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# BRANDED CONTENT AS A TOOL FOR BRAND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: ANALYSIS OF THE REDEIA CASE

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**Abstract:** This article aims to analyze how Redeia uses *branded content* to meet its communication and brand strategy goals. To define and delimit the discipline of *branded content*, two methodological tools are used: a literature review and semi-structured surveys of experts from communication agencies in Spain. Subsequently, a descriptive (qualitative) analysis and a content (quantitative) analysis are applied to Redeia's communication pieces, previously identified as *branded content* by the brand. The results show that the strategic dimension of *branded content* is present in 75% of the cases analyzed, reflecting a clear alignment with best practices in this area. However, the execution dimension is only fulfilled in 50% of cases, which limits its impact in terms of connecting with the audience. This facet has clear room for improvement to meet best practice standards, especially in key areas such as creativity, originality, and emotional arguments in content to achieve a more efficient impact. In conclusion, Redeia makes appropriate use, based on the best practices identified in the theoretical framework, of *branded content* as a strategic communication tool to project its brand (identity, values, and positioning), with significant room for improvement in the execution (creativity, emotionality, and resonance) of the published content. The main limitation of the work has been to reduce the number of pieces analyzed to those recognized by the brand itself as *branded content*. Looking ahead, the aim is to extend the research to the analysis of all digital communication pieces published by the brand and its direct competitors. The object of study, applied to the case of Redeia, means that the research meets the criteria of originality, relevance, and significance.

**Keywords:** Branded content; Strategic communication; Brand communication; Brand identity; Brand values; Brand positioning; Content marketing; Social media; Redeia

## INTRODUCTION

In a hyperconnected world thanks to the democratization of the internet, where people interact constantly through different mobile devices, generating conversations and exchanging information, contributing to an increase in fragmented consumption (Rosique, G. 2010). Users can access content from anywhere, even consulting several devices at the same time. According to a study by Neuromedia, we receive an advertising impact every 10 seconds, which adds up to a total of about 6,000 impacts per day. However, humans can only retain a maximum of 18 messages that have really caught their attention, connected with a meaning, and generated a memory (Guillén, 2023). There is no point in creating content if it is not going to effectively reach the audience.

On the other hand, the self-generation of audiovisual content has become widespread thanks to advances in and easy access to technology, including audiovisual editing and post-production tools (Quesada, Ugarte & Cortina, 2023). This allows users to become creators and disseminators of content, giving rise to the figure of *the prosumer*. In this scenario, brands are aware of the importance of creating interesting and entertaining content that reaches consumers, captures their attention, and achieves *engagement* (Muñoz, 2024).

If consumers are saturated and traditional advertising formats are no longer

as effective, even becoming intrusive, it is essential that brands adapt their communication strategies. This allows them to offer quality content that not only captures the user's attention but is also capable of creating a bond with them (Mayorga-Escalada & Pelegrín, 2024). This is where *branded content* comes in as an alternative, as it essentially uses the power of stories to connect with consumers, indirectly generating mobilization and desire (García, 2024).

In this context, it is relevant to study the case of a brand such as Redeia. It was created in June 2022 as a strategic solution to the problematic situation in the management of the Red Eléctrica Group's brand portfolio. The 2014-2019 strategic plan had highlighted the need for active corporate brand management to improve the group's reputation and recognition. The brand emerged in response to this plan, building its new identity, establishing its personality values, and generating a new strategic positioning.

With a narrative based on what Redeia contributes to society, the brand is also launching its strategic communication plan, in which the use of content and the development of *branded content* cases will form part of the actions aimed at projecting the brand's identity, values, and positioning, seeking to connect deeply and emotionally with its target audiences.

## OBJECTIVES

The use of *branded content*, applied to the case study of Redeia's brand communication, means that this research meets the fundamental criteria of originality, rele-

vance, and significance, generating a solid framework due to the extensive scientific production developed around the subject of study.

General objective:

- To analyze the type of use that Redeia makes of *branded content* to meet its communication and strategic brand objectives.

