SOCIAL NETWORKS AS MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR FOOTBALL CLUBS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE TIKTOK ENGAGEMENT OF ONE OF THE MAIN CLUBS IN BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

Digital social networks have reshaped the forms of relationship not only between people, but also between organizations and individuals. Among the most popular platforms in Brazil, TikTok has been gaining prominence, especially since the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, a platform that is characterized by its focus on short videos, is currently being increasingly used by organizations from different fields of activity. Including football clubs. In this context, this article brings an analysis of the public's engagement with posts made on this social network on the profile of Clube de Regatas Vasco da Gama, one of the four main teams in Rio de Janeiro. Thus, through a research with both qualitative and quantitative approaches, it was possible not only to identify types of content commonly published and measure which are more capable of generating greater engagement; It was also allowed to survey the behaviors that such posts generate in fans, sympathizers and others interested in the content published by the institution. Thus, the present research proposes a classification for content frequently posted by other football clubs and also provides insights on how these organizations can use this platform in order to generate and manage relationships with their stakeholders.

Keywords: Social Networks. TikTok. Virtual Engagement. Football Clubs. Digital Marketing.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital social networks are a consequence and evolution of the internet that leverages the potential of marketing strategies (Kotler, Kartajaya, Setiawan, 2017; Toledo, 2002). They have reshaped the forms of relationship not only between people, but also between organizations and individuals. In such a way that they have become essential elements in the marketing and communication strategies of several organizations, since they provide not only a way to send messages to the public, but also provide a way to receive feedback from them. In other words, by allowing direct interaction between institutions and people, especially the younger ones, these tools not only improved this relationship, but also made it possible to observe behaviors and trends. This helps to improve future marketing and communication actions (Mendonça, 2013; Culnan, Mchugh, Zubillaga, 2010).

Because of this potential, especially among younger people, today there seems to be a certain common sense today that not acting on social media (understood as the use of social networks as media channels) brings a great risk to the image of organizations. As if perceptions about their brands were adrift from the internet, lacking adequate management (Torres, 2009; Zikmund and Babin, 2011 apud Oliveira, 2016).

Of course, organizations such as football clubs are no exception to this rule. In fact, in a broad sense, it can be thought that groups of fans to a certain degree already represent forms of "social networks", although not necessarily online (Salles, 2015). So, it is natural that with digital social networks, fans have gained more prominence, since they can interact directly with clubs, questioning decisions of their leaders, such as player negotiations, advance of television and sponsorship quotas, sale of image rights, among others (Feitosa, 2019).

Because of this, several efforts have been implemented by these sports associations on a daily basis through different platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter) among others. However, in this context, TikTok deserves to be highlighted. Created in China by the company ByteDance, the platform focuses on sharing short videos, up to 3 minutes long. And its use has been growing at a speed never seen before, having reached the mark of one billion users in the world in just 3 years. Which is less than half the time it took Facebook and Instagram to get the same reach. In Brazil, TikTok in 2024 is one of the four most popular social networks and the spread of its use among Brazilians was strongly

boosted after the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic (Martins, 2024; Bragado, 2024; Pacete, 2024).

In this way, TikTok can be a powerful tool for clubs' marketing campaigns. Well-implemented strategies in this media allow for greater connection, which helps not only to retain fans, but also to increase the adhesion of supporters to the brand, even helping to form new followers (Brogan, 2012).

To this end, the performance in these virtual networks creates a new social scenario which has among its objectives/challenges to engage the public (Bertoletti and Camargo, 2016). It should be noted that engaging is not just about getting someone's attention, it involves getting an action/reaction from that person (such as: liking, commenting, sharing and saving), which would demonstrate that to some degree they were, in fact, impacted by the message/post. In short, engaging is seeking to keep the individual as much as possible by interacting with a profile on these online platforms (Santos, 2015).

Thus, virtual engagement has become a widely accepted measure of the effectiveness of a message in these virtual environments (Bertoletti and Camargo, 2016; Feitosa, 2019). It is important to reflect that the form of interaction with the posted content can generate different interpretations. Thus, "liking" could be associated with a legitimization of the message. "Sharing", on the other hand, would demonstrate an interest in making the content reach more people, and even a willingness to take ownership of what is communicated. While "saving" can denote great interest in the content and a desire to have it at your disposal more easily at any time. Finally, "commenting" shows a willingness to participate in (creating a) debate around what was 'said'. For Raquel Recuero (2024), one of the pioneers in the country in studies on social networks, the act of commenting on virtual posts would represent the highest degree of engagement, since it requires more effort than the actions mentioned above.

