

# Management strategies of the Madrid Community golf clubs on Twitter

## Estrategias de gestión de los clubes de golf de la Comunidad de Madrid en Twitter

### Estratégias de gestão no Twitter dos clubes de golfe da Comunidade de Madrid

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#### ABSTRACT

Social networks provide companies and brands with a more direct communication and facilitate greater interactivity with their audiences. Through a content analysis of the Twitter profiles of the golf clubs of the Community of Madrid, we examine whether their nature—public, private or commercial—influences how these networks are managed. It is concluded that the nature of the club accounts for differences in the communication strategies: in the private and public clubs, the informative messages predominate, whereas in those emitted by the commercial clubs, there is a prevalence of strategies linked to marketing.

**Keywords:** Corporate communication; public and private enterprise; Twitter; golf course; interactivity.

#### RESUMEN

*Las redes sociales aportan una comunicación directa de las empresas y marcas y facilitan una mayor interactividad con sus públicos. Mediante un análisis de contenido de los perfiles de Twitter de los clubes de golf de la Comunidad de Madrid, se examina si su naturaleza—pública, privada o comercial— influye en cómo se gestionan estas redes. Entre las conclusiones, destacan diferencias en las estrategias comunicacionales según la naturaleza del club: en los privados y públicos predominan los mensajes informativos, mientras que en los emitidos por los comerciales prevalece una estrategia vinculada al marketing.*

**Palabras clave:** Comunicación corporativa; empresas públicas y privadas; Twitter; campos de golf; interactividad.

#### RESUMO

As redes sociais permitem a comunicação direta das empresas e das marcas e facilitam uma maior interatividade destas com os seus públicos. Através de uma análise de conteúdo dos perfis mantidos no Twitter pelos clubes de golfe da Comunidade de Madrid, examina-se se a sua natureza—pública, privada ou comercial—influencia a forma como essas redes são geridas. Entre as conclusões destacam-se as diferenças nas estratégias de comunicação de acordo com a natureza dos clubes: nos privados e públicos predominam as mensagens informativas; ao contrário, nos comerciais prevalece uma estratégia vinculada ao marketing.

**Palavras-chave:** Comunicação corporativa; empresas públicas e privadas; Twitter; campos de golfe; interatividade.

#### How to cite:

López de Ayala, M. C.; Fernández, J. G. & Catalina García, B. (2018). Estrategias de gestión de los clubes de golf de la Comunidad de Madrid en Twitter. *Cuadernos.info*, (42),71-84. <https://doi.org/10.7764/cdi.42.1304>

## INTRODUCTION

Symmetric communication and the creation of relationships are the main principles of public relations (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Ledingham, 2003). The goal of this discipline is to strengthen links with different publics (Cornelissen, 2008; Van Riel, 2005) to gain their support, consensus and loyalty, thus generating a good company image (Villafaña, 2002). The extension of interactive means of social communication facilitates this task (Grunig, 2011; Vernuccio, 2014; Wright & Hinson, 2015) due to their great potential to generate, at a low cost, an open and direct dialogue between the company and its stakeholders (Kang, 2014; Watkins, 2017).

Companies are aware that social media are becoming prescriptive spaces to which users come to stay informed about brands or companies and show their adhesion or bring up their critiques. In 2016, 66.8% of Spanish participated in social networks; young people between 16 and 24 years old accounted for more than 90% (91.1%) (INE, 2017). Regarding brands, 83% of Internet users declare to follow them through social networks, and of these, 39% say they do it with intensity (IAB, 2017). These followers no longer limit themselves to get information: 75.15% somehow responds to the brand in social networks, 20.53% suggest or recommend it and 4.17% generate content in relation to it (IAB, 2016), thus acquiring an active role in the transmission of the organizations' image (Şerban, 2016).

Despite the opportunities that social media offers to organizations to establish a more personal dialogue with the public, several studies have shown that companies underutilize the interactivity capabilities of social networks to communicate with their audiences (Herrera & Requejo, 2012; Watkins, 2017).