Specific objectives:

- Define and delimit the concept of branded content as a tool for a brand's communication strategy.
- To describe the main characteristics, types, methodology, and trends that conceptually make up good branded content practice.
- Identify the communication cases of content published by Redeia that have been classified by the brand as branded content campaigns.
- Record the extent to which the cases analyzed comply, strategically and operationally, with the described best practices for *branded content*.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Corporate brand

The corporate brand is the one that holds the highest level within the organizational chart established by the brand portfolio policy, representing the organization as a whole. There is consensus among authors (Balmer, 1995; de Chernatony, 1999; Vellilla, 2012; Villagra & Monfort, 2015) that the corporate brand reflects the value pro-

position, verbal and visual identity, values, vision, mission, culture, and the way in which it activates its experiences and points of contact.

According to Hulberg (2006), the corporate brand has three characteristics: its ability to differentiate itself (its attributes are more difficult to copy than those of a product), transparency (it reflects information about the company in a more open and accessible way), and cost reduction (a joint strategy is developed that favors synergies and consistency of messages instead of promoting many brands).

Corporate brand management depends on the chosen architecture. In other words, the way a company organizes and presents its different brands. Establishing the hierarchy, roles, and relationships between the brands in its portfolio, understood as a whole, allows it to obtain greater value than it would by managing each brand separately. Brand architecture can be divided into the following types (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2012; Kotler & Keller, 2012): *branded house* (monolithic model), in which there is a single brand for all the organization's business lines, services, and products; *endorsed brands* (endorsed model), where an institutional brand supports the organization's set of brands with its corporate identity; and *house of brands* (independent brand model), where the company presents each product or trademark with a different brand and visual identity. The choice of architecture determines the type of communication the company will have with its stakeholders, determining whether the focus will be on the corporate brand or on the commercial brands.

## Corporate communication

Despite the consensus reached on defining corporate branding, there is complexity in the assessments and different approaches taken to corporate communication. Following a review of the literature and compilation of definitions, the following table presents the most relevant ones (table 1).

Corporate communication is understood to be that which a company carries out in a strategic and planned manner, where brand architecture influences the focus of communication, which can be placed on the corporate brand or on the commercial brand. It is also important to know that the communication style of the corporate brand influences that of commercial brands.

### **Branded content: definition, scope, and characteristics**

The management of the corporate brand, and therefore its communication, must be understood in a cross-cutting manner, as it is not only aimed at consumers, but also encompasses all stakeholders who have some kind of relationship with the organization's activity. It is the company's job to know the expectations of these potential audiences.

Brands always try to reach consumers through innovative formulas that guarantee successful communication. Consumers, for their part, require much more than commercial information about products or services; they demand attention from brands, which are present in their daily lives, offering them unique and relevant experiences. *Branded content* is the meeting point between the interests of both parties.

Author	Term	Definition
Kreps (1995, p. 13)	Organizational communication	The process by which members gather relevant information about their organization and the changes occurring within it [...]. Organizational communication serves a crucial data collection function for members of the organization by providing them with meaningful information.
Van Riel (1997, p. 26)	Corporate communication	A management tool through which all forms of internal and external communication are consciously used and harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible to create a favorable basis for relationships with the publics on which the company depends.
Martínez & Nosnik (1988, p. 22)	Corporate Communication	The process by which an individual or one of the subparts of the organization contacts another individual or subpart.
Capriotti (1999, p. 30)	Corporate communication	All of the communication resources available to an organization to effectively reach its audiences. In other words, an entity's corporate communication is everything the company says about itself.
Álvarez (2013, p. 15)	Corporate communication	A concept that integrates the communication practices and strategies carried out by institutions, organizations, and companies, especially large ones. It is a generic concept included in and referring to the management of organizations.

Table1 . Definition of corporate communication.

Source: Own elaboration.

This technique refers to content that is of interest to the potential audience, providing information, entertainment, or inspiration in a non-intrusive way, without directly pursuing sales. For this reason, *branded content* could be called *people's content*, since it is not brand content, but rather relevant content that projects the brand to people (Llorens, 2019). On the other hand, the company can create its own content, build a territory that it can make its own, and, by being relevant, it can reach mass audiences and achieve its communication objectives.

