



STREAMING PLATFORMS IN SPORTS COMMUNICATION

An Analysis of the 'Tiempo de Juego' Channel on COPE Radio

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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the integration of streaming services into sports radio, a domain traditionally dominated by legacy media. It focuses on YouTube's emergence as a medium for live content, increasingly leveraged by major radio programmes to engage wider audiences. The study centres on the trajectory of the Tiempo de Juego channel, analysing its audience reach, content strategy, organisational structure, and live broadcasting activity from its launch to the present.

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1. Introduction

The online environment has become one of the most influential spaces for information consumption with the development of fast, efficient communication, unimpeded by traditional barriers (Arab & Díaz, 2015). Within this digital context, social networks and live-streaming platforms have established themselves as key channels for reaching broad audiences and have positioned themselves as major sources of information, often surpassing traditional media in several respects. Young people are the primary users of these platforms, largely due to their high levels of engagement on mobile phones, computers, and other electronic devices (Tejedor-Calvo et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, the wider public has not been left behind. The use of social networks and live-streaming platforms has become increasingly normalised, resulting in a society shaped by digital connectivity, where individuals can both express their opinions and access a wide variety of content. Within this context, YouTube has emerged as the most influential platform globally and ranks as the second most valuable brand in the world (Orús, 2024). Its impact is such that prominent public figures have chosen the platform to build communities, disseminate their content, and engage with their audiences with ease.

One of the areas of communication most significantly impacted by the rise of YouTube and live-streaming platforms is sport, particularly football. For decades, traditional media have played a central role in reporting on and disseminating information related to the sport. However, the political agendas of television networks, the ideological frameworks of radio stations, and the editorial constraints of the press have led to tensions with prominent journalists seeking platforms where they can operate with greater editorial freedom (Romero-Ochoa, 2022). According to *You First*, one of the world's leading talent representation and sports-branded content agencies, "YouTube has become the platform of choice for the consumption of sports and football content in Spain across different generations" (ReasonWhy, 2023). Indeed, at the national level, numerous football-related YouTube channels now rival or even surpass traditional media outlets in terms of audience reach. This shift has compelled legacy media organisations to adapt their strategies in order to maintain relevance and appeal to a broader, digitally engaged public. The rise of these digital platforms has not only altered the structure of the media landscape but has also transformed the production and treatment of news, expanding the range of possibilities and increasing the prominence of social networks (Romero-Ochoa, 2022).

The clearest example of this phenomenon is the case study selected for this work, *Tiempo de Juego*. This programme, broadcast by the COPE radio network, focuses on current football news and possesses a strong visual identity within the radio landscape. While its primary platform remains radio, *Tiempo de Juego* has successfully modernised by launching a YouTube channel, where the programme is simultaneously broadcast during its regular weekend slot. On YouTube, however, it incorporates visual footage from the studio and adopts structures more closely aligned with those of social media, thereby constructing its own distinct digital presence. Although this transformation was not immediate, the shift was gradual, with audience engagement playing a pivotal role in shaping its ongoing evolution, including its graphic presentation (Guía Radio, 2019). The programme has been chosen for analysis due to its growing influence in recent years, particularly in reaching a broader and more representative online audience. Moreover, it offers a valuable lens through which to examine the development of sports communication in football, originating from a traditional medium and transitioning to YouTube, the leading live-streaming platform. This study also enables a deeper exploration of how the informative process and communication strategies are shaped by the affordances of the platform.

2. Background

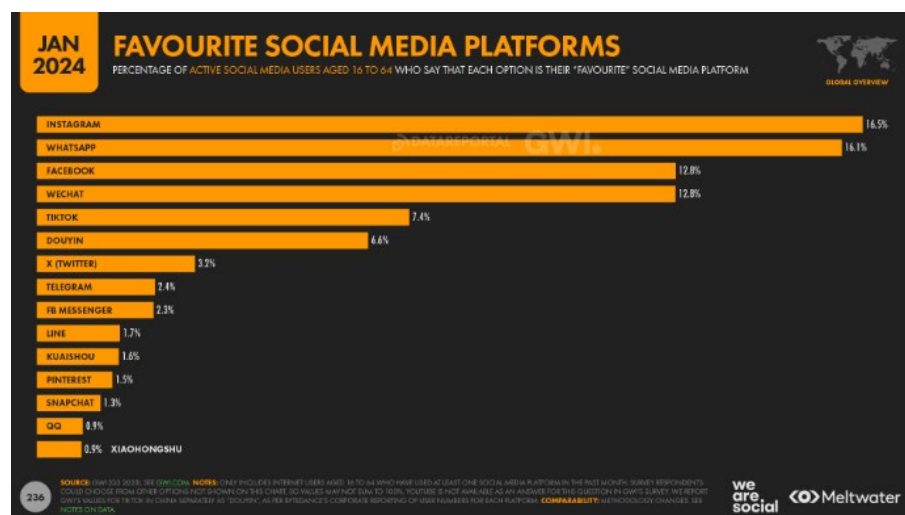
Cultural development has been significantly reshaped in recent years by the emergence of New Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their effective integration within digital networks. Their influence is essential for understanding the transformation of communication and information processes across all spheres (Cabero-Almenara, 2015). Since the early 21st century, traditional media, including television, radio, and the press, have been eclipsed by the Internet and the ongoing expansion of the digital landscape. This shift has given rise to new models of communication, in which social media platforms play a central role due to their immediacy and accessibility (De Ramón-Carrión, 2011). Within this context, streaming platforms have gained considerable prominence by fulfilling a growing demand among audiences. These live platforms enable real-time broadcasting and

