A r t i c l e s

Transmedia sports: the game Cartola and new ways of cheering in the Brazilian Soccer Championship

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Abstract

This article aims to study how transmedia storytelling reflects how Brazilian supporters engage with Brazilian Soccer League – *Brasileirão* – through the game Cartola. This game consists of a fictitious competition in which users must create and line up teams based on real soccer players to challenge other users. For this reason, the concept of transmedia storytelling is a key base in this work. Transmedia represents a process in which content elements get spread across multiple platforms in a coordinated manner. As a corpus of analysis, we collected content broadcasted on TV during the rounds of October 2019, in addition to social networks, specifically Twitter, Cartola's official website and app. We noticed that the game contributes to increasing the fans' engagement with the national championship and changes the current logic in the ways of supporting and in the communicational and social interactions related to football.

Keywords: Cartola. Gamification. Transmedia storytelling. Soccer. Interaction.

Introduction

This article aims to understand how transmedia presents itself in Cartola, a fantasy game created in 2005 by Grupo Globo. The game consists of a fictional dispute in which people assemble their teams with real-life football players to compete with teams from other users. This paper also seeks to understand how the game is used strategically to engage fans with the Brazilian Soccer League. It also proposes to analyze how Cartola uses transmedia platforms to engage supporters in the "Brasileirão" and to understand if there is any platform, among the analyzed ones, that stands out in the transmedia strategy proposed by the game. From concepts such as transmedia storytelling and gamification, it seeks to discuss the social and interactional dynamics related to promoting the most popular sport in the country, soccer. The corpus was collected from content regarding matches of the 23rd to 28th round of the Brazilian Soccer League, in October 2019.

Cartola, gamification and fantasy games

Cartola is the second-largest sports fantasy game in the world, with 30 million downloads and six million active teams in 2021 (UOL, 2022). As a starting point for understanding the game, two essential concepts arise, gamification and fantasy games. The first of these can be understood as:

> [...] the process of applying game mechanics in non-game situations, which generally aims to intensify individuals' engagement in a given circumstance. Its main aim is to imbue activities (which do not prove to be that attractive themselves) with the enjoyment, motivation and fun commonly associated with digital games. [...] The intention is to make the individual act as if they were playing, even if the circumstance in which they find themselves is not presented to them as such: those involved "*play*" subliminally, i.e., without full awareness of the nature of the actions and behaviors in progress (CRUZ JÚNIOR, 2014, p. 944, our translation, our emphasis).

Zichermann and Cunningham (2011) highlight some characteristics of gamification: 1) score; 2) existence of levels and phases; 3) "intra-game" achievements; 4) badges; and 5) construction of rankings. Thus, the first of these characteristics is measuring the participant's performance in the gamified activity. The score is a primary requirement for all gamification systems, as they define how the game will be played and how real athletes' performance interferes with how users are affected (ZICHERMANN; CUNNINGHAM, 2011; CRUZ JÚNIOR, 2014). The second feature is the existence of levels and phases, which indicate the player's evolution in the proposed game, showing their evolution, challenges etc. The third factor is the achievements, a system of "micro" challenges within a larger challenge, which do not necessarily interfere

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with the procedural progress of the game. Instead, it serves as a stimulus for users to test their skills and limits within the competition. The fourth element is the "badge", linked to the achievement systems and seen as a secondary form of reward, which rewards exceptional achievements by the player. The last aspect is the ranking or leaderboard: the formation of the ranking is the main activity of the game platform and serves as an instrument for measuring and comparing the performance of the game participants.

According to Tussey (2018), fantasy games can be conceptualized as a profitable platform in which the content of a given sport, information and narratives are co-opted for the social use of its fans. The author explains that fantasy games are based on the creation of teams originated from real players made by users who compete against each other. In this context, the achievements of these athletes in official games have a double meaning: besides changing the game's outcome, it changes the parallel competition between its participating users. Therefore, organizers of sporting events and official broadcasters have incorporated gamification and fantasy games in their narratives as a strategy to get closer to soccer fans/consumers.