In the expert literature consulted, different definitions for the concept of *branded content* have been identified. Descriptions, techniques, spaces, and formats appear from different perspectives of study and areas of

knowledge. On the other hand, common views are extracted when understanding this technique as a communication strategy for brands. (table 2)

It is also essential to review the definitions provided by associations and professionals in the sector regarding the concept of *branded content*. (table 3)

Branded content offers organizations the opportunity to connect with their target audiences, generating recognizable positioning by projecting the brand's values and purpose. Some of the main characteristics that define *branded content*, and that make it so effective compared to other communication strategies, are as follows (Foxize Schol, 2014; Regueira, 2018; Iab Spain & Fluor Lyfestyle, 2022):

Author	Definition
Moore (2003)	Creation of value for customers through information, entertainment, and experience.
Martínez Sáez (2005)	Messages that are a hybrid between advertising and entertainment. Linking the advertising message to entertainment content.
Hudson & Hudson (2006)	Integration of advertising into entertainment content, where brands are embedded in the narrative of a film, television program, or any other form of entertainment.
Del Pino & Olivares (2006)	An increasingly popular trend among advertisers to forge close ties between their brands and the editorial content of various media outlets with which they partner.
Lehu (2007)	A form of promotion that aims to create an emotional connection with customers and spread the message in a multimedia context.
Aguado (2008)	Integration of a brand into entertainment, information, or educational content.
Martí & Muñoz (2008)	Any entertainment content generated around a brand to achieve specific marketing objectives.
Pineda & Ramos (2009)	Symbiosis between advertising and entertainment whose main objective is to attract the public to the brand's values in an appealing and suggestive way.
Martorell (2009)	A non-intrusive strategy that merges advertising with entertainment content, the main objective of which is to entertain.
Horrigan (2009)	A fusion of advertising and entertainment in a single communication product at the service of marketing, which is integrated into an organization's global brand strategy and is intended to be distributed as high-quality entertainment content.
Regueira (2011)	A non-intrusive way of getting the brand message across to consumers. Audiences are scattered and new technologies make it possible to eliminate annoying advertising. Branded content allows for respect for time and space.
Casas-Alatriste (2013)	Branded content is content produced by a brand with the aim of interesting, entertaining, and exciting the person who consumes it, with the intention of creating a bond between that person and the brand, in that order.
El-Qudsi (2013)	Branded content should not have the sole purpose of talking about the merits of the brand itself, but should "offer interesting content to the consumer" in that it is "content generated thanks to the sponsorship of a commercial brand."
Olamendi (2013)	Any entertainment, informational, or educational content paid for by the advertiser with the purpose of reflecting the brand's ideal values within the content.
Aguiló (2013)	Communication carried out by a brand that, instead of interrupting, tries to be interesting enough to be sought out, so that effective branded content is produced when "the brand does instead of says and gets people to seek out the content instead of having to resort to interruption."
Darriba (2013)	Branded content is more than just advertising; it is "the tendency for brands to communicate values, share experiences, and generate conversations," regardless of the medium used.

Gutiérrez de Tena (2013)	“Branded content is branded content, branded content is everything, everything is fluid, and fluidity is life,” and he wonders why we should come up with solid strategies or creative ideas in a fluid world, even “when we know they will sink to the bottom.” Let’s call branded content “branded content” and everything will be easier. Let’s enjoy the lack of definition and get things done.
Mejide (2013)	From the beginning, there is the brand. The creation of content reflects the brand’s values. Content is produced with that brand in mind and is also broadcast thanks to the brand’s collaboration. Thus, the brand is involved in the entire process, not just when it comes to paying.
Regueira (2018)	Reproduce content capable of winning over large audiences (I repeat: either entertainment or information/education) and capitalize on that content as effective brand communication.

Table 2 . Definitions of branded content by experts.

Source: (Ros Egea, 2016); (Regueira, 2018).

Author	Definition
PQ Media, 2010	A marketing strategy that combines advertising and entertainment to connect with and engage consumers, build brand awareness, and create positive associations that can impact sales.
Grupo Consultores, 2013	A new “anti-advertising” discipline that takes a long-term view, does not have sales as its sole purpose (at least not exclusively), is based on emotion, closeness, and the brand-person connection, and does not even require the brand itself to be visible.
ADECEC, 2015	Content produced, co-produced, or sponsored by the brand that, without being advertising, conveys its values and positioning by entertaining, educating, or training the target audience. The key is that the content is relevant and interesting. It should add value, connect, and encourage audience participation, creating a community around the brand.
IAB Spain, 2015	Relevant, entertaining, or interesting content that does not appear to be advertising, generated by a brand to create an audience and connect with it. The content implicitly communicates the values associated with the brand, although the brand itself takes a back seat.
BCMA, 2021	A communication asset produced by a brand that, through formats that fulfill an entertainment, informational, and/or useful role, aims to communicate its values and connect with an audience that, upon finding it relevant, voluntarily devotes its attention to it.
IAB Spain & Flúor Lifestyle, 2022	Content produced or co-produced by a brand that informs, entertains, inspires, and/or educates, and that combines what the brand wants to show with what its target audience wants to see.

