

# Communication at equestrian events: analyzing pre-event advertising, broadcast and post-event media coverage

## La comunicación en los eventos ecuestres: análisis de la publicidad previa, la retransmisión y su cobertura posterior

*Comunicação em eventos equestres: análise da publicidade pré-evento, da transmissão e da cobertura pós-evento*

**Júlia Alabart-Algueró**, Universidad de Girona, Barcelona, España  
([julia.alabart@eum.es](mailto:julia.alabart@eum.es))

**Óscar Gutiérrez-Aragón**, Universidad de Girona, Barcelona, España  
([oscar.gutierrez@eum.es](mailto:oscar.gutierrez@eum.es))

**Joan Cuenca-Fontbona**, Universidad Ramon Llull, Barcelona, España  
([joanfc@blanquerna.url.edu](mailto:joanfc@blanquerna.url.edu))

**Joan-Francesc Fondevila-Gascón**, Universidad Ramon Llull, Barcelona, España  
([joanfrancescfg@blanquerna.url.edu](mailto:joanfrancescfg@blanquerna.url.edu))

**ABSTRACT** | Communication strategies and techniques in the sports field have great potential to promote events and increase their reach, helping to boost the popularity of each sport. In the case of equestrian sport in Spain, although it is in the minority, events are held very frequently. The main objective of this study is to analyze the perception of the sector's stakeholders regarding communication strategies before and after equestrian events. To do so, we combined two methodologies: quantitative analysis –based on survey data– and qualitative analysis –based on the results of semi-structured interviews and a focus group with different professional members of the stakeholders. The results show that although younger people and those who attend equestrian events professionally tend to be more satisfied with pre-event publicity and post-event coverage, overall satisfaction is low. The conclusion is that the equestrian sector needs to make improvements to increase the efficiency of its communication campaigns.

**KEYWORDS:** media, advertising, events, sport, horse riding, equestrian sector

### HOW TO CITE

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**RESUMEN** | Las estrategias y las herramientas de comunicación en el ámbito deportivo tienen un gran potencial para promover los eventos y ampliar su alcance, contribuyendo a aumentar la popularidad de cada deporte. En el caso del deporte ecuestre en España, aun siendo minoritario, se desarrollan eventos de forma muy frecuente. El objetivo de este estudio consiste en analizar la percepción de los grupos de interés del sector sobre las estrategias comunicativas previas y posteriores a la realización de los eventos hípicas. Para ello, se empleó una combinación de metodologías de análisis: cuantitativo –a partir de los datos de una encuesta– y cualitativo –sobre los resultados de entrevistas semiestructuradas y un *focus group* con distintos profesionales de gran relevancia del sector ecuestre español–. Los resultados muestran que, aunque las personas más jóvenes y quienes participan de forma profesional suelen estar más satisfechos con respecto a la publicidad previa y la cobertura posterior de los eventos hípicas, la satisfacción general es baja. Se concluye que resulta necesario que el sector ecuestre implemente mejoras que incrementen la eficiencia de sus campañas comunicativas.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** medios de comunicación, publicidad, eventos, deporte, equitación, sector ecuestre

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**RESUMO** | As estratégias e ferramentas de comunicação no domínio do esporte têm um grande potencial para promover eventos e alargar seu alcance, contribuindo assim para aumentar a popularidade de cada esporte. No caso específico do esporte ecuestre na Espanha, embora seja minoritário, os eventos são realizados com muita frequência. O principal objetivo deste estudo é analisar a percepção dos grupos de interesse do sector relativamente às estratégias de comunicação antes e depois dos eventos equestres. Para atingir o objetivo acima descrito, foi utilizada uma combinação de metodologias de análise quantitativa (com base em dados de inquéritos) e qualitativa (com base nos resultados de entrevistas semiestructuradas e de um grupo focal que foram realizados com diferentes profissionais do sector ecuestre espanhol dos grupos de interesse). Os resultados revelam que, embora as pessoas mais jovens e as que participam profissionalmente tendam a estar mais satisfeitas com a publicidade pré-evento e a cobertura pós-evento dos eventos equestres, a satisfação geral é baixa. Conclui-se que é necessário que o sector ecuestre implemente melhorias para aumentar a eficácia das suas campanhas de comunicação.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** mídia, publicidade, eventos, esporte, equitação, sector ecuestre

## INTRODUCTION

Sporting events are experiencing remarkable growth, driven by a variety of digital innovations that have created new opportunities for corporate communications departments. Appropriate communication strategies in the field of sport are tools with great potential to promote events and amplify their reach, helping to increase the popularity of said sport. In the case of equestrian sports, various events take place regularly, namely competitions and contests as well as shows, exhibitions, congresses or fairs.

