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FROM THE PORTAL TO DIGITAL SOCIAL NETWORKS: A LOOK AT GRUPO MEIO'S JOURNALISTIC PROFILE ON INSTAGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Digital Social Networks have already become part of the world communication scenario, inserting themselves in the daily lives of a significant portion of the population. Therefore, journalistic outlets realize the need to be present in these spaces, which also become means of disseminating journalistic content. The present work seeks to analyze how the Grupo Meio de Comunicação – headquartered in Teresina -Piauí, through the MeioNews.com Portal, uses the digital platform Instagram, through the @meio_news profile, as an informative vehicle, offering a comparison with content published on the news portal of the same company. To materialize the proposal, qualitative research is used, of exploratory and descriptive nature, carried out with bibliographic research, Case Study (Yin, 2001) and analysis of the contents collected both in the journalistic profile on Instagram and in the news portal.

Keywords: Journalism. Digital Social Networks. Instagram. Meio News.

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INTRODUCTION

The 1990s were marked by great achievements in relation to technology and information: the Internet gained more and more strength and means of disseminating content and information began to emerge. In relation to journalism, the News Portals are beginning to make great strides and conquer the public through their quick and easy practice. And Digital Social Networks, which are gradually integrating into the daily lives of users and are becoming part of the day-to-day life of much of the world.

From children to the elderly, small businesses and multinationals are immersed in this new mode of communication, whether through computers, tablets and, of course, smartphones. In this way, it would be no different for the Communication Groups, which soon also begin to be part of this universe and share daily news through profiles created in these spaces. However, when taking it to the journalistic aspect, it is necessary to ascertain how far these tools fit as disseminators of knowledge, information and news. Connecting is the word of the moment, but do these forms of connection also fit journalism?

In this sense, this article aims to understand how Grupo Meio de Comunicação uses the Instagram platform as a way to disseminate information, through the @meio_news profile, also bringing a comparison with content published on the news portal of the same company (MeioNews.com).

To materialize the proposal, qualitative research is used, of an exploratory and descriptive nature, carried out with bibliographic research and Case Study (Yin, 2001). The literature review on the subject focuses on authors who address digital social networks (Recuero, 2009) and web journalism (Canavilhas, 1999; 2004; 2014). The case study, on the other hand, is based on guidelines established by Yin (2001), focusing on a communication group and its ramifications. According to the author, this methodology:

> It allows an investigation to preserve the holistic and significant characteristics of real-life events - such as individual life cycles, organizational and administrative processes, changes in urban regions, international relations and the maturation of some sectors. (Yin, 2001, p. 12).

Thus, the following article covers the following topics: a) From the Portal to Digital Social Networks, which makes a timeline with the phenomena that led this information to leave the news portals to the Digital Social Networks; b) Methodology, which presents the methods and techniques used in this research; c) Meio News, with an analysis of the News Portal and the profile on the Social Network Instagram of the Communication Group; and Final Considerations.

FROM THE PORTAL TO DIGITAL SOCIAL NETWORKS

In the mid-1970s, the digital space arrived to improve the forms of communication. What was previously possible to follow only through traditional information vehicles: TV, radio and print, would now be explored in a new environment: the Web[3]. And, shortly after, Web journalism, which entered the virtual environment at the end of the twentieth century. Thus, there is a reconfiguration in the media, which seek to readapt to the new reality and enter, even if gradually, into this vast universe. According to Oliveira (2023):

> Journalism followed the use and appropriation of the various communication technologies. Innovations and advances in the technological field reverberate in journalistic work and reshape its main product, news. This is proven when we look throughout history at the emergence of the press, telegraph, radio, television and finally the diffusion of the internet that enabled the arrival of web journalism and network journalism. (p.30)

However, like all beginnings, the new modality was used only as a kind of periodical, only reproducing the content covered in other vehicles. Mielniczuk (2003, p. 3) portrays this phase well:

> At first, the products offered were reproductions of parts of the major printed newspapers, which began to occupy space on the internet. It is very interesting to observe the first experiments carried out: what was then called an "online newspaper", on the web, was nothing more than the transposition of one or two of the main articles of some editorials.

