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THE CULT OF THE BODY IN SPORTS CENTRES. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA: INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK, AND TIKTOK

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In the last decade, concern about body worship has experienced significant growth, whether for health and well-being reasons or for aesthetic reasons. This article presents an analysis of the strategies designed for the creation and dissemination of content for social media applied to gyms. **Methodology:** A qualitative methodology was developed, based on in-depth interviews with community managers from ten gyms nationwide, which provided their perspective on who designs and oversees this content, how it is disseminated, how it is created, who designs it, and how this sports and body image content is perceived and absorbed by users. **Results:** The results show that social media hosts a vast amount of content related to sports, nutrition, wellness, and physical appearance, serving as a source of information on topics of interest to the public, where the accuracy of such information varies greatly. The professionalization of communication strategies in the digital sphere, specifically on social media, is centered around three types of professionals with training in communication and/or marketing. Strategies are developed based on the specific characteristics of each platform on the most widely used networks, such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, but without regular planning. **Discussion and conclusions:** The growth of social media is considered an effective tool for building loyalty and attracting new members in a digital-first environment.

Keywords: social media, community manager, fitness, digitalization, gyms, influencer

1. INTRODUCTION

Gyms have become must-visit destinations for people who want to take care of themselves for various reasons to feel better. In 2022, the 4,000 gyms spread across Spain had approximately 5.5 million members. This figure not only represented an increase of more than half a million compared to the previous year, but also came very close to the figures recorded before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These figures justify the increase in revenue for these sports centers of more than 500 million euros, with turnover rising by 8.4% in the sector in 2023. Fitness in Spain is a constantly evolving sector. Furthermore, the provision of clothing and footwear for the practice of the desired sport, together with the purchase of technological gadgets, as well as the need to maintain adequate nutrition, provide extraordinary economic benefits to the brands that have a place in this growing market niche (Sánchez, 2012; Martínez-Lemos & González, 2016; Martínez-Lemos & Hontoria-Hernández, 2020; palco23.com, 2023).

Spain's growth aligns with industry expectations, as the trend is similar across Europe and the world: increased focus on physical fitness and well-being in gyms and all types of sports centers. According to the *European Health & Fitness Market Report*, prepared by Deloitte and EuropeActive, the number of members increased by 7.5% in the last year, reaching 67.6 million users. Consequently, within the wellness industry, physical activity plays a prominent role in a market that generated more than \$6.8 trillion in revenue in 2024, according to the latest estimates from the Global Wellness Institute (Fernández, 2024).

According to Cabrera-García and Fanjul-Peiró (2012), the internet is the preferred medium for young people, particularly adolescents, to find information on matters related to improving physical appearance. It is their primary channel of communication and information gathering. This fact carries a number of implications that warrant reflection: the risk of accepting as true misleading content from unreliable sources or influencers and prescribers who recommend products and advice for improving physical appearance (Fanjul et al., 2019). Often, unattainable beauty standards are presented, which can cause body dissatisfaction and directly affect health (Meléndez González-Haba & Carrillo Durán, 2024).

1.1. Digitalization at the Service of the Wellness Industry

According to Slotnisky (2016), the process of digital transformation for companies is an ongoing process that requires professionals in every sector to stay up to date. This implementation is not always easy, neither is it free of challenges and risks (Del Do et al., 2023); however, it offers numerous benefits and opportunities across various sectors by reinventing businesses (Espinoza, 2020; Anta-Alonso, 2021; Rogers, 2021; Palazzo, 2022; Vega et al., 2023; Canosa- Avversari, 2023) and fitness is no exception (Valcarce, 2017; Camacho, 2022; Sustersic & Zanfardini, 2023).

It's worth mentioning what the wellness industry encompasses. It includes segments ranging from mental and occupational health to nutrition and personal care. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this sector has grown exponentially since 2021, to the point that its estimated market value for 2023 exceeded US\$6.2 trillion. Forecasts for 2027 indicate a growth rate of 8.6% (Statista.com, 2024).

Gyms and fitness centers have become fundamental pillars within the wellness industry for those seeking to improve both their health and lifestyle. In an increasingly global, uncertain, complex, and digital environment, communication with users through social media has become pivotal (Muñoz, 2010; del Fresno et al., 2015; Miller, 2019; Valcarce-Torrente et al., 2024). Therefore, the effectiveness of communication and advertising strategies on social media has become essential for the promotion and success of these establishments.

