



Fashion and beauty magazines on social networks in 2021. Strategy, content, and connection with the audience through Instagram

Las revistas de moda y belleza en redes sociales durante 2021. Estrategias, contenidos y conexión con las audiencias a través de Instagram

Revistas de moda e beleza em redes sociais em 2021. Estratégias, conteúdo e ligação com o público através da Instagram

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Abstract

The emergence of the Internet and social networks has forced the press to redirect its communication strategy. Fashion and beauty magazines in Spain are no exception, as they have thrown themselves into this new media ecosystem in which they find a highly alluring, potential audience for their content. The aim of this research is to examine the content strategies of these magazines on the Instagram social network. To this end, a quantitative content analysis has been carried out regarding the publications posted during 2021 by the four Spanish magazines with the highest circulation, according to *EGM* (General Media Study). The analysis is based on a system code created *ad hoc*, through which the authors have examined the content, topics, technical/stylistic resources, brand presence in the posts, impact of the messages, and the relationship with the audience. The results indicate that each magazine offers its own communicative style with a variety of topics, yet fashion is the most recurring theme. All the magazines take advantage of the strong visual component of this social network and have established synergistic links with their print editions.

Keywords: social networks; fashion; beauty; Instagram; content; strategies

Resumen

La irrupción de internet y de las redes sociales ha obligado a la prensa a reorientar sus estrategias comunicativas. Las revistas de moda y belleza en España no han sido una excepción y se han lanzado a este nuevo ecosistema mediático en el que encuentran una audiencia potencial muy atractiva para sus contenidos. El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar las estrategias de contenido de las revistas en la red social Instagram. Para ello, se ha realizado un análisis de contenido cuantitativo de las publicaciones realizadas durante 2021 por las cuatro cabeceras españolas de mayor difusión según el EGM a partir de un código de codificación creado *ad hoc* en el que se estudian los contenidos, temáticas, recursos técnicos y estilísticos, la presencia de marcas en las publicaciones, así como el impacto de sus mensajes y la relación con su audiencia. Los resultados apuntan a que cada revista ofrece un estilo de comunicación propio con temáticas variadas, pero donde la moda es el tema más repetido. Todas ellas aprovechan el alto componente visual de esta red social y establecen sinergias con sus versiones en papel.

Palabras clave: redes sociales; moda; belleza; Instagram; contenido; estrategias

Resumo

A emergência da Internet e das redes sociais forçou a imprensa a reorientar as suas estratégias de comunicação. As revistas de moda e beleza em Espanha não têm sido excepção e lançaram-se neste novo ecossistema de meios de comunicação em que encontram um público potencial muito atractivo para os seus conteúdos. O objectivo desta investigação é analisar as estratégias de conteúdo das revistas na rede social Instagram. Para tal, foi realizada uma análise quantitativa do conteúdo das publicações publicadas em 2021 pelas quatro revistas espanholas mais distribuídas de acordo com a EGM, utilizando um código de codificação criado ad hoc para estudar o conteúdo, temas, recursos técnicos e estilísticos, a presença de marcas nas publicações, bem como o impacto das suas mensagens e a relação com o seu público. Os resultados mostram que cada revista oferece o seu próprio estilo de comunicação com temas variados, mas onde a moda é o tema mais repetido. Todos eles tiram partido da elevada componente visual desta rede social e estabelecem sinergias com as suas versões impressas.

Palavras-chave: redes sociais; moda; beleza; Instagram; conteúdo; estratégias

1. Introduction

Since the appearance of the first social network in 1997, these spaces have been the spearhead of Web 2.0, and they have been growing ever since. The arrival of these platforms disrupted the communicative ecosystem, which forced the traditional media to adapt their content in the initial phase in order to subsequently develop new communication strategies. The press was the first medium to launch itself into this new environment in order to take up positions and reach new segments of the audience, yet it has done so with a certain degree of mistrust when facing “a digital model with hardly any past, a scant present, and a future that is full of hope, yet with an equal amount of uncertainty” (Salaverría, 2007, p. 5).

1.1. Fashion and beauty magazines

There is no fashion without communication (Paricio, 2000). Furthermore, “this aspect is precisely the point where high-end magazines that specialise in this industry play a fundamental role as effective channels for disseminating the various messages emanating from the fashion world. At the same time, these titles have become consolidated as prescribers of all types of articles and products related to fashion and beauty, positioning themselves as a symbol of the sophistication of Western society (Gough-Yates, 2003). As such, nowadays they have become one of the journalistic media that is most sought-after by the public” (Vinader-Segura et al, 2022, p. 99).

