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ONLINE COMMUNICATION OF SPANISH FILM PRODUCTION COMPANIES
Product promotion

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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

From a strategic point of view, the audiovisual sector is a key factor in the economic and cultural development of a country and a decisive factor in the promotion of the country's brand abroad (cf. Tribaldos Macía, 2013). To this end, in 2021 the Spanish government presented the Spanish Audiovisual Hub and in 2023 a series of measures were launched to promote the internationalisation of the sector. It is in this context that this research is presented, focusing on the analysis of the digital presence of the main Spanish film production companies, with the aim of observing their communication strategies to promote their products and, therefore, the Spanish audiovisual sector.

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1. Introduction

The audiovisual sector represents a pivotal strategic sector for the economic and cultural development of a country and a crucial factor in the external promotion of the Spain brand (cfr. Tribaldos Macía, 2015). In pursuit of this objective, the Spanish Government presented the creation of the Spain Audiovisual Hub in 2021, approved the updating of the General Audiovisual Law in 2022, and implemented a series of measures in 2023 to boost the sector and facilitate its internationalisation.

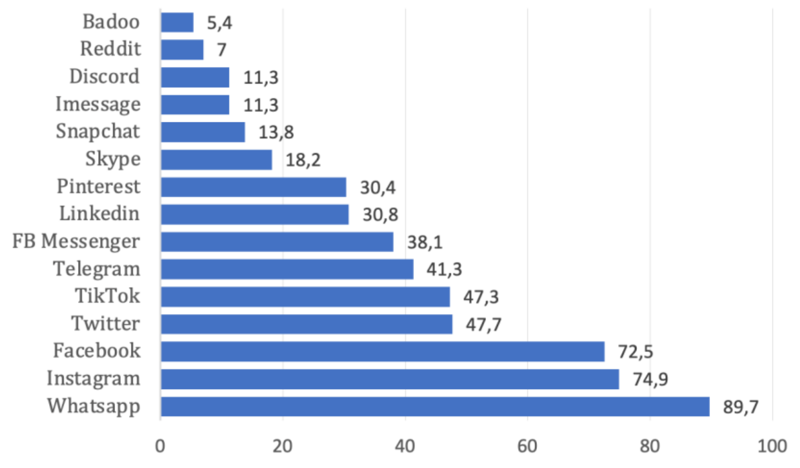
The film market has experienced a surge in competition over the past few decades, with the advent of television, public television, digital television, video on demand (VoD) platforms, and audiovisual content sharing sites such as YouTube.

> In response to this intense competition from other products, the film industry has intensified its marketing campaigns and the channels used to promote films, among other actions. As a consequence of this situation, the film industry is confronted with the challenge of recovering its former glory and adapting to a new, highly competitive, technologically advanced, and more interactive environment, where the convergence of industries is a reality. (Linares Palomar, 2008, p. 14)

Conversely, in recent years, there has been a marked increase in the utilisation of social networks by Spanish audiovisual production companies, both in the film and television sectors and in the creation of content for online platforms. However, it is the latter that appear to exhibit a more active and strategic approach to their online communication (cfr. García-Mirón, 2023). Some of these production companies have been able to leverage the power of social networks to effectively promote their works, utilising appealing visual content, exclusive trailers and interviews with the cast and crew to generate interest and anticipation among the public. Furthermore, they have devised ingenious strategies to encourage audience participation, including contests, live question-and-answer sessions, and behind-the-scenes content.

Nevertheless, it appears that there is still a considerable distance to traverse, with production companies failing to utilise social media to any significant extent. Their engagement with social media is often limited to the promotion of specific products or events, which detracts from their digital presence and reputation. Consequently, the communication efforts for each new project must be initiated anew, with no prior foundation.

Figure 1. Use of social media platforms in Spain (percentage of internet users).



Source: We are social & Meltwater, 2023.

In the context of an increasingly digitalised and connected world, the online presence of any company has become a crucial factor in determining its success and visibility. This is as true of the film industry as it is of any other sector. The *Digital Report Spain*, conducted by We Are Social and Metwater (cfr. We Are Social, 2023), indicates that almost 95% of the population has access to the internet. Of this total, nearly 85% of the population is active on social networks. Furthermore, the average user spends approximately six hours a day online and another three hours a day consuming television. The advent of video on demand (VoD) platforms has posed a significant challenge to the film industry, compelling it to adapt to the emergence of formidable competitors. The framework "is supported by the magic triangle, which comprises three main aspects in the following order of importance: technology, original content creation and branding" (García Santamaría y Rodríguez Pallares, 2022, p. 16). This triangle of strategic ingredients presents a significant challenge for the film industry as a whole, and for production companies in particular.

In this context, the utilisation of social media by Spanish film production companies presents a number of distinctive challenges, including the maintenance of market share, the management of online reputation, and the protection of copyright in an increasingly complex and evolving digital environment.

Conversely, in the academic field and literature, there is a paucity of research on film marketing, despite the fact that it is widely studied in other fields such as real estate or finance (García Santamaría & Rodríguez Pallares, 2022; García-Mirón, 2020). The field of film marketing encompasses a series of marketing actions and strategies that are applied at different times and with varying characteristics within the audiovisual industry. Consequently, it is necessary to treat this subject in a unique manner.