As equestrian sport is a minority sport that has received little attention in academic research, this study aims to provide a holistic analysis of the strategies and forms of communication used at equestrian events in the run-up to, during the broadcast and in the post-event coverage of equestrian events, based on the perceptions of those involved. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to identify similarities and divergences between the different profiles of stakeholders in the sector. In this way, a holistic view will be created that can be useful for the development and promotion of equestrian sport and the equestrian sector.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Through the coverage of sporting events, the media play a key role in amplifying their visibility and impact, acting as a bridge between the events and the target audience (Chen et al., 2023; Zhou & Banhidi, 2024). Through pre-event coverage, live broadcast and post-event coverage, events can reach audiences that would otherwise be significantly smaller, creating a direct connection with fans and increasing interest and participation in the sport (Horky, 2021; Van-Reeth, 2023). They can also serve as platforms for advertising and promotion for various companies, facilitating the dissemination of sponsored messages and increasing the presence of brands associated with the events (Shank & Lyberger, 2014; Nuseir, 2020). Therefore, media coverage is an essential factor, not only for the promotion of sporting events, but also for the economic development and financial viability of sport at local and international levels (Casper & Pfahl, 2015; Fonseca et al., 2022; Yamakita et al., 2024).

In this paradigm, the media report on the outcomes and proceedings of events and influence public perceptions and narratives about sporting events (Billings et al., 2017; Tamir & Lehman-Wilzig, 2023). The relationship between the media and sport is bidirectional, as the success of these events largely depends on the quality and volume of media coverage, which makes the media a strategic tool for the marketing and promotion of sporting events (Ludvigsen & Petersen-Wagner, 2023; Millán, 2024). Pre-event advertising and live broadcasting of sporting events

are important components of the advertising strategy and coverage of these events (Lünich et al., 2021; Getu, 2023). The former focuses on generating anticipation and excitement among the target audience and uses a variety of channels. When done efficiently, it is important for increasing attendance and participation in events and attracting the attention of sponsors and media (Kwon & Cornwell, 2021; Bao et al., 2023). Live broadcasts allow viewers to watch the event in real time, which increases participation and engagement and provides a platform for monetization thanks to broadcast and advertising rights during the event (Liu et al., 2023; Tian & Frank, 2024). Post-event coverage – with detailed analysis, summaries of events or other insights– in print or digital media ensures that the impact and scope of the event is maintained after it has ended, contributing to its success (Chen et al., 2018; Bazzanella et al., 2023).

This type of coverage also facilitates increasing the value of the event for future sponsors and spectators (Morgan et al., 2020; Nickell and Johnston, 2020). At this stage, both traditional and digital media play an important role by providing additional content and updates that further feed the public's interest (Cazorla-Milla et al., 2020; Kennedy et al., 2024). When done effectively through a holistic communication strategy, this coverage helps to create a positive narrative that enhances both the image of the event and the image of the institutions involved (Parent & Ruetsch, 2020; Brochado et al., 2022). An appropriate combination of traditional and digital media (phygital marketing), ranging from pre-event promotion to post-event analysis, including real-time broadcasting, allows for more comprehensive coverage that generates significantly more benefits based on a broader and more diverse audience (Johnson & Barlow, 2021; Perea-Gómez & Gallardo-Camacho, 2023).

In this area, the contribution of social media to communication about sporting events is noteworthy, as it is an integral part of the brand image and provides communicative benefits that serve to attract the potential customer, whether as a tourist or as a visitor to the event (Islam, 2021; Morgan et al., 2021). In this sense, in addition to the sponsorship of companies and brands in the event sector, the contribution of influencers in social media is also important, as they generally have a significant and direct influence on the perception of many users of these applications (Radmann et al., 2021; Fernández-Gómez et al., 2024). However, despite the evidence of the positive outcomes resulting from appropriate use of social media when communicating about events, especially sporting events, many organizations and institutions fail to take advantage of these benefits and continue to miss opportunities for growth and promotion (Einsle & Escalera-Izquierdo, 2022; Fenton et al., 2023). Therefore, it is necessary for companies and institutions that participate in these events to promote the development of holistic communication

strategies – including appropriate social media management – that will help improve their promotion and allow participants to have a positive experience that will encourage them to participate in the events again and recommend others to do so (Du et al., 2020; Gutiérrez-Aragón et al., 2023).

