. This confidence, which is generated from recommendations of friends and contacts, is a power that Facebook has already got and the cybermedia still aspires to it. Zuckerberg associates this successful process to the concept of trusted referral, which is based on the idea that "it is tremendously more powerful to make a piece of content come from a friend, there are more chances to coincide, read and get involved in it". Besides, he adds that the market is saturated with information, therefore "now it is so important to trust friends in order to filter news" (O'Connor, 2009).

The appearance of this new circuit of prescribers or influencers alters undoubtedly the media prospect and the old relations of credibility with the media. The traditional authority of the media as filter must exchange with the new role as administrator of communities and conversations, either in its own networks or in external ones. According to Tiscar Lara (2008), there exist five requirements that the media must fulfill if they want to consolidate their social networks among the audience:

- Connectivity: to develop a relation of proximity not only from dialog, but also from common contexts which generate enough confidence so that readers can design their own networks and collaboration.
- Service: to exceed the information offer with products adapted to integrate with the information process of citizen media (widgets, release of codes, applications for Facebook...).
- Participation: it must be open and high quality, which implies to establish return channels and be ubiquitous, with practices which are more related to the opening of formats and licenses than with the idea of "locking up" the users.
- Guiding and dynamizing: the mere authorization of technology that allows the participation doesn't mean it is high quality. If the media wants a real, critical, social criterion, it must dynamize it and administer it with the new role of mediator between publics and professionals which is presupposed to any media.
- Knowledge management: the aforementioned administration implies an effort to value those contributions of quality, even designing spaces of contact among those members of the community who are more motivated and active.

If the routines of media consumption have changed, it wouldn't be logical to ask adaptations to produce apart from the spaces that are responsible for the above changes. "The media needs to create contexts where its audiences can interact with the media and other users, where people feel the space like theirs, like a place of membership and of personal and community reference" (Lara, 2008).

The social networks are "media with elements of remediation" (Campos, 2008), the innovation in these spaces towards journalistic narratives, which can be either native or adopted, is more than predictable due to the fact that a lot of their users will configure some their agenda through what it arrives from their contacts. Therefore, the media has an important role in its task of guarantor of sources of quality in a space that is characterized by the superabundance of information, where confidence between pairs won't be enough. As the specialized expert in technology Rob Perogaro points out, "the journalistic interactions through the social media are essential" (Muthukumaraswamy, 2009), but this isn't enough anymore. It is necessary to define the nature of the interactions and its purpose, otherwise the uses won't go much beyond a mere duplication of contents without specific services of a social network.

One of the characteristics in these first years of use of the social networks by the cybermedia is the creation of style guides so that its journalists can know about specific company policies on the subject. Media such as The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, BBC, or the agency Associated Press has already announced small internal regulations about this topic. In these regulations, questions such as the difference between personal and corporative profiles or the journalist's awareness that their personal activity can't come off the honor of the media seem to be two of the main unresolved matters which may provoke many problems.

In the USA Facebook and Abc collaborated in the coverage of the debates of the US primaries. They developed the tool U.S. Politics Application, an area where users and journalists could establish contact and share their experiences. Every information piece could become a debate topic, Facebook users published their points of view and could see what the rest of the community were thinking. According to Randi Zuckerberg's words, this project helped to get a space "extremely interactive" (O'Connor, 2009).

The application Facebook Connect was also used by the American media Huffington Post in order to create its own social network in August 2009, HuffPost Social News (www.huffingtonpost.com/social), an integration with opinions that users have about news and share under this platform thanks to their account on Facebook. From different media, the project has received significant comments, which can be observed on the main page of HuffPost Social News (site visited on October 25th, 2009) which at the same time represent a statement of intentions about the future of the media: "it improves the social experience... friends will have a feeling of being talking one another" (The Guardian), "It defends a future about the spreading of information... more related to sharing stories with friends and colleagues" (Adweek), "...it promises to expand the conversation among users beyond leaving just a link on Facebook" (PaidContent), "...it is another victory for Facebook Connect and the social media in general..." (Mashable).

The aforementioned change in the consumption habits of news, and its impact in the different ways of traffic opened for a web site is a circumstance which can't go unnoticed if we want to fully understand what synergy is established in projects such as HuffPost Social News. Contacts in a network exert as new prescribers more and more about news people read, or at least as guides: "They are who review their friends' profiles on Facebook more and more, they see what sites they just saw and click on the link to read it themselves" (Pereda, 2009). Trusting personal contacts generated through the networks is the basis for HuffPost Social News to function, where each comment made on an article is duplicated at the same time on the user's Facebook profile. Synchronizing among accounts appears again as a key element in a paradigm based on a ubiquitous conversation, among other factors.

