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Radio and social networks: the case of sports programmes on Twitter

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Abstract

Introduction. This research study analyses the Twitter accounts of the most successful radio sports programmes in Spain. These types of journalistic programmes use this social network to increase their visibility and the influence and impact of their messages on the Internet. **Method.** We analysed the 3,200 most recent messages posted in the accounts of each of the most listened-to radio sports programmes, based on a list of 20 indicators divided into four major groups: potential influence, activity, interaction and user reactions. **Conclusions.** The results confirmed the impact of the messages posted by radio sports programmes on the social network. The amplification rate ranges between 50 and 80 per cent while the applause rate ranges between 40 and 85 per cent. These results indicate that these programmes are very influential due to the interest generated by sports and everything that surrounds it.

Keywords

Radio sports programmes; social networks; Twitter; radio; *Carrusel deportivo*; *El larguero*.

Contents

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1. Introduction

The sports phenomenon occupies an increasing space in news programming. For example, during 2013, Catalan television news programmes devoted more than 20% of their time to sports, according to the President of the Audiovisual Council of Catalonia (*l'Audiovisual de Catalunya*), Roger Loppacher [1].

Governments use sports to increase the prestige of their nations and thanks to social networks sporting events break audience records (the obvious example is the recent World Cup Brazil 2014, which became the most watched sporting event in history thanks to the Internet, according to data published by Twitter and Facebook at the end of the 32-day competition) [2]. “Definitively, we are witnessing the ‘sportivisation’ of the daily agenda, in which football is clearly above other activities” (Mendiguren *et al.*, 2012). This is because “membership of or identification with a sports team can provide people with an important identity-prop, a source of ‘we-feelings’ and a sense of belonging in what otherwise would be an isolated existence or what Riesman (1953) has called “the lonely crowd”(Dunning, 2003: 16).”

Luis Malvar, in his book *La radio deportiva en España* (“Sports radio in Spain”)(quoted in Arenas, 2012: 117), highlights the importance acquired by sports journalism: “From 1927 to 2004 the historical development of Spain has had a transcendental and exceptional travel companion: sports and sports information”. In this sense, “sports on the radio, especially football, has such an important place that it has become one of the basic contents of any general-interest radio, and also of the regional and local programming” (Moreno, 2004: 344, quoted in Arenas, 2012: 97).

Spanish radio started to use social networks in the 2009-10 season (Peña and Pascual, 2013: 124) and thanks to them, today’s radio has a new tool “to strengthen and build a renewed relationship with its audience providing it with a virtual meeting and socialising space” (Ramos del Cano, 2014: 1). Thus, “the community of a particular radio network is no longer only composed of its listeners, but this it is enriched with the addition of the ‘social audience’” (Videla and Piñeiro, 2013: 86).

In a few years Twitter has become an instrument that is widely used in sports journalism and affects the collection, publication and coverage of sports news (Butler *et al.*, 2013; Schultz and Sheffer, 2010; Sherwood and Nicholson, 2013; English, 2014). The microblogging network has become a meeting space where journalists, in addition to publishing news, can promote stories (Schultz and Sheffer, 2010), monitor news and discuss topics with the public interested in the latest sports news (Sherwood and Nicholson, 2013).

The data speak for themselves. Of the 15 programmes with the largest social audience in 2013, eight were sporting events, mainly football matches. The Confederations Cup occupied the first place with 194,638 ‘social’ spectators who made 404,444 comments about the Spain-Italy match (Tuitele, 2013: 8). According to Tuitele, sport is the king among the most-discussed television genres, and some sports broadcasts reached more than 3.1 million comments in September, one million comments more than “talent shows”, which occupy the second position.

In this context in which sports programmes constitute spaces of great impact due to the importance acquired by sports and everything that surrounds it, this article will examine the reach of the most listened-to radio sports programmes on the Twitter platform.

2. Object of study

With regards to the selection of the object of study, according to the EGM(General Media Study)research group, the most successful weekday radio sports programme is *El Larguero* (“The Crossbar”) (SER), with more than one million listeners (see Figure 1) –despite being broadcast early in the morning-, followed by *El partido de las 12* (“The 12 o’clock match”) (COPE), with 512,000 listeners and *Al primer toque* (“In the first touch”) (Onda Cero) with 284,000 listeners. Saturday afternoons are for *Carrusel Deportivo* (“Sports Carousel”) with 1,562,000 listeners, followed by *Tiempo de Juego* (“Game time”) (1,197,000), *Radio Estadio* (“Stadium Radio”) (557,000) and *Tablero Deportivo* (“Sports Board”) (419.000 listeners). Sundays are also for *Carrusel Deportivo* (SER) with 1,759,000 listeners.