Cartola follows the logic described above. The game in its current format can be accessed via computer and as an app for Android, iOS and Windows Phone systems. On it, the user selects 11 players and a coach from the clubs involved in the Brazilian Serie A (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Line-up on the Cartola FC platform on Windows 10 for PC

Source: Cartola (2019).

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Cartola's scoring system reflects the performance of the athletes on the field during the games of the Brazilian League. It can vary according to the performance and the criteria used to evaluate the athletes' positions on the field. According to the athlete's performance on the field in real life, the user can lose or gain points. If the athlete selected by the user does not enter the field, there is no score. The user also needs to select a team captain, whose score will be multiplied by two, whether positive or negative, at the end of the round. It is possible to choose the athletes for the round up to two hours before the start of the first game of the round of the *Brasileirão*, and the market always reopens hours after the last game.

The scoring system also varies according to the athlete's position. Goalkeepers, defenders, midfielders and forwards are evaluated according to specific criteria for each position, ranging from difficult saves, goals scored, balls recovered or lost, cards, etc. The performance of the athletes is evaluated based on data and information in the official records released by the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF), as well as from the data collected by Grupo Globo's broadcasting teams.

Even though there are no phases and levels, Cartola is divided into 38 rounds that run concurrently with the Brazilian League. After each round, the participant's performance is calculated according to the results obtained by the athletes chosen to integrate their team in the game. In addition, the platform allows parallel disputes within the main competition, such as creating challenges between teams, leagues or elimination matches against other participants in the game.

In the logic of gamification, badges are the secondary rewards of a game. In the case of Cartola, this parallel can be made with the "cartoletas", the platform's virtual currency. At the beginning of the competition, each user receives 100 cartoletas that will be used in negotiations of athletes during the competition. In this logic, players with better performances and, consequently, more points have higher values. Moreover, the valuation or devaluation of the players also occurs according to their performances. If he scores more than the average of his previous performances in a match, he is valued. Otherwise, he loses value. Thus, the cartoletas can be considered a form of secondary reward since earning these virtual coins is not the game's primary goal. On the other hand, their acquisition allows its users to have more conditions to get valued players and, theoretically, have more possibilities for better results.

The generation of competition rankings (Figure 2) is the essence of Cartola. At the end of 38 rounds, the game rewards the player with the most points. In addition, the game creates other parallel rankings, such as the one related to the match (the Brazilian league is a two-match series of 19 rounds), the monthly one, the round and the one related to assets.

Figure 2 – Rankings produced by Cartola

Source: Cartola FC (2019).

Transmedia sports narratives

Scolari (2015) defines transmedia narratives as particular narrative structures that expand across several languages, whether verbal or iconic or media, such as cinema, comics, TV and video games. The author points out that these connections are not adaptations from one media to another but expansions that tend to agree with the platform chosen to be the main one and contribute to constructing a vast and complex narrative world. For Scolari (2005), the transmedia narrative is the device for creating narratives for the production of meaning. Jenkins (2013), on the other hand, says that the transmedia narrative represents a process whose content elements are systematically dispersed through multiple channels, creating a unified and

coordinated entertainment experience. Theoretically, each media makes its contribution to the expansion and outcome of the story or content.

Fechine (2014) works with the concepts of transmedia texts, which would be the articulations of related and distributed enunciates by numerous platforms. "It corresponds to the whole that results from the articulation of the parts proposed by the enunciator and operated by the recipient" (FECHINE, 2014, p. 121, our translation). Such articulation occurs through strategies and practices of interaction promoted by participatory culture fostered by convergence. The author also highlights the transmedia process - the development of textual content around a reference media from which there is the propagation and expansion of this material thanks to the addition of other platforms to the creative chain.

Hutchins and Sanderson (2017) point out that despite the greater variety of platforms for discussing sports narratives, the stories are always initiated from the competitions. Tussey (2018) also states that sports narratives are generated by the main text. In this case, the competitions, whatever they are, such as games, matches, races, events etc. However, these main texts would be surrounded by a series of peripheral texts, the paratexts.

