*VISUAL REVIEW* | V o l . 18, No. 9s, 2026 | ISSN 2695-9631

*International Visual Culture Review / Revista Internacional de Cultura Visual*

# INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL TELEVISION ON ECUADORIAN NEWSCASTS

Influencia de la Televisión Social en los Noticieros Ecuatorianos

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**KEYWORDS**

*Social television*
*Ecuador*
*Social media*
*News programs*
*Digital interaction*

**ABSTRACT**

*In the era of digitalization, social television has significantly transformed the landscape of traditional media. This article examines the impact of social networks on the newscasts of major television networks in Ecuador, focusing on how these platforms influence audience interaction and perception. Using a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative techniques, the study analyzed behavioral patterns, comments, and engagement levels on social networks such as Facebook and X. The results highlight the digital leadership of Ecuavisa and Teleamazonas and emphasize the need for sustainable strategies to strengthen the connection between traditional media and digital environments.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

*Televisión social*
*Ecuador*
*Redes sociales*
*Noticieros*
*Interacción digital*

**RESUMEN**

*El concepto de televisión social ha transformado significativamente el panorama de los medios tradicionales. Este artículo analiza el impacto de las redes sociales en los noticieros de las principales cadenas de televisión de Ecuador, enfocándose en cómo estas plataformas influyen en la interacción y percepción de la audiencia. Utilizando una metodología mixta que combina técnicas cualitativas y cuantitativas, se estudiaron patrones de comportamiento, comentarios y niveles de engagement en redes sociales como Facebook y X. Los resultados destacan el liderazgo de Ecuavisa y Teleamazonas en impacto digital y subrayan la necesidad de estrategias sostenibles que fortalezcan el vínculo entre los medios tradicionales y los entornos digitales*

# 1. Introduction

Social television represents an evolution of the traditional medium toward a more interactive experience, allowing viewers to participate in real time through social media while consuming audiovisual content. This phenomenon has not only transformed media consumption habits but has also changed the way newscasts interact with their audiences, particularly in the Ecuadorian context, where television plays a central role in public information (Merino, 2013).

In the media sphere, television has historically been a pillar for the dissemination of information and entertainment. However, the transition to a digital era has posed new challenges and opportunities for newscasts. Digital platforms such as Facebook, X and Instagram have redefined the way audiences interact with the news, enabling a two-way flow of communication. This shift is particularly relevant in Ecuador, where the use of social media has grown exponentially over the last decade, becoming a key tool for news consumption.

Social television involves not only the act of watching a news program, but also the ability to share, comment on and react to content in real time. According to recent studies, this phenomenon has contributed to greater participation by young audiences, who have traditionally shown less interest in conventional news formats (Lorente, 2011). In addition, media convergence has allowed newscasts to extend their reach and adapt to the demands of an increasingly digitalized society.

In Ecuador, television networks have adopted various strategies to integrate social media into their daily operations. However, the degree of success in this transition varies significantly among the different players in the sector. The purpose of this article is to analyze the impact of these strategies, identifying best practices and the associated challenges. At the same time, it seeks to answer key questions such as: What factors determine the success of a newscast in the digital ecosystem? How does social media interaction influence audiences' perceptions of, and trust in, traditional media?

This analysis is relevant not only from an academic standpoint but also from a practical one, as it offers communication professionals tools to optimize their presence in the digital environment. It also provides a better understanding of the role of social media in shaping the media agenda and in creating a space for public debate in contemporary Ecuador.

### *1.2. Social television and digital convergence*

Social television is an emerging media phenomenon that combines the traditional experience of watching television with users' active participation on social media. Lorente (2011) defines this concept as "the simultaneous use of social media and television to interact with audiovisual content". In this context, platforms such as Facebook and X allow viewers to share their opinions, reactions and comments in real time, transforming the passive viewer into an active prosumer (Napoli, 2010). This shift has generated new dynamics in the television industry, where media outlets seek strategies to encourage interaction and hold the audience's attention. According to Scolari (2020), social television has become a key tool for building audience loyalty, as it enables more participatory and personalized consumption.

