A discrete proposal: Appeals to the social networks of popular programmes in Europe

Una proposición discreta: apelaciones a las redes sociales de los programas populares en Europa

Uma proposta discreta: apelações às redes sociais dos programas populares na Europa

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ABSTRACT

This article shows the results of an empirical research dealing with on-screen appeal strategies calling for the use of social networks during the most-watched programmes on general DTT channels in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom in 2016-2017. The aim is to identify how the attention of social audiences is sought while the broadcast is taking place and what form these appeals acquire in the narrative and structure of formats. The content analysis shows the resources and strategies used, the differences according to country, channel ownership and programme genre, and the hegemonic use of hashtags and the unique strategies of info-show in commercial channels.

RESUMEN

El artículo presenta los resultados de una investigación empírica sobre las estrategias de apelación en pantalla a las redes sociales de los programas más vistos en los canales generalistas de TDT en Francia, Alemania, Italia, España y el Reino Unido en 2016-2017. El objetivo es identificar cómo se reclama la atención de las audiencias sociales en tiempo sincrónico a la emisión y qué forma adquieren en la narración y estructura de los formatos. El análisis de contenido muestra los recursos y estrategias empleadas, las diferencias según país, titularidad del canal y género programático, y el uso hegemónico del hashtag y las estrategias singulares del info-show en los canales comerciales.

RESUMO

O artigo apresenta os resultados de uma pesquisa empírica sobre as estratégias de apelação em tela às redes sociais dos programas mais assistidos nos canais generalistas do TDT na França, Alemanha, Itália, Espanha e Reino Unido em 2016-2017. O objetivo é identificar como se exige a atenção das audiências sociais em tempo sincrônico à emissão e que forma se tornam na narração e estrutura dos formatos. A análise de conteúdo mostra os recursos e estratégias empregadas, as diferenças segundo o país, titularidade do canal e gênero programático, e o uso hegemônico da hashtag e as estratégias singulares do info-show nos canais comerciais.

Keywords: digital terrestrial television; social media; hashtag; fiction; information; info-show.

Palabras clave: *televisión digital terrestre; redes sociales; hashtag; ficción; información; info-show.*

Palavras-chave: televisão digital terrestre; redes sociais; hashtag; ficção; informação; info-show.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of social TV has promoted interest in the study of multiple-screen usage and the observation of the strategies and actions that broadcasters are implementing. Specifically, this knowledge will help explain the behaviour of new audience communities and certain aspects of business models in media environments.

Research focusing on social networks and television convergence is conducted by exploring and analysing certain specific elements, such as technological, financial and social, to name just a few. However, it is worth pointing out that most research that explores the strategies used by television channels focuses on the study of audience-generated content on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the broadcaster's websites. It deals with this research centres on programmes broadcast both as part of the usual schedules (Rossi & Giglioetto, 2016; Han & Lee, 2014) and specific events broadcast by television channels (Harrington, Highfield, & Bruns, 2013).

A relevant factor that helps to understand this context is knowing precisely how the television programme schedule itself appeals to the social audience at the same time as the broadcast. This makes it possible to explore how broadcasters call for the audience's attention and their attempts to enhance the feeling of inclusion in a different community relationship. Likewise, mapping these on-screen appeal strategies informs us of the extent to which the actions directed at social audiences can modify the narrative elements of programme schedules.

This research project presents the findings of an empirical study on social network inclusion strategies, conducted on-screen and during the broadcast of the most popular programmes in five European markets: Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom during the 2016-2017 season. The programmes and formats that have the highest audience ratings become a privileged scenario for the study of the relationships between programme genres and the behaviour of the different audience communities. Therefore, the formats analysed correspond to the three main contents of the programme schedule of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT), namely serialised fiction, info-show and information.

