

## The bullfighter brand in transmedia storytelling: the case of Román Collado

La marca torero en la narrativa transmedia: el caso de Román Collado

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### Abstract

This study examines the transmedia storytelling strategy of bullfighter Román Collado, focusing on how he has consolidated his personal brand in the traditional context of bullfighting. Using a mixed methodology that combines qualitative content analysis and a quantitative approach to social media engagement, the research evaluates 76 publications made between February and July 2024, as well as his television appearances. Results highlight Collado's ability to connect with a young audience through an emotional and relatable style, using metaphors, humor, and contemporary values. His strategy aligns with infotainment characteristics, balancing professional and personal aspects, which enhances his authenticity and appeal. However, limitations include the lack of bidirectional interaction with followers and the need to diversify content across platforms. This study contributes to the analysis of transmedia storytelling in traditional professions, emphasizing its potential to build modern and relevant personal brands in an ever-changing digital environment.

### Keywords

Engagement; infotainment; Román Collado; social media; tauromachy; transmedia storytelling.

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## Resumen

Este estudio analiza la estrategia de narrativa transmedia del torero Román Collado, enfocándose en cómo ha logrado consolidar su marca personal en un ámbito tradicional como la tauromaquia. Mediante una metodología mixta que combina el análisis cualitativo de contenido y un enfoque cuantitativo del engagement en redes sociales, se evalúan 76 publicaciones realizadas entre febrero y julio de 2024, así como su participación en televisión. Los resultados destacan la capacidad de Collado para conectar con una audiencia joven a través de un estilo cercano y emocional, empleando metáforas, humor y valores contemporáneos. Su estrategia se alinea con las características del infoentretenimiento, mostrando un equilibrio entre lo profesional y lo personal, lo que refuerza su autenticidad y atractivo. Sin embargo, se identifican limitaciones como la falta de interacción bidireccional con los seguidores y la necesidad de diversificar el contenido según las plataformas. Este estudio contribuye al análisis de la narrativa transmedia en profesiones tradicionales, destacando su potencial para construir marcas personales modernas y relevantes en un entorno digital en constante evolución.

## Palabras Clave

Engagement; narrativa transmedia; redes sociales; Román Collado; tauromaquia.

# 1. Introduction

In the 21st century, technology has become central to economic, social and communicative development, transforming the way content is created, shared and consumed. This digital age, characterised by media convergence, has prompted the media to migrate from traditional models to interactive and multimedia systems that respond to the demands of digital natives (Campos-Freire, 2008; Paniagua-Iglesias et al., 2024). In this context, transmedia storytelling has emerged as a key strategy for articulating narratives across multiple platforms (Jiménez-Marín et al., 2018), maximising their impact and encouraging the active participation of users as prosumers (Jenkins, 2008; Scolari, 2013).

Although initially developed in entertainment, transmedia storytelling has extended its influence to sectors such as politics, journalism, and corporate communication (Galán, 2016; Larrondo, 2016). Its ability to connect emotionally with audiences has also reached more traditional fields, such as bullfighting, where figures such as Román Collado have implemented this strategy to build an attractive and modern personal brand. This study analyses how transmedia storytelling allows Collado to connect with a young audience, evaluating its effectiveness in terms of *engagement* and proposing improvements to optimise his communication strategy. The objectives include analysing his communication, measuring its impact and suggesting recommendations to strengthen his personal brand.

# 2. Literature review

The current sociocultural context revolves around a central element for the population and economy of the 21st century: technology. This not only drives economic development, but also reconfigures the communicative sphere and social processes at all levels. In this context, technology facilitates media convergence and promotes the hybridity of the language used, an essential feature in the digital age. Traditional media, such as television, have had to adapt, migrating from linear and unidirectional models to a reticular communication model, characteristic of digital technology (Campos-Freire, 2008). This new model is distinguished by its interactivity, hypertextuality, virtuality, connectivity, multimedia nature and flexibility, characteristics that not only allow for more dynamic and accessible communication, but also respond to the demands of digital natives (Paniagua-Iglesias et al., 2024). For these users, who are growing up in a digitalised environment, speed of access and instantaneity in the flow of information

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have replaced the volume and mass of traditional media, creating an audience that demands immediacy and diversity in content. Within this model, the 'speed man' occupies the centre of the communication strategy, empowering himself both as a consumer of content and as an active agent within the network (De Kerckhove, 1999; Himanen, 2001).