There is also a predominance of a marketing strategy aimed primarily at the promotion of the company and its products (Sung & Kim, 2014; Şerban, 2016; García, 2017) rather than a corporate communication strategy focused on the entire organization and as a representation before its stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2008). This promotional orientation is linked to a low index of interactivity, which rises when dealing with issues that are not strictly corporative (Ruiz, 2012). However, the objectives that guide the activity of public and private organizations diverge: public enterprises need to be legitimated socially, while private companies maintain a more direct orientation towards the pursuit of economic benefits. This discrepancy in the objectives can affect the way in

which both orient their communication strategy in social networks.

Although there is more and more research that analyzes the presence and use of social media in different sectors, there is a lack of research that studies the influence of the nature of the organization on the strategies deployed in these platforms as public relations tools. This paper aims to know to what extent and how public, private or commercial golf clubs use Twitter—the social network with the greatest presence of service companies (Costa-Sánchez & Fontela, 2016)—to contribute to the main principles of public relations and encourage bidirectional, interactive, symmetric and dialogical communication with their audiences.

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Interactive social media has become a tool that allows the construction of relationships between organizations and their stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2008), favoring the generation of mutual trust and the strengthening of the companies' reputation.

Dijkmans, Kerkhof, Buyukcan-Tetik and Beukeboom (2015) argue that the growing presence of organizations in social networks would imply that the perception that people have of them is mostly based on their exposure in these platforms; they also suggest that activity in social media predisposes to a positive attitude towards the reputation of the company. Likewise, Vernuccio (2014) points out that the ability to interact and the openness of Web 2.0 offers companies the opportunity to interact with their stakeholders and encourage their participation to establish, maintain and strengthen the brand's image and reputation.

According to Vernuccio (2014), from the point of view of corporate communication, organizations can use social media at different levels. The egocentric strategy (Colleoni, 2013) is aimed towards the dissemination of information and makes limited use of the followers' retweets, contributing to the public visibility of the company and its popularity (Bonson, Bednarova, & Escobar-Rodríguez, 2014). Through these platforms, an organization can disseminate information about its activity, identity and values, share knowledge, promote its products or connect with its audiences in different formats (Cho, Phillips, Hageman, & Patten., 2009; Dijkmans et al., 2015). The dialogic strategy requires listening to the interested parties

and initiating interactive forms of communication that generate a direct dialogue with their publics: sending direct messages to the followers, spreading their contributions and responding to their comments. Through effective listening, the company can detect relevant issues for its audiences and their opinions on specific topics (Colleoni, 2013; Salo, Lehtimäki, Simula, & Mäntymäki, 2013). This strategy allows, for example, to identify the image that the public has of the organization and detect reputational damage before it is extended and consolidated (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013).

Organizations can also make it easier for audiences to get involved in these conversations and offer them the opportunity to participate collaboratively in problem solving, as well as manage conflicts and improve their relationships (Men & Tsai, 2015). As Şerban (2016) states, the interested parties are no longer passive recipients of the company's messages on social networks, but actively participate in the process of communication and creation of the corporate image for other audiences.

Several studies have found that the interactivity in the messages positively influences the attitude towards the company, generating credibility and commitment of the followers (Li & Li, 2014; Men & Tsai, 2015; Laroche et al., 2013; Kim, Sung, & Kang, 2014). Consequently, some authors propose different tools that can favor a more strategic and dialogical management that promotes user participation: questions, contests or raffles (Men & Tsai, 2012; Sisson, 2017), lifestyle contents (IAB, 2016), multimedia features (Kim, Kim, & Sung, 2011; Gao, 2016), or the inclusion of links (Aced & Lalueza, 2016).

Despite the advantages of dialogue and participation offered by social media for the creation of good relations with their publics, companies seem to maintain a certain amount of mistrust regarding the interactive use of social networks (Watkins, 2017; Aced & Lalueza, 2016). Waters and Williams (2011) found that the exchange of information tends to be the main use of social networks among public relations professionals, and, in the Twitter environment, Rybalko and Seltzer (2010) pointed out that 39% of organizations maintain a non-dialogical orientation.

Costa-Sánchez and Fontela (2016) went further and found that half of the main Spanish companies develop –in terms of corporate reputation– a strategy of presence rather than of proactivity in audiovisual social networks. On the other hand, Macnamara and

Zerfass (2012) affirm that the use of social networks in organizations is mostly experimental and ad hoc, rather than being strategically planned.