Various small businesses, such as gyms and fitness centers, have ventured into different social media platforms, reaping the benefits of the various tools available, but it is true that many lack the proper management skills to optimize communication with users on these platforms, addressing various aspects: reach, visibility, interaction, segmentation, personalization, and adaptation to constantly changing trends (Cárdenas-Ponce, 2024).

The implementation and digital transformation of the *fitness sector* implies cultural and organizational changes, as it requires organizations to adopt a mindset focused on innovation, agility, adaptation, and the acquisition of new digital skills and capabilities (Pérez, 2023). In some cases, other strategies, such as *inbound marketing*, have contributed to the economic recovery of gyms, positioning content creation as a tool

for brand identification and loyalty, or for identifying customers at the right time for the business (Hernández-Lavayen & Villalva-Ronquillo, 2021; Bui, 2020; Cintell, 2019).

In the fitness industry, there is no doubt that managing physical facilities is important, but the human factor must not be overlooked. User interaction and feedback are ongoing, something that does not happen in other businesses. Therefore, communication must be a top priority, especially in the digital realm, where it is handled by qualified professionals.

When referring to sports centers or gyms, it is important to distinguish between those belonging to large corporate chains, family-owned businesses, low-cost centers, and local gyms (Flores-Cagua & Guamán-Chacha, 2018), each of which has very distinct characteristics. The implementation of digital tools at the communication level, both for the center's workers and at the user level, is different, producing in many cases a marked digital divide due to factors such as budget, professionalization, or the knowledge and optimal use of these tools (Rodríguez-Osorio, 2023).

1.2. Social Media Content: a Reference Point or Misleading Advertising for Health and Wellness Users?

In today's globalized society, social networks offer enormous possibilities for accessing information quickly and effectively from any device (mobile, tablet, laptop...) (Estévez-Gualda & García-Marín, 2015). For this reason, the content that appears on these platforms in advertising format generates opportunities for brands of various kinds that choose to advertise on social media, offering, among other advantages, low cost and segmentation possibilities, allowing them to achieve their short-term objectives. Therefore, it is established as a persuasive communication tool, developing paid, owned, and earned content (POEM model) depending on the strategies employed to achieve the organization's objectives (Aced , 2018; Llorente-Barroso et al., 2020; Navío-Navarro et al., 2020).

Several studies have demonstrated a direct correlation between young people and social media use, analyzing diverse topics within this demographic: body image, self-esteem, eating habits, health promotion platforms (Rodríguez, 2017; Rosado et al., 2022; Borges et al., 2023; Feijoo et al., 2023), and gym memberships. In the latter case, the relationship between social media and gyms or sports centers is particularly close, as young people are both gym members and active social media users. In fact, social media constitutes their primary source of information and, in many cases, their main means of communication (Castro & Ponce de León, 2018; Sahin, 2018; Rodríguez-Torres et al., 2020; and Moral-García et al., 2023).

In this sense, advertising plays a fundamental role, and user-generated information in the form of recommendations is one of the most organic and honest ways to advertise something in the market, as it is based on someone's prior experience. According to Campbell et al. (2024), this content mimics the style and intent of traditional advertising, making it more credible.

In the current context, the influencer represents the new opinion leaders in the online sphere (Gómez-Nieto, 2018; Martínez-Estrella et al., 2020). This phenomenon has not gone unnoticed by brands seeking opportunities to create engaging content for users. Thus, influencer marketing has become crucial to online advertising content strategies, generating ongoing debates about advertising transparency and the ethical commitment of both influencers and brands, particularly regarding users who are legally unprotected (Castelló-Martínez & del-Pino-Romero, 2015; Taramona, 2018; Guíñez-Cabrera et al., 2020).

Several studies highlight the interest in using the figure of the influencer from the fitness and sports sector (Bellido-Turró, 2018; Duarte et al., 2021; Sánchez-Hernández, 2021; Gil-Quintana et al., 2022). One of the main advantages of influencers is the honest recommendation and trust they receive from their followers. However, the brand must be very clear that choosing that influencer represents the ideal values for consolidating its reputation with minimal risk. Sometimes, choosing micro-influencers is better for certain market niches (notorius-comunicacion.com, 2019).

This article analyzes the social media content strategies developed by gyms located in Spain to reach their audiences: who designs them, the professionals who develop them, the type of content, user segmentation or profiles, etc.

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this article is to analyze how the communication strategy on social networks is developed in Spanish gyms, paying special attention to the professional profile of community managers.