Digital convergence has accelerated this transition by integrating information and communication technologies into the production and distribution of television content. In Latin America, the adoption of digital technologies has been uneven, but studies such as Merino (2013) highlight that 62% of consumers in the region use mobile devices to complement the television experience. This trend has led to greater audience fragmentation, as viewers can access content from multiple platforms and at different times. According to García-Avilés (2022), digitalization has forced media outlets to rethink their business models and adopt transmedia strategies to expand their reach and interaction with audiences.

Furthermore, interactivity in social television has changed the way the impact of audiovisual content is measured. Traditional ratings measurement has been complemented by digital metrics that analyze engagement and the virality of content on social media (Sanjuan, 2019). This evolution has allowed television producers to adjust their strategies in real time on the basis of audience comments and reactions. According to Ruiz and Alcalá (2016), the media's capacity to adapt to these new dynamics will determine their relevance and sustainability in an increasingly digitalized media ecosystem. In this sense, digital convergence has not only transformed the way television is produced and consumed, but has also redefined the relationship between the media and their audiences.

### *1.3. Social media as catalysts of media change*

Social media have profoundly transformed the dynamics of interaction between the media and their audiences. According to Castillo (2011), digital platforms allow users to influence public perception and, at times, the development of media content. This phenomenon, known as "social audiences", is characterized by viewers' active participation through comments, shares and reactions (Napoli, 2010). The combination of social media and television has fostered a new relationship between viewers and content, in which communication with users is key, as they take part by debating, rating, creating and distributing their own content (Álvarez-Monzoncillo, 2011).

In Ecuador, the Superintendency of Telecommunications (2015) identifies television as the most influential medium, with 90% household penetration. Nevertheless, the growing popularity of social media has led newscasts to adopt strategies that combine both formats in order to remain relevant. This adaptation seeks to take advantage of real-time interaction and direct audience feedback, allowing media outlets to adjust their content to the preferences and opinions expressed on digital platforms.

Audience participation in television has evolved from a passive to an active attitude, in which viewers become participants engaged with the medium. León and García-Avilés (2012) note that interactive or social television is two-way and personalized, meeting entertainment and communication needs. This shift has led traditional media to rethink their strategies, incorporating interactive elements and encouraging audience participation through various digital platforms.

Moreover, mass self-communication is shaping a new world in which we increasingly think of social relations, institutions, power, social change and personal autonomy as network-based realities (Cardoso, 2013). This digital environment has allowed audiences not only to consume content but also to produce and disseminate it, giving rise to more horizontal and democratized communication. Recognizing this shift, media outlets seek to integrate social media into their strategies in order to harness the potential of active audiences and remain relevant in today's media landscape.

### *1.4. Metrics and impact of social television*

The impact of social television is measured through various metrics that make it possible to evaluate and understand audience interaction with content. The main metrics include the number of interactions, reach, and sentiment and emotion analysis. According to García-Avilés (2022), social television has transformed the way viewers consume audiovisual content, since digital participation and real-time feedback allow media outlets to adapt their strategies. Tools such as Hootsuite and Fanpage Karma make it easier for media outlets to evaluate the performance of their posts and understand how audiences engage with content on digital platforms (De-Lara-González & Arias, 2021).

These metrics are crucial for identifying trends and adapting communication strategies. Quantitative data provide information on the most popular topics, while qualitative analysis of comments makes it possible to understand the tone and perceptions of the audience. According to Scolari (2020), the study of digital engagement in social television not only reveals audience preferences but also informs the production of more effective and personalized content. For

example, monitoring hashtags related to television programs helps to measure social media impact and identify conversation patterns among viewers (Sanjuan, 2019).

At the same time, audience measurement in the digital age requires an adaptation of traditional methods. According to Moreno and Pozo (2021), audience analysis must incorporate digital metrics to provide a more accurate assessment of the impact and quality of television content. Recent research has highlighted that time-shifted viewing, social media interaction and the use of streaming platforms have changed the paradigm of audience measurement (Lorandi, 2014). In this context, combining digital tools with advanced analytical models enables media outlets to develop more effective strategies for attracting and retaining audiences.

In conclusion, social television has transformed the way viewers consume and participate in audiovisual content. The use of quantitative and qualitative metrics, together with specialized tools, allows media outlets to better understand their audiences and adapt their content strategies in a constantly evolving digital environment. As digital platforms continue to expand, it will be essential to keep investigating new ways of measuring and analyzing interaction in social television in order to maximize the impact of content and strengthen the relationship with viewers.