In Spain, the success of these fashion and beauty magazines has increased considerably. In 2021, despite the fact that the magazine sector in general suffered a decline in sales, the nine titles published in our country (*Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Telva*, *Glamour*, *Woman*, *Marie Claire*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *InStyle*) had more than three million readers. On the other hand, in order to reach new audiences, magazines of this type have found a new way of renewing and reinventing themselves by making a commitment to social networks such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, which allow for increased dissemination and immediacy of content. These spaces have become “new tools and channels that enable the segmentation and adjustment of content to each audience. This is highly valuable information for any company that wants to sell its products and achieve success” (Rodríguez Sánchez, 2018, p. 20). For this same author, both social networks and the digital versions of these magazines in this sector can be described as follows:

These are channels that are best suited to establishing direct communication with their audiences. The Internet has made it possible for magazines to “talk” to the audience. One of the objectives of the vast majority of digital media is to generate conversations on websites in order to increase the time spent on their pages (p. 325).

In this way, journalists and those who create content for these magazines, regardless of the format or media in question, are genuine prescribers of news and trends, as they relate directly with brands and readers (whether print, digital or social editions), selecting and sharing the most interesting news and content with them.

1.2. The prevalence of images in fashion and beauty magazines

Magazine design is halfway between the design of newspapers and illustrated books, or in other words, between functionality and experimentation (Subiela, 2010, p. 36). The reason is that the visual impact in magazines is decisive, as they must offer their readers a painstaking, attractive presentation in order to surprise the readers from a graphic, typographic, and even chromatic point of view, with the aim of maintaining their interest. As Subiela points out, “All of this means that magazine design has to follow standard rules and be functional, but it also needs to be innovative and experimental” (Ibidem).

Thus, the aspects of fashion and beauty magazines that are formal, graphic, and typographic follow specific visual guidelines in their print editions, such as the creative and experimental use of typography, a commitment to using shades of white as design elements, the widespread use of colour to transmit symbolic and cultural meanings, and most of all the undisputed predominance of images. In fact, one cannot even imagine this type of magazine without photographs and illustrations. However, as Owen points out, “Photography is the backbone of illustrated magazines, and its primary role is journalistic” (Owen, 1991, p. 198), whereas illustration “can act as a 'humanistic' or textural counterpoint to photography, providing a certain stylistic identity” (p. 203).

Fashion is intended to be told, but above all “to be seen” (De Diego, 1984, p. 15). Hence, photography imposes itself as a vehicle of graphic communication on this type of publication, and its presence is greater than that of text and illustrations. Moreover, as stated by Barthes (1989, p. 17), fashion photography “has specific guidelines and rules; within photographic communication, a particular language is created, which undoubtedly has its own lexicon and syntax, or in other words, its own ‘turns of phrase’, either forbidden or recommended”. Thus, photography is one of the most important aspects of both newspapers and magazines, although the photographic treatment in the latter, especially in fashion and beauty titles, is much more radical than in newspapers. In newspapers, photographs are informative complements or units in themselves. In magazines, however, photographs serve to fully illustrate the information, often being the foundation of the topic itself, upon which the text is supported, and through which the entire report is structured (Blasco, 2012). Moreover, the photographic focus of magazines is more extreme than in newspapers, as we can observe more radical cuts and riskier photographs with markedly aesthetic features.

1.3. Instagram, the visual social network par excellence

Social networks currently have 4.2 billion users worldwide, which represents 53% of the world's population (Hootsuit and We are social, 2021), and Spain is one of the countries with the highest levels of consumption of these networks (Noguera, 2010). Thus, the figures show that 80% of the population of Spain, or some 37.4 million people (Hootsuit and We are social, 2021), have a profile on one of these spaces, and they connect on average nearly two hours per day. Currently, the preferential position of Facebook is starting to be threatened by the strength of other social networks, which have been gaining momentum in recent years. Facebook is still the most easily recognised social network in this country, according to IAB Spain (2021). Moreover, it is among the most highly rated networks by users and is second only to WhatsApp in terms of frequency of use. However, Instagram, founded in 2010 and acquired by Facebook in 2012, has been gaining ground, and in December of 2020 it had 20 million users in Spain, according to data from Statista (2022). This represents an increase of 12.6 million users since 2015. Through the use of photographs and small, downloadable videos and GIFs, this social network has become the favourite of millennials and centennials (The Social Media Family, 2021).

Instagram is known for its ease-of-use and diverse functionalities such as filters and stories, which the network has gradually incorporated, thereby positioning itself as the memory of users' daily lives “through the photographs and videos they record live, or that they save to post later on a regular basis” (Marinas, 2019, p. 190). However, at the same time Instagram has developed into a meeting point for companies and brands, enabling the “participatory development of organisational discourse between brand and user” (Caerols et al., 2013, p. 70), an interaction that is entirely feasible and revolves around images. This is an essential element in the development of communicative discourse of fashion and beauty magazines. Precisely for this reason, these publications have a greater presence on

visual social networks, mainly Instagram and Pinterest (Gómez de Travesedo and Gil, 2020), where they can heighten the viewing aspect of their content and reach a highly attractive audience at the same time, speaking of women.