Table 3 . Definitions of branded content from industry associations and organizations.

Source: Own elaboration.



- Emotional connection with the audience, credibility, and relevance. Consumers trust informative and/or emotional content more than direct advertising.
- Less intrusive. As the content is adapted to the channel and the tastes of potential audiences, it is perceived as relevant and not intrusive.
- More economical and more visible than traditional advertising. It is an original technique that connects with people, which means it generates more efficiency and impact than traditional advertising.
- It generates value. It projects useful content that is relevant and interesting to the target audience.
- It is strategic. The content is specific and tailored to the interests of different audiences.
- It increases trust and loyalty to the brand. It generates relationships of interest that become unique emotional experiences for potential users. This creates a deep sense of trust and builds loyalty.
- Take advantage of the benefits of co-creation. Partnering with recognized professionals, *influencers*, or people who represent a group to create content helps spread the message and attracts audiences who identify with them.
- Boost brand positioning. It also improves brand visibility and recall among the target audience.
- Generate *engagement*. It helps to create a community committed to the brand because the audience identifies with it.

- It bypasses *ad blockers*. Quality *branded content* is not perceived as advertising and circumvents the tools that block it.
- It can help drive registrations and *leads* (contacts). Although it does not directly seek to make sales, and is associated with indicators of awareness and image, it also serves to increase web traffic and create a deep relationship with users.

### Branded content: types, methodology, and trends

The main authors consulted in the literature review identify four main types of *branded content*. Both Nuñez (2022) and Sordo (2023) provide excellent summaries in this regard:

- Informative (or brand journalism). Seeks to provide in-depth information on specific topics that the company wants to highlight.
- Entertainment. It mainly uses audiovisual formats to offer an entertaining experience and motivate the audience, capturing their attention and encouraging their participation.
- Perceptive. This type seeks to connect emotionally with the audience, inspiring and generating empathy through emotions.
- Educational. It seeks to promote values that are specific to the company, or that revolve around its identity, in order to position it as a benchmark in that area.

To these four main categories, Sulé (2024) adds the following:



- Collaborative. When the content consists of collaborations with influential people to expand the brand's reach and reach new audiences.
- Social. Content on social media to achieve direct interaction with the community, seeking to generate *engagement*.
- *Branded entertainment*. Content that integrates the brand into films or series, offering an immersive and emotional experience through entertainment.
- Social cause. Supports a social cause to raise awareness and connect with audiences that are aligned with the brand.
- *User-generated content*. Actively engage your potential audience, *prosumers*, who are consumers who become creators of their own brand-related content, promoting participation, visibility, and brand credibility.
- Virtual or augmented reality. These technologies create immersive and innovative experiences for the public, increasing the level of engagement between the user and the brand.

The choice of *branded content*, understood as an advertising tool for brand communication, connecting it in a relevant way with its potential audiences, involves knowing the appropriate methodology that achieves optimal results. These are the main steps that every successful *branded content* process follows (ADECEC, 2015; Iruba, 2021; Molina, 2021):

- Purpose and meaning. It is necessary to understand the customer's needs and focus on them as opportunities that can be resolved with the proposal.