## 2. Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses to obtain a comprehensive understanding of audience interaction with the selected newscasts. This approach makes it possible to combine the precision of numerical data with the interpretive depth of qualitative observations, providing a fuller picture of the phenomenon under study. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), mixed methods offer a holistic perspective by allowing different types of data and analytical approaches to be integrated.

### *2.1. Research design:*

**Quantitative**: Interaction metrics were collected from the official Facebook and X pages of the selected newscasts. Fanpage Karma and Twitter Analytics were used to extract data such as the number of comments, shares and engagement rates. Fanpage Karma is a social media analytics tool that makes it possible to monitor and compare the performance of different profiles, providing detailed information on audience interaction.

Twitter Analytics, for its part, offers detailed statistics on tweet performance, including impression and interaction metrics as well as follower analysis.

**Qualitative:** A content analysis was carried out on the newscasts' posts on both platforms, focusing on the tone of the conversations and the predominant topics. This analysis made it possible to interpret conversation trends and audience reactions, providing a deeper understanding of the audience's perceptions of, and attitudes toward, the content disseminated. According to Hernández Sampieri and Mendoza (2018), qualitative analysis is essential for interpreting the meaning of data and understanding the context in which interactions take place.

### *2.2. Sample:*

Six representative newscasts from public and private networks in Ecuador were selected: Televistazo (Ecuavisa), 24 Horas (Teleamazonas), El Noticiero (TC Televisión), La Noticia (RTS), Noticias 7 (Ecuador TV) and Gamanoticias (Gamavisión). The study period ran from February to April 2024, allowing a detailed analysis of interactions and trends during this time. The sample was selected to cover a variety of news approaches and audiences, ensuring that the data collected were representative.

This mixed methodology made it possible to triangulate the data obtained, strengthening the validity and reliability of the findings. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches yielded a more complete and richer understanding of the interaction between newscasts and their audiences on digital platforms. According to Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007),

triangulation in mixed methods contributes to a better understanding and corroboration of results by approaching the phenomenon from multiple perspectives.

## 3. Results

### *3.1. Social Media Interactions*

Ecuadorian newscasts have adopted differentiated social media strategies, reflected in key metrics such as number of followers, interaction rates and posting frequency. Ecuavisa and Teleamazonas lead in followers and interactions on Facebook and X, with 3.7 million and 2.5 million fans, respectively. These newscasts have built a broad digital audience through a strategy of consistent posting and relevant content.

By contrast, Gamavisión and RTS show lower levels of engagement, which could be attributed to lower posting frequency and a less aggressive digital strategy. Ecuador TV and TC Televisión, as government-backed outlets, have maintained a stable audience, although their follower growth has been more moderate.

Analysis of the engagement rate reveals that Gamavisión has the highest figure on Facebook (0.081%), while Teleamazonas dominates on X with a rate of 0.0099%, indicating that its audience not only consumes content but also actively participates in the digital conversation.

**Table 1** Ecuadorian television channels with national coverage

| Channel | Type of programming | Type of channel | Coverage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ecuavisa | General-interest | Private | International |
| Teleamazonas | General-interest | Private | International |
| RTS | General-interest | Private | Ibero-American |
| Ecuador TV | General-interest and institutional | Public | National |
| TC Televisión | General-interest | Public | Ibero-American |
| Gamavisión | General-interest | Public | National |

Source: Fan Page Karma.

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### *3.2 Comparison between Newscasts*

Ecuavisa: Leader in reach and posting frequency, with a high volume of daily content (89 posts on Facebook and 30 on X).

Teleamazonas: Stands out for the highest social media engagement, reflected in a higher interaction rate and sustained follower growth.

Gamavisión and Ecuador TV: Less consistent strategies and lower impact in terms of interactions and audience growth.

RTS and TC Televisión: Although they have a considerable follower base, their capacity to generate engagement remains a challenge.

**Table 2.** Summary of newscast metrics on Facebook

| Channel | Page performance index | Fans | Follower growth | Post interaction rate | Posts per day |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ecuador TV | 6% | 822K | -0.063% | 0.017% | 24 |
| Ecuavisa | 7% | 3.7M | -0.54% | 0.0064% | 89 |
| Gamavisión | 4% | 528K | -0.059% | 0.081% | 11 |
| RTS | 2% | 1.6M | -0.059% | 0.0026% | 16 |
| TC Televisión | 5% | 3.1M | -0.051% | 0.016% | 24 |
| Teleamazonas | 10% | 2.5M | -0.083% | 0.039% | 57 |

Source: Fan Page Karma.