In light of the aforementioned considerations, this research aims to examine the manner in which Spanish film production companies employ digital tools and online platforms to establish their brand identity, engage with audiences, and expand their reach nationally and internationally. Consequently, this research will also assess the extent to which such initiatives contribute to the promotion of Spain's branded audiovisual products and companies.

1.1. Objectives

The primary objective is to ascertain the extent to which agents in the film production sector utilise social media as a promotional tool. This encompasses networks such as Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok and YouTube, as well as the presence of a corporate website.

In light of the aforementioned criteria, the following supplementary objectives have been established:

1. To ascertain the principal Spanish film production companies in terms of box office takings.
2. To gain insight into the utilisation of social media by the principal Spanish film production companies.
3. A content analysis of the websites of Spanish film production companies will be conducted.
4. A content analysis of social networks should be conducted, with a particular focus on the message and formats used to disseminate information and promote content.
5. An examination of the challenges and opportunities facing Spanish film production companies in the digital sphere is required.

2. Methodology

The methodological design of this study is focused on the analysis of the digital presence of the main Spanish film production companies in the context of the year 2021.

In the initial phase of the study, the sample was selected based on the ranking of film production companies with the highest grossing in 2021, as reported in the Film Yearbook 2021 published by the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts (ICAA. Instituto de la Cinematografía y las Artes Audiovisuales). At the time of conducting this research, the ICAA had recently published the 2022 edition of the Film Yearbook, which did not include the ranking of the leading production companies in terms of grossing. Consequently, the previous year's document was consulted for this purpose.

This classification leads to the elimination of those production companies that have been created specifically for the production of a film, as they are not considered to be exclusively focused on this area of work. Such is the case of Todos al tren la película AIE (place 4), El tesoro de Drake AIE (place 6), La pepa la película AIE (place 9), Maixabel Film AIE (place 16), and Hasta el cielo 2019 AIE (place 25). Thus, in the end, the selection is made up of the following 18 production companies: The following 18 production companies were selected: Atresmedia Cine, Telecinco Cinema, Bowfinger International Pictures, Think Studio, Producciones Cinematográficas Ciudadano Ciskul, Warner Bros Entertainment

España, Básculas Blanco, Mediapro Cine, Reposado Producciones Cinematográficas, Kowalski Films, Feelgood Media, El deseo, Remotamente Films, Álamo Producciones Audiovisuales / Álamo Audiovisual Séptima Parte, Lazona Producciones, The Snake Films, Apolo Films and Vaca Films.

Table 1. List of producers that make up the sample

Producer	Creation	No. of feature films	Fundraising
Atresmedia Cine	2000	12	11.722.265,29
Telecinco Cinema	1999	6	8.891.281,34
Bowfinger International Pictures	2004	5	8.891.281,34
Think Studio	2005	2	5.490.647,89
Producciones Cinematográficas Ciudadano Ciskul	2008	1	5.490.626,89
Warner Bros Entertainment España	1983	7	3.929.432,66
Básculas Blanco	2020	1	3.253.441,35
Mediapro Cine	1994	1	3.253.441,35
Reposado Producciones Cinematográficas	2003	1	3.253.441,35
Kowalski Films	2007	4	2.823.758,28
Feelgood Media	2015	1	2.749.367,27
El deseo	1985	5	2.593.406,55
Remotamente Films	2020	1	2.535.039,10
Álamo Producciones Audiovisuales	2017	6	1.660.791,89
Lazona Producciones	2003	4	1.294.729,11
The snake films	2017	1	1.293.643,91
Apolo Films	1977	1	1.193.564,65
Vaca Films	2003	1	1.000.693,86

Source: Own elaboration based on ICAA data, 2023.

The research is structured around the direct observation of digital marketing strategies, social media management, online content creation, and other key practices that are driving the online presence of these production companies. In order to achieve this objective, a mixed research methodology is employed, comprising a first phase of a quantitative nature. This phase determines the social media presence of Spanish film production companies through the use of certain content strategies and by observing the use and frequency of publications.

To delimit the analysis of social platforms, data from We Are Social (2023) is taken into account, focusing on the main social platforms according to the number of users. These include Instagram, Facebook, X and TikTok – instant messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram and Facebook Messenger are excluded from the analysis. Additionally, YouTube is included, as the sample companies are from the audiovisual sector. This is considered a strategy of interest, given that it allows for the sharing of videos.

In a subsequent phase, a qualitative analysis is conducted employing the content analysis technique. "It can be argued that content analysis represents one of the most significant research techniques employed within the social sciences. The objective is to comprehend data not as a collection of physical occurrences, but as symbolic phenomena, and to undertake direct analysis thereof" (Krippendorf, 1990, p. 7).

It was determined that, following an initial exploration phase, the content published on social networks is, in the majority of publications, duplicated from one of the networks considered to be the main one. Consequently, the decision was taken to carry out this analysis based on the publications of the production companies on their Instagram profiles. As illustrated in Figure 1, Instagram is the main social network in Spain in terms of users, excluding the instant messaging platform WhatsApp.

3. Contextualisation

3.1. Trends in the Film Industry: The Growing Influence of Platforms

As far as market trends are concerned, several descriptive facts can be observed. First, the increase in the number of films produced, with a practically progressive and constant increase from 182 in 2012 to 322 in 2022 (ICAA, 2023). On the other hand, there is a decrease in the income from exhibition. On the other hand, the creation of high-quality audiovisual products released simultaneously or almost simultaneously on platforms and in cinemas has been observed, precisely because of the boost provided by on-demand platform services (Netflix, Prime Video, etc.). This was the case in Spain in 2023 with *The Snow Society (La sociedad de la nieve)* (J. A. Bayona, 2023), which is closely linked to the pressure exerted on the financing phase of Spanish cinematographic works (Formoso, 2022).

