

# Storydoing as an innovative model of advertising communication that favors an improvement in society

El *storydoing* como modelo innovador de comunicación publicitaria que favorece una mejora en la sociedad

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## ABSTRACT

**Introducción:** Storydoing is analyzed as a prospective advertising communication model in terms of social justice and environmental sustainability that responds to the needs of a society that demands more transparency and honesty from commercial organizations. **Methodology:** A sample of 87 storydoing campaigns was subjected to exploratory qualitative content analysis. This analysis consisted of identifying the social cause of the campaign based on the categories established by Kotler et al. (2002) and calculating its incidence in the sample. **Results:** The results show that storydoing is an advertising communication model that favors the improvement of several areas within society, including education in values concerning family, school, adolescence and youth, civics, culture, and politics. In the same vein, it can help address issues such as environmental and ocean pollution, endangered species, and recycling. **Discussion:** In light of the above, we are faced with a model in advertising communication that favors an improvement in society. However, some studies point out the lack of clarity with which companies develop advertising strategies based on social causes. **Conclusion:** Ultimately, we find a disruptive edu-communicative model in advertising that bases its strategy on a story aligned with business reality and that is committed to the transformation of social reality.

**Keywords:** Advertising; Media; Edu-communication; Storytelling; Storydoing; Social change; New literacies.

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## RESUMEN

**Introduction:** Se analiza el *storydoing* como un modelo en publicidad prospectivo en términos de justicia social y de sostenibilidad medioambiental que responde a las necesidades de una sociedad que demanda más transparencia y honestidad a las organizaciones comerciales. **Metodología:** Una muestra compuesta por 87 campañas *storydoing* se ha sometido a un análisis de contenido cualitativo exploratorio. Dicho análisis ha consistido en identificar la causa social de la campaña a partir de las categorías establecidas por Kotler *et al.* (2002) y calcular su incidencia en la muestra. **Resultados:** Los resultados constatan que el *storydoing* es un modelo de comunicación publicitario que favorece una mejora en la sociedad a través de la educación en valores que atañen a la familia, la escuela, la adolescencia y la juventud, el civismo, la cultura y la política. Asimismo, en temas como la contaminación medioambiental y de los océanos, las especies en peligro de extinción y sobre el reciclaje. **Discusión:** Visto lo anterior, estamos ante un modelo en comunicación publicitaria que favorece una mejora en la sociedad. Ahora bien, algunos estudios señalan la poca claridad con la que las empresas desarrollan sus estrategias basadas en causas sociales. **Conclusiones:** Al final encontramos un modelo disruptivo educomunicativo en publicidad que basa su estrategia en un relato alineado a la realidad empresarial y que apuesta por la transformación de la realidad social.

**Palabras clave:** Publicidad; Medios de comunicación; Educomunicación; Storytelling; Storydoing; Cambio social; Nuevas alfabetizaciones.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Future Studies in Advertising Communication

The perception of the world today is one of risk, as it has been hit throughout recent history by different emerging issues such as the financial crisis, climate change, SARS-CoV2, gender inequalities, or cancer as one of the main causes of mortality (Inayatullah, 2002; INE, 2021). In fact, the Eurobarometer 464 survey reveals that the majority of European people (94%) are particularly sensitive to environmental protection (Sailer *et al.*, 2022). Despite all this, institutions have the power to drive real social change by modifying laws, rules, and regulations and thus bring about a new way of seeing the world through a change of consciousness (Inayatullah, 2002). To this end, they ask themselves what future societies and countries want, and try to answer this question by conveying the feeling that it is possible to bring about change (Amara, 1991).

Faced with this scenario, governmental, non-profit, and corporate organizations have implemented the formal study of the future within their communication strategies. The aim is to foresee and predict from the lens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century what leads to the construction of alternative worlds in the era of postmodernity. Studies based on sociology, mathematics, and humanities that over time have intervened in other scientific disciplines acquiring a new theoretical and methodological framework (Pedroza, 2020).

Advertising creativity is presented as an effective tool when it comes to building a positive and credible image of the world. Cortés-González (2008, p. 231) states that advertising tries to give meaning to our lives in a capitalist society and, therefore, express a symbolic reality and another one woven through coherent discourses around people. "It is now a matter of constructing the metanarratives of the only future by creating discursive genealogies that question the dominant narrative and explore the other narratives that were subsumed in history and the present" (Pedroza, 2020, p. 214). So much so, that some theories suggest that the future lies in creating an ecosystem in which brands create and

lead movements that benefit both their businesses and society by promoting social projects linking companies, social organizations, and individuals (Good Rebels, 2012).