- Differentiation. Each brand is unique and has its own identity. Its values must be clearly identifiable.
- Relevance. *Branded content* must be relevant, attractive, interesting, and pertinent to the potential audience, providing added value.
- Type. It is necessary to choose the right type of *branded content* to develop in order to achieve the objectives set, taking into account the values and needs of the audience.
- Format. The most appropriate format must be decided. One of the keys to success in the format lies in originality.
- Interactivity. It is necessary to create participatory content that calls for action, promoting conversation and interaction within the community.
- Accessibility. In a saturated context, bearing in mind that this is traditional advertising content, it is necessary to choose the ideal distribution channel to reach the target audience.
- *Transmedia*. It is essential to draw up a strategy that assesses all possible channels and chooses the most appropriate ones for the integrated and consistent dissemination of content.
- Objective of a communication plan. *Branded content* is a technique and, therefore, a way of achieving an objective that will be part of a communication plan.
- Monitoring. Every strategy and action must be measured to show results. It is important to align the objectives of the action and set measurement indicators.

Finally, given the immediate need for adaptation required by the digital context, it is essential to identify the main trends that may exist in the development of *branded content*. The industry cannot afford to stagnate because it would mean losing efficiency and, therefore, its customer base. The key remains creating content of interest so that brands can connect in a relevant way with their potential users. To do this, it is important to be aware of the main trends in branded content (Butcher, 2023; Laporte, 2022; Rebold, 2023), especially for brands that target young people:

- Omnichannel with technology. Immersive and multisensory experiences attract users and generate powerful experiences that are difficult to forget.
- Return to long-form content. Although the general trend is toward immediacy and telling as much as possible in the shortest amount of time, long-form content is making a comeback to allow certain audiences to enjoy extended narratives.
- User-generated content (*prosumers*). Consumers trust recommendations made by other users more.
- Simple is attractive. Simplicity in visual content highlights the value of the brand.
- Not everything has to be perfect. Audiences respond to content that breaks with visual perfection, showing authentic and real moments that showcase unique experiences.
- More sustainability, inclusivity, and diversity. These themes are central to content because they reflect the concerns of potential users.

## Branded content: interviews with experts from the professional sector in Spain

In order to complement and enrich the theoretical approach to the concept of *branded content*, the perspective of four experts from some of Spain's leading consulting firms and brand agencies has been added through semi-structured *ad hoc* interviews to shape this theoretical framework.

First, we present the information extracted from the interviews in which the experts give their definitions of *branded content*. (table 4)

Secondly, a table is provided that summarizes the most relevant information obtained from the experts interviewed on *branded content*. The data is presented in a two-column table: question asked in the interview, summary of the relevant information given by the experts in their answers. (table 5)

The professionals interviewed agree with the experts consulted in the literature review when pointing out the fundamental elements that shape the concept of branded content:

- Relevant content (although they do not explicitly mention the creative and differentiating component).
- The need to meet objectives (related to the brand's interests).
- Tool/technique that is part of the brand's communication strategy.
- Use of the most appropriate formats for the brand to connect meaningfully with its target audience.
- The need to measure the efficiency of the campaign (not just the objectives).

Agency/Author	Definition
Interbrand. Director of Strategy.	Content associated with a brand's strategic areas that is of interest to the target audience, connecting with them in a relevant way. This creates a natural connection with the brand.
Summa Branding. Direction.	<p>A marketing strategy that consists of creating and distributing relevant and engaging content for a brand's target audience in order to promote it in a subtle and non-intrusive way. Instead of focusing on direct promotion of the product or service, branded content seeks to connect emotionally with the audience by offering content that can entertain, educate, or inspire.</p> <p>The key to branded content is that the brand message is naturally integrated into the content, so that it is not perceived as traditional advertising, but as a valuable experience for the consumer.</p>
Interbrand. Senior Director, Client Services.	It is a strategy used by brands to create relevant content for their audiences and thus generate engagement with them.
Comuniza. Managing Partner.	<p>Branded content describes a discipline that puts content at the center, as the axis through which brands generate value and capture the attention and interest of their audiences.</p> <p>Branded content transformed this, based on the idea that brands, in order to be relevant, must address issues that really matter. Always drawing on their knowledge and expertise, to be useful in their own spaces, which users have a real interest in visiting and consuming.</p>
Gilead Sciences. Director of Public Affairs.	Branded content is sponsored content that is produced as a result of an agreement between two parties (usually a company and a media outlet) and, as such, is subject to review and approval by both parties prior to publication.

Table 4. Definitions of branded content from experts consulted.

Source: own elaboration.