TELEVISION AND APPEALS TO THE SOCIAL AUDIENCE

The appearance and development of social networks has allowed television programme schedulers to improve their audience ratings and the proliferation of new relation spaces. It is evident that television has always had a social facet, which was strengthened by concepts that redefined public ones, such as active audience (Fiske, 1987; Morley, 1992) or *prosumers* (Toffler, 1980; Jenkins, 2006; García-Galera & Valdivia, 2014) versus former theoretical perspectives, like the hypodermic needle model during the analogue era, where the passive audience was influenced by the message of mass media. It should be noted that the search for communities among audience members was a phenomenon already present at this earlier point in time. The interaction through websites of certain television products, such as teen series, is an example of this (Gillian, 2010).

Content consumption changes onto second and third screens (Sørensen, 2015; Wilson, 2015) has multiplied online as well as traditional social communities. In this case, both types of communities are consumers of content generated by the television industry. Social networks redefine the power of traditional television, leading to changes generated both in family interaction through second screens (Morrison & Krugman, 2010) and in the consumption of content in several spaces and devices.

The interest in this convergence between social networks and television has promoted numerous research projects centred on the use of Twitter as a second screen (Deller, 2011). Twitter Social Television stimulates the feeling of a shared consumption experience embodied in the concept of *liveness* by some authors such as Bourdon (2000) and Couldry (2004). Most studies show the importance of the use of Twitter during the linear broadcast of programmes (Greer & Ferguson, 2011). The activity in Twitter is notable both in the reality formats (Doughty, Rowland, & Lawson, 2011; van Es, 2016) and in serialised fiction (Ji & Raney, 2015; Auverset & Billings, 2016) as well as in information content (Larsson, 2013; Pond, 2016). It is evident that the research findings value hashtags highly, not only for audiences but also for the creators and distributors of television content. Therefore, the possible use of hashtags has a significant role in the strategies employed inside and outside the linear broadcasts of television channels. It must not be forgotten that "Social TV involves behaviours and cognitions before, during and after consuming TV programming" (Auverset & Billings, 2016, p. 10). For their part, audience measurement companies have already included certain strategies to provide data on

how the audience interacts with television programmes on Twitter, for example Kantar Media through its Kantar Social TV Ratings service.

There have been changes to the production and distribution of television content as adaption to technological and economic convergence occurs (Jenkins, 2014), abandoning specific traditional processes in favour of other innovative ones (Franquet & Villa Montoya, 2014). The actions undertaken by the broadcasters aim to capture the attention of both the digital user and the conventional television audience. To do so, industry practices have been altered from the transmedia and cross-media activities, along with other specific actions that capture the attention of the social audience during the linear broadcast. The interactions taking place in the social audience communities are determined by several factors, including the forms and resources of appeals to online communities during the simultaneous consumption of television broadcasts. The study of these on-screen appeals allows us to discover how they are incorporated into the narrative and the storyline of the programme and what kind of participation is required.

In fact, one of the fundamental aspects of television and social networks is to be found in the concept of participation, on the basis of a hypothetical redefinition when any attempt to analyse its presence in the digital context is made. The concept of participation "has become one of the key concepts of communication and media studies, especially after the popularization of web 2.0" (Carpentier, 2012, p. 2). One of the essential differences with the analogue era is that the call for participation in the digital age demands the creation of new online communities and the capture of new audiences. The relationship between participation and media has been studied by several researchers (Livingstone & Lunt, 1992; Hibberd, 2003; Cammaerts & Carpentier, 2007), who confirm this complex and prickly practice, in which the industry's activities are focused. The presence of appeals (call to actions) on-screen is an explicit way of calling for audience participation. However, two highly differentiated strategies can be established: one which provides on-screen information about the social network where the audience can give an opinion, and another which shows some on-screen content related to audience response through the networks. Future research on the second strategy should be initiated (van Dijck, 2013) which could account for the new productive routines regarding audience participation.

Furthermore, among the factors that shape the practices of broadcasters, it is worth indicating one of the aspects that on occasions has influenced several strategies on television. The ownership of channels can be important in capturing digital audiences. The function and responsibility of public media services towards audiences has traditionally been different to the behaviour shown by commercial media. As indicated by Moe, Poell and van Dijck (2016) "audience engagement obviously means something different for public service broadcasters than it means for commercial producers" (p. 100). State regulations, differentiated business models and commercial agreements between televisions and platforms are some of the factors which, along with the broadcasters production routines , can determine the final decisions of the programme schedulers (Hallvard, 2011; van Dijck & Poell, 2015).