## 1.2. Advertising with a social cause

Companies are revising their marketing strategies to connect with consumers more personally (Rehman and Basheer, 2022). This scenario includes social cause advertising whose message draws the attention of the recipient through a value or a theme linked to a social issue (Huang et al., 2020; Rehman, 2019). This type of advertising comes from both cause-marketing strategies and corporate social responsibility (CSR) protocols. Although there is no unanimous definition regarding this concept (Barrio, 2019, p. 44) there are certain recurring elements such as the economic, social, and environmental dimensions, the impacts derived from the company, decision-making according to the objectives of society, and the contribution to its development and improvement (Capriotti and Zele, 2020).

All these aspects will be echoed by advertising in promotional campaigns with a social cause from which the audience is asked to participate in its purpose (Kim et al. 2015). Depending on the appeal to the socio-consciousness of the audience, there are three types of advertising messages based on corporate social marketing initiatives, cause promotion, corporate philanthropy, socially responsible business practices, and community volunteering (Huang et al., 2020; Yaqub et al., 2021).

On the one hand, there are those messages in which the consumption of the product, service, or company manifests a physical or functional attribute that contributes to the improvement of people or the planet. That is campaigns that communicate the benefits of a product or service to achieve sales (Das et al., 2018). On the other hand, there are cause-driven advertising campaigns in which a commercial and a non-profit entity partner to drive pro-social behaviors through donations (Li and Atkinson, 2020). Finally, also recurrent are those commercial messages in which the social reality that it deals with eclipses the message to the point of making the product disappear (Alvarado, 2010).

It should be noted that the presence of digital social networks has helped this type of advertising to position itself in society by positively influencing their attitudes (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Van Steenburg and Spears, 2021), especially in terms of social justice and sustainability (Barbas-Coslado, 2012). Social justice is understood as any discourse of solidarity based on values referring to a certain altruism that consumers adopt through behaviors, including consumerism. In other words, advertising communication endows certain consumer products with altruistic values, providing welfare to those who consume them, as well as contributing to the improvement of aspects such as migration, poverty, unemployment, or violence. To this end, the challenge is to develop messages that inform, educate, and convince the audience to take action (Van Steenburg and Spears 2021). On the other hand, the concept of sustainability refers to the awareness of increasingly notable problems affecting the planet, such as global warming, deforestation, or ocean pollution. In this regard, Kotler et al. (2002) already referred to the main causes that could be improved in society through the application of social marketing techniques. Some of these revolve around health promotion, accident prevention, environmental protection, and citizen participation, as will be seen below.

## 1.3. Organizational washing

Some brands take advantage of the benefits of environmental branding through exaggerated, misleading, or unfounded claims with the sole purpose of improving their corporate image. This practice is known as greenwashing and is a growing problem given its intrusion into companies that do maintain a sustainable message over time. So much so, that its presence has acquired certain transversality by incurring unfair promotions in favor of LGTIBQ+ rights and the fight against breast cancer with the so-

called pinkwashing, causing confusion and alarming cynicism among consumers (Sailer et al., 2022; Nederer et al., 2017).

All this becomes particularly important in a framework in which private companies promote greater participation of society in the production and provision of public services to the detriment of governmental ones (Sorribas and Sabaté, 2006, p. 4). Through advertising campaigns with a social cause, the audience is encouraged to take actions such as voting, getting vaccinated, or separating paper, glass, and organic waste (Kotler et al., 2002). Hence, many social critics consider this type of advertising to be a conscience-washing of the whole system, which would place it as one more element contributing to the globalization of postmodern societies. It is even possible that in the same way that commercial advertising maintains the expectation of a better life on the material level, advertising with a cause could act in the same way on the social level. However, to confront unfair advertising, Alvarado (2010, p. 680) proposes that the consumer-recipient should not be satisfied with the proposal of improvement offered by social advertising, but should evolve to participate in the change, complementing their values with greater doses of altruism.

#### **1.4. Storydoing as a prospective advertising communication model for social improvement**

Cortés-González (2008) defends in his work the use of advertising to promote social change; however, he asks whether to do so we should follow procedures similar to commercial ones or look for new formulas. Within this framework, storydoing is proposed as an innovative advertising communication model that favors social change.

The term storydoing comes from those companies that are born with a social purpose and that translate their narrative into action (Montague, 2013; Pallete, 2014; De-Miguel-Zamora and Toledano-Cuervas, 2018). So-called social enterprises have grown at a dizzying pace in the last 15 years, even in startups, posing core missions that include social well-being (Malpani, 2019). In fact, that there are organizations that are born with a purpose is not a novel aspect, since Aaker (2014) already spoke of a higher purpose as a business objective with environmental purposes. However, recent studies point out the lack of clarity with which the identity of organizations that combine social and economic elements at the same time is managed (Bandyopadhyaya and Ray, 2020). So much so that Coleman (2022) warns that the significant aspect lies in how advertising effectively communicates authentic and selfless motives.