Mittel (2015) reiterates that paratexts consist of elements of introduction and promotion of given main text, in the case of sport – the competitions. The author also points out that it is important not to confuse paratexts with transmedia practices, which are the texts created from the transmedia strategy deliberated previously to expand the narrative. Fechine (2014) proposes a distinction between transmedia practice and strategy. By strategy, she understands a set of proposals prepared by those responsible for a content for the engagement of the recipients of this same content. In this context, the transmedia strategy can be divided into two other aspects: transmedia strategies of propagation and transmedia strategies of expansion. In the propagation, there is feedback on the content in various media and platforms. The logic of this strategy is to propagate information to maintain the consumer's interest in this content and build communities of interest. For the author, expansion is based on procedures that complement and expand the narrative universe beyond TV or any other central platform. Extensions are proposed to the main text in several other platforms than the original one.

The example used by Fechine (2014, p. 122, our translation) about transmedia strategy is the TV, which often deliberates the strategy of feedback to "'resonate a narrative universe in social networks on and off the web driving consumers' willingness to know more about what they consume in the reference media". According to Brooker (2004), this logic can be called television overflow, since the narratives of the main text continue on digital platforms. In sports, this overflow can be seen in the news, best highlights, replays of the matches, analysis and commentary on the competitions. Tussey (2018) also states that this logic is inherent to transmedia storytelling, since it is not limited to the main event/text but extends to its previous and subsequent days. The author suggests that the logic of sports narratives is the same as that of television products and resembles soap operas or series, for example, and that each season has a plot, characters, and story to be told.

Tussey (2018) points out that the logic of transmedia storytelling in sports follows a flow: the texts/events begin in the television broadcast and the narratives produced from that point on are dissected on several other platforms. Starting with television itself, in which sports leagues are the subject of specific programs and discussion tables, passing through written content such as newspapers, magazines and websites, which feed the narratives and stories, besides expanding them. Then, there is audiovisual content that generates material such as *best highlights* and *news* to keep consumers updated. Finally, performing the integration of the whole flow, the digital social networks, which receive numerous official contents of the most varied sports narratives, besides being notorious as the space where fans are open for conversation and debate. The main intention of organizers and producers of sports content is to use transmedia strategies to promote engagement with the primary digital audience, besides leading the conversation.

Transmedia practices relate to the performance of consumers through interventions in the content initially proposed by producers. According to Fechine (2014, p. 122, our translation), these interventions can be considered modalities of "work, response or textual cooperation".

Transmedia strategy and practice are concepts that can also be related to the assumptions of "interactive action" and "participation" proposed by Rampazzo Gambarato (2012) and Rampazzo Gambarato and Tárcia (2017). Interactive action allows the audience to engage with the content or platform by pressing a button or control to decide how to experience the content without changing the story. In another perspective, participation invites viewers, users or players to engage with the content in a way that expresses their creativity and influences the outcome of that interaction.

Scolari (2015) points out that transmedia practices are based on multiliteracy: the ability to interpret discourses from different media and languages. Thus, the author states that the transmedia logic does not affect only the text but transforms the processes of production and consumption of information. The author also suggests that transmedia narratives allow "corporations to broaden their bases and capture different consumer groups (SCOLARI, 2015, p. 6, our translation). Veras and Porém (2019, p. 172, our translation) point out that "the creation and sharing of stories through communication are as important in organizations as marketing products and services". Furthermore, the authors point out that these narratives made by organizations involve immaterial issues, such as representations, signs and values, and stories, which can be elaborated on different platforms, whether audiovisual, printed or digital.

Tussey (2018) indicates that these narratives, based on digital platforms, have given voice to several new audiences, making sports narratives faster, more complex and diverse. Veras and Porém (2019, p. 172, our translation) state, "the actors of organizations can strategically appropriate these stories, using them as communication action with their audiences". These relationships occur once producers count on the interest and ability of the public to operate varied platforms and employ digital social networks to connect in new ways. This model of interactions fosters the circulation of texts in their various forms, besides developing new forms

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of content filtering, since it is not only the large communication conglomerates that have a voice in the interaction processes. Oliveira (2013, p. 120, our translation) points to interaction or discursive interactions as a process "in which the manifestations result from the different modalities of participation proposed by the enunciator to the receiver in making the discourse". According to the author, these interactions open the way to understand better a varied order of textualities inaugurated by digitalization and media convergence.