global communication, thereby addressing societal needs that traditional media often struggle to meet. Over the past decade, content consumption patterns have undergone a profound transformation, with audiences increasingly turning from conventional media to digital live-streaming services (Madieto, 2024).

The communicative landscape has been fundamentally altered by the rise of streaming platforms, which have transformed traditional consumption patterns. The focus is no longer on *when* content is consumed, but rather on *what* is consumed and *from whom*. Algorithms play a central role in this shift, using user data to personalise content and streamline the consumption process (García-Marcos & García-Mateos, 2022). This eliminates the need for prior preparation or extensive searching, enhancing the user experience. The consequences for traditional media are significant: streaming has become a dominant mode of expression and consumption, leaving television and radio increasingly marginalised. These traditional outlets often express concern over their inability to engage younger audiences (Espada, 2023).

Even before the pandemic, social networks and live platforms were beginning to strengthen their position in the communication process, establishing themselves as the primary channels within the digital network. However, once the pandemic was officially declared, their growth became unstoppable. Audiences have steadily increased, and platforms such as YouTube and Twitch have seen their audiences grow exponentially, becoming the most consumed platforms globally (Marín-Sanchiz et al., 2022). This evolution has fostered increased interdisciplinarity, diversifying the platforms' structures and supporting content creators in their respective fields. Consequently, a universal space has emerged, where content is nourished by traditional media, creating a new form of intrinsic normality for the viewer and side-lining television and radio (Herrero-Gutiérrez & Haokequian, 2024). Among these platforms, YouTube is at the forefront of social networks. Indeed, according to the digital analytics report conducted by *We Are Social* and *MeltWater* in January 2024, YouTube is the second most consumed social network, behind only Facebook (Martín, 2024).

Figure 1. The most widely used social networks in the world.



Source: *We Are Social* and *MeltWater*, 2024.

However, the advent of new digital networks has radically transformed one area in particular: sports communication, which has now shifted decisively into the digital realm. Prominent sports figures have increasingly turned to these platforms to engage directly with their closest audiences, bypassing traditional intermediaries. Among these figures are major football clubs (Ballesteros-Herencia, 2021). This shift has had a direct impact on larger traditional media outlets but has also enabled communicators to build substantial communities with a strong social base of followers. Several examples demonstrate how communicators have successfully developed and managed their content through platforms such as YouTube or Twitch (Gutiérrez-Lozano & Cuartero, 2020). *Mundo Maldini*, *Gerard Romero*, and *Siro López* are three channels with extensive careers and considerable influence

within the football world in Spain. Their audiences are significantly larger than those of many other channels, approaching the scale of traditional media.

Traditional sports media began to lag behind following the advent of new platforms and the pandemic, as audiences started to decline in number. Leading broadcasters were alerted to the risk of failing to modernise their approaches. Some were unable to adapt and became obsolete (Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018). However, programmes such as *El Chiringuito TV* and *Tiempo de Juego* made the strategic decision to enter the social media sphere, which had come to dominate audience attention. The former was the most daring, paving the way for others. Meanwhile, *Tiempo de Juego* adopted different strategies and ultimately made its mark in the world of YouTube. These media outlets benefited from their strong identities outside the digital space, owing to their roots in traditional media, which helped them compete with major channels. The aim was to produce high-quality content that could thrive in the digital realm. *Tiempo de Juego*, the focus of this study, belongs to the COPE radio station, which has a long history in sports communication in Spain. It is one of the most significant radio stations in terms of both entertainment and information (COPE, 2020). Its communication strategies are followed by professionals worldwide. In sports, and particularly football, it is renowned for having some of the best communicators. For this reason, on 27 August 2010, it launched one of the most influential programmes in its schedule, *Tiempo de Juego*. Led by communicators of the calibre of Paco González and Pepe Domingo Castaño, the programme was created to become the leader of sports radio nights in Spain. Its relaxed talk show format and its comprehensive and accurate information have made it a staple of Spanish nightlife for many years. It ranked as the leader in the 2023 *Estudio General de Medios* (EGM)¹, Spain's main audience measurement system for radio throughout the year. Over time, the programme's methods and staff have evolved. Paco González remains at the helm, accompanied by Manolo Lama, Juanma Castaño, and a team of distinguished communicators. However, it no longer includes their prominent figure, Pepe Domingo Castaño, who is remembered every night on the programme (COPE, 2024).