Jornal do Brasil and Folha de S. Paulo, which already had a large reach through the printed newspaper, were the first to enter the virtual world and realize the power of online journalism, which goes through three phases: reproduction, production of authorial content and, finally, production of original news content, developed specifically for the internet.

> This third and current moment corresponds to a more advanced stage of an entire technical infrastructure related to telematic networks, as well as a moment of expansion of the installed base and the increase in the number of users. There was also a technical evolution that allows the faster transmission of sounds and images, the growth in the number of users, which justifies investments in the sector. (Mielniczuk, 2003, p.39).

The possibilities offered by hypertextual writing and the web were quite attractive and their striking characteristics, "interactivity, content customization or personalization, hypertextuality, multimedia or convergence and memory" (Mielniczuk, 2003), made it the ideal place for online information vehicles, the famous news portals.

[3] Web is an abbreviation for World Wide Web, an information and communication system used on the internet that allows the transmission of data in hypermedia.

With the emergence of digital social networks in 1995, the scope of these means of communication becomes increasingly wider. It is a fact that the internet enables the appearance of a new interactive communication, through the sending of messages, in real or determined time, in addition to spaces dedicated to the propagation of content of the most diverse types, and little by little, it becomes a cultural element of the whole society and brings to the world a new way of communicating, In addition, of course, to facilitate relationships between people from different locations and, consequently, impact the sharing of information. For Recuero (2009, p. 24):

> A social network is defined as a set of two elements: actors (people, institutions, or groups; the nodes of the network) and their connections (interactions or social ties). A network, therefore, is a metaphor for observing the connection patterns of a social group, based on the connections established between the various actors. The network approach thus focuses on the social structure, where it is not possible to isolate social actors or their connections.

According to Castells (2015), users of digital social networks, based on the flexibility of the online environment, always seek to adapt new technologies to their interests, to the satisfaction of their desires, but it is based on two common characteristics:

> The first is the value of free, horizontal communication. The practice of virtual counits synthesizes the practice of global free expression, in an era dominated by media conglomerates and censorious government bureaucracies [...] The second shared value that arises from virtual communities is what I would call autonomous networking. That is, the possibility given to anyone to find their own destination on the Net, and, if they do not find it, to create and disseminate their own information, thus inducing the formation of a network. (Castells, 2015, p. 52).

It is through these digital social networks that the public achieves something that is still very shy in relation to traditional media outlets and even in online journalism: interaction. With this powerful tool, the user issues opinions, makes provocations and uses the platforms as a whole. Thus, Moura (2012) points out:

> The great flow of information we have today ended up transforming the way people relate and interact. With the advancement of digital tools, users can now be connected to the world instantly, with just one click. It is remarkable how easy it is and how it has developed and personalized great contacts, which in a social context creates a range of possibilities that make a general service of extreme importance in the general content, to the most illustrious or gloomy situations that run through virtual networks, a sector of great contribution to Brazil.

And, in a way, these digital social networks aimed to show life as it is and strengthen ties between sender and receiver. This makes these spaces also attractive for doing journalism, as Sousa (2013) points out: "It is still during the 2000s that social networking sites on the internet began to be used in the processes of production and circulation of

news. We emphasize, however, that something similar to what happened with other media is repeated on the internet: the news needs to adapt to this new medium." (p. 60).

Moraes (2021) believes that we are living in the "post-massive" era, with digital citizens producing and disseminating information in a network, configuring not only the ways of producing, circulating, and consuming information, but the social body, as well. This also incubates the need for the participation of these traditional media within this universe.