The following specific objectives are proposed for this research:

- SO1. To determine the training, area of knowledge, experience, qualification, and professional profile of the community manager of Spanish gyms.
- SO2. To identify which social networks are most used and for what reasons.
- SO3. To analyze what type of content is used: purpose, design, form, periodicity, verification of information and sources.

3. METHODOLOGY

To carry out the analysis of the content structure in social networks, a qualitative methodology has been developed, using in-depth interviews as a technique.

Ten interviews were conducted with individuals responsible for managing the social media accounts of various gyms. The criteria considered for selecting the gyms were revenue, profitability, and the implementation of investment plans for the improvement and expansion of facilities to support the sector's growth, according to the 2021 Fitness Economic Report (2Playbook, 2021).

The gyms participating in the study were: Veevo Valladolid, Studio-Club Pilates, DreamFit, Sparta Sport Center Donosti, BeOne, Centro Supera, Clubs DIR, INACUA, Xerión Club, Fitness Park Spain.

The interviews were based on a semi-structured guide and focused on the following topics:

1. Ways to approach the work of a community manager.
2. Strategies being implemented, working conditions.
3. Professional profile.

The goal was to gather information to study the impact of the implementation of digitalization at each of the centers: how social media is used, the resulting effects, the most popular types of accounts, the types of content posted, and the sources consulted, among other aspects.

The analysis of the interview transcripts was carried out through a manual coding process. This process involved a detailed reading of the collected information, during which codes were assigned to specific segments of the text. This coding was performed using the qualitative analysis software MAXQDA 2020 (a tool that optimizes data organization and facilitates the systematic presentation of results).

4. RESULTS

The main findings from the interviews with the centers' community managers are presented below, organized thematically.

4.1. Professional Profile

In general terms, the following profiles are identified:

The people in charge of managing secondary accounts, that is, those associated with a specific center within a chain of gyms, usually perform various additional functions in the center, beyond the management of digital platforms.

On the other hand, there are community managers responsible for managing the sports center's main account, which in some cases is the establishment's only official account. In these situations, these professionals typically dedicate themselves full-time to social media management, without taking on other additional tasks within the center. This approach allows for greater specialization in the creation and execution of digital strategies.

Sometimes, in addition to having an in-house community manager, gyms hire an external agency to help with account management and content creation. The role of this external agency varies from gym to gym. In some cases, the agency provides support in defining and planning digital communication strategies. However, in other situations, the strategy is developed internally, and the external agency's role is limited to editing and producing content according to the guidelines established by the internal team.

Regarding the training and professional profile of these workers, three distinct profiles are identified:

- The first profile corresponds to those professionals whose academic and professional background is focused exclusively on the field of communication
- The second profile consists of professionals who, although they have initial training in communication, have subsequently decided to specialize in the sports sector, integrating knowledge from both areas.
- Finally, the third profile includes professionals who began their career in the sports field and, over time, have acquired specialized skills in digital communication, that is, they have become community managers, since some of the profiles perform other tasks and are not exclusively community managers.

Based on these three identified profiles, it is clear that the individuals responsible for managing the social media accounts of these gyms have a background in communication and/or marketing (specifically, they studied Advertising, Journalism, Marketing, and to a lesser extent, Sports Science), with prior experience in the communications field (1-3 years). However, although there is a tendency to supplement this training with knowledge of the sports sector, such specialization is not considered strictly necessary to perform this type of work. This observation suggests that, while an understanding of the sports sector can be beneficial, communication and marketing skills are what are truly considered essential for the successful management of these accounts.

4.2. Social Networks Used

The primary purpose of the social media presence is to increase the gym's visibility and influence, while also offering added value to existing members. It is never mentioned that one of the objectives of these accounts is to generate revenue by promoting external brands.

The social media platforms used, in order of importance, are Instagram (where most gyms host their main account), Facebook, and TikTok. It's true that many gyms maintain active profiles on various digital platforms. In the case of gym chains, it's common to find multiple accounts under the same brand within a single platform. This results in individual profiles for each of the chain's centers, allowing for more specific and localized management of their digital presence, adapting to the needs and characteristics of each location. This optimizes communication and interaction with current clients and allows them to adapt to the specific expectations of each user community.

The interviews were conducted with individuals hired by the centers to manage communications, in some cases also performing other tasks. The working methods of the community managers interviewed varied considerably. This diversity is closely linked to the specific nature and characteristics of each sports center. Furthermore, there were also significant differences depending on whether the interviewee was the community manager responsible for the gym's main account or a secondary account for a specific center.

