



# Content Analysis of Communication Strategies in Team 'Patrón Mejía': Effectiveness and Message Study

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**Abstract.** This research analyzes the communication strategies employed by the Club Deportivo “Patrón Mejía” between August 2024 and September 2024 on the digital platform Facebook, using a mixed-methods approach. Through content analysis and metric evaluation, the study examined the communication strategies, the diversity of formats, the level of interaction, and the participation of fans in the last six matches of the team in the Hexagonal Final of the AFNA Championship. The results revealed the performance of the Club Deportivo “Patrón Mejía” strategies, demonstrating the consistent use of graphic elements that strengthen the team's identity, and the application of three sub-strategies (general expectations for the team in the Hexagonal Final, expectations per match, and results per match). These strategies successfully captured attention and led to increased audience participation in the six matches of the Hexagonal Final. This study, conducted in the digital environment to understand the dynamics of engagement and active participation of the audience in sports events such as matches and team anniversaries in the Second Division Championship, revealed some issues between fans and the team due to the lack of information provided by the Club Deportivo “Patrón Mejía”.

**Keywords:** Ecuadorian football, communication strategies, social networks, Patrón Mejía.

## 1 Introduction

Sports are a social and cultural phenomenon that unites people. In Ecuador, football is one of the most watched and popular sports worldwide, with a strong football identity. Currently, communication plays a fundamental role in sports. Football teams employ certain communication strategies in new forms of interaction and audience participation on social networks, especially on Facebook, where reactions, likes, comments, and shares influence the construction of their followers' identity.

In the digital age, sports communication in digital media has increased significantly with the rise of streaming platforms, social networks, and sports-related websites.

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D. Barredo Ibáñez et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Communication and Applied Technologies 2025 (ICOMTA 2025)*, Atlantis Highlights in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities 42, [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-868-4\\_5](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-868-4_5)

The communication strategy of football clubs is to adapt to new technologies in user engagement with textual, photographic, and multimedia posts on social networks. The Instituto Nacional Mejía, founded on June 1, 1897, during the liberal government of President Eloy Alfaro, is one of the oldest public institutions in Quito and the second in Ecuador. It has over 127 years of history in public secular education, with notable alumni such as writer Jorge Carrera Andrade, former presidents Dr. Galo Plaza Lasso and Lic. Lenin Moreno Garcés, and former Quito mayor General Paco Moncayo.<sup>1</sup>

The Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" emerged from the dream of Dr. Víctor Hugo Zambrano, an alumnus of the Instituto Nacional Mejía, with the goal of reaching the first division of Ecuadorian football. In 2023, the team made history by winning its first title and being crowned champion of the Pichincha amateur tournament, earning promotion to the Second Category of Pichincha.<sup>2</sup>

This research addresses the following question: How do the communication strategies of the "Patrón Mejía" team influence interaction and positioning with its audience through the Facebook social network? To answer this question, the following specific objectives were set: 1) Analyze the content generated by the team in relation to its communication strategies, 2) Evaluate the level of audience interaction (likes, comments, reactions, and shares), and 3) Identify the most used communication elements, such as textual, visual, and audiovisual, in the "Patrón Mejía" team's Facebook posts.

### 1.1 Digital communication strategies

In the digital age, communication strategies have undergone significant transformation due to the growth of new technologies and the expansion of digital platforms. These tools have allowed companies, organizations, football teams, and media to access new forms of communication with their audiences in a more direct, effective, and efficient manner.

As González states, "social networks have become a way to capture the attention and interests of users through the interaction of visual content (...) through comments, likes, and shares, both for information, socialization, and entertainment" [1]. Digital media have promoted the creation of creative communication strategies in companies and organizations, including the use of multimedia content and transmedia storytelling. Videos, flyers, photographs, and press releases have become fundamental resources to attract user attention and communicate information in a more dynamic and impactful way. On the other hand, transmedia storytelling allows for the creation of new immersive experiences, connecting with the audience through different digital and streaming platforms.

### 1.2 Strategic communication

Strategic communication is a planning process for companies, organizations, brands, and football teams in the digital age, where the image and its link with the target audience are highlighted.

Strategic communication consists of projecting the identity of the organization through a coherent image, built through a narrative that reflects the values and objectives of the organization, while strengthening its presence in the business environment. According to Tironi & Cavallo, "strategic communication is the projection of an image of

the identity of organizations through an image that generates trust and a link with its target audience in a social and cultural environment" [2].

The theory of strategic communication works to understand the identity of the organization. Scheinsohn mentions that "strategic communication is a set of various resources through an image, video, or message from the company, causing various impressions and reactions from its employees or another social subject" [3].

