

Governmental Communication and Brand Advertising During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted governments and brands around the world to produce short audiovisual spaces with different objectives. This research examines the governmental and business communication within the Ibero-American sphere.

Audiovisual products belonging to YouTube official channels of governmental institutions were observed. These productions have been categorized according to their intention (informative, appealing, emotional or poetic).

Results show a predominance of referential videos in government communication, followed by the appealing intention and somewhat less by the emotional and poetic intentions. The intention of the business spots can

also be categorized into the following: informing about what companies do during the COVID-19 crisis, their support of the StayHome campaign, messages of encouragement, sales of products or brand image, gratitude campaigns towards professionals and citizens, and focusing on the return after the pandemic.

It is concluded that governments and businesses are marking arduous media efforts during the health emergency, with special differences in terms of quality and quantity. Finally, recommendations are made in this regard.

Keywords: COVID-19, coronavirus, crisis communication, governmental communication, brand advertising.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on peoples' lives, not only because of the high number of human lives being lost, but also because the uncertainty on peoples' livelihoods. The second one is the consequence of quarantines and social distancing practices implemented by cou-



tries to contain the pandemic, which have put the world in a Great Lockdown (Gopinath, 2020). The collapse that followed these practices has led to a global crisis that has affected households and many industries, including marketing and advertising.

However, the impact on marketing and advertising varies across industries and countries, but with a common point: the drop in marketing and ad spending. About eighty percent (81%) of major multinationals are postponing planned campaigns and more than half (57%) are cutting spend (World Federation of Advertisers, 2020). Latin America is one of the regions with the biggest differences in the evolution of ad spending, with decreases of 90% in Peru (Barranzuela, 2020), while in Mexico the drop is expected to be of 15% (López, 2020). In general, the negative impact has been higher in traditional media than on digital media (Influencer MarketingHub, 2020; International Advertising Bureau, 2020a). Despite the massive growth in news and social media consumption, publishers were unable to monetize it (International Advertising Bureau, 2020a; Socialbackers, 2020). In US and Spain the drop in digital ad spending was between 20% and 30% in March and April (International Advertising Bureau (2020a, 2020b, 2020c).

Regarding differences across industries, the survey carried out by Influencer MarketingHub (2020) shows that law, government and politics (72%), travel sector (65%) and sports (40%) registered the most significant drop in ad spend, while ad spend on e-commerce has doubled in countries as US. However, it seems that the evolutions of ad spend by sectors varies depending on the country. For example, in Spain, institutional campaigns, which include advertising by public institutions, registered the highest growth (6.2%), followed by alimentation (2.8%) and energy (2.2%); while automotive (6.7%), beauty, hygiene and cosmetics (2,9%) and big distribution (2.6%) sectors suffered the highest drop (International Advertising Bureau, 2020c).

Although the economic uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 crisis has pushed companies and institutions to rethink their strategies and budgets, the literature shows that marketing and advertising are an important part of crisis communication (Ritchie *et al.*, 2004). The experience of crisis or disaster management in tourism shows that communication and public relations are essential in restoring the confidence of clients, which must be supplemented by marketing initiatives (Blackman, Kennedy, and Ritchie, 2011). The importance of communication and marketing in crisis management is due to the need of managing human perceptions, which can be distorted through rumors (Ritchie *et al.*, 2004).

Nevertheless, communication and marketing strategies must be adapted to the stages of crisis or a disaster. Roberts (1994) identifies four stages: *pre-event*, where actions can be taken to prevent or mitigate the disaster; *emergency phase*, when the effects of disaster have been experienced and actions must be taken to rescue people and property; *intermediate phase*, when the essential needs of people must be covered; and *long-term phase*, when action for complete recovery are taken. In the emergency phase, it is essential to ensure enough information to the media and affected parties in order to avoid misinformation and speculation, which abound in the first part of a crisis (Smith and Sipika, 1993). Recovery mar-

keting initiatives are especially important during the long-term stage (Ritchie *et al.*, 2004). A relevant example of communication and marketing strategies is the adopted by Singapore during and after the epidemic of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in order to minimize the negative impact on the tourism industry (Beirman, 2006). During the emergency phase, Singapore launched a push marketing campaign under the slogan COOL Singapore Campaign, with the aim of informing the travel industry and clients in key markets that the country has adopted measures to minimize the risk of contagion of SARS. Hotels and tourist attractions that complied with a set of measures were declared “SARS free”. By June 2003, when Singapore was declared SARS free by WHO, the country launched the recovery marketing campaign “Singapore Roars”, whose main message was that the country was safe again.