Based on the previous, this article will examine the Twitter accounts of these sports programmes, which have the highest audience levels. The profiles of these radio programmes are shown in the following figure 2.

Figure 1: Main sports programmes by broadcast day

Weekday programmes											
EL LARGUERO	SER	24:00-01:30	1.131	1.000	946	1.100	1.027	1.167	1.142	13,1	2,8
EL PARTIDO DE LAS 12 (6)	COPE	24:00-02:00	512	476	408	420	506	439	469	7,8	21,9
AL PRIMER TOQUE (7)	OCR	24:00-02:00	284	329	321	339	314	318	329	-13,7	-16,2
Saturday programmes											
CARRUSEL (2)	SER	15:00-00:00	1.572	1.437	1.628	1.740	1.585	1.549	1.442	9,4	-9,7
EL LARGUERO	SER	24:00-01:30	1.239	553	946	944	953	968	960	124,1	31,3
TIEMPO DE JUEGO (1)	COPE	15:00-02:00	1.197	1.508	1.436	1.090	1.348	675	698	-20,6	9,8
RADIO ESTADIO (18)	O.CERO	16:00-01:30	557	646	823	671	786	752	631	-13,8	-17,0
TABLERO DEPORTIVO (9)	RNE1	17:00-00:00	419	369	241	301	243	176	330	13,6	39,2
MARCADOR (13)	RADIO MARCA	13:00-01:00	290	432	255	274	279	332	359	-32,9	5,8
Sunday programmes											
CARRUSEL (17)	SER	15:00-23:30	1.759	1.819	1.631	1.889	1.695	2.175	1.486	-3,3	-6,9
TIEMPO DE JUEGO (3)	COPE	15:00-02:00	1.032	1.430	1.326	1.074	1.274	968	745	-27,8	-3,9
EL LARGUERO (8)	SER	23:30-01:30	985	1.083	1.179	1.025	738	1.038	847	-9,0	-3,9
RADIO ESTADIO	O.CERO	16:00-00:00	691	511	680	596	705	591	564	35,2	15,9
TABLERO DEPORTIVO (4)	RNE1	16:00-23:30	442	405	316	363	347	518	425	9,1	21,8
MARCADOR (11)	RADIO MARCA	11:00-00:00	355	402	502	304	253	287	272	-11,7	16,8
AL PRIMER TOQUE (5)	O.CERO	24:00-02:00	279	310	401	335	342	190	339	-10,0	-16,7

Source: EGM, 2ª Ola 2014 (2nd report from 2014)

Figure 2: Twitter accounts of the main sports programmes

Programme	Station	Twitter	Creation
<i>El Larguero</i>	SER	@ellarguero	30-11-2009
<i>El partido de las 12</i>	COPE	- - - -	- - -
<i>Al primer toque</i>	OCR	@AlPrimerToque	28-05-2010
<i>Carrusel deportivo</i>	SER	@carrusel	20-08-2010

<i>Tiempo de juego</i>	COPE	@tjcope	2010-08-24
<i>Radio Estadio</i>	Onda Cero	@Radioestadio	21-09-2009
<i>Tablero deportivo</i>	RNE1	@Tablero_RNE	26-09-2010
<i>Marcador</i>	Radio Marca	@Marcador	07-06-2012

Source: Authors' own creation with data from EGM, 2^a Ola 2014

3. Objectives

This research study aims to analyse the activity, amplification, applause and conversation rates of these programmes in the microblogging network. In other words, the study focuses on clarifying such issues as the degree of activity of these programmes, the reach of their messages, the potential to influence their followers and the reactions generated in users.

4. Hypotheses

The initial hypothesis of this research study is that Twitter is a very useful tool for sports journalists because it allows them to amplify their messages and increase the visibility of their programmes and because it facilitates interaction with sports enthusiasts. The second hypothesis is that these radio programmes are very influential and persuasive due to the tremendous impact that sport has in our society and, therefore, that their tweets go viral and are shared by a large number of followers among their own communities of users.