2. Instruments and methods

The overall objective of this research is to analyse the communicative strategies of fashion and beauty magazines on Instagram in order to examine the most common communicative trends in this type of publication. To achieve this aim, the following specific objectives have been proposed:

- To examine the main content of the posts published by the magazines that are the object of study on this social network.
- To study the technical and stylistic resources used in the posts analysed in order to gain knowledge regarding the functionalities of a 2.0 space that allows its messages to reach its potential audience and other segments of the population.
- Determine what type of relationship is established with advertisers in their different formats by studying the posts.
- Analyse the impact of their messages and observe the directionality of the relationship established with their audiences.

To this end, a descriptive research study has been carried out, as it provides an overview of a situation at a specific time, in this case the calendar year 2021 on Instagram. It does so by means of displaying the details that comprise the study, as well as transversal aspects involving the comparison of different topics at a specific time, or in other words, subjects that share the same time-frame, as can be seen in the description of the sample.

To achieve the objectives, a content analysis has been carried out within a quantitative methodology which, as pointed out by Krippendorff (2002, p. 28), is “a research technique designed to formulate reproducible and valid inferences that can be applied to their context, based on certain data”. Thus, through content analysis we intend to study not only the frame of reference within which the messages analysed were developed, which can result in diverse interpretations, but also how its analysis will allow us to draw conclusions regarding the processes of production and reception of the content. For this purpose, a system code has been created, structured in five large blocks, which in turn are divided into diverse variables with their corresponding categories. In this way, a coding sheet is presented for the analysis of fashion magazine posts on Instagram. This code is organised into five sections based on previous studies by Martínez-Sanz and González-Fernández (2018), Vicente-Fernández et al. (2019). Even with these references as a foundation, an ad hoc code was also created that combines all the variables necessary for the correct development of the analysis, in such a way that the precepts of objectivity, systematisation, relevance, and thoroughness of this type of study have been followed.

The code is made up of the following sections:

- General data (9 variables): where the main data of each post is collected in order for it to be located easily along with basic characteristics.
- Content of the message (25 variables): where all the written elements of each of the publications are analysed.
- Technical and stylistic resources [26 variables divided as follows: text (5); photograph (4); video (12); and illustration (5)]: where all the elements used in the still and/or moving image are examined.
- Advertising message [18 variables divided as follows: geolocation (4); photograph (3); body of the message (3); video (3); and commercial links (5)]: where the commercial information included in each post is studied in depth.
- Impact of the message (15 variables): where the items that allow us to evaluate the degree of diffusion of the message and the reaction of the audience are recorded.

This research has verified the degree of reliability of content analysis when applied by different coders, in order to guarantee the soundness of the technique, so as to provide similar results regardless of the evaluator. Regarding this aspect, as Kaplan and Goldsen point out:

The importance of reliability arises from the assurance it provides that the data have been obtained independently, regardless of the event, instrument, or person measuring them. By definition, reliable data are those that remain consistent through all variations in the measurement process (Kaplan and Goldsen, 1965, pp. 83-84, in: Krippendorff, 2002, p. 191).

Therefore, a reliability study has been carried out to determine the degree of concurrence produced when the code is tested on the object of study by a team, because as pointed out by Igartua and Humanes (2004, p. 218), "Inter-coder verification is an essential requirement in all content analysis". The result was 0.916 in the Krippendorff Alpha¹, which means a high degree of reliability in the coding.

Vogue, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle* and *Telva* are the fashion titles ranked among the top twenty monthly magazines, according to the first phase of the 2021 *Estudio General de Medios .EGM* [General Media Study], and as we have indicated, they are the only four among the top twenty that specialise in this type of journalism. The ranking of the selected sample can be seen below.

Table 1. Magazine rankings in Spain (in thousands)

Rank	Magazine	Readers	Rank	Magazine	Readers
1.	<i>National Geographic</i>	1,360	11.	<i>Micasa</i>	391
2.	<i>Muy Interesante</i>	1,208	12.	<i>Fotogramas</i>	370
3.	<i>Vogue</i>	709	13.	<i>Saber Cocinar</i>	288
4.	<i>Historia N. Geo.</i>	654	14.	<i>Cosas de Casa</i>	288
5.	<i>Saber Vivir</i>	576	15.	<i>Viajar</i>	242
6.	<i>Viajes N. Geo.</i>	557	16.	<i>Men's Health</i>	232
7.	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	480	17.	<i>Telva</i>	230
8.	<i>Elle</i>	478	18.	<i>Coches</i>	212
9.	<i>Cocina fácil</i>	405	19.	<i>Solo Moto</i>	209
10.	<i>El Mueble</i>	397	20.	<i>Casa Diez</i>	204

Source: General Media Study, first phase, 2021.

The reasons for selecting the space and time-frame of this study are described in the following comments. Instagram was chosen as the social network of study for two reasons. Firstly, this communication tool has a strong visual component, which is a hallmark of the type of magazine being studied. On Instagram, the posts have a predominance of images (still or moving) over text. Therefore, Instagram “is the social network best described as a field of observation for exploring these new forms of representation and persuasive strategies” (Mattei, 2015, p. 97). On the other hand, it has the type of audience that is highly attractive for this kind of magazine. Thus, according to IAB Spain (2021), Instagram is one of the most important social networks in Spain, as it ranks second in spontaneous knowledge and frequency of use, reaching nearly one and a half hours per day. The Instagram user profile is attractive to fashion journalism and its magazine format, due to the fact that young urban women aged 16 to 24 dominate this realm (The Social Media Family, 2021), which is the type of audience that acts as a complement to the print version. In this way, it is possible to connect with a new audience, thereby avoiding gaps between new and old media (Noguera, 2010).