The internet and, in particular, social media have acted as catalysts for this transformation, promoting media convergence. This process, described by Jenkins as the basis of transmedia storytelling, facilitates the continuous flow of content across multiple platforms in an integrated manner (Scolari, 2013). Transmedia storytelling not only allows for the construction of narratives that function autonomously on each platform, but also maximises the impact of those narratives by enriching their meaning when consumed together. Furthermore, transmedia storytelling invites users to actively participate in the creation and expansion of content, transforming them into 'prosumers' who not only consume but also produce and reinterpret information, creating digital communities around shared interests (Salaverría and García, 2008).

In the business world, *transmedia storytelling* has redefined marketing and communication strategies (Caldera and Rodríguez, 2022; Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2020). Advertisers no longer seek only to inform consumers about the advantages of a product; they now try to engage them emotionally through participatory experiences that foster *engagement*, increase awareness and strengthen brand loyalty. These experiences help to consolidate the public image and reputation of companies, generating a deeper and more lasting connection with users (Campillo-Alhama et al., 2023). In this context, *transmedia storytelling* allows the deployment of interconnected stories across different channels, adapted to the characteristics of each platform (Porto and Flores, 2012), which enriches the brand experience and gives the viewer a leading and participatory role (Jenkins, 2008).

Although transmedia storytelling initially emerged in the entertainment industry, its ability to capture and maintain attention has led to its adoption in sectors such as journalism (Larrondo, 2016), commercial and corporate communication (Galán, 2016) and even politics, where it is used to strengthen the identity of leaders and create compelling political narratives (D'Adamo and García-Beaudoux, 2014). Transmedia storytelling allows for the personalisation of messages, adapting them to the interests and characteristics of different audiences, thus creating a multiplier effect on the impact of communication. In this sense, its application has expanded into less conventional areas, such as bullfighting, where figures such as Román Collado have adopted *transmedia storytelling* as a tool to build a differentiated personal brand.

The proliferation of personal branding stems from the connections between the brand personification proposed by Séguéla and the discourse on personal branding, although their objectives and strategies diverge significantly. Personality branding proposals, such as Roberts' (2005) 'lovemarks', prioritise emotional and cultural factors, seeking to build consumer loyalty and make them fall in love with the brand. In contrast, the discourse on personal branding focuses on the professional attributes of the individual, aligning more closely with Roser Reeves' (1964) rationalist USP philosophy. This approach can lead to a phenomenon of depersonalisation, reducing the empathic potential of social interactions by transforming personal profiles into thematic information channels under a logic that is more corporate than personal. Thus, priority is given to presenting a 'business self', which is often inappropriate for the culture of sociability inherent in social media, which demands authenticity and closeness.

Among personal branding practitioners, there is a tendency towards informational redundancy and automation. The repetition of content at different times or the use of programming tools are common practices, but they contradict the promise of interaction and conversation inherent in social media. In addition, the use of specialised services such as Commun or Klout, which generate automatic thank-you messages, contributes to parasocial interactions, assimilating human behaviour to that of a bot (Horton and Wohl, 2006). However, some users manage to balance their professional communication with personal elements, incorporating affection and intimate narratives that humanise their brand. They post about family matters, aspirations, cultural tastes, or holidays, creating a more authentic and approachable style. This approach avoids excessive thematisation of posts and fosters a genuine connection with the audience. Through this strategy, Collado manages to connect his identity and values with his audience, generating a public image that resonates with the interests of a young audience. This approach allows him to attract and retain followers who see him as a modern representation of a traditional profession.

Collado's transmedia strategy not only seeks to raise the profile of his professional career, but also to humanise the figure of the bullfighter, bringing it closer to the reality of the younger generations. Through the use of social media and other digital media, Collado constructs a narrative that connects aspects of his personal and professional life, projecting himself as an accessible and authentic individual. This generates a process of viralisation in his communication, which not only attracts his followers but also encourages the creation of an active community, willing to participate and get involved in his career (Cárcar-Benito, 2016). Thus, transmedia storytelling becomes a key tool for building a public image that goes beyond stereotypes (Elías-Zambrano et al., 2023), allowing Collado to define his identity on his own terms and connect meaningfully with his audience.