Other authors have found that companies use Facebook to promote their products and services rather than to gain the trust of their stakeholders (Şerban, 2016) or to disseminate messages related to corporate social responsibility (Kim et al., 2011). Regarding YouTube, a study of companies in twelve countries in the euro zone, in nineteen subsectors, shows its mainly promotional use and reveals that the sector –if it has more or less direct contact with the public– affects the degree of activity (Bonson et al., 2014).

### **CORPORATE COMMUNICATION IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS**

In the realm of organizations, there are differences between the public and private sectors. These have to do, to a large extent, with the fact that in the first there is a prevalence of public good objectives and greater regularization, while private companies have a more commercial nature and pursue the maximization of profits for their shareholders. However, in recent years there has been a tendency for public organizations to adopt the practices attributed to the private sector to improve their efficiency (Gelders, Bouckaert, & Van Ruler, 2007). However, as stated by Serrat (2017), these increasingly blurred borders between the two sectors do not imply that the public sector abandons traditional aspects, such as accountability.

From the point of view of corporate communication, public relations are fundamental in the generation of credibility, reputation and legitimacy of public organizations. In addition, they constitute a key element in the transmission of an image in accordance with its objectives, which include a commitment to social responsibility linked to transparency and dialogue with its stakeholders. On the contrary, marketing communication is oriented towards the direct promotion of products and services, more akin to private companies.

Regarding relations, Wilcox and Cameron (2012) also suggest that the public relations model implemented by the organization depends, among other things, on the sector to which the company belongs. These authors find that the press agent model, characterized by the unidirectional communication of the organization towards the public, with a clear promotional objective, would be more present among

sectors that promote, among others, sports or culture. Within the same unidirectional approach, but with an orientation towards transparent communication and accountability, the public information model would be more widespread among public administration, among others. On the other hand, the bidirectional asymmetric model, in which great attention is paid to the demands and opinions of the public, is linked to companies that face great competition, many of which sell consumer products, while it is more likely that large companies—which must show a socially responsible behavior to their government regulators, adapting to the situations and demands of the public in search of a consensus—(Grunig, 1992) use the bidirectional symmetric model.

In a similar vein, Preciado-Hoyos and Guzmán-Ramírez (2012) conclude that, although a bidirectional public relations model also exists in the public sector, there is still predominance of a short-term orientation, with the use of models like the press agent or of public information. The results of Bustos-Salinas (2016) regarding the management of social networks in the hospital sphere point in the same direction: public funding entities mostly disseminate news, as opposed to the marketing perspective privileged in private hospitals.

Despite the proliferation of studies that analyze the management of social networks in different sectors, research that addresses a comparative perspective is scarce. Therefore, more studies are required to examine how the public or private nature affects the communicative strategies of organizations from different sectors in an environment in which, increasingly, the private management model becomes the benchmark for organizations, while, from the perspective of public relations, there is a preference for a model based on the construction of relationships, that seeks the trust and loyalty of all stakeholders, including customers and consumers.

One of the activities in which public and private action converges is golf. This industry encompasses a sporting, economic and social activity of great importance. A report by Aymerich and Anabitarte (2016) states that, in Spain, golf generates 2000 million euros per year, and that an important part comes from tourism. Madrid is the community with the most golf amateur players in Spain, where this is the sport with the highest number of associated members. In this autonomous region there are 37 clubs with golf courses, either of 18 or 9 holes, and—as of January 1, 2017—there

are 81,836 associated players (Federación de Golf de Madrid, 2017).

The possibilities offered by new technologies and the rapid development of social networks have also been noted in this sector; these technologies broaden the options of making themselves known and improving their relations with their publics.

Numerous studies have placed the focus of their analysis on Twitter, a tool that facilitates the debate and exchange of information (Bustos & Ruiz, 2016) in real time (Castelló, Del Pino, & Ramos, 2014), to study how different entities apply the dialogic principles in social platforms (Watkins, 2017). Likewise, Barnes and Lescault (2014) found that 83% of Fortune 500 companies had Twitter activity at least once a month. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that, although some studies focus attention on tourism (Huertas & Mariné, 2014; Paniagua, Rabassa, & Setó, 2015) or on sports (Williams & Chinn, 2010), there are hardly any studies—none in the academic field—that analyze how the management of social media in golf clubs is being implemented.

## OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research is to know to what extent and how clubs with golf courses use social media to contribute to the main principles of public relations, promoting symmetrical communication and managing relationships with their audiences. More specifically, we examine the degree of activity on Twitter of the golf clubs in the Community of Madrid, based on their ownership (public, private or commercial), and we analyze if this aspect influences the type of strategies they implement.

The specific objectives are:

- Know how many clubs with golf courses have accounts on Twitter and the tools they use in their management, regarding their public, commercial or private nature.
- Identify the content strategy, which we have classified, according to the theory gathered in the theoretical framework, in three categories according to the type of activity in their accounts: marketing strategy, information strategy to promote the corporate image and dialogical or relational strategy.

## METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND SAMPLE SELECTION

To identify the accounts that the clubs with golf courses in the Community of Madrid keep active on Twitter, we conducted a first follow-up on this social network. Of the 37 clubs identified by the Golf Federation, six were eliminated because they did not have their own course or they had closed. Of the remaining, twenty have a profile on Twitter. However, some of the accounts have hardly any activity: three had around twenty tweets and others only has created the profile, with one, two or no posted messages. These profiles were discarded.

### PROCESS

We applied a content analysis to ten corporate accounts that had 100 or more tweets since the profile was created until February 17, 2017. It is worth mentioning the decision to include the account of the Centro de Tecnificación FGM, with only 90 tweets, since the recent creation of the account (May 2016) indicates that there is an active management of it. The analysis was extended throughout 2016—from January 1 to December 31—and nine accounts were analyzed.

### VARIABLES EXAMINED IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE ACCOUNTS

Based on the referenced literature, we elaborated a code sheet adapted to the object of study:

- Number of tweets.
  - Retweets: messages that are sent from other accounts to be spread among followers.
  - Use of hashtags: the symbol # is used to link the tweets of the same topic and makes it easier for the person to find the messages they are looking for.
  - Mentions: it is used placing the @ symbol in front of the name of the person we want to address, although any Internet user has the possibility of reading and interacting with it.
  - Links to YouTube: allow redirecting interested users to another page where that information is found.
  - Multimedia: inclusion of photos and videos.
- Theme of the published tweets regarding the type of strategy. This classification derives from the literature reviewed:
    - › Marketing strategy: refers to content aimed at directly promoting the sale of products and services.
      - Self-promotion: information on products and services offered, courses, championships, including store products.
    - › Information strategy to promote the corporate image: information about the company and corporate social responsibility (hereinafter CSR), aimed at generating a positive image of the club. It contains the following subsections:
      - Information about their events, i.e., departure times, rankings, results, among others.
      - Users or professionals of the center achievements (example: “Not long ago, he trained here, today he is an important player... congratulations”).
      - Sponsorship of the course, social action and CSR.
    - › Dialogical or relational strategy: oriented to the formation of links (good relations) with the public, establishing personal relationships with them, directly linked to the degree of interactivity achieved. It includes the following elements:
      - Information about events and news from the world of golf not linked to the company: championships, tournaments, prizes, rankings, special external events, golf personalities.
      - Educational: tips, recommendations, demonstrations, new materials, tutorials, among others.
      - Lifestyle: related leisure activities not linked to the activity of the company: news

about health, gastronomy, other sports, travel, among others).

- Seasonal or daily greetings.
  - Questions, contests, raffles, that facilitate interaction.
  - Sponsored links.
- › Interactivity of the accounts, which has been measured using two indicators:
- User activity in response to the messages issued by the account managers. They include:
    - Retweets: messages that the followers of the accounts post to share with their followers, contributing to spread the messages of the accounts analyzed.
    - Likes, previously known as favorites. Allows to save tweets in a section of our own account to read them again when we want.
    - Comments from followers, which in turn are classified as: request for information/question; positive messages regarding the brand, emotional support and self-expression (includes laughter or emoticons); neutral messages that provide additional information; negative messages (complaints and criticism about the company); comments not related to the brand.
- › Feedback: responses from clubs to comments from supporters.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

The contents were manually coded and recorded in a database for later analysis with SPSS v.22.