> With agility, ease and economy, the social network became not only entertainment but also educational, informative and serious in the form of an online newspaper, online headlines, etc. A situation in which it is possible to affirm a notorious active participation of society in social life, not only in virtual life, with daily political, legal, local news, among others. (Moraes, 2021)

It is through these adaptations that journalism is maintained, always adapting to the most diverse types of technological inventions, that is, wherever its audience is, the news will be. This news, even with the changes that have taken place due to the technological development of the internet, does not alter its meaning: it continues to be the information that the public likes to read and that attracts the audience to the communication vehicles.

And for that, it is necessary to occupy all places, such as the application/platform/digital social network, Instagram. Considered one of the most accessed networks in recent times, it was born in 2010 and has been a phenomenon ever since. Invented only for sharing photos and videos, it has become one of the main ways to spread online content.

According to DataReportal's Digital 2023[4] survey, Instagram is the second most used digital social network in Brazil, with the attention of 89.8% of Internet users, due to the range of possibilities that can meet the most diverse types of persona within the platform. This also makes it attractive to the mass communication vehicles, as another space for the dissemination of information, thus occurring a journalistic convergence, which for Jenkins (2009), is a word that carries technological, cultural, market and social transformations, that is:

> The flow of content through multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media markets and the migratory behavior of media audiences, who go almost anywhere in search of the entertainment experiences they want. (Jenkins, 2009, p. 30).

Barbosa (2012) believes that this process is about the integration of traditionally separate means of communication, reaching companies, technologies, professionals,

[4] Learn more: https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-brazil

products, content and users, in the consumption and interaction with information, among other words, the joining of newsrooms, new communication flows and convergent work routines.

However, these digital transformations do not replace traditional media, they only bring the idea that traditional media and new media need to interact, that is, convergence brings new perspectives in the way of producing and consuming media. "It is possible to consume content from television, radio, and printed newspapers through the internet, and social networks improve this process" (Costa, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

The discussions presented in this article are anchored in qualitative research of an exploratory and descriptive nature. To carry out the study, the literature review covers authors who address digital social networks (Recuero, 2009) and Web journalism (Canavilhas 1999; 2004; 2014) in their studies.

The methodology chosen was the Case Study (Yin, 2001), since this research focuses only on a media group based in the state of Piauí - Brazil: the Meio group. According to Yin (2001), it is a method that allows the researcher to deepen in a unit of analysis and, thus, makes it possible to understand how Grupo Meio appropriates Instagram as a news platform for the dissemination of content produced in the web newspaper.

Although this methodology is used in historical research, the case study has two more sources of evidence: direct observation and a systematic series of interviews, the first being used in this work to analyze the productive routine of the professionals who are part of the team formed by 4 journalists, 3 interns, 1 video editor and 1 graphic designer who think together about guidelines to feed the @meio_news profile on the Digital Social Network Instagram.

DATA COLLECTION

In addition to the literature review considering the authors already cited, a sample was constituted with content and analysis of the content collected both in the journalistic profile on *Instagram* and on the news portal. The collection took place on June 16, 2024 on the journalistic profile @meio_news on Instagram, observing whether the space is used only for the reproduction of content from the news portal or if it also has authorial information, prepared especially for this platform.

After collecting the publications, they were divided into two representative tables to verify the articles/publications posted in this period and quantify them. The analyzed material comprises 43 news items taken from the organization's website, which are divided into the editorials of Famous, Sports, Politics, Piauí, Police, Horoscope, Curiosities and Maranhão, and 22 publications collected from the journalistic profile on Instagram that also address the topics mentioned.

MEIO NEWS: ANALYSIS OF THE PORTAL AND THE INSTAGRAM PROFILE

From a regional perspective, Grupo Meio Norte (today, Grupo Meio), created in 1990 by businessman Paulo Guimarães and headquartered in the city of Teresina-PI, has as its main focus to be present everywhere within the North/Northeast. Thus, the conglomerate communicates both through traditional vehicles, such as TV and radio, for example, and through new media that permeate the internet, especially digital social networks.