Over the past year, the programme has been highly successful, dominating almost its entire time slot against its rival *Carrusel Deportivo* on Cadena SER, with coverage centred around the European Football Championship and the Olympic Games. However, in online media, it faces no competition within the radio niche. It boasts 509,000 followers on YouTube, with an average of 17,200 viewers per video and live stream. These figures are notable and place *Tiempo de Juego* among the 50 most significant entertainment and communication channels in Spain, alongside other channels of professional teams such as Real Betis Balompié (Hypeauditor, 2025). Its presence on YouTube began on 2 November 2017. Initially, the content consisted of short videos analysing the most important moments from the radio show. However, the format gradually evolved towards a more modern and relaxed style of communication. A year later, the programme began broadcasting live on the platform from its radio studio. This pivotal shift in its communication strategy has led to substantial revenue generation. So much so that communication professionals are now seeking to understand the transformation that sports communication has undergone over the years, particularly the changes in football communication, in order to determine how to approach the future.

It is important to highlight the development driven by the audiovisual industries and streaming platforms, which have become the primary sources of communication in the world of sports, entering the market for live broadcasts of sporting events (Hutchins et al., 2019, p 977).

This research by Hutchins et al. (2019) explores the growth of streaming services and their impact on sports, highlighting the ongoing transformation of sports communication, which is an area that still needs deeper understanding in Spain. *Tiempo de Juego* serves as the ideal case study to comprehend this phenomenon.

¹ The *Estudio General de Medios* (EGM) represents the analysis of media audiences at a national level in Spain, conducted by the Association for Media Research. In this case, the results discussed are from the EGM of 2023.

3. Objectives

The research aims to analyse the impact of streaming platforms on sports communication by examining a programme that originated in traditional Spanish radio and has since transitioned to the digital sphere. For this purpose, the programme *Tiempo de Juego* on the COPE channel has been selected, due to its significant global influence and strong national presence. The programme's transition to this digital platform required the development of a new content structure designed to engage diverse audiences and adapt to evolving communication and news styles. The study of its audience metrics, communication management, content production, and diverse formats helps to understand the evolution of communication on social networks, where radio now finds its place in the digital realm. Within this context, YouTube assumes a central role as the most extensively consumed live social network, generating significant traffic related to football. Accordingly, the principal objective of this study is to examine the integration of sports radio into the football domain via streaming platforms. In this case, YouTube and *Tiempo de Juego* were selected as the most influential media in Spain.

From this primary objective, a series of secondary objectives have been established to guide the development of the research:

O.E.1. Analyse the transformation of radio broadcasting on live platforms by examining the communication and informational presence on YouTube through the selected case study, with particular attention to the imagery and content produced.

O.E.2. Examine how radio content is managed on streaming platforms by investigating the role of social networks in the communicative process. This includes focusing on user influence, as well as the representation and identity constructed within the network. The analysis will centre on the programme *Tiempo de Juego*.

O.E.3. Assess the impact of the channel's content by analysing the most significant videos and live broadcasts within the selected timeframe, to identify those that are most trusted and widely consumed by the programme's audience.

These objectives will facilitate a rigorous and focused analysis of the integration of sports radio within social networks.

4. Methodology

This study will focus on the analysis of sports communication in football, specifically on one of the most influential live platforms globally, YouTube. Using the *Tiempo de Juego* channel from COPE as a case study, a detailed and comprehensive analysis will be conducted on the channel's growth within social networks. This research will trace the programme's origins as a traditional radio broadcast and examine its transformation within the evolving communication landscape.

To achieve this, it will be crucial to identify representative moments of the programme and analyse the videos and live broadcasts, employing methods specific to the platform. The content is organised into sections, creating a straightforward structure that facilitates audience consumption. On one hand, there are the live broadcasts, which constitute the core of the channel. The programme broadcasts live on YouTube simultaneously with its radio transmission, forming a content sphere aimed at capturing the largest possible audience within its time slot. This seamless coordination generates continuous user engagement. This approach helps establish a strong connection between the programme and its viewers, allowing them to comment live and share their opinions on ongoing events.

On the other hand, there are the short videos, often extracted from the live shows, featuring the most-watched moments or videos recorded at specific times on topics that interest the audience.

To analyse the content effectively, it is essential to gather extensive data and diverse perspectives. Therefore, a methodology that supports this analytical process must be clearly defined. This study will employ a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques within social research.

The quantitative approach seeks to test existing theories through a set of predefined hypotheses, requiring the selection of either a random or purposive sample (Tamayo et al, 2007). Meanwhile, the qualitative methodology is based on the interrelation of assumptions and concepts derived from events observed in the sample, which have been collected by the researcher and are related to subjective

experiences (Lincoln & Denzin, 1994). This method focuses on interpreting the selected object of study, analysing the phenomena occurring during its evolution and development.