The extraordinary thing about the storydoing strategy is that it is based on a narrative that favors the fight for social change through the active participation of the audience (Baraybar and Luque, 2018). In other words, the brand invites those who consume to represent heroism thanks to the help provided through iconic and transformative actions (Sanders and Van-Krieken, 2018). It could be defined as a communication model based on a narrative that transcends the commercial, defines a problem in society, and makes the consumer participate through actions that the organization proposes (Rodríguez-Ríos and Lázaro-Pernias, 2021).

According to De-Miguel-Zamora and Toledano-Cuervas (2018), storydoing has a story that is born within the organization, but expands to its products, its advertising, and its values, and transcends commercial ambition for the sake of improving people's lives. It is what Montague (2013) calls a meta-story; the observed truth that emerges from the total of the organization's actions, i.e. the core of a transformative story. This consists of understanding people's motivations, what stories they present themselves to the world with, and identifying their shortcomings to propose solutions. In addition, it delves into both the truth of the organization and the scenario in which it operates, so that communication is aligned with cultural, economic, technological, and competitive aspects in an honest and balanced way. Of course, none of this would make sense without defining the aspirational mission

of the company, a purpose that gets the audience involved and propagates new images for the future of society through its network of contacts (Rodríguez-Ríos and Lázaro-Pernias, 2022). Therefore, a singular proposal that moves away from short-term CSR promotions betting on a social mission embedded in the corporate philosophy and culture (Littlewood and Khan, 2018).

In sum, one could speak of an evolution in the creation of markets with communications based on promising new narratives for an uncertain future of the planet. In this framework, storydoing is presented as an innovative alternative to cause-based advertising that responds to a society committed to the planet (Vega-Olmos, 2016).

## 2. Objectives

Understanding that advertising is presented as a tool with great social and cultural impact, the main objective pursued in this research is to define storydoing as a prospective and edu-communicative model in advertising. To this end, this article aims to answer the following research questions:

Q1: Is storydoing an advertising communication model that favors an improvement in society?

Q2: Does storydoing have an impact on education to build a better future?

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Procedure and sample

The research was conducted through a qualitative approach, specifically through exploratory content analysis. The objective is to identify what type of causes are found in the selected storydoing campaigns based on the categories proposed by Kotler et al. (2002) and their review by Rodrigo-Martín and Rodrigo-Martín (2014). For this purpose, the yearbook *Los Anuncios del Año* (2013-2020) has been consulted given its exhaustiveness and disinterested selection of ads, and it has been complemented with the *c de c* file, as it presents projects focused on dispelling sexist stereotypes in advertising. In fact, the current president, Monica Moro, has been involved in the design of a program where creativity is synonymous with education and analysis for the development of a better future (Club de Creativos, 2021).

Secondly, a purposive sampling procedure (Krippendorff, 1990) has been carried out to guarantee the representativeness of the sample. To this end, we selected from both yearbooks those campaigns that met the storydoing criteria through the items in Table 1. These are a series of categories that are developed in Montague's (2013) work and that co:collective.com makes available to organizations and brands to determine whether they are storytellers or storydoers.

**Table 1.** *Storydoing campaign screening table.*

Category	Data
Code	2019_13
Advertiser	Famosa
Sector	Game/Toys/Video game consoles
Product	Toys
Brand	Famosa

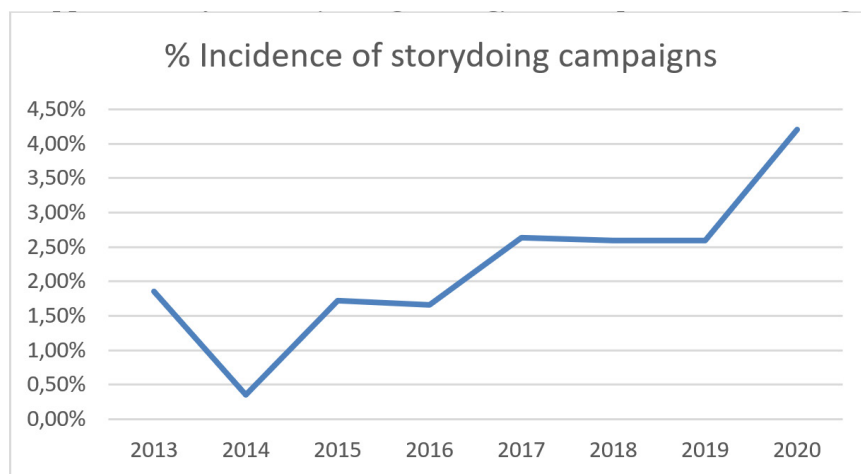


Piece	30" TV Spot
Title	In line with them
Does it have a story?	Yes
Does the story define an ambition beyond commercial aspiration?	Yes
Does the story define a clear enemy?	Yes
Does the story drive the company to act outside the company?	Yes
Have a few iconic and transformational actions been defined?	Yes
Is it a storydoing campaign?	Yes

