

Social Network Communication: Perceptions and Uses for Spanish NGOs

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Abstract

The aim of the current investigation is to discover the perceptions and uses of Social Networks for Spanish NGOs. Two research lines have been stated, a quantitative one based on a poll, and another one qualitative and based on the pro/con valuation of two designed groups. The role of Social Networks in the communication plan of the NGOs has been analyzed, foreseeing the possible upcoming needs. The scope of the reference analysis includes aspects of creativity and innovation in the message release, as well as the measure methodologies optimization within the Social Networking.

Keywords: communication, social, NGO, social network, efficiency, creativity

Social communication is the main instrument used by NGO's, each time more, to show their principles and actions. In the beginning it was understood as a secondary aspect, where the projects developed for the benefited countries was primary. However, communication is getting relevance for these organizations because "media itself does not create social movement on a strict sense, but it eases the work for NGO's for the consciences and wills movement, fomenting powerful movements on public opinion" (Grzybowski, 2001, p. 31). Therefore, it's communication what eases the creation and maintaining solid links between NGO's and their partners, supporters and audiences, just like has been expressed by several authors (Herranz de la Casa, 2009; Cerdá, 2003; Erro, 2002; Aranguren, 1998; Angulo, 1998; Aguadero, 1993).

Until not many years ago, conventional communication media were to NGO's the most efficient speakers for their messages. But due to the abundance of organizations and the difficulty to appear on those media has emerged the convenience of looking for other channels, getting relevance first the web communication (Martín, 2010) and a little later social networks, because of the cheapening of the communicative processes that they mean for NGO's (Sampedro, 2006, p. 2).

The situation of economic crisis lived in Spain in recent years is empowering the use of these new channels, because their cost is considerably lower that massive advertising campaigns on traditional media may be. It's a trend that NGO's share with the rest of the advertising actors the business and institutional scene, forced to drastically reduce their advertising budgets. New media, specially social networks make possible a direct communication with their audience, without making expensive investments on ad spaces and time buying. This situation has importantly changed the use that NGO's are giving to social networks and pointed like trend rather than a palpable reality in the moment of the making of this study, centered on the first phase of the crisis, when it was not yet foreseen the extensive damage that it would carry to the Spanish social and business tissue.

Further more, as Orihuela said, the new media gather three dimensions: "Communication, when permitting to share knowledge; community, when helping to integrate communities; and cooperation, when helping to do things together" (Ramil, 2005). An example of this are the actions of cyber voluntarism; social networks are used to communicate the achievements of the organization, requesting the participation of the cyber volunteers and communicate them the new action needs, as well as for sensibilization duties, getting the active commitment of the social network members. In this sense, we can define the social networks as a social apparatus with revolutionary and emancipating power, since it can include everyone and it must include everyone. Reason why they are used to build virtual communities where their users interact with people all around the world, looking for, as the ultimate objective, social inclusion (Zafra, 2010, p.73). To

reach these objective, “most of NGO’s believe that Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are the correct social media. Each one contributes to different goals and the sum of them all generates the new communication way. But in all of them it is essential, in first place, the presence of the viral video to be shared and commented in the different social networks and, in second place, how the user spreads it according to his or her membership to one or other social network” (Arroyo, Baños y Van Wyk, 2013, p. 331). Therefore, YouTube is considered in this research, to be a fundamental tool to look for a viralization effect through the so-called communication technics through digital rumor.

In this ay, the new media presents to NGO’s the potentiality, already proven on other social movements, to “jump from the web to the street, the public space and to mass media” (Ferrerias, 2011, s.p.) like it happened with the 15-M movement in Spain. Some years ago, Marí Saéz concluded, in a study about the use of Internet by the third sector, “the potential of networking and knowledge collective construction is underused” (2001, p.462). Function that undoubtedly should be reinforced with the use of social networks.