In any case, whenever it deals with adding a model to journalism which is more conversational, this one will find the logical problems of moderation on administering a great amount of users and, not all of them will have the purpose the program or the media had planned previously. As it happens in any successful platform, the journalist will have to act as a moderator with users who don't want to debate (trolls) or with the "noise" generated by the number of topics and their different interest, matters that can be resolved if the human teams increase. During summer 2009, TVE adopted Facebook as platform for the live coverage of Tour de Francia, so the possibilities of interacting with the audience increased drastically. However, the initiative seemed to be a simply praiseworthy attempt due to the lack of attention in relation to some interesting points of view contributed by viewers, the poor administration of the "noise" or the connection mistakes (P. Roberto, 2009).

Some of the aforementioned examples remember that the greater promotion of the social networks lies in the conversion of journalism (at least a part of it) towards a model which is more collective and clear with and to its sources and, of course, with its audiences. The social architecture of these networks is suitable to administer Breaking News, the search of new sources and therefore the constant contextualization of the contents in spaces which are much more social and dynamic than the offered ones by the cybermedia.

3. Methodology

From the mentioned requirements by professor Tiscar Lara (2008) in order to dynamize the social networks of a media among its audience, the current paper proposes an analysis card of the cybermedia content in these networks. This proposal tackles the chosen sample and offers the results in the following section of the study. The chosen sample is made up by cybermedia associated to a written media as well as by other Net natives, either national, regional or local.

In the current paper what has been looked for is the sample meaning in regard to the universe that represents (Spanish cybermedia pages in the social network Facebook) from a selection which combines the main national writing media (El País, Abc), digital versions of regional or autonomous media (La Verdad, El periódico de Catalunya, La Opinión, El Periódico de Extremadura...), Net native media (Lainformación.com), and even local digital newspapers (diario de Alcalá, Elche Digital). In any case, a sample that shows all the possible methods of the Spanish cybermedia on Facebook.

Given that the total number of Spanish cybermedia isn't very large (currently there isn't any updated directory about its presence and the sample has been configured through varied searches with key words), the cited sample reaches the significant character at the same time that it could come up with a high level of representativity. Those pages with greater monitoring by each cybermedia, apart from their nature within the Facebook platform (Página, Grupo, Evento...) have been selected. In the analysis card of content created ad hoc for this study, attached in the annex, the aforementioned parameters are used in order to structure up to four blocks of analysis that provide different types of information about the activity the cybermedia is developing on Facebook: Contents, Connection, Participation and Dynamization.

From the conception of the social networks as a potential market for cybermedia, the current study is structured from an approximation with a structured observation from the aforementioned analysis card, which allows a research with conclusive character in order to identify "clearly the details of the phenomenon to watch" (Malhotra, 1999: 186). There have been attempts to systematize those details through the previous four blocks. Next to these blocks and as it can be noticeable in the annex, the card begins with the formal part that offers several identifying data in the studied unit, which are also useful to establish some crosses with variables such as their coverage degree (local, regional or national) or their nature (digital version in written edition or Net native).

On the other hand, this content analysis conceives as sampling unit those Facebook profiles of cybermedia with greater relevance which the analysis card will be applied to ($n=13$), as record unit all the published or designed contents by the media or their audience in those spaces, and as context unit, the official media site in this platform, with all the represented content in its vertical scroll (except in those matters of the analysis card that something different is specified). The gathered results belong to Tuesday, December 1st, 2009, when the analysis card was applied to all the units that make up the sample.

4. Case study and results

It can be extracted a vast number of relations and results of the analysis pattern. In the current section only some of the most significant ones will be highlighted, since this is a preliminary research and we understand that subsequent monitoring studies would be necessary for a real extrapolation. One of the data that can be obtained during the first search which is closely related to the possibilities of integration with the audience is the interest generated by each media. This first number of connection, either through the term "friend" (on the other hand, semantically kidnapped by the social networks) or the term "fan", which isn't monitoring, offers us a first scale in order to evaluate the initial interest awakened by each platform. From this point of view and as a preliminary result which will be used later together with another variable, a first classification of cybermedia according to their number of followers would be the following: El País (8235), Lainformación.com (3026), La Opinión de Murcia (2828), Elche Digital (2565), Público (1883), El Periódico de Catalunya (1834), Diario Vasco (1717), El Periódico de Extremadura (1402), Diario de Alcalá (1388), Abc (1240), Diario Crítico (942), La Verdad de Murcia (430) y El Correo Digital (181).