**Source:** Own elaboration based on Montague (2013).

The delimitation of the sample covers from 2013 to 2020 for two reasons: on the one hand, in 2013 the storydoing manifesto was published in *How to combine story and action to transform your business* (Montague, 2013), so any campaign after that date could be susceptible to storydoing and, on the other hand, 2020 corresponds to the last yearbook published by Anuncios at the time this research was concluded. Thus, after the analysis of 2,736 campaigns, 87 were obtained that met the storydoing criteria and, therefore, were suitable for analysis. The low number is explained by the low confidence that Spanish agencies have in implementing storydoing strategies in their campaigns. In fact, Baraybar and Luque (2018), in exploratory research on the object of study at hand, determined that only 10% of agencies and advertisers trust its effectiveness. However, in this research, it has been possible to detect an increasing interest in applying this type of strategy, as shown in the following figure, which shows the storydoing campaigns launched per year.

**Figure 1.** Application of the storydoing strategy in the Spanish advertising industry.



**Source:** Own elaboration based on the yearbooks *Los Anuncios del año* (2013-2020).

To carry out the analysis in question, the list proposed by Kotler et al. (2002) of the main issues that could be improved through cause marketing and advertising strategies was taken into account. These were then modified after unifying under a single category all those that contained a common denominator, besides taking into account the new contributions made by Rodrigo-Martín and Rodrigo-Martín (2014), and, finally, adding some categories that neither of the two works considered, such as gender equality. Its inclusion is given because it is a significant aspect if we take into account that women worldwide still earn 24% less than men, 35% have suffered physical and/or sexual violence, and almost 15 million girls under 18 years of age are married each year (United Nations, 2020).

Below is the final list of categories of current social and environmental concerns that will form part of the analysis tool developed ad hoc.

**Table 2:** *The main issues that can be improved through marketing strategies*

<b>Human beings</b>	
Health. Diseases	Physical activity Pregnancy and breastfeeding Sexually transmitted diseases Fat intake and obesity Fruit and vegetable consumption Cancer Preventing congenital diseases Immunization Osteoporosis Oral health Blood pressure Eating disorders
Road Safety	Tobacco and alcohol use
Violence	Road safety Suicides Domestic violence Sexual assault Domestic accidents
Education	Cultural diffusion Education in values
Equality	Homophobia Gender Xenophobia Immigration Disability Senior citizens
Solidarity	Volunteering Solidarity Organ donation
Poverty	Fight against hunger War conflicts Schooling
<b>Environment</b>	
Ocean pollution	Conservation of rivers and oceans

Endangered species	Fauna and flora in extinction Animal abuse Depopulation
Environmental pollution	Natural habitat protection Climate change Energy saving
Recycling	Felling of trees Environmental pollution

**Source:** Own elaboration based on Kotler et al. (2002, pp. 15-16) and Rodrigo-Martín y Rodrigo-Martín (2014, pp. 263-264).

Once they had been divided into two groups, one related to human-related causes and the other to the environment, thanks to the design of two analysis sheets prepared for the occasion (see Figures 2 and 3 in ANNEX I), we were able to quantify the frequency with which some categories occurred in the sample (Fernández-Chaves, 2002). To this end, the campaigns of the first group have been numbered from 01 to 75 and those of the second group from 01 to 12, thus forming a codebook that has simplified the process with which we have obtained the results that are highlighted in the following section.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Human-related storydoing campaigns

After analyzing the 87 campaigns (N=87), 75 were found to be related to social causes and 12 to environmental causes (see Table 3 in ANNEX II). The following is a list of the issues found and their presence in the analysis.

**Table 3.** *Presence of campaigns with a social cause.*

Topic	%
Education	28
Health. Diseases	26.6
Equality	14.6
Altruism and solidarity	13.3
Poverty	9.3
Traffic. Road safety	5.3
Violence Bullying	2.6

**Source:** Own elaboration.

With 28%, the advertising campaigns analyzed focus on values education for children, adolescents, young people, and adults. They also point out the importance of education in schools, as well as in civics, politics, and sex education.