Even though the possibilities that are open for NGO’s, this ambit has barely been analyzed scientifically, being a study object with an important projection and in which is necessary to develop experimental research that may be referent to the ambit. There have been made different works about persuasive communication of NGO’s – some of special value because of their rigor and advance in knowledge (Martín, 2010; Sabre, 2011; Arroyo and Martín, 2011) – and even about their application to other concrete 2.0 communication spaces, like blogs (Herranz de la Casa y Cabezuelo Lorenzo, 2009; Berrios, 2005), but not specifically about social networks, except some non-experimental studies (Baraybar, 2009). Outside Spain, with a similar objective and methodology to the one of the study here presented, it must be recalled a recent investigation about adoption and use of ICT’s by New Zealand’s NGO’s (Zorn, Flanagan y Shoham, 2011), with some of its conclusions are similar to the ones obtained in our investigation. Lastly, it should be mentioned some polls made by independent entities like Citizen Schools and Public Learning Media Lab (2008) about the use of the social web by organizations.

METHODOLOGY

The objective of this investigation is to know the perception and use of social networks as a communication tool by the NGO’s based on Spain in the context of the first years of the economical crisis that affects this country since 2008, when most of the NGO’s drew on public funding². The specific objectives, principally three: identifying the motivations and barriers that NGO’s detect when using networks as a communication channel; observing the potentialities they find in their use and knowing the communicational strategies that these organizations show when facing the development of present and future communication through social networks.

To achieve those objectives, it was combined a quantitative research method and a qualitative one, implemented in 2010 and 2011; concretely, a survey and a focus group³, having in both with the participation of the communication managers of the NGO’s. It was opted to do a first phase of research of quantitative nature, supported by a second phase based on focus groups with the goal of evaluating qualitatively the resulting data from the surveys and deepening the suggested relationships by quantitative analysis. Therefore, the triangulation strategy mentioned by Bericat (1998) was followed, since the study object and the objectives themselves are the same for both methods of research used, allowing then reinforcing the validity of the results.

² Until 2010, nine out of ten NGO’s drew on public funding, according to the “Social Action Third Sector Yearbook” in Spain in 2012 (Luis Vives Foundation, 2012).

³ Focus groups were taking place on March 22nd and April 15th 2010 on the facilities of the Communication Sciences Faculty of Rey Juan Carlos University. The questions of the surveys were formulated in personal and face-to-face interviews scheduled with the different people in charge of communication of the organizations during the last trimester of 2009. The surveys were completed over the course of those interviews.

The choosing of a survey as an instrument for the first phase was mainly made because it gives a rich quantitative information, something fundamental for our study object due to the almost non-existence of scientific investigations about it. A standardized, programmed or structured survey was chosen, based on the use of the questions: some of them general and open that influence the potentialities of the media, like, for example: What barriers or fears do you meet when reaching social networks? And some others specific and of concrete answer like, for example: Do you measure the influence of your messages on social networks? (Which influence the real use they make of those potentialities). The questions were presented in the same order for everyone. For the data analyzing it was used the content analysis, because it's a technique that allows systematizing and objectifying the characteristic of the messages. This technique allowed considering each and every answer to each question for the survey which content could be objectified and from them formulating reproducible and valid inferences.

Regarding the second phase of the research, the selection of the focus group was motivated by its capability of generating qualitative material from group interaction, since focus groups allow "the interdependence of their members and the fact that each participant acts in relation with his own needs, showing his life, experience and point of view" (Soler, 1999, p.80). This way, hard to collect in individual interviews information or other qualitative techniques is obtained. This was fundamental for the objectives set in our study, since it was tried to collect information about the use and perception of social networks from NGO's going beyond individual approaches and aggregating that data so it would be useful to a better comprehension of the results of the first phase. In general terms, that information about usage and perception was considered to be investigated through the testimony of the people responsible of the communications departments of the NGO's instead of direct analysis of their profiles on the networks, due to the great disparity of size, budget and characteristics of the organizations involved in the research and the uneven real use that existed among them.