Mixed methods offer considerable potential for research practice, distinguished by their methodological pluralism (Delgado et al., 2018). This approach comprehensively addresses all relevant aspects by pragmatically combining the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, thereby minimising their respective weaknesses. The goal is to integrate both forms of research to achieve the most complete and effective study possible.

In this context, a series of variables and categories have been established to structure the information emitted by the channel under study.

The study is based on a temporal division that spans from the inception of the *Tiempo de Juego* YouTube channel to the present day, selecting and analysing the most influential moments from the channel, as well as the videos and live broadcasts in terms of their significance. Additionally, a specific and representative time sample will be chosen, centred around a major event, such as Euro 2024 in Germany, from 8 June to 21 June. This will allow for the examination of the evolution and transformation of the programme's live content on the platform, as well as its impact during one of the key moments in the world of football. Therefore, the analysis of this event will cover a period of 44 days, during which each piece of live content and its continuity will be studied.

Within the quantitative framework, we will analyse publication dates, views, interactions, likes, comments, and subscriber growth (see Table 1). Concurrently, the qualitative analysis will focus on the subject matter of each piece of content, its origins and development, the structural choices made, and its projected future trajectory. This set of variables and categories is systematically organised to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Table 1. Quantitative analysis.

Date	No. Visualisations	No. Comments	No. Likes	Total Interactions	No. Subscribers	No. Topics
1						

Source: Authors' elaboration. 2024.

5. Analysis and Results

5.1. Creation of the *Tiempo de Juego* Channel: The Transition from Radio to the Digital World

The growth of sports communication on YouTube has been gradual yet transformative, aimed at reaching a broader audience. This platform offers a novel avenue for connecting with viewers through a different social network (Rodríguez-Santana & Suárez-Gómez, 2020). Many journalists have actively sought to build communities within YouTube. However, as digital communities expanded and viewership increased significantly, traditional media found themselves compelled to engage with new audiences beyond their usual reach. Television, radio, and print media have been forced to adapt to social networks, integrating their presence and creating distinctive spaces where their loyal followers feel comfortable, while also making content accessible and clear for new audiences (Cuestas-Zegarra, 2024).

The case of *Tiempo de Juego* on COPE clearly exemplifies the transition from traditional media to the digital realm. The radio sports programme is the most listened to by audiences, broadcast every Saturday from 13:00 to 01:00 and on Sundays from 12:00 to 01:30 on COPE. The *Estudio General de Medios* (EGM), which annually measures audiences in Spain, continues to rank it among the leading sports programmes of the year. However, several years ago, the channel underwent a significant transformation alongside the programme. Noticing that audiences were shifting towards social networks, COPE decided to create a YouTube channel. This channel enabled the radio programme to be broadcast with a television-like format, incorporating live images and later supported by video clips designed to attract a younger audience.

Figure 2. Summary of the *Tiempo de Juego* COPE YouTube Channel.

Source: SocialBlade, 2024.

The *Tiempo de Juego* YouTube channel was created on 29 October 2017 by COPE. While its content covers a broad range of sports, football dominates the programme's line-up due to the sport's widespread influence in Spain and globally. Although the channel was established in October 2017, content was not uploaded until a few days later. Initially, the channel featured short videos that highlighted key moments from each live show. The first video, titled *The Last 5 Minutes of Radio History with Paco, Pepe, and Lama*, has garnered 149,190 views, 176 comments, and over 2,800 likes, marking a significant milestone in the channel's development. For an extended period, this short-form content was the primary format on the channel, with several videos surpassing 100,000 views within less than a year of activity. Football-related content dominated the videos, followed by personal moments shared by the journalists involved in the chat show.

In an effort to redefine radio within the context of social networks and to establish a distinct identity, the channel began producing live content on YouTube. The aim was to simultaneously broadcast the live shows alongside the radio programme, with one key distinction: the incorporation of visual elements. This shift transformed the show from a traditional radio programme into a global project aimed at a broader audience. Initially, however, the live broadcasts did not include visual elements, an essential feature for social media platforms. Despite this limitation, the experiment was a success: the first live broadcast, aired on 11 November 2018, garnered over 91,000 views and lasted 2 hours and 17 minutes.

Figure 3. The most-watched audio-only live stream on the channel during its early years took place on 1 March 2020.

(SOLO AUDIO) Directo del Real Madrid 2-0 Barcelona en Tiempo de Juego COPE

Source: Authors' elaboration, 2024.

This approach to content creation allowed the channel to build a loyal community that mirrored the audience of the radio programme. This format remained in place for several years, until 3 November 2021. During this time, the channel's live shows became the most popular among viewers, with four of them surpassing one million views, which are figures that are rarely seen in sports communication in Spain. A common feature among these high-viewership shows is their focus on either Real Madrid or FC Barcelona, or occasionally both teams.