In terms of values, some campaigns, such as those of Ikea or Famosa, focus on the importance of adults and children spending time together. Others, such as those of Audi or Euskaltel (2016), are



committed to reducing materialism detected among young people. Selmark and Gillette, for their part, focus specifically on adolescence to advise on issues related to puberty and also to change a concept of masculinity that is increasingly less representative in society (ReasnWhy, 2019). Finally, campaigns such as those of Renault, Ruavieja, and Skoda aim to educate a more adult section of society by encouraging them to fulfill their goals in life, to put aside the Internet to see each other in person, and encourage birth rates so that schools survive in towns in danger of abandonment, respectively. BBK, on the other hand, aims to make visible the loneliness suffered by the elderly and how important it is to keep them company. Regarding the elderly, the Proximity agency proposes to preserve Spanish words that have fallen into disuse over time.

Concerning education in schools, some brands have based their strategies on economic donations, but through interactive games, such as the campaigns of Vodafone and ING Direct. Both aim to increase schooling in Africa through funds raised by downloading and playing the games.

In terms of civic education, one campaign was found, that of Renfe, which invites reflection on the public expense involved in cleaning graffiti from trains. As for political education, *Tapas* magazine aims to dispel the problems between Spain and Catalonia. And finally, concerning sex education, Control is launching an interactive campaign on how to use condoms, among other aspects.

As for the health category, with 26.6% of the total, there were campaigns aimed at preventing breast cancer, such as those launched by ING Direct, Romancho, Generalli, and C&A, and raising awareness of neurodegenerative diseases. Regarding the latter, EiTB, Samsung, Skoda, and Hospital 12 de Octubre focus on disorders and pathologies that affect mental health and cognitive processes, such as dyslexia, Down syndrome, and some phobias. Finally, IFA, Coca-Cola, Danone, and Ikea, focused on healthy habits, such as nutrition and rest.

14.6% of campaigns advocate for equality, including gender equality, the inclusion of disabled people, especially in the field of sports, such as Bankia's campaign, against racism, such as La Liga's campaign, and ageism, as proposed by Aquarius.

13.3% are altruistic and solidarity campaigns aimed at selflessly helping others. These campaigns focus on financial contributions either through actions proposed by the brand or by raising funds for the most disadvantaged. Of all these, we would like to highlight the solidarity campaigns aimed at helping hospitality professionals during the confinement caused by the SARS-CoV2 pandemic.

9.3% of campaigns have strategies based on collaborating with an NGO through actions proposed by the brands to eradicate poverty in Africa, but also to restore the Spanish economy.

In terms of road safety, 5.3% of the campaigns, such as those of Generalli, Volkswagen, Nike, or Genesis, have the mission of reducing traffic accidents involving people behind the wheel, on bicycles, or walking through apps that prevent accidents or by using reflective clothing to make cyclists visible when riding at night.

Finally, 2.6% of the sample (N= 87) are campaigns whose mission is to detect bullying and mitigate it by promoting values such as respect, empathy, and tolerance in schools, such as that of the newspaper *El Mundo* and the financial company BBK.

## 4.2. Storydoing campaigns related to environmental causes

As mentioned above, 12 campaigns related to environmental preservation have also been detected. The following is a list of the topics found and their presence in the analysis.

**Table 4.** *Presence of campaigns with environmental causes.*

Topic	%
Environmental pollution	33.3
Endangered species	33.3
Ocean pollution	25
Recycling	8.3

**Source:** Own elaboration.

33.3% of the respondents are concerned, on the one hand, with issues related to environmental pollution and, on the other, with the preservation of endangered species. Regarding the first issue, actions such as disintegrating CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, using a bicycle, taking care of neighborhoods through sustainable projects, and eliminating plastic straws in the third sector are proposed. Regarding endangered species, the former Gas Natural Fenosa aimed to preserve the Navarra mink by converting its tweets into euros to finance a protected area and prevent its disappearance. Skoda and Correos, on the other hand, focused on reviving rural towns in danger of disappearing due to depopulation.

Twenty-five percent of the environmental campaigns are related to ocean pollution. Actions such as those of Coronita, Flopp, and Hyundai, for example, emphasize the importance of keeping beaches plastic-free. Finally, there is only one campaign, that of Coca-Cola, which corresponds to 8.3% of the sample, focused on the importance of recycling.