SAMPLE SELECTION

To select the sample, the work began with the 41 NGO's qualified for the development by the Spanish International Cooperation Agency⁴ (DNGO). This qualification supposes that all of them have gone through a process of acknowledgment of their work. Given the number, quality, rigor and concretion of the data facilitated by NGO's to SICA during the process, it is considered that the fact of being qualified is significant enough to center this research on them. Thirteen of them, which correspond to the 31,7% of the qualified DNGO's, finally, took part of this investigation. To complete the sample, more than 20 organizations, with 4 or more years doing social communication through conventional or not media, were contacted. The initiative had an excellent reception, being 35 organizations in the end, those that gave back the completed survey.⁵

To select the sample for the focus groups, there were made two callings between these 35 organizations and two groups were constituted (GD1 and GD2). Normally, it is recommended the making of two focus groups for each relevant category for the study, in order to reach a minimum level of saturation. Since this is a qualitative technique, the focus group, the objective was not to collect statistic representativeness, but to get pertinent and relevant speeches according to the research investigation. Since it was not used the

⁴ On the years 2005, 2007 and 2009.

⁵ According to the order in which their surveys were received, these were: Anesvad, Farmacéuticos Mundi, Salud para Todos, Pacto Mundial, FAD, Codespa, Movimiento por la Paz, Adaner, 5 al Día, Cáritas Getafe, Greenpeace, Setem, Un Solo Mundo, Asamblea Cooperación por la Paz, Cruz Roja, Juntos para Jugar, Maison des Enfants, Fundación Vicente Ferrer, Fundación Nelson Mandela, Comercio Justo Web, Acsur las Segovias, Acción contra el Hambre, Manos Unidas, Fundación Tomillo, Cáritas Española, Jóvenes del Tercer Mundo, Abenin, Fundación San Ezequiel, Cesal, Asociación Miguel Fenollera, Intermón- Oxfam, Asza y Accem.

method as self-sufficient to achieve the proposed goals, but as complementary, and precisely for being unnecessary a categorization of the participants according to these objectives, the final number of groups was limited to 2. In this way, Gaitán and Piñuel say that a reduced number of groups avoids the trend of redundancy or noise, due to that the number two is set as the minimum necessary group number to secure the testability of the data. Finally, 16 members of NGO's participated, all with base in Spain and linked to the departments responsible of the communications of them.⁶

Regarding the focus groups, beginning from the registered information, there were elaborated reports according to what Krueger denominates interpretative model and in which, as Valles indicates, "based on descriptive reduction of information [...] it is added a greater analytical and interpretative effort" (2000, p. 328). As long as what concerns to the surveys, beginning from the content analysis, there were made some inferences organized in two blocks: one referring the perception that those responsible of communications have of social networks, in the possibilities aspects and fears; and another one, real use that they do of those networks, as in delimitation of the kind of presence they have as in the expectations for future updates.

RESULTS

FROM QUANTITATIVE PHASE

Following next the quantitative frequency of appearing data from the answers of the surveys is presented, no matter in what question they appear. Therefore, they are the number of coincidences of a statement that influence a concept. The tables collect concepts grouped by similar meaning, being highlighted those most frequent; and those, ordered by greater to lower frequency.

Perception about social networks

Beginning by the perception in which NGO's have of social networks, in first place on what refers to the possibilities of the networks (Table 1), the values perceived as most important by the 35 NGO's participating are: proximity, messages spreading, speed or gratuity. Proximity, with a frequency of 24 coincidences of answer, is mainly understood as the possibility of establishing a direct contact with the audience and having with them an active attitude; it is equally considered the capability of spreading the messages (with 24 coincidences). Also stand out speed (18) of sharing information with the audience thanks to immediacy (7) between the moment when information is produced and the time in which it updates itself inside the social network, satisfying the information demand (8).

Secondly, between the barriers that NGO's perceive to use social networks (Table 2) stands out, above any other, the fear of losing control of communication (with 27 coincidences), specially regarding the incorrect use that could be done of the data and information that organizations provide (27). In second place, it must be mentioned the fear to practices that may violate rights (22).

Social Networks Usage

Regarding the use that NGO's make of networks, in Table 3 it can be observed that in more than half of the sample manifests that has some presence on social networks and from these, 17 have it on Facebook and 11 on YouTube. On a minor degree, they are on Twitter or Tuenti and really few on Flickr. These data has consonance with those from American NGO's published in USA (Quinn and Berry, 2010), that indicate that mainly they manifest to have presence on Facebook (73%), Twitter (56%), blogs (45%) or video sharing platforms (49%); and with those collected by the poll taken by Citizen Schools and Public Learning Media Lab (2008), stating that blogs, Facebook and YouTube are also the mostly used social web channels used by the

⁶ The following NGO's stand out: Adaner, Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz, Fad, Greenpeace, Cáritas, Cruz Roja Madrid, Movimiento por la Paz, Salud para Todos, Setem and 5 al día.

organizations. The slight differences are determined by the Twitter boom later to the data collection of this research and dominant role that blogs have in 2.0 webs.