PORTAL MEIONEWS.COM

Also in 1995, in adaptation to new technologies, Portal Meio Norte arrives, (which will be renamed Meio News in 2024). Described as interactive, communicative and up-to-date, it is one of the Group's largest content dissemination platforms. According to the site itself[5], Portal MN, on average, is accessed by 300 thousand different computers a day and has 40 million *Page Views* per month.

With a clean layout, the portal publishes several articles daily. These articles are divided into different sections: Famous, Entertainment, Horoscope, Curiosity, Politics, Police, Well-Being, Piauí, Sports, Contests and Columns that compete for the reader's attention with the various advertisements present on the site.

[5] Learn more: https://www.meionews.com/conheca

FIGURE 1 - News Portal – MeioNews.com



Print made from the first page of Portal Meio News.com, on 06/17/2024.

In the period of just one day (06/16/2024), 47 articles from the most varied editorials were published, as shown in the following table:

TABLE 1 - Articles published on 06.16.2024 – News Portal

TITLE OF THE ARTICLE	LINK	SECTION
"In boxing, Anderson Silva and Chael Sonnen draw in exhibition fight"	https://www.meionews.com/esportes/no-boxe-anderson-silva-e-chael-sonnen-empatam-em-luta-de-exibicao-500054	Sports
"Meet the most listened to artists when it comes to sex"	https://www.meionews.com/entretenimento/famosos/conheca-os-artistas-mais-ouvidos-na-hora-do-sexo-499986/slide/120207	Famous
"The country's largest banks no longer foresee an interest rate cut next week"	https://www.meionews.com/noticias/maiores-bancos-do-pais-ja-nao-preveem-corte-de-juros-na-semana-que-vem-500055	News
"Fonteles talks about the development of Piauí with a focus on job creation"	https://www.meionews.com/piaui/fonteles-fala-sobre-desenvolvimento-do-piaui-com-foco-na-geracao-de-empregos-500056	Politics
"Study reveals average penis size in the world; Brazil is not top 10"	https://www.meionews.com/curiosidades/estudo-revela-tamanho-medio-do-penis-no-mundo-brasil-nao-e-top-10-500059	Curiosities