Persuading tourists that a destination is safe is a frequent recovery marketing strategy, though there are other marketing strategies that previous research has identified as useful in crisis, such as, appealing for solidarity from potential clients, testimonials of celebrities or clients or product diversification (Scott, Laws, and Prideaux, 2008). Past disasters, such as the one caused by the Hurricane Katrina, showed that gratitude campaigns can have a positive impact on the consumer willingness to purchase products or to offer social and financial support, as they “encourage both those associated and those not associated to a disaster to either directly or indirectly behave in ways that promote recovery” (Raggio and Garretson-Folse, 2011: 172). Discounts or price reduction are also frequently used, but they are not the preferred option as companies usually suffer already financial losses during a crisis or disaster (Scott, Laws, and Prideaux, 2008). Previous economic crises have shown that in this contexts companies are faced with new realities, characterized by lack of trust, lack of finance, protectionism and growing competition (Piercy, Cravens, and Lane, 2010). In this context, companies are challenged to realign marketing strategies to these realities and to offer different value propositions to different segments of clients.

The coronavirus pandemic represents a difficult challenge for institutions and companies, which must rethink their communication, marketing and advertising strategies for the management of the crisis under a context of financial constraints. Therefore, the purpose of this research is, on the one hand, to analyze the audiovisual media strategies used by Ibero-American governments to communicate, persuade and raise awareness among the population, as well as to investigate about their characteristics. And on the other hand, to find out what advertising actions are taking brands and how they are adapting their commercials to the context of COVID-19.

METHODOLOGY

A record of the videos uploaded to YouTube by governmental institutions of most Ibero-American countries between January and June 2020 was made and an analysis of advertising spots was performed. Most sources of the advertising spots were the YouTube channel of El Publicista (n.d.) and the Adsoftheworld website

(n.d.). It is worth mentioning that those audiovisual pieces closest to the pseudo-report or the mini-documentary were excluded because they were not considered productions belonging to the conventional advertising or propaganda field.

For the analysis of the governmental videos, a descriptive study was carried out based on the typology and proposal of the different audiovisual productions, by using the division of Jakobson (1988) applied to advertising (Fitriyah, 2017), paying special attention to those of conative, emotional and poetic type; and also the Searle and Vanderveken's categorization (representatives and directives) (cited by Escandell-Vidal, 2015). These categories are not exclusive, but sometimes the same video can have different purposes:

- Referential or representative: it informs or gives advices objectively and formally.
- Conative: it appeals to the viewer to take action. It is characterized by imperative or exhortatory sentences.
- Expressive or emotional: the characters express their feelings, emotions or states of mind. Subjectivity predominates. It mixes language, images and music to convey emotions. The familiar, the social or personal experiences can become a resort to try to reach the deepest feelings of the viewer.
- Poetics or aesthetics: it refers to the use of language or symbolic codes to generate stylistic figures such as allegories or metaphors with which to draw attention to the public.

Finally, in this section, the most prevalent format in each video was analyzed; animation, real or mixed images. The objective of this analysis is evaluate how these formats are used for each category of audiovisual production.

A discursive study was performed for the analysis of the advertising of brands, categorizing the spots according to their purpose and exemplifying these categories (Jiménez-Sánchez *et al.*, 2020). It should be emphasized that the objective of this part is not to expose the commercial broadcast in each country, but rather to show how national and international brands present in Ibero-American countries adapt their advertising to the coronavirus context.

All the audiovisual sources used for this research can be consulted at the following link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KYW6l_3eHyMs9QsYQA-5uhXEqpASgDmTR?usp=sharing>.

RESULTS

As might be expected, the main functions of audiovisual creations related to COVID-19 are to persuade, inform, educate and raise awareness. According to Jakobson's (1988) approach, most of the analyzed productions made by governmental institutions of Ibero-American are referential or informative, having clearly the objective of teaching people about the virus and of giving recommendations or measures on how to prevent contagion. But, in the case of advertising spots, the conative, poetic and emotional functions prevail.

The results are shown below according to the production source.