To test the classification and clarity of the descriptions and ensure the reliability of the data, the two researchers who coded the contents of the profiles tested the scheme with a limited temporal sample. In this phase, we identified areas of confusion and clarified discrepancies and doubts, setting the framework of the final coding.

## RESULTS

### GENERAL DATA

A first approach to the use of Twitter by the clubs with golf courses of the Community of Madrid reveals a limited activity. Only twenty clubs have profiles in this social network, and slightly more than half are inactive or practically do not show activity.

Among the nine clubs that have an active management on Twitter to communicate with their audience, there is an overrepresentation of those of public initiative (two of the three existing) against commercial (five of twenty) and, especially, private (two of twelve). Table 1 shows its characteristics.

### ACTIVITY IN THE ACCOUNTS OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL CLUBS WITH GOLF COURSES

The number of tweets published during the period analyzed ranges from 45 to 401. In general, it is observed that commercial clubs maintain a greater dynamism, with an average of 211 tweets compared to 179 of the public clubs and 97 of the private.

Slightly less than half of these messages are retweets from messages from other accounts. However, the tendency to retweet contents varies considerably from one account to another, and is more common among private golf courses (63% of all tweets) than in commercial (49.2%) or public (20.1%).

As for the multimedia possibilities of Twitter, there is a relatively intensive inclusion of photographs (more than two thirds of the messages contain them) and very little of videos. Over a third of the published tweets contain mentions and hashtags, but only three links to YouTube were found throughout the year.

Depending on the commercial, public or private nature of the accounts, there are significant differences in the use of videos and mentions in the messages sent from private accounts, as well as a greater propensity to publish hashtags in the profiles of the commercial clubs.

The thematic area more used by the messages is self-promotion, followed by the information of their own events and greetings. On the contrary, there is scarce reference to educational content, questions, contests or raffles, sponsorships, social action and CSR –all of them below 1 %– and lifestyle.

Of these contents, 93% of lifestyle messages, 79% of golf contents, 77% of greetings and 67% of educational content come from other accounts. On the contrary, the publications of sponsorships, social action and CSR (11%), self-promotions (28%) and information (29%) are contents generated by the profile managers.



Account	Field nature	Antiquity	Followers	Following	Number of tweets
@Encíngolf	Commercial	Apr-11	2971	608	1104
@elrobledalgolf	Commercial	Oct-13	507	263	503
@golfoliva	Commercial	Jan-12	234	14	114
@escuela_golfFGM	Public	May-16	90	1	92
@cngolfmadrid	Public	Apr-09	3809	482	1507
@golfjardinaran	Commercial	Oct-11	1594	970	1468
@retamaresgolf	Private	Jun-12	738	369	792
@rcglaherreria	Private	Feb-11	1698	833	1040
@la penuela	Commercial	Nov-11	453	157	595

Table 1. Characteristics of the active accounts of the golf clubs of the Community of Madrid. Data registered as of February 17, 2016

Source: Own elaboration.

Account	Tweets (totals)	Retweets	Photo	Video	@	#	YouTube link
Public	359	20.06%	67.69%	1.67%	25.07%	27.30%	0.28%
Private	195	63.08%	68.72%	5.64%	64.62%	30.26%	0.00%
Commercial	1056	49.24%	67.14%	5.49%	35.98%	38.45%	0.19%
Total	1610	44.41%	67.45%	4.66%	37.02%	34.97%	0.19%

Table 2. Number of tweets and horizontal percentages of retweets, photos, videos, mentions, hashtags and links to YouTube regarding the number of tweets in the active Twitter accounts of the golf clubs of the Community of Madrid

Source: Own elaboration.

It is not surprising that in the commercial golf courses self-promotion (marketing strategy) predominates over any other content (44% of tweets), while the dialogic strategy, in its various forms, occupies a second place (29.4%). On the contrary, in the private and public clubs the information strategy predominates, with 48.7% and 45% respectively. Self-promotion ranks second in public golf courses (31.2%), and the dialogical strategy dominates, mainly due to news about golf, in the private ones (21.4%).