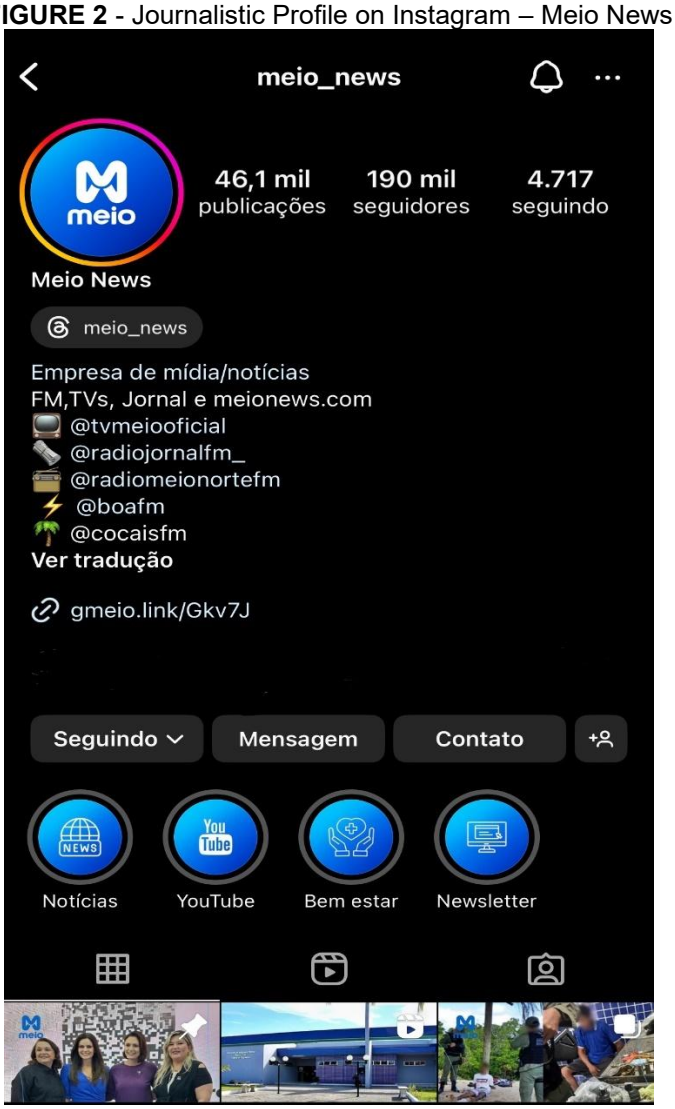
Who is the American hitwoman hunted by international task force"	https://www.meionews.com/policia/quem-e-a-assassina-de-aluguel-americana-cacada-por-forca-tarefa-internacional-500062	Police
"PM arrests three robbery suspects with stolen car and firearms"	https://www.meionews.com/piaui/pm-prende-tres-suspeitos-de-assalto-com-carro-roubado-e-armas-de-fogo-500065	Piaui
"Sheila Melo is rushed to hospital and diagnosis is revealed"	https://www.meionews.com/entretenimento/famosos/sheila-mello-e-internada-as-pressas-e-diagnostico-e-revelado-500079	Famous
"Motorcyclist by app is stabbed during attempted robbery in Timon"	https://www.meionews.com/maranhao/motociclista-por-app-e-assassinado-a-facadas-durante-tentativa-de-assalto-em-timon-500088	Maranhao
"Gossipers! The zodiac signs who know how to keep secrets"	https://www.meionews.com/horoscopo/fofoqueiros-os-signos-do-zodiaco-que-nao-sabem-guardar-segredos-500094/slide/120223	Horoscope

Subjects that are composed as follows: 12 in Famous, 9 in Sports, 8 in Politics, 7 related to Piauí, 4 in Police and only 1 (one) in Horoscope, Curiosities and Maranhão. A possible justification for the number of publications in the first two sections is the day of the week, Sunday, where readers/users look for lighter publications and, due to the passion of Brazilians for football, the sports section gains more space.

PROFILE MEIO_NEWS

With the advent of digital social networks, also in the 1990s, new possibilities for dissemination began to be part of the productive routines within newsrooms, especially when Instagram was launched. Since its first publication, still in 2012, the @meio_news profile had as its main intention to be only a channel for reproducing the articles published on the news portal Meio News. Over the years, the profile starts to gain more and more notoriety and begins to stand out and produce authorial and exclusive content for the Instagram platform.

FIGURE 2 - Journalistic Profile on Instagram – Meio News



Source: print of Meio News' profile on Instagram - 17/06/2024.

The content of the journalistic profile in focus is designed according to the interest of its 190 thousand followers. These connections are strengthened around the news shared within digital social networks. "The social relations that exist on the networks, the processes of interaction and conversation in this internet environment allow the negotiation of the information that circulates there." (Costa, 2021).

Factual, viral, regional, national and even international videos and photos make up the productive routine designed for the profile within this digital social network. But, it is necessary to understand if what is published daily meets requirements and criteria such as a sense of opportunity, *timing*, impact (when it is perceived that a certain topic can attract the public's attention), human interest (publications that involve human emotions), among others, so that it can be evaluated whether it is a new space for the dissemination of news or not.

To analyze the profile in more depth, it was found that, in just one day (06/16/2024), 22 publications were made. Of the most varied themes, using attractive titles, which

represent the famous headlines and explanatory captions, which lead the reader/audience to "know more" on the news portal Meio News.