On the other hand, Spanish cinema is experiencing an increase in co-productions, either with other production companies outside the Spanish context or in co-production with television channels or broadcasters, in addition to observing the growing presence of television production companies specialised in the film sector (specifically Atresmedia Cine and Telecinco Cinema).

Finally, there is the stimulation of production by economic interest groups (EIGs) and their commercial success in certain productions (as shown in the research methodology with examples such as Todos al tren la película EIG or Maixabel Film EIG) and the integration of US majors in distribution through their national subsidiaries, as in the case of Warner Bros Entertainment España (see Table 1).

To these trends must be added other characteristics and circumstances that characterise the current audiovisual situation, in which we must continue to fight to maintain cinema attendance in a context in which audiovisual consumption in general and fiction films in particular are increasingly being consumed via Over the Top (OTT) service platforms. According to the latest data from the National Markets and Competition Commission (CNMC. Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia) Household Panel, by mid-2023 this type of pay platform will be present in 58.1% of households with internet access and it is increasingly common to have more than one OTT service (25.9% use two, 18.6% use three and 19.7% use four or more). The growth of platforms is having a decisive impact on the reality of the different sectors that make up the film market, distorting the way in which films are produced, distributed and exhibited and, more specifically, influencing the way in which film content is promoted to find its place in the market.

Added to this was the exceptional situation experienced in 2020 as a result of the global pandemic caused by Covid-19, which led independent distributors to adopt, among other things, "a risky practice of releasing films that they felt were neither recognised nor compensated for when the billboard began to normalise in the following months" (SEMINCI, 2022).

Nevertheless, according to the Spanish Film Yearbook (Anuario de Cine Español) (Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts. ICAA, 2023), the total number of admissions increased in 2022 compared to 2021, reaching 59.1 million compared to 41.7 million the previous year. It is also worth highlighting the number of Spanish admissions, which will increase from 6.7 million in 2021 to 13 million in 2022, representing a market share of 22.08% in terms of admissions, compared with 16.10% in 2021. The highest number is represented by American cinema, which accounts for 56.64% of the total in Spain.

Despite this increase, the exhibition sector in Spain has not stopped losing cinemas and audiences since 2012, with the highest peak in terms of number of cinemas being precisely in that year, with 4,003 compared to the 3,650 cinemas recorded in 2022, and with a peak of 104,889,200 spectators in 2019 - a consequence of the direct promotion of the film sector through specific measures such as the Fiesta del Cine, among others - compared to just over 59 million in 2022 (ICAA, 2023).

In 2022, of the 322 feature films produced, 250 are entirely Spanish and 72 were co-produced with other countries, with a steady increase in co-productions since 2020 (with 38 feature films), the main option being the production of feature films co-produced bilaterally (51 feature films) with France (11), Argentina (7), Peru (4) or Italy (4). However, this figure must be seen in the context of the fact that almost half of Spanish production is not released in cinemas: of the 200 titles produced on average each year in Spain, less than half reach commercial cinemas, thus failing in their first window of exploitation and creating difficulties in being accepted by subsequent ones (Valladolid International Film Festival. SEMINCI, 2022).

3.2. Production and Exploitation Costs of Spanish Feature Films

On the other hand, it is interesting to note the production costs of Spanish feature films. This item has increased from 2,833,100 euros in 2020 to 3,504,130 euros in 2022.

With regard to the expenses related specifically to Chapter 12, which includes the costs of exploitation, copies and advertising (i.e. the chapter that includes the part dedicated to the promotion of audiovisual works), the average cost has increased over the last three years, from 371,530 euros in 2020 to 399,410 euros in 2022, although as a percentage of the total, this represents a decrease from 16.98% to 11.40%. However, these figures are far below the percentages devoted to this item in other countries, such as the US industry.

In terms of the cost of Spanish feature films, it is also worth noting that their total budget is increasing. Thus, from 28 feature films that exceeded 900,000 euros in 2020 to a total of 35 that exceeded this figure.

Table 2. Cost breakdown by chapter of Spanish feature films (2020-2022)

Año 2020: Muestra de 28 largometrajes															
	Capítulo 01		Capítulo 02	Capítulo 03	Capítulo 04	Capítulo 05	Capítulo 06	Capítulo 07	Capítulo 08	Capítulo 09	Capítulo 10	Capítulo 11	Capítulo 12		
	Guión	Música	Personal artístico	Equipo técnico	Escenografía	Estudios y varios	Maquinaria y transporte	Viajes y hoteles	Película virgen	Laboratorio	Seguros e impuestos	Gastos generales	Explotación, copias y publicidad	**Intereses Pasivos**	**TOTAL**
Coste*	2.050,37	1.435,39	7.194,88	24.157,69	6.886,63	3.722,87	5.782,09	3.732,98	86,44	2.810,08	6.208,78	2.782,14	13.202,86	2.073,68	82.126,90
Coste Medio*	73,23	51,26	256,96	862,77	245,95	132,96	206,50	133,32	3,09	100,36	221,74	99,36	371,53	74,06	2.833,10
% Medio	2,50%	1,75%	8,76%	29,42%	8,37%	4,53%	7,04%	4,55%	0,11%	3,42%	7,56%	3,39%	16,08%	2,52%	100,00%