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The table presents an analysis of the performance of the main Ecuadorian newscasts on the social network X, highlighting key metrics such as the performance index, number of followers, audience growth, interaction rate and posting frequency. Ecuavisa leads in followers with 3.7M, followed by TC Televisión (3.1M) and Teleamazonas (2.5M), while Gamavisión (528K) has the smallest fan base. However, all channels show negative follower growth, with Teleamazonas (-0.083%) the most affected. In terms of interaction rate, Gamavisión (0.081%) and Teleamazonas (0.039%) show better engagement, while RTS (0.0026%) records the lowest interaction. Ecuavisa is the channel with the highest posting frequency (89 posts a day), although its interaction rate remains low (0.0064%), suggesting that a high volume of content does not guarantee greater participation. In contrast, Gamavisión and Teleamazonas, with fewer posts, achieve significantly higher levels of interaction, indicating that content quality may matter more than quantity.

**Table 51** Summary of newscast metrics on X

| Channel | Page performance index | Fans | Follower growth | Post interaction rate | Posts per day |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ecuador TV | 11% | 639K | 0.57% | 0.0028% | 7.5 |
| Ecuavisa | 6% | 3.1M | 0.41% | 0.00079% | 30 |
| Gamavisión | 1% | 638K | -0.25% | 0.00025% | 3.2 |
| RTS | 16% | 943K | 0.72% | 0.015% | 1.8 |
| TC Televisión | 15% | 1.8M | 0.86% | 0.0055% | 5.2 |
| Teleamazonas | 42% | 2.9M | 1.1% | 0.0099% | 17 |

Source: Fan Page Karma.

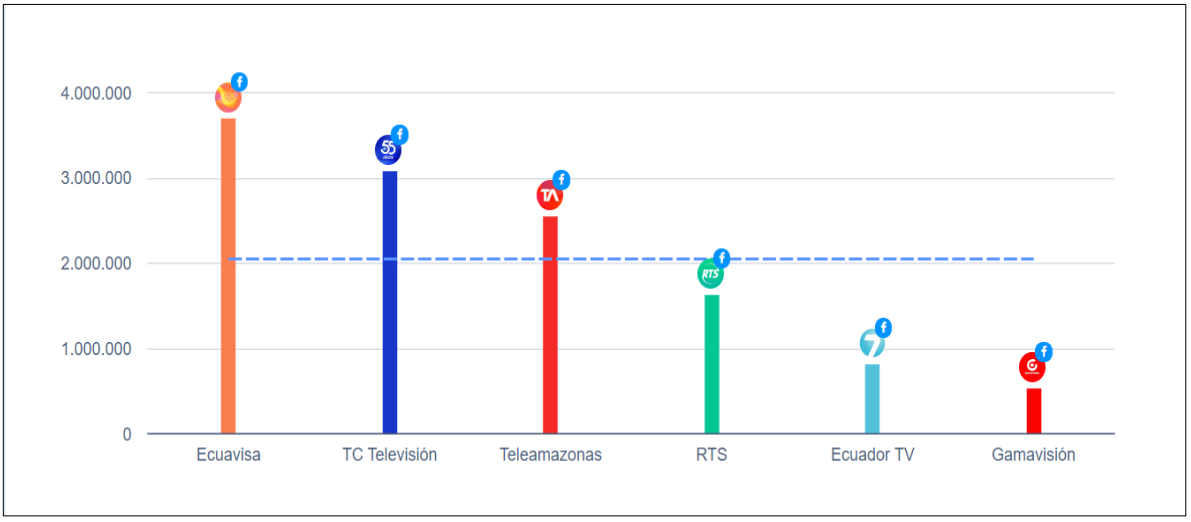
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The table shows a comparative analysis of the metrics of the main Ecuadorian newscasts on the social network X, evaluating their performance in terms of followers, interaction and posting frequency. Teleamazonas stands out with the highest page performance index (42%), followed by RTS (16%) and TC Televisión (15%), while Gamavisión has the lowest performance (1%). In terms of number of followers, Ecuavisa (3.1M) and Teleamazonas (2.9M) lead, while Gamavisión and Ecuador TV have similar figures (638K and 639K, respectively). Follower growth is most notable for Teleamazonas (1.1%), while Gamavisión shows a decline (-0.25%). As for the interaction rate, RTS (0.015%) and Teleamazonas (0.0099%) achieve the highest engagement, despite posting less frequently than Ecuavisa, which publishes 30 posts a day but has the lowest interaction rate (0.00079%). This analysis reveals that posting frequency does not always translate into greater interaction, underlining the importance of quality content and effective engagement strategies.