There are even some studies that unite both objects of study, Brazilian football clubs and social networks, such as: Oliveira (2013) who analyzed the strategy on social media of the Atlético Mineiro club, such as the dissemination of the "Galo na Veia" membership program; Mokfianski and Alvetti (2017), who investigated the online presence of the Coritiba Foot Ball Club, identifying types of content that received the most engagement; and Oliveira (2016), who studied the Facebook engagement of the Brazilian clubs at the time best placed in the CBF ranking. However, there is still a lack of studies at Basil aimed at understanding the phenomenon of the use of TikTok as a communication tool between

national clubs and their fans. Above all, studies that are able to provide guidelines for a more effective use of this tool.

In this sense, this article brings an analysis of the public's engagement with posts made on TikTok on the profile of Clube de Regatas Vasco da Gama, one of the main clubs in the country, which in 2024 has around 12 million followers on this social network alone (information available on the club's own profile).

METHODOLOGY

This research is a case study, a research strategy that explores a contemporary phenomenon inserted in its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (YIN, 2005).

Both a qualitative and quantitative approach is used here, which helps to provide a broader view of the problem investigated. Qualitative analysis helps to generate insights into the types of content and attitudes they generate in Internet users (Flick, 2010. The quantitative part, on the other hand, helps in the descriptive aspect of the research (Gil, 1994). Including the measurement of engagement through the number of likes, comments, views, shares and saves of posts in the period

The analysis focused on posts made by Vasco da Gama and was restricted to a period of about 2 months between 04/14/2024 and 06/16/2024, which coincided with the start of the Brazilian football championship (04/13/2024). Data collection was carried out on 07/20/24.
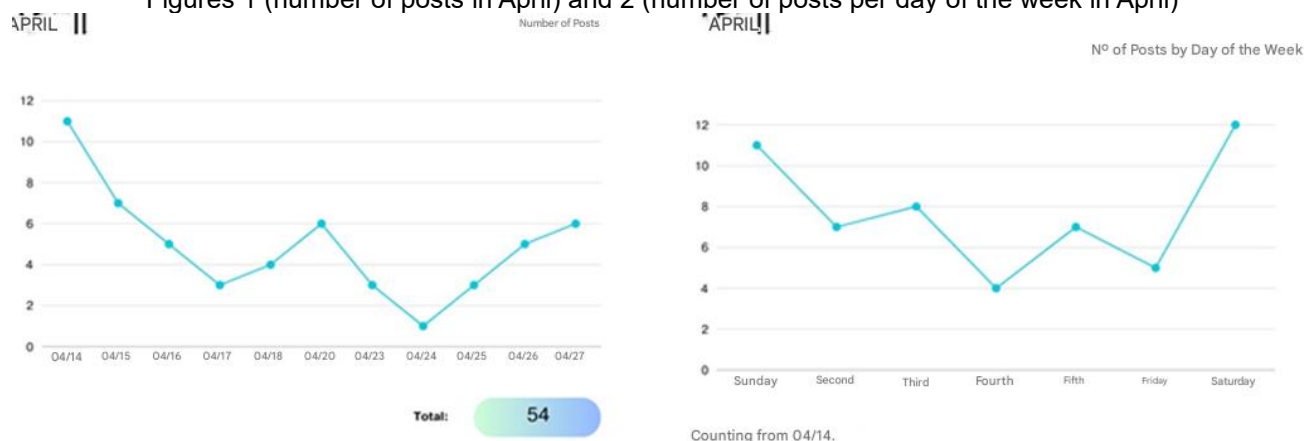
RESULTS

GENERAL SAMPLE DATA

From the chosen time frame, it was found that 159 videos were published on TikTok on various topics, which will be covered in detail in this article.

Chronologically, the club cruzmaltino made its first publication, within the pre-defined period, with a post about the arrival of the Vasco delegation at the São Januário stadium for its first match in the Brasileirão against Grêmio. The club emerged victorious from the match and, on the same day, made a total of 11 posts. From 04/14 to the end of the month, Vasco made a total of 54 posts on TikTok, as shown in figure 1.

