Contribution of users in building digital content in the mainstream media of the Andean Community

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Abstract
Introduction. Achieve a participation of users with a journalistic tone has become the greatest challenge of digital media of the Andean Community (CAN) and the world. This research analyzes the forms of interaction, means to interact, models, and tools that online media have for the user to input relevant data. Digital Newspapers under study are: "El Comercio" in Peru, "El Tiempo" in Colombia, "El Deber" in Bolivia and "El Universo" in Ecuador. **Methodology**. It is based on a qualitative and quantitative research type, by observing digital media for two weeks, to determine levels of interactivity and participation of citizens, criteria and ratings that they give to the news. **Results.** The research concludes that the participation of users provides credibility, keeps digital media alive and fulfills the purpose of online media which is to educate, entertain and train its audience. Users can also be producers of new content and practice responsible citizen journalism.

Keywords
Cibermedia, citizen journalism, interactivity, digital content.

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1. Introduction; 2. Methodology; 3. Observation and Analysis; 3.1. El Comercio in Perú; 3.2. El Tiempo in Colombia; 3.3. El Deber in Bolivia; 3.4. El Universo in Ecuador; 4. Discussion and Conclusions; 5. References.

1. Introduction

The participation of users in the media has been historically constant. It is true that traditional media: Radio, TV and Press have had many limitations. However, for some years it has begun a process of change in journalistic products, the journalistic profession and especially in the relationship with users.

With the advent of the Web, users are more likely to interact in the network, they can even browse the various social networks, and they can appropriate one way or another Technologies of Information and Communication, contributing lately to creating their own content. According to a study on the motives of the users to contribute content, the need for recognition appears as a fundamental element: "The Respondents believed that through the content-generation online process, they would have the opportunity to be Recognized, gain respect, publicize their expertise, learn more of the world, socialize with friends and be entertained "(Leung, 2009: 1337).

> "The network brings a new paradox about the audience: on the one hand, the possibility of a feedback from users, allowing the author and the environment meet better their receptors, knowing immediately what they think, what they feel, what their concerns, preferences and opinions are. On the other hand, such telematics networks turn users into a universal audience: the messages can be distributed, received and often answered at anytime and anywhere "(Martinez, 2007: 211-212).

The pioneering work of Dan Gillmor *'We the Media*. Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People' and Chris Willis and Shayne Bowman *We Media*. 'How audiences are shaping the future of news and information', helped to highlight the central factor in this new scenario: audiences, public, and people are the new actors in the work of public communication, which is no longer being starred exclusively by the established media and professional communicators (Orihuela, 2006: 182).

The origin of digital media dates back to 1979, in Birmingham (UK), here comes the first Viewtel 202 digital newspaper, its pages were transmitted by Prestel teletext system (Armentia et al., 2000). Today digital journalism has been consolidated using tools that break barriers of time and place, including: immediacy, interactivity, updating, multimedia, hypertext, among others. This research focuses on interactivity and user contributions.

Digital media in Latin America (Salaverría, 2016: 21) states:

> "They have striven to be audience leaders in their respective countries and have struggled to attract, in an exclusively practical way, their national advertisers. Even those who have explored digital media paid content models have oriented their marketing campaigns to attract Internet users in their own country."

From Interaction to content generation

eferring to the concept of interaction, we can say that it is the ability to present tools that allow users

to interact. It is one of the most notable virtues or qualities of online journalism. Created by López, Gago and Pereira (2002: 81) as "the ability of the users to act on the multimedia product presented to them". In this sense Jaime Alonso and Lourdes Martínez (2003: 288-289) state: "in digital media the user experiences a major change from the traditional press. In a generic approach, it can be said that users take on a more active role covering two aspects: first, they participate in the creation of the information process; secondly, they allow to discover more unknown communication spaces up to now."

"Interactivity has become one of the most important features in the relationship between readers and the media with an Internet presence. Virtually every successful online product must necessarily have this feature to grow and capture the interest of users "(Luján, 2002-2003). Thus in Interactivity, we should consider three main factors: the type of audience, purpose and accessibility.