GOVERNMENTAL COMMUNICATION

The predominant topics of the referential function are handwashing, the use of masks, advices for the quarantine and for the moments when people are leaving home. Meanwhile, the conative is mainly used for asking the population to stay home and, to a lesser extent, to use compulsory masks or respect the rules of social distancing. Regarding the expressive function, the most recurring reasons to excite the viewer are the family, gratitude and the encouragements to overcome the pandemic. Finally, the poetic function is the least frequent and, in its application, the most used is the comparison of the fight against the virus with a battle or a final football match or the qualification of healthcare professionals as heroes or warriors.

It is confirmed that the referential videos are the ones that use digital an mixed animation (animation and real images) the most, while the conative and especially the expressive and poetic videos mainly use real images, with a less formal and emotional music, and including in many cases storytelling.

The basic chronology for most countries consists in starting with referential videos (February and March), especially informing about handwashing, offering basic information about the virus and main recommendations. Next, productions with a conative function are used for appealing to the population to stay home and to respect quarantine (April). On the same dates, most emotional and poetic videos are included, with the special intention of expressing gratitude to professionals and citizens for their efforts, as well as giving emotional and coping support for overcoming the health crisis. Finally (May), the referential videos once again predominate, informing of the new regulations as the de-escalation of the confinement proceeds.

The following table shows a summary of the results according to the different categories analyzed and according to the country of origin (in alphabetical order). The general table with all the specific information (title, date, links, duration of each spot, number of views and topics) of the analyzed spots is presented in the Appendix.

Table 1. Analysis of the Governmental productions

Type (Referential, Conative, Emotive, Poetic)	Format (Animation, Real, Mixt)	Slogan, campaign o hashtag
Argentina (61 videos; March 13 – June 3)		
-Referential: 57 -Referential and conative:1 -Referential and emotive: 1 -Conative and emotive: 1 -Emotive: 1	-Animation: 19 -Real: 3 -Mixed: 39	-Argentina Unida (United Argentina) -Cuidarte es cuidarnos (Taking care of yourself is taking care of ourselves) -Si sabemos más, podemos prevenir mejor (if we know more, we can better prevent) -Prevenir el coronavirus está en nuestras manos (prevent coronavirus is in our hands) -Aislados. Más unidos que nunca (Isolated. More united than ever) -Quédate en casa (Stay home) -Seguí cuidándote (I kept taking care of you)

Brazil (22 videos; March 18 – June 3)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Referential: 18 -Referential and emotive: 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Animation: 18 -Real: 2 -Mixed: 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Contra el coronavirus, Brasil cuenta contigo (Against the coronavirus, Brazil counts on you) -TeleSUS, consulta sin salir de casa (TeleSUS, consult without leaving home) -#ficaemcasacomsaúde! -El Ministerio de Salud quiere saber como estás (The Ministry of Health wants to know how are you) -Nosotros estamos aquí por vosotros, así que quédate en casa por nosotros (We are here for you, so stay home for us) -Con pequeños cuidados usted demuestra un gran amor (With little care you show great love) -Una comunidad unida cría lazos solidarios para enfrentarse al COVID-19 (A united community breeds solidarity ties to confront COVID-19)
Chile (28 videos; February 12 - June 4)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Referential: 21 -Conative: 2 -Conative, emotive and poetic: 1 -Emotive: 1 -Emotive and poetic: 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Animation: 9 -Real: 6 -Mixed: 13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sé responsable (Be responsible) -Esta pandemia solo la superamos entre todos (This pandemic we only overcame all together) -#CuidémonosEntreTodos (#Let'sTakeCareOfEachOther) -Feliz día trabajadores de la salud (Happy health workers day) -Hazlo por ti y por todos (Do it for you and for everyone) -Porque a este virus le ganamos entre todos con el corazón (Because all will fight this virus with our hearts) #ChileTeAplauda (#ChileAplaudsYou) -Separados para volver a encontrarnos (Separated to meet again)
Colombia (16 videos; March 2 – May 27)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Referential: 13 -Referential and emotive: 1 -Conative, emotive and poetic: 1 -Emotive: 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Animation: 3 -Real: 5 -Mixed: 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prevenir el coronavirus #EmpiezaPorTusManos (The prevention of coronavirus #StartsWithYourOwnHands) -La salud es de todos (Health belongs to everyone) -En tus manos y en las de toda Colombia está la solución para acabar con el coronavirus (In your hand and those of all Colombia is the solution to end coronavirus)
Costa Rica (13 videos; March 13 – May 13)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Referential: 1 -Referential and emotive: 2 -Referential, conative and emotive: 4 -Referential, conative, emotive and poetic: 1 -Conative and emotive: 2 -Conative, emotive and poetic: 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Animation: 1 -Real: 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Quedémonos en casa (Let's stay home) -Quédate en casa (Stay home) -Quédate en casa, este partido lo ganamos entre todos (Stay home, this match we all won together) -Está en tus manos CR contra el COVID-19 (It's in your hands CR against COVID-19) -Recuerda, todos y todas debemos luchar juntos contra el COVID-19 (Remember, we all must fight together against COVID-19)