### 3. Objectives and hypotheses

The hypothesis of this study is that Román Collado consolidates his image as a media bullfighter through a transmedia narrative strategy based on the values of infotainment. Based on this premise, the objectives are to analyse this strategy, evaluate its effectiveness in terms of *engagement*, and identify areas for improvement to optimise his connection with the audience.

The main objective of this study is to analyse the transmedia communication strategy implemented by the bullfighter Román Collado, who has managed to build a modern and attractive public image within a traditional profession such as bullfighting. The research seeks to understand how this strategy leverages multiple digital platforms to project his image and connect with a young and diverse audience. By analysing his social media posts and television appearances, we seek to identify the elements that constitute his transmedia narrative and the resources used to convey his values and professional identity.

The second objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of Román Collado's communication in terms of audience *engagement* and participation. Through social media interaction metrics such as comments, reactions and shares, the impact of his digital presence on his community of followers will be analysed. This objective focuses on measuring the resonance of his messages and how his emotional and approachable communication style contributes to the creation of an active community that participates in his narrative. The research will explore whether his strategy succeeds not only in capturing the audience's attention, but also in fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty to his personal brand.

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Finally, the third objective of this study is to identify the limitations and areas for improvement in Román Collado's transmedia strategy. Although his communication approach has proven effective in connecting with his audience, the research will also analyse untapped opportunities in terms of bidirectionality and interactivity, such as responding to comments or adapting messages to the characteristics of each platform. This analysis will allow us to propose recommendations that optimise his communication strategy, suggesting practices that could enhance *engagement* and the relationship with his followers. Through this objective, the study seeks to contribute to the development of more effective transmedia communication strategies for public figures who wish to strengthen their digital presence. The objectives are as follows:

- S01: Analyse Román Collado's transmedia communication strategy to understand how he projects his image and connects with a young audience.
- S02: Evaluate the effectiveness of his communication in terms of audience *engagement* and participation, measuring the impact of his digital presence.
- S03: Identify limitations and areas for improvement in his transmedia strategy, proposing recommendations to optimise his relationship with his followers and strengthen his personal brand.

## 4. Methodology

This research aims to analyse the characteristics of Spanish bullfighter Román Collado's communication at national and international level through his media strategy. To address this analysis, the following research questions are posed: What language, resources, intentions and media does he use in his narratives? Does he comply with the characteristics of current infotainment? Through what media does he spread his story and personal image? What kind of response does he generate?

Similarly, the above hypothesis is based on the presence of characteristics typical of infotainment in his communication (Gascón-Vera, 2020): anecdotes from his public life, expressions of opinions, charisma, approachability, humanisation of the profession, courage in his actions and an up-to-date discourse in a traditional profession.

The choice of a case study methodology for this analysis is justified by the need to explore in depth how Román Collado constructs and projects his identity and personal brand through various media, specifically his social networks and television appearances. This is a qualitative methodology based on a single case study, which allows for a detailed and contextualised understanding of Collado's communication strategies. This approach is complemented by a quantitative analysis to evaluate the interactions and *engagement* generated on his digital platforms. By using a specific analysis template, based on the model developed by Durántez-Stolle and Martínez-Sanz (2019) in public image studies, a structured framework is guaranteed that integrates both the qualitative and quantitative dimensions, providing a comprehensive and rigorous view of the phenomenon under study.

At this point, it is important to introduce the biographical and relevant data surrounding the protagonist of this case, the bullfighter Román Collado. Born in Gouinguenet (Valencia) in 1993, he is one of the most media-friendly bullfighters. He ranks fifth among the bullfighters with the most followers on Instagram, with 60,800 *followers*. Ahead of him are José María Manzanares (240,000 followers), Sebastián Castella (202,000 followers), Alejandro Talavante (145,000 followers) and Manuel Escribano (104,000 followers), all of whom have more contracts in bullrings, which makes Román Collado's case even more exceptional.

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He also regularly participates in talk shows, interview programmes and analyses of the current situation in the sector in which he participates. He has been invited to the San Fermín bull runs on RTVE, Espejo Público, Clarín on RNE, bullfighting fairs, book presentations on bullfighting and national, local and regional conferences. He has also appeared in other digital media such as El Mundo, El Español, The Objective and ABC, among others.

