



USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS IN SPANISH HORTOFRUIT COMPANIES

CONTENT

Analysis on Instagram and TikTok

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KEYWORDS

Social networks
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ABSTRACT

This article examines the impact of communication on social networks as part of the marketing strategy of Spanish fruit and vegetable companies. The objective is to examine the type of content that these companies share, demonstrate the need for interaction between brand and consumer to generate trust, in addition to defining the most effective type of publications to achieve engagement between both. The information will be collected through content analysis of Instagram and TikTok, social networks most used by digital native generations with purchasing decision-making power and spending autonomy: millennials and centennials.

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1. Introduction

The agri-food sector is undergoing a continuous industrial revolution, particularly in its relationship with the end consumer, driven by market and societal trends. Additionally, digitalization processes offer significant opportunities for the agri-food value chain and the rural sector (Gallardo Cobos et al., 2024). This evolution has an immediate impact on the sector's image and on how companies directly communicate with their customers.

In this context, it is crucial to highlight the economic importance of the agri-food sector in both Spain and Europe. The food industry is the largest manufacturing activity, representing 14.3% of total manufacturing output (MAPA, 2023). In Spain, the agri-food sector leads the manufacturing industry, accounting for 24.2% of industrial production, 22.6% of total employment, and 2.4% of the national GDP (MAPA, 2023). The sector comprises 28,335 companies, representing 17.9% of the total manufacturing industry, with 96.1% of these businesses employing fewer than 50 workers, and 77.7% having fewer than 10 employees (DGIPYME, 2023).

Another key aspect is consumer behavior regarding internet usage and online shopping. Social media use is particularly dominant among Millennials (1984–1996) and Centennials (1997–2010). According to the DGIPYME report (2023), INE data show, internet usage among individuals aged 16–24 is nearly universal, with 99.9% of men and 99.7% of women using the internet. These figures remain consistently high across age groups: 99.6% of men and 99.5% of women aged 25–34, and 98.8% of men and 98.9% of women aged 35–44 (INE, 2023). Similarly, data from the IAB Spain (2023) study indicate that 11% of social media users are aged 18–24, while 27% belong to the 25–40 age group. The most recognized platforms include Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and WhatsApp. However, Millennials (26–39 years old) primarily use Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, whereas Centennials (16–24 years old) prefer TikTok and Instagram (IAB Spain, 2023). Instagram and TikTok are the most intensively used social media platforms among these two generations with purchasing autonomy, making them particularly relevant for marketing and communication strategies in B2C (business-to-consumer) industries.

The origins of advertising on social media date back almost to the very inception of these platforms, with the objective of viralizing brand messages through non-traditional media channels. In this regard, Instagram was the first platform to widely adopt this marketing strategy, initially through the use of endorsers or influencers and later through programmatic advertising, integrated into companies' digital marketing strategies and paid media campaigns. This communication model allows brands to accurately measure their impact, using metrics such as geographical reach, impressions, and click-through rates, thereby offering precise insights into consumer engagement and campaign effectiveness.

On TikTok, corporate communication strategies extend beyond influencer partnerships and promotional hashtags. Companies on this platform also leverage interactive challenges centered on a product or brand (Han, 2020; Peng, 2021) and advertisements linked to external websites that capture user data (Tomas, 2020; Pérez Rey, 2020).

Another crucial aspect of this transformation is the support provided by government policies. At both national and European levels, authorities have recognized the need to accelerate digitalization in the agri-food industry to ensure its long-term sustainability and alignment with contemporary consumer demands. The digitalization of agriculture aims to enhance efficiency, improve management and traceability, and optimize farmers' overall quality of life (Calvo, 2021). In this regard, the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA) is leading modernization efforts through legislation that promotes digitalization in the sector. The Royal Decree 113/2022, enacted on February 8, establishes the regulatory framework for subsidies supporting knowledge transfer, digital competency development, advisory services, management optimization, and technological substitution in the agri-food sector. This decree serves as the primary legislative instrument governing the digital transformation of the sector (R.D.113/2022, MAPA). The digital transition strategy outlined in this decree is linked to other national strategies, such as the National Strategy for Addressing Demographic Challenges and the Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology, and Innovation. The Digitalization Strategy is essential for eliminating or reducing barriers in the digital transformation process and aims to position the agri-food sector as a leader in sustainability while also contributing to the revitalization of rural areas (R.D.113/2022, MAPA).

Additionally, data from the Observatory for the Digitalization of the Agri-Food Sector highlight the following trends:

- In the agri-food industry, 44.4% of companies with annual revenues exceeding €50 million market their products through online channels.
- Additionally, e-commerce penetration in the agri-food sector stands at 29.8%, with Navarre (Comunidad Foral de Navarra) being the most proactive region in Spain in adopting online sales channels, where 42.1% of agri-food businesses engage in digital commerce.
- Most agri-food industries still rely on traditional distribution channels, which they complement with modern retail networks and, to a lesser extent, with direct or third-party e-commerce solutions (Observatorio Para la Digitalización del Sector Agroalimentario, 2023).