Strategic communication in digital media has transformed into a connection between companies and their target audience about the identity and image of the organization, allowing the construction of a narrative and a corporate message of the company or brand. According to Tallarico, "digital communication media have provided connectivity, interactivity, and exchange among various users, creating a sense of belonging and strengthening ties between the organization and its audience in the new trends of the digital age" [4].

In the digital age, strategic communication in digital environments stands out in the adaptation of new trends, formats, and streaming platforms, where events, coverage, and strategies are planned to captivate brand sponsors, new followers, and increase views. According to Dominguez, "social networks develop an experience for users in content generation, responding to the interface or algorithm of the platform, such as Facebook, where its content ranges from text, images, and videos" [5]. Football teams use digital platforms to interact with their fans through the use of hashtags, comments, likes, and shares in the creation and dissemination of content about new signings, matches, or sporting events, allowing engagement with the audience and participation with new followers.

### 1.3 Persuasive communication

Persuasive communication is a communication practice through which a message, information, or ideas are transmitted through a communication channel, influencing the beliefs or actions of others. This communication is essential in other areas such as advertising, marketing, and interpersonal relationships in the behavior of the audience as they receive, interpret, and respond to a post on digital media.

Persuasion on social networks is used as a tool to influence sharing, beliefs, and the behavior of the listener or receiver of the message of a group. Brands, companies, and football teams create a message or content that captures the attention of fans or users, encouraging them to subscribe to the team's social networks. According to Basanta, "persuasive communication is a set of stimuli that modifies the thinking, speech, and action of people, influencing behavior and actions towards a post with some persuasive message" [6].

Persuasive communication on social networks aims to capture attention and modify the positions, beliefs, and behaviors of users. Digital platforms such as Kik, Twitch, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok facilitate interaction with persuasive messages through advertising videos, interviews, and testimonials, which seek to capture the attention and emotions of fans or the target audience.

On the other hand, persuasive communication refers to the influence on the opinion, attitude, and behavior of users by the receiver, through a new post with an attractive message that establishes an emotional connection with the audience. In this context,

people interact with each other in posts through likes, shares, and comments [7].

#### **1.4 Interaction on social networks**

Interaction on social networks has transformed the way people communicate, reflecting its impact on daily life as they connect to various digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter, according to user preferences. This has led to the creation of communities and a virtual identity, where pages of political parties, football teams, public figures, and clothing brands are followed, fostering interaction at a distance among users.

According to Cortes, "social networks are a digital system where users initiate a conversation with friends, family, and people from some part of the world on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Twitch, standing out in forums, video conferences, and online games, generating interaction among users on political, football, and cultural topics" [8].

In the digital age, interaction on online platforms has transformed the dynamics of communication and content dissemination. Companies, brands, and football teams generate a connection with their users through new content posted on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, allowing users to share and comment on relevant news, thus contributing to the construction of a virtual identity.

Virtual users participate through likes, comments, and information exchange, which increases interaction on digital platforms and causes a change in interpersonal communication. Through these interactions, they share photos, videos, experiences, and emotions related to sporting events. According to La Rosa Pinedo, "social networks produce a change in the way users interact, transforming reality among individuals who actively participate through a comment, a phrase, or emojis, exchanging opinions and messages on digital platforms" [9].

#### **1.5 Digital Identity**

Identity is a set of characteristic traits of a person or group that defines and distinguishes them, allowing them to face various everyday situations and form their personality. This set of traits differentiates them from others through interactions with other people or social groups that share cultural characteristics, ideas, customs, and even affinities such as a passion for football teams. According to Castro, "identity is a set of traits of an individual in the movement of masses, chants, nicknames, and the clothing of fans, where chants support the team both aggressively and positively, exalting the use of the body" [10].

Media and digital platforms facilitate new forms of communication with users, allowing for more direct and active interaction between brands, companies, and football teams with their followers. According to Cruz, "digital media recreate a collective and individual imaginary of users on platforms, building a cultural and digital identity where the imaginary of people emerges" [11].

#### **1.6 Patrón Mejía Sports Club**

The Instituto Nacional Mejía<sup>3</sup>, founded on June 1, 1897, during the liberal government of President Eloy Alfaro, is one of the first public secular education institutions in Quito. Initially, it began on the lands of the Christian brothers of the beaterio between Olmedo and Benalcázar streets. At the entrance of the institution, there are two statues representing General Eloy Alfaro and José Mejía Lequerica.

The Colegio Mejía has 127 years of history as one of the most representative institutions of public education in Ecuador. It has stood out not only for its academic excellence but also for its participation in sporting events, such as basketball and intercollegiate football. Among its graduates are prominent personalities of the country in different fields. Notable figures include writers such as Jorge Carrera Andrade, Jorge Icaza, and Jorge Enrique Adoum; former presidents such as Galo Plaza Lasso and Lenin Moreno; and political and social leaders such as former mayor General Paco Moncayo.