Question	Answers (summary)
How would you define branded content?	<p>Relevant, attractive content that is of interest to the target audience, connecting with them in a relevant, subtle, and non-intrusive way.</p> <p>It creates a natural connection with the brand and a valuable experience for the consumer. Content sponsored, reviewed, and approved by the company and media outlet.</p>
What objectives do you think branded content pursues?	<p>Connection with audiences, engagement. Relevance and interest, contributing something to their lives. A deeper and more lasting relationship between the brand and its audience, building trust, loyalty, and affinity towards it.</p> <p>Positioning the brand, generating awareness, retention, and memorability.</p>

Do you think it is necessary for brands to develop branded content actions today? If so, explain why.	<p>Yes:</p> <p>Because it is a more genuine way to generate awareness and engagement, to stand out in a saturated market, and to connect authentically with your audience.</p> <p>Because you put the user at the center, understanding what really matters to them.</p> <p>It depends:</p> <p>It depends on your objectives and, above all, on whether the brand has the credibility to generate specific branded content.</p>
What disadvantages do you think branded content has?	<p>It requires constant creativity and innovation, as well as the budget and human resources necessary to maintain a constant and relevant presence on multiple platforms.</p> <p>Difficult to measure return on investment (ROI).</p> <p>If done poorly, it can backfire on the brand, causing it to lose credibility and therefore relevance. Market saturation, especially on digital platforms and social media.</p>
Do you recognize different types of branded content? If so, please comment on them.	There are all kinds of formats: blogs, articles, events, sponsorships, collaborations, interactive and immersive experiences, social media, videos, short films, documentaries, articles, podcasts, collaborations, music festivals, roundtable coverage, themed series, etc.
Are there any branded content actions that you consider to be examples of success? If so, please mention them.	<p>Red Bull (x2).</p> <p>Discovering Canary Islands by Turismo de Islas Canarias.</p> <p>Stuck in the 90s by Ikea.</p> <p>Aprendemos Juntos (Let's Learn Together) by BBVA (x2).</p>
What metrics do you think a branded content campaign should have?	<p>Linked to the campaign: recall of the campaign or content, association with the brand, attributes or associated meanings, engagement, brand recognition, leads/conversions, retention/loyalty, brand sentiment, traffic analysis.</p> <p>Related to the brand itself: awareness, consideration, preference, distinctiveness, sentiment analysis, etc.</p> <p>Impact on business, although these are in the minority since branded content does not generally seek to sell directly: market share, share by audience type, evolution in specific products/services, etc.</p>

Table 5. Questions and answers from the experts consulted.

Source: own elaboration.

It should be noted that in the responses related to the typology of *branded content*, all the experts interviewed relate it to formats, and not to existing types based on whether it is content that entertains, informs, educates, etc.

Taking into account everything discussed in the theoretical framework, the following definition of *branded content* is proposed: a non-intrusive communication tool/technique that projects, in an attractive and suggestive way, the values, concept, and identity of a brand through the generation of content that is relevant and of interest to its target audience.

## METHODOLOGY

For the empirical development of the selected case study, various methodological tools will be used in accordance with the objectives determined for each stage of the analysis process:

- Document review. This allows basic information to be extracted about the history, values, positioning, and strategy of the brand.
- Content analysis. A sample of four cases of content produced by Redeia is examined, which are considered by the brand itself, as indicated on the corporate website, as *branded content*.
- The cases are studied in an initial qualitative stage through descriptive content analysis. A descriptive approach is taken to the selected campaigns. For this stage of analysis, strategic aspects identified in the literature review are used, relating to brand identity and

values in their projection within the campaigns, as well as their compliance with good practices associated with a *branded content* campaign.

In a second stage of the analysis, which is quantitative in nature, an analysis form designed ad hoc for data collection is completed. The study has six categories, generated in an exercise synthesizing all the information collected in the literature review. Once the categories have been identified and structured, the presence or absence of these elements in the campaigns analyzed is studied, related to the strategic presence of the brand's identity and values, as well as the best practices associated with a *branded content* campaign. The six categories are listed and described below:

- Relevance. Content of interest and value that is sought after by the potential audience (associated with the identity and values projected by the brand).
- Reputation. Builds brand identity and values, increasing brand awareness.
- Emotion. Surpasses creativity by exciting the audience and connecting powerfully with them.
- Strategic focus. Objective and defined strategy for brand positioning, projecting its identity and values. It is thought out in the medium to long term.
- Creativity. Key to how content is presented so that it stands out (brand originality and differentiation from the competition).
- Resonance. Potential users share the content (increasing its dissemination and multiplying the audience).