Cuba (7 videos; March 12 – May 29)		
Referential: 5 Referential and emotive: 1 Emotive: 1	-Animation: 4 -Real: 2 -Mixed: 1	¡Alerta! Viajeros (Alert! Travellers) -No seas un número más. Hazlo por ti. Por mí. Por todos (Don't be one more number. Do it for you. For me. For everyone) -Hazlo por todos (Do it for everyone) -#CubaSalva (#CubaSaves) -#FuerzaCuba (#ForceCuba) -#YoMeQuedoEnCasa (#IStayHome)
El Salvador (7 videos; January 28 – March 21)		
-Referential: 5 -Conative and emotive: 2	-Animation: 4 -Real: 2 -Mixed: 1	-Quédate en casa (Stay home)
Guatemala (8 videos; February 5 – June 3)		
-Referential: 4 -Conative and emotive: 1 -Conative, emotive and poetic: 1 -Emotive: 2	-Animation: 1 -Real: 5 -Mixed: 2	-Quédate en casa (Stay home) -Juntos saldremos adelante (Together we will get ahead)
Mexico (36 videos; February 27 – May 21)		
-Referential: 9 -Referential and conative: 15 -Conative and emotive: 9 -Emotive: 1 -Emotive and poetic: 2	-Animation: 25 -Real: 10 -Mixed: 1	-Sana distancia (Healthy distance) -Quédate en casa (Stay home) -Gracias por quedarte en casa (Thank you for staying home) -¡Lávate las manos! (Wash your hands!) -Si te cuidas tú, nos cuidamos todos! (If you take care we all take care)
Nicaragua (8 videos; March 23- June 5)		
-Referential: 8	-Real: 2 -Mixed: 6	-La salud está en nuestras manos (Your health is in our hands) -Unida Nicaragua triunfa! (United Nicaragua succeeds!)
Paraguay (4 videos; March 23-24)		
-Referential: 2 -Referential and conative: 2	-Animation: 4	None

Peru (18 videos; March 10 – May 18)		
-Referential: 9 -Referential, conative and emotive: 1 -Conative 3 -Emotive: 2 -Emotive and poetic: 3	-Animation: 4 -Real: 13 -Mixed: 1	-#PerúEstáEnNuestrasManos (#PeruInOurHands) #YoMeQuedoEnCasa (#IStayHome) -Tú también puedes ser un héroe (You can also be a hero) -Juntos venceremos al coronavirus (Together we will defeat the coronavirus) -Por ellos me quedo en casa (I stay home for them) -Ayúdanos a detener el coronavirus (Help us to stop coronavirus) -No esperes perder a un ser querido para quedarte en casa (Don't expect to lose a loved one to stay home) -Protégete del coronavirus (Protect yourself from the coronavirus)
Portugal (18 videos; April 3 – June 1)		
-Referential: 16 -Referential and emotive: 1 -Emotive: 1	-Animación: 15 -Real: 3	-Contamos contigo, contamos con todos (We count on you, we count on everyone) -Protéjase así y a los otros (Protect yourself like that and others) -Protege su salud (Protects your health)
Spain (15 videos; March 9 – June 14)		
-Referential: 12 -Conative and emotive: 2 -Emotive and poetic: 1	-Animation: 9 -Real: 3 -Mixed: 3	-Si te proteges tú, proteges a los demás (If you protect yourself you protect others) -#EsteVirusLoParamosUnidos (#WeStopThisVirusUnited) -Un día más, es un día menos (A day more, a day less) -Tu papel es esencial ¡no lo dudes! (Your role is essential. Do not hesitate!) -Si te cuidas tú cuidas a tu familia (If you take care you take care of your family) -Salimos más fuertes (We come out stronger)
Uruguay (11 videos; March 13 – April 8)		
-Referential: 10 -Referential and conative: 1	-Animation: 8 -Real: 2 -Mixed: 1	-Juntos podemos prevenir el contagio, infórmate, previene, cuídate (Together we can prevent contagion, find out, prevent, take care) -#NosCuidamosEntreTodos (#WeTakeCareOfEachOther)

Source: Own elaboration.