A key component of this study is the evaluation of online reputation indicators, which define a brand's perceived credibility and prestige in digital spaces. Reputation is among the most valuable intangible assets for businesses and organizations, as it directly influences consumer trust and brand loyalty (Vegas-García & Paniagua, 2023). The relationship between brands and consumers has undergone significant transformations over the past decade due to globalization, internet expansion, and the rise of social media (Casado-Molina et al., 2013). This new digital landscape necessitates a paradigm shift in corporate communication management (López Font & Cuesta Cambra, 2012). Consequently, evaluating a brand's online reputation requires assessing key digital popularity metrics, including, customer reviews and ratings, social media engagement levels, brand perception and digital presence, customer reviews have become a critical element in consumer decision-making.

In this regard, customer reviews serve as a key indicator, according to Del Fresno García (2011): "Online reputation can be identified, extracted, classified, and analyzed based on the opinions disseminated by users" (Del Fresno García, 2011, p.95). This indicator is essential in consumer purchasing decisions because companies are no longer the sole broadcasters of information about themselves, meaning that the communication process is no longer unidirectional (Aced, 2013). In other words, organizations have lost exclusive control over their public discourse (Losada, 2019).

According to the European Communication Monitor (2023), which highlights the most critical strategic issues in communication management, two key concerns dominate the minds of communication professionals: building and maintaining trust, as well as aligning corporate and communication strategies. Communication professionals prioritize trust-building over many other values, reaffirming that consumer trust is fundamental to organizations' success (Zerfass et al., 2023). For this reason, engagement between producers and consumers in horticultural businesses and digital commerce serves as another key performance indicator. The online commerce model in this sector significantly enhances engagement, ensuring successful interactions with the target audience. According to Barreiro's (2018) study on Spanish food consumption trends, 23% of consumers use food and cooking apps (Barreiro, 2018). The study also reveals that Millennials and Centennials are the most active generations in online food purchases. Specifically, nearly 5% of Millennials buy directly from producers, and 6.2% of Centennials purchase food products directly from producers (Barreiro, 2018).

Regarding consumer sentiment toward brands, which in this context is reinforced through social media, Plaza Llorente (2019) explains that the immediacy of digital platforms, combined with the omnipresence of social networks, transforms commercial positioning and brand reputation into highly valuable assets that must be managed through appropriate digital tools (Plaza Llorente, 2019, p. 96). This underscores the crucial relationship between brand reputation and digital presence, highlighting the necessity of vertical integration within the value chain to ensure that customer communication enhances positive brand perception. Additionally, brand differentiation through distinct behaviors plays a key role in creating a memorable consumer experience. The same author further argues that digital price-channel strategies have replaced traditional undifferentiated advertising, favoring a personalized shopping experience linked to distribution variables. In this context, factors such as the role of social media and the influence of digital prescribers (influencers) have become determining elements (Plaza Llorente, 2019). Furthermore, various studies conducted by experts in digital communication emphasize the importance of social media in corporate marketing strategies. These studies suggest that social media users engage in a cognitive process that involves interacting with both visual and textual content, fostering a positive perception of the platform and the brand's offerings. This,

in turn, influences consumer behavior, reinforcing their engagement and purchasing decisions (Guiñez-Cabrera et al., 2020; Sánchez Romero & López Berlanga, 2020).

2. Methodology

The methodology chosen for this study is based on a content analysis of three horticultural companies' social media accounts on two of the most widely used platforms among Millennial and Centennial consumers, namely TikTok and Instagram. The selection of these accounts followed specific criteria aligned with a qualitative research framework, within which this social media content analysis was developed.

To conduct this analysis, a series of tables was designed to assess key variables, including, the presence of horticultural companies on social media and digital platforms, the level of interaction between these brands and consumers, the type of content used to communicate brand identity on their Instagram and TikTok profiles. The data collection process was conducted manually, using direct observation and systematic recording of the relevant variables from the official social media profiles of the selected horticultural companies.

The following section defines the objectives that this research aims to achieve, as well as the main hypothesis that this study seeks to test. In this case, the primary objectives are as follows:

- Determine whether horticultural companies maintain an active presence on social media.
- Analyze how these companies utilize social media for brand positioning.
- Assess whether Millennial and Centennial consumers interact with horticultural SMEs through their social media profiles.
- Demonstrate the importance of brand-consumer interaction in fostering trust.
- Identify the most effective types of content for generating engagement.

The study is based on the following hypothesis, Agri-food companies that maintain an active presence on social media enhance their brand reputation, as they achieve greater visibility and consumer recall compared to those that do not engage in social media activity.

This research is part of a larger study, and the content presented in this article represents a segment of the broader investigation. Accordingly, the content analysis for this study is structured as follows.