Finally, his communication strategy has helped him to improve his recognition and popularity at the national level. This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of his debut as a professional bullfighter, and he is announced at all the major bullfighting fairs, such as San Isidro in Madrid, Las Fallas in Valencia, the San Fermín bullfighting fair in Pamplona, and the Valencia Fair in July, among others.

To develop this methodology, an analysis sheet has been created based on content analysis, which is applied to all the interventions made by the person under study, in this case, Román Collado. This sheet consists of six categories: the first four focus on the publication as a whole, i.e. text plus image; the remaining two focus exclusively on one of the elements mentioned above, text or image. The structure of the categories is configured as follows:

- Intentionality: Identifies the main objective of the publication.
- Protagonism: Indicates who the publication focuses on.
- Theme: Open category.
- Symbolic role: Identifies the role that the protagonist seeks to represent about themselves.
- Textual composition: Determines the content, formulation, language and values instilled in the text.
- Image: Analyses the type of multimedia content that the publication consists of.

The categories are explained in more detail below. Firstly, intentionality is the first element analysed and refers to the different purposes that each publication may have. These may provide information about Collado's status, announce his bullfighting schedule, or present important events. They also include interactions with followers, notable achievements, promises about future performances, and comments related to the bullfighting season. In addition, the posts may address more everyday aspects of his life, humanising his image.

The second category addresses the analysis of the prominence of the posts, classifying them into those that focus exclusively on Collado himself (own prominence) and those that share the focus with other characters or entities (shared prominence). In this context, the nature of the content differs between professional posts, which revolve around bullfighting, and those that address his personal life.

The third category corresponds to the subject matter of the publications and is divided into two main areas: bullfighting content and content related to his private life. In addition, the scope of action is classified according to geographical reach, whether national or international, which allows us to observe how the bullfighter adapts his communication to different contexts.

Fourthly, the category of symbolic role is included, with the table identifying Collado as a '21st-century bullfighter' or simply as a 'professional'. This allows us to understand how he constructs his public image, either as a modern figure who breaks with traditional stereotypes or as a serious professional dedicated to his craft.

Fifthly, the textual composition of the publications is evaluated according to the type of content, which can be bullfighting-related or personal. In addition, the formulation of the messages is analysed, which can be rational, based on facts and arguments, or emotional, designed to provoke an emotional response in the audience. The language used and the values conveyed are also key elements in the construction of Collado's image.

Finally, imagery is a fundamental aspect of the analysis. We observe whether or not the bullfighter appears in the images and classify the type of visual space in which he is represented. This may be a snapshot of a specific moment, a planned pose, or a spontaneous image that conveys naturalness. These visual elements contribute significantly to the perception of his personal brand and his connection with the audience.

This file has been compiled by the author based on Berrocal (2003), Durántez-Stolle and Martínez-Sanz (2019), García-Beaudoux and D'Adamo (2006), López, Marcos and Casero (2017), Selva and Caro (2017).

Finally, the sample analysed includes all posts on Román Collado's social media profiles (Instagram and X/ Twitter) and his television appearances between 2 February and 18 July 2024, covering the period from the start of the season in Spain to his participation in the Pamplona Bullfighting Fair. This analysis includes:

- Posts on Instagram (@romancollado) and Twitter (@romancollado), including 58 posts in total, with an evaluation of reactions and comments.
- Analysis of Román Collado's participation in the television programme Los encierros de RTVE on 8 June 2024.

## 5. Results

Bullfighter Román Collado has made a name for himself on two of the most popular social networks in Spain: Instagram and Twitter. On both platforms, he uses a simple and consistent username, consisting of his first name followed by his first surname, which makes it easy for followers to find him quickly. However, although his presence is notable, there are certain differences between how he presents himself on each network. For example, the avatar he uses on each profile is not the same, and the tone of his posts varies, as can be seen in Table 2. In his bios, Román maintains a humorous and light-he : on Twitter, he defines himself as a "smile collector" and on Instagram with a curious "in sixth grade, I was class president." It is interesting that, despite being a bullfighter, he does not directly mention his profession in any of his profiles. This detail gives him a light-hearted and approachable air, which helps him connect with his followers.

**Table 1.** Summary of Román Collado's profiles on the social networks studied. Source: Own elaboration, 17 October 2024.