The discourse of social network audiences is guided. Firstly, the participation platform is specified, and secondly, a specific topic is provided to comment on and discuss from the start of the programme. This circumstance does not guarantee an immediate response from the digital communities. However, any element that appears on-screen in real time depends on the decisions of those in charge of the programme, and not the audience. Therefore, it is necessary to know which content is created by the audiences to be shown, and which is guided and selected by those in charge of the programmes.

Approaching industrial scheduling practices allows us to find out what decisions are made by broadcasters from the specific perspective of audience participation in real time. This study aims to explore how the producers of the most popular programmes appeal directly on-screen for participation on social networks. Based on this, we formulate the following research questions:

RQ1. Do the real-time, on-screen appeals present distinctive practices depending on the country of broadcast?

RQ2. Is the ownership of channels a determining factor in the appeals?

RQ3. Can differentiated strategies be identified depending on the programme's formats?

RQ4. Is the use of hashtags a general on-screen practice in all five markets?

METHODOLOGY

The study examines a sample of thirty programmes with the highest audience ratings from a total of 26

general public and commercial DTT channels in France (France 2, France 3, TF1 and M6), Germany (Dar Erste, ZDF, ProSieben, Sat1 and RTL), Italy (RAI1, RAI2, RAI3, Canale 5, Italia 1 and Rete 4), Spain (La1, La2, TV3, Antena 3, Tele5, Cuatro y La Sexta) and the United Kingdom (BBC1, BBC2, ITV and Channel 4), during the 2016-2017 season.

The DTT channels that constitute the sample have been selected from five European markets because they are general content broadcasters with the highest audience shares in their respective territories. In these countries "the role of the state has been a driving force, regulator and subsidiary of digitalisation" and the role of public television depends on "the history of the corporations in each of the countries" (Urquiza García, 2009, pp. 390-391). The analysis of the programmatic content of the DTT has revealed an absence of genres diversity and a continuity in the leadership of those already existing in the analogue era, fiction, information and info-show (Bustamante, 2002; Prado, 2002; García-Muñoz & Larrégola, 2010; Prado, 2010; Prado & Delgado, 2010).

In order to select the programmes that make up the sample for this study, the audience data of the programmes broadcasted on the DTT channels of the five selected markets during the 16th of January to the 26th February 2017 period was firstly monitored. Audience data from the audiometric companies in each country (AFG, Mediamat-Mediametrie, Auditel, Kantar Media and Barb) allowed the creation of a data bank with the most viewed programmes in each country.

After the identification of the most watched programmes, the classification according to content was carried out. For this task, our own typology was used. It has previously been tested and validated by the consolidated research group GRISS-UAB in previous projects (CSO2009-1212822 and CSO2012-39232), and developed by the Euromonitor Observatory, which has three leves of categorization –macrogenre, genre and microgenre– (Prado & Delgado, 2010). Once the content of the programmes was labeled, those with the highest audience from the most important macrogenre of the general European DTT offer were selected. Table 1 shows the programmes selected for this study, which are equally distributed according to the programme genre[1] (serialised fiction, information and info-show) and channel ownership.

The programmes analysed were saved during the week of the 13-19 March 2017 and the megadata collected during the broadcast of these programmes

was stored at the GRISS laboratory[2], at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. A business intelligence system was designed using the Oracle Business Intelligence tool and implemented to explore the data.

The quantitative and qualitative content analysis performed identifies where and when the appeals occur during the broadcast and analyse their morphology. The concept of appeals refers to any kind of call during the broadcasting of the programme which asks the audience to interact on online platforms (official websites, social networks and apps). The unit of analysis was, therefore, each of the on-screen appeals identified during the broadcast of these programmes.

Besides the identifying variables of the programmes, the analysis protocol includes variables related to the platforms and social networks where there are appeals to the social audience, appeal typologies, authorship of these appeals, modality and form of insertion on-screen, duration, narrative moment where they occur, and narrative resources to transmit the appeal to the audience, such as the use of a hashtag.