Figures 1 (number of posts in April) and 2 (number of posts per day of the week in April)
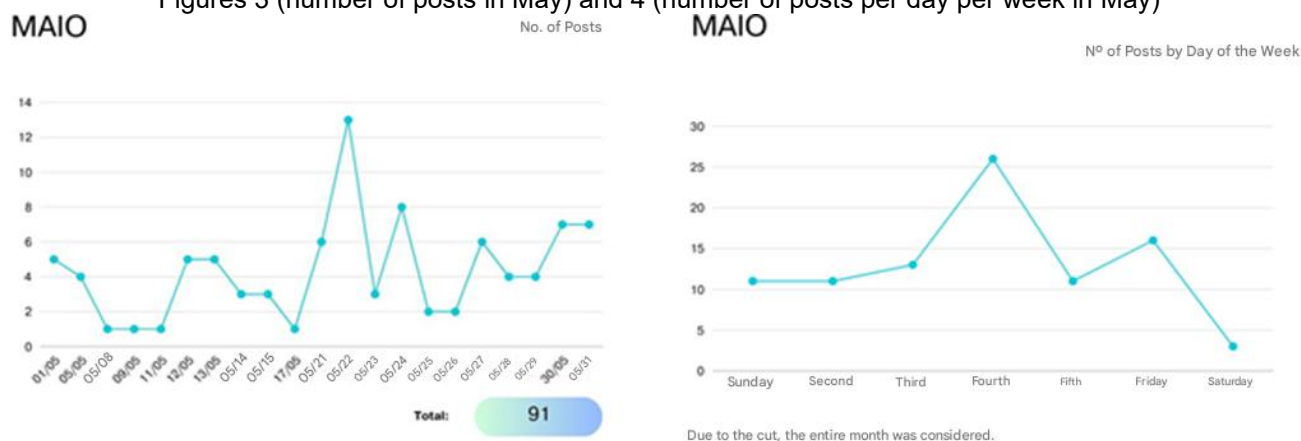

Source: prepared by the authors.

It was also possible to verify that, as of 04/14, the club made more posts on weekends, totaling 12 posts on Saturdays and 11 posts on Sundays, as shown in figure 2.

In May, a more assertive average was obtained about the approximate number of posts that the club makes during an entire month and on which days of the week it makes the highest number of publications. The organization made a total of 91 publications in a well-distributed way on weekdays, but it was noticed that the most expressive number appears on Wednesday, with a total of 26 posts, according to the visualization of the figures.

Figures 3 (number of posts in May) and 4 (number of posts per day per week in May)
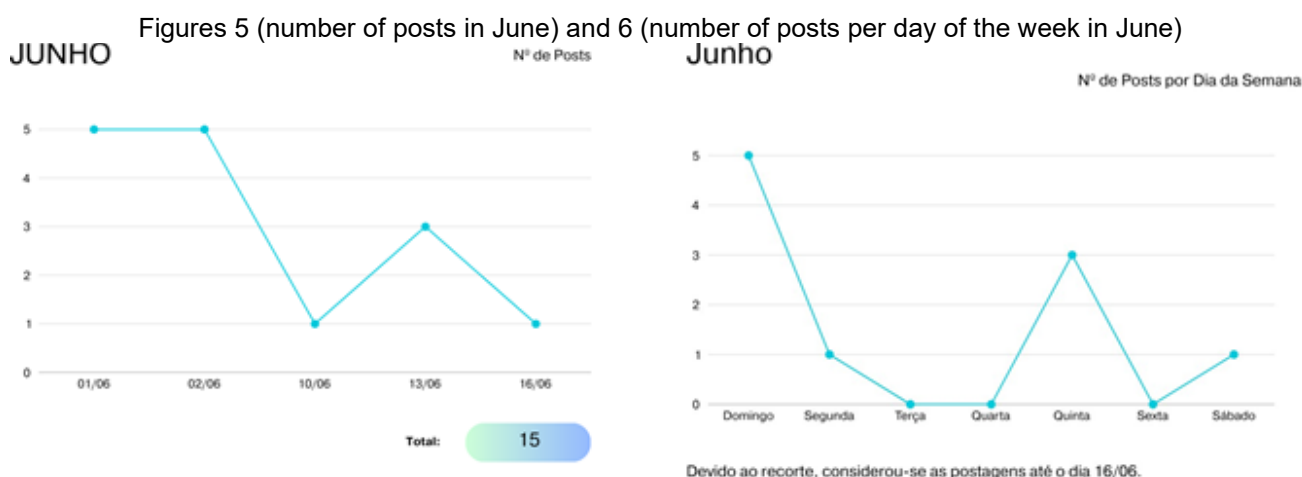

Source: prepared by the authors.