Año 2021: Muestra de 36 largometrajes															
	Capítulo 01		Capítulo 02	Capítulo 03	Capítulo 04	Capítulo 05	Capítulo 06	Capítulo 07	Capítulo 08	Capítulo 09	Capítulo 10	Capítulo 11	Capítulo 12		
	Guión	Música	Personal artístico	Equipo técnico	Escenografía	Estudios y varios	Maquinaria y transporte	Viajes y hoteles	Película virgen	Laboratorio	Seguros e impuestos	Gastos generales	Explotación, copias y publicidad	**Intereses Pasivos**	**TOTAL**
Coste*	2.280,07	1.502,03	10.146,83	28.395,14	8.412,94	5.921,40	6.701,97	4.417,77	186,65	2.507,32	7.499,37	3.956,76	14.061,22	2.332,12	98.321,59
Coste Medio*	63,34	41,72	281,86	788,75	233,69	164,48	186,17	122,72	5,18	69,65	208,32	109,91	390,59	64,78	2.731,16
% Medio	2,32%	1,53%	10,32%	28,88%	8,56%	6,02%	6,82%	4,49%	0,19%	2,55%	7,63%	4,02%	14,30%	2,37%	100,00%

Año 2022: Muestra de 35 largometrajes															
	Capítulo 01		Capítulo 02	Capítulo 03	Capítulo 04	Capítulo 05	Capítulo 06	Capítulo 07	Capítulo 08	Capítulo 09	Capítulo 10	Capítulo 11	Capítulo 12		
	Guión	Música	Personal artístico	Equipo técnico	Escenografía	Estudios y varios	Maquinaria y transporte	Viajes y hoteles	Película virgen	Laboratorio	Seguros e impuestos	Gastos generales	Explotación, copias y publicidad	**Intereses Pasivos**	**TOTAL**
Coste*	3.348,21	1.803,91	14.665,46	37.340,62	10.174,47	5.733,04	8.506,98	4.573,67	119,38	5.078,07	9.628,55	5.070,64	13.979,20	2.622,22	122.644,41
Coste Medio*	95,66	51,54	419,01	1.066,87	290,70	163,80	243,06	130,68	3,41	145,09	275,10	144,88	399,41	74,92	3.504,13
% Medio	2,73%	1,47%	11,96%	30,45%	8,30%	4,67%	6,94%	3,73%	0,10%	4,14%	7,85%	4,13%	11,40%	2,14%	100,00%

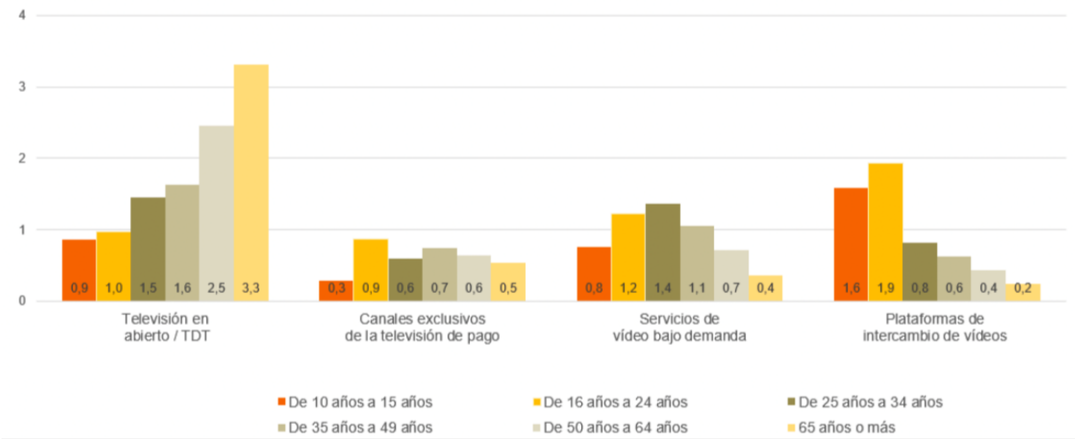
Source: ICAA, 2023.

3.3. Sector Needs

According to the conclusions of the conference "The Distribution of Spanish Cinema" held during SEMINCI in 2022, producers and exhibitors have called for distribution to be committed from the outset to the films it is going to market, in a continuous and joint effort to ensure that none of them fails to find its audience.

In this sense, the aspects or functions related to marketing and the use of new techniques and media in promotion plans are considered particularly relevant, through the use of networks, applications and the Internet, especially to attract young audiences (10-15 and 16-24 year olds), as this type of audience is the one most likely to abandon cinema attendance and consume audiovisual content through other channels such as OTT platforms (CNMC, 2023) or through other types of opportunities such as YouTube or Twitch. The figures are even more pronounced at weekends, when young people spend 2.5 hours a day on video-sharing platforms and 1.6 hours a day on video-on-demand services.

Figure 2. Consumption of audiovisual content by service and age on weekdays (2023)



Source: CNMC, 2023.