The least viewed of the four live broadcasts was a match between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, which took place on 27 February 2019. It garnered 1,055,850 views and over 3,000 likes, but only 18 interactions. The narration of *El Clásico*, as such matches are known in Spain, clearly captured the audience's attention. Ranking third among the most-watched live streams is another match between the same two teams, held on 18 December 2019. It attracted 1,222,178 views and more than 4,000 likes. This highlights the significance of these two teams in Spanish football, as well as the peak moment for sports radio in its more journalistic form.

The two most-viewed videos on the channel have each surpassed 1.5 million views. The second most-viewed video, lasting 3 hours and 48 minutes, covers the live narration of the famous Liverpool 4-0 FC Barcelona match. It has 1,588,249 views and 165 comments, alongside significant interaction within the live chat. This surge in engagement is due to the historic nature of the match in the UEFA Champions League. The most-viewed video, however, is a replay of the Real Madrid vs FC Barcelona match on 1 March 2020. In this highly anticipated match, both teams were vying for the La Liga title. It garnered 1,746,191 views, more than 6,500 likes, and a large volume of comments in the live chat. The match ended 2-0 in favour of Real Madrid, and the broadcast lasted 4 hours and 9 minutes.

Until this point, the programme retained the characteristics of a traditional radio format. However, the growing influence of social media was about to redefine the channel's content strategy moving forward.

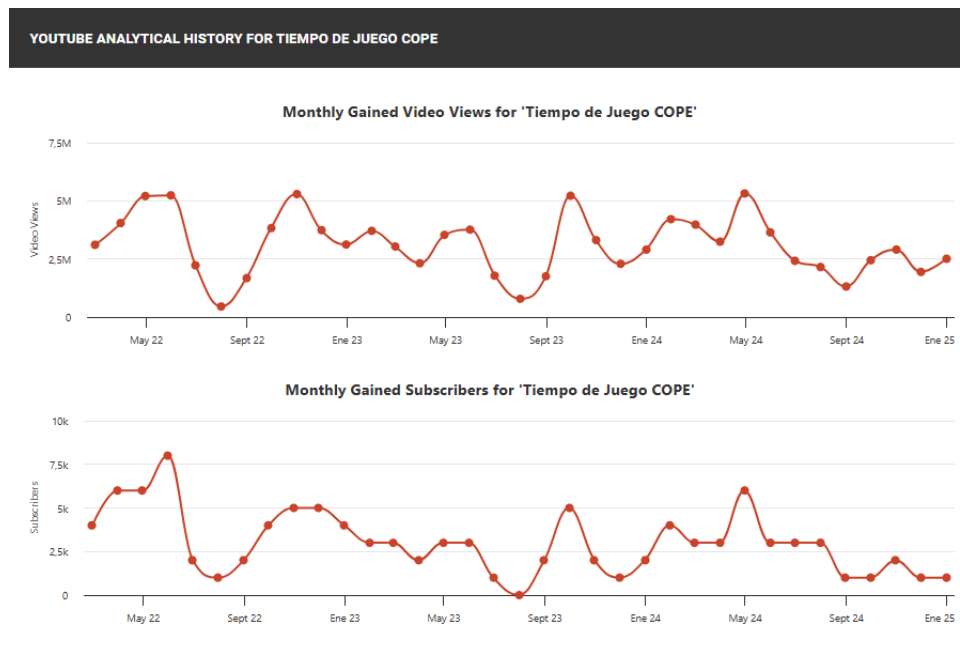
5.2. Transformation of the Channel in Search of An Identity of Its Own

The evolution of YouTube channels in sports communication became increasingly prominent in Spain, as more communicators embraced social networks and traditional media outlets began adapting to the new digital landscape. Journalists began creating quality content, following the example set by other traditional media, and successfully reaching a broad social audience. Their aim was to establish a presence in the digital realm and forge their own unique identity. This trend led to significant changes in the organisational structure of *Tiempo de Juego*. The programme embraced a new approach to live radio, integrating live images alongside the radio broadcast. This strategy allowed the content to be delivered visually, attracting a larger and more diverse audience while distinguishing the programme from other emerging channels. The influence of prominent journalistic figures was pivotal in this transformation. Manolo Lama, Paco González, and Pepe Domingo Castaño, along with figures like Julio Maldonado, who has his own channel, *Maldini*, played a crucial role in driving greater traffic through their structured and informative content delivery.

The transformation began on 3 November 2021. By this time, the pandemic had receded, and unlike many other channels on the platform that saw increased traffic during lockdowns, *Tiempo de Juego* did not experience significant growth, which highlights the stability and loyalty of its existing audience. However, the incorporation of visual elements into its live broadcasts marked a shift toward a more television-like professionalism, aligning more closely with the conventions of other content on the streaming platform. Initially, this change did not result in a substantial increase in viewership. Most videos during the early months of the new format garnered between 50,000 and 150,000 views. This modest reception can be attributed to the seasonal context, as there were no major football competitions taking place at the time. Consequently, the most viewed video in this period, a live Champions League match between Liverpool and Atlético de Madrid broadcast on 3 November 2021, reached 171,000 views and remained the most popular until 2022.