The club's second biggest posting day in May was Friday, totaling 16 publications in the month, followed by Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays – each day with 11 publications in the month. It is worth noting that the club had a consistency of posts, that is, publishing

almost every day. Of the 31 days in May, cruzmaltino uploaded videos on TikTok in 21 days.

In June, the last month of the time frame, it was observed that, until 06/16, Vasco's official page made only 15 posts, not even a third of the number of posts in May. With this sudden drop in publications, it was noted a behavior that the club's marketing department assumes when the team presents poor results in football, which will be developed later in the article.

From 04/14/24 to 06/16/24, cruzmaltino made 159 posts in 37 days, reaching an average of 4 posts per day. According to the Rock Content portal (2024), TikTok itself recommends posting 1 to 4 times a day to expand reach, which increases the possibility of the brand going viral on the social network, since the regularity of publications keeps the profile in the spotlight for the page's followers and even reaches new profiles. However, the portal also signals that it is important to understand the number of posts that work for the page's audience, since a high amount can cause an opposite effect to the viralization of the content, that is, loss of followers and low reach.

Figures 5 (number of posts in June) and 6 (number of posts per day of the week in June)

Source: prepared by the authors.

From the data above, from an observational analysis, the following number of video publications per date was reached:

Table 1 – Number of posts by date

Date	No. of Posts	Data	No. of Posts	Data	No. of Posts
14.04.24	11	27.04.24	6	17.05.24	1
15.04.24	7	01.05.24	5	21.05.24	6
16.04.24	5	05.05.24	4	22.05.24	13
17.04.24	3	08.05.24	1	23.05.24	3
18.04.24	4	09.05.24	1	24.05.24	8

20.04.24	6	11.05.24	1	25.05.24	2
23.04.24	2	12.05.24	5	26.05.24	2
24.04.24	1	13.05.24	5	27.05.24	6
25.04.24	3	14.05.24	3	28.05.24	4
26.04.24	5	15.05.24	3	29.05.24	4

Source: prepared by the authors.

TYPOLOGY OF CONTENT

According to Domingues (2022), there are four types of content present on social networks: *task-oriented*, informative, remunerative, and entertainment. From the analysis of the posts, it was noticed that in the period the organization did not make any content posts with a remunerative or *task-oriented nature*, which is interesting, since content of a remunerative nature in a football organization could, for example, address discounts on the subscription to fan membership plans. This decision leads us to reflect on whether TikTok is the appropriate social network for a football club to publish content related to purchases and *Call-to-Actions*.

Anna Bentes, researcher and doctoral student in Communication and Culture at UFRJ, explains that young people are highly present on social networks. This phenomenon occurs thanks to short videos that generate short-term entertainment, something favorable for a mass of young people who have a fast-paced lifestyle. According to Gabriela Borges (apud Caldas, 2024), coordinator of the Audiovisual Quality Observatory and professor at the University of Algarve, who analyzed data released by Ofcom – a British regulatory agency – in 2022, "young people no longer watch television, but migrate and watch audiovisual content on *streaming platforms* or on-demand content (on demand) and in social media videos." In this context, it is possible to perceive the replacement of open TV by other models of audiovisual consumption in order to obtain quick and practical entertainment. With this, young people no longer need, for example, to wait for a sports program to show the best moves of their favorite team's match, as they find all this on *streaming platforms* or social networks.

For Guilherme Figueiredo, former CEO of NSports and current general manager of Betano, in an interview with Exame magazine, social networks work as a complementary delivery, and should focus on a different audience that also has different consumption habits, that is, that is looking for shorter videos, such as best moments and highlight plays. However, open TV reaches an already consolidated audience, while social networks allow access to a different audience, that is, the young audience.

Given this, it is inferred that young people consume social networks mainly for the purpose of obtaining entertainment that, in the case of football, can be obtained in different ways, such as the best moves of a match, behind the scenes of the players, viral trends and others.