To select the periodicity of the research, a strategic, systemised, and non-probabilistic sample has been proposed that follows the parameters of the constructed week by Kayser (1982), adapted to the calendar year 2021. Thus, 52 days have been analysed, one for each week of the year, comprising the sample as follows: Monday of the first week of January, Tuesday of the second week of January, Wednesday of the third week of January, Thursday of the fourth week of January, Friday of the first week of February, and so on, until a sample of 52 days had been constructed. This sampling system has allowed us to ensure the presence of all the months of the year. In short, a total of 414 posts were analysed, distributed among all the entries of the four magazines on each selected day.

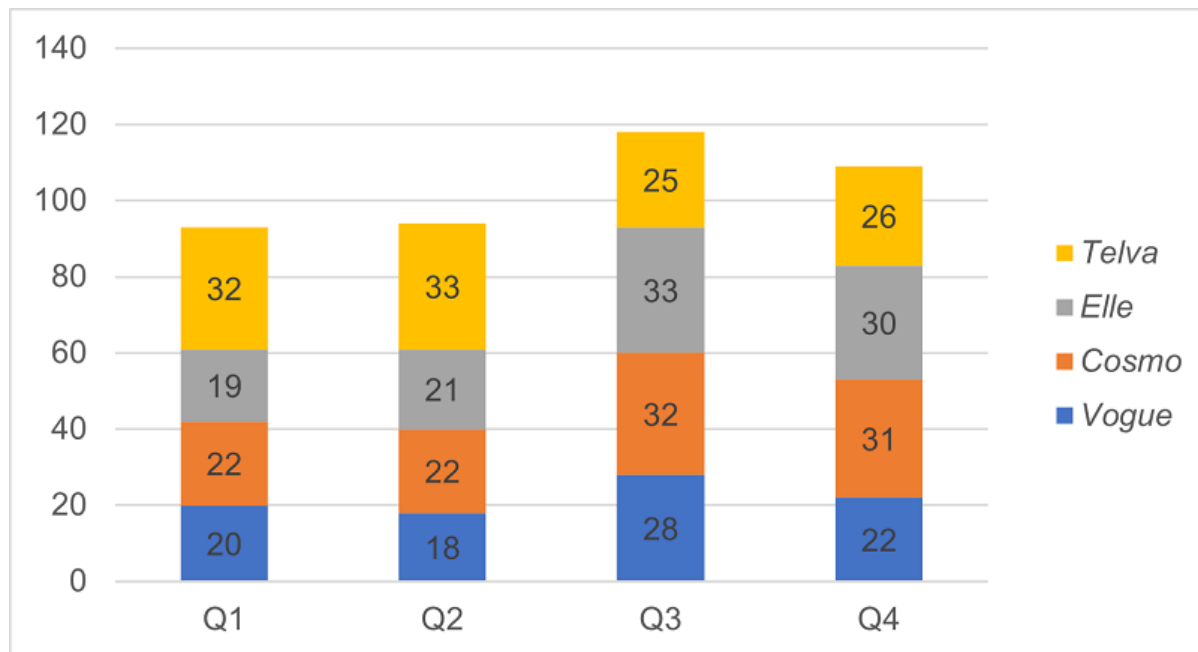
3. Results

The main findings of the fieldwork are presented below, taking into account the five core topics established in the coding sheet.

A total of 414 units of analysis were recorded between January and December of 2021, according to the sampling schedule mentioned above. The magazines studied have a similar level of activity in terms of the amount of publications and frequency of distribution. *Telva* is the magazine with the highest number of posts (116), which represents 28% of the total. *Cosmopolitan* (107) and *Elle* (103) have around 25 % each, and *Vogue* is the title with the lowest number of posts (88) at 21.3%. If we study their distribution over time, we can see that September and, to a lesser extent October of 2021, were the months with the most publications. Only *Telva* stands out from this trend, with a higher number of posts in March, April and May. This is clearly related to the fact that the two key issues of monthly fashion magazines are those of March and September, which coincide with the start of the ready-to-wear seasons, although the most important is that of September.

On the other hand, June of 2021 is the month with the lowest number of posts overall, though in the case of *Telva* it is August. Examining the publication data by quarter (Figure 1), the highest concentration of posts occurs in the third quarter of the year.