On other issue, the 20 NGO's present on social networks, consider them efficient media, not a fleeting trend; nevertheless, 65% perceives that the offered advantages are not well seized and only 10% perceive they are. Also, the 45% of the NGO's with presence on networks say they are only on one, usually Facebook, because of its degree of penetration and closeness with the objective audience; 10% manifest being on two; 25%, on three and the remaining 20%, on more than three. Regarding the expectations of the NGO's in the actions performed on the networks, the most prominent is interacting with their audience in cooperation actions, participation and mobilization (noted on 50%), followed by sharing information, experiences and knowledge (35%) and a wider reach and presence on media (25%).

As to the networks management (Table 4), 75% of NGO's that use this medium say that they perform information updates and mainly make them in an interval equal or smaller than two to three days. This marks a significant valuation of the instantaneity power, just as was marked the immediacy between the information update and recovering time. The one in charge of the communication performs the update task, even though a considerable number of interviewees did not answer to this question.

Lastly, as to the measure of efficacy of the messages on social networks, it's stated that it's not a priority activity in the organizations (Table 5). The few of them who perform a following (25%) observe that the visitors number and in a lower measure, the registered people and comments, which contrasts with the fear previously mentioned of losing control of communication. It may be hypothesized that it's consequence of that lack of an authentic social networks' professional, a *community manager*.

FROM QUALITATIVE PHASE

Among the results that may be extracted from focus groups, stand out the dialogues kept regarding four issues: positive aspects of communication through social networks; negative aspects of the same; network communication planning; y, lastly, creative strategy in the communication through social networks. Following next, we will illustrate them with some of the opinions made by the participants of the focus groups and which they are very coherent with the results of the first phase of the study.

Positive aspects of communication through social networks

There are at least three important fields of consensus between the communication managers of the NGO's. The first one is referred as that social networks allow a more participative communication than other tools, because they imply a more direct and transparent communication, which eases establishing trustworthy relationships between the organization and their objective audience: "What we look for [...] is talking face-to-face with the people" (GD2, p.7);⁷ "we have transmitted so much secrecy until not long ago. It is like breaking a wall. It is showing transparency" (GD2, p.21).

They greatly value the fact of having an own space to sensitize, inform and in which the receivers may participate asking, proposing, expressing their views. In this sense, it stands out that social networks are useful to communicate to their audiences, but above all that, to promote participative communication: "The communication we do is very unidirectional. The goal of opening to these new channels [...] is a little more participation" (GD2, p.12); "it's getting out from a situation of isolation because we have a web page that

⁷ This nomenclature was used to denominate in an anonymous way the participants of the focus groups. The first part corresponds to the first or second focus groups (GD1 and GD2 respectively) and the second with the page number where that text is on the conversation transcriptions.

doesn't look the others, but looks its own belly button and does not interact with people" (GD2, p.9). It must be considered that these organizations are born from civilian society, so they perceive very positively those tools of communication that allow the implication of several layers of society.

In second place, NGO's defend that, thanks to that participative communication, networks are useful because they help to promote the civilian commitment with their causes; in sum, to form new committed civilians: "A playful use is being given to the social networks, but then there's a series of other movements [...] that have sensibility" (GD2, p.32); they are a tool "to get activists *online* and *offline* [...] so that people gets involved: make a donation or become a supporter" (GD2, p.19). In consequence, they believe in the usefulness of the networks to implicate the civilians in the society improving, making them participants in the activity of the organization. Besides, they consider that such a power of networks finds its explanation, mainly, in their multiplying effect: for example, "in Facebook, behind every person, there are 120 more [...] that is the audience you may reach" (GD1, p.19); "each person transmits things of the organization to their friends as if they were theirs, reason why they have an important weight" (GD1, p.10).