In the time frame of the analysis of Vasco's posts, it was noted that the club developed content that covers the typology of entertainment and informative. Of the 159 posts analyzed, only 4 (2.5%) referred to informative content, while the other 155 (97.5%) were intended only to entertain.

Among the informative content, there were posts about hiring players, hiring a coaching staff, debuting a uniform and closing a new sponsorship.

Table 2 – List of informative content

Data	Link	Post	Typography
18/04/2024	Link TikTok	Player Signing	Informative
26/04/2024	Link TikTok	Debut Shirt	Informative
11/05/2024	Link TikTok	Betfair Sponsorship	Informative
21/05/2024	Link TikTok	Hiring of Technician	Informative

Source: prepared by the authors.

The posts about the signing communicated the arrival of new members in the team: the player Hugo Moura and the coach Álvaro Pacheco, who took the place of the former coach Ramon Diaz. The post referring to the debut of the shirt shows Léo Jardim, goalkeeper of cruzmaltino, seeing his new uniform for the first time, and informs in the caption when the piece will debut. Finally, the club also communicated by video the event of the largest sponsorship in the team's history.

Due to the extension of the list of entertainment posts, it was decided to group the posts according to the content they deal with. However, the Excel spreadsheet with all the information was made analytically. Regarding the content of the posts, the following types and their respective quantities were noted, in ascending order:

Table 3 – Number of posts per content group

Content	Quantity	Content	Quantity
"Say It" Painting	1	Twist	7
Behind the Scenes: Press Conference	1	Heating	9
Homage	2	Trend TikTok	10
Influencers	2	Delegation	11
Player Interview	3	Other	12
Interview with Técnico	3	Post-Match Interview	13
Post-Match (Celebration)	3	Game Throw	18

Media Day	3	Training	18
Check-in Stadium	4	Backstage	36

Source: prepared by the authors.

It was observed that the club approached the "entertainment" typology from a range of content, from interactive whiteboards to the backstage of the players. The types of content will be analyzed qualitatively below:

- "Diz Aí" board: brings the players closer to the crowd through a box of questions such as "what does it feel like to play in Caldeirão?", "do you like to play as a full-back?", among others and directs to a particular player. In the time frame, the club only made content focused on this frame and directed to the player João Victor.

- Tribute: publishes videos with the fans honoring an idol, such as bleacher mosaics honoring Roberto Dinamite, the greatest idol in Vasco's history.

- Influencers: in the time frame, the presence of two posts related to content creators, that is, influencers, was noticed. Both videos show fashion influencer Malu Borges watching a Vasco match with her family or taking a tour of São Januário.

- Media Day: presents the backstage of the production of content for dissemination on social networks, creation of promotional materials, among others.

- TikTok trend: TikTok trends are content that stands out among users and end up going viral. In this context, several profiles enter a certain trend to follow the trends and create connections with their followers. It is important to reinforce that, over time, trends tend to lose strength, being replaced by new ones. Therefore, it is important that organizations do not miss the correct time to post. Among the club's entertainment posts, participation in different trends was noted.

- Delegation: portray the arrival of players and coaching staff in different stadiums where matches at the beginning of the Brasileirão 2024 take place.

- Others: content that had little recurrence in the time frame, such as: post by Max Verstappen, a famous Formula 1 driver, declaring himself a Vasco da Gama fan; content showing details of the clothing before the players enter the field; among others.

- Behind the scenes: team interaction beyond the matches. They show the players giving speeches before entering the field, revealing curiosities, joking among themselves and others. Among the posts are, for example, videos of the players

revealing the most beautiful of the squad and what they talk about the most. This type of post allows fans to get to know more of their favorite players and idols in a humanized way.

- Game Throw: show the players on the field, either scoring a goal or just giving the so-called "dribble" to a player from the opposing team. Among the videos, there was also a post about the women's team's game, called "Meninas da Colina".

Thus, it was found that the club uses the "entertainment" typology in quantity, especially involving backstage (36), game plays (18), player training (18) and post-game interviews (13).

DISCUSSION

In this topic, analyze the performance of posts. Remembering that virtual engagement in this survey was evaluated through five parameters: comments, likes, saved, shares and views; whose data were collected and tabulated along with respective posting dates, content, content typography and access link. The order of the columns was arranged as follows: date, post content, links, number of comments, number of likes, number of saved, number of shares, number of views, content typography and grouping. The results are presented below.