2.1. Social Media Content Analysis

This section examines the type of content shared by a selected group of horticultural companies on social media, using an initial segmentation approach based on their presence on the following platforms:

- a. Instagram: Instagram, launched in 2010, was designed as a social media platform for sharing audiovisual content, including images and videos. Over time, it has introduced new communication formats, such as Reels and InstaStories, which feature short video content exclusive to Instagram. Currently owned by Meta, Instagram serves as a key platform for brand marketing, where endorsers and influencers promote products and services, aiming to drive consumer engagement and sales. While Instagram attracts a diverse user base, Millennials were its first adopters, later followed by Centennials, making it a relevant platform for multi-generational brand strategies.
- b. Tiktok: TikTok, a China-based social media platform, is primarily targeted at a younger audience, specifically Centennials (Patiño, 2020a; Suárez-Álvarez & García-Jiménez, 2021). The platform is structured around short-form video content, encouraging users to create and share engaging content (Zuo & Wang, 2019). TikTok actively incentivizes content creation, utilizing mechanisms such as hashtag challenges (#HashtagChallenges) to increase virality (Peralta, s.f.; Cervi, 2021). This feature reinforces audience loyalty toward high-interest accounts (Ma et al., 2019) and contributes to enhancing consumer satisfaction with brands that adopt these engagement strategies (Ariantara, 2021).

Once the social media platforms were identified, the next step was to define the selection criteria for the horticultural companies included in the analysis. The first level of segmentation was based on determining whether the companies had a presence on the selected social media platforms. The second

level of segmentation focused on evaluating the companies' overall digital presence, extending beyond social media. This criterion was crucial because a company's presence on professional social media profiles does not necessarily imply an active presence in other digital environments. This segmentation is particularly relevant as Instagram and TikTok function as communication tools and direct contact points with consumers, often replacing corporate websites as the first point of engagement between the customer and the brand. In many cases, the use of these platforms allows companies to effectively communicate their brand values and foster engagement, enhancing brand reputation without requiring an extensive corporate website. For example, if a horticultural SME already operates through physical sales channels and is recognized in local markets but lacks digital visibility, it may choose to use social media as an initial strategy to communicate its mission and values, gauge consumer interest, and assess the feasibility of expanding into e-commerce. This allows companies to test digital engagement before committing to significant investments in an online store. Given these factors, the second-level segmentation criteria assess the following attributes related to the company's presence in digital environments:

Table 1. Segmentation criteria according to their presence in the digital environment

Objective	
I. Corporate website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify the existence, quality, and operability of the corporate website to reinforce the brand image. • Show the market its philosophy, values, related content, type of activity, and communication with the market, providing its data and contact networks
II. Online store	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify that the company has a portal that allows customers to buy the marketed products online, offering delivery options either to homes or established pickup points.
III. Other social networks different from the selected ones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if companies have a presence on other social networks, such as Facebook, X, Pinterest, LinkedIn, in addition to the already selected ones • Evaluate their level of exposure and potentiality of being recognized in the consumer's mind. • Possibility of expanding their reach and notoriety among different market segments

Source: Own elaboration (2025)

Thirdly, the core part of the analysis is evaluated to segment horticultural companies based on their presence on the selected social media platforms, Instagram and TikTok. This segmentation is further subdivided according to a set of variables. The first variable considered is the number of followers of each company's social media profiles on these two platforms, with the aim of assessing the reach and brand awareness of these companies on Instagram and TikTok, as perceived by consumers and reflected in their engagement behavior. The second variable evaluates the nature of interactions initiated by horticultural companies on the selected social media platforms. This analysis seeks to determine whether these interactions are effectively fostering engagement with consumers, thereby strengthening the relationship between the brand and its audience. Finally, the third variable focuses on measuring the longevity or experience of horticultural companies on TikTok and Instagram, based on the number of years their profiles have been active on these platforms. The objective is to gather relevant insights into the correlation between a company's duration on social media and the level of brand awareness, consumer recall, or identification with the horticultural brand.

Table 2. Segmentation by the trajectory of companies on social media

Criterion	Subcategory	Parámetros
I. Number of followers	Masive	More than 500.000 followers
	Recognized	Between 2,000 and 500,000 followers
	Unknown	Fewer than 2,000 followers
II. Interaction with followers	Established	Do not interact; only publish content
	Interactive	Engage in reciprocal communication with their followers
III. Time of Presence on social media	Pioneers	Have been publishing content for 5 to 10 years
	Exploiters/Capitalizers	Have been publishing content since 2020
	Lagging	Have been publishing content for 12 months or less

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

Once the segmentation criteria and variables used to select the companies have been defined, the following analysis presents a data compilation of three horticultural companies that serve as representative examples to illustrate how the applied analysis is structured within this sector.

The selection of these companies is primarily based on the number of followers within the total sample, as each of them belongs to a different segment categorized according to the number of loyal followers. This criterion enables a clearer comparative analysis of other variables that influence these companies, using a fixed pivot variable, the follower count, to facilitate this comparison. This approach allows for a better understanding of whether the communication strategy employed by each company is proving effective or not. The selected companies are:

Table 3. Selected companies for analysis

	Business Model	Main Activity	Differentiation Strategy
Europagricultproduct	Company intermediary between agro-producers and customers, eliminating commercial intermediaries.	Facilitates direct sale of high-quality horticultural products.	Visibility of agri-food producers Support for the sector Reduction of agency costs Lower prices Mutual gain relationship
La caja saludable	Horticultural company whose productive support are cooperatives of agro-producers	Creation of combined boxes of fruits and vegetables, with products of Spanish origin from various cooperatives.	Food safety Sustainability in packaging
Weeko	Online sales company of horticultural products	Offers personalized boxes of 10 kg of fresh fruit and vegetables, allowing the customer to choose 10 products from over 50 available options.	Possibility of weekly subscription or one-time purchase Customer loyalty with subscription discounts