Prior to the coding of the identified call to action, a pretest was carried out to evaluate the designed analysis protocol. The six coders that would work in the coding process participated in the pretest, and a result of 86.8% Holsti Proceed (1969) was achieved. Once the reliability test was passed and the resulting discrepancies between coders were corrected, the content analysis of all the programmes that make up the sample was carried out, with the complete view of each one of them.

RESULTS

The results for the study show that the most popular entertainment and information programmes on generalist DTT channels in Europe are an excellent space for programme schedulers to appeal for audience participation through online platforms. These on-screen calls to action, which occur simultaneously to the broadcast, respond to different needs and their final aim does not always align with the desire to increase social audience participation with the programme content.

In relation to the research question (RQ1), on-screen appeals present different practices depending on the countries analysed.

Firstly, it can be said that it is possible to identify three appeal levels, all of which entail a different degree of involvement on the part of the social audience as shown by the examples in figure 1. The first level comprises calls to action, which aim to make the shared spaces

Fiction				
Programme	Channel	Ownership	Country	Frequency
Fais pa ça	F2	Public	France	Weekly
Section de recherches	TF1	Commercial	France	Weekly
Tatort	ARD	Public	Germany	Weekly
Rabenmütter	SAT 1	Commercial	Germany	Weekly
Un passo dal cielo	RAI1	Public	Italy	Weekly
Amore pensaci tu	CANALE5	Commercial	Italy	Weekly
Cuéntame cómo pasó	LA1	Public	Spain	Weekly
Sé quién eres	TELE5	Commercial	Spain	Weekly
Eastenders	BBC1	Public	United Kingdom	Daily
Coronation Street	ITV	Commercial	United Kingdom	Daily
Information				
Programme	Channel	Ownership	Country	Frequency
20 Heures	F2	Public	France	Daily
Le 20H	TF1	Commercial	France	Daily
Tagesschau 20:00 Uhr	ARD	Public	Germany	Daily
Aktuell 18:45	RTL	Commercial	Germany	Daily
TG1 ore 20:00	RAI1	Public	Italy	Daily
TG5 Edizione ore 20:00	CANALE5	Commercial	Italy	Daily
Telediario 2	LA1	Public	Spain	Daily
Informativo Noche Telecinco	TELE5	Commercial	Spain	Daily
Six O'Clock News	BBC1	Public	United Kingdom	Daily
ITV Evening News	ITV	Commercial	United Kingdom	Daily
Info-Show				
Programme	Channel	Ownership	Country	Frequency
Vivement Dimanche Prochain	F2	Public	France	Weekly
The Voice (Le plus belle voix)	TF1	Commercial	France	Weekly
Aktenzeichen XY	ZDF	Public	Germany	Weekly
Vermisst	RTL	Commercial	Germany	Weekly
La vita in diretta	RAI1	Public	Italy	Daily
Striscia la notizia	CANALE5	Commercial	Italy	Daily
Hora Punta	LA1	Public	Spain	Daily
El Hormiguero 3.0	A3TV	Commercial	Spain	Daily
The Real Marigold Hotel	BBC1	Public	United Kingdom	Weekly
The Voice UK	ITV	Commercial	United Kingdom	Weekly

Table 1. Programme list

Source: Own elaboration.

First level
Tagesschau, ARD, Germany.

Second level
ITV News, ITV, UK.

Third level
The Voice, ITV, UK.

Figure 1. Appeal levels

Source: Screenshots from ARD and ITV.

created by the broadcaster visible on-screen. Their purpose is simply to redirect the audience to platforms and social networks, an action which does not imply any intervention on the part of the audience in relation to the narrative elements of the programme. Three specific practices can be differentiated at this first appeal level. Firstly, the programme website is visible, for example, by showing its URL. Secondly, the on-screen appeal shows the profiles of the official accounts pertaining to the programmes in the social networks, mainly on Twitter and Facebook. And the final one centres on the visibility of apps, which may include exclusive programme content.