From the tabulation of the data of the 159 posts, it was observed the contents that had the best performance during the analyzed period. For this, the column of each metric was added and, subsequently, the result of the sum was divided by the number of posts (159), obtaining the average of each metric of the club's profile. In summary, the averages of the metrics were as follows:

Table 4 – Average of each metric

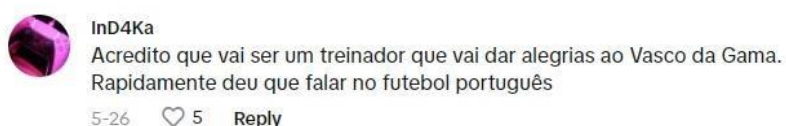| Metric	Total	Posts	Calculation	Average
Comments	29.853	159	29.853 /159	187,75
Tanned	2.025.103	159	2.025.103 / 159	12.736
Saved	55.082	159	55.082 /159	346,42
Shares	46.751	159	46.751 / 159	294,03
Views	15.756.200	159	15.756.200 / 159	99.095

Source: prepared by the authors.

From this, it was possible to verify the posts that performed above average. It was observed that not all posts performed above average in all metrics. As a result, the contents that performed above average on all fronts were as follows:

- On 04/14/2024: goal by the player David Côrrea da Fonseca, who scored the team's first goal in the Brasileirão 2024 in the game against Grêmio.

- On 04/14/2024: Vasco fans singing in the stands of São Januário in the match against Grêmio. The number of shares was the most expressive (2,104).

- On 04/14/2024: Mc Bala's song, called "Tropa do DVD da Colina", illustrated with scenes from the series "Everyone Hates Chris" (VASCO, 2024). Video published after Vasco's victory over Grêmio with music praising the player David, author of the club's first goal in the Brasileirão. The numbers of likes (25,400), saved (1,495) and shares (1,396) were the most expressive.

- On 04/15/24: one day after the club's first victorious match in the Brasileirão, the club participated in the platform's "good morning" trend, revealing a person accompanied by a voiceover with a motivational message. In the video we have the exaltation of one of the authors of the goals against Grêmio, with a flower that opens and reveals the player Matheus Carvalho. The number of shares (1,750) was the most expressive.

- On 04/16/2024: Vasco fans singing in the stands. The numbers of likes (43,500), shares (2,102) and views (281,600) were the most expressive. There is a good performance in content involving the Vasco fans vibrating with the songs from the stands.

- On 04/16/2024: trend "I am such and such a thing and of course ...". In it, users reveal something they are and comment on what they do as a result. In the video (VASCO, 2024) we see the Vasco influencer Geyson Palitot saying "I'm from Vasco and of course Payet for me is the best number 10 in Brazil", "I'm from Vasco and of course I find myself 24 hours a day imitating the celebration of the Pirate", among other expressions. The content performed above average on all fronts, with the numbers of likes (36,400) and views (283,600) being the most expressive.

- On 04/18/24: Max Verspatten, famous racing driver, revealing affection and support for Vasco. This specific content was framed in the "others" group because it has little result, however, it is important to note how the presence of someone famous declaring support for the club generates relevant engagement. The numbers of likes

(38,900), saved (2,850), shares (3,083) and views (203,800) were the most expressive. Among all the posts analyzed, this one obtained the highest number of shares.
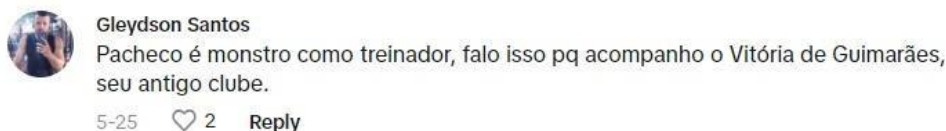
- On 04/20/24: influencer "Neguinho da Bala" dancing to the sound of a funk song that in its lyrics says "today there is Vasco" to communicate that Vasco would play that day.

- On 05/13/24: backstage with the player Dimitri Payet, the team's number 10, speaking to the team after the victory against the Vitória team, which yielded 3 points for the club and removed it from the relegation zone. The content stood out in all the metrics analyzed: comments (556), likes (91,300), saved (3,069), shares (1,260) and views (803,200). It was the most liked and saved content of all, which can be explained by two factors: Payet was the player who assisted the two goals that resulted in the team's victory, according to the article published by ge (VASCO, 2024); With the victory, the team left the relegation zone.