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

To enhance the understanding of this study, a series of data collection tables has been designed as a model for evaluating the presence of selected companies on Instagram and TikTok. These tables serve as a structured framework for assessing key variables that measure the impact of corporate content on the mentioned social media platforms. The analysis focuses on evaluating how companies establish their presence in digital environments and how they position themselves from a corporate perspective in

relation to their consumers. Additionally, an in-depth examination will be conducted regarding the content style and thematic approach that define each brand's narrative strategy on social media. This analysis will consider both general content trends within each corporate profile and a specific case study of brand activity during a particular period. The selected timeframe for this focused observation is December 2024, chosen due to its proximity to the execution of this study and its relevance as a key promotional period, given the commercial significance of the holiday season in Spain.

3. Results

This section presents the findings obtained from the data collection tables, followed by their subsequent interpretation and analysis.

3.1. Analysis of the Impact of Corporate Content on Social Media

The following section includes technical data sheets for the selected companies to provide a clearer understanding of their presence in this study. These initial tables offer a snapshot of the current status of the selected companies on the two most relevant social media platforms for the target consumer demographics, Millennials and Centennials. Table 4 focuses on the classification of the selected horticultural companies based on their presence on Instagram, evaluating key metrics that contribute to their visibility, engagement, and brand positioning on this platform.

Table 4. Technical Data Sheet of Selected Companies on Instagram

	Número de seguidores en Instagram		Interacciones con seguidores	Tiempo de presencia en Instagram	
Europagricultproduct	393.000	Masive	Interactive	2 years y 2 months	Capitalizer
La caja saludable	21.800	Recognized	Interactive	5 years y 1 month	Pioneer
Weeko	1.595	Unknown	Established	6 months	Lagging

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

Table 4 presents the classification variables for the three selected accounts, focusing on their performance on Instagram. Each company occupies a different position in terms of follower count, highlighting variations in brand visibility and audience engagement. In this case, EAP has the highest number of followers among the selected companies. However, it is not the company with the longest presence on Instagram. This suggests that EAP's communication strategy has been highly effective, as it has achieved significant popularity growth in a shorter period compared to its competitors. As will be further analyzed through the content data collected from social media, this increase in visibility is closely related to the company's approach to content strategy and publication style. In contrast, La Caja Saludable exhibits a slower growth trajectory when considering its longer presence on the platform and the number of followers it has accumulated over time. Meanwhile, Weeko has the lowest follower count among the three companies, but this is partially explained by its relatively recent entry into social media.

Table 5 applies the same classification variables but focuses on TikTok performance. Due to the unique characteristics of this platform, an additional account-specific metric has been incorporated—the number of positive reactions received from users. This variable assesses the degree of consumer acceptance of each company on TikTok, offering insights into brand perception and engagement levels.

Table 5. Technical Specifications of Selected Companies on TikTok

	Number of Followers on TikTok		Interaction with Followers	Time of Presence on TikTok		Number of Positive Reactions ("LIKES"
EAP	117.300	Massive	Interactive	11 months	Lagging	1.000.000
La Caja Saludable	154	Unknown	Established	5 months	Lagging	635
Weeko	8	Unknown	Established	5 months	Lagging	191

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

A comparison between Table 4 (Instagram classification) and Table 5 (TikTok classification) reveals several notable differences, primarily related to platform longevity and user engagement dynamics. One major distinction is that, while TikTok is a newer social media platform than Instagram, the selected companies have an even shorter history on TikTok, with none of them having been active for more than a year. This aspect is particularly relevant in the case of EAP, which, despite having been on TikTok for only 11 months, has already accumulated 1 million "likes" and 117,300 followers. This indicates a strong and effective brand presence on TikTok, especially when compared to the other two companies, whose engagement levels on this platform are significantly lower. Given that TikTok is primarily dominated by Centennial users, it can be inferred that EAP's content strategy is effectively reaching this demographic. In contrast, while La Caja Saludable and Weeko demonstrate a more solid presence on Instagram, their TikTok strategies appear to be less successful. This difference in engagement may be attributed to EAP's level of interaction with consumers, which surpasses that of the other two companies. Unlike La Caja Saludable and Weeko, which do not engage with their followers, EAP actively interacts with consumers, leveraging a more dynamic and participatory approach to communication.

To further reinforce this comparative analysis, the following tables present detailed information on each company's digital presence, not only on social media but also across the broader digital landscape. These insights will provide a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which each company integrates digital strategies into its overall business model.