5. Method

This study analyses the Twitter accounts of the most listened-to radiosports programmes, based on the last 2014 report of the EGM (General Media Study) Association, which indicates that sports, especially football (as noted by Deloitte's 2013 report), is still one of the main battlefields of the large stations and that, according to the consulting firm Tuitele (2013), sports programmes generate the greatest conversations in Twitter [3]. The decision to choose Twitter over its rival Facebook has also been determined by a report published by The Cocktail Analysis (2013), which indicates that 17% of Facebook users use less and less this platform. In contrast, 39% of Twitter users indicated they use the micro-blogging network increasingly more frequently. In addition, 42% of Twitter users explain that they have an active profile, which ranks it as the second most important social network in Spain.

The Twitter accounts of the radio programmes have been analysed with the following tools: Twerpscan, Tweetstat, Twitalyzer, Tweeteffect, Twittercounter, Retweetrank and Tuitonomy. In total, we analysed the 3,200 most recent messages posted in each account by the 15:00 hours on 20 October 2014. The analysis focuses on the examination of 20 indicators divided into 4 groups: potential influence, activity, interaction and reactions generated in users. This analysis tool (see Figure 3) is discussed in detail in the article titled "Evangelizar desde las redes sociales" ("Evangelism from social networks") (see Pérez and Santos, 2014). Also helpful for the study were the articles written about Twitter and sports journalism by Schultz and Sheffer (2010), Hutchins (2011), Butler *et al.* (2013), Sherwood and Nicholson (2013), and English (2014). In addition, we reviewed recent articles dealing with Spanish radio programmes in social networks like those written

by Herrero (2011), Montín and Bejarano (2012), Peña and Pascual (2013), Videla and Piñero (2013), Ramos del Cano (2014), Gutiérrez *et al.* (2014) and Lastra (2014).

Figure 3: Most successful sports radio programmes in Twitter

Radio	Followers	Following	Messages	Followers / Following	Listed / 1,000 followers	Average daily tweets
<i>El larguero</i>	121,323	785	53990	155	11	51.6
<i>El partido de las 12</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Al primer toque</i>	53,139	13 °	33,783	100	16	39.02
<i>Carrusel deportivo</i>	206,500	560	47,365	369	10	28.28
<i>Tiempo de juego</i>	259,383	991	77,784	262	11	84.18
<i>Radio Estadio</i>	27,329	218	17,654	125	23	21.3
<i>Tablero deportivo</i>	6,250	77	7,590	81	24	7.71
<i>Marcador</i>	12,090	67	2,402	180	11	2.77
%						
Radio	Retweets	Retweets%	Mentions	Mentions	Replies	% Replies
<i>El larguero</i>	543	17	1043	0.33	13	0
<i>El partido de las 12</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Al primer toque</i>	218	7	2,069	0.65	42	1
<i>Carrusel deportivo</i>	581	18	1,121	0.35	52	2
<i>Tiempo de juego</i>	183	6	1951	0.61	334	10
<i>Radio Estadio</i>	15 °	17	819	0.26	259	8
<i>Tablero deportivo</i>	313	10	1960	0.61	156	5
<i>Marcador</i>	268	11	1,713	0.71	388	16
% Retweeted by						
Radio	Links	% Links	Hashtags	Hashtags	by	%
<i>El larguero</i>	747	0.23	1508	0.47	2,197	68.68

<i>El partido de las 12</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Al primer toque</i>	223	0.07	2,378	0.74	2,197	68.66
<i>Carrusel deportivo</i>	1,770	0.55	1,673	0.52	2,511	78.57
<i>Tiempo de juego</i>	1,305	0.41	1,187	0.37	2,580	80.65
<i>Radio Estadio</i>	453	0.14	167	0.05	1522	47.64
<i>Tablero deportivo</i>	2	0	910	0.28	981	30.68
<i>Marcador</i>	84	0.04	1,085	0.45	1325	55.25
	Retweeted		Favourited		Marked	
Radio	tweets	%	tweets	%	Tweets	%
<i>El larguero</i>	14,063	6.4	2,244	70.15	8,404	3.75
<i>El partido de las 12</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Al primer toque</i>	16,982	7.73	2,142	66.94	8,297	3.87
<i>Carrusel deportivo</i>	98,242	39.12	2,508	78.47	38,561	15.38
<i>Tiempo de juego</i>	38,718	15.01	2,689	84.06	20,841	7.75
<i>Radio Estadio</i>	4,572	3	1,374	43	2,604	1.9
<i>Tablero deportivo</i>	1,739	1.77	654	20.45	870	1.33
<i>Marcador</i>	6,863	5.18	931	38.82	2,703	2.9