Therefore, it is not surprising that in the field of equestrian sports, professional riders, together with sports sponsorship and specialized media, are the main components of sports marketing strategies for horse riding, an activity with a relatively lower popularity than other sports, especially in the case of Spain (Sedky et al., 2020; Alabart-Algueró et al., 2021). As in other sports, companies that sponsor equestrian events or competitions seek to improve their brand image and increase sales through communication measures (Nuseir, 2020; Gutiérrez-Aragón et al., 2021). In addition, due to the nature of this discipline, communication specifically for equestrian sports must be based on a model that takes into account the different stakeholders (riders, horses and participants) so that the design of events allows the exploration of innovative and creative ways to engage and stimulate participants, generating satisfaction and loyalty (Le-Clinche et al, 2017; Dashper & Buchmann, 2020; Ouvrein et al, 2021; Sigurðardóttir, 2021).

In short, the type of communication and the media used play a fundamental role in the promotion, impact, dissemination and popularization of equestrian events, significantly increasing their visibility and reach by providing a platform that allows them to reach a larger audience (Vial & Barget, 2023; León-Quismondo et al., 2023). Therefore, it is important to develop comprehensive strategies that include pre-event advertising to raise expectations and maximize attendance, as well as attract sponsors that associate their brands with the sport and the values it represents. Finally, to complete this strategy, there is the broadcast and post-event coverage, which extends the reach and broadens the audience by offering the opportunity to experience the event virtually (Broms et al., 2021; Rezapouraghdam et al., 2024). Each communication and promotion activity within the marketing strategy generates profits for both organizers and participants and contributes to the growth of equestrian sport and its professionalization by increasing its accessibility and promoting its development (Broms et al., 2022; Gregić et al., 2024). The correct and efficient use of communication strategies and media will serve to bring the social and commercial performance of equestrian events closer to their optimal potential for impact and participation (Hudson et al., 2014; Ennis, 2020).

## **METHODOLOGY**

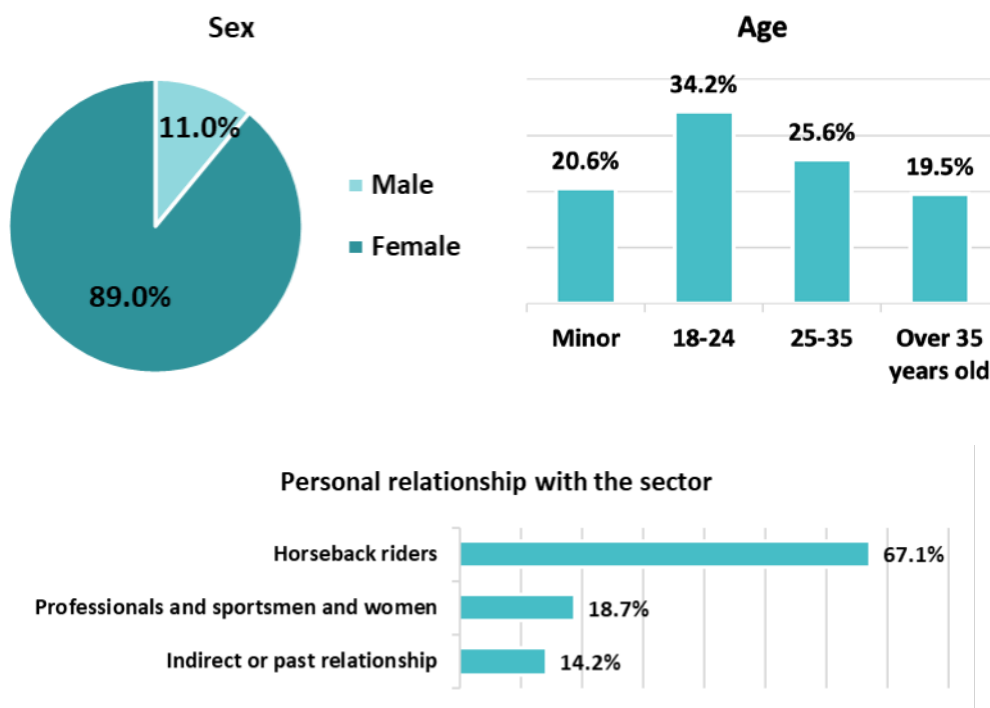
In order to achieve the research objectives, a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis was used to examine the results from different approaches, as

it is a technique that provides optimal results in studies on sport and specifically in the field of equestrian sport (Gutiérrez-Aragón et al., 2021; Fondevila-Gascón et al., 2024).