In third place, to these advantages, must be added others that have to do with the diversity of opinions and the possibility that NGO's have of opening a social debate about the issues in which they work. This way, it is not only about the potential of the networks to help in the development of the activities of the NGO's, but also to incentive the debate in society. The dialogical character of networks is in the root of all that.

Negative aspects in communication through social networks

In the conversations kept within the discussion groups by the participating NGO's communication departments members, they were detected some important fears regarding social networks. Among the most recurrent stand out, in first place, those having to do with the control loss of communicative processes in these new scenarios. Like Baraybar wrote, the communication is now dialogue and "when empowering the relationships it has been produced a new ambit in which controlling the information by the organization turns out to be impossible" (2009, p.53). NGO's are conscious of this, and they fear the negative comments about their members, their projects, etc., especially those against the values or ends of the organization.

Even though that, they emphasize that the important thing is appropriately channeling and managing the negative comments: "In all the actions we have performed in all the years we've been working, we have only erased the insults" (GD2, p-15); "we give so much importance to the issue of attacks, when those that may have more attacks [...] are multinational corporations" (GD1, p.8). They do not defend censorship or reality denial as a hostile messages management strategy, but better off, seizing them to consolidate the relationships between the NGO's and their audiences.

In second place, other negative aspects they perceive in the use of networks has more to do with the lack of support from the executive layers of their organizations and the absence of strategic definition of their use. In what refers to the first, the consideration of networks as a medium of minor impact or relevance than others persists: "Greater than our fear [...] is the one of the executive board, that besides considering it useless and a waste of time [...] see it even dangerous" (GD2, p.14). In this way, it's not valued the need of including the networks in the communication strategy of the organization or increasing the personnel in charge of it: "They think that having one person dedicated [to that] is like throwing their salary to the trash" (GD1, p.18).

Thirdly, NGO's signal as a negative aspect a purely practical issue, the multiplicity of profiles and confusion around them that some of these NGO's have: "Many people gets confused thinking that it is profile of our organization, but from some country in South America, even though the profile states [it belongs] to Spain" (GD1, pp. 4-5); "The use given [to networks] supposes some trouble because it gets to confuse people" (GD1, p.5). In many NGO's have emerged specific profiles for determined projects or organization sections (volunteers, youth, etc.) and the result is that, that multiplicity, generates confusion in the audience, difficulties to identify which is the real profile of the organization or message dispersion.

Social Networks communication planning

During the focus groups, some reflections about the way in which NGO's strategically plan their communication on social networks and how they should do it emerged. For starters, they acknowledged the need that the NGO has to design an *online* communication plan that may allow to establish objectives, focusing strategies and, a posteriori, measure the results, something non-existent in almost every NGO analyzed; as an exception it could be spotted the larger, generally international and with structured communications departments, NGO's. It would be also interesting that in this communication plan may appear patent references to the networks communication management, because it is usual to hear in NGO's phrases like: "It is been promoted, but as such, in the typified communication plan, does not [appear reflected]" (GD1, p.20). So far, communication made on networks has generally come determined more by intuition than by planning. Strategy will depend of each organization, of their objectives and way of working, but maybe there are some common elements: "The way is not collecting, it is interacting so that later, people feels part of it, and so just as they support us over the web, they would do it economically [...] We are seeding, that is our strategy" (GD1, p-19). "If you are on the net, your are there with all the consequences. If you are, you have to adapt to it, not trying to adapt the net to you" (GD1, p.15).

The great limitation that NGO's must face is the lack of human resources and materials. It is not a new limitation that could have emerged alongside with social networks; it is just that now they find one more mission to cover and don't find how: "The time we dedicate is the time 'we can'" (GD1, p.17); "I believe that in that [necessary resources] we're all in the same situation, no matter larger or smaller" (GD2, p-20).

With these limitations, during the focus groups, it appears one especially interesting, because it will be the battle horse in the future: the efficacy measurement. In the beginning it was made in a quantitative way, i.e., quantifying the number of new fans, interactions, etc. There are some tools already being used by NGO's to "track the degree of conversions from cyber activist to supporter, of the traffic that comes from Facebook" (GD1, p.13), but they are just a few organizations and they acknowledge that it is something "that must be further developed" (GS1, p.13).