In view of these needs, and understanding the sector as an industry and not just a culture, in 2021 the Spanish government launched the Plan "Spain, Audiovisual Hub of Europe" (Plan "Spain AVS Hub"), one of the pillars of the Digital Spain 2025 agenda, which proposed the following as an objective:

> (...) to make Spain the most important audiovisual hub in Europe by boosting national audiovisual production and attracting investment and economic activity, strengthening companies in the sector by improving their competitiveness through digitalisation and promoting talent, and reducing the gender gap. (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Enterprise; Ministry of Digital Transformation and Public Service-MINECO, s.f.)

The plan covers all activities and services of the audiovisual sector, not only the film sector, and includes a public investment of 1,603 million euros for the period 2021-2025, with the aim of increasing audiovisual production in Spain by 30%.

4. Results

Based on the sample identified in the methodology, an initial quantitative analysis was carried out to identify the direct digital presence of the main Spanish film production companies, recording whether they have a corporate website in their digital strategy (this is considered validated whether it is their own website or a page within the corporate website of a communication group) and a profile on the main social networks according to the number of users in the Spanish market, namely Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok and YouTube. This presence is shown in Table 3 by shading the cell corresponding to a validated profile for each social network or platform.

Thus, 61% of the sample have a company website and, in terms of social networks, the greatest presence is on Instagram (61% of production companies), closely followed by Facebook or X (both used by 55% of companies). Neither the main platform for audiovisual content, YouTube, nor the emerging Tiktok show very widespread use in the film industry. In the case of Tiktok, only 3 of the 18 production companies in the sample use it in their digital strategy, and one of them, Bowfinger International Pictures, has only created a profile, but it is not verified and at the time of data collection for the research (February 2024) it had not made any publications.

Table 3. Digital presence of the main Spanish film production companies

Producer	Web	Facebook	Instagram	X	TikTok	YouTube
Atresmedia Cine						
Telecinco Cinema						
Bowfinger International Pictures						
Think Studio						

Producer	Web	Facebook	Instagram	X	TikTok	YouTube
Ciudadano Ciskul						
Warner Bros Entertainment España						
Básculas Blanco						
Mediapro Cinema						
Reposado Producciones Cinematogr.						
Kowalski Films						
Feelgood Media						
El deseo						
Remotamente Films						
Álamo Produccines Audiovisual						
Lazona Productions						
The snake films						
Apolo Films						
Vaca Films						

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

In a second phase of the research, and for each validated case, a qualitative analysis is carried out based on the information and promotion strategies used in each case. As can be seen in Table 3, a total of 7 production companies that do not have an online presence to promote themselves as a company are excluded from this second phase of the analysis process. These are Think Studio (Way down, Jaume Balagueró, 2021), Ciudadano Ciskul (Way down, Jaume Balagueró, 2021), Básculas Blanco and Reposado Producciones Cinematográficas (responsible for *The Good Boss*, Fernando León de Aranoa, 2021), Remotamente films (*Parallel Mothers*, Pedro Almodóvar, 2021 in co-production with El deseo, Sony Pictures and Radiotelevisión Española), Álamo producciones audiovisuales (*Carpoolers*, Martín Cuervo, 2021; *You Keep the Kids*!, Dani de la Orden, 2021; *Just One Time*, Guillermo Ríos Bordón, 2021) and Snake films (*The Perfect Family*, Arantxa Echevarría, 2021).

In most cases, the websites of the film production companies contain key information, such as a presentation, which can be more or less detailed and even include the company's team, a catalogue of productions made, contact details (telephone, address, email) and identification of social networks with a direct link to them. The latter is the content provided by practically the entire sample, with the exception of Atresmedia Cine, which focuses on presenting news about the productions it has in shooting, at the box office or about to be released.

Atresmedia Cine and Telecinco Cinema, despite being the two production companies with the highest box office receipts in recent years according to the Spanish Film Yearbook published by the ICAA in its webpage, do not have a corporate website that directly promotes their work as production companies, but focus mainly on providing a news section with information on their latest feature films and information on release dates. The same is true of the subsidiaries of the US majors, represented in this ranking by Warner Bros. Entertainment España, which only has a news section on releases and links to the production company's social media pages.

Table 4. Content analysis of the websites of the main Spanish film production companies

Productora	Web	Quiénes somos	Catálogo	Noticias	Contacto	RRSS
Atresmedia Cine	cine.atresmedia.com					
Telecinco Cinema	telecinco.es/t5cinema					
Bowfinger International Pictures	bowfinger.es					

Warner Bros Entertainment España	warnerbros.es				
Mediapro Cine	mediapro.tv/es/contenidos/cine				
Kowalski Films	kowalskifilms.es				
Feelgood Media	feelgoodmedia.es				
El deseo	www.eldeseo.es				
Lazona Producciones	lazona.eu				
Apolo Films	apolofilms.es				
Vaca Films	vacafilms.com				

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

The most common practice is to offer a website with a presentation of the company, a catalogue of productions, contact details and identification of the social networks in which it is present.

Finally, in accordance with the elements defined for the content analysis, it can be noted that El deseo and Vaca Films are the ones that offer a more complete site. However, in the particular case of El deseo, it is sold through a page that is outdated in terms of usability, navigability and design and needs to be updated. In fact, the last news published was on 21 December 2020 under the title "The best of 2020 by Pedro Almodóvar".

As far as the presence on the different social networks is concerned, a more detailed analysis is made of Instagram (compared to Facebook and X), together with the emerging TikTok and YouTube, due to their particular visual nature. In a first process of direct observation, it is noted that the publications are practically duplicated on both social networks (Instagram and Facebook), which is why the study is mainly based on the content of Instagram.