TABLE 2 - Content published on the @meio_news Profile – Instagram

PUBLICATION TITLE	LINK	SECTION
"In boxing, Anderson Silva and Chael Sonnen draw in exhibition fight"	https://www.instagram.com/p/C8Ro0i2uQUa/?igsh=djhtamhrd29qdGRx	Sports
"Priscilla reveals she lost "BV" with SBT presenter: "I was desperate"	https://www.instagram.com/p/C8Rpt_iO6f_/?igsh=MnQ4bndtY2Y4ajRy	Famous
"Fonteles talks about the development of Piauí with a focus on job creation"	https://www.instagram.com/p/C8RqwGquQEp/?igsh=MWFhZjdneWRhYTQ0MQ==	Politics
"Caixa pays Bolsa Família this week; see who receives it and the calendar"	https://www.instagram.com/p/C8RrfcPuYjP/?igsh=MXV0cm5pOHZ1aGNmeA==	Cities
Single video reels	https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8R6-CzAYCk/?igsh=MWR4NDB6bjJqZnBrMA==	Entertainment
"Off-duty PM is killed with his own weapon during fight in São Paulo winery"	https://www.instagram.com/p/C8SOk_dO8Gc/?igsh=cm0yeDNjbWR0ODQ3	Police
"Nova Jeri: Scheme uses elderly people to register and sell areas in Cajueiro da Praia"	https://www.instagram.com/p/C8SSfumuaQ4/?igsh=d3ExdWxneXFweDNq	Piaui

The table above allows us to observe that, in the case of Instagram, compared to publications made on the News Portal, the scenario changes. Through the posts, it is possible to perceive the interest of the group studied in publishing subjects more focused on Politics (with 5 publications) and the life of "Famous" (with 4 publications), in addition to

the publications of "REELS" videos (4 in total), followed by Sports and Police (with 2 publications each) and Piauí and Cities (which total 1 publication) on the date of analysis.

It is also worth remembering that some editorials that were present on the News Portal were not found on Instagram: Horoscope, Curiosities and Maranhão. On the other hand, on the Platform we have REELS videos, which according to Instagram[6] is "a fun way to connect with your community through interesting videos that inspire anyone to participate." and which, during the collection of this data, were used to disseminate motivational, curiosities and humorous videos, which generates entertainment and feeds the profile.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The main purpose of this article is to analyze the relevance of the Instagram platform for Grupo de Comunicação Meio, offering an understanding of the use of this space by the aforementioned journalistic company based in Teresina-PI.

Based on bibliographic research and analysis of content collected both in the journalistic profile and on the news portal, it is possible to say that, although it is not the main information vehicle used by the group to pass on information to the public (television is still the flagship of the company's business), *Instagram* It is already considered a platform of great relevance in planning and actions, as it is in this space that it is possible to reach a relevant audience: the user of digital social networks.

Making a comparison between the publications on Instagram and the news portal, it is observed that, of the 47 news published throughout the day on 06/16/2024, only 16 were present on Instagram, in a format that brings only a small summary of the body of the news becomes a "caption" and, soon after, there is a call for the reader to follow the information in more detail on the portal link.

Thus, it was observed that, in just one day, more than a dozen publications were made on the profile, but that there is still a deficit of authorial content, and there is not even one publication prepared especially for the platform itself. On the other hand, the team invests in strategies to feed the space and satisfy followers, one of them being the publication of videos in Reels format.

Thus, it remains to be said that, in the group studied, the future of journalism within Instagram seems prosperous, as the tool offers possibilities that, considering the current period, make it indispensable. However, it cannot be said that this digital social network is being used to its full potential by the group, since there is still no logistics that ensure the

[6] INSTAGRAM REELS: HTTPS://ABOUT.INSTAGRAM.COM/PT-BR/FEATURES/REELS

production and preparation of its own material for the journalistic profile on Instagram. There is also a dependence on content from other Grupo Meio communication vehicles, especially the news portal, a fact that will demand reflections and new guidelines from business managers to improve the information flow on the platform.

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