When looking at more specific contents in the dialogical and informative strategy, it is worth noting that greetings reach a certain importance in the

commercial (18.3%) and private clubs (14.4%); this is lower in public clubs (6.7%), where it is behind golf news (15%). Another aspect to mention is the practically insignificant percentage of publications linked to sponsorships, social action and CSR, regardless of the ownership of the field.

#### INTERACTIVITY IN THE ACCOUNTS: THE USERS' RESPONSE

From a different perspective, this section analyzes the effectiveness of the management of the accounts regarding the users' activity. Specifically, we examine the dissemination of the golf club tweets in other

Themes	Public	Private	Commercial	Totals
<b>Marketing strategy:</b>				
Autopromotion	31.20%	14.36%	43.94%	604
<b>Informative strategy:</b>				
Own events information	40.39%	48.21%	20.83%	459
Users/professionals achievements	3.90%	0.00%	5.30%	70
Sponsorship/Social action/CSR	0.56%	0.51%	0.57%	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>44.85%</b>	<b>48.72%</b>	<b>26.70%</b>	<b>539</b>
<b>Dialogical/relational strategy:</b>				
Golf news	15.04%	21.54%	5.97%	750
Educative	0.28%	0.00%	0.47%	6
Lifestyle	0.28%	0.51%	3.88%	43
Greetings	6.69%	14.36%	18.28%	245
Questions, contests, draws	0.00%	0.51%	0.19%	3
Sponsored links	1.67%	0.00%	0.57%	12
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23.96%</b>	<b>36.92%</b>	<b>29.36%</b>	<b>750</b>

Table 3. Themes of the messages published regarding the nature of the golf courses in vertical percentages and total data

Source: Own elaboration.

accounts, the “like” selection and the comments of users to the published messages, as well as the feedback generated among the managers.

Three quarters of all published messages have received “likes” and slightly less –72.2% of all messages– have been retweeted on some occasion by followers. However, of the 1610 tweets published in the accounts of clubs with golf courses, only 11.8% have received comments from their followers.

The propensity of these followers to disseminate in their accounts the published tweets and “like” them depends on the nature of the club: 88.7% of the messages of the private clubs are retweeted, compared to 73.7% of the messages of commercial clubs and 59% of the public; 83.6% is liked, in contrast with 77.2% of commercial clubs and 63% of public, respectively. Regarding the average number of responses in relation

to the volume of tweets published, the private clubs maintain the leadership: 3.6 and 5, respectively.

On the other hand, private clubs get a higher percentage of commented tweets: 19% compared to 14% of public and 10% of commercial. However, public golf courses have a higher volume of comments (187), with a higher average in relation to the number of messages issued.

Of the 383 user comments, most are requests for information (191) and positive messages (142). In this regard, it should be noted that despite the criticism of social networks as channeling spaces for complaints and negative comments, these are very low in the case of Twitter profiles of golf clubs.

Finally, and in order to visualize the degree of real dialogue maintained by the account managers, we analyzed their responses to the comments of the



Account	Tweets Totals	Retweeted		Like		Comments	
		%	( )	%	( )	%	( )
Public	359	59.05%	2.4	62.95%	4.1	52.09%	0.52
Private	195	88.72%	3.6	83.59%	5	23.59%	0.24
Commercial	1056	73.67%	2.9	77.18%	4.6	14.20%	0.14
Totals	1610	72.24%	2.6	74.78%	4	1.99%	0.11

Table 4. Number of tweets in absolute and average data and percentages of retweeted messages, "likes" and comments regarding the number of tweets in the active Twitter accounts of the golf clubs of the Community of Madrid

Source: Own elaboration.

	Information petition	Complaint/ Suggestion	Information	Positive messages	Neutral messages	Complaint/ Suggestion	Comments from outside the company
Public	176	0	0	3	1	0	7
Private	4	1	0	26	15	0	0
Commercial	11	5	6	113	7	7	1
Totals	191	6	6	142	23	7	8

Table 5. Types of comments of the followers of the active Twitter accounts of the golf clubs of the Community of Madrid

Source: Own elaboration.

followers. Of the 383 messages from the followers, there were only ten responses: one is a response to a request for information, two to complaints with suggestions, two to neutral messages and three to positive messages; finally, two other responses consist of adding comments to what had already been said.