The motto of Colegio Mejía, "Per aspera ad astra," which means "Through hardships to the stars". [12], reflects the spirit of improvement that characterizes this institution and its students.

One of the most emblematic aspects of the school is its fan group known as "La Demencia Mejía," formed by students, alumni, and graduates. Their passion and creativity are reflected in the way they cheer for the football team, the war band, and their participation in various social events.

The Club Deportivo Patrón Mejía, founded in 2022 by alumni and graduates of Colegio Mejía, has brought the spirit of the institution to the professional sports arena. Inspired by Dr. Víctor Hugo Zambrano, the club sought to transfer the glory achieved in the student arena to professional football.

In 2023, the team achieved an important milestone by being crowned champion of the Pichincha Provincial Tournament in amateur football. This triumph marked its promotion to the Second Category of Pichincha, consolidating the Club Deportivo Patrón Mejía as a prominent representative of Ecuadorian football.

## 2 Methodology

This research is developed using a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative elements, and aims to analyze the content of the communication strategies employed by the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" on its Facebook page. This digital platform focuses on disseminating information related to the coverage of matches and events during the Hexagonal Final of the AFNA 2024 Tournament.

The research is descriptive in nature. Within this framework, the following variable was examined: the type of content published and user interaction. According to Cauas, the term "variable" is understood as an observable characteristic of a phenomenon. It is also related to causality, dependence, and the influence of individuals on one another, encompassing all things or phenomena that can take on different values [13]

The descriptive method focuses on the observation and description of a specific situation, phenomenon, or group. In this research, this method was applied to observe and describe the last four matches of the Hexagonal Final of the Second Division Championship. As defined by Hernández Sampieri & Mendoza, "The descriptive ap-

proach examines the characteristics, profiles of a social group, data collection, and verification of variables between a brand, company, or football team and its relationship with its group, community, or fan base" [14].

The techniques used were content analysis and observation. The first technique was implemented by analyzing the communication strategies of the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" on social networks, specifically Facebook, from August 1 to September 1, 2024. For this purpose, the content published and the participation of fans were considered. Additionally, a content analysis of the team's posts was conducted to understand the participatory culture in digital media.

The detailed selection of information was fundamental to obtaining representative results from the posts. Various metrics related to the published content were collected, such as the type of post, text, hashtags, interactions, and reach.

For the collection and analysis of data related to the team's communication strategy within the digital community of the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" during the last six matches of the Hexagonal Final of the AFNA Second Division Championship, a matrix was used. This matrix, adapted from Meza (2024), was tailored to the specific requirements of the research. Ten posts from the platform with the highest interaction on Facebook were selected for content analysis. [15].

Finally, non-participant observation involved an approach to user interactions and cultural dynamics in the digital and virtual spaces of the fandom, allowing for a deeper understanding of the relationships and behaviors within these environments.

### 3 Results

The analysis of Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía"'s communication strategies during the Hexagonal Final reveals structured and effective planning in using digital platforms, specifically Facebook, to interact with its audience. Posts are divided into three main categories: squad expectation posts, match expectation posts, and result posts. Each category uses consistent visual and textual elements such as logos, player photographs, motivational phrases, and hashtags that reinforce team identity and encourage follower engagement.

Squad expectation posts include player lists, match details (date, time, stadium), and team support phrases. These posts achieve moderate reach (200-300 people) with interactions ranging between 125-335. The use of 12-16 hashtags increases visibility and attracts fans seeking team information.

Match expectation posts highlight both teams' logos, player photographs, and match details. Those including ticket price information achieve greater reach (300-400 people) and show notable team support, especially in high-rivalry matches. Sponsor presence in the central section reinforces connections with associated brands. Result posts generate the highest engagement, reaching up to 700 people with 615 interactions. These posts, which include final match results and celebratory/motivational phrases, are published immediately, maximizing impact and encouraging active follower participation.

Collectively, Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" communication strategies demonstrate effective adaptation to digital platforms by combining attractive graphic content, persuasive narratives, and interaction metrics to maximize engagement with soccer fans. Audience segmentation and use of consistent visual/textual elements reflect well-structured strategic planning aimed at meeting followers' informational and emotional needs.