In 2022, *Tiempo de Juego* entered a period of gradual transformation, during which the number of subscribers began to grow exponentially and live broadcasts attracted increasingly high viewership. Audiences responded positively to the new radio format adapted for YouTube, signalling a successful integration of traditional broadcasting with digital media. Notably, May 2022 marked the channel's highest recorded subscriber growth to date, with over 8,000 new users. This peak was only reached again in April 2024, with nearly 6,000 new subscribers (SocialBlade, 2025).

Viewership has been a defining feature of *Tiempo de Juego's* digital presence. The channel has cultivated a large and loyal audience, with consistently stable engagement metrics. From early 2022 through to 2025, monthly views have frequently exceeded 5,000,000, demonstrating sustained growth. The most influential months in terms of audience activity tend to be April and May, as well as September and those coinciding with national team tournaments, highlighting key moments in the channel's development.

Figure 4. Graph of subscriber growth of the *Tiempo de Juego* channel (2022-2025).

Source: SocialBlade, 2025.

During this period (2022–2025), the most viewed content on the channel was a live broadcast aired on 4 May 2022, covering the UEFA Champions League semi-final between Real Madrid and Manchester City, in which the Spanish team secured a place in the final. The video garnered over 750,000 views, nearly 6,000 likes, and 131 comments, in addition to significant activity in the live chat. These figures are particularly notable given the channel's consistently balanced performance across its live broadcasts, which regularly reached substantial yet steady audience numbers.

At present, the *Tiempo de Juego* YouTube channel has 509,000 subscribers, a substantial figure that reflects the formation of a highly representative and influential community within Spanish sports communication, not only in the realm of radio, but also across digital platforms. The channel has published over 2,846 pieces of content, including videos, live broadcasts, and short-form clips, amassing a total of 281,015,963 views (SocialBlade, 2025). As a result, it ranks among the 50 most-watched sports channels in Spain and is the second most-consumed channel among those associated with traditional media. Within the radio sector specifically, it leads the field due to its sustained commitment to content creation. Currently, it is ranked 33rd overall, positioned just behind the official YouTube channel of professional Formula 1 driver Carlos Sainz and ahead of prominent football clubs such as Real Sociedad. The channel averages approximately 16,000 views per video, with more than 242 likes and 11 comments per upload, demonstrating its ability to engage a broad audience while consolidating a clear identity and presence in the digital media landscape (Hypeauditor, 2025).

5.3. Developments During EURO 2024 in Germany

The UEFA European Football Championship is the most significant football tournament in Europe and one of the most prominent globally. Its importance stems from the participation of numerous European nations competing to establish continental supremacy, thereby generating substantial audience engagement both within the participating countries and among global football enthusiasts. Simultaneously, the tournament prompts a considerable media presence, with major sports outlets providing continuous coverage, before, during, and after the event. For this reason, the Championship has been selected as the focus of this study, covering a 44-day period that includes one week prior to the opening match and one week following the final. This analysis specifically examines the activity of the *Tiempo de Juego* YouTube channel during this timeframe. A quantitative approach has been adopted, guided by a structured data collection table (Table 2), which records metrics such as views, comments,

likes, interactions, video duration, subscriber growth, and thematic content. This methodology enables a comprehensive understanding of the channel’s growth and engagement during a major media event.

Table 2. Daily breakdown of *Tiempo de Juego*’s YouTube activity during the UEFA European Championship in Germany (8 June – 14 July 2024), including content published before and after the tournament.

	Fecha	N. Visualizaciones	N. Comentarios	N. Likes	Interacciones totales	Duración	Suscriptores	Temas
1	8-6-24	36.666	6	383	389	2:38:43	498.000	España vs Irlanda del Norte. Reposteo: 00:00
2	9-6-24	62.797	9	391	400	4:17:33	498.000	Zverev vs Alcaraz
7	14-6-24	19.623	3	240	243	2:22:08	499.000	Alemania vs Escocia. Eurocopa.
8	15-6-24	41.115	9-31	479	488	2:18:44	499.000	España vs Croacia. Error.
9	16-6-24	16.312	3	181	184	2:18:50	499.000	Sevilla vs Inglaterra.
10	17-6-24	16.377	3	214	217	2:23:00	499.000	Austria vs Francia.
11	18-6-24	16.349	4	216	222	2:23:55	499.000	Portugal vs República Checa.
12	19-6-24	10.420	3	123	126	2:10:10	499.000	Alemania vs Hungría.
13	20-6-24	62.908	7	680	687	4:33:10	499.000	España vs Italia.
14	21-6-24	12.887	1	157	158	2:06:35	499.000	Países Bajos vs Francia.
15	22-6-24	13.901	1	157	158	4:44:15	500.000	Belgica vs Rumania y Turquía vs Portugal.
16	23-6-24	15.888	2	209	211	2:24:00	500.000	Suiza vs Alemania.
17	24-6-24	43.148	8	422	430	3:23:17	500.000	Albania vs España.
18	25-6-24	28.404	0	298	298	5:11:24	500.000	Francia vs
19	26-6-24	26.732						Polonia, Inglaterra vs Eslovenia
22	29-6-24	70.272						Ucrania vs Bélgica, Georgia vs Portugal.
23	30-6-24	93.467						Suiza vs Italia, Alemania vs Dinamarca.
24	1-7-24	57.382						España vs Georgia. Octavos.
25	2-7-24	34.518						Francia vs Bélgica, Portugal vs Eslovenia. Octavos.
26	3-7-24	139.584						Rumania vs Países Bajos, Austria vs Turquía.
28	5-7-24	139.584						España vs Alemania, Portugal vs Francia.
29	6-7-24	131.154						Inglaterra vs Suiza, Turquía vs Países Bajos. Cuartos.
32	9-7-24	132.315						España vs
33	10-7-24	33.469						Francia. Semifinal.
37	14-7-24	147.377						Países Bajos vs Inglaterra. Semifinal.
Final		1.263.005						España vs Inglaterra. Final.