For the quantitative analysis phase, a survey was developed based on academic studies on similar topics (Pelegriñ-Muñoz, 2018; Chen et al., 2023). The survey was conducted between March and May 2024 and distributed digitally (via social networks, email) and in person (QR codes distributed at equestrian events and businesses). The sample is made up of people from the equestrian sector in order to obtain a more accurate overview of the pre-event advertising, broadcasting and coverage of equestrian events, as these people represent the direct audience of these events and are therefore inextricably linked to their development and communication. In order to reach only the direct audience, a filter question was included to determine the presence of a relationship with the equestrian sector, which served to exclude from the study those who were not of interest to the research. The final sample therefore consists of 620 people residing in Spain. The population studied comprises approximately 215,000 people – the sum of the sector's personnel (150,000 jobs) (Real Federación Hípica Española, 2022) and the number of people registered in the sport in 2023 (approximately 65,000 licenses) (Real Federación Hípica Española, 2024) (<https://is.gd/fsMj1N>) – with a confidence interval of 95% and a proportion of 80% of the population (a discrete figure considering that all respondents belong to the sector's stakeholders). The sampling error is  $\pm 3.14\%$ .

The questionnaire used for the survey was divided into three blocks. The first included the socio-demographic profile of the participants (gender, age and relationship to the sector). The second block collected information on the preferred means of obtaining information or following events. The third block contained questions on the respondents' level of satisfaction with the pre-event advertising, broadcast and post-event coverage of the various equestrian events.

The profile of respondents was 89% female and 11% male. In terms of age, four categories were formed: minors, 18 to 24 years, 25 to 34 years and 35 years or older (considering that equestrian sports are generally practiced at a very young age, whether for professional, sporting or recreational purposes). A large proportion of participants were under the age of 25 (54.8%, of which 20.6% were minors). The most common personal relationship with equestrian sports among the respondents is the regular practice of equestrian sports and a sporadic hobby (67.1%), followed by athletes and professionals in this sector (18.7%). For 14.2%, it is a relationship from the past or from a family member or friend (figure 1).



**Figure 1. Profile of the sample (survey)**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

The IBM SPSS Statistics program was used to perform a descriptive and inferential univariate and bivariate statistical analysis. The variables were compared with each other to determine a correlation between them using Cramer's V, Chi-square, Eta and ANOVA tests.

The qualitative research phase comprised in-depth semi-structured interviews and a focus group. The questionnaire used in both cases was based on the general axes of the study to obtain information from experts and professionals about the communication used in the equestrian sector. In search of a comprehensive overview of the sector, seven types of stakeholders were identified and selected, interviewing between four and seven people for each profile in order to obtain a sufficient variety of responses. Thus, a total of 30 professionals were interviewed, all relevant to the Spanish equestrian sector and belonging to one of the different stakeholder groups: influencers, equestrian brands, equestrian stores, professional riders, riding clubs and event organizers, equestrian marketing agencies and media, and the Royal Spanish Equestrian Federation. The interviewees were selected based on specific criteria, considering variables such as their relevance and contribution to the sector or their achievements and experience, among others (Lindlof & Taylor, 2017). In some cases, slight changes were made to the

questionnaire to adapt it to the interviewee's profile. The individuals selected for the focus group were a combination of equestrian coaches and riders. In this case, the connection established and the interaction with the riding students is significant as it allowed information to be gained about this stakeholder group, the only one not represented in the interviews.

## RESULTS

### Results of the quantitative analysis of descriptive statistics

The statistical results show that the preferred means of finding out about equestrian events are industry-specific social media accounts (61.9%), followed by recommendations from friends and colleagues (57.6%), content created by athletes or influencers on social media (53.1%) and information disseminated by their clubs or riding schools (49%) (figure 2). When asked about their preferred media for following event coverage, the favorites were traditional TV channels (60.8% of respondents), news reports on social media (57.6%), online television channels (50.3%) and social media coverage by influencers (36.9%) (figure 3). In this context, respondents were asked about their opinion on the contribution of social media in discovering and subsequently attending events in the equestrian world. A total of 84% of the study participants stated that they had discovered an event through information from social media, which shows the great importance of this medium as an information platform in the equestrian sports sector.