### *3.3 Analysis of Posts and Audience*

The analysis of the posts indicates that the most successful newscasts use specific visual and thematic strategies to attract their audience. Most followers interact more with images and videos, while links and text-only posts generate less response.

**Chart 1.** Channel profiles with the most followers




Source: Fan Page Karma.

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Likewise, this monitoring shows that users on this network interact most with images, which reach 5,948,250 interactions, followed by videos (489,484), links (32,855) and reels (19,309), while simple status updates receive hardly any reactions, as shown in Figure 19. Thus, across the six channels analyzed, users of the channels' digital formats are most likely to like, comment on or share the information in the images posted by the newscasts, from which it can be inferred that internet users are predominantly visual.

**Chart 2.** Average posts per day

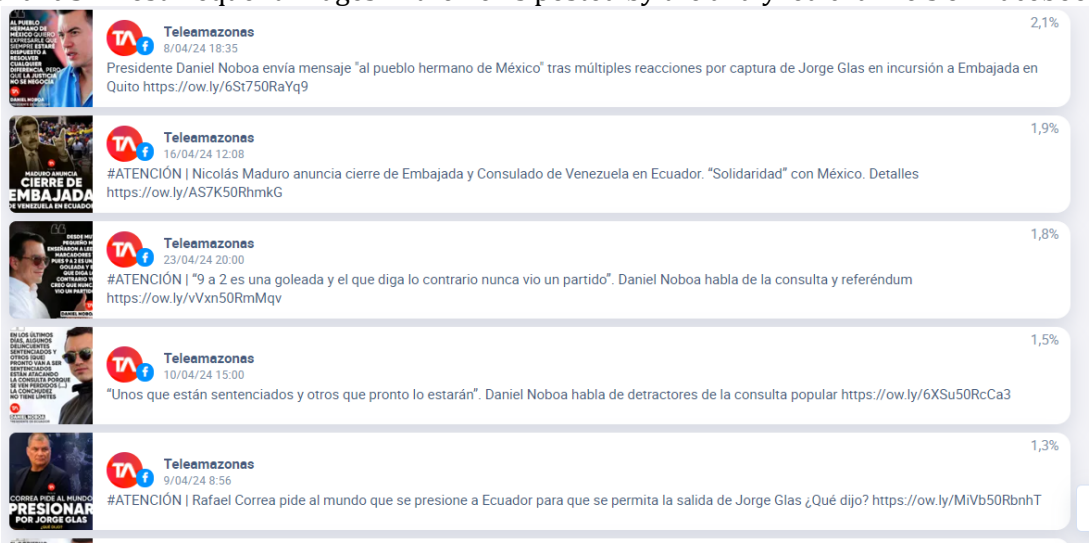


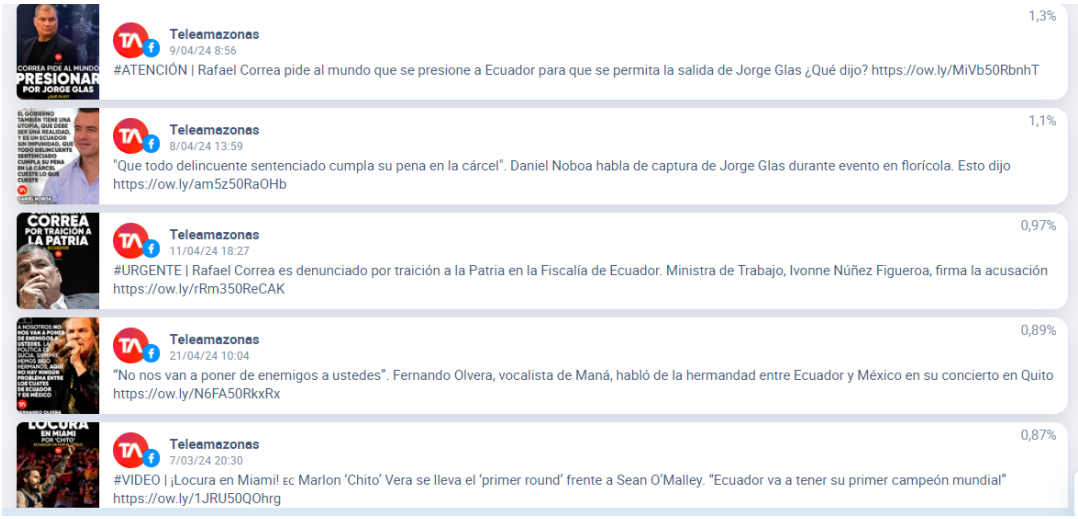

Source: Fan Page Karma.

