

Digital Platforms and further challenges in Public Communication

"Public communication and digital platforms" is the theme of this edition of the Brazilian Journal of Communication Policies (RBPC), a publication in connection with the Laboratory of Political Communication at the University of Brasilia (LaPCom/UnB).

A group of national and international experts were invited to analyze and send in various contributions. A number of texts analysing the current state of public communication were selected from these contributions. These texts mainly focused on online radio and TV and how it (the web) has become a platform for producing, distributing and/or accessing content as well as an interactive channel for listeners, readers and viewers.

This issue of the journal prioritized academic excellence and diversity, and was not restricted to only using concepts such as public broadcasting, public communication or public service media. The editors' choice to do that was based on the fact that these concepts do not necessarily sum up the main point the RBPC wanted to make: how changes in technology have contributed towards conceptual and practical transformations in public communication channels. For example, what was previously referred to as public broadcasting (it occupied only the electromagnetic spectrum), is nowadays also referred to as public service media since it uses internet channels.

We recommend reading the article "*Las políticas editoriales de las radiotelevisiónes públicas europeas para el uso de los nuevos medios sociales*" written by Francisco Campos Freire, Tania Fernández Lombao and Andrea Valencia Bermúdez (Santiago de Compostela University in Spain). They analyze the use and management of social networks in public broadcasting services in seven European countries. The existence of public channels in social media such as Facebook and Twitter has provided some interesting debates on editorial policies within digital media.

This issue also includes studies that evaluate content related to new technology, staff training, technical and operational difficulties, costs, losses and gains that public radio and television broadcasters include on their sites.

Andrea Medrado (Fluminense Federal University in Brazil) looks at internet-related issues and public communication service in his article "*Culturas de Produção Digital nas TVs Públicas do Reino Unido*", a project based on the transition from public television in the United Kingdom to a multi-platform setting. She conducted an ethnographic study of Channel 4's production of their online web-game. The text examines media convergence by gathering videos, animations and games together and showing the everyday challenges producers of such media have to deal with.

The articles also look at the trajectory of public communication systems and their political and technological challenges in the southern hemisphere countries where their experiences are mainly concentrated. Ruth Reis (Federal University of Espírito Santo in Brazil) identifies in her article "*Democratização da comunicação e comunicação pública: trajetórias de dois mundos*" how public communication processes in Brazil are formed and helps to shed light on what the State's demands are (on civil society) for exercising citizenship.

In "*Inmediaciones de lo público: Políticas de acceso y límites de la participación ciudadana en el sistema de medios públicos en Argentina*", Daniela Monje (National University of Córdoba in Argentina) systematizes the access policies, the limitations put on citizen participation and the asymmetry that exists in public audiovisual media in Argentina. Ezekiel Rivero (National University of Quilmes in Argentina) offers up another view on Argentinian public communication in his article "*Televisão Pública da Argentina na Internet: Dois modelos em busca de uma nova legitimidade*", in which he uses the electromagnetic spectrum to analyze public communication and the possibilities that the internet provides for public participation.

Lastly, a notable addition to the issue is Adilson Cabral's (Fluminense Federal University) review of the book "*A televisão digital terrestre: experiências nacionais e diversidade na Europa, América e Ásia*". Coordinated by Luis Albornoz and Maria Trinidad García Leiva, Cabral considers this book "a significant effort in qualified research essential towards achieving a more definitive analysis of the perspectives and changes in audiovisual production, conveyance and businesses in the second decade of this century". The work was originally written in Spanish and published in 2012, and presents a series of essays and critiques on the development of Digital Terrestrial TV in several countries on the three continents.

This trilingual issue of the RBPC comprised of contributions in English, Portuguese and Spanish used resources from the project: "*Políticas de comunicação, radiodifusão pública e cidadania: subsídios para o desenvolvimento sócio-cultural em Portugal e no Brasil*". It is an initiative resulting from the partnership between the University of Brasilia and the University of Minho, brought about by the *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* or *CAPES* (a government agency linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Education in charge of promoting high standards for post-graduate courses), and by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT).

In addition to this publication, the project is also involved in the research and training for exchange programs and does so by sharing knowledge between Brazilian and Portuguese researchers. These activities have made the two universities' graduate programs in Communication Sciences visible internationally, and have had an impact both within and outside of Portuguese-speaking countries. Since 2014, project members have organized seminars on the postgraduate programs from both countries which included participation from teachers and graduate students alike, as well as the reading of several papers written on scientific meetings.

The studies paid special attention to the relationship between listeners, viewers and readers, and those responsible for public communication service and the role that public media have in promoting the Portuguese language and the cultural exchanges between the two countries. This concern has generated some thought and maturity on the limits and possibilities that studies have by examining coincidences and cultural dissimilarities. This helps towards strengthening research methodologies used in studies on communication policies, media production and reception, citizenship, and cultural development.

The project "*Políticas de comunicação, radiodifusão pública e cidadania: subsídios para o desenvolvimento sócio-cultural em Portugal e no Brasil*" has also collaborated with managers in public communication towards developing studies.

Collaborating with researchers, professionals and managers, together with the transposition and multitude of analogue channels and possibilities the Internet offers bring forth challenging and thought provoking ideas towards understanding the mechanisms of contemporary production, distribution and content access. Additionally, we hope to introduce further data on other academic productions originating from these joint efforts.

The importance of scientific and strategic research of public media has become increasingly clear, especially when it comes to technological innovation, the restructuring of content and tools for promoting media literacy, and socio-cultural development.

Additionally, when studying communication policies in public radio and television it is necessary to identify the technological trends needed for producing innovative media content and reaching a wider audience.

The members of the initiative have been examining the strategy public radio and television broadcasters use as it pertains to the role of the ombudsman in both Portugal and Brazil. It is also necessary to analyze how the public communication systems in both countries are educating about the critical use of media and promoting media literacy; a theme presented in this issue and that will also be presented in future products of the project.

We hope to encourage more reading and more joint activities that can stimulate further thoughts on digital platforms and other challenges in public communication.

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