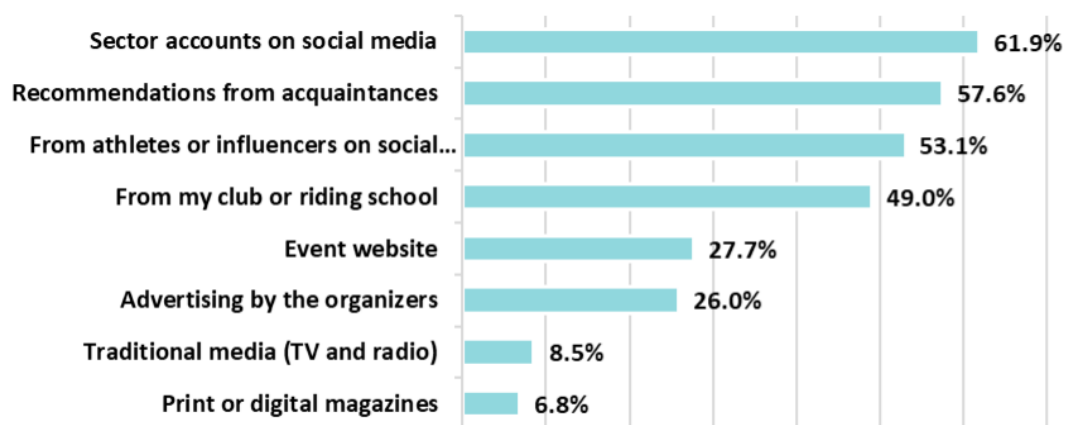
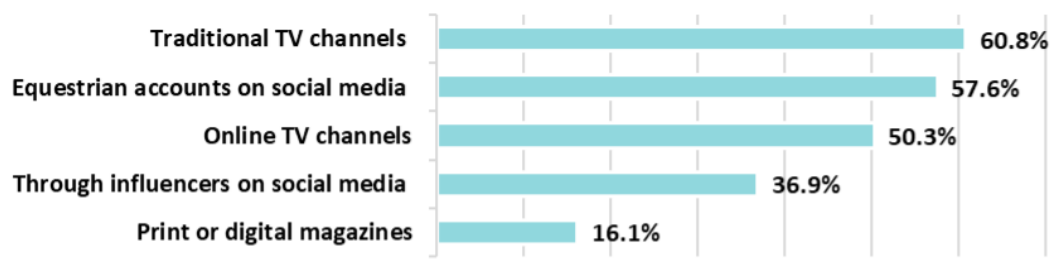


Figure 2. Preferred means of finding out about events (multiple response)

Source: Own elaboration.



**Figure 3. Preferred means of following events (if any) (multiple response)**

Source: Own elaboration.

Item	Value
Level of satisfaction with advertising and promotion in the run-up to equestrian events.	2.49
Level of satisfaction with the communication during the broadcast and with the coverage after the equestrian events.	2.17

**Table 1. Evaluation of the degree of satisfaction with communication and advertising before and after equestrian events (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

Source: Own elaboration.

In the final section of the survey, respondents rated their level of satisfaction with the advertising and promotion in the run-up to the equestrian events, as well as with the communication during the broadcast and the subsequent coverage. Likert scales from 1 to 5 were used for this purpose (with 1 being very low and 5, very high). In both cases, the satisfaction indicators showed remarkably low scores (2.49 and 2.17 out of 5 respectively), indicating that the communication strategies in this area are not the most suitable for their potential recipients (table 1).

### Results of the quantitative analysis of bivariate statistics

Following the descriptive analysis, the possible correlations between gender, age and personal relationship to equestrian world were examined, as well as the ratings on Likert scales in relation to pre-event advertising, broadcasting and post-event coverage of equestrian events. The results show that, in general, there are no significant correlations between these ratings and the variables that make up the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, apart from those indicating that, as age increases, satisfaction is lower in relation to pre-event advertising ( $\eta=0.230$  and  $p<0.0001$ ) and in relation to broadcasting and post-event coverage ( $\eta=0.243$  and  $p<0.0001$ ). In any case, it is a weak relationship. It is worth noting that there are differences, albeit moderate, between the ratings of pre-event advertising and the relationship with the industry, because the more intense the relationship is (in this order: professionals and athletes, riders and indirect or previous relationship), the higher the rating given ( $\eta=0.190$  and  $p<0.0001$ ).