It is not just soccer, it is communication

Frandsen (2014) and Quintela (2021) argue that, in this context, sport and media have an interdependent relationship fed by reciprocal interests. Thus, for sports, it is relevant to have the presence of the media as an intensifier element of popularity, audience and capital. For the media, this relationship also generates interest on several fronts, such as journalistic, organizational, communicational and economical. In Brazilian soccer, the Grupo Globo and the Brazilian Soccer League represent this logic. Even if it did not happen in a deliberate and organized way as nowadays, sports and media have always had a transmedia relationship; since the radio, or with the printed media and then with the TV, the media always used to spend days reporting and analyzing sporting events.

In the case of Cartola, this incorporation of new modalities of participation is linked to the transmedia narrative proposed by Grupo Globo, an organization that has held since 1987 (SANTOS, 2013) the broadcasting rights of the Brazilian Serie A. To understand to what extent and intensity the transmedia manifests itself in the strategy of engagement of the game with its fans, we collected content broadcast on TV during the broadcasts of the matches and material from digital social networks from the hashtag #CartolaFc on Twitter[1], and the official page[2] and the game app. The choice for Twitter was given for two reasons: the greater ease of collection and since the content published is the same as other social networks such as Facebook[3] and Instagram[4]. The content was collected manually from the 23rd to 28th round of the Brazilian Football Championship during October 2019.

The methodology used in this work is based on the articulation and adaptation of the model of analysis of major events proposed by Rampazzo Gambarato (2012) and Rampazzo Gambarato and Tárcia (2017). In the model, the authors propose the analysis of transmedia events from the reflection of the context, strategic planning and execution of these events. Allied to this, the analytical proposal is based on ten aspects: 1) premise and purpose - issues linked to the nature of the event, its magnitude, and understanding the influence of its actions on communication; 2) structure and context, such as the organization of the proposed transmedia

1   Available at: https://twitter.com/cartolafc. Access on: 1 june 2019.
2   Available at: https://cartolafc.globo.com. Access on: 1 june 2019.
3   Available at: https://www.facebook.com/cartolafc. Access on: 1 june 2019.
4   Available at: https://www.instagram.com/cartolafc. Access on: 1 june 2019.

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strategy, professionals involved, infrastructure available and the operations that were planned and executed; 3) transmedia narrative itself, which involves the primary and parallel events of the event; 4) world building, - the idea that the narrative world in which the transmedia strategy is based is robust enough to support multiple expansions; 5) characters involved in the narrative, journalists, athletes, fans, characters of reports, sources of information to be disclosed, besides the audience as collaborators; 6) Expansions, that is, narratives spread through multiple platforms to expand the content taking advantage of each platform; 7) media platforms and genres, that is, the transmedia narrative can encompass several areas of communication, such as journalism, advertising, marketing etc. and different technological devices; 8) market and audience, the scope of the audience and public of the event; 9) engagement, the relationship between the narrative and the public interested in the essential aspects of the transmedia strategy; and 10) aesthetics, the visual and audio elements contribute to the narrative and the enhancement of the transmedia experience unveiled through the multiple platforms.

Four operators of analysis were created (Table 1) to understand how the interactions between the transmedia strategy of the game and the changes in the practices of supporters in the Brasileirão take place.