Jens Jensen (1998) theoretically expands the possibilities given by the interaction by defining the concept as the degree that the media potentially has in order to allow the users to influence their content and form. In this sense, it mentions four levels of interactivity according to the degree of participation and control by the user of the information; in addition to the selection options to be established, they are selective, consultational, conversational and registration.

a) Selective: the user can interact by choosing from a series of unidirectional options and constant "flow" of information (e.g. to select a link, the system responds by taking him where you want).

b) Consultational: it is generated when a two-way information flow is formed between the user and media. This interaction can be requested by the user (what is called "pull") or supplied by media (what is called "push"), by means of a "choice".

c) Conversational: the user can generate content (e-mail, forums).

d) Registration: The system records data about the user and it is based on this generating content / form (games, monitoring system).

Social networking is a term that comes precisely from the dynamics of participation of users in the network. Social networks reinforced by communication networks amplify the phenomenon and help to increase their effectiveness. They allow to coordinate activities whose economic and political dimensions must be taken into consideration (Pisani and Piotet, 2008: 244). This social networking is a step forward in network communications; representing direct communication among members of a society.

Currently the social networks represent well advanced formulas of primitive tools of interactivity, such as the first chats, forums, etc. Building an actively participatory community of friends or followers is not only a matter of "social media play", but also is essential to develop an effective stance against the further development of media products (Ito et al., 2010).

In this context, Rupert Murdoch (in his speech to the American Association of Newspapers Editors

in April 2005) said that "newspapers can only survive with multimedia strategies." Adding to this the convergence strategies and incorporation of users for the media (participatory journalism).

The role of citizens in the new communicative scenario has changed over time, currently the users tend to practice citizen journalism that contributes and sometimes consolidates content publishing digital media; this participation is given from the information previously made by the media.

The concept of user-generated content next to citizen journalism is born (Avilés and Carvajal, 2008; Ornebring, 2008, Thurman, 2008), to describe the material created by the public, especially in the news context. Thurman (2008), in a study of British online newspapers in 2008, could differentiate up to six types of user participation: 1) surveys, 2) what users say, 3) real time chatting, 4) interviews in which questions of users are incorporated: 5) blogs, and finally 5) space for messages. Some of these elements are still in place and have formed the basis for generating content by consumers.

A cybermedia should not only serve to read news, but on the contrary it has to become a true virtual site that allows users to exchange messages, create interpersonal networks, share, chat, and comment information, etc. In the specific case of user participation in the commenting system offered by digital media, a study by Nina Springer (2011) establishes two types of cognitive needs. First, the need for "competitive acquisition"; this space allows users to get rich with contributions from other users. Second, the need to "experience the competition"; a need that leads to the most active users to participate in writing comments to improve the ability of argumentation and sharpen discursive skills.

Rushkoff (2010: 19) claimed that coding changes we are witnessing, like "the social, cognitive and intellectual implications" in this age of digital evolution. Young people are developing new codes of conduct and creating models to support production beyond simple publication, and they are making contents acquire other contexts and other uses.

In this context, the term multimedia is highlighted, Ramón Salaverría (2001) to describe it as what it expresses, transmits or perceives through various media. In communication two realities are pointed out: a) languages, in the identification of informative messages transmitted in various media and platforms, and b) media, concerning "multiple intermediaries" who can participate in the transmission of an information product.

In order for the online media and interactivity of users to exist, we cannot forget the role of participation of cyber-journalists who are able to lead the digital environment, strengthen content and interact with the user.

> "The cyber-journalists must work as an interpreter of reality and as a manager of knowledge [...] Their work is clear, but it will not be enough. It should contribute to catering to citizens in the use of the media and, especially, of all means that come from the hand of digitilization. [...] To this, journalists and media policies can help, ensuring digital literacy and the education of citizens in the knowledge of the media." (Lopez, 2003).

2. Methodology

In order to determine the contribution of users in major digital media in the Andean Community, the observation technique was used in the following cybermedia: *El Comercio* in Perú, *El Tiempo* in Colombia, *El Deber* in Bolivia and *El Universo* in Ecuador. In addition, the analysis of the case was applied, through monitoring of participation models of the studied media for two weeks. it was taken into account issues of greatest relevance and interaction of users in the media and on social networks.

To achieve the objectives in this research, according to model levels of commitment and level of interactivity introduced by Masip and Suau (2011): selective, participative and productive interaction; classification tools of users' participation in digital media were used.

A matrix was performed for each digital media, which allowed us to identify the most read or most shared news, and the most recommended with number of comments. It was decided to prepare a separate table for each cybermedia, due to these having different parameters regarding the participation of users; some users do not have access to comments, other cybermedia only allow their users to rate news and recommend them in social networks.