	Instagram	X/Twitter
Number of followers	61,100	22,300
Number of profiles followed	1,776	300
Number of messages posted	1,371	4,492
Profile creation date	August 2012	April 2011

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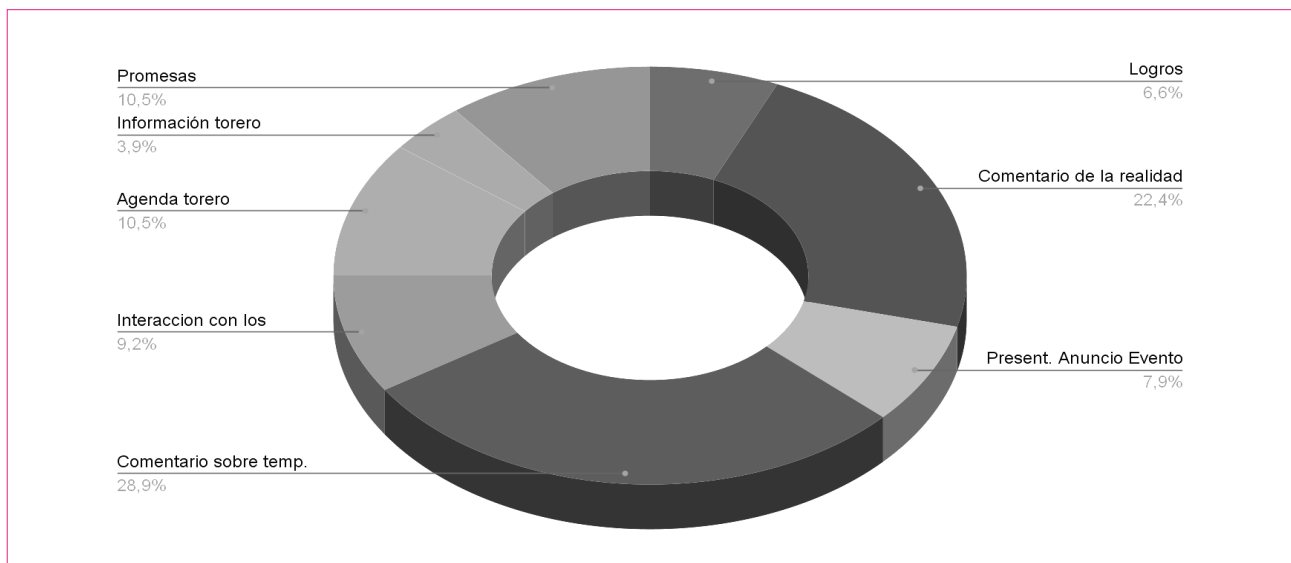
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The difference in the number of followers is significant: Román has more than 60,000 followers on Instagram, while on Twitter he has around 23,000. This disparity shows how his content seems to resonate more in the visual and dynamic environment of Instagram. On the other hand, the number of accounts he follows from each profile is relevant data that also provides information for the analysis of his digital strategy. On Twitter, the header with his logo stands out, a cheerful and playful design where the word "Román" appears in a vibrant font, and the letter "o" is replaced by a sun. This logo conveys his values and the character he reflects in his posts, reinforcing his image as someone who is authentic and has a friendly touch, who does not take himself too seriously on social media, although he does in the bullring.

Román Collado is continuously active on social media, with 76 posts across both platforms during the period evaluated. Specifically, he posted 51 times on Instagram and 25 times on Twitter. As shown in Figure 1, the main purpose of his messages is to comment on the reality of the bullfighting season (22.4%) from his position and in relation to his performances (10.5%), from a perspective very close to what it means to be a bullfighter in the 21st century. His posts show a great symbiosis between the textual message and the visual content, showing acceptance of what has happened, whether it be an achievement or a misfortune in his performance. He uses contemporary communication, navigating general values and feelings, staging the figure of the protagonist and employing linguistic resources common to popular culture with metaphors, symbols and morals.

Figure 1. Intentionality in percentage terms of Román Collado's public messages.