Table 1 - Research analysis operators

Analysis operators	Concept	Media
Transmedia Information Platforms	Platforms that provide access to technical, entertainment and journalistic information about Cartola FC whether audiovisual, printed or digital.	Cartola FC Official Portal Press coverage of Cartola FC - Grupo Globo
Transmedia Interaction Platforms	Platforms that enable interaction between content producers, the Cartola audience and partner brands	Cartola FC's official mobile app Cartola FC's official digital social networks (Twitter) TV shows and broadcasts
Transmedia Marketing Platforms	Platforms that provide access to marketed products and partner brands of Cartola FC	Cartola Pro Marketing actions of other brands on the Platform
Transmedia Practices Platforms[5]	Platforms to access information about Cartola FC elaborated by users/fans	Profiles on digital social networks Blogs and websites Podcasts

Fonte: elaborado pelos autores.

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5   Concerning the last operator, it was not an objective of this research to quantify this type of material, but to perceive and qualify its existence.

Transmedia Information Platforms

This analytical operator is centered on the game's official page hosted on the Globo Esporte television program website and on the press coverage of other Grupo Globo media outlets, such as the newspapers "O Globo" and "Extra". The two platforms have different dynamics between them. Cartola's official page concentrates numerous textual and audiovisual information about the game, ranging from news articles, tips on how to line up teams in the competition, infographics on the most played athletes in each round and tutorials on general questions related to the functioning of the fantasy game. It can be said that the content produced by Cartola is fluid and presents the four types of sports writing proposed by Rowe (1992): 1) hard news, which focuses the writing basically on sporting events and treats the subjects in an impersonal and direct way; 2) soft news, which has an orientation focused on storytelling and entertainment; 3) orthodox rhetoric, which would be the opposite of the logic of hard news, trying to take the audience to the subjectivity behind the events; and 4) reflective analysis texts, which present certain critical content, but are produced, generally, by specialists and focus on sharing experiences and affectivity.

The coverage made by other media outlets of Grupo Globo focuses only on providing tips to users. They present texts partially presented in the reflective analysis model and provider the audience analysis made by experts trying to create emotional bonds with the reader by formatting the analysis with tips, however, without performing deep reflections on football or about the game fantasy.

Figure 3 – Example of journalistic material produced by "O Globo" newspaper about Cartola

Source: O Globo (2019).

Another point perceived in the analysis of informational platforms is a subversion of the logic in sports coverage. The journalistic content highlights to the supporters, in this case - the Cartoleiro. It happens once after each round, when Cartola produces special reports with the user with the highest score in the PRO league (Figure 4), the paid version of the game. This material usually contemplates the supporters' history with the game and their strategies to score well during the rounds. On the other hand, athletes, who are more commonly the center of sports coverage, become mere "characters" that are exchanged at each round and valued only by their price in "cartoletas" and their score in the game.

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Figure 4 – In the journalistic material about Cartola, the main character is the supporter who stands out each round

Fonte: Cartola (2019).

Transmedia Interaction Platform

This operator analyzes the engagement between content producers and the audience/users of Cartola. In this research, Twitter and the official Cartola application are highlighted, besides the insertions of content about the game in the television programs of Grupo Globo.

The official app allows user interaction with other platforms and users. From the app, it is possible to access the official portal, news articles, and tips on how to better line up the teams in the dispute and create competitions with other competitors. In addition, all the information on the official website has tabs that allow users to navigate through the app. Except one, exclusive to the application, the "Central da Zoeira", a series of exclusive stickers for WhatsApp, prepared for users to interact with their friends on the messaging network (Figure 5).

Figure 5 – Central da Zoeira encourages fans to interact with each other through various platforms

Source: Cartola official app (2019).

The official Twitter of Cartola stimulates engagement with the game audience with three types of messages: interaction, sharing and entertainment. The invitations for participation or interaction can be conceptualized as the stimulus to practice the communicational process actively, bringing up opinions and disagreements about given content on various platforms (FERNANDES VIANA, 2018; COVALESKI, 2010). The idea of sharing is related to the high probability of recommendation and spontaneity of the receiver in sharing content heard from a positive experience (COVALESKI, 2013). Finally, entertainment is related to activities designed to fill idle moments (FERNANDES VIANA, 2018).