Table 1. Model user participation, classified by type of interactivity

Selective Interaction	Participative Interaction	Productive Interaction
Registration	Evaluation of the news	News of the readers
RSS	Comments	Send in photos
Personalization	Extended information about a news	Send in videos
Contact with media	Errors notification	Send in audios
Contact with journalists/sections	Innapropriate comments reporting	Letters to the Director
	Respond comments	Participation in interviews / send in questions
	Vote/Recommend comments	Blogs of the Readers
	Comment Opinion Articles	
	Tools to share Articles	
	Links to social networks	
	Forum	
	List of news most viewed/commented/shared	
	Surveys	

3. Observation and Analysis
3.1. *El Comercio* in Perú

The constant development of the Internet requires those who handle digital media to stay updated and find new ways of participation and interaction for their users in order to achieve a model that allows citizens to be producers or actors of new accurate, reliable and complete content.

The participation model of *El Comercio* in Perú offers its users the options to issue, vote -with *like* or *do not like*-, share or even respond to and sort comments for readability; these can be sorted as: oldest, the most valued and least valued, also offering interaction on social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

Figure 1. Comments on news from *El Comercio* in Perú

Figure 2. Users Interaction on Facebook

The Opinion section comprises: editorial, ephemeris, educated speech, columnists, contributors and author corner, users are identified here and they have the opportunity to participate in this media.

El Comercio has a WhatsApp section; in this space users are the ones who tell the facts through videos and photographs, making citizen journalism and feeling part of the online media.

Figure 3 y 4. WhatsApp service from *El Comercio* in Perú

For the selection of news or most relevant content, *El Comercio* in Perú has a filter which lets you select: Most read content; it can be news or picture galleries, each offering at the bottom right part of the page the number of visits that such content has so far, by accessing the news, users can identify

the number of times information is shared in social networks and the number of comments they made. The results of observation of online media are presented below:

Tabla 1. Most read news from *El Comercio,* Perú

Fecha	Más leídas	Nº de vistas	Nº de veces compartidas	Nº de comentarios
July 13, 2016	EE.UU.: Robó US$200.000, saltó de un avión y nunca fue hallado	20.998	1.209	6
July 14, 2016	Guns N' Roses: confirman show en Lima con formación original	13.063	19.638	25
July 15, 2016	Francia: Atentado en Niza 84 muertos y más de 100 heridos	98.687	3.960	71
July 16, 2016	Francia y el terror que se vivió durante los ataques en Niza	93.774	718	8
July 17, 2016	¿Quién era Mohamed Bouhlel, el atacante que mató a 84 en Niza?	30.828	541	0
July 18, 2016	Editorial: Haberlo dicho antes.	11.037	336	61
July 19, 2016	De ver y no creer, por Ricardo Vásquez Kunze	10.197	2.074	49
July 20, 2016	Editorial: Pérdida de memoria	10.304	478	55
July 21, 2016	Cámara captó a universitario arrojando el cuerpo de su víctima	22.341	1.046	31
July 22,2016	Kenji Fujimori evocó a Keiko en discurso en el Congreso [VIDEO]	19.024	560	54
July 23, 2016	Virgin Mobile: los planes tarifarios que traerá al Perú	34.252	6.689	54
July 24, 2016	Una joven se operó la mandíbula y su cambio fue sorprendente	6.138	1.296	0
July 25, 2016	Sin pena ni gloria, la columna de Diana Seminario	10.484	657	81
July 26, 2016	Guns N' Roses: ¿Cuántos boletos se vendieron en el primer día?	16.203	745	22

Preparation: The authors

1.1. *El Tiempo,* in Colombia

People in charge of updating *El Tiempo* in Colombia, regularly select a relevant topic of the day and allow users to give their opinion on it; they place it on the right side of the online media, to promote users' participation, thus its users feel heard and valued by the online media.

Figure 4. Question of the day exposed by *El Tiempo* in Colombia

The participation model allows users to: share their content on social networks, save, comment, report an error or print information; it can qualify the opinions of others with *I like* or *do not like* and answer to comments made.

Figure 4. Exposed Comments on the news

The segment of opinion offers: column section, editorial, blogs, recommended editorial, snapshot of the day, videoblog, readers forum, highlighted comment; which fosters responsible participation of citizens through letters to the reader.

Figure 5. The highlight comment of the day

To facilitate the selection of news *El Tiempo* in Colombia invites users to access *Most popular* and *Most shared*. These two different items present the content in order to provide a greater reading experience or better interaction in social networks. Here, the number of visits and number of comments that each news has are displayed.