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Interaction peaks occur at strategic times, with the highest level of activity between 7:30 and 10:30 a.m. and between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m., particularly on weekdays. On weekends, peak engagement times vary between morning and evening, depending on the type of content posted.

**Chart 3.** Most frequent images in the news posted by the analyzed channels on Facebook



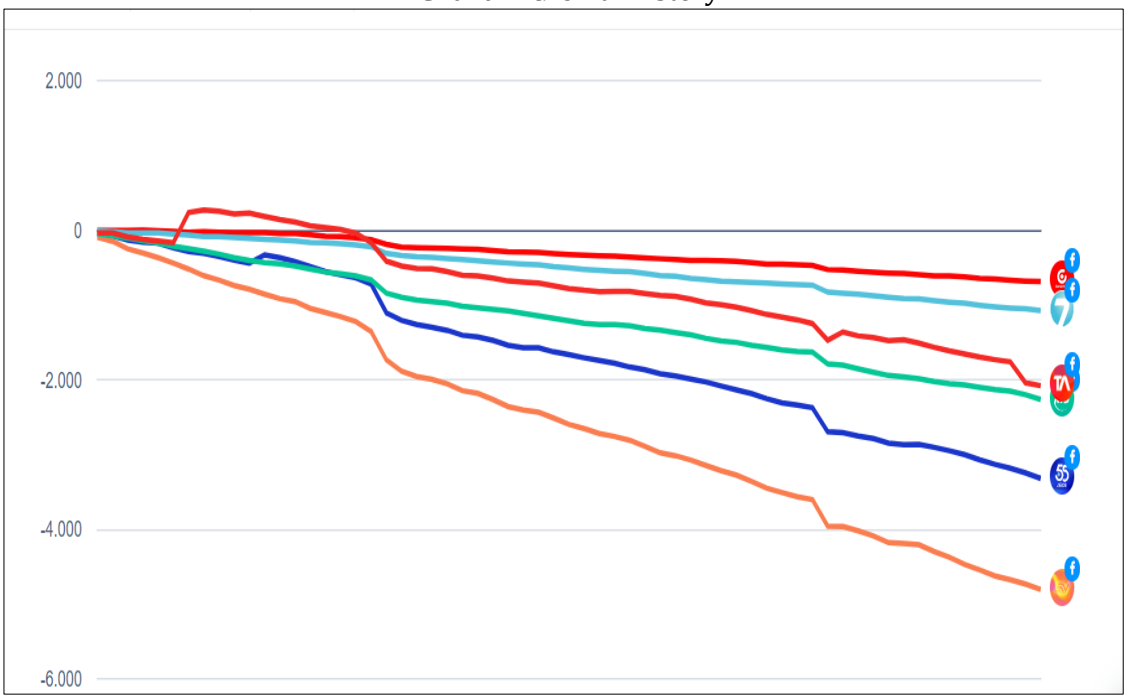




Source: Fan Page Karma.

Prepared by*:* Ortiz, C. Maldonado, J. Silva, M. 2024

The analysis of the most frequent images in the news posted by the analyzed channels on Facebook reveals key patterns in the visual strategy used by Ecuadorian media to capture public attention. The predominant images relate to political issues, natural disasters, sporting events, crime and breaking news, reflecting the preferences and editorial focus of each outlet. Channels with higher interaction rates, such as Gamavisión and Teleamazonas, tend to use images with a strong emotional charge or visual impact, which generates a greater audience response. In contrast, those with lower engagement, such as RTS and Ecuavisa, may be using less striking images or images poorly aligned with their audience's interests.