The necessary involvement commitment to become "friend" or "fan" with someone on Facebook is minimum, thus at least a cross with a variable that allows to scale again this interest with another activity which does denote a minimum of involvement seemed appropriate: to publish a message on the Wall. With this new variable (messages published on the Wall) and the previous one (followers), a Participation Rate (PR) which comes from an easy way has been established: the Participation Rate (PR) is the coefficient when the published messages (including comments) are being taken as dividend and the number of followers as divisor. In this way, for instance, El País would obtain a PR of 0.006 since it needs 165 followers in order to have an external message on its Wall.

It can be observed from this operation how the classification of the Spanish cybermedia on Facebook changes its order according to the involvement of its audience. In fact, from the point of view of the involvement, or of the real participation, on the first four cybermedia classified in the previous list, only one would repeat in this new group. Thus, Público, El Periódico de Catalunya, La Verdad de Murcia and Lainformación.com would occupy the first positions with rates 0.84, 0.47, 0.025 and 0.023, what would mean that these media only need an average of 12, 21, 39 and 43 users, respectively, in order to generate an answer or a message on their Facebook pages. The fact that only a digital native

of recent creation, Lainformación.com, has been able to combine connection (followers) with participation and, on the other hand, that two out of the four first cybermedia on top are regional is what attracts attention in this second classification.

If it is important to know what others do with us (number of followers, grade of participation...), after the important references in the theoretical framework about concepts such as the walled garden it isn't less important to observe what the cybermedia does with others' contents. For this reason, it is obvious that the first action is the link, and connecting with others' contents is a first step that denotes the predisposition to turn into back-and-forth places, transition, the spaces of the social networks, and not just as adding of own contents. This unknown factor is what the analysis pattern with the variable Transversality wanted to solve, which referred to the presence of external URLs in the vertical scroll on the main page.

In that respect Lainformación.com has stood out again, since its 38 references double the number of external links of almost half the sample of cybermedia. In regard to its followers, the regional character of the cybermedia is again associated to the first positions, since Mario Tascón's newspaper would be followed by El Periódico de Catalunya (18 references), Diario de Alcalá (17), El Correo Digital (16) and La Opinión de Murcia (15). In the recount in this variable a punishment with -3 which corresponds to the presence of advertising contents should be applied, since they don't follow the important purpose of the wish of transversality.

From the variable number 2.3 of the pattern, corresponding to the nature of the published content on the Wall in its vertical scroll, the different approach of each media can be seen in the (lack of) diversity of contents. In any case, and despite a quantitative difference could be done, the qualitative one seems to be the most interesting. Thus, opposite to who only publish their news, we find remarkable isolated examples such as the explanations for the Diario de Alcalá's internal operation, director's apologies from his videoblog in ABC due to a controversial publishing matter, the section of the web of the week in El Periódico de Catalunya, the announcement of the live coverage of a conference from Lainformacion.com or the possibility to download a plugin in Murcia's La Verdad. These are examples taken on a single day that show a variety of contents, which seems to not happen in practice. Therefore, these pages are left in social networks just for the diffusion of headlines by an additional channel.

On the same line, we can also find differences in the way of introducing the published contents. Although it is unusual, it is possible to find some cybermedia such as Público or Lainformación.com presenting, like introductory heading, each publication with a style characterized by their attempts of orality and an informal character. Sometimes it is just paraphrasing the headline, although the great majority we discover ideological or ethical stances in the news. Thus, we are suggesting tangentially a future line of investigation to study whether these studies, which look for a conversational style, favor the mixing of opinion genres with informative ones.

Finally, and related to the fourth block in the analysis pattern, the Dynamization (of participation), the study monitored the number of replies the cybermedia did to its audience. Undoubtedly, it deals with an important aspect in order to determine the real predisposition the media has so as to satisfy particular information needs that its audience may have. The greatest differences are noticeable in this section. From the beginning, 69.3% of the observed media in the sample don't answer nor register public messages to individuals, either a reply to a previous question or to establish any type of relation. Therefore, the presence of some published personal message is only found in 30,7% of cybermedia.

In the second block of media, the younger digital native Lainformacion.com stands out again, and this time with a large advantage, since up to nine individual messages to audience members were registered in its complete vertical scroll. On the opposite side to those who "did have a conversation" at some time with its audience, we find the newspaper Público with only one reply, which is revealing about what to have "left hand" to open, or in this sense to close, conversations apparently open by a troll consists of. Público's next reply, which is directed to a user who informed their membership cancelation due to the excess of messages, seems to be a clear example: "Thank you for giving us your point of view; there isn't anything else more confusing than fans who abandon without an explanation. What does the rest think?" (Público's Facebook page, Decemeber 1st, 2009).