Table 3. Most read and shared news of *El Tiempo* in Colombia

Date	Most read	Nº of views	Nº of comments	Most shared	Nº shared times	Nº comments
July 13, 2016	Las primeras e 'irritantes' decisiones de Theresa May en Reino Unido	30085	30	La guerra que viene	203	38
July 14, 2016	¡Caos en el Tour! Jueces dan a Froome liderato; Nairo es tercero	260257	623	Hombre de origen tunecino estaría tras matanza de 80 personas en Niza	1442	146
July	Video: Nairo se	149851	1082	Video: Nairo se	1438	1086

15, 2016	coge de una moto en ascenso a Mont Ventoux			coge de una moto en ascenso a Mont Ventoux		
July 16, 2016	Kim Kardashian de Pakistán fue asesinada por su hermano	72427	274	Kim Kardashian de Pakistán fue asesinada por su hermano	282	66
July 17, 2016	Así cayó 'Jake', jefe de poderosa red de prostitución en Medellín	116597	257	'Iván Márquez', el potentado	2753	767
July 18, 2016	Las pistas tras el asesinato del hijo del general Maza Márquez	18161	48	Luz verde al plebiscito por la paz que necesita 4,5 millones de votos	357	317
July 19, 2016	Dron grabó momento de la muerte de Luis Saiz en protestas en Duitama	16144	61	La esquina de Bogotá que guarda la historia de la Independencia	38	10
July 20, 2016	Uber pidió a una colombiana borrar una foto y así respondió la gente	7733	118	Los republicanos y el 'novelón' de Melania Trump	11	2
July 21, 2016	Uber responde a usuaria por foto que le pidieron borrar de Instagram	20415	35	'Guerra de ambulancias', cara macabra de los fraudes al Soat	101	29
July 22, 2016	Un milagro que se llama Alexis Viera	322	22	Un milagro que se llama Alexis Viera	322	22
July 23, 2016	¿Se acabó la novela de James Rodríguez?	83194	249	Nairo, tercer podio en el Tour; Pantano fue segundo en la etapa 20	507	263
July 24, 2016	Murió en un accidente de tránsito el ex senador Juan	10056	139	RCN, Caracol y carroña / El otro lado	128	64

	Mario Laserna					
July 25, 2016	Estudiantes de La Sabana comenzaron a ir a clases en tren	5188	77	Nuevo escándalo en La Guajira por contratos de alimentación escolar	145	64
July 26, 2016	'Hay Juli López pa' mucho rato': carta de modelo paisa presa en China	40	277	'Hay Juli López pa' mucho rato': carta de modelo paisa presa en China	199	280

Preparation: The Authors

1.2. *El Deber,* in Bolivia

El Deber in Bolivia does not have tools to make comments or visualize the times that news has been shared, on the contrary this cybermedia supports its users to rate news and content published by itself, the appreciation is divided into: liked, surprised, thrilled and indifferent. The number of participations is displayed at the end of each story.
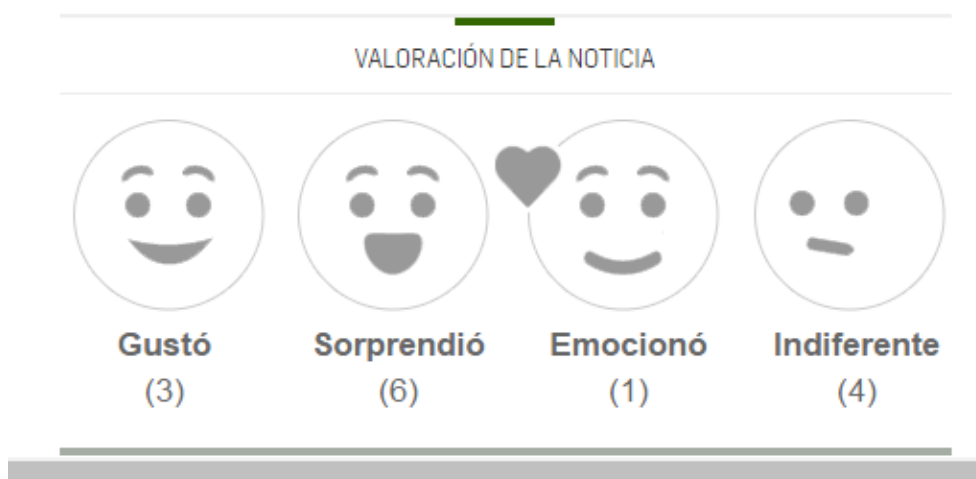