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

In Román Collado's posts, the subject of bullfighting is clearly the centre of attention, although sometimes snippets of his personal life, which is deeply intertwined with his profession, filter through. These posts, whether about bullfights or personal moments, tend to generate the most intense and meaningful reactions from his audience. Román ensures that everything he shares has a powerful visual impact, using high-quality photos and videos that are always accompanied by short, direct phrases. The content has an emotional and accessible tone, reflecting his more human side and concerns that resonate with young people in Spain in 2024. It is this authenticity and closeness that sets him apart

from other bullfighters: Román presents himself as a young man of the 21st century, connected to the realities of the digital world and committed to being a modern symbol for his profession.

In addition to images of his performances in bullrings in Spain, France and even Latin America, Román shares moments from conferences, interviews and television programmes, all carefully designed with an attractive visual aesthetic. Sometimes, he opts for graphics that add diversity to his profile but, at the same time, maintain the essence of what he represents: a bullfighter proud of his roots and traditions who combines the courage and dedication of his craft with the values and aspirations of young people fighting for their dreams. This content reflects a narrative of effort, hard work and determination, qualities that Román highlights as essential both in bullfighting and in everyday life.

On the other hand, his personal life appears discreetly and subtly, as can be seen in Figure 2. However, when he does show aspects of his private life, he does so with the same warmth and closeness he employs in the rest of his content. This reinforces the idea that, for Román, bullfighting is not just a job, but a true way of life. Figure 2 shows how his messages are always imbued with respect and love for his profession, which he presents with a sense of dedication and pride, seeking to dignify it and connect with his followers from a place of authenticity and humanity.

The bullfighter's informative events and presentations always have a festive and approachable feel, yet the language used follows the same thread as that seen in the protagonist's digital world: approachable, charismatic, humble, realistic and imbued with the values and language of today's socio-cultural society. The symbolic role that Román plays on these occasions is that of a great communicator and not very pragmatic, as his colleagues in the profession tend to be characterised, which leads to a greater connection with younger fans.

Likewise, the messages linked to the bullfighter's upcoming performances are direct references to the event in question, as shown in Figure 3, both visually and textually. It is noteworthy that his communication strategy offers suggestions for improvement, achievements or direct invitations to accompany his performance. However, the use of friendly and approachable language and tone does not give the impression of constant bombardment and demands on the virtual follower (*push strategies*).

The language Román Collado uses on his official profiles and in his television appearances is very expressive and direct, with a simple and accessible touch. Although his vocabulary is not extensive, he compensates for this with expressions and terms typical of the digital world, which brings him closer to his audience, especially young people who identify with this style of communication.

In terms of interaction with his *online* community, Román shows a great ability to mobilise and connect with his audience. This is evident in the thousands of comments he receives: 96.57% of these (3,913) are on Instagram, while only 3.43% (139) are on Twitter. The comments from his followers are usually enthusiastic and full of admiration, with a very positive tone. Internet users often refer to him affectionately, calling him "torero" and praising both his bravery in the ring and his personal qualities. It is also common for followers to express their desire to see him at more bullfighting events, highlighting their admiration for him.

**Figura 2.** Publicaciones realizadas con relación a la temática de la vida personal



Source: Own work, 2024.



**Figura 3.** Publicación realizada en el perfil oficial de Román Collado en Twitter acerca de sus próximos eventos



Source: Own work, 2024.

Even in their interactions, his *fans* imitate or are inspired by the language he commonly uses, replicating his phrases and expressions. Despite the large number of comments, the reach and interaction of his posts through likes and shares is even greater. On Instagram, these figures reach 167,246 reactions, representing 96.38% of the total, while on Twitter they only account for 3.62%. Overall, Román has accumulated 173,534 interactions on both networks, demonstrating his ability to generate content that resonates with his audience.

One of the most successful examples of this connection with his followers is when he shares everyday and personal aspects that go beyond the theme of bullfighting. Figure 4 illustrates how he invites his community to participate with relatable posts, such as when he celebrated Mother's Day with humour: "A mother is not a mother if she has never said one of these phrases to you: 'I'll go and find it,'" and asked his followers to share typical phrases from their own mothers. This closeness and ability to get his audience actively involved is one of the keys to his social media success.