Table 6. Digital presence of the selected companies

		EAP		LA CAJA SALUDABLE		WEEKO	
Company Name		Europagricultproduct (EAP)		La Caja Saludable		Weeko	
Province		Valencia		Almería		Alicante	
User		@europagricultproduct		@la_caja_saludable		TIKTOK: @_weeko_ Instagram:@weeko.es	
Presence on other social network		Facebook, Youtube y X		Facebook		Facebook	
	POSSIBLE VALUES	ANSWERS (EAP)		ANSWERS (La Caja Saludable)		ANSWERS (Weeko)	
Has corporate website		1		1		1	
Has online store	1 - Yes 2 - No	1		1		1	
Has a blog on the website		1		1		2	
Social Network	POSSIBLE VALUES	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM
	1 - Yes 2 - No	1	1	1	1	1	1
ANALYSIS VARIABLES	POSSIBLE VALUES	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM
Link on the social network to specific website	1 - Yes 2 - No	1	1	2	1	1	1

Link on the social network to online store	1 - Yes 2 - No	1	1	2	1	1	1
Proper and timely photos/videos for profile/cover	1 - Yes 2 - No	1	1	1	1	1	1
Company logo visible in profile picture	1 - Yes 2 - No	1	1	1	1	1	1
Company logo present in posts	1 - Yes 2 - No	1	1	1	1	1	1
Online customer community within the company	1 - Yes 2 - No	2	1 ¹	2 ²	2	2	2

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

Through the data presented in Table 6, it can be established that all three selected companies maintain an active presence on both TikTok and Instagram. This indicates a communication strategy focused on high-interaction visual content, designed to maximize engagement with a young target audience.

- EAP demonstrates the widest reach and strongest digital presence, as it is highly diversified across multiple social media platforms and maintains a comprehensive online presence that includes both a website and an e-commerce store. The company actively integrates links across its social media profiles and effectively implements branding strategies, such as the use of a corporate blog to generate educational and promotional content.
- La Caja Saludable and Weeko have a more limited social media presence, restricting their activity to Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, without broader multi-platform diversification. La Caja Saludable exhibits certain inconsistencies in its TikTok strategy, as it does not include direct links to its website or online store. However, it compensates by using a newsletter as an additional customer communication channel. Despite this, the company maintains a comprehensive digital platform, including a website, online store, and blog, along with a consistent branding strategy across its social media profiles and content. Weeko, in contrast, lacks a corporate blog and an active digital community, which may limit its ability to foster deeper customer engagement.
- Given these findings, it is evident that both La Caja Saludable and Weeko have areas for improvement, particularly in terms of enhancing consumer engagement. Key recommendations include, developing customer communities to strengthen brand-consumer relationships and ensuring consistent integration of social media links to facilitate seamless access to digital business platforms and improve consumer conversion rates.

3.2. Analysis of Brand Image on Selected Social Media Platforms: Instagram and TikTok

This section evaluates the brand image projected by each selected horticultural company on the chosen social media platforms. The analysis considers these platforms as a brand introduction tool, designed to attract and retain loyal followers. The variables examined focus on assessing the connection between each company and its corporate profile on the respective social network. Specifically, the analysis determines whether the company effectively communicates its values, philosophy, and business activities, and whether social media serves as an active communication channel for engaging with consumers or merely acts as a secondary, complementary element within the company's broader

¹ A membership channel is available for followers to join voluntarily, and it is clearly shown on the profile

² There are newsletter

strategy. To provide a comprehensive understanding of this perspective, the following section presents the collected data and results:

Table 7. Image analysis of brands on Instagram and Tiktok

ANALYSIS VARIABLES	POSSIBLE VALUES	EAP		LA CAJA SALUDABLE		WEEKO	
		TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM
Is there general company information on the profile?	1.Yes						
	2.No	1	1	1	1 ³	1 ⁴	1 ⁵
Is the company's mission included in the profile?	1.Yes						
	2. No, but it can be inferred	1 ⁶	1	1	1	1	1
	3.No						
Are the company's values included in the profile?	1.Yes						
	2. No, but it can be inferred	2	2	2	2 ⁷	3	2
	3.No						
Are the main attributes and characteristics that define the brand personality clearly presented?	1.Yes						
	2. No, but it can be inferred	2	2	2	2	3	2
	3.No						
Which brand personality dimension stands out? (Aaker, 1997)	1. Competence						
	2. Ruggedness						
	3. Sincerity	3	5	5	5	1	3
	4. Sophistication						
	5. Excitement						
How often does the company post?	1. Daily						
	2. Weekly	1	1	1	1	2	2
How often does the company post stories?	1. 1 story daily						
	2. Twice a day						
	3. Twice a week	3	4	4	1	3	3
	4. Weekly						
Which of the following features are active on the profile and contain information?							
Stories	X	X	X	X	X		X
Story Highlights	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	X
Photo posts	X	X			X	X	X
Reels posts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tagged posts	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	X
	1.Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 ⁸	1	

³ In the biography section of both social media profiles, they explain that they handle the shopping for you, delivering products directly from farmers with no intermediaries involved.

⁴ It is only mentioned that they sell fruits and vegetables online

⁵ They explain that they sell fruits and vegetables and that these are sold in 10 kg packs

⁶ In their biography, they clearly state that their goal is to defend European farmers.

⁷ The videos clearly show that this company stands for organic and environmentally friendly products.