Source: Authors’ elaboration, 2024.

The study begins on 8 June 2024, one week prior to the official start of the European Championship. On this day, *Tiempo de Juego* broadcast a warm-up friendly match between Spain and Northern Ireland, which garnered 36,666 views and 389 interactions. At that point, the channel had approximately 498,000 subscribers, a number that increased steadily as the tournament progressed. On 9 June 2024, the channel streamed a live broadcast, unrelated to football, of the tennis match between Zverev and Alcaraz, which attracted 62,797 views and ran for over four hours. In the following days, from 10 to 13 June 2024, the channel did not air any live content, likely due to the proximity of the tournament’s official kick-off.

14 June 2024 marked a significant moment in the tournament, the opening match between Germany and Scotland. However, the live broadcast by *Tiempo de Juego* did not meet viewership expectations, registering 19,623 views over more than two hours of coverage and 243 interactions. In contrast, the following day, 15 June, saw a marked increase in audience engagement as Spain debuted against Croatia. The programme lasted 2 hours and 18 minutes and attracted 41,115 views, with a notable 479 likes. It is important to note that a technical issue disrupted the original broadcast, requiring the programme to be re-uploaded due to audio failure, which likely impacted the overall metrics. From 16 to 18 June, daily viewership figures remained relatively stable, averaging over 16,000 views per day. The broadcasts covered the most prominent matches of the championship and maintained a consistent structure, each lasting over two hours. In contrast, 19 June recorded the lowest viewership of the tournament, with just over 10,000 views for the Germany vs. Hungary match. This dip was offset the following day, 20 June, when *Tiempo de Juego* covered the high-profile Spain vs. Italy match, drawing 62,908 views and 687 interactions over four hours of live coverage.

Between 21 and 23 June, the channel experienced a noticeable decline in viewership, with daily visits barely surpassing 10,000. Despite this downturn, the subscriber count rose from 499,000 to 500,000, which is a modest increase given the scale of the event and the accumulated views of the programme overall. A resurgence occurred on 24 June with the live coverage of the Spain vs. Albania match, which attracted 43,148 viewers and 430 recorded interactions. However, on 25 and 26 June, viewership figures declined once more. This reduction coincided with a shift in the programme’s thematic focus, as the Spanish national team was no longer the central subject. Nevertheless, both broadcasts still exceeded 20,000 views, maintaining a baseline of audience engagement.

Following the conclusion of the group stage, the programme paused its live broadcasts on 27 and 28 June. Live coverage resumed on 29 June with a newly structured format: instead of focusing on individual matches, each broadcast encompassed all matches played that day. This shift resulted in significantly longer live shows, exceeding five hours in duration. On 29 June, coverage of the Italy and Germany matches garnered 70,272 views and 564 interactions, an increase compared to previous days. The impact of this new format became especially evident on 30 June, during Spain's Round of 16 match against Georgia, which attracted 93,567 views and 842 total interactions. However, this momentum declined over the next two days, 1 and 2 July, when none of the featured content matched the viewership generated by Spain's match.

On 3 and 4 July 2024, the programme was not broadcast live. The round of 16 matches had concluded, and the break did not generate sufficient content to fill a full programme. However, on 5 July, Spain faced Germany in the quarter-finals, while France played against Portugal. This broadcast became the most-watched live stream so far, with 139,584 views and over 1,100 interactions. This event also contributed to a rise in the channel's subscriber count, which increased by 1,000, reaching a total of 501,000. The following day, 6 July 2024, the broadcasts of the England vs. Switzerland and Turkey vs. Netherlands matches stabilised the statistics, achieving over 131,000 views during more than five hours of live coverage.

On 7 and 8 July, the programme took a break due to the transition from the quarter-finals to the semi-finals. The live show returned on 9 July with the semi-final match between Spain and France, attracting more than 130,000 viewers over three hours and receiving 1,257 likes. This broadcast also contributed to an increase in subscribers, bringing the total to 502,000. However, on 10 July, there was a significant drop in views. The Netherlands-England match was watched by just over 30,000 people, marking a noticeable decline.