In general, we found that most of the campaigns analyzed are based on making digital platforms available to people to carry out their purpose, such as algorithms to calculate the time they have left to spend with their loved ones, forms to join the volunteer program that helps blind people to practice sports, reverse bids to reverse the public cost of cleaning graffiti on trains, or virtual spaces with tips for the prevention of breast cancer. Other websites integrate scientific tools to detect psychological disorders such as early dyslexia and treat the driving phobia. A paradigmatic case is that of Amstel, which set out to help the hospitality sector by offering a microsite designed especially for the occasion where people could pay for rounds of beer in advance during the lockdown of the SARS-CoV2 pandemic.

Related to the digital environment, actions consisting of downloading apps for mobile devices have also been found. Some paradigmatic cases are those digital apps that function as a meeting point for women runners, such as those of Nike and EDP, or Font Vella, which proposes to measure daily hydration. In this scenario, video games to educate adolescents about healthy habits and recognize signs of bullying are noteworthy. Some of these were aligned to cause-marketing strategies and, therefore, the funds raised by downloading and using are destined for different NGOs.

Other actions are based on the organization of public events such as demonstrations to raise awareness of multiple sclerosis or large-scale pink pours to raise awareness of breast cancer. Along the same lines, it is worth mentioning the happiness ATM installed by Coca-Cola to help vulnerable sectors,

the Famosa Parents' School, the wine tastings of *Tapas* magazine, and the Deliciosa Calma restaurant where women could taste dishes free of social charges.

Furthermore, products designed and distributed for the occasion have been found. Examples include reflective clothing to prevent accidents among cyclists, Audi's driving doll to dispel gender issues, and McDonald's solidarity burger to reverse the economic and social damage caused by confinement. Along the same lines, Generalli is launching the Melanoma Summer Collection, a swimsuit collection to raise awareness of skin cancer, just as C&A's bra does for breast cancer.

In the environmental field, some iconic actions are the responsibility of Hyundai, with the installation of parking meters in some areas of the Costa del Sol, for which payment was based on inserting plastic bottles from the beaches instead of money. Another paradigmatic case is that of Coca-Cola, which manufactures toys with recycled plastics in one of its Christmas campaigns, and McDonald's, which auctions off the last plastic straws to make way for cardboard ones and contribute to the improvement of environmental pollution. On the other hand, there were short films to raise awareness of the harshness of cancer for those who suffer from it, as well as to fight against fashion stereotypes.

It should also be noted that more sophisticated proposals have been found, such as that of Selmark, which establishes virtual spaces in those digital contents used by teenage girls so that, under the same wifi network, their mothers can anonymously insert advice related to puberty. Another is Correos, which focuses on producers in depopulated Spain, offering them an online marketplace where they can sell their products and distribute their purchases. In terms of ecology, Shiseido's initiative to distribute advertising tarpaulins impregnated with titanium dioxide to disintegrate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in some cities, such as Madrid, is worth mentioning.

In short, from this exploratory content analysis, it is possible to diagnose a type of social advertising that has an impact on the improvement of society, especially in the education of values in the school environment, civics, political issues, and sex education. We have also detected those whose purpose is the preservation of the environment, specifically environmental pollution and the consequent extinction of species. Campaigns whose advertising message breaks through in a novel way, building hopeful scenarios for a socially committed society that demands more transparency and honesty from organizations.

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

Due to the power that advertising exerts on society, it is essential to incorporate in the design of campaigns some methods that allow the integration of prospective thinking to detect emerging issues, and search for change patterns and mechanisms sustainable over time. In fact, advertising with a social cause seems to convey messages that alert society to a specific problem, only that, due to unfair practices such as pinkwashing or greenwashing, the transparency of the message has been called into question until it is even seen as a phenomenon that trades in values. Kotler et al. (2016) already warned that the mission of social marketing was focused on making people act to the point of creating a habit for the sake of social improvement. However, the strategy moved within conventional banners, such as launching a simple and clear message, focused on audience benefits, that were memorable and had a touch of humor. While it is true that these are recommendations that could be part of any type of campaign, among all of them stands out the so-called open collaboration or crowdsourcing, a technique carried out to take advantage of the potential of online communities and get them to participate in a purpose. Storydoing goes a step further and is presented as a new alternative in advertising communication based on a story that, far from basing its strategy on the brand promise, goes on to help achieve its purpose by getting people to participate and join a social cause. A neologism that, although it seems

relevant and current, amalgamates certain practices that have been used in advertising before, such as the call to action or a format worthy of a branded content strategy.

In this article, qualitative research is carried out to understand how storydoing can influence the construction of images for the future of society. It also aims to know whether it could be considered an advertising tool to help improve it in terms of social justice and environmental sustainability. To this end, a content analysis has been carried out to record the presence of a series of categories that have been developed for the occasion taking as a reference previous studies on social marketing such as Kotler et al. (2002) and Rodrigo-Martín and Rodrigo-Martín (2014). To this end, an analysis sheet has been prepared that contemplates current social aspects valid for future research that wishes to address this object of study.