Figura 7. News rating system of *El Deber* in Bolivia

There is demonstrated the participation of the users in the surveys that the media publishes often allowing to observe and know the results of these.
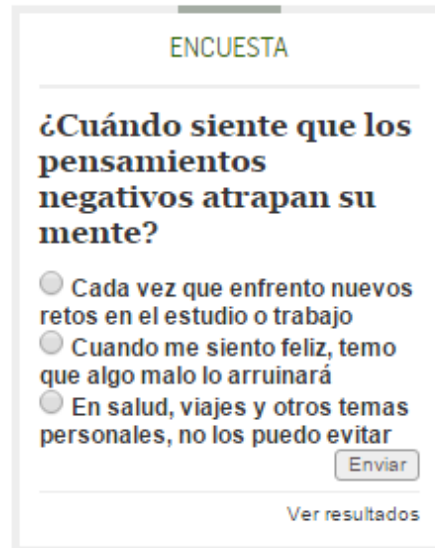

Figure 6. Survey of the day

The opinion section of the cybermedia offers: editorial board, editorial, face to face, opinion, after the crack, and seesaw.

Figure 7. Example of the Opinion Section of *El Deber* in Bolivia

It has most read news segment, but you cannot access the number of visualizations, nor shared times, nor comments from users. Therefore, the observation table was developed with the appreciation each news presented:

Table 2. Most read news of *El Deber* in Bolivia

Date	Most read news	Liked	Surprised	Thrilled	Indifferent
July 13, 2016	La tragedia del hombre que murió por ayudar a una mujer golpeada	25	379	131	13
July 14, 2016	Profesora denuncia acoso y acaba presa por delito de estrupo	7	162	4	4
July 15, 2016	Matan a un millonario que lució su camisa de oro	31	157	10	37
July 16, 2016	Gobierno asegura que falleció el acusado de matar a otro hombre	4	32	4	10
July 17, 2016	Jefe de Terracor ataca a persona de tercera edad	24	283	4	33
July 18, 2016	La historia de la mujer que quiso conocer al hombre que la violó	67	183	25	27
July 19, 2016	Chile revoca convenio de visas oficiales con Bolivia	58	13	2	16
July 20, 2016	Descubre que le era infiel gracias a Pokémon Go	9	9	1	10
July 21, 2016	Insólita foto de los jeques más ricos del mundo	36	17	3	46
July 22, 2016	Falleció la bebé que cayó a una letrina al nacer	1	68	43	5
July 23, 2016	Niñeras contraatacan con demanda por abuso	2	60	2	31
24 de julio de 2016	La ciencia lo prueba: si te han dejado por otro, te han hecho un favor	11	2	0	2
July 25, 2016	Ex presidentes chilenos critican postura de Evo	36	3	2	43
July 26, 2016	Empresaria es hallada sin vida tras 5 días extraviada	1	82	3	3

Preparation: The Authors

1.3. *El Universo,* in Ecuador

El Universo in Ecuador is a digital immigrant newspaper, which also offers its version printed on the users; in the section opinion presents several options in which the users can take part: columnists, publishing houses, letters to the reader, cartoons and forum for readers.

Figure 8. Section of Opinion of *El Universo* in Ecuador

This cibermedia has an available space at the bottom right page, for the most read news in which is evidenced by the number of times recommended by Facebook. In all contents issued by the media, the user has the option to share through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Google, pinterest, linkedin, reddit, tumblr, among others.

Table 3. Most read news of *El Universo* in Ecuador

Date	Most read news	Nº recommendations
July 13, 2016	Barcelona espera un Monumental lleno	199
July 14, 2016	Independiente del Valle ganó 3-2 a Boca Juniors y se metió en la final de Copa Libertadores	114
July 15, 2016	Ejército de Turquía anuncia que tomó el poder y decreta ley marcial	170
July 16, 2016	A Antonio Valencia se le cumplió un sueño	3
July 17, 2016	Por ataque de abejas se suspendió el River Ecuador-Aucas	2
July 18, 2016	Asambleísta Fausto Cayambe advierte 'afectación psicológica' de burócratas	10
July 19, 2016	José Angulo, en la órbita de españoles	4
July 20, 2016	Independiente del Valle igualó 1-1 ante Atlético Nacional por la final de la Copa Libertadores	1447
July 21, 2016	Gustavo Quinteros elogió a Barcelona SC y Matías Oyola	66
July 22,	Unas rosquillas en el primer envío de comida a domicilio con un	231