We also investigated the possibility of significant differences when we matched the results of satisfaction levels in relation to pre-event advertising with the media through which respondents obtained information. To this end, it was deemed appropriate to analyze these variables in two different ways: First, the quantitative variable of pre-event advertising was recoded to transform it into a qualitative variable comprising two categories: Those with a high level of satisfaction –those who rated 4 or 5 on the Likert scale– and those with a low level of satisfaction –those who rated the items a 1 or 2 (those who rated each item a 3 were discarded, as a high level of indecision in rating the item is assumed). The results show that, in general, there are no significant differences between perceptions of pre-event advertising and the type of media used to inform the public. Needless to say, however, it can be observed that individuals with a high satisfaction level show a very slight tendency to obtain information from industry accounts on social media ( $V=0.134$  and  $p=0.007$ ), from athletes or influencers on social media ( $V=0.120$  and  $p=0.017$ ), on the event website ( $V=0.165$  and  $p=0.001$ ), through traditional media and printed or digital magazines ( $V=0.103$  and  $p=0.039$ ), more than people with a low satisfaction level who do not tend to get information from the media. Comparing satisfaction ratings according to previous use or non-use of each media, the mean ratings of satisfaction with pre-event advertising obtained from the statistical analysis are remarkably similar between those who usually use these media and those who have not (table 2).

Media used to obtain information	Satisfaction value of advertising in the pre-event	
	Previous use	No previous use
Sector accounts on social media	2.62	2.27
Recommendations from acquaintances	2.50	2.46
From athletes or influencers on social networks	2.64	2.32
From my club or riding school	2.51	2.46
Event website	2.66	2.42
Advertising by the organizers	2.55	2.47
Traditional media	2.79	2.46
Print or digital magazines	2.91	2.46

**Table 2. Assessment of pre-event advertising according to the media previously used**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

In addition, the variable of broadcasting and subsequent coverage was analyzed. No significant correlation was found with the media used to follow the coverage of equestrian events, suggesting that the perception of the sector is general and that there are no differences of opinion in the evaluation of communication about the events.

### Results of the qualitative analysis

As mentioned above, semi-structured interviews and a focus group were conducted with different stakeholders in the sector to identify the main similarities or differences between their responses (table 3). The results obtained with both techniques are analyzed together, as the focus group participants represented another stakeholder comparable to the relevance level of the other stakeholders selected for the interviews.

Items	Most frequent response	Other high frequency responses
Communication of events in the media	The prior communication, broadcasting and subsequent coverage of the events falls short of their potential.	The country's main events are well known and sufficiently advertised. Coverage in specialized media is extensive. There is no visibility in the mainstream media. There is a possibility that advertising is not reaching the right audience.
Orientation of the promotion of the equestrian sector	It has a clear internal focus and is aimed at people who are already part of the sector.	Equestrian sports receive little attention in the media. The technical details are difficult to understand, which is not attractive to the general public.
Proposals for improvement to broaden the scope	Communicate in the mainstream media. Promote the explanation of sport and simplify it for outsiders.	Advertise easy-to-understand disciplines in mainstream media. Multidisciplinary platforms that include entertainment would be more popular.
Particularities of the sector in terms of communication	Advertising and communication are not valued or given importance, so there is no investment in them. Pre-event advertising and event coverage should be valued more highly as they have a very big impact.	There are few institutions that implement efficient communication strategies. The public informs itself on its own, because the information reaches it only with a delay. They have to pay to use the few available platforms, which has a negative impact on their consumption.
The role of social media versus other media	They are positioned as the main and most powerful communication tool.	They should be a complementary medium. Their success is based on their ability to show the reality of everyday equestrian life and their ease of use. They are often used as a means of information and community building.