Source: Twitter

6. Results

The presence of these programmes on the platform created by Jack Dorsey is not surprising since, according to the report by the consulting firm Tuitele, sports contents provoke the largest number of comments on social networks. Specifically, as mentioned, sports programmes generate the greatest conversations (10.7%) followed by general news programmes (7.5%), docu-shows (9.9%) and reality shows (3.6%). In the case under study, some radio programmes have already been over 5 years on the microblogging network. The first programme to open an account on Twitter was *Radio Estadio* in September 2009, and the second, just two months later, was *El Larguero* (SER). The rest joined the network in 2010, with the exception of *Marcador* which joined in 2012. Twitter is set on fire every time a sporting event takes place and sports journalism has found in this platform a complementary way to inform and interact with its audience. For example, the presence of minute-

to-minute sports chronicles on Twitter is outstanding. The classic minute-result format of the sports chronicles has been redefined in the online world (see Gárciga-Rodríguez, 2013) and it is now normal to narrate the football matches in a ‘Tweet’ by ‘Tweet’ basis and now fans only have to look at their ‘timelines’ to follow matches live. In addition, athletes are increasingly creating accounts on the microblogging network (Hutchins, 2011: 244) and are increasingly using these accounts (instead of press conferences) to share their opinions. For instance, a study carried out by Oriella PR Network (2013:6) revealed that in 2013, 51% of journalists used Twitter as a source of information. According to Lastra (2014): “The good use of Twitter as a source of information can be useful for the journalist to obtain newsworthy material directly from the protagonist (the athlete in this case) and without mediation (of clubs, for example)”.

6.1. Potential influence

Returning to the issue under study, these radio sports programmes are presented by very famous and influential journalists “who are followed massively because of their status as prestigious professionals” (Lastra, 2014) and use these platforms to promote themselves (Herrero, 2011: 17). The star here is *Tiempo de Juego*, which is presented by Paco González, Pepe Domingo Castaño and Manolo Lama and has 259,383 followers. It is followed by *Carrusel Deportivo*, which is presented by Manu Carreño and José Antonio Ponseti, with 206,500 followers. The third place is occupied by *El larguero*, which is presented by José Ramón de la Morena and has 121,323 followers. The rest do not exceed the 100,000 followers. This number of followers may not seem too high to reach but if we examine the number of followers reached by other successful radio programmes like *Hoy por hoy* (@HoyPorHoy) (SER) and *Herrera en la onda* (@HerreraenlaOnda) (Onda Cero) we can see that this barrier is difficult to overcome. These morning shows have 76,242 and 96,665 followers, respectively. This confirms the influence of sports programmes despite some of them are broadcast early in the morning.

In this sense, it is important to verify the quality of the followers and separate the active ones from the inactive ones (which are poor quality followers). The results show that this type of programmes has an active audience that is very interested in the contents of their accounts, even outside the broadcast time since in Twitter “communication between programme and audience occurs beyond the time set in the schedule” (Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2014: 11).

Figure 4: Quality of followers

Radio	Suspicious	Inactive	Active
<i>El larguero</i>	12%	3%	85%
<i>El partido de las 12</i>	-	-	-
<i>Al primer toque</i>	11	1	88
<i>Carrusel deportivo</i>	19	6	75
<i>Tiempo de juego</i>	23	4	73

<i>Radio Estadio</i>	13	3	84
<i>Tablero deportivo</i>	12	6	82
<i>Marcador</i>	15	3	82

Source: <http://www.socialbakers.com>

Not surprisingly, a large number of followers only give us an idea of the influence of a Twitter account, since it may be that not all followers are active in the last week or month. The important thing is the ability to influence this community of followers and to this end we will examine other metrics such as retweets, mentions, replies, and retweeted-by, which allow us to know the level of engagement and amplification of the message.