2016	dron en Estados Unidos	
July 23, 2016	Amargados van a sufrir a fin de año, dice Nassib Neme	427
July 24, 2016	Más de medio millón en taquilla del Barcelona SC para pagar a Zárate	81
July 25, 2016	Juegos pirotécnicos en el Malecón cierran fiesta patronal en Guayaquil	1085
July 26, 2016	Horario del choque entre Atlético Nacional vs. Independiente del Valle por la final de la Copa Libertadores	33

Preparation: The Authors

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Several models of participation according to the matrix of Masip and Suau (2011), were determined among them we have:

4.1. Participation model Catch-all

Is defined by the effort that makes the digital media to present a range of participatory tools, calling the user to interact, even without using a high level of knowledge and commitment. In the digital media object of study, this model is demonstrated with the use of: comments in news, blogs or segments of opinion and the interactivity in networks social, through these the media is intended that their contents are viral in the web.

Figure 9. Users' comments of *El Tiempo* in Colombia

There was visualized the opportunity to vote in the contents exhibited by the media and the comments that the users express, by recommending news, participating in surveys, where the cybermedia emphasizes important comments, among others.

4.2. Users' Community

This model creates tools for interaction between users, the main objective is to establish a community in which free access is allowed and their participation in the digital media, making them feel closer and free to issue opinions, ideas and feelings.

Some digital media help users assess the comments or report them as the case may be. As an example we present *El Tiempo* in Colombia which allows you to create a profile of user and access to its content.
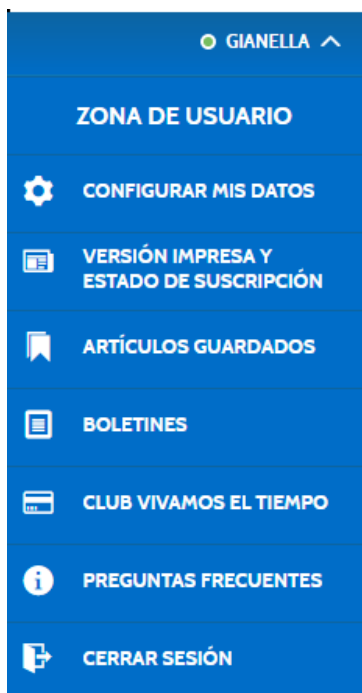
Users' Profile:

Figure 10. Users' profile of *El Tiempo* in Colombia

4.3. Collaborative networks

Creates a sense of affinity between the user and the media environment, collaborative networks allow user participation in content production of digital media, such participation is evidenced by sending photos, videos, and content issued by WhatsApp, also with successful comments producing replicas and feedback, among others.

The users' interaction is synthesized in this table reflecting participation models that digital media has:

Table 4. Characteristics and assessment of participatory models of the Andean digital media

Cybermedia	Model	Selective Interactivity	Participative Interactivity	Productive Interactivity	Media to user Relation	User to user Relation
El Comercio in Perú	Catch all	Medium	High	Medium	High	Medium
	Users' Community	High	High	High	High	Medium
	Collaborative Networks	Medium	High	Medium	High	High
El Tiempo in Colombia	Catch all	High	High	Medium	High	High
	Users' Community	High	High	Low	Medium	High
	Collaborative Networks	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
El Deber in Bolivia	Catch all	Medium	Alto High	Medium	Bajo Low	Bajo Low
	Users' Community	Bajo	Bajo	Bajo	Bajo	Bajo
	Collaborative Networks	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
El Universo in Ecuador	Catch all	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
	Users' Community	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Low
	Collaborative Networks	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Low

Preparation: The Authors

In this context, the results coincide with the challenge proposed by Professor Xosé López, a new way of telling stories, interact and act in communication:

"One of the main challenges is to encourage innovation with the languages and products to discover new ways of telling stories, allowing interactivity with quality through new tools and new media. We know that the technical fusion is on the way so we have to take advantage of the computer as a means of representation, a way of shaping the world by adding its own powerful properties to traditional media that has been assimilated rapidly." (Lopez, 2000).

It is concluded that the mainstream media of the Andean Community have several forms of participation for users, according to their personality and content creation. There are media that

allow commenting on the news to others who simply support the assessment of them; each media studied in this research has essential tools for participation of its members.

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