**Table 3: Summary of similarities and differences between the groups surveyed**

*Source: Own elaboration based on the interviews and focus group.*

The results of the interviews showed that, in the opinion of most respondents at this stage of the study, the communication strategies used at equestrian events are far below their true potential, as advertising and promotion is sparse in the run-up to the event and even more so during the coverage of the event and afterwards. However, as an exception to the trend in the equestrian world, there is consensus that the two major equestrian events in Spain (Madrid Horse Week <https://is.gd/4ynbXT<sup>1</sup>> and SICAB <https://is.gd/ppl8w3<sup>2</sup>>) are widely known and run with sufficient advertising and promotional activities. In this regard, respondents were informed of the ratings they received in the survey on this topic (2.49 out of 5 points in the pre-event phase and 2.17 during the event and afterwards), and not only did they unanimously agree, but they also pointed out the problem caused by the fact that the few existing platforms for the consumption of quality equestrian content are paid, which influences this poor perception among the public. However, it was pointed out that if these platforms were entertaining and multidisciplinary, i.e., if they offered complementary content alongside competitions and broadcasts, they would be much more attractive to and consumed by the general public, which in turn would have a positive impact on the image of the sport.

Furthermore, there is a certain unanimity when considering that the equestrian sector tends to communicate internally, addressing directly to current customers or to people who are already part of the sector, without considering potential external stakeholders. The possibility that communication through the various events does not reach the desired audience is also highlighted. It is also emphasized that any communication is usually initiated late, which means that the interested public has to inform itself. In this context, some interviewees pointed out that equestrian sport receives little media coverage and is rather technical in nature, making it difficult to understand and limiting its appeal to a wider audience. To solve this problem, it is suggested that there should be more promotion of disciplines that are easier to understand (such as polo or horseball), as well as simplifying the explanations for the more complex disciplines in order to broaden the audience. The group of influencers, riders, retailers, brands and event organizers agreed that more active communication in mainstream media using modern formats and more

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**1.** The most important multidisciplinary equestrian event in Spain. It goes beyond the competition and offers an entertainment program focused on the equestrian world through numerous shows and exhibitions.

**2.** The Salón Internacional del Caballo de Pura Raza Español is the largest event dedicated to the purebred Spanish horse and one of the two main equestrian events in Spain, which are not just sporting events.

diverse content could reduce barriers to entry into the sport by strengthening the grassroots in riding schools and opening up the sport to an external audience.

Regarding the perception of social networks compared to other media, there is virtual consensus that they are currently the main communication tool, as they are more effective due to their ability to offer understandable language and direct and fluid communication, as well as their wide reach and high return on investment in communication and advertising campaigns. In any case, the interviewees from the different companies emphasize that social networks should be a complementary medium to the others and not the only channel for communication and advertising. Influencers say that one of the reasons why they are more popular than other media is the fact that they allow them to show daily life and that they correspond to reality by showing a vision that other media do not offer. In terms of their functionality, most respondents admit that they use the networks for information purposes. Companies and brands consider them ideal for making themselves known and building a reliable image that conveys security and trust. Professional riders and influencers, on the other hand, use them to interact with their audience, share information, dispel doubts and show content that they believe cannot be found in other media (such as broadcasting events in the case of influencers).

Another issue that respondents largely agree on is that advertising and communication in the equestrian sector does not receive the necessary attention or investment, resulting in a lack of effective communication strategies and sometimes quality content. It is also noted that there is a high level of segmentation, with different disciplines having very differentiated characteristics, which has a direct impact on the lack of a common communication strategy. For example, it was repeatedly pointed out that there is a high presence and activity of influencers in the discipline of dressage. In fact, this discipline is less influential than show jumping, which invests more in advertising and communication in traditional channels; however, it receives significantly less attention from influencers on social networks.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this study was to analyze the perceptions of equestrian sector stakeholders on the communication strategies before and after equestrian events to explore opportunities that can enhance the sector, make it more attractive to internal and external audiences, and make equestrian events more popular (Einsle & Escalera-Izquierdo, 2022; Chen et al., 2023; Zhou & Banhidi, 2024).

The results confirm the important role of social networks as an industry-specific source of information. They represent a space to which the public regularly turns

to find out about equestrian sport, either by searching for information or through the content created by athletes or influencers (Islam, 2021; Morgan et al., 2021; Radmann et al., 2021; Fernández-Gómez et al., 2024). Neither traditional media nor communication originating from the organizers are among the main preferences for following information about these events, although they would be preferred over social networks (accounts of the equestrian industry, athletes or influencers) for following the live broadcasts, thus forming a suitable combination of traditional and digital media (Cazorla-Milla et al., 2020; Johnson & Barlow, 2021; Perea-Gómez & Gallardo-Camacho, 2023). In fact, participants in the qualitative phase of the study warn that social networks should not be considered the only communication channel in this area (Kennedy et al., 2024).