From 11 to 13 July, the content took its final break before the championship final. On 14 July 2024, Spain faced England in the European Championship final. In a closely contested match, Spain, known as 'La Roja', emerged victorious, claiming its fourth European Championship title. This live broadcast, lasting 3 hours and 40 minutes, was the most significant of the content studied. It garnered 147,377 views, 31 comments, a very active live chat, 1,287 likes, and a total of 1,318 interactions. This highlights the strong influence of Spanish fans within the channel.

From 15 July to 21 July, the programme did not produce any live content, although it saw an increase in subscribers, reaching 503,000. Meanwhile, the live content previously aired continued to generate exponential returns, accumulating more than 1,263,000 total views and 11,536 total interactions. These figures could have been even higher, but the channel was unable to maintain consistency, which is understandable, given that it typically produces content only on Saturdays and Sundays. However, during the event, the schedule changed in order to cover all the matches.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the study time selected for the European Championship in Germany. Firstly, a programme of great importance at a time of influence such as the European Championship can change its broadcasting schedule from being broadcast on Saturdays and Sundays to being broadcast on all match days. On the other hand, the influence of the image is crucial in the development of the YouTube channel, leading to a growth in figures, although less than expected. At the same time, it has been possible to consider the importance of the Spanish national team in the content. All of the live shows in which Spain played have a higher number of views and interactions than the rest, where the influence of the Hispanic audience has a direct impact. Likewise, unlike other channels, a specific event does not mark the channel's audience, but rather, the most viewed moments have been developed throughout the usual football calendar. Finally, the creation of content with little continuity generates a lower capacity of followers. Even so, it is the 33rd most watched sports channel in Spain and one of the most influential in the world of football.

6. Conclusions

The communication paradigm has evolved significantly with the advent of social networks, prompting television, radio, and the press to find new ways to reinvent themselves. In this context, the role of the communicator has become crucial, alongside new structures where the audience generates indirect content and influences the decision-making of the communicator (Manfredi-Sánchez et al., 2015). YouTube has emerged as the platform of choice for prominent figures in sports communication, as well as for traditional media, seeking to reach a larger audience and create differentiated content for their most loyal viewers. The platform's user-friendly interface is a key factor behind the significant evolution of this form of communication, enabling the creation of diverse content viewed globally through image and video. As such, YouTube has become an essential element of the new communication landscape (Rojas-Torrijos, 2014).

This study examines the influence of social networks and streaming platforms on a radio programme with a traditional format and structure, alongside the changes made to enable it to compete with the new sports content creators who dominated the main audience at the time. *Tiempo de Juego* on the COPE channel has successfully modernised its approach to radio through a complex process, developing new styles and experimenting with communication models, some of which are rarely seen in traditional radio.

Based on the research conducted, the influence of social networks on the communication process within football has been recognised. Social networks provide a new method of information management, offering greater agility and clarity. However, at times, this can be detrimental, creating dissonance in certain areas of communication. Despite this, the introduction of radio programmes, typical of traditional media such as *Tiempo de Juego*, lends a degree of credibility and accuracy to the news, while also entertaining viewers with prominent figures in the field.

Users have carved out a niche of influence within the communication process. They are no longer mere spectators of content development; instead, through their comments and interactions, they directly shape the communicative structure. An example of this evolution can be seen in the growth of the programme selected for this study. Initially, its content was more traditional, typical of radio stations. However, as time passed and YouTube was introduced for expansion, the content began to incorporate television-style ideas. Subsequently, the selected content was not only broadcast on YouTube but also shared across the programme's other social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok. This enabled the creation of bidirectional videos, leveraging the wide reach of live broadcasts from multiple perspectives. In this context, *Tiempo de Juego* has been one of the pioneers in Spain. While many journalists and communicators have managed to build communities within social networks, *Tiempo de Juego* has distinguished itself by understanding the digital space and creating a unique identity, as evidenced by the figures it has achieved.

During the European Championship in Germany, COPE's *Tiempo de Juego* channel did not develop its own themes beyond the matches being broadcast. Undoubtedly, the highlights were those related to the Spanish national team, which is understandable, given that it is a Spanish channel with significant influence on sports communication in the country. This explains the spikes in audience growth during national team matches and any content associated with them. It is important to highlight and observe how events of this scale are crucial to the growth of live sports channels, as they generate massive interest and active audience participation.

In conclusion, football and communication have always been closely intertwined, with their growth being continuous and establishing new paths for development within the communicative phenomenon. At this juncture, traditional media, such as radio, have sought to keep pace, reinventing themselves and reaching new audience segments. *Tiempo de Juego* has become a reference in Spain, successfully reaching a broad social audience by creating engaging football content. However, this phenomenon is ever-evolving, and its potential for innovation will shape the future of communication in football.

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