Finally, the bullfighter frequently appears on television. Román's appearance on RTVE's television programme on the running of the bulls (Figure 5) reaffirms the aforementioned communicative characteristics, such as the use of familiar, colloquial, metaphorical and humorous language. Most of these appearances address the subject of bullfighting with the intention of commenting on the reality of the season and promoting or announcing upcoming events or activities featuring the bullfighter. The discourse analysed shows a predominantly emotional bias, with a predominance of anecdotes or opinions on the subject at hand, in this case the Pamplona bullfighting festival. The use of this type of discourse and language allows for a special connection and attracts the audience's attention with

language that is rarely seen among the leading figures in the fighting bull industry. The use of expressions such as “tirarse a la piscina” (take the plunge) or “esto es la leche” (this is amazing) is striking. All these figures of speech that form part of the bullfighter’s communicative style convey the personal and professional values that he seeks to uphold throughout his strategy, such as approachability, simplicity, honesty, a sense of humour and pride in his profession and his country.

Figura 4. Publicación para felicitar a su madre en el Día de la Madre



Source: own creation, 2024.

Figure 5. Román Collado’s appearance on RTVE’s bull-running programme on 8 July at the Pamplona bullfighting festival, San Fermín.



Source: RTVE, 2024.

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## 6. Conclusions

Román Collado's transmedia communication strategy demonstrates a successful application of the principles of transmedia storytelling in a profession as traditional as bullfighting, adapting it to the demands of a modern, digital audience. In a media context that emphasises platform convergence, Collado has managed to build a public identity that attracts and retains a young audience. This is particularly relevant in a discipline that faces challenges of renewal and acceptance in a society that often criticises bullfighting practices (Cárcar-Benito, 2016). Through constant and consistent communication on social media and television, Collado has forged a style that appeals to emotions and contemporary values, combining the professional and the personal to project an accessible and approachable image (Mut and Miquel, 2019). This phenomenon is in line with the observations of De Kerckhove (1999) and Himanen (2001) on the 'speed man', who responds to the demands of a digital environment that requires immediacy and accessible content at any time.

In line with the first objective of the study, Collado's ability to project his image and connect with his audience is one of the keys to his success. His transmedia strategy reflects an adaptation of elements typical of entertainment narratives, making him a '21st-century bullfighter' who challenges traditional stereotypes in the sector (Larrondo, 2016). Through the use of metaphors, symbols and colloquial expressions, Collado creates an emotional connection with his followers, reinforcing his public image as someone who shares common values and experiences with his audience (D'Adamo and García-Beaudoux, 2014). This not only attracts an audience that identifies with his language and style, but also positions the bullfighter as a figure capable of connecting with a global audience, transcending the geographical and cultural barriers of bullfighting. The choice of topics and his narrative tone demonstrate his ability to generate an authentic and consistent message, which resonates particularly in a context where authenticity becomes a key value for digital audiences (Caro, 2017).

With regard to the second objective, the effectiveness of his communication in terms of *engagement*, the results of the quantitative analysis of his interactions on social media reflect a significant connection with his audience, especially on Instagram. With 96.38% of interactions concentrated on this platform, Collado demonstrates an ability to adapt to his audience's preferences, using a visual and textual style that generates high levels of reactions and comments. The high *engagement* rate on Instagram, where the visual format is predominant, aligns with the characteristics of transmedia storytelling described by Jenkins (2008) and Scolari (2013), who emphasise the importance of adapting content to the particularities of each platform. However, a relevant observation is the lack of two-way interaction in his posts. Although his followers respond actively and positively, Collado's absence of direct responses limits the potential for engagement and reduces the possibility of creating a more committed digital community (Salaverría and García, 2008). This one-way communication can be perceived as a barrier for those followers who seek a closer and more dynamic relationship with the bullfighter.

On the other hand, the presence of negative comments on his social media, although in the minority, highlights the cultural tensions surrounding bullfighting. In the context of the 21st century, where opinions against this practice are increasingly common, Collado has managed these comments diplomatically, maintaining a discourse that focuses on the positive aspects of his profession and avoiding confrontation. This strategy allows his public image to remain unblemished by controversial debates, while reinforcing his connection with followers who value his attitude and commitment to his profession. This approach is in line with infotainment strategies that seek to capture audiences through

emotionality and personal identification without delving into issues that may divide their audience (Gascón-Vera, 2020; Berrocal and Cebrián, 2009).