## CONCLUSIONS

Academics and professionals place the focus on the potential of social media to promote business/audience dialogue and improve the commitment of the latter. However, a first conclusion of this study refers to the low percentage of profiles that golf clubs in the Community of Madrid maintain active on Twitter: even though almost two thirds have created an account, more than half of them do not actively manage it. This suggests

that there is some exploratory curiosity about the tool, but the interest in exploiting its benefits to interact with the audiences does not blossom. In this regard, future lines of research should investigate, with qualitative methods (in-depth interviews and discussion groups of audiences of these accounts, for example), the possible causes that determine the disaffection of these entities with the social networks and the digital environment for their promotion and interconnection with their users.

Oriented to a marketing strategy, the commercial clubs are the most active, with a higher volume of tweets and hashtags, the main tool to favor a dialogue that exceeds the dimensions of the specific profile in which that message was generated. They are also the ones that provide the most feedback to their users.

Public clubs, on the other hand, implement an information strategy, focused mainly on the

dissemination of events rather than social actions, sponsorship or CSR, and manage to get a greater number of comments. However, they do not overlook the commercial nature that has also penetrated in this area. It should be remembered that the second most mentioned item in the accounts of commercial clubs is information, while self-promotion occupies that place in the public ones. Alien to this dynamic are private clubs, which privilege information about golf, followed by greetings and self-promotion. By making limited use of the accounts, these entities manifest a clearly informative and relational strategy, and relegate the commercial aspect.

## DISCUSSION

These results are consistent with those of Bustos-Salinas (2016) in reference to public and private hospitals; despite having a different object of study, both researches are framed in the same terms of identity and corporate promotion. Likewise, they are consistent with the predominance of the public information model in entities oriented to the public good and subject to greater control by their audience (Wilcox & Cameron, 2012). However, they also show the importance that the commercial aspect has achieved in the space of public organizations.

Private clubs, with a more informative and relational orientation, better exploit the possibilities of Twitter and incorporate retweets, videos and mentions in their messages, which translates into a superior “like” number and greater dissemination of their messages. These results would be similar to the proposal of Ruiz (2012), who attributes a low index of interactivity to the promotional orientation that increases in the non-strictly corporative topics.

In any case, the use of tools that favor a more strategic and dialogical management, such as questions, contests or raffles (Men & Tsai, 2012; Sisson, 2017), lifestyle contents (IAB, 2016), multimedia functions –particularly videos– (Kim et al., 2011; Gao, 2016)

or the inclusion of links (Aced & Lalueza, 2016) is limited, as well as the active participation of users. In line with the above, when we focus on the elements that most clearly indicate the implementation of a true dialogue between companies and their stakeholders in social networks, the outlook is bleak: only 11% of the messages published get comments from the users, and there were only ten responses by the account managers; regarding feedback, the monopoly is of public clubs.

Regarding this last point, the data show the lack of interest of the account managers to generate a debate that allows going beyond knowing the demands and opinions of the audience –asymmetric bidirectional model– and orienting them to create a consensus in a more symmetrical relationship. This is evident if we consider that 191 contributions are requests for information and there are thirteen complaints, six accompanied by suggestions.

Despite the insistence on the need to create bidirectional links that help build relationships between the organization and its stakeholders, the theory clashes with the evidence. On the one hand, organizations are still suspicious of the possibilities of interaction provided by Twitter, making limited use of the resources offered by the platforms and without responding to doubts and other comments from users. On the other, the response of the followers is meager.

Finally, although the information extracted provides relevant results regarding the management of the Twitter accounts of companies of different nature in a relevant sector of the Spanish economy, this research is limited to a very specific sector, that of golf courses. It should also be borne in mind that the academic literature has been very limited in proposing analyzes similar to the one developed in this study. Consequently, it would be convenient to replicate this research in this and other areas in which the public and private sectors coexist to control to what extent the nature of the company may affect the communication strategies implemented in social networks, without the scope of activity affecting the results.

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