At the second appeal level, actions performed by the programme schedulers and creators involve an implicit, but not direct, appeal to the social audience interaction in relation to programme content or actors. The call is mainly transmitted through two actions: the use of hashtags (#) and, to a lesser extent, by mentions (@). In this sense, a generic or specific hashtag is used during the broadcast to allow the audience to express their comments. In the case of mentions, this is usually associated with a profile of the main characters from the programme, whether they are journalists, presenters, collaborators or participants, offering digital audiences the chance to interact with them.

The third and final level encompasses appeals that call for audience participation and whose action is necessary to develop the programme narrative. These appeals are proof of the greater level of synergy between conventional broadcasting and the explicit participation through social networks by digital communities. As will be shown later, these methods of appeals are associated with specific television formats, where the audience is encouraged to decide, for example, the future of a

contestant in a programme. These calls make it possible for the social audience to actively take part in some of the narrative elements of the programme.

These three appeal levels can occur in the same programme or else be used independently. Furthemore, the different television practices of broadcasters in relation to the three levels varies depending on the country of broadcast.

LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND OF COMMERCIAL CHANNELS IN EUROPE

The United Kingdom stands out as the country that appeals the most to social audiences through its programmes with the highest ratings (58.7 percent of total appeals). British broadcasters are notable in motivating viewer participation through all platforms, whether they are social networks, programme websites or apps. This leadership is observed on all British channels, whatever their ownership.

These broadcasters are also differentiated by transmitting the appeal widely through several online platforms in comparison to the other countries analysed. The practices selected for these actions are found in the combination of different social networks (like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat) and the promotion of specific apps, as well as the corporate or programme website, and are used individually or collectively.

Another distinctive feature of the British market is the inclusion of these appeals across different television formats. The appeals made in info-show programmes are mainly directed at encouraging the participation of social audience to determine the development of the programme and interacting through the hashtag or the mention, occupying the second and third
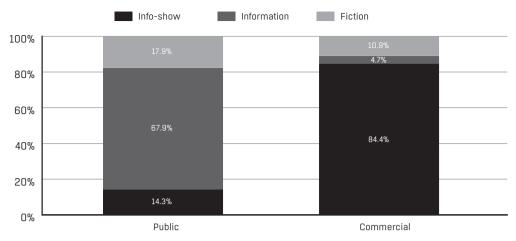
Figure 2. Distribution of appeals according to ownership and programme content and channel ownership

Source: Own elaboration.

levels defined above. In information programmes, the appeals are mainly limited to the first level: the programme website where viewers can continue to obtain information is posted and, on occasions, the profiles of their journalists' social networks are offered.

Regarding the number of appeals made, Spanish has the second place, after the British market, with 20.7 percent, followed by France (15.2 percent). Germany and Italy show a lower level of activity in capturing the attention of digital audiences (3.3 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively). However, this does not prevent appeals to the social audience from being articulated in these countries through other resources outside the synergy that the scheduling flow offers in these countries.

The results validate the hypothesis of the second research question (RQ2), stating that the channel's ownership is a determining factor in the presence of appeals. In the five countries of the sample, the commercial broadcasters make greater use of these actions (69.6 percent) in comparison to public channels (30.4 percent). It should be noted that this divergence between ownership occurs in all countires except Germany. This trend is not observed in the case of the popular programmes analysed in that country, where only spaces offered by public channels make these calls to action. In addition, it is important to highlight how the public programmes that have higher audience ratings in the French and Italian markets did not have appeals on the analysed shows.

THE TALENT SHOW AND SOCIAL AUDIENCE, A DECLARATION OF LOVE

Programme genres and television formats are a crucial element in a broadcaster's scheduling strategy when seeking the participation of digital audiences. Therefore, the answer to the third question (RQ3) is affirmative, as the results demonstrate that the formats present different strategies in the use of appeals. In this regard, the info-show requires greater visibility to social audiences, reaching the highest rate on the use of appeals (63 percent), and maintains a notable lead in quantitative terms, in comparison to information programmes (23.9 percent) and serialised fiction (13 percent). While all the countries agree on the preferential use of appeals in television reality formats, Italy and Spain also also include an equal number of appeals in serialised fiction programmes and info-shows.