- On 05/24/24: new coach Álvaro Pacheco, replacing former coach Ramon Diaz, coaching the team for the first time. The most expressive metrics were sharing (786) and views (228,500). Among the comments, there was great expectation from the fans regarding the results of the new coach with the team, as follows:

Figure 7 – User comment on a post about hiring a technician

InD4Ka
Acredito que vai ser um treinador que vai dar alegrias ao Vasco da Gama. Rapidamente deu que falar no futebol português
5-26   ♡ 5   Reply

Source: print taken from the club's aforementioned post on TikTok.

Figure 8 – User comment on a post about hiring a technician

Gleydson Santos
Pacheco é monstro como treinador, falo isso pq acompanho o Vitória de Guimarães, seu antigo clube.
5-25   ♡ 2   Reply

Source: print taken from the club's aforementioned post on TikTok.

- On 05/25/24: players Lucas Piton, João Victor and Pablo Galdames answered the question "who is the most stylish in the squad?". In the answers, the players joke and pin each other. This video obtained expressive results: comments (296), likes (58,100), saved (1,347), shares (384) and views (369,900).

- On 05/27/24: players answering the question "who is your bullet shell?". The term refers to the song by Thullio Millionaire that went viral on social media in 2024 and is an affectionate way of saying someone is always with you. The video obtained higher results than the previous one, being expressive in all metrics: comments (545), likes (90,000), saved (2,759), shares (3,413) and views (638,300). Among the videos analyzed, it was the one that obtained the second highest number of likes. It was noted that the club took advantage of the right moment, posting when the music and trend were on the rise.

- On 05/27/24: backstage with Argentine player Pablo Vegetti trying to give an interview in Portuguese. In it, his castmates, who are in the background, laugh and encourage him. It was the most expressive metric of likes (35,300).

- On 05/27/24: player Lucas Piton answering the question "who is the most beautiful on the team?", where he states that he is the most beautiful while goalkeeper Léo Jardim laughs next to him. It reached significant numbers of comments (614), likes (65,400), saved (1,817), shares (1,279) and views (536,000). The simple response of full-back Lucas Piton in a video of just 9 seconds generated a significant amount of comments, with users joining in on the joke and even disagreeing with the player, as can be seen below.

Figure 9 (user comment on backstage post) and 10 (user comment on backstage post)

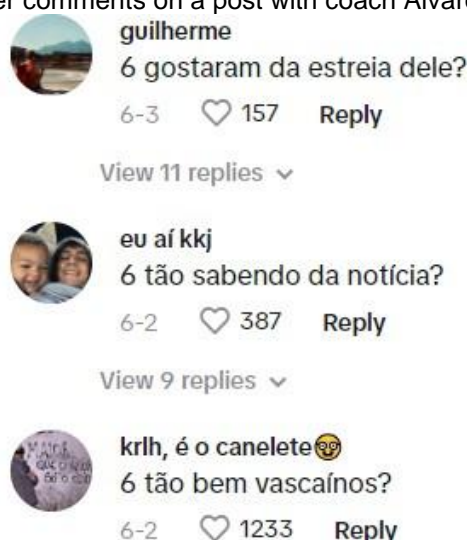Source: print taken from the club's aforementioned post on TikTok.

- On 05/28/24: behind-the-scenes content that performed above average, where players joke with each other behind the camera, with expressive numbers of comments (636), likes (54,800), saves (1,491), shares (780) and views (484,000).

- On 05/30/24: behind the scenes with the players answering the question "who is the most reviewed?". It also obtained significant numbers of likes (75,500), being the third highest observed among the posts.

- On 05/31/24: president Pedrinho greeting the players at CT Moacyr Barbosa during a visit. The content had an above-average performance, but the data that drew the

most attention was the views (1,100,000), resulting in a high number of likes (74,900), being the publication that obtained the highest number of reach.

- On 05/31/24: coach Álvaro Pacheco with a viral TikTok song.
- On 06/01/24: "training" group with goalkeeper Léo Jardim training one day before the match against Flamengo for round 7 of the Brasileirão. It also achieved above-average results.

Despite the above-average performance of the last two publications, as a result of the 6-1 defeat to the Flamengo team on 06/02/24, both posts – and others published on close dates – received many negative comments, with a considerable part composed of comments from *haters* (haters) of the rival team, which in turn also received likes, as shown in the image below.