All this has made it possible to answer the first research question, which concludes that storydoing is an advertising communication model that, through the proposal of a series of iconic actions available to the audience, favors an improvement in society. Most of these invite people to enter a website and participate in the campaign proposal. Others consist of asking the audience to participate more, such as downloading mobile apps and video games, as well as watching short films to encourage prosocial behavior through donations. In any case, both strategies take place in a digital environment, which is not a trivial aspect considering that society has adapted to new models of information transmission along with new ways of understanding knowledge management and social relations. However, the results also show some guerrilla marketing actions and the manufacture of exclusive products with which the company manifests a physical or functional attribute that contributes to the improvement of people's lives.

Regarding the second research question, it could be said that storydoing is also shown as a communication tool that informs, educates, and aims to convince the audience to get them to act. That is, some stories have an impact on the education of society and encourage an attitude towards social change through the democratic participation of people. On the one hand, campaigns that make people fight against problems such as the abuse of digital social networks, materialism, and youth consumerism, gender equality, ageism, social inclusion, the importance of schooling, political differences, prevention, detection, and awareness of diseases, healthy habits in society, road safety, and the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic stand out. But so are those focused on the importance of eradicating ecological sustainability issues, such as ending environmental and ocean pollution, preserving endangered species, and promoting recycling.

Of all this, the importance of the brand story stands out since, as pointed out by some scholars such as Villagra et al. (2015), it is an asset that is part of the nature of the company, is not perceived as a cost, and arouses interest in society. An idea, of basing an advertising campaign on a story, which is sustained due to the nature of human beings and their innate condition of constructing stories. In fact, it is presumed that for more than 100,000 years mankind has been building and transmitting stories through myths and rites that forged their identity and marked their behavior, making people exemplary beings. Hence, in a scenario where society is concerned about the future of the planet, it makes sense for the brand to take on a human touch to get closer to people and establish emotional ties with them. It is, therefore, a strategy that has a set of exemplary symbols that operate in people's unconscious and that for thousands of years has had the same purpose that storydoing contemplates in the information society: to model human behavior. In fact, we could speak of an evolution of storytelling that adds value to business communication through the renewal of some of its assets, which would favor new communication patterns and mechanisms in advertising that are sustainable over time.

However, the use of storytelling for strategic commercial purposes has raised certain objections, especially since communication between organizations and the audience is based on bidirectionality in real time. So much so that Coleman (2022), Das et al. (2018), and Li and Atkinson (2020) point out the lack of clarity with which companies develop advertising strategies based on social causes. They ask what is the best strategy for a commercial company to address the market with a social proposal since it seems that incurring contradictory strategies could damage the image of the organization. To clarify this question, this article looks at the concept of storydoing companies, a term coined by Ty Montague and Rose Mary Ryan (Montague, 2013, p. 223) to designate any commercial organization that is born with a purpose for the planet. An innovative practice that favors commercial organizations to launch social messages that are part of the company's DNA in a creative, honest, and transparent way. It should be noted that, although not all the campaigns analyzed in this research come from storydoing companies, they do apply storydoing as an advertising tool. That is, they have content aligned with their purpose in the form of narrative, eliminating incongruities between the discourse disseminated and the business reality, which generates organic feedback that favors the brand. In short, a phenomenon that reinforces intangible assets as valuable as brand identity and image, culture, and reputation, and which is far from practices such as the implementation of corporate social responsibility protocols.

Apparently, it is a practice that tries to demonstrate to society a certain honesty in the relationship established between brand and advertising within the capitalist system where consumers and commercial organizations coexist. That is why it is proposed as a future line of research to analyze which of the campaigns proposed in this article could incur unfair practices such as greenwashing or pinkwashing.

In short, storydoing could be understood as an alternative to the ineffectiveness of existing strategic advertising formulas, making the organization consider its *raison d'être*, its history, its communications, and its purpose. In other words, a disruptive educational-communicative model in advertising that bases its uniqueness on a story that starts from the advertising companies and is committed to the transformation of social reality through the voluntary participation of people through tools that the organization itself makes available to them.