As it can be observed in Table 1, not only the quantity, but also the type of function, format or slogans vary greatly depending on each country.

Some countries, such as Chile or Argentina, have used mostly the referential type and animation, while others like Mexico or Peru have especially resorted to the conative and emotional function, while using more real images. Regarding the slogans and hashtags, most coincide in referring to the *union* or connection between the self and others, with verbs in first person plural or that relate individual actions with consequences at the family or social level. Finally, conative

sentences are also used with the intention of directly appealing to the viewer to comply with the recommendations (“#QuédateEnCasa” (#StayHome)).

It is worth mentioning that in the cases of Honduras and Panama, this type of communications has not been found, but rather small informative or pseudo-reportages. Regarding Ecuador, the country has not been included in the previous table because it has the largest numbers of productions. Thereby, within the YouTube channel of the General Secretary for Communication (SECOM), three playlists on COVID-19 stand out. On the one hand, there is the playlist “Mitos y verdades sobre coronavirus” (Myths and truths about coronavirus), made up of 9 short informative videos made with a sober animation. This demystification campaign explains in pleasant and simple way issues, such as, the mortality of the virus, its durability on surface, the spread, etc.

On the other hand, there will be “Coronavirus” and “Informe sobre el coronavirus” (“Get informed about the coronavirus”) (about 80 videos), being the first one more oriented to inform about the actions carried out by the Government and its self-hype. Nevertheless, in both (more in the second playlist), dozens of videos can be observed with the purpose of persuading the citizen or informing them about COVID-19. Finally, additionally to the Secretary of Communication, the Ministry of the Government has on its YouTube account 22 videos aimed at raising awareness and informing the population about various aspects of the pandemic.

The descriptive section presented above is followed by a more detailed analysis of the most relevant productions to the object of the study from a creative or original point of view.

- **Argentina:** there are 3 special creations. The videoclip with the slogan “Aislados. Más unidos que nunca” (Isolated. More united than ever) is made exclusively with images of exteriors without people (streets, parks, roads, etc.) and also without voice, only with a somewhat nostalgic but hopeful music. A campaign that also reminds the Chilean “Separados para estar más juntos” (Separated to be closer together), as both use the oxymoron to reinforce the meaning of the phrase. The other two productions under the same confinement topic have different approaches. In the case of “Respeta la cuarentena” (Respect the quarantine) the tone is serious, with faces that are mostly sober, and with calm and melancholic music. However, in the video “Estas son algunas recomendaciones para practicar en estos días de cuarentena obligatoria” (These are some recommendations to practice these days of compulsory quarantine), the tone is cheerful and hopeful, with lively music, and with entertaining people at home doing various things.
- **Chile:** three especially emotional spots stand out. One is “#ChileTeAplaudes” (ChileApplaudsYou), in which in an epic way the gratitude for the work of health professionals is expressed, calling them new heroes (as observed in Peru). Another production is “No expongas a nadie” (Don’t expose anyone), which shows the serious consequence of not complying with the quarantine. The third audiovisual titled “Separados para estar más juntos” (Separated to be closer together) reminds the Spanish production “Un día más, un día menos”

(A day more a day less), but in this case Chileans are epically and poetically encouraged to overcome this crisis.