In the analysis of the number of followers and the potential reach of a profile we must mention the ‘listed/1,000 followers’ variable. This metric is an indicator of the quality of an account and makes reference to the average number of people who added the radio programme’s account to a public list. ”Its value lies in the fact that it indicates the average number of internet users who have devoted time to classify the account to a public list (for each 1,000 followers), which is a recognition of the importance of the account a specific theme. A high number combined with a broad following means that the user’s tweets are considered particularly important by third parties” (Pérez and Santos, 2014: 218). In this indicator, at first, the programmes that stand out are *Tablero deportivo* with 23 lists for each 1,000 followers, *Radio Estadio* with 23 and *Al primer toque* with 16. The other programmes also present good results since none of them has less than ten lists. It useful to compare these numbers with those of other successful radio shows and public figures: SER’s morning show *Hoy por Hoy* (@HoyPorHoy) has 18 listed/1,000 followers; *Herrera en la onda* (@HerreraenlaOnda) 12; Mariano Rajoy (@marianorajoy) 11; and Santiago Segura (@SSantiagosegura) 4. However, as mentioned, this indicator has to be combined with a high number of followers. Therefore, the show with the highest potential influence is still *Tiempo de Juego*, *Carrusel Deportivo* and *El larguero* because they reach the largest number of users.

Regarding the accounts followed by the radio programme, it is important to highlight the similarity since most followed accounts are related to sports: “football players, basketball players, tennis players, other sports programmes, journalists from their own radio station and other media” (Montín and Bejarano, 2012: 10). This is because, according to English (2014: 2), much of the activity of sports journalists consists in “retweeting the messages posted by athletes, sports organisations and fans”.

6.2. Activity

On 31 March, 2014, Twitter published that it had exceeded 255 million active users per month [4] (including those who had used the platform at least once in the last 30 days). However, a study commissioned by *The Wall Street Journal* questioned the data offered by the social network. According to the Journal, eight years after the creation of Twitter only 25% of those initial users remains tweeting. In fact, of the 285 million accounts created in 2013, only 12.9% were still active in 2014 (Koh, 2014). This suggests that one of the challenges for Twitter is to get users to become active participants and not to abandon the platform. This conception of activity is fundamental because active users are the only ones that can get attention and amplify the message of

these sports programmes. In other words, publishing new content is the best way to retain users and ensure that the account is influential. This has been highlighted by Carrera Álvarez *et al.* (2012: 31-53), who pointed out that 78% of the Spanish journalists use Twitter to retain users. In this regard, radio sports programmes more than comply since they are very active and try to add value of their speciality every day, trying to position themselves as experts in the latest sports news.

COPE's *Tiempo de Juego* is the programme that provides the highest value to the community of sports fans with a daily average of 84 posts. *El larguero* appears in second position with 52 daily messages, followed by *Al primer toque* with 39 tweets per day. The rest of programmes also present positive values, ranging from 3 to 28 on average, which are not low in comparison to the values of the most popular morning shows: *Hoy por hoy* (@HoyPorHoy) publishes an average of 27 messages while *Herrera en la onda* (@HerreraenlaOnda) barely reaches 1.5 tweets.

6.3. Interaction

The degree of interaction has been analysed based on: a) the number of retweets by users followed by the programmes, b) the average number of mentions per tweet and c) replies. The higher these values are the higher the desire of third parties to interact with the accounts under study. The objective is to see whether these sports programmes discuss others' posts and respond to their mentions. In this case, there are differences in the way they interact with users. *Carrusel Deportivo*, *Radio Estadio* and *El larguero* stand out for using the retweet as a form of interaction (17% - 18% of all the messages from these accounts), which is also a good way of increasing the influence of an account.

The second way to create conversation/interaction on Twitter is by mentioning others (we are talking about the number of accounts mentioned in tweets). In this regard, all programmes reached good values, all above 25% and some like *Marcador* include mentions in 71% of their messages. *Marcador* also stands out in the number of replies, which is another way of measuring interaction. It is the most responsive programme, with 16% of all the messages. In second place is *Tiempo de Juego* with 10%.

Also relevant is the likelihood that a Twitter account will become a source of information for third parties, which could also generate interaction. To measure this it is useful to observe the account's own links and others' links, and hashtags. For example, the higher the number of links is, "the more likely is that the account will become a source of information for third parties" (Pérez and Santos, 2014: 221). Specifically, the tweets that contain links are 86% more likely to be shared (Cooper, 2013), and three radio programmes follow this maxim strictly: *Carrusel Deportivo* with links in 55% of messages; *Tiempo de Juego* with links in 41%; and *El larguero* with 23%. This indicates the programmes' interest in becoming a source of information for the public who follows the latest sports news.