Creative Strategy on Social Networks

Finally, it is worth to make a stop in the creative strategy of the communication developed by NGO's on social networks, because it could lead to needs and specific characteristics when they spread on these platforms. Among the adaptations that have been observed by organizations in their networks communication is the fact that messages must be briefer, more direct and more visual than on other media; this is why some representatives of the NGO's spoke of "information trivialization": "In general the message tends to get decaffeinated, especially on issues that have technical loads" (GD1, p-14).

At the same time, they have witnessed that messages must be more creative and groundbreaking than those for other media: "I miss more aggressiveness" (GD1, p-16); "humor [...] would be very positive to include it in the communication of NGO's, because we are always seen as a sad world" (GD1, p.6). The messages must be adequate to the language of the networks and for that it may be necessary to break with the communication schemes to which NGO's are used to work with: "I refuse to think that since the organization has serious goals, it is only for serious people and serious attitude" (GD2, p.32).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

It is confirmed that the use that NGO's make of the social networks are related to the perceptions that those in charge of communications have of the positive and negative aspects of them, limited by the shortage of human resources and materials that they face and by the need of incorporating them in a mid-term strategic planning, that may allow them to advance in their use without abandoning other complementary types of communication.

Social networks are perceived by NGO's as a suitable tool to develop more participative and direct communication channels that allow them to talk "face-to-face" with the civilian society, easing a greater civilian commitment. And, at the same time, they exercise a multiplying effect on their messages, which first will help to invite the receivers to participate and support their communicative actions and, posteriorly, to develop other actions of more commitment, such as donations, volunteering, etc.

In spite of social media being considered of great relevance, it has not yet been fully seized the opportunities they offer to achieve the objectives of social improving and change of the NGO's. This insufficient use of the networks connects with the limited use that those NGO's keep making of Internet in general, as said by a recent study from Montoliu i Riu (2012), whose conclusions are coherent with the ones presented in the sense of highlighting the underuse of the web to promote interaction with civilians; issue that other authors (Celaya, 2011) also mark as dominant in the use that in general is made of social networks.

There are, basically, two types of inner breaks that put an obstacle to a more intensive and efficient use of the networks in communication of the NGO's. On one side, the usual lack of support from the executive layers, which keep on considering them a medium of minor visibility and impact in front of more traditional ones, like press and television. And, on the other side, the insufficient resources with which these organizations usually have for communications management.

Similarly, there are external breaks to the organizations, even though they are intrinsic to social media; for example, the interactive and participative dimension of the networks, that the people in charge of the NGO's recognize at the same time as the great advantage of these platforms. That interactive dimension is related, over all, with the loss of control over the communication processes that occur in the networks, differently from other media.

The existence of multiple profiles of the same organization in the same network or different social networks, because of the existence of multiple local or international organizations, generates confusion in the audience and this worries the communication managers.

The incorporation of social networks to the communication strategic planning of the NGO's is fundamental because, so far and with some exceptions, they have operated in an intuitive way working under try and error schemes. If strategies and previous objectives are not defined, then it will not be able to seize all the potential of the networks.

Also, the measurement of efficacy of the messages in social networks is not an priority activity of the NGO's; proof of that are the few organizations that actually do it and the lack of their observations, which barely go further from counting the number of fans or visit received on the profile. The future must pass through the design and perfecting the efficacy measurement systems, so that rolled-out experiences by the third sector, through the networks, may be evaluated in a quantitative way as in a qualitative one.

Finally, it has been observed the urgency of adapting on a greater degree the messages to the own language of the social networks, just like the importance of creativity and innovation in the contents to reach more efficiently the audience. Creativity based on catchy, closer and modern designs; new brief and visual formats; more direct contact with more specific audiences. It is a new conclusion corroborated also by other studies, and since that, it's being talked about a "predictable communication where NGO's tell what they do, what has to be done, but they do not build messages that capture the attention and spread over the network" (Arroyo, Baños and Rodríguez, 2012, p. 15).