Figure 1. Distribution of the posts by quarter

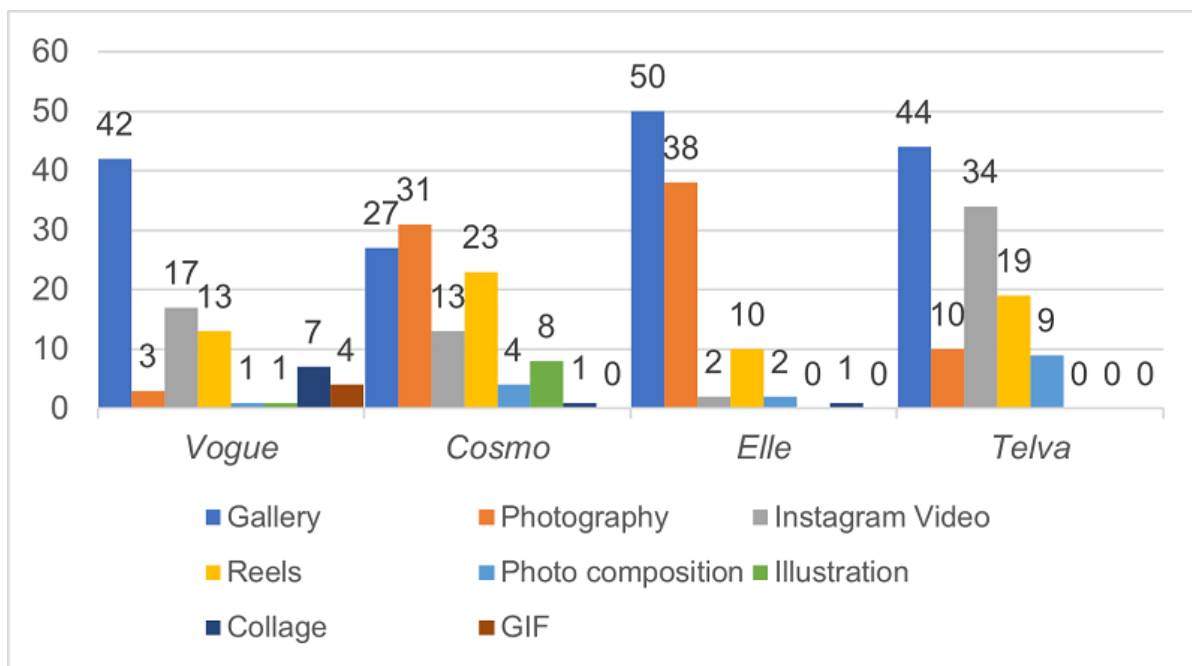


Source: created by the authors

Furthermore, after carrying out a detailed study of each post, we can see that the texts of all the magazines are mostly in Spanish, as we have found only 14 publications in English, mainly in *Vogue* (57.1%). On the other hand, *Telva* is the only magazine that uses Spanish exclusively in all its posts. No other languages have been found in the units of analysis that comprise the sample.

Regarding the format of the posts examined, images clearly dominate, which is a feature of this social network. Thus, in all the cases photography plays a paramount role. Accordingly, 245 posts (59.1%) have photographs or image galleries. In fact, the latter are the most recurring format in all the magazines with the exception of *Cosmopolitan*, in which a higher number of posts with a single photograph have been found. On the other hand, videos (f=131) account for 31.6% of the total, whether they are Reels² or Instagram Videos³. In this format, *Telva* is the title that stands out in total volume (f=53), mainly using Instagram Videos, while *Cosmopolitan* is the one that has published the most Reels. As for the length of the Instagram videos, we can confirm that the clips are not very long, with an average of 8 minutes each. However, we found some videos with a duration of close to an hour (f=3).

Figure 2. Format of the posts analysed



Source: created by the authors

If we look at the content of the posts analysed, fashion is clearly the most significant topic in terms of numbers. In this sense, nearly a third of the publications explore issues related to this industry, including proposed seasonal *looks*, haute couture fashion shows, new styles and collections, etc. *Cosmopolitan* is the only magazine among the three in which this content is not as relevant as celebrity-related posts. Regarding this topic, 59.2% of the

content of this magazine refers to celebrities. In addition, publications related to Leisure and Culture (f=62) and Beauty (f=54) must also be taken into account.

Table 2. Topics covered by the magazines

Content	Vogue	Cosmo	Elle	Telva	Total
Fashion	40	8	50	30	128
Beauty	12	9	13	20	54
Cooking		7	1	2	10
Wellness	4	4	1	17	26
Celebrities	1	29	5	14	49
Decoration		1	1	9	11
Leisure and Culture	17	22	13	10	62
Interviews / Reports / Podcasts	10	8	13	11	42
Front cover	1	2	4	1	8
Advertising	1				1
Ecology	1				1
Other	1	17	2	2	22
Total	88	107	103	116	414

Source: created by the authors

The purpose of the publications is overtly informative, with 65.2 % following this trend, although the presence of more entertainment-related posts is evident in *Cosmopolitan* (11.6 % of the total), followed by *Vogue* (5 %). Less significant are publications focused on promotions (7% of the total), society (5%), or opinion (3%).