In general, the following profiles were identified:

The people in charge of managing secondary accounts – that is, those associated with a specific center within a gym chain – usually perform various additional functions at the center, beyond simply managing digital platforms. In other words, their role is not limited exclusively to community management activities, but also encompasses other operational or administrative responsibilities within the gym. On the other hand, community managers responsible for managing the main account of the sports center, which in some cases is the establishment's only official account, were interviewed. In these situations, it is common for these professionals to dedicate themselves full-time to social media management, without taking on other additional tasks within the center. This approach allows for greater specialization in the creation and execution of digital strategies.

Furthermore, in three of the participating centers, it was observed that, in addition to having an internal community manager, the gym uses an external agency to support account management and content creation. This outsourcing strategy strengthens the sports center's capabilities in the area of social media and provides a specialized perspective that can improve content quality. Thus, collaboration with external agencies reflects a trend toward professionalization in digital communication within these centers.

It's important to note that the role of the external company isn't the same for all sports centers. In some cases, the external company provides support in defining and planning digital communication strategies. However, in other situations, the strategy is developed internally within the gym, and the external company is limited to editing and producing content according to the guidelines established by the internal team. This structure, therefore, reveals that some gyms have established up to three distinct levels of professionals dedicated (exclusively or not) to social media management. The first level consists of those responsible for managing the specific accounts of each individual center, adapting the content to the needs and characteristics of their local audience. The second level includes the community managers in charge of managing the gym's main account, who focus on maintaining a global and consistent brand image in the digital sphere. Finally, the third level comprises the external companies hired to provide specialized support in content design and creation.

Another issue the interviews intended to clarify was the existence of a schedule for posting content. Regarding this point, no uniform trend or pattern was observed among the interviewed centers. One gym indicated that its posts are scheduled for the early morning hours, about 4-5 times a week; another opts to post from 1:00 PM onwards; while some centers do not follow any predetermined schedule for their posts.

In some gyms, up to three distinct levels of professionals have been established, dedicated (exclusively or not) to social media management. The first level consists of those responsible for managing the specific accounts of each individual center, adapting the content to the needs and characteristics of their local audience. The

second level includes the *community managers* in charge of managing the gym's main account, who focus on maintaining a global and consistent brand image in the digital sphere. Finally, the third level comprises external companies hired to provide specialized support in content design and creation (in three of the participating gyms, it was observed that, in addition to the internal community manager, the gym uses an external agency to support account management and content creation).

This feature highlights the importance these gyms place on their digital communication, and therefore it is understandable that these are centers that share thoughtful content with clear objectives, incorporating elements of spontaneity when necessary.

The passages presented in quotation marks are direct quotes from the interviewees.

"We have a defined annual strategy. With each network, we set objectives to achieve and a strategy. The strategy is reviewed monthly."

"We send the recording schedule to the different centers well in advance, and a month before we already have the content developed and planned."

"We also base our work on current events and what's in fashion; if there's a trend or a viral song, we use it."

"We have a defined hashtag strategy. Based on the content of the post, there are some hashtags that are always included, which are generic, and then there are some that are specific. That is, depending also on whether the post is more directed at a part of our gym in Madrid, we might use a more specific hashtag and then include hashtags specific to the content of that post. There is an average of five hashtags, to give you an idea."

The demographic profile of followers varies depending on two main factors: the type of gym and the social media platform used. For example, one of the participating gyms in this phase, which specializes in Pilates, states that most of its Facebook followers are women between 30 and 55 years old, while other gyms are trying to increase their visibility on TikTok to reach a younger audience.

4.3. Types of Content and Digital Sources on Social Networks

The types of content published on these profiles are quite varied. They include gym promotions, information related to healthy eating, exercise routines, detailed descriptions of the gym's equipment and facilities, activities offered there, and so on. Although these topics are listed individually, they are not entirely separate; in practice, it's common to find this type of content interconnected.

It is observed, once again, that these accounts serve a dual purpose: on the one hand, they seek to offer information of interest that can help retain current customers and attract new ones, and on the other hand, they highlight the possibilities of the sports center with the aim of attracting new customers.

The format of the generated content is conditioned in all cases by the platform used.

“On TikTok it’s all reels and on Instagram they’re usually reels, but we also tend to combine them with photo carousels or creative content.”