It can be observed in this last example how a user's direct reference to the media has been closed by the media at the same time as the message is used to re-direct it towards a group debate and a call to participation for the rest of the audience.

5. Discussion y conclusions

After the presentation of the most significant results, gathered through the ad hoc designed pattern for the present study, the conclusions associated to those data and the debate that raise are detailed next. Either in terms of connectivity, contents, participation or dynamization, all of them sketch a scenario of experimentation that is now beginning, what makes subsequent studies a requirement in order to validate fully the following statements:

- It'd better not confuse the possibilities of connectivity in these social spaces with the effective participation of these audiences. This fact can be clearly proved comparing the numbers of connection of some Facebook profiles with other variables that demand more commitment of interaction, such as the external messages left by readers (El País registers more than 8200 followers but only 50 messages of audience throughout its vertical scroll).
- Keeping on the same line, if participation isn't used and administered actively by the cybermedia, new services or products won't be derived. In this respect, a feature that can denote the predisposition is the

number of public replies to individual messages of the audience, what offers us a certain “degree of hearing” of the media to its readers. The most discouraging results have arrived in this section, since up to two thirds of the sample don’t publish any type of reply to the audience.

- The transversality, a concept derived from all those theories that invite to leave the fear to link to external contents (such as Jeff Jarvis’ “ethics of the links”), seems to be an inherent quality to the social networks. Nonetheless, in the cybermedia the presence of external contents in these platforms continues to be an exception. Except the case of Lainformacion.com, this type of contents still isn’t outstanding for the journalistic platforms of the great written media on Facebook.

- The regional character of some cybermedia seems to have favored its adaptation to the dynamics and relations that the social networks suggest. In other words, spaces such as Facebook appear like a new opportunity for “glocalization” (globalization of the local information), where the closeness with the audiences is a competitive advantage.

- The majority of the gathered results place the Net native newspapers in the first positions about connectivity, participation, dynamization or transversality. Of these cybermedia, specifically the youngest one within the sample of national character (Lainformacion.com) showed significant differences in its favor in terms of integration into the platform. Unfortunately, the recent closing of another of the great native digital projects, Soitu.es, deprived us of having a sample with more significance to those projects with an apparent greater ease for adaptation: the native media of the Web.

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7. Annex

A) Sample on Facebook (n= 13):

- Abc.es:

<http://www.facebook.com/ABCes>

- Diario Crítico:

<http://www.facebook.com/diariocritico>

- Diario de Alcalá:

<http://www.facebook.com/DiariodeAlcala>

- Diario Público:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Diario-Publico/75084861845>

- Diario Vasco:

<http://www.facebook.com/diariovasco>

- ElcheDigital.es:

<http://www.facebook.com/elchedigital.es>

- El Correo Digital:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/El-Correo-Digital/22326270807>

- El País:

<http://www.facebook.com/elpais>

- El Periódico de Catalunya:

<http://www.facebook.com/elperiodico.catalunya>

- El Periódico de Extremadura:

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1135282990>

- LaInformacion.com:

<http://www.facebook.com/lainformacion>

- La Opinión de Murcia:

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000232324282&ref>

- La Verdad de Murcia:

<http://www.facebook.com/diariolaverdad>

B) Form content analysis:

1. DATOS FORMALES:

1.1 Unidad de análisis nº:

1.2 Fecha de análisis:

1.3 Nombre del medio:

1.4 URL del espacio en Facebook analizado:

1.5 Naturaleza: Digital con cabecera de papel / Medio nativo de la Red

1.6 Cobertura: Nacional / Regional / Local

2. CONTENIDOS

2.1 Información básica o de perfil

2.2 Opciones del menú principal

2.3 Carácter del contenido publicado en Muro (scroll vertical)

2.4 Finalidad de las columnas laterales

3. CONEXIÓN

3.1 Número de seguidores

3.2 Unión a grupos

3.3 Hipertextualidad en página principal (URLs internas –del cibermedio–)

3.4 Transversalidad en página principal (URLs externas al cibermedio)

4. PARTICIPACIÓN

4.1 Mensajes de audiencia en muro (scroll vertical)

4.2 Marcado de favoritos por audiencia -"Me Gusta"- (scroll vertical)

4.3 Media de respuesta en los últimos tres foros publicados

4.4 Número de votos en la última encuesta publicada

5. DINAMIZACIÓN

5.1 Respuestas a audiencia (scroll vertical)

5.2 Actividades anunciada

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