Another resource that can be used by a Twitter account to increase the visibility of its tweets and to get more followers is the hashtag. This resource is used to relate a tweet with a particular topic or to start a discussion, because when users select a hashtag they can read all messages that use it. The inclusion of one or two hashtags in a tweet (Cooper, 2013) increases audience participation by

21%. In this case, the tweets with more chances to be found in a search and generate interaction are those posted by Onda Cero's *Al primer toque*, since 74% of its tweets include a hashtag. In this regard almost all of the analysed programmes get good results (the exception is *Radio Estadio*) since, in general, all of them include hashtags in at least 30% of their tweets.

6.4. Reactions generated in users

In 2012, Evan Williams, cofounder of Twitter, told Cnet that for him the thing that “would be more interesting than followers is... retweets”, that the simple follower count “does not capture your distribution” and that “the dream metric is how many people saw your tweet”. So a more accurate measure to know the real reach of a profile is to examine the number of times people has seen your tweets and the times that they have been shared (also referred to as amplification rate).

Figure 5: 5 most retweeted messages and 5 most favoured messages in *Tiempo de Juego*

🔄 Tweets most retweeted

-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 10:28 PM - 14 Sep 2014 via Twitter Web Client  810  278
El golazo de Menez que os contaba @ferevangelio RT @vallejocoolom Jeremy Menez. Qué escándalo. vine.co/v/OajPIZeqTnQ
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 10:37 PM - 14 Sep 2014 via Twitter Web Client  733  147
El gol que os contábamos hace un momento con el fallo de Diego López RT @FutbolModerno_ INCREIBLE EL GOL DEL PARMA: vine.co/v/OajDxmVM77Q
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 9:44 AM - 12 Oct 2014 via Twitter for iPhone  511  208
Marc Márquez (@marcmárquez93) renueva su título de campeón del mundo de MotoGP. Enhorabuena!!! <http://t.co/zNokDJABSh>
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 3:47 PM - 5 Oct 2014 via Twitter Web Client  493  133
Wenger empuja a Mourinho durante el Chelsea - Arsenal (via * @GeniusFootball: vine.co/v/OKhFVw1UYW) #TJPremier
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 4:11 PM - 14 Sep 2014 via Twitter for iPhone  414  113
Las pancartas que se colgaron en los puentes de Madrid la madrugada del viernes al sábado <http://t.co/mXaSEctHtp>

More on @tjcope's retweeted tweets

★ Tweets most favorited

-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 8:28 PM - 14 Sep 2014 via Twitter Web Client  810  278
El golazo de Menez que os contaba @ferevangelio RT @vallejocoolom Jeremy Menez. Qué escándalo. vine.co/v/OajPIZeqTnQ
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 7:44 AM - 12 Oct 2014 via Twitter for iPhone  511  208
Marc Márquez (@marcmárquez93) renueva su título de campeón del mundo de MotoGP. Enhorabuena!!! <http://t.co/zNokDJABSh>
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 6:26 PM - 4 Oct 2014 via Twitter Web Client  77  170
Aquí esta Sherena la profe de Inglés que tiene revolucionado el gallinero <http://t.co/rUZswaBfqk>
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 9:21 AM - 17 Oct 2014 via Twitter Web Client  231  155
Antena de Oro para Paco González. cope.es/detalle/Antena...
-  **Tiempo de Juego @tjcope** 3:10 PM - 4 Oct 2014 via Twitter Web Client  323  151
¡¡Uy Xabi Alonso!! RT * @Mifondo La que casi lla Xabi Alonso en el Allianz Arena vine.co/v/OKuV2pexuJF #TJBundesliga

Source: Tuitonomy

An account that has many of its messages retweeted by third parties is surely regarded as an important source of information for users. If we apply it to the radio sports programmes, the results confirm that the contents posted by the sports programmes generate expectation in the audience. Only *Tablero deportivo* has a percentage under 50% (30%, which is still a good score). The rest reach very high percentages approaching 80%. Followers of *Tiempo de Juego*, which is hosted by Paco González, Pepe Domingo Castaño and Manolo Lama, have 8 of every 10 of its messages retweeted. Anyway, *Carrusel Deportivo* is the programme that achieved the greatest impact despite its percentage of retweeted messages is two points lower than that of *Tiempo de Juego* (78% versus 80%, respectively), because each of its messages is shared 39 times in average, while the messages of *Tiempo de Juego* are shared only 15 times. In this regard, it should be noted that other sports

programmes also generate a positive reaction since most of their messages are retweeted by users, although the average number of times their messages are retweeted is under 7.