Video is the predominant option due to the advantages it offers for showcasing gym facilities, documenting training sessions, and highlighting other relevant aspects of the center. Videos allow for a faster and more dynamic presentation of information, and the ability to combine moving images, sound, and text in a single format provides a more engaging experience for viewers, contributing to greater effectiveness in message delivery. Regarding the days and times of content publication, no consistent trend or pattern is observed.

Here are some of the most notable uses:

Communication tool. First, social media allows gyms to have a two-way communication channel with their clients. Among the first online environments that gyms began to use was their website, but this medium did not allow for real interaction.

“On the website, we don't have two-way interaction with them. In other words, there's no space for them to post complaints, comments, or praise. It's more informational in nature.”

Customer loyalty tool. Social networks offer additional advantages, making them a valuable customer loyalty tool.

“Social media can be used to promote special offers, discounts, and exclusive promotions to your online followers. This can help boost sales and attract new customers interested in trying the gym.”

Customer acquisition tool. The customer retention functions performed by social media also result in opportunities for acquiring new customers.

“We also use social media as a brand showcase, obviously, so that people can see what we do in our centers, what we are like, and so on.”

Furthermore, social networks represents the perfect space to develop marketing campaigns and communicate the brand's values and philosophy, helping to build and give visibility to the corporate image of gyms and differentiate themselves from competitors, especially among young people.

“People still use Google for searches, but what we’ve seen is that in recent years, younger generations are increasingly using social media, Instagram’s search engine, and TikTok’s search engine to find a gym near their home. So it’s also true that we’ve gone from investing 100% in Google Ads campaigns to investing more in social media campaigns.”

Therefore, social networks represent a very useful tool for gyms: they allow the formation of online communities and are a fundamental means of information.

"It has allowed us to create communities among members, sharing experiences and motivating each other to achieve our fitness goals."

"They are a different and constantly changing medium where information reaches people directly and constantly."

Consuming information on social media involves a series of problems such as the veracity of the content and the sources of origin, so it is important to compare these and apply a critical and responsible spirit.

"Social media should be a tool to open up that field of curiosity where you say, 'Hey, look, this girl is talking about... protein shakes. Let me look into it and see what's out there,' but it's not an encyclopedia to believe that everything she says there is correct."

A distinction must be made between accounts managed by influencers and those managed by gyms themselves. The differentiating factors are their objective, the type of content, and its accuracy. Influencers are primarily motivated by increasing their number of followers and views, as this is their source of income. This pressure to maintain or increase their popularity can lead some influencers to share information without proper filtering or rigor, prioritizing the content's appeal over its accuracy. However, gym accounts on social media are an extension of their brand and business. In this case, they constitute a channel to strengthen the gym's presence in the market. This implies the need to publish more careful and responsible content, since the brand's reputation and image depend heavily on the quality of the posts.

"I think that's where the responsibility of those of us who work in networks lies, to provide information that is as accurate as possible."

"On our account, all published content has been previously reviewed by a professional, both in the field of fitness, nutrition... in this way we ensure that the information we provide is 100% reliable."

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The research developed has made it possible to determine the professional profile of those who execute communication strategies on networks, to analyze how the communicative structure is in the social networks used and the type of content generated.

The lockdown period resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic marks a significant turning point in the unstoppable process of digitalization, as well as in the potential that social networks offer to sports centers, allowing them to maintain a constant connection with their members through online classes, live broadcasts and other online activities.

The existence of a community manager to manage social media is a necessary requirement for a successful strategy (Boned-Pascual et al., 2015; Villanueva, 2023). Several studies confirm this fact, applicable to all types of sectors and diverse organizations: education (Ghorbanzadeh & Sharbatian, 2022); tourism (Keelson et al.,

2024), company (Song et al., 2023). NGOs (Arroyo-Almaraz & Calle- Mendoza, 2018), public institutions: Municipalities (Zabala- Cia et al., 2022); political journalism (Pérez Soler & Micó Sanz, 2020).

The study identified three levels of professionals dedicated to social media management in gyms. The first level comprises those responsible for managing the specific accounts of each individual gym (these individuals also handle other tasks within the gym). The second level consists of the community managers in charge of managing the gym's main account. Finally, the third level includes external companies hired to provide specialized support in content design and creation. In all cases analyzed, the individuals responsible for managing gym social media have training in communication and/or marketing. While it is common for them to supplement this training with knowledge in the sports field, such specialization is not considered strictly necessary for this type of work.

In a digital environment, networks are an effective tool for building loyalty and attracting new members in all sectors.