The three types of content are used with posts very similar in their logic. To stimulate interaction, the game's official profiles usually always ask if the users did well in the round (Figure 6), how many points they scored etc. The entertainment is basically done by posting several football-related memes (Figure 7), aspects of contemporary culture and recent relevant or curious facts. In addition, the digital profiles of the game also usually share the content produced for other platforms, such as tips, the memes themselves and reports about Cartola.

Figure 6 – Invitation to participate is widely used on Cartola digital social networks.

Fonte: Twitter (@cartolafc).

Figure 7 – Entertainment through memes is one of the interaction strategies proposed by Cartola

Fonte: Twitter (@cartolafc).

There is an attempt to interact with users since all sports programs in Grupo Globo (Figure 8), whether on the main network - Globo -, or the paid channel SporTV, have teams

and/or leagues of the programs themselves in Cartola. A common strategy is a debate about the performance of these teams round by round, during these attractions. Generally, the host, who encourages interaction with viewers via digital social networks, leads this interaction. Another attempt to engage through television is the use of TV personalities of Grupo Globo on other official platforms of Cartola, as is the case of the section *Tirando da Cartola* (Pulling out of the hat, in English), a program broadcast on the official digital social networks of the game that aims to give tips to users round by round.

Figure 8 – Journalists from Rede Globo comment on the performance of their teams after one round.

Source: Rede Globo (2019).

Transmedia Marketing Platforms

The engagement proposed by Cartola is used by other brands that are partners of Grupo Globo to develop marketing actions. There are no specific marketing platforms in Cartola. However, there is the use of platforms and engagement strategies already used. The first form of engagement through marketing in the game is the paid model of the game itself, Cartola PRO, which offers several benefits inside and outside the game as advantages for those who join. These advantages may even reach awards in cash, reaching the maximum value of R\$ 10.000,00; brand new Chevrolet cars, automaker partner of the game, among others.

Another example of this use is the Cartolouco character. The journalist Lucas Strabko created the character in 2016 – at the time, Strabko was an intern of the sports department at Rede Globo. In the same year, Lucas started to present the "Cartoloucos" show, a special series

produced for GloboEsporte.com and broadcast on TV on Saturdays, during Globo Esporte, and on Sundays, during Esporte Espetacular. From then on, the character gained prominence in the Grupo Globo sports broadcasts due to his irreverence when talking about soccer and, of course, about Cartola, until he was fired[6] by the company in 2020. In addition to being a created character, Cartolouco was considered an interaction tool of Cartola in on-site events, since his presence generated new interactions and forms of engagement. It was common that, during matches in which the character appeared, fans would chant songs referring to the game Cartola and, of course, in honor of the character. This strategy, on the other hand, also presented risks, since the character had already suffered aggressions from fans[7] because of interactions and comments made during meetings with rival fans, for example. Allied to this, Cartolouco was also used as a tool to promote brands that are partners of the game, like when he attended a Flamengo game and was deliberately "caught" with a poster in the stands inviting the commentator of the match, Luís Roberto Demúcio, to download Ifood (Figure 9), a food delivery application and commercial partner of Grupo Globo.

Figure 9 – "Cartolouco" as an interaction tool of Cartola with the audience and partner brands

Source: Twitter (@globoesportecom).

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6   Folha de S.Paulo. Grupo Globo fired Cartolouco due to excessive jokes; picture in the toilet was the last straw. Available at: https://f5.folha.uol.com.br/televisao/2020/04/globo-demitiu-cartolouco-por-jornalista-exceder-em-brincadeiras-foto-na-privada-foi-gota-dagua.shtml. Access on: 22 june 2022

7   Istoe.com. Fluminense supporters try to assault SporTv host. Available at: https://istoe.com.br/video-torcida-do-fluminense-tenta-agredir-apresentador-do-sportv. Access on: 1 june 2019.

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Transmedia Practices Platforms

The PPT provide access to information about Cartola prepared by users and/or supporters. It was found that content produced by the audience in all possible formats, such as blogs, websites, audiovisual materials and profiles on digital social networks. The produced material also does not differ much from the logic used in the official content production of Grupo Globo. The content produced stands out for the elaboration of tips and tutorials about the game and humorous content involving soccer.