Therefore, if we focus on the presence on Instagram, several relevant ideas can be observed. Firstly, the commitment to this social network was earlier in the case of Warner (2012) and Telecinco (2013). Kowalski Films and Vaca Films resisted until 2020, although they were created as production companies in 2007 and 2003 respectively. In terms of the number of followers, Warner again stands out with 261,000, followed by Almodóvar's production company (86,400 followers) and Atresmedia Cine (42,200). The more independent production companies (Feelgood Media) or those that focus on very specific content and have a limited reach (Apolo Films) do not reach a thousand followers. As far as the number of publications is concerned, there is no correlation between the year in which the profile was created and a greater number of publications (this is the case for Warner and Atresmedia Cine, but this pattern is not followed by the others); however, there is a direct correlation between the number of productions and the number of publications, precisely because of the axis on which the content of the same is focused: promoting the launch of new feature films by production companies.

On the other hand, with the exception of El deseo or Apolo Films, the rest have recent or relatively recent publications (on the day of the data collection or, in the worst case, in the last month, as in the case of Bowfinger International Pictures, Kowalski Films or La Zona Producciones). The frequency of publication is low or very low, with the exception of the production companies Atresmedia Cine and Warner Bros, again coinciding with those that have the largest number of feature films in release (Spanish in the case of Atresmedia Cine and national or American in the case of Warner). It should be noted that in the case of Apolo Films, the lack of updates in the publications is due to the fact that the production company was in liquidation in September 2023 (cf. Baratech, 2023).

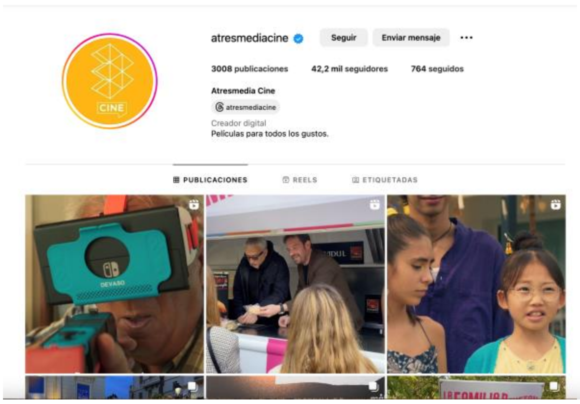
Table 5. Presence of the main Spanish film production companies on Instagram

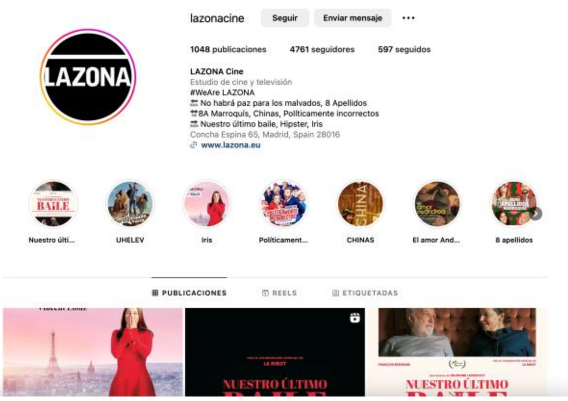
Producer	Home	Followers	Followed by	Public.	Last published.	Frequent.[1]	Hightlights
Atresmedia Cine	11/2014	42,2K	764	3007	11/03/2024	12-19	no
Telecinco Cinema	12/2013	10,3K	132	326	10/03/2024	1-2	no
Bowfinger Int. Pict.	10/2017	4356	301	898	06/02/2024	0-1	yes
Warner Bros Esp.	09/2012	261K	214	5273	10/03/2024	13-17	yes
Mediapro Cinema	10/2016	28,2K	210	1921	09/03/2024	3-5	no
Kowalski Films	07/2020	2014	99	35	01/02/2024	0-1	yes
Feelgood Media	04/2023	554	208	57	07/03/2024	1-3	yes
El Deseo	02/2013	86,4K	354	272	20/10/2023	--	yes
Lazona Produc.	07/2016	4757	596	1047	15/02/2024	8-13	yes
Apolo Films	06/2018	650	19	99	17/02/2022	--	no
Vaca Films	05/2020	12,9K	376	815	10/03/2024	2-5	yes

Source: Own elaboration, 2024 (*data collected on 11/03/2024).

In terms of content structure, the majority of profiles offer content on the wall, reels, tagged publications and different highlights folders. The content is organised in a variety of ways. Some profiles are organised by feature film (for example, the Warner Bros. España profile), while others are organised by type of publication, with sections devoted to upcoming releases, awards and recognitions. Furthermore, some profiles include a special section for press releases (as does Bowfinger International Pictures). It is worthy of note that neither of the two principal production companies, Telecinco Cinema and Atresmedia Cine, has included any highlights.

Figures 3 and 4. Profiles of Atresmedia Cine and Bowfinger Int. Pictures on the social network Instagram.





Source: @atresmediacine and @lazonacine in Instagram (2024, 12 march).

Finally, on Instagram, there is also the presence of a brand tagline (brand advertising message) used for its presentation on the social network. Only Atresmedia Cine – "Films for all tastes" ("Películas para todos los gustos") -, Telecinco Cinema – "We swap popcorn for couscous" ("Cambiamos palomitas por cuscús") - and Grup Mediapro – "We are what you see " ("Somos lo que ves") - use this strategy.