⁸ In a highlighted story, they clearly and concisely explain their method of marketing their product as a 'healthy box

Is there a story
highlight
featuring the
main services
provided? 2.No

1⁹

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

This table presents a comparative evaluation of how companies use Instagram and TikTok to communicate their corporate information, including their values, mission, vision, and brand personality, while also analyzing the frequency and type of activity related to their publications and profile characteristics on these platforms.

In the case of EAP company:

- The company maintains a presence on both social media platforms, demonstrating a clear effort to present itself transparently and effectively to its audience.
- Its mission is explicitly stated on both Instagram and TikTok, reinforcing the company's core purpose, which includes advocating for European farmers. However, the brand's values are not clearly outlined; instead, they can be inferred from the content it publishes. If these values were communicated more explicitly, they could help strengthen and reinforce the brand's identity.
- Regarding brand personality, it is communicated indirectly. Based on Aaker's (1997) brand personality model, the company primarily conveys sincerity, as its messages and content project authenticity and emotional connection.
- In terms of posting frequency and volume, EAP consistently publishes stories and posts daily on both platforms, demonstrating commitment and consistency in maintaining engagement with its followers. On TikTok, stories are posted less frequently, twice a week, whereas on Instagram, one story is posted daily. This suggests that Instagram's features for ephemeral content are leveraged more effectively. The company uses stories, photo posts, reels, and tags on both platforms. However, TikTok lacks "highlighted stories" and tagging options, limiting its ability to consolidate relevant content.
- No information regarding services offered is provided on TikTok, and Instagram does not have this feature enabled either. Improving this aspect by utilizing highlighted stories could be beneficial, as they help showcase key services.

In the case of La Caja Saludable:

- The company includes general business information on both social media platforms, emphasizing its operational model, which involves purchasing directly from farmers without intermediaries. This approach enhances brand transparency and fosters a connection with consumers interested in the company's philosophy. The brand aligns its value proposition with consumer expectations, ensuring a clear and compelling brand message.
- The company's mission is explicitly stated on both platforms, allowing users to easily understand its primary purpose, thereby reinforcing its corporate identity and maintaining a high level of coherence in its communication strategy.
- However, the company's values are not explicitly communicated. Nonetheless, its videos suggest a commitment to promoting organic and environmentally friendly products. Making these values more visible and clearly articulated would strengthen the brand's long-term strategy. It would also reinforce its positioning as a sustainable and locally sourced company, thereby enhancing its competitive differentiation.
- According to Aaker's (1997) model, La Caja Saludable's brand personality is characterized by emotional connection, which fosters strong and close relationships with consumers. This emotional appeal conveys warmth and authenticity, both of which are essential for promoting fresh agri-food products.
- The company maintains a daily posting frequency on both platforms, demonstrating high consistency and commitment to its audience. This posting rate is appropriate for maintaining brand relevance and engagement with followers.

⁹ A highlighted story showcases the products that can be added to the pack when ordering

- However, TikTok activity is lower than Instagram activity, likely due to the intrinsic differences between the platforms. Increasing TikTok activity could help balance the brand's presence across both platforms. The company effectively utilizes Instagram's tools to strengthen its digital presence, but TikTok lacks highlighted content related to its services, which could be an area for improvement.

Weeko presents a clear distinction between its activity on TikTok and Instagram compared to the other two selected companies.

- On TikTok, the company limits its messaging to stating that it sells fruits and vegetables online, while on Instagram, it provides more detailed information, such as the sale of 10 kg product packs. This indicates that Instagram serves as a more informative platform for Weeko, whereas TikTok focuses on attracting engagement through entertainment.
- The company's mission is clearly stated on both profiles, but its values are less explicitly communicated on TikTok. Instead, the company predominantly shares memes with satirical humor, in contrast to Instagram's more structured and informative content, which provides a stronger brand representation.
- Regarding brand personality, Weeko exhibits platform-dependent variations according to Aaker's (1997) framework. On Instagram, the company conveys high levels of sincerity, using a serious and professional tone in its posts. Meanwhile, on TikTok, its personality aligns with a "competence" profile, which is likely reflected in its ability to attract younger audiences through informal and satirical content.
- In terms of posting frequency and functionality usage, the company maintains a weekly posting schedule, with two stories per week on both platforms. However, this limited posting strategy may reduce the brand's reach, especially if consumers expect more frequent content updates, particularly on TikTok, where younger users are highly active.
- The company utilizes photo and short video content formats on both platforms, but Instagram also leverages highlighted stories to showcase available products in the 10 kg packs, which helps enhance the customer experience.

3.3. Content analysis of the company on selected social media platforms in December 2024

Table 8. Content analysis table of the companies in December 2024

ANALYSIS VARIABLES	POSSIBLE VALUES	EAP		LA CAJA SALUDABLE		WEEKO	
		TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM	TIKTOK	INSTAGRAM
Format	1. Product photography						
	2. Infographic image						
	3. Music video	3 ¹⁰	3	3, 4, 5	3,4, 5	1,2 ¹¹	2,3 ,4 ¹²
	4. Talking video with people						
	5. Explanatory video without people						
Type of content	1. Advertising content						
	2. Blog link content	2, 4 5 ¹³	2,4 y 5	2, 4, 5	2,4, 5	2 ¹⁴	2
	3. Educational content						
	4. Expert content						

¹⁰ Most of them are videos of farmers discussing their product.