Vimieiro (2018) points out that Web 2.0 allows the growth of the culture of content production by fans. Much of this content is formed by blogs that are initially considered inferior works, since many of these bloggers do not go to the field during the matches, do not attend press conferences or have privileged access to the clubs – facts that often lead to non-original contents. In addition, a technical factor is the lack of journalistic training on the part of those fans. The author also points out that fans have been producing a range of digital content such as blogs, podcasts, live coverage of matches, flogs, vlogs and other types of audiovisual productions. As in the official material of Cartola, the four writing forms that Rowe (1992) points out - hard news, soft news, orthodox rhetoric and reflexive analysis - can also be found in the content produced by supporters.

It was also noticed that it is not only the fans that have appropriated the transmedia practice related to Cartola. Other media companies started to produce material on the subject, as it is the case, for example, of Gazeta do Povo, a centennial communication company in the state of Paraná. The vehicle has created a network of interaction from the Brazilian fantasy game that had entries from the Gazeta do Povo newspaper portal, in addition to the digital social networks such as a YouTube channel, with more than 167,000 followers; a Twitter profile, with almost six thousand followers; an Instagram profile, with more than 70,000 followers; and more than 30 groups on message exchange networks like WhatsApp and Telegram at the time of collecting material for analysis of the fantasy game, in 2019.

Final considerations

Cartola represents a milestone in the interactions between Brazilian fans, brands and the Brazilian Soccer League, since it intensifies relationships that were already common in the interactions between the sport, the media and its public. Through the analysis of its strategies and transmedia practices, it is possible to realize how the game helps in the process of changing some logics then in force in the processes of communication and interaction in sports, more specifically when it comes to soccer.

One strategy is precisely the greater valorization of the supporter as a character. By producing content that values the figure of its audience, as is the case of fans who become "myths" in their performances in Cartola, the game reaffirms the importance of their enthusiasts

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and, to some extent, brings limits to the overexposure of athletes, which in this context are treated as mere tools of the game mechanics. The game highlights figures that generally would never be in focus, besides making the narrative more interesting for other fans since they can become the focus of the produced material. This subversion of the current communicational logic has two sides, one more institutionalized, coming from Globo vehicles, and the other not.

In the content institutionally produced by Cartola, there is an emphasis on the fan. First, however, this supporter should submit to a traditional logic, which is to stand out in the game to become a character, which also submits to institutional and organizational criteria, such as the journalistic criteria of Grupo Globo production.

The second side is not institutionalized or led by any organization. The supporter also assumes a new role of expert and content producer. Besides gaining more visibility as a character in the mainstream media, due to his performance in the game, the supporter gains importance in the context of promoting interactions and content circulation about Cartola. Thus, the supporter is free to produce their content about the game in several formats, but without necessarily submitting to journalistic criteria or formalities, for example, producing in a more fluid and less/not conventional way.

There is also a change in soccer consumption, since many fans no longer follow only the matches of their favorite clubs, but a more significant number of matches, precisely to follow the performance of the athletes that are part of the team they have selected, which leads some fans to wish that their beloved club does not get good results[8], to the detriment of a good personal result in Cartola.

This change in the way of supporting has also brought organizational changes in the main brands involved in this process, such as the event itself, the Brasileirão, and its main organizational partner, Grupo Globo. If the fans' interest becomes greater and adds value to the event, since they tend to follow more games, the championship tends to be more valued as a brand. Furthermore, the organization that holds the broadcasting rights tends to benefit from the supporters' greater eagerness to be always more updated about teams and players, which generates not only a communicational interest but also a marketing interest reflected in the sponsorship of companies like Chevrolet, Itaú, Casas Bahia and Ambev – sponsoring companies in the analyzed season.

 However, as previously mentioned, the new role assumed by the fans - the production of content - is also a challenge for conventional media companies. Before, the competition was restricted to other media companies. Today, with the presence of new agents, this is a different reality. As a result, the competition increases, provoking new postures by the communication companies and their technical and commercial partners, as noticed in this case.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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