- **Colombia:** it stands out an emotional and conative production made as a video clip with the aim of expressing gratitude to the healthcare professionals while sending the message to the people to stay home. Entitled “Nosotros somos unos guerreros y aquí nos quedamos y tú, quédate en casa” (We are warriors and here we stay and you, stay home), this creation return to the concept of fighting the virus as if it were an armed warfare.
- **Costa Rica:** 7 of them are filmed theatrically with a curious comic-emotional focus, aimed at giving advice and appealing to citizens to stay home. This country also produced the video “Costa Rica 1 – COVID 0” which mixes the poetic, the conative and the emotional to return to the idea of fighting the virus as if it were the final of a football championship.
- **Ecuador:** an interesting video of an emotional and conative nature is “Juntos Ecuador” (Ecuador Together), appealing to the professionals’ struggle, advising to stay home, fight all together, and giving a hopeful message to the citizens because soon the hugs, games, smiles and walks will return. Similarly, “Volveremos pronto” (We will be back soon) pose in a somewhat poetic way that the return to normality is near, but this time, making an analogy as it were a football match and with the ultimate goal of ending up being champions. With a similar poetic character is the video “¡Sólo juntos podremos superar este momento!” (Only together can we overcome this moment!), also an hopeful production, made in black and white, and with a rhythmical musical base that reminds the *We Will Rock You* song of Queen. And finally, the emotional-conative campaign “#QuédateEnCasa” (*#StayHome*), carried out under the same slogan of another campaign developed in Mexico, the same short-length format, epic music, without voices, only text, and appealing to stay home.
- **Guatemala:** it stands out a greater production of the conative-emotional type (“Quédate en casa” - Stay home), appealing to stay at home and alluding to the concept of hero, the union of people, since the return and recovery are coming soon.
- **Mexico:** there is the campaign “#QuédateEnCasa”(*#StayHome*) with two types of videos, one with 4 videos with only one celebrity (such as Patty Cantú or Amandititita) and another type with 5 audiovisuals that start individually with celebrities, but they end with a multiscreen of people of all kinds claiming the same.
- **Peru:** it stands out the storytelling based on the story of a grandson who apologizes to his deceased grandmother for being irresponsible and infected her with the virus. This video is a somewhat macabre but a well-made, interpreted and direct proposal, which at least manages not to leave the citizen indifferent.
- **Spain:** there are two videos that mix the conative with the emotional. On the one hand, there is the very widespread video “EsteVirusLoParamos Unidos” (*#WeStopThisVirusUnited*), which shows the lives of dozens of people during the quarantine. The main message under the framework of hope and

optimism is to stay home. The slogan “Si te proteges tú, proteges a los demás” (If you protect yourself, you protect others) emphasizes the prevailing need of home confinement to control the virus, while appealing to the concept of group as the sum of individual actions, hence the hashtag #EsteVirusLoParamosUnidos. On the other hand, there is the video “Un día más, un día menos” (A day more, a day less). This original production also underlines the problem of sharing false information, that has increasingly worried the Government, and in this video it is showed as a problem to mitigate.

ADVERTISING SPOTS

The health emergency has determined the big and small brands to put aside the traditional purpose of selling in their advertising and replaced it with the awareness and support in the fight against COVID-19 in a particularly emotional and appealing way. Some have adapted their conventional logo to the emergency situation (Palau, 2020). Thus, many brands have generated in this context numerous spots with various proposes. From the analysis of dozens of these spots resulted that they can be classified into homogenous blocks:

- Their support actions during the COVID-19 crisis: some brands participate directly in the fight against the health crisis and, therefore, some of their spots have the referential objective of publicizing these activities.
- #StayHome: several brands have taken advantage of this global hashtag to make themselves present in the media.
- Support, encouragement, and improvement: the main objective of some spots is to give a positive message, beyond selling their products or brand image.
- Selling product or brand: one of the characteristics of advertising is the ephemeral nature, changing its persuasive strategy according to the context (Christmas, summer season, Father’s Day, etc.). In this case, some brands have continued to sell their products or promote their image aware of the COVID-19 situation.
- Gratitude: many corporations also want to express their gratitude to professionals and citizens.
- The return: a number of brands have based their strategy by appealing to a return to normality.
- Post: after “the return”, some brands are announced under the context of a new normality, being aware of having overcome the crisis and their products are promoted in relation to the de-escalation phases.

In the following table, some examples, selected for their special creativity and originality, are presented. The examples include regional and international brands, which productions were broadcast in one or more countries of the Ibero-American region and, for this reason, the result of the analysis is not presented by countries. The link of each spot can be found in the Appendix.