Moreover, it is important to note that the posts analysed have content predominantly developed by the magazines themselves, in which the use of hashtags, or labels, is present in 78.5% of the publications. Consequently, we can affirm that this tool is used frequently compared to others. *Elle* and *Telva* have a high level of use, which together account for 62% in this category, whereas *Vogue* only includes hashtags in 45 of its posts (13.8%). All the magazines analysed use hashtags for the purpose of establishing synergistic links with their print versions. Thus, they are used to advertise and promote the launch of the monthly issue of the printed product. As a result, we have found hashtags such as #ELLEenero, #COSMOMarzo, and #TELVAabril, which are clear examples of how the magazines make references to themselves.

Likewise, the use of another Instagram tool, the *mention* (@), was also examined. It is present in 68.8% of the posts analysed. Of these, it is used to mention social profiles of private individuals in 78.8 % of the cases, although companies are also mentioned at the rate of 22.2 %. This feature is used by the magazines in the body of the message similar

(44.4%) and close-ups (25.9%). Regarding angle, in the photographic posts of all the magazines, the neutral option dominates (94.7 %) and low-angle shots rarely appear (3.5 %). *Vogue* is the only magazine that does not use low-angle shots in any of its entries. Finally, colour images clearly predominate, comprising 89.9 % of the total number of photographs in all the magazines, as the use of black and white is minimal in the sample analysed. Moreover, *Cosmopolitan* is the only title that does not use this expressive resource in any of its posts.

With regard to moving images, we have examined the genre, type of production, and editing. Accordingly, the videos mostly consisted of mini reports (61.3 %), although other types of videos such as interviews (21.9 %) and spots (15.3 %) have also been found. If we look at these data by magazine, we find that mini reports are especially important in the communication strategy of *Cosmopolitan* (81.5 % of the videos published) and *Telva* (65.4 %). In addition to mini reports, others that stand out are the use of spots (34.3 %) in *Vogue* and interviews in *Elle* (41.6 %).

In terms of production, half of the videos were shot with a fixed camera (52.9%), while the remainder were filmed with hand-held cameras (12.3%), or mixed (34.7%). Despite being professional productions, 12.3% of them have somewhat amateurish editing. Nevertheless, all of them contain background music, 96.5% of which is of the non-diegetic type. In these categories, there are no significant differences among the magazines analysed.

If we consider illustrations (f=63), all of them are colour and the techniques used for their development are collage (36.5%), drawing (36.5%), and photomontage (25.5%). Looking at the differences by magazine, *Vogue* and *Telva* clearly choose collage (42.8% and 57.1% of their publications, respectively), while *Cosmopolitan's* publications contain more drawings (70.5% of their illustrations), and *Elle's* are dominated by photomontage (50%).

These images are literal (f=62), as only one conceptual image was found, which appeared in one of the *Vogue* posts. In addition, more than half of them use a traditional style (54.8%), while the rest have a completely modern look. Looking at each magazine, *Cosmopolitan* and *Elle* have more traditional illustrations, while those of *Vogue* and *Telva* are more contemporary.

The presence of brands in the publications of the selected magazines has also been explored, since advertising revenue is essential for these publishers and is especially important for their print editions. In this regard, 138 posts have been found in which there is an explicit brand presence, either exclusively or not, which represents 33.3% of the units analysed. This means that in two-thirds of the publications (66.6%) there is no reference to advertisers or brands. This number is significant considering the importance of brands in their print versions. In this regard, *Cosmopolitan* is the magazine with the lowest presence of brands in its posts (f=88), as only 17% of its publications refer to a brand. The rest of the titles have a similar number, with *Telva* having the highest presence of brands in its publications.

On the other hand, if we examine the type of brand presence, we can classify the posts as single-brand (f=78) or multi-brand (f=60). *Elle* has the most entries with the exclusive presence of a single brand, while *Vogue* has the highest number of multi-brand publications.

Table 3. Brand presence

Magazine	Without presence	Single-brand	Multi-brand	Column 1
<i>Vogue</i>	51	12	25	37
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	88	12	7	19
<i>Elle</i>	61	34	8	42
<i>Telva</i>	76	20	20	40
Total	276	78	60	138

Source: created by the authors

On the other hand, the appearance of brands in geolocation, photographs, body of the text, and video has also been analysed. Thus, the use of geolocation (f=6) as a tool to explain collaboration and refer to the commercial relationship with the advertiser is not relevant in terms of numbers. This resource is used only by *Telva* to warn its readers of the commercial nature of the information contained in the post. For *Telva*, the strongest presence of this tool is found in the body of the messages. Thus, 311 brands have been found in a total of 136 posts, or in other words, in nearly all the publications that mention a specific brand (f=138). Finally, the presence of advertising in photographs and videos is quite similar. There are 66 brands in 35 posts (photographs) and 81 brands in 31 posts (videos). Table 4 shows the distribution according to each of the magazines. Thus, *Elle* has a stronger presence in photographs, while *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Telva* are more prominent in the texts of the posts, although the latter stands out in videos as well.