Likewise, the conclusions of this study confirm the main hypothesis: Román Collado effectively exploits and consolidates his image as a media bullfighter through a transmedia narrative strategy based on the values of infotainment. Throughout the analysis, it has been shown how Collado's communication incorporates elements characteristic of this approach, such as personal anecdotes, expressions of opinion, and a style that projects charisma and closeness. This strategy not only humanises his profession by showing the courage and determination inherent in bullfighting, but also employs an updated discourse that connects with new generations. The bullfighter's social media posts and television appearances reveal an intentional use of emotional and narrative resources that facilitate identification with his audience and reinforce a modern and accessible public image, aligned with the demands of a digitalised society.

In terms of limitations and areas for improvement, the third objective of this study highlights the importance of diversifying and adapting content for each platform. Replicating similar messages on different social media platforms without proper adaptation can limit the impact of his transmedia narrative. In this sense, Collado could benefit from greater content segmentation, taking advantage of the particularities of each platform to offer a more personalised and meaningful experience for his audience. For example, on Twitter, it could opt for more direct and conversational interactions, while on Instagram it could delve deeper into visual and emotional content that reinforces its connection with its followers (Galán, 2016). This lack of adaptation limits its potential to strengthen audience loyalty, as it does not fully exploit the characteristics of each platform.

Another significant limitation is the lack of responses to comments and messages from his followers, which prevents the creation of a closer, two-way relationship. In the digital age, where consumers seek to be heard and actively participate in the narrative of the public figures they follow, this lack of interaction represents a missed opportunity (Jiménez-Morales, 2016). Although Collado has managed to build a strong personal brand through his visual and textual content, greater interaction with his audience could elevate his image and strengthen the community of followers that has formed around him. A strategy that includes personalised responses, surveys or live sessions could significantly improve the engagement and loyalty of his followers.

The implementation of transmedia storytelling in Román Collado's strategy exposes key characteristics of today's digital society. Digital consumers have gone from being passive recipients to active prosumers, participating in and co-creating content. This change in role is crucial to understanding how public figures such as Collado can generate a powerful brand image by combining personal and professional elements. This strategy not only reinforces his identity, but also helps to blur the barrier between interpersonal communication and mediated communication, facilitating a more genuine and direct connection with his audience (Galán, 2016; Porto and Flores, 2012).

Thus, Román Collado's transmedia strategy represents a significant innovation in the communication of public figures in bullfighting, a field traditionally reserved and distant from the digital sphere. Through a combination of authenticity, emotion and accessibility, Collado has managed to build a public image that deeply connects with new generations. The results of this study suggest that transmedia storytelling is a powerful tool for developing personal brands in the digital context, especially in areas where public image tends to be rigid and stereotypical (Paniagua-Iglesias et al, 2024). However, the

research also highlights the need to optimise certain aspects of his strategy, such as bidirectionality on social media and content diversification.

The analysis of this case provides a valuable perspective for future studies on transmedia communication in traditional professions. As technology continues to transform society, the ability to adapt to new media and meet the demands of a digital audience is essential for any public figure who aspires to maintain their relevance and connection with the public (Atarama-Rojas et al., 2017). Ultimately, Román Collado's experience shows that transmedia storytelling not only contributes to visibility and engagement, but also allows for authentic and meaningful brand building in an ever-changing digital environment.

## 7. Limitations of the study (and possible future lines of research)

This study has several limitations that should be taken into account. First, the exclusive focus on the case of Román Collado may restrict the generalisation of the results to other public figures within the bullfighting world. Furthermore, given the limited existing literature on bullfighting applied to communication and marketing, this work should be considered a starting point for promoting new quantitative and qualitative analyses related to the construction of personal brands of bullfighters and other figures linked to this traditional sector.

In terms of future lines of research, it would be relevant to carry out comparative studies between different public figures who use transmedia narratives in traditional contexts, as well as specific comparisons between bullfighters. Likewise, the integration of qualitative methodologies, such as interviews or focus groups with followers, would provide a deeper insight into the emotional impact and *engagement* generated. Finally, investigating the role of emerging platforms in transmedia communication would significantly broaden the scope and implications of the analysis.

## 8. Specific contribution of each author

- Conception and design of the work: D.B.R.; F.J.C.
- Documentary research: D.B.R.; F.J.C.
- Data collection: D.B.R.; F.J.C.
- Analysis and critical interpretation of data: D.B.R.; F.J.C.
- Review and approval of versions: D.B.R.; F.J.C.

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