Table 2. Observed blocks and examples of commercials

Blocks	Brand	Title
They support actions during the COVID-19 crisis	ING and Unicef	Esta vez ayudamos en casa (This time we help at home)
	Avianca	Aviones de papel Avianca (Paper planes Avianca)
#StayHome	IKEA	Tu casa tiene algo que decirte - Anuncio IKEA (Your house has something to tell you)
	Orange	#quédateencasa #conéctateencasa (#stayhome #connecthome)
	Distribuidora de electricidad La Paz	Spot quédate en casa (Spot stay home)
	Rayados	Quédate en Casa - #EnLaVidaYEnLaCasa (Stay home - #InLifeAndAtHome)
Support, encouragement, improvement	Vodafone	Hoy más que nunca (Today more than ever)
	BBK	Ser mayor nunca fue tan importante (Being older was never so important)
	Audi	Esta curva la paramos juntos #Audi (Together we will stop this curve #Audi)
Selling product or brand	IKEA	(1) Spot de la nueva campaña de IKEA (Spot of the new IKEA campaign)
		(2) Spot de la nueva campaña de IKEA (Spot of the new Ikea campaign)
	Banco Santander	Queremos volver a trabajar juntos (We want to work together again)
		Esto lo superamos juntos Banco Santander (We will overcome this together)
	Telepizza	Hacemos lo que nos une (We do what unites us)
	United Balconies	'#UnitedBalconies', a initiative of Imile España & Italia
	Just Eat	Just Eat Decentes 30"

Blocks	Brand	Title
Gratitude	Mapfre	Héroes unidos (United Heroes)
	Coca - Cola	Coca-Cola Por Todos #portodos #cocacola #vamosasaliradelante (Coca-Cola For all #forall #cocacola #wewillmoveforward)
	Vithas	De Héroe a Héroe - #CuidemosALosQueCuidan (From Hero to Hero - #Let'sTakeCareOfThoseWhoCare)
	Cacaolat	'#BravoMadresYPadres', de Contrapunto BBDO para Cacaolat (#BravoMothersAndFathers, from Contrapunto BBDO for Cacaolat)
	Orange	La tecnología no puede sustituir a un padre, pero sí puede acercarte a él. (Technology cannot replace a father, but it can bring you closer to him)
	TOUS	TOUS - El mejor lugar del mundo - Español (España) (TOUS – The best place of the world -Spanish (Spain))
	Agencias de publicidad	'Perdón', anuncio anónimo ('Sorry', anonymous announcement)
	Banco de Chile	Gracias (Thank you)
The return	Banco Santander	Queremos volver a estar juntos (We want to be together again)
	ALDI	Volver Campaña ALDI 2020 (Coming back ALDI Campaign 2020)
	Larsa	E se desde Larsa lanzasemos este novo iogur con sabor a pasará? (E se desde Larsa, should we launch this new yoghurt with the flavor of will pass?)
	Racing de Cordoba	Un minuto (One minute)
Post	O2	O2. Tienes alas, ¿no las vas a usar? (O2. You have wings, aren't you going to use them?)
	McDonald's	Es hora de volver a encontrarnos (It's time to meet again)
	Lay's	Anuncio Lay's Verano 2020 (Lay's Summer 2020 Ad)
	Sevilla FC	Te quiero, mi Sevilla - #MiQuererEsTuPoder (I love you, my Sevilla #MyLovesYourPower)

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding form and content, there some observations that point out that many commercials have the same characteristics (@Alvy, 2020); gloomy piano music at the beginning; use of certain words or expressions (year, people, family, now, more than ever, time, close, separated, home, hope, here for you, together); music acceleration; and everyone ends with the applause. And certainly, this small

analysis is not very misguided if it is payed attention to the slogans and hashtags of the spots and government communication discussed (together, home, separated, etc.).

It is worth mentioning the musical contribution, because just as musical themes have gone viral (*Volveremos a juntarnos*, Lucía Gil; *Resistiré*, Dúo Dinámico; *Ya volverán los abrazos*, Jorge Drexler, etc.), some commercials, regardless of the purpose, advocate the use of jingle or video clip as a transmission format (all the links are in Appendix). This is the case of Volkswagen using in its spot titled “Resistiré” the eponymous and famous song, or the example of “Un Giorno Migliore”, where Coca-Cola joins a crowdfunding campaign. This video ends with the slogan *Anche se distanti, restiamo uniti* (Even if distant, we remain united). The spot “[AD 2020] Bankinter. The bank that sees money as you see it”, which uses an emotionally well-done jingle to achieve various objectives, such as, selling products, expressing gratitude, appealing to stay home, or cheering up people.

Also the spot “Volver” by BMW, which uses Julio Iglesias’ song *Volver a empezar* to create a version sung in this case by Anna Colom. In this spot, garages are shown opening to the outside world on a sunny day.