In general, it is felt that the pre- event advertising, the broadcast and the subsequent coverage in the various media could be improved: this emerges from the study in both its quantitative and qualitative phases (Nuseir, 2020; Gutiérrez-Aragón et al., 2021). As already indicated, the communications issued by the organizers are not very enthusiastically received by the public. Therefore, it would be advisable for them to implement marketing strategies that adequately address their target audience to enable better promotion of equestrian sports (Broms et al., 2022). In general, the older the person is or the more relationship they have with the sector, the higher the rating of satisfaction with advertising and communication about equestrian events (Le-Clinche et al., 2017; Dashper & Buchmann, 2020). Also relevant is the fact that the media from which the audience obtains information has no significant influence on the level of satisfaction with advertising in the pre-events advertising (Kwon & Cornwell, 2021; Bao et al., 2023).

Despite the successful participation and high profile of major events such as Madrid Horse Week and SICAB, the perception of study participants is that most equestrian events have limited visibility and advertising (Sedky et al., 2020; Alabart-Algueró et al., 2021). There is also a tendency towards internal and delayed communication in the equestrian sector, aimed at audiences already familiar with equestrian sport, which limits outreach to new audiences (Gutiérrez-Aragón et al., 2021). The lack of anticipation in communication campaigns and the overuse of technicalities contribute to this disconnect. Therefore, greater promotion of the most accessible disciplines is advisable, together with more attractive and varied communication in the general media to try to broaden the audience and strengthen the sport's base (Vial & Barget, 2023; León-Quismondo et al., 2023). It would also be interesting if there were more broadcast platforms for the events and they were not like the current pay-per-view platforms, but also offered multidisciplinary and entertaining content to improve the public's perception of equestrian sport (Dashper & Buchmann, 2020; Alabart-Algueró et al., 2021).

The results show that, in general, the communication strategies implemented in the equestrian sector in Spain can be improved and that there is a significant need to increase investment in advertising before, during and after equestrian events, which will improve access and awareness of equestrian sport and promote more efficient development (Gregić et al., 2024). The use of an optimal combination of marketing and media strategies should enable equestrian event organizers to achieve better results in terms of participation and outreach, as well as the development and expansion of the sport (Hudson et al., 2014; Ennis, 2020).

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**JÚLIA ALABART-ALGUERÓ**, lecturer at the Department of Business at the Escuela Universitaria Mediterrani (Universidad de Girona). Pre-doctoral researcher at the Department of Communication and International Relations in Blanquerna (Universidad Ramon Llull). Double master's degree in Communication Management and New Technologies from ESIC Business & Marketing School and Universidad Rey Juan Carlos. Degree in Marketing from the Universidad de Girona (extraordinary honors and number one in the national ranking). Her research areas are communication, social media, marketing, and the equestrian sector.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8694-3306>

**ÓSCAR GUTIÉRREZ-ARAGÓN**, director of the Business Department and coordinator of the Marketing program at the Escuela Universitaria Mediterrani de Barcelona (Universidad de Girona). Ph.D. in Business Administration from the Universidad de León. Lecturer in the Business Department of the Universidad de Barcelona. Economic analyst and lead researcher of the Spanish Veterinary Business Confederation (CEVE). His publications include course manuals and various research articles on business organization, communication, marketing, environmental economics, gender perspective, tourism, the veterinary sector, and the automotive sector.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4417-6310>

**JOAN CUENCA FONTBONA**, Ph.D. in Communication and Humanities and Research Professor at the Blanquerna Faculty of Communication and International Relations of the Universidad Ramon Llull in Barcelona. He teaches Theory, Techniques and Strategy in Public Relations, Corporate Communication, Introduction to Advertising, Public Relations and Marketing, among others. Director of the master's degree in Strategy and Management of Public Relations and Communication, and member of the Research Group on Strategy and Creativity in Advertising and Public Relations.

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5807-9442>

**JOAN FRANCESC FONDEVILA-GASCÓN**, Ph.D. in Journalism and Communication Sciences, university professor, lecturer and researcher at Blanquerna-Universidad Ramon Llull, EUM-Universidad de Girona, EAE Business School, Euncet- Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña, Universidad Pompeu Fabra, and other universities. Director of the Centre for Cable Studies (CECABLE). President of the Catalan Society of Communication - Institute of Catalan Studies. PI of the Innovative Monetization Systems in Journalism and Digital Marketing Research Group and the Journalism and Digital Marketing and Broadband Research Group.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6587-939X>