Figure 11 – User comments on a post with coach Álvaro Pacheco

guilherme
6 gostaram da estreia dele?
6-3   ♡ 157   Reply

View 11 replies ⌄

eu aí kkj
6 tão sabendo da notícia?
6-2   ♡ 387   Reply

View 9 replies ⌄

krlh, é o canelete🤓
6 tão bem vascaínos?
6-2   ♡ 1233   Reply

Source: print taken from the aforementioned post on TikTok.

After the defeat, the club's official page lost the consistency of posts at the beginning of June. As observed throughout the data collection, Vasco published almost daily. After the defeat on 02/06/24, the club only returned to publishing on 10/06/24, being absent for 8 days on the platform, demonstrating that the result of one of its biggest defeats directly influenced the publication calendar.

CONCLUSION

Through a research with both qualitative and quantitative approaches, on a specific case of one of the main football clubs in Rio de Janeiro, it was possible not only to identify types of content commonly published and measure which are more capable of generating greater engagement; It was also allowed to survey the behaviors that such posts generate in fans, sympathizers and others interested in the content published by the institution. With this, the present research proposed a classification for content frequently posted by other sports associations as well and also provided insights on how these organizations can use Tik Tok in order to generate and manage relationships with their stakeholders.

Through the analysis of posts on the official page of the Vasco da Gama Regatta Club, the number of daily publications was determined, types of published content were identified and their performance was compared. With this, it was observed that within the time frame the club has an average of 4 publications per day (it should be noted that this frequency is fully in line with the recommendation of the platform itself). However, it is noticed that in moments of victories it seems common to increase the number of publications, including content such as videos of the fans singing in the stands and with various plays of the game, which are published over several days after the games.

And, in fact, it is clear that the team's results on the field directly influence the posting calendar on TikTok. It is worth mentioning that over the time frame studied, the club had a total of 11 games, 9 for the Brasileirão and 2 for the Copa do Brasil. Of the 9 games in the Brasileirão, the club emerged victorious from only 2 games. It was then found that Cruzmaltino started the Brasileirão 2024 with a bad campaign, which led it to be one of the clubs in the relegation zone. And the posts in these moments of negative results showed behind-the-scenes footage of the players, not directly linked to games, but also included videos of the fans' dissatisfaction.

It should be noted that behind-the-scenes footage was recurrent throughout the analyzed period and consistently showed above-average results in all metrics, as in the case of the video of up to 9 seconds of Lucas Piton answering the question "who is the most beautiful in the cast?". This suggests that content of the "behind-the-scenes" type/group seems to have a higher chance of generating interactivity between users, even in negative circumstances (of game results).

A possible explanation for this phenomenon is the fact that these contents bring fans closer to the human side of the players, temporarily distancing them from the professional

side (with unsatisfactory performance), and strengthening the connection between the fans and the squad. The pertinent literature provides support for this hypothesis. According to Melo Neto (2013, p.18), the new sports consumer is demanding and seeks to be aware of the events of the sport of his choice. He wants to interact with the athletes, participate directly in the sporting life of his club or team – following training, negotiations, getting to know the club's stories better, visiting its headquarters – and assuming his condition as a supporting actor in the show. From being a fan, he becomes a participating consumer (Melo Neto, 2013, p.18).

In addition, it was also possible to identify that in extreme bad moments, such as after suffering a big defeat to one of the rival principals, the club stopped posting on the platform. But it is important to note that this can negatively impact overall engagement with your profile on the platform, as a sharp reduction in the volume of posts causes the profile to appear less in the "*for you*" section of users on TikTok and, consequently, reaches fewer potential fans and partners. Therefore, this type of strategy can lead to unstable virtual engagement. Previous studies reinforce this risk for other social networks, which suggests that it would be important that, even in the face of scenarios where the brand image has negative associations, the organization does not stop publishing relevant and interesting content, in order to continue providing subsidies for the platform's algorithm to continue propagating the content of the profile.

Finally, it should also be noted that this risk is also present, and perhaps even more enjoyable, in the case of *haters* (social media users who make negative and offensive comments to the club). Just like any other organization with an online profile, football clubs are never immune to the action of these people. In the case studied here, it was noted that the club's official page chooses not to respond to these comments. Toadvia, for reasons similar to those explained in the previous paragraph, this can also result in loss of profile propagation within the platform, as well as loss of engagement.

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