And as a final example, Movistar’s “#SeguimosConectados”(#WeAreStill-Connected) with two spots, under the same aesthetic-poetic format of the cloud of birds while an instrumental version of the song *Lucha de Gigantes* by Antonio Vega plays in the background.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this research is to analyze the audiovisual strategies used by Ibero-American Governments, brands and businesses in the context of the coronavirus crisis. The analysis shows that the spots of Ibero-American Governments focus especially in the information, awareness and education of people about COVID-19. It is not surprising the use of this communication strategy, as in the analysis period, the coronavirus crisis was in the *emergency phase* defined by Roberts (1994). In this phase, organizations focus on giving information to the interested parties in order to avoid misinformation, which has been the objective of the spots of many Ibero-American Governments, which have denied fake news or unfounded rumors or have underlined their danger.

These Governments have created productions based on previous strategies used in disasters, such as gratitude campaigns targeted to professionals that are fighting against COVID-19 and even to the citizens that are staying home in order to obtain social support. Another frequent objective of their campaigns is the persuasion of people to stay home.

As in the case of Governments productions, the advertising strategies used by brands also include gratitude campaigns. Brands have also joined Governments in the persuasion of people to stay home, in an attempt to take advantage of the widespread of hashtags, such as #StayHome. The commercials of the companies that aim to sell products, show that brands have adapted their strategies to the new reality, offering products that add value especially to the home confinement of the

population or respond to the financial needs of companies and people. There are also spots that communicate the support actions of companies or are focused on the support, cheer up and improvement or the return to the normal life.

The results show that the difference between the governmental and commercial communication lies in the predominance of the informative function in the first one, while the brand spots resort especially to the emotional one. In any case, it should be remembered that national government institutions have managed to produce emotional and poetic videos of high quality and at the same level of many commercial brands analyzed.

Therefore, it is worth reflecting on the number of referential productions by governments, as it is understood that an appealing or emotional announcement is directed at specific citizens, and so, its audiovisual production depends on the cultural context. In the case of the informative productions, there are dozens of videos of a similar nature, which leads us to think that perhaps this amount could have been reduced and a few could have been used for the entire international context (especially those made by animation), adapting only the language to each country, and thus, have invested more in other types of ads or in other areas of vital need, such as healthcare. This strategy should be considered and financed by higher entities such as WHO, creating homogeneous informative videos that majority of the countries could use, instead of each Government repeating the same referential typology over and over again.

In any case, it is visible that all countries have been involved to a greater or a lesser extent; in fact, activity on their official YouTube channels has increased considerably in recent month. This shows the great interest of governments in the use of media to reach different segments of citizens, according to their age (with especial attention to the elderly), social context, or their disabilities, since some countries have shown an interest in making their videos in sign language for deaf people.

For all these reasons, it is inevitable to wonder about the effectiveness of these Government communications. Finding out the answer would require an additional study to analyze in depth not only the volume or quality of the videos, but especially the reception of the audience and the broadcast channels used, since most of the productions, although they have few views on YouTube, they have been broadcast on the main television channels in each country. Additionally, it should be taken into account how much of the change in citizen's attitudes and behaviors is due to the audiovisual media and not to others such as the radio or other factors, like group and social influence, personal experiences, individual and cultural perception, or even the simple survival instinct.

Regarding the analyzed format, it can be concluded that the use of animation is relegated mainly for referential intention, while the rest (appellative, emotional and poetic) hardly use this resource. This is quite understandable, since at the beginning it is logical to flood with informative videos that are cheap to produce, general and of a quasi-child nature. Instead, other proposals requires more production and, above all, make them under a specific context that serves the viewer to empathize more with the images and the message, and thus, increase the effectiveness sought by these institution.

Therefore, the evolution in this field must continue to be observed. Although it is often difficult to accurately measure the effectiveness of these audiovisual products, this is not an excuse to not continue to analyze the various campaigns on the topic. On the one hand, governments will project their messages focused on the following phases, such as “from isolation to distancing”, with new media proposals that would likely be more informative. On the other hand, as the economy recovers, more and more brands ad and commercials will be produced based on the pandemic, especially turning to the emotional and poetic as a primary ways of effectively reach consumers.

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Appendix

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KYW6l_3eHyMs9QsYQA5uhXEqpASgDmTR?usp=sharing>.