Once again, the RQ2 premise that gave prominence to the role of the ownership channel is resized after the analysis of the formats, since ownership of the broadcasters is essential to understand the initiatives undertaken in relation to the convergence of television and social networks from the qualitative point of view. The behaviour of the channels shows that there is a polarised strategy in the patterns developed by public and commercial channels to place their products, as shown in figure 2. A clear preference can be seen in commercial channels for infotainment content and, to a lower level, for fiction and information. In contrast, public channels give preference to the use of appeals for informative content rather than serialised fiction and info-shows.

The way audiences are evolving is highlighted prominently in television talent show formats, which broadcasters have exploited to great success. Talent

shows increase the advertising revenue obtained by channels, have a knock-on effect on other content and use the actors of these programmes in several spaces of their channels. It is precisely these talent shows which concentrate the greatest number of appeals (51.1 percent). Other genres typical of info-shows, which also require audience engagement, albeit discreetly, are talk shows (9.8 percent), reality shows (1.1 percent) and humour content (1.1 percent).

The special feature of talent shows is revealed not only in a quantitative approach; it is also visible in a qualitative approach, which presents a use of appeals calling for audience participation to construct the programme narrative. It is evident that, historically, game shows and reality formats have very often promoted both analogue and digital audience participation. The very nature of the talent Show implies an indivisible association with direct audience participation. For this reason, these formats use the three appeal levels as previously mentioned, in practices that include websites, social networks and applications. However, we must not forget that the phenomenon observed in this genre is precisely how relevant the third appeal level becomes, a phenomenon not shown in other content typical of info-show, information and serialised fiction.

The activities generated by British and French talent shows ask the viewer to comment on what is happening in the programme through social networks, and also to vote on the progression or elimination of a contestant from the game. Other actions in which the social audience can partake range from direct communication with protagonists through social networks and the creation of communities of fans, to access to exclusive programme content through platforms and applications.

It is important to note to what extent the appeal strategies to digital audiences form part of what is included in the adaptation of a format and/or corresponds to decisions taken by the producers or schedulers themselves. This fact must be understood in the context of the global format trade (Chalaby, 2011), as all programmes of this type are adaptations of franchises, which stipulate how the role and the participation of the audience must be articulated, at which points of the narrative, and which mechanisms are to be used to appeal to the social audience. Audiences respond to patterns developed in previous markets and which have proved capable of this task. In the case of the British and French versions of The Voice, "their modus operandi consists of placing appeals at the

beginning of the programme, after each contestant's performance, following the commercial break and at in-between or quiet moments, in which the viewers are reminded that they must vote for their favourite singer" (Franquet, Gómez, Coromina, & Guerrero, 2018, p. 7).

These special features identified in talent shows are not observed in other genres of info-show. Programmes of humour content and talk shows centre their activity instead at the second appeal level, suggesting various social networks to interact with the social audience. They mainly refer to Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and, mostly, resort to the programme hashtag or to a specific topic being considered on the programme to draw the viewers' attention. On the other hand, reality shows place greater focus on making the programmes website visible.

Fiction genres present two different strategies when using on-screen appeals. For instance, soap opera (10.9 percent), humour content and talk shows employ hashtags to encourage audience activity on social networks. On the other hand, series focus on making their websites known, along the line of action identified in reality shows.

It is precisely this strategy that is used in a generalised way in information. Evening news programmes (23.9 percent) mainly promote their website, but on occasions they also refer to social networks and inform of the availability of specific apps where more content can be found. Social audiences can thereby interact with the protagonists of the information when they know their profiles and, highly sporadically, through the proposal of a hashtag. These initiatives have been solely identified in the evening news programmes in the United Kingdom and Germany.

THE USE OF THE HASHTAG ON SCREEN

The results show that there is no widespread use of the hashtag as proposed in the fourth research questions (RQ4). The manifestation of on-screen appeals to social audiences is articulated mainly using a hashtag (#), mention (@), URL, and to a lesser extent, text, image, audio and email. It must be pointed out that these elements can appear on-screen individually or in combination. However, the presence of these resources is unevenly spread, depending on the genre and country.