Regarding the strategy in X, the beginnings of the incorporation of film production companies are irregular, although it is understood that the years of creation of the production companies are also

[1] For this case, frequency has been defined as the range of publications per week, analysing the last 4 weeks of publications on Instagram for each production company.

different in each case. For example, smaller or independent production companies such as Lazona Producciones and Apolo Films delayed their entry into X until 2015 and 2018 respectively. On the other hand, Atresmedia Cine, Telecinco Cinema, Warner Bros and, above all, El deseo, are interested in using this platform as part of their communication strategy.

On the other hand, active and timely participation is generally observed, with the exception of Apollo Films for the reasons already mentioned.

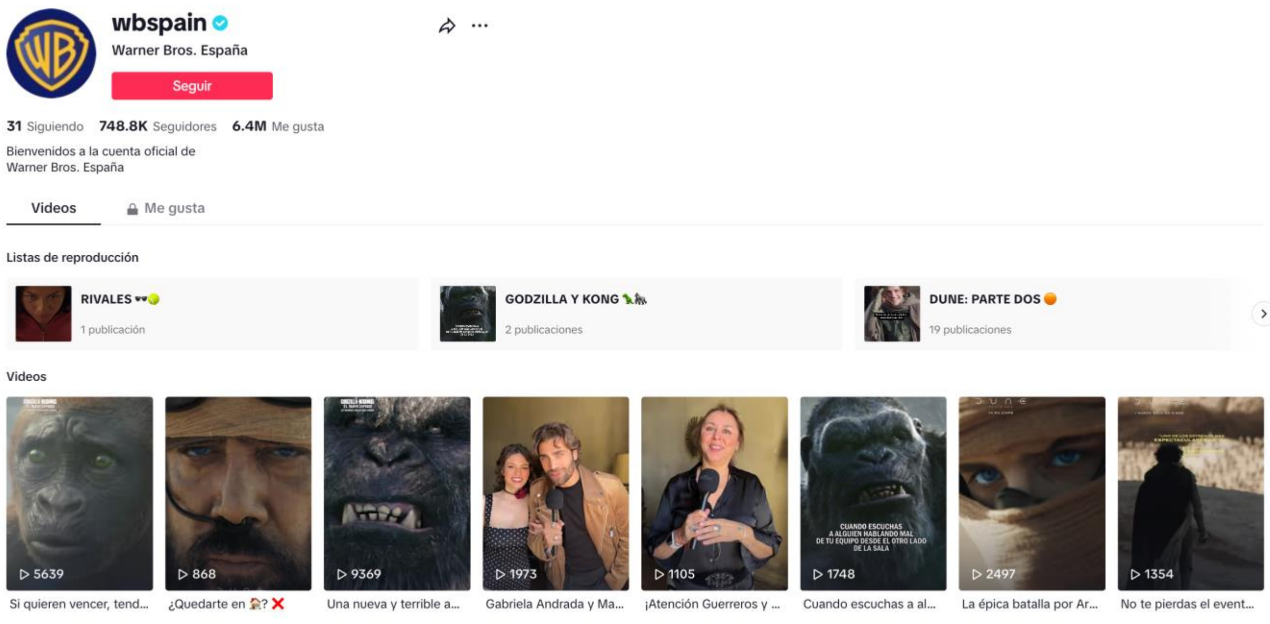
Table 6. Presence in X of the main Spanish film production companies

Producer	Home	Followers	Followed by	Last published.
Atresmedia Cine	10/2010	59.295	790	12/03/2024
Telecinco Cinema	10/2010	22.372	515	12/03/2024
Bowfinger Int. Pictures	10/2017	970	133	10/03/2024
Warner Bros España	05/2010	309.461	985	12/03/2024
Mediapro Cinema	10/2016	14.911	262	08/03/2024
Feelgood Media	04/2023	59	35	01/03/2024
El deseo	04/2011	44.092	341	25/01/2024
Lazona Producciones	10/2015	4.143	935	12/03/2024
Apolo Films	07/2018	369	76	17/02/2022
Vaca Films	09/2012	9.268	1.324	11/03/2024

Source: Own elaboration, 2024 (*data collected on 12/03/2024).

In the case of TikTok, as shown in Table 3, only Atresmedia Cine and Warner Bros Entertainment España have verified and active profiles on the emerging social network. Warner Bros stands out far above Atresmedia, with 748,800 followers compared to 10,000 and 6.4 million likes compared to the 268,400 of the television production company. A notable difference is the fact that @wbspain offers playlists in highlights.

Figure 5. Warner Bros España's profile on the social network TikTok (@wbspain)



Source: @wbspain on TikTok, 2024 (2024, 12 March).

Despite the fact that video has become the most popular format in content marketing, surpassing blog articles and infographics (HubSpot, 2020), the truth is that its presence on the audiovisual social network par excellence, YouTube, is practically anecdotal, limited to its use by two of the most important production companies in terms of revenue (Atresmedia Cine and Warner Bros España), along with El deseo and Vaca Films, and it is the latter two that showed the earliest interest in the portal (2009 and 2010 respectively). However, it is the subsidiary of the American giant that stands out in terms of the number of subscribers and the number of videos uploaded (and therefore viewed). After this, El deseo is the one that shows the most revealing data, despite having published fewer videos than Atresmedia Cine or Grup Mediapro and not having published any videos since April 2023.