**Chart 4.** Growth history




Source: Fan Page Karma.

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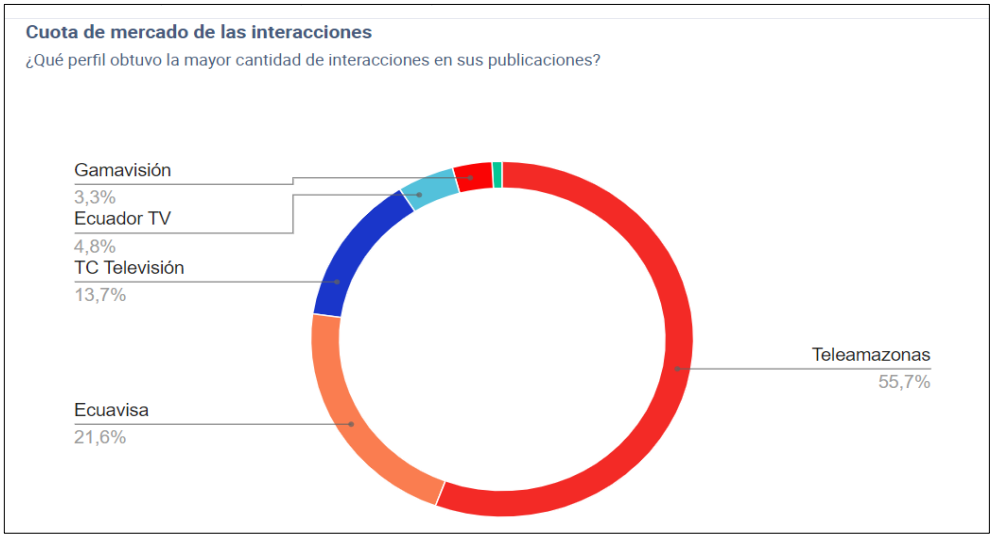
The chart shows the ten most frequent images in the news on Facebook according to audience interaction, with Teleamazonas at the top; as noted above, most of these images relate to the diplomatic standoff between Ecuador and Mexico following the raid on the Mexican embassy to arrest Jorge Glas.

Political content dominates interactions, especially during diplomatic crises or major national events. Coverage of the conflict between Ecuador and Mexico was among the most commented on, demonstrating that the digital audience is interested in current political and social affairs.

### *3.4. Impact on Content Strategies*

The data show that newscasts with a more robust digital strategy achieve greater audience loyalty and participation. Outlets that post consistently and diversify their content with images, videos and innovative formats obtain better results in terms of engagement.

**Chart 5.** Market share by interactions




Source: Fan Page Karma.

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Figure 22 shows the post interaction rate and the follower growth rate. First, Teleamazonas and Gamavisión have a stronger presence, bearing in mind that the further to the right of the dashed lines a profile lies, the higher its post interaction; second, follower growth is highest for Gamavisión, since the chart indicates that the higher up and further to the right a profile is, the more it has grown. The remaining channels analyzed lie to the left and toward the bottom, and therefore have little presence in terms of interactions and follower growth.

**Chart 6.** Summary of post interaction

| FECHA | IMAGEN | PUBLICACIÓN | ME GUSTA | COMENTARIOS | INFORMACIÓN COMPARTIDA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30 abr 2024 |  | #Nacional \| Ecuador demandó a México ante la Corte Intern... | 202 | 379 | 32 |
| 30 abr 2024 |  | #CasoBlanqueoJr \| #VIDEO. En el marco de una investigació... | 84 | 31 | 0 |
| 30 abr 2024 |  | #Seguridad I Doce procesados irán a juicio por terrorismo... | 33 | 9 | 1 |
| 30 abr 2024 |  | No habrá desconexiones eléctricas durante el feriado del ... | 56 | 71 | 8 |
| 30 abr 2024 |  | #Atención \| Las personas que quieran cambiar de domicili... | 17 | 0 | 17 |

Source: Fan Page Karma.