Table 4. Brand presence in the magazine posts analysed

Magazine	Geolocation	Photography	Text	Video
<i>Vogue</i>	0	2	40	6
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	0	7	18	1
<i>Elle</i>	0	26	35	2
<i>Telva</i>	6	0	43	22
Total posts	6	35	136	31

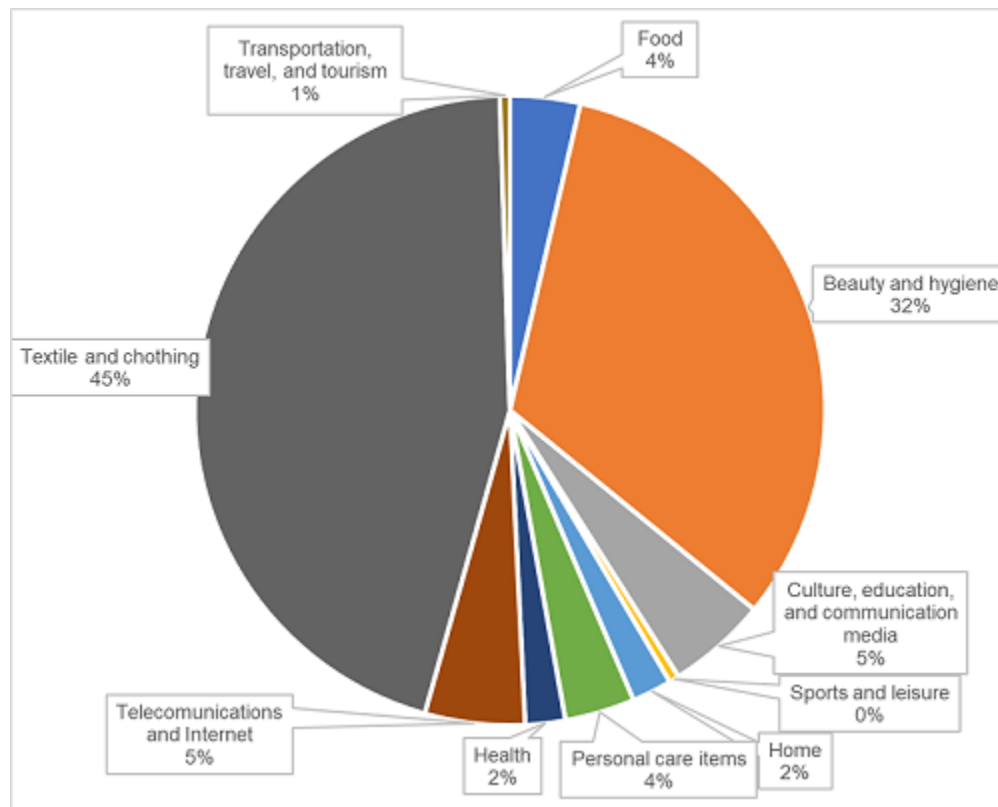
Source: created by the authors

Despite the presence of brands on a fairly regular basis, paid collaboration with them is rarely specified. Of the total number of posts with brand names (f=138), only seven

announce *paid collaboration* with the advertiser in question. *Kocca* (f=3), *Cantabria Lab*, *Bulgari*, *Elisabeth Arden* and *Denominación de Origen Rueda* are the companies that have used this resource offered by the social network to show a commercial relationship with the magazines. This tool is mainly used by *Telva*, which accounts for six of the seven posts. To conclude this section, we must highlight the absence of promotions and prize raffles in the sample.

Similarly, the sectors of the brands identified has also been studied by using the index of sectors, categories, and products offered by *Infoadex* (n.d.) as a reference. Thus, a total of 195 companies have been found, mainly from the textile sector (45% of the appearances), making it the most prevalent area of activity, followed by manufacturers of beauty and hygiene products, which are clearly related to the main content of these magazines. In *Vogue* and *Elle*, there is a greater presence of companies from the textile sector, which is linked to fashion, while in *Telva*, and to a lesser extent *Cosmopolitan*, the beauty sector is more prevalent. At the same time, the presence of mentions related to culture, education, and the media in all the titles is noteworthy as well, which is mainly justified by self-referencing (regarding the print editions of these magazines) or alluding to other media.

Figure 3. Sectors of the brands found



Source: created by the authors

Lastly, we present the data related to the impact of the message and the relationship with audiences. To do so, we have counted the number of likes regarding the still images, while in the case of videos we have considered the number of views in order to determine the level of circulation of the clip. After examining the sample, a total of 1,024,936 likes were counted in 281 posts, or in other words, referring to the posts among the total sample (414) that have a photograph, gallery, or collage, and in which the user has the option of using this tool. This is an average of 3,647.4 likes for each of these types of posts. However, as we can see in Table 5, the performance of each individual magazine is uneven. Thus, *Elle* (36.8%) and *Vogue* (31.7%) are the magazines with the best figures, both in terms of total volume as well as in weighting with regard to the number of posts. This indicates that these two magazines manage to attract the attention of their audience toward the type of content they publish. Far behind are *Cosmopolitan* and *Telva* at 16.3% and 15.2%, respectively, as can be seen in the following table.