¹¹ In addition to frequent meme-style images aimed at attracting a younger audience

¹² Customer-created unboxing videos, recipe videos featuring their products, and collaborations with well-known nutrition content creators like 'staynutri'

¹³ While the majority of the content features videos of farmers discussing their specific products, there are also promotional materials comparing their products with those available in supermarkets.

¹⁴ In addition to what was previously mentioned above

Source of content	1. Own content						
	2. Consumer-generated content						
	3. Content generated by other entities	1	1	1	1	1	1, 2
	4. Curated content						
Content Topic	1. Corporate						
	2. Product information						
	3. Health						
	4. Food and recipes						
	5. Contests or promotions	1, 2, 10 ¹⁵	1,2, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 6	1, 10	1 ¹⁶ , 2, 3, 4, 5
	6. Environmental						
	7. Innovation						
	8. Awards or recognitions						
	9. News						
	10. Others						

Source: Own elaboration (2025).

When analyzing the content format shared by the companies, EAP utilizes spoken videos featuring individuals, with farmers as the central focus on both social media platforms. In contrast, La Caja Saludable employs a diversified strategy, combining spoken videos, explanatory content, and music-based posts on both TikTok and Instagram. Lastly, WEEKO adopts a satirical approach, using memes on TikTok to attract younger audiences, while on Instagram, it focuses on visually engaging content, such as unboxing videos and recipe tutorials, targeting consumers interested in agri-food products and healthy eating habits. This suggests that WEEKO adapts its messaging strategy based on the platform, leveraging humor on TikTok and influencer marketing on Instagram, whereas EAP and La Caja Saludable maintain a more consistent communication approach across both platforms, ensuring message coherence.

Regarding the content type and thematic focus, each company employs distinct strategies. EAP combines corporate educational and promotional content, including testimonials from farmers discussing their challenges. Meanwhile, La Caja Saludable focuses on recipes, health tips, environmental sustainability, and promotional content, establishing itself as the most educational brand among the three. Conversely, WEEKO shares memes and blogs on TikTok, while on Instagram, it integrates expert opinions and influencer collaborations on recipes, consumer advice, and health-related topics, making it the most diverse in content strategy. By leveraging user-generated content, influencers, and promotional themes, WEEKO stands out for its versatility, while La Caja Saludable excels in thematic breadth, and EAP emphasizes agricultural storytelling.

Examining the content source, EAP and La Caja Saludable primarily produce original content, highlighting farmers' work and the origins of their products, reinforcing their corporate identity. WEEKO, although also creating original content, uniquely incorporates consumer-generated content on Instagram, strengthening brand trust and increasing engagement with its audience.

Regarding storytelling and content duration, EAP focuses on short videos narrating farmers' stories and challenges, aiming to establish an emotional connection with the audience. La Caja Saludable, on the other hand, produces videos featuring recipes and health-related advice, with content length varying depending on its purpose, as educational videos tend to be longer than promotional ones. In WEEKO's case, the storytelling approach differs between TikTok and Instagram. On TikTok, storytelling is not explicitly present, as the brand primarily shares very short videos, whereas on Instagram, it leverages

¹⁵ The feed includes videos addressing the challenging situation faced by European farmers, particularly Spanish farmers, with the goal of raising public awareness about this issue.

¹⁶ Meme-style posts are predominant for the reasons previously mentioned.

consumer experiences to narrate stories, capitalizing on customer interactions to create engaging and relatable content, with varying durations depending on the type of post.

3.4. Discussion of Results and Improvement Proposals for the Companies

Following the presentation of results in the previous sections, the discussion now focuses on analyzing these findings through improvement proposals for each company, aiming to enhance their brand positioning based on the conducted analysis. From this perspective, all brands should work toward developing a strategy that ensures a more consistent identity across TikTok and Instagram, while preserving the content personalization they seek to achieve through platform-specific segmentation. The goal is to optimize the adaptation of publications to the distinct audience segments targeted on each social media platform

3.4.1 Recommendations for EAP

- Integrate user-generated content to enhance authenticity and strengthen consumer trust.
- Increase engagement by implementing consumer-centric initiatives, humanizing the brand and reinforcing storytelling strategies.
- Encourage customers to share photos or videos using the brand's products, creating a dedicated highlighted stories section showcasing consumer experiences.
- Incorporate recipes featuring products promoted by farmers, emphasizing their quality and origin.
- Launch contests on Instagram and TikTok, rewarding consumers who use EAP products in their meals, thereby fostering interaction and participation.
- Develop corporate hashtag campaigns to generate viral consumer-driven content, such as #EAPdecerca, encouraging users to share stories about their preference for local products.
- Include testimonials from satisfied consumers to strengthen the brand-consumer relationship, while continuing to highlight farmers and their role in the supply chain.
- Leverage micro-influencers who advocate for sustainability values and support local agriculture, aligning with the brand's mission.
- Produce short-form documentaries, 1 to 2 minutes, that narrate compelling farmer stories, adapting them to Instagram and TikTok formats to maximize reach and impact.
- Create thematic posts detailing the product journey through the production and logistics chain, from harvest to table, reinforcing traceability and enhancing consumer confidence in the brand.