Although the findings obtained reveal that only 27 percent of programmes analysed use a hashtag to appeal to social audiences, this resource is the

Overprint. *Amore Pensaci tu*, Fiction, Canale 5, Italia.

Embedded. *El Hormiguero 3.0*, Info-show, Antena 3, Spain.

Credits. *Cuéntame cómo pasó*, Fiction, La 1, Spain.

Figure 3. Typologies of hashtag insertion

Source: Screenshots from Canale 5, Antena 3 and La 1.

Overprint. *Telediario 2*, Information, La 1, Spain.

Overprint. *El Hormiguero 3.0*, Info-show, Antena 3, Spain.

Overprint. *The Voice UK*, Info-show, ITV, UK.

Figure 4. Typologies of mention insertion

Source: Screenshots from La 1, Antena 3 and ITV.

one that appears most frequently on-screen and lasts the longest, registering a minimum duration of 3 seconds and a maximum of 87 minutes, thus remaining for the whole duration of the programme broadcast. France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain choose this resource, and always associate the hashtag to a keyword derived from the name of the programme. This can occasionally be accompanied by the contents discussed on the programme, of the episode or the broadcasting channel. The hashtag is used on info-show (#WalkingDeadEH, #HoraPuntaTVE, #THEVOICE, #TheVoiceUK), fiction (#CuéntameNegocios, #SéQuiénEres9, #amorepensacitu) and information programmes (#BBCNewsSix).

A hashtag acquires immense value in on-screen appeals by being the most widely exploited symbol used to invite the audience to enjoy a shared experience between digital communities and broadcasters. Regarding the method of on-screen insertion, the overprint is the dominant mode, however, it is occasionally embedded[3] into the credits at the end of the programme, as shown in figure 3.

The second resource highlighted in appeals gives

special protagonism to mentions "@" (20 percent), thereby establishing it as another essential symbol in the physical manifestation of appeals. The decision to include the names of programmes and their main characters after the "@" is made, giving information about official accounts on social networks, mainly Twitter and Instagram. Information, serialised fiction and info-shows use this resource, although its use acquires special significance in the latter, in particular in the British talent show The Voice. It is in this adaptation of the format created by Endemol where the official accounts of the contestants are shown. As in the case of some news programmes, these try to attract digital communities using the profiles of their journalists. Appeals that incorporate mentions are on-screen for 2 to 43 seconds. Mentions are inserted exclusively by overprint and, on some occasions, the @ shares its presence on-screen with other resources, as shown in figure 4.

Overprinting the name of the website on-screen is the third resource used by programme schedulers. As in the case of the hashtag and the mention, info-shows, serialised fiction and information include this element on-screen. It is found mostly at the end of the

Overprint. *Aktenzeichen XY*, Info-show, ZDF, Germany.

Embedded. *Six O'Clock News*, Information, BBC1, UK.

Credits. *Striscia La Notizia*, Info-show, Canale 5, Italy.

Figure 5. Typologies of URL insertion

Source: Screenshots from ZDF, BBC1 and Canale 5.

programme. Germany, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom are the countries that practice this the most, with the duration on-screen ranging between 2 to 29 seconds. The integration of this resource shows a diversity of modalities that may occur individually or jointly. Again, overprint is the most frequent method of on-screen inclusion, but credits, embedded and overprint and mention are also other insertion formulae employed, although more inconspicuously. Figure 5 illustrates some examples.

DISCUSSION

Industry practices can design strategies to attract the attention of other audiences and build up a loyal following inside and outside the real-time broadcast of a programme. The research results on social networks and television content, whether online or offline and presenting different forms of consumption (synchronous/asynchronous, streaming, etc.), provide substantive elements of the function that content can have on society.

Interaction with networks should promote the discourse or interest of the audience towards themes or other aspects that reinforce the triple and traditional function of the media. Certain strategies can be made effective in specific formats based on the countries' communicative policies. Globalization allows practices that improve the relationship between social networks and audiovisual content to spread, as global format or other television products do. While reception studies and cultural studies underline the relevance of the contexts of consumer, public and user communities, it is also known that certain industry practices end up becoming productive routines. Just as audiovisual content, whether television with or without a platform, has accounts on

most social networks, it is now a question of learning and establishing the strategies to use those accounts and the practices that are being consolidated.