Even though the data obtained on this research and its coherence with other recent studies performed on other countries (Waters, Burnett, Lamm and Lucas, 2009; Quinn and Berry, 2010), the changes happen rapidly in the world of social networks, therefore it's necessary to periodically replicate the research or complementary works of the same, in order to allow a constant update of the results obtained. The same

way, NGO's are seeing themselves forced to adapt to this constant change, playing on disadvantage some times, because, in general terms, they have a great delay in the use of social networks regarding other organizations in our society.

In this sense, it will be key how the NGO's adapt their communication use and budgets to the new reality derived from the economic crisis getting more acute in Spain since the moment of the making of this study. The budget difficulties of these organizations, influenced by the fall of the public funds destined to these ends, will decisively affect on how they will plan their communication and the increasingly important role that the new media may acquire, specially because of the reason marked in this article: the reduced costs that implementing communication actions supposes when confronted to those needed to perform conventional actions on traditional media. Now, it is not recommended to forget that, even though these new media suppose reduced costs, it should be lost from sight that many NGO's are having difficult economic times that are forcing them to reduce personnel, structures, projects, etc., therefore, it will be more difficult that communication on social networks may not be affected by this situation, being possible a further reduction of the budgets destined to these new media.

Table 1: Objectified answers of the survey about social networks possibilities.

Concept	Frequency
Proximity	24
Direct contact and active attitude	20
Interest issues for OA	7
New and current language and communication	1
Diffusion	24
Reaching a massive audience	15
Mobilizing and multiplying messages	11
Speed	18
Information demand satisfaction easier	8
Mass media	2
Immediacy	7
Actuality	6
Sharing	17
Expressing social activity and sharing information	16
Experiences	3
Gratuity	17
Democratization	13
Participation	12
Social Support	3
Democratization	1
Social transformer	1
Cooperating	1
Segmentation	12

Segmentation	4
Knowing the audience interested in knowing our work	6
Getting close to younger audience	5
Positive, committed and responsible image	6
New formats	5

Source: self-elaborated

Table 2: Objectified answers of the survey about fears and inconveniences of social networks.

Concept	Frequency
Lack of control	27
Incorrect use of data and information	27
Negative image of the NGO	2
Seen as a game	1
Rights violation	22
Loss of respect (defamations)	10
Lack of intimacy	6
Protection to childhood and womanhood	18
Work trivialization	3
Violence	2
Resources shortage	13
Few human resources for continuous and daily work	9
It takes time and effort	7
Necessary information nourishing	1
Distrust	11
Distrust	5
Not knowing who's receiving the information	3
Uncertainty	2
Entering the conversation in a transparent and sincere way	1
Saturation and competitiveness	8
Difficulty to outstand and getting attention	5
Competition	3
Not to be rude	2
Inexperience	8

Not knowing the own tool	6
Lack of experience	2
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Segmentation	5
By interest	2
Exclusive participation with previous contact	1
By age	1
OA different to the receiver on social networks	1
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Other	9
<hr/>	
None	5

Source: self-elaborated

Table 3: Presence on social networks

Presence on social networks	Nº	%
Yes	20	57,14
In what networks	49	
Facebook	17	85
YouTube	11	55
Twitter	7	35
Tuenti	6	30
Flickr	3	15
Hi5	2	10
MySpace	1	5
LinkedIn	1	5
Menéame	1	5
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No	12	34,28
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No answer	3	8,57
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TOTAL	35	100

Source: self-elaborated

Table 4: Frequency and responsibility of information updating

Periodical information update	Frequency	%
Yes	15	75

Daily	5	33,33
Two or three days	4	26,66
Tries to	1	6,66
Not indicated	5	33,33
No	4	20
No answer	1	5
TOTAL	20	100
Updates responsibility	Nº	%
Communications department responsible person	10	50
Volunteer	2	10
No answer	8	40
TOTAL	20	100

Source: self-elaborated

Table 5: Measurement of the efficacy of messages

Measurement of the incidence of messages	Frequency	%
Yes	5	25
Visitors number	5	100
Registered people	3	60
Comments	3	60
Periodical reports (followers number, posts and answers)	2	40
Events participation	2	40
Connected people	1	20
No	7	35
No answer	8	40
TOTAL	20	100

Source: self-elaborated

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