3.4.2 Recommendations for La Caja Saludable:

- Optimize the diversity of shared topics and personalize content, while also strengthening audiovisual content through strategic collaborations with other brands and influencers.
- Establish recurring thematic content to generate anticipation, customer loyalty, and enhance engagement, including:
 - "Healthy Monday": Health tips and easy recipes.
 - "Green Wednesday": Environmental tips related to conscious consumption.
 - "Giveaway Friday": Promotions and contests.
 - Develop a more active digital community, complementing the newsletter with interactive spaces.
- Introduce a blog featuring short explanatory videos on nutrition and sustainability, linked to Instagram and TikTok, with professional narration to enhance the impact of educational content.
- On TikTok, integrate trending music and viral challenges to increase audience attention and retention, incorporating a more emotional storytelling approach, highlighting consumer and farmer experiences.

- Collaborate with nutrition experts, influencers, or well-known chefs on social media to create engaging, educational content.
- Form partnerships with complementary brands, such as kitchenware companies or sustainable food brands (e.g., meat producers or organic farms) to develop cross-promotional content.
- Strengthen the integration of links to the online store on TikTok to facilitate conversions and drive sales.
- ***Recommendations for Weeko:***
 - Establish a consistent brand identity across all social media platforms, strategically utilizing humor while optimizing the influencer presence strategy.
 - Enhance engagement through user-generated content, fostering greater interactivity and trust between the brand and its audience.
 - Implement a blog to strengthen the educational content strategy and SEO positioning, attracting new customers and followers. In this regard, leverage the Instagram broadcast channel tool to create an active digital community, encouraging customer loyalty and engagement, while also exploring presence on additional platforms and social networks to expand reach across different customer segments.
 - Balance the use of humor on TikTok with more informative, serious, or emotionally engaging content, to attract a broader audience. This strategy should incorporate content related to sustainability, nutrition, and fitness to reinforce credibility. While maintaining the humorous meme-based approach, it is recommended to start associating this humor with awareness topics and social issues. For example, developing humorous content highlighting common mistakes in purchasing or consuming horticultural products and how WEEKO addresses them.
 - Standardize corporate branding across design, content, and visual style on both social media platforms, ensuring greater message consistency and brand coherence. Additionally, integrate color schemes and typography elements that reinforce brand identity and enhance brand perception.
 - Develop viral and shareable hashtag campaigns, such as #UnboxingWeeko, encouraging consumers to share short videos of their online purchases being unboxed. These customer experiences should be highlighted in a dedicated Instagram Stories section, further strengthening brand engagement.

4. Conclusion

The development of a digitalization strategy by horticultural companies is essential within the agri-food sector, as it is necessary for improving this industry's economic performance, both in terms of brand awareness and reputation and in reducing intermediaries by leveraging the advantages of online commerce. This need is further driven by the imperative to adapt to an increasingly digital consumer base.

Furthermore, the use of social media as a communication channel is crucial in the marketing strategy of horticultural companies, as well as in customer loyalty initiatives, aiming to attract millennial and centennial consumers. Instagram and TikTok, as the most widely used platforms among these businesses, enable the implementation of brand development strategies, influencer marketing, and customer engagement techniques.

Additionally, considering the impact of the content shared by companies on social media in shaping consumer perception, it plays a critical role in digital brand reputation and positioning. Equally important is the interaction between brands and consumers and the way this engagement is fostered in digital environments, as these factors enhance consumer trust and strengthen engagement levels, ultimately contributing to a customer experience-oriented approach.

All these elements will drive opportunities for improvement in digital strategies and lead to the emergence of new communication approaches in the sector, such as the use of influencers and collaborations with other brands and complementary products to generate high-quality content and enhance brand reputation.

This transformation would not be possible without the support of government regulations at both national and European levels, which seek to assist agri-food producers in digitizing their businesses. The Royal Decree 113/2022, for instance, aims to establish guidelines for modernizing the sector through digitalization, representing a valuable opportunity for horticultural companies to optimize their digital presence and improve their competitiveness.

Ultimately, this article seeks to demonstrate the significance of social media and its inherent components, such as direct and indirect communication with customers in horticultural SMEs. Previously, corporate communication was centered on delivering information, whereas now, it has evolved into a dialogue-driven approach (Vegas-García & Paniagua, 2023). This shift allows for a comprehensive analysis of the communication strategies employed by companies in this sector on digital platforms. The findings indicate that social media publications enhance brand positioning, improve reputation, and strengthen consumer relationships. Furthermore, key characteristics for brand personality development and its market impact are identified.

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This study forms part of the development of a doctoral thesis on the digital presence of horticultural companies, titled *Digital Communication in the Agri-Food Sector: The Use of Social Media as a Means to Build the Reputation of Horticultural SMEs Among Millennial and Centennial Consumers*. This article emphasizes the initial phase of content analysis, which will be further explored in depth within the full thesis.

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