Table 5. Impact of the posts analysed

Magazine	Likes (no.)	Average no. of likes per post	Comments (no.)	Average number of comments per post
<i>Vogue</i>	325,019	5,803.91	4,889	56.2
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	167,053	2,353.28	4,509	42.1
<i>Elle</i>	377,202	4,145.07	6,885	66.8
<i>Telva</i>	155,662	2,470.82	6,130	52.8
Total	1,024,936		22,413	

Source: created by the authors.

Nevertheless, the behaviour of the audience is different if we look at the number of comments each post receives. Thus, of the 22,413 in total, *Elle* and *Telva* attain a better position, yet this is not the case if we calculate the average. In this regard, *Elle* is the clear winner with up to 66 comments for each of its posts, while *Cosmopolitan* has the lowest number of comments, and consequently the worst average per post, which means it has the lowest level of engagement with its audience.

Meanwhile, the impact from videos has been measured by counting the number of views found on the closing date of the research, which was 1 January 2022. Thus, up until that date, a total of 4,068,318 views had been counted for 133 posts with video, which were unevenly distributed among the magazines analysed. Although *Vogue* and *Telva* had the highest number of views, the work of *Elle* is worth mentioning, because even with the smallest number of videos (12) it achieved the best performance with 45,029.91 views (33.4% of the total).

Table 6. Impact of the posts with video

Magazine	Views	Videos	Average
<i>Vogue</i>	1,227,994	32	38,374.81
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	905,566	36	25,154.61
<i>Elle</i>	540,359	12	45,029.91
<i>Telva</i>	1,394,399	53	26,309.41
Total	4,068,318	133	134,868.74

Source: created by the authors.

The direct appeal to the audience by these magazines is not very significant in quantitative terms, and on most occasions (f=18) the purpose is to announce the publication of their print issue and to invite followers to buy it. No other references to sharing with friends, promotions, or invitations to follow other profiles were found. Therefore, we can confirm that this is a highly unilateral type of communication that does not obtain a high level of involvement with followers as a result.

4. Discussion

Social networks, and especially those in which images dominate, are the 2.0 channels preferred by magazines that specialise in fashion and beauty for transmitting information and gaining proximity with their audience, which is fostered by immediacy, familiarity with the language, and the use of multimedia.

The communication strategies of the magazines analysed during the period in question are focused on using their social profiles to establish synergistic links with their print editions, either by offering excerpts from interviews or reports, or by promoting the launch of the monthly issue.

The content published by these magazines on Instagram in 2021 focused mainly on fashion and beauty, complemented by topics related to culture and celebrity news as well. This achieved an informative purpose without overlooking the entertainment aspect that is common among this type of publication. The presence of advertising in the sample analysed, which is fundamental in print editions, was not very significant in the posts on Instagram, which leads us to believe that the commercial potential has yet to be explored.

On the other hand, interaction with audiences was quite limited, which clearly shows that in none of the cases in 2021 was a strategy implemented for the purpose of creating a community of users in which followers interact on a regular basis. In this sense,

communication is still very one-sided. In fact, few direct appeals to followers were found, as these were mainly aimed at obtaining a purchase of the print edition. What is needed is the implementation of a strategy aimed at achieving greater engagement with the audience.

In conclusion, the panorama presented by this research shows that the social spaces of the most prominent fashion and beauty magazines in Spain, which have been analysed in this study, have become a new channel of communication with audiences through the use of tools such as Instagram, as it enables the development of painstaking, attractive content, thereby enhancing the visual aspect that is already offered in their print editions. However, this study also reveals that the social profiles of the magazines analysed need to be renovated. This requires the incorporation of original content not present in the traditional format, which will allow them to develop their own style and differentiate themselves from others, thereby providing true spaces for connection with their audiences.

The main findings of this research are limited by the analysis of one calendar year. For future studies, the authors propose enlarging the sample in order to determine whether current trends continue, or if new communicative strategies are incorporated. Likewise, it would also be useful to contrast the results of this study with the posts of the same magazines on other social networks, such as YouTube.

Authors' contribution

Raquel Vinader-Segura: Conceptualization, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing-original draft, and writing-review & editing. **Belén Puebla-Martínez:** Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing-original draft, and writing-review & editing. **Laura González-Díez:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Supervision, Validation, Writing-original draft, and writing-review & editing. All the authors have read and agree that the manuscript herein is the one to be published. Conflict of interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this study.

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Notes

- 1 According to Krippendorff (2002, pp. 215-219) it is essential to know “how high the degree of agreement must be for the data to be considered sufficiently reliable to justify the analysis”. Perfect reliability would be 1, and 0 reliability would indicate its complete absence. Krippendorff points out (2002, pp. 215-219) that scores below 0.7 tend to have low statistical significance.
- 2 Short video clips (15-30 seconds), edited and published with this Instagram feature that aims to compete with the tools offered by TikTok.
- 3 This tool, formerly known as Instagram TV, allows the creation of higher quality, vertical format videos of up to 60 minutes in length.