Prepared by*:* Ortiz, C. Maldonado, J. Silva, M. 2024

The analysis of posts and their interaction on X reveals key trends in content management by the main Ecuadorian newscasts. Ecuavisa is the channel with the most daily posts (89), but its interaction rate (0.0064%) is relatively low, suggesting that post volume does not always translate into greater engagement. Ecuador TV and TC Televisión, with 24 daily posts each, maintain interaction rates of 0.017% and 0.016%, respectively, indicating a more balanced strategy in terms of frequency and participation. Gamavisión, on the other hand, with only 11 daily posts, records the highest interaction rate (0.081%), suggesting that content quality and audience targeting may be decisive factors. In contrast, RTS, with 16 daily posts, has the lowest interaction rate (0.0026%), which could indicate a weaker connection with its audience or a less effective content strategy. Finally, Teleamazonas, with 57 posts a day and an interaction rate of 0.039%, shows an intermediate performance, combining a high-frequency strategy with moderate engagement. These

data reflect the importance of striking a balance between the number of posts and the capacity to generate effective interaction with the audience.

## 4. Discussion

The results of the study confirm that social television has transformed the media landscape in Ecuador, in line with a global trend in which convergence between traditional and digital media is redefining news consumption. The capacity of newscasts to generate engagement depends not only on the number of posts but also on the relevance, credibility and appeal of the content. In a saturated digital environment, trust and relevance have become decisive factors in building audience loyalty (Napoli, 2010).

In addition, the immediacy and interactivity of social platforms have created new challenges for newscasts, which now compete not only with other traditional media but also with independent content creators and the constant flow of user-generated information. As Jenkins (2006) argues, audience participation is a key element of the new media ecology, which forces newscasts to adopt strategies that promote conversation and debate in real time.

A crucial aspect of this phenomenon is the credibility of information. Unlike traditional television, where information goes through a rigorous editorial process, fact-checking is a constant challenge in the digital ecosystem. The spread of fake news and disinformation can affect public perceptions of newscasts, highlighting the need to strengthen transparency and accountability in the production of digital content (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of well-established digital strategies for improving the reach and public perception of newscasts (Lorente, 2011). Studies on digital transformation in the media have shown that outlets that integrate data analytics tools and interaction metrics tend to perform more effectively in terms of audience engagement and loyalty (Newman et al., 2021).

For example, previous research in Latin America has shown that integrating targeted content strategies and using artificial intelligence to personalize the user experience significantly increases interaction (Scolari, 2018). In Ecuador, this study shows that newscasts that adopt interactive practices and diversify their content formats are better able to capture audience attention, reinforcing the need for a transition toward hybrid information models in which social media play a fundamental role.

A further aspect to consider is the relationship between posting frequency and content quality. Previous research has shown that posting excessively without a clear strategy can dilute the impact of messages and reduce the value perceived by the audience (Casero-Ripollés, 2016). In this regard, the Ecuadorian newscasts with the highest interaction rates have shown that a well-planned posting strategy with relevant content is more effective than simply increasing the number of posts.

## 5. Conclusions

The analysis of the data collected in this research shows that social media interaction with the newscasts of Ecuador's main television networks is measured through key metrics such as the number of reactions, follower growth, number of fans and daily posting frequency. These characteristics are decisive in assessing the impact and relevance of each newscast in the digital environment, making it possible to identify effective strategies for increasing audience engagement.

Audience choices reflect greater interaction with the newscasts of Ecuavisa, TC Televisión and Teleamazonas, where users prefer posts that combine images, text and additional data. This finding suggests that visual content plays a crucial role in audience retention and participation, highlighting the importance of optimizing the design and narrative of posts to achieve greater impact.

In terms of digital presence, Ecuavisa is the newscast with the most followers on both Facebook and X, and the outlet with the highest number of daily posts. However, Teleamazonas and TC Televisión also occupy a significant space in the digital ecosystem, demonstrating active competition among newscasts to capture public attention and consolidate their leadership in the digital environment.

Social television has transformed the way newscasts interact with their audiences, establishing strategic posting times from Monday to Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., and at midday on weekends, unless a major event occurs. This strategy responds to the audience's digital consumption behavior and highlights the importance of adapting news production and distribution to the dynamics of social platforms. Furthermore, the steady growth in the number of followers confirms that social television will continue to evolve as a fundamental medium for news communication, driving new interactive and targeted content strategies.

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