**Table 1.** Communication strategy analysis: Club deportivo "Patrón Mejía".

| CATEGORY            | DETAILED DESCRIPTION  |
|---------------------|---|
| POST TYPE           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Squad expectation announcements</li> <li>• 7th round match previews</li> <li>• 7th round results</li> </ul>  |
| VISUAL ELEMENTS     | <p>[Graphics] Team logos (Patrón Mejía + rivals)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Player action photos</li> <li>• Official team crests</li> <li>• Color scheme: White &amp; yellow branding</li> </ul>  |
| POST STRUCTURE      | <p><b>Left Column:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Match details (date/time/stadium)</li> <li>- Ticket pricing (pre-match)</li> </ul> <p><b>Center:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opponent team logos</li> <li>- Featured players</li> </ul> <p><b>Right Column:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Squad lineup (pre-match)</li> <li>- Social media handles</li> </ul> |
| SPONSORS            | <p>San Francisco de Asis • Elohim • Pancita Selecta • Fibramax<br/>Martining • TropiBurger • G.A. Security</p>  |
| CONTENT STRATEGY    | <p><b>Pre-Match Posts:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Motivational captions</li> <li>2. Essential match info</li> <li>3. Ticket availability</li> <li>4. Hashtag campaigns (4-15 tags)</li> </ol> <p><b>Post-Match:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Final score highlights</li> <li>2. Celebratory messages</li> <li>3. Fan engagement tags</li> </ol>                               |
| PERFORMANCE METRICS | <p>[Chat] Interactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 125-615 per post</li> <li>• Peak engagement: Results posts</li> </ul>  |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
|                     | <p><b>Reach:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200-700 users</li> <li>• Best performance: Results posts</li> </ul> <p><b>Impressions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15-89 per post</li> </ul> |
| <b>KEY HASHTAGS</b> | <p>#ClubDeportivoPatronMejiaOficial • #PatrónMejia</p> <p>• #FutbolEcuatoriano</p> <p>#TodaLaVida • #JuntosPorElAscenso</p>   |
| <b>REFERENCE</b>    | <p><a href="#">Facebook Post Example</a></p> <p><i>Self-developed analysis</i></p>  |

The analysis results demonstrate that Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" communication strategies during the 2024 Second Category Championship's Hexagonal Final were effective in promoting active audience participation on digital platforms. The combination of attractive graphic content, persuasive narratives, and interaction metrics allowed the team to strengthen its identity and meaningfully connect with followers.

Squad expectation posts played a key informational role, providing essential match details and generating anticipation among fans. While their reach was moderate, these posts laid the foundation for maintaining audience interest before each match.

Match expectation posts proved more effective in terms of reach, particularly when including ticket price information. This suggests fans value not only match details but also event accessibility. Sponsor inclusion in these posts also reflects well-planned strategies to strengthen relationships with associated brands.

Finally, result posts generated the highest impact in both reach and interaction. The immediacy of result sharing, along with celebratory/motivational phrases, allowed the team to capitalize on fan enthusiasm and promote active digital platform participation. In conclusion, Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" successfully adapted to social media dynamics by using communication strategies that combine attractive visual content, emotional narratives, and interaction metrics. This approach not only strengthened fan connections but also positioned the team as a reference in using digital platforms for sports promotion.

#### 4 Conclusion

The study aimed to analyze the communication strategies<sup>1</sup> of the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" and their impact on user participation during the sporting events of the Hexagonal Final of the AFNA Championship between August and September 2024. Through a methodology that integrated content analysis and observation, the proposed objectives were achieved, focusing on the dynamics of participation and interaction of the team's football community on digital platforms.

In the first part, key components of the communication strategy of the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" in the coverage of the Hexagonal Final of the 2024 Second Division Championship were identified. The analysis of graphic content published on the Facebook platform revealed the use of a color palette and various visual elements that represented the team's identity, such as logos, icons, photographs, slogans, and banners.

Additionally, three fundamental strategies were identified: general expectations for the championship, expectations per match, and results per match. These strategies contributed to the connection, interest, and participation of the audience before,

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<sup>1</sup> N. Aguiar et al. "The implementation of interactive content strategies and the development of online communities significantly enhance opportunities for meaningful audience engagement. [...] The main advantage of digital marketing lies in its ability to provide precise, real-time analytics on audience behavior, peak engagement times, preferred platforms, and interaction patterns." *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, pp. 1005-1506 (2025).

during, and after the matches.

Secondly, the content generated by the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" in relation to its communication strategies was analyzed, observing the combination of graphic content, match summary videos, and social media posts. This combination reflected detailed planning of the user experience and participation on digital platforms. The use of hashtags, reels, posts, and advertising elements also demonstrated participatory plan- ning adapted to digital platforms.

Finally, the level of audience engagement with the team's sports content during the Second Division Championship of the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" was analyzed using metrics such as comments, reactions, and shares. The results of the analysis revealed notable reach and interaction in some of the team's matches in the Hexagonal Final, such as the match between "Patrón Mejía" and Aampetra.

The analysis of the communication strategies of the Club Deportivo "Patrón Mejía" during the Hexagonal Final of the Second Division Promotion Championship positively contributed to the active participation of the virtual audience. The use of graphic ele- ments such as photographs of players, fans, referees, and videos, along with defined sub-strategies and proper adaptation to digital platforms, fostered interest, active par- ticipation, and notable satisfaction among its fans and followers.

**Disclosure of Interests.** The authors declare no competing interests relevant to the content of this article.

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