The most used social media platforms by gyms and fitness centers in Spain are Instagram (where most gyms host their main account), Facebook, and TikTok (Pérez-Tur et al., 2022). In line with our findings, video and image resources present significant opportunities for building user communities and fostering interaction between the center and its users. The demographic profile of followers is influenced by the type of gym and the social media platform.

The content generated by the competition is viewed, but no formal or systematic analysis of said content is produced and it does not influence strategic decision-making in this regard.

The type of content generated on social media in the fitness industry typically focuses on healthy eating, nutrition, and tips and recommendations for physical fitness (Aladro Gonzalvo, 2015; Hoyos-Orozco & Gutiérrez-Valderrama, 2019; López-López & López-Villar, 2024). This pattern is confirmed in our research, which also includes promotions, exercise routines, detailed descriptions of equipment and facilities, and center activities. Furthermore, they also publish content about the potential of exercise to improve mental health. As for the issue of diversity in body representation, it is addressed broadly in most publications.

Regarding the relevance of the potential psychological effects that published content can have on users, two aspects were explored: the inclusion of information related to mental health and the visibility of diverse body types. Regarding mental health, most interviewees confirmed having published content on several occasions related to how sport can contribute to emotional well-being. Specifically, posts are published stating that regular physical exercise can be beneficial for reducing stress, alleviating anxiety, or increasing self-esteem. As for content related to body diversity, none of the gyms interviewed stated that they explicitly address this topic in their posts. However, it is noteworthy that the issue of diversity in body representation is addressed

comprehensively in the vast majority of publications. In general, the protagonists of the videos and images are the gym members themselves: real people who visit the center to work out. In this way, they contribute to showing an inclusive and realistic representation of bodies. The danger of comparison is repeatedly emphasized. Users are exposed to idealized representations of bodies and lifestyles that rarely reflect everyday reality. Furthermore, there is almost unanimous agreement that younger people are more susceptible to the social and aesthetic pressures presented on social media.

The posts are not typically tailored to specific audience niches, nor do they adhere to specific segmentation criteria such as age, gender, marital status, education level, income, occupation, or area of residence. However, in some cases, different strategies are used for each social media platform due to the differences in audience and format. All posts with an educational or informational objective are supervised by instructors properly trained in the subject matter to avoid misleading content that distorts and deviates from the true essence of good sports practice.

Several studies highlight the limited attention paid to strategic planning by competitors, even though their own actions are observed. Content format is dictated by the social media platform: reels for TikTok and Instagram, in addition to creative content and photos (Rincón-Zambrano, 2022; Vilca-Mina, 2022; Valcarce-Torrente et al., 2024). Given the diversity of gym types, each center prefers to plan its social media strategy independently, addressing current needs. While they may observe what the competition is doing, this is not a factor considered in their social media content planning and management. Therefore, each center develops its own social media strategy.

It's true that social media platforms host a vast amount of information related to sports, nutrition, and physical appearance. While this isn't inherently negative, it does present certain challenges. Specifically, the accuracy of the shared information is highly variable, and offering personalized content is nearly impossible.

Among the positive aspects, social media can serve as a valid source of information and contribute to promoting a healthy lifestyle. However, for this to be effective, it is important to consider several aspects: while social media is useful for exploring a topic, delving deeper into it requires consulting a professional. Furthermore, it is essential to maintain critical thinking when evaluating the available information. The communications department chooses to directly share scientific studies from secondary sources that they deem relevant to their audience, validating the content and appropriate format for publication (visual design, elements such as hashtags, music, style, etc.). Therefore, this department decides the type of information that is posted.

The community managers interviewed agree that the most followed accounts for information related to sports, fitness, and nutrition belong to influencers. Most of the community managers interviewed stated that they have collaborated regularly, or at least occasionally, with content creators. The most common form of collaboration is

inviting these influencers to sports centers to create content that, in addition to showcasing their exercise routines, highlights the center's strengths and features its facilities.

One of the main limitations of this study is the number of interviews conducted, as a larger number of participants would have contributed to a more representative picture of the professional reality in this sector. Nevertheless, the information obtained from the interviews allows us to identify thematic patterns and differentiate between diverse opinions that are widely shared among the participants, providing a starting point for further research.

The following areas are proposed as future lines of research: evaluating information sources beyond social media to gain a holistic understanding of the impact of information disseminated through other online and offline channels; conducting a comparative analysis of strategies and content across online and offline media; and examining the impact of these strategies on users when it comes to obtaining information and participating in sports activities at specialized facilities.

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