Another indicator of the impact of tweets is the applause rate, which refers to the number of times a tweet is favourited. This metric, like the previous one, is one of the most interesting to determine the actual influence/impact of a Twitter account. Again, all the accounts have very high scores ranging between 40 and 85 per cent (the exception is *Tablero deportivo* with 20%), which reflects the interest generated by the sports content in the audience. The first position is also occupied by *Tiempo de Juego*, with 84% of its messages marked as favourite by third parties. In addition, each of its tweets has been marked as favourite by an average of 7.75 users. However, *Carrusel Deportivo* had more repercussion because, despite 78% of its messages were favourited by third parties, each message is favourited by an average of 15.38 followers (twice as many as *Tiempo de Juego*). However, as mentioned, all programmes obtained very good results in this metric, which reflects a positive reaction among users and is indicative of the visibility and influence of their activity in their area of expertise.

7. Conclusions

After examining the Twitter accounts of the most popular radio sports programmes, it is important to highlight the broad impact their messages have on the social network. The amplification rate ranges from 50 to 80 per cent, which means some accounts get 8 of every 10 of their messages retweeted by their followers, who consider them of interest to be disseminated among their own community of followers. Moreover, the tweets posted by one account are shared by an average of up to 39 users. In this line, the applause rate, which indicates the percentage of tweets that are favourited by followers, is also very high, ranging from 40 to 85%. In other words, one of the studied accounts gets almost 9 of every 10 of its tweets marked as favourite by third parties, and by an average of up to 15 followers per tweet. This is a sign of the ‘pull’ of these sports programmes, which are considered very influential and persuasive spaces due to the great interest generated by sports and everything that surrounds it.

The quality of the followers of these programmes is also very good, with an inactivity rate that does not exceed 6% in the worst case. These radio programmes have a large number of active followers, interested in the information they post in their accounts, which is basic to succeed because quality followers are the only ones that can increase the visibility and interest generated by a Twitter account. And the best way to get loyal users and increase the influence of the account is to publish updated content and provide added value to followers. In this case, the rate of activity of these programmes is also positive since they publish between 3 and 85 messages every day in their attempt to position themselves as a source of reference in the latest sports news.

Regarding the rate of interaction, it is also generally positive, although somewhat lower than the previous variables. The mentioning of third parties in these radio programmes’ tweets is outstanding (with all accounts above 25%), followed by the use of the retweet as a way to discuss the posts made by third parties and generate conversation. In addition, the desire of these sports programmes to become an important source of information for third parties is reflected in two other aspects: the inclusion of links in their messages (which makes posts 86% more likely to be shared) and the

inclusion of hashtags(which increases the visibility of tweets by 21% by making it easier for tweets to be found in search and create interaction) in 30%to 74% of their tweets.

In short, it can be affirmed that, although to varying degrees, these sports programmes use Twitter as a tool to increase their social capital, which is beneficial to increase their influence and extend the impact of their messages.

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8. Notes

1. Participation at the 12th edition of the Communication Forum organised by the Audiovisual Council of Catalonia (CAC). See *lavanguardia.com* on 22 September, 2014.
<http://www.lavanguardia.com/television/programas/20140922/54416227549/informativos-catalanes-deportes-futbol.html>
2. The 2014 Football World Cup broke audience records in Twitter and Facebook. Twitter published in its blog that during the 32-day competition 672 million tweets were posted and that the final match between Argentina and Germany set a new record in tweets per minute (TPM), with 619,000 messages. On the other hand, in a press conference, Facebook referred to this event as “the single most-talked-about sporting event in Facebook history) and said that 350 million people talked on its *platform* and generated around 3 billion interactions. See <https://blog.twitter.com/2014/insights-into-the-worldcup-conversation-on-twitter> and <https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2014/07/world-cup-breaks-facebook-records/>
3. Tuitele is now known as Kantar Media (http://www.kantarmedia.es/sections/kantar_twitter)
4. <https://about.twitter.com/company>

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