In relation to the interaction with the public through social networks, the routines that the television industry ultimately incorporate become a clear indicator of broadcasters' policies. In the field of public television, the current scenario is an opportunity to rethink the social and educational functions that could be incorporated into the genres and formats of the information matrix. Without forgetting either, the possibilities that the programmes called infotainment could offer to citizenship could broaden, offering added services of information and dissemination. Similarly, the practices of citizen participation on public television through live, on-screen appeals should be explored and incorporated by those responsible for audiences and social networks. Discovering which strategies and tactics could be implemented, both by public and commercial channels, should be a priority to increase television audiences.

The relationship between broadcasters and audiences, whether the latter is outside social networks or are daily users of digital communities, is important not only in involving audiences quantitatively and qualitatively, with greater or lesser participation, but also to review the production inertias of cultural industries. For this to happen, it is necessary to conduct longitudinal and systematic studies that become regular observatories on how digital audiences are being targeted to promote the use of second and third screens.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the fact that the most popular entertainment and information programmes of the selected European

DTT generalist channels are a suitable space to appeal to the audience's participation, the sudy conducted highlights a somewhat timid and discreet activity, which distances itself from a generalised and systematic use of appeals that help capture social network audiences and their possible insertions into television content.

The on-screen activity of popular programmes reveals that three types of specific actions are put into practice. The first makes shared spaces, platforms, official accounts and applications visible. The second attempts to appeal to the audience via hashtags (#) and mentions (@). The third encourages the audience to actively participate in specific aspects of the programmes. In addition, there are factors that shape and influence television practices, such as the ownership of the channels, the programme's formats and country of origin. In terms of ownership, the general behaviour of public channels is to show greater numbers of appeals to digital audiences in news programmes, especially on BBC1, whereas commercial channels opt to do so on info-show programmes. This generates the need for future studies to observe to what extent public broadcasters call for audience interaction on social networks regarding information issues, in an attempt to reestablish the social and cultural function of television as a public service.

All programming is capable of appealing to digital audiences, but at present it is mainly programmes that require large audiences which experiment with certain practices. Info-shows have become spaces that seek the greatest engagement with digital communities. Format strategies like talent shows need to reach high audience ratings and, therefore, they use resources in the form of appeals, which seek direct participation in the development of the programme. An example of this would be voting and other appeals through networks like Instagram and Twitter that allow for the increase in membership of these fan-created communities. We must not forget that interaction with the programme through voting is also an important contribution to its storytelling and it can affect the development of the competition. In addition, the increase in audience ratings and followers is obviously essential to increase advertising revenue.

Twitter and, specifically, the use of hashtags overprinted on-screen is becoming one of the most common practices used by broadcasters to capture digital audiences. Understanding the efficiency of this strategy requires the analysis of the possible involvement and engagement of digital communities in this social network. Mapping appeals made by those in charge of television channels reveals the industry's confidence in Twitter to capture the attention of audiences that consume contents in real-time broadcasts. The analysis carried out in this study reveals that the use of hashtags by the television industry is more a visibility practice than a previously planned strategy to articulate actions that convey participation through the discourse of audiences on social networks.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NOTES

1. The programme classification has been made in accordance with the methodology used by EUROMONITOR, the permanent television observatory in Europe, created by a group of European researchers (Paoli Baldi, Ian Connel, Claus Dieter Rath and Emili Prado) in 1989, with the support of the RAI's VQPT service. Its main office was based in Geneva until 1995, but then it transferred to the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona where it operates under the leadership of Professor Emili Prado (GRISS-Euromonitor).

2. The Image, Sound and Synthesis Research Group (GRISS, Gup de Recerca en Imatge, So i Síntesi) is a consolidated research group at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), created in 1980, recognised by the Catalan Government (ref. 2017SGR672) and affiliated to the Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising.

3. The appeal forms part of some programme's set.

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