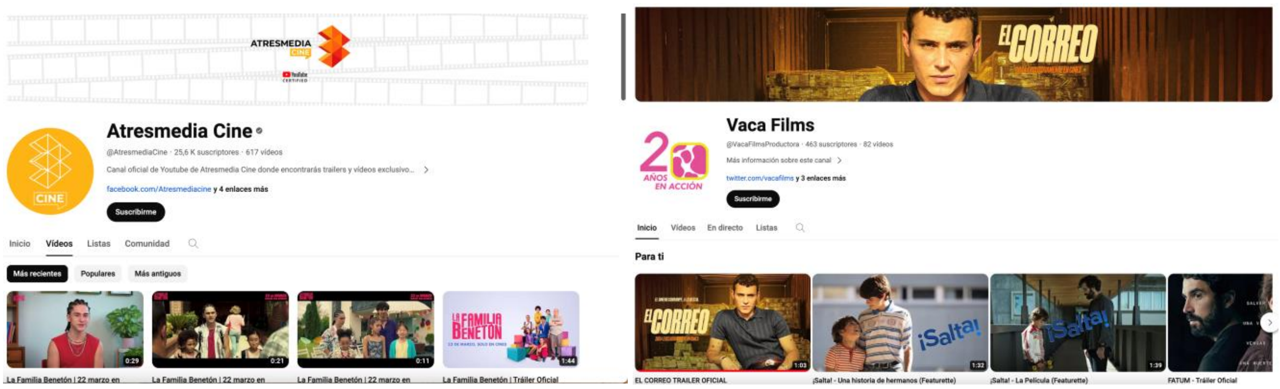
Table 7. Main YouTube data of the main Spanish film production companies

Producer[2]	Home	Subscribers	Videos	Visualisations	Last published.
Atresmedia Cine	25/10/2013	25,6K	613	30.756.524	04/03/2024
Warner Bros. España	31/01/2011	852K	2525	871.859.921	11/03/2024
Mediapro Cine (datos Grup Mediapro)	08/04/2015	41,4K	613	18.251.953	07/03/2024
El deseo	07/05/2009	61,6K	193	42.840.672	26/04/2023
Vaca Films	27/08/2010	463	82	551.378	13/10/2023

Source: Own elaboration, 2024 (*data collected on 11/03/2024).

In terms of content and aesthetics, the main difference lies in the options offered, the organisation of the content and the image used for the profile. In terms of options and organisation, the most complete profile is Warner Bros. España (Videos, Lists, Community, Live, Shorts) and a structure by most recent, most popular and oldest. In terms of aesthetics, the most common profiles, which include a promotional image of the production they are currently showing at the cinema, differ from those, such as Atresmedia Cine, which offer a corporate image.

Figures 6 and 7. Profiles of Atresmedia Cine and Vaca Films on YouTube



Source: @AtresmediaCine and @VacaFilmsProductora in Youtube, 2024.

5. Conclusions

In the current context, it seems that one of the main challenges facing the Spanish film industry is to recover the audiences that have been lost in recent years, especially among the generations of film lovers that have supported the more independent production and distribution, and among the younger population groups that are trying to encourage the habit of going to the cinema. To this end, the presence of film production companies promoting themselves and their products (mainly feature films), with a digital presence that is easily searchable on the Internet and strong against non-national competitors, is becoming a necessity in order to achieve a solid and recognised industry outside the country's borders.

For this reason, this research has been carried out to present the results of an analysis of the digital presence of Spanish film production companies in order to promote themselves as a brand and to promote each of their audiovisual contents. To this end, we have studied their websites and the data and content of their profiles in the main social networks, taking into account the number of users in Spain.

[2] La zona producciones is not analysed because its YouTube page focuses exclusively on theatre productions (its profile is La zona teatro), not film productions.

The reason for carrying out the study on social media was that these are the platforms and communication tools with the greatest access for operators in the sector and the public and potential consumers of film products, and therefore the platforms that offer the greatest possibility of access to information and promotion of the feature films being released.

The study shows that the use of the website and the social network Instagram appear to be fundamental and indispensable tools in the digital communication strategies of Spanish film production companies. The presence on X and Facebook is maintained at practically the same level of frequency of publication and content, but it seems that the strategy emerges from Instagram and is partially duplicated in the other two media. Tiktok, despite the boom it is currently experiencing and its potential to reach a young audience, is not included in the communication plans of the production companies and is only used by two of the companies analysed.

In terms of content, they focus mainly on the product, much more than on publications related to the company itself, the brand or presence at events. In this sense, the frequency and intensity of the publications is clearly determined by the launch of the products, i.e. the release of the films in cinemas and their prior presence at festivals.

The analysis shows that it is imperative for Spanish film production companies to continue working on a strategic communication plan for their online presence. In general, there is a need to update their websites in terms of design, navigability and topicality of content; to create profiles on TikTok in order to try to reach a younger audience that does not go to the cinema and consumes audiovisual content on other media and platforms; and to develop a strategy adapted to YouTube, with exclusive content on feature films, of greater length and quality, such as making of pieces, behind the scenes or interviews, among others. And all this with the development of more public policies to support the sector. While acknowledging the work already done through the creation of the Audiovisual Centre and the "Spain, Audiovisual Hub of Europe" plan, which has favoured co-productions and attracted film shoots to the country, it is essential to continue to make the work of Spanish film production companies visible both inside and outside the country.

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