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**ANNEX I**

**Figure 2:** Social concerns related to the human being analysis worksheet

CATEGORÍAS		CÓDIGO CAMPAÑA																							...	%		
		01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23				
Salud Enfermedades	Actividad física																											
	Embarazo y lactancia																											
	Enfermedades de transmisión sexual																											
	Consumo de grasas y obesidad																											
	Consumo de frutas y verduras																											
	Cáncer																											
	Prevenir enfermedades congénitas																											
	Inmunización																											
	Osteoporosis																											
	Sanidad bucal																											
	Presión arterial																											
	Desórdenes alimenticios																											
Seguridad vial	Consumo de tabaco y alcohol																											
Violencia	Seguridad vial																											
	Suicidios																											
	Violencia doméstica																											
	Agresión sexual																											
	Accidentes domésticos																											

Educación	Difusión cultural																									
	Educación en valores																									
Igualdad	Homofobia																									
	Género																									
	Xenofobia																									
	Inmigración																									
	Discapacidad																									
	Tercera edad																									
Solidaridad	Voluntariado																									
	Solidaridad																									
	Donación de órganos																									
Pobreza	Lucha contra el hambre																									
	Conflictos bélicos																									
	Escolarización																									

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 3: Environmental social concerns analysis worksheet.

CATEGORÍAS	CÓDIGO CAMPAÑA																								
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	...	%
C. océanos	Conservación de ríos y océanos																								
Especies en extinción	Fauna y flora en extinción																								
	Maltrato animal																								
	Despoblación																								
Contaminación medioambiental	Protección del hábitat natural																								
	Cambio climático																								
	Ahorro de energía																								
Reciclaje	Tala de árboles																								
	Contaminación ambiental																								

Source: Own elaboration.

## ANNEX II

**Table 5:** *Campaigns that make up the sample*

Brand	Campaign name
<b>Campaigns with a social cause</b>	
Alhambra, San Miguel, Mahou, and Solán de Crabras	«Somos familia», «Reparto», «Orgullo por lo nuestro»
Amstel	«Cuenta»
Aquarius	«Microviejismos»
Audi	«Una carta más corta», «La muñeca que eligió conducir»
Aura	«De tu belén a Camerún»
Balay	«Pulseras»
Bankia	«Medalla»
BBK	«Stopbullying», «Invisible soledad»
BBVA	«Palabras»
C&A	«The reminder bra»
Coca-Cola	«Ascensor saludable», «Cambia las estadísticas», «Magic Pills», «El cajero de la felicidad»
Control	«Fingering stories»
Correos	«Yo me quedo»
Cruz Campo	«Aseguramos tu sur», «Que no te falte feria», «La primera», «Cara a cara»
Danone	«Activia challenge 21 días», «Cuidémonos de corazón»
David Delfin	«Fashion to be free»
EDP	«Sincronizadas», «Comparte tu energía»
EiTB	«Cada segundo cuenta»
El Corte Inglés	«El viejo juguete»
El Mundo	«Bullying or not»
Euskaltel	«Mi primer contrato»
Famosa	«Juega con ellos»
Font Vella	«Coach20»
Generali	«Melanoma summer collection»
Genesis	«Maillot 45»
Gillette	«Hay que ser muy hombre», «A moustache, mi bigotillo»
Hospital 12 de Octubre	«Searching Q help»
Iberdrola	«Universo mujer», «Ellas. La gran fuerza»
IFA	«Los super saludables»
ING Direct	«Heartbeats», «Monstruo», «Luna», «Mano»
Ikea	«Salvemos las cenas», «Familiarizados», «Stories para no dormir», «Yo me quedo en casa»
Kia	«Rafa vende su coche»
La Liga and others	«Hero», «Héroes de hoy»
McDonald's	«Big Good»
Nike	«The safest tracks»
Pavofrío	«Mensajes», «Los fantasmas del más acá»
Pescanova	«El mensaje de la reina»
Proximity	«La tienda de palabras olvidadas», «No más desahucios»
Renault	«Nómadas»
Renfe	«La obra más cara»
Romacho	«Colada rosa»



Ruavieja	«Tenemos que vernos más», «Escapa»
Samsung	«Corresponsales de guerra», «Empieza el baile», «Copiloto Samsung, no viajas solo», «Dyetective for Samsung»
Selmark	«Undercover Advisors»
Skoda	«Los guardianes del invierno», «Enfrentarse al monstruo», «Cowboys del desierto»
Tapas	«Sin/Sense Frontera»
Vodafone	«Pasa la bola»
Volkswagen	«Bike Assist»
<b>Campaigns with an environmental cause</b>	
Coca-Cola	«Green Santa»
Coronita	«Save the Beach Desktop»
Flopp	«The Contaminated T-shirt»
Gas Natural Fenosa	«La casa del visón»
Hyundai	«Eco Parking»
McDonald's	«La última pajita»
Renault	«Feliziudad»
San Miguel	«Saca tu bici»
Shiseido	«Shiseido activa tu piel»
Skoda	«Los cowboys del desierto»

**Source:** Own elaboration.