REDEIA

In 2022, Grupo Red Eléctrica became Redeia. This change was necessary to position itself as a relevant company with its own personality, consolidating itself as a global operator of strategic infrastructure, managing electricity, fiber optic, and satellite networks; connecting people and essential services. The company revamped its image in response to a business need resulting from its evolution, growth, and diversification, becoming a manager of essential and global infrastructure in the energy and telecommunications sectors. This new brand encompasses all of its businesses: Red Eléctrica, Reintel, Hispasat, Redinter, and Elewit, five leading companies in their sectors, which also revamped their image.

The company opted for an endorsed model to meet one of the main objectives of the rebranding, which was to generate strong group communication where existing brands remained independent and felt supported by the new parent brand. In turn, the parent brand could provide the credibility and security inherent in a corporate brand. There is a value transfer process in which the new brand draws on the values of the existing companies, and these, in turn, take advantage of the attributes of the new corporate brand.



Figure1 . Redeia brand architecture.

Source: own elaboration based on data from Redeia.

Redeia’s new name and identity reflect the true core of the brand: the network. A network made up of five brands and more than 2,400 professionals. It defines itself as “the leading brand that designs, implements, and manages smart network systems and infrastructures” (Redeia Brand Manual, 2022). Based on this concept, the brand defines its identity and builds its values:

INSIGHT	PURPOSE	POSITION
Not everything that can be seen is valued, and not everything that is valuable can be seen.	To guarantee electricity supply and connectivity, promoting a fair ecological transition based on sustainability criteria, highlighting our neutrality and contributing to social and territorial cohesion.	Redeia is the leading brand that designs, implements, and manages smart network systems and infrastructures so that countries, companies, and individuals can enjoy all the advances that come into their lives through electricity and telecommunications, the two levers that drive the world forward. Through the best connection between talent, technology, and innovation, Redeia anticipates the needs of society so that we can all enjoy a more connected and accessible world.
VALUES		PERSONALITY
Excellence. Anticipation. Balance. Service		Decisive and leaders. Efficient and consistent. Innovative and flexible. Transparent and approachable.
BRAND IDEA		
Transformation for progress		

Figure 2. Redeia brand definition model.

Source: Redeia (2022).



The strategic positioning of the new brand also involves a change in the external communication strategy. The aim is to position Redeia as the corporate parent of a group, becoming a recognized brand with its own narrative, distinct from Red Eléctrica. It is true that Redeia's identity embraces the Red Eléctrica Group's corporate social responsibility discourse, which revolves around cross-cutting issues such as sustainability, the environment, and innovation, in addition to financial content associated with these values.

Along with the launch of the brand in 2022, the company is launching a new website with its own content and creating new official profiles on social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube), where it projects the brand's identity and core values. These new communication channels are the result of the implementation of a new communication plan that seeks to connect with its potential audiences by generating brand awareness and recognition.

## RESULTS

After analyzing the four cases of content produced by Redeia, which have been considered by the brand itself as *branded content*, a series of qualitative and quantitative results have been obtained.

### Qualitative

Case 1: "El Asombrario." Digital content published in a culture and environment magazine associated with Publico.es. It discusses the initiative against depopulation "Holapueblo," promoted by Redeia, Almanatura, and Ikea. It features testimo-

nials from people who have chosen to live in depopulated areas, showing the benefits of this decision. The content brings together some of the characteristics of *branded content* mentioned in the literature review:

- Content that is interesting for the target audience, providing them with the value of learning about the experience of living in rural areas.
- The story is based on emotions (as it is testimonial, it connects better with the potential audience).
- It has a strategic focus, conveying part of the brand's identity and values (commitment to the territory and its inhabitants -network-).
- There is no call to action or direct sales of traditional advertising. It is not intrusive content. The objective is to build brand reputation and awareness.
- The aspect that deviates most from what is considered good practice in *branded content* has to do with the creative aspect.

Case 2: "Salvaje." This content is included in a print magazine (published only in paper format) that defines itself as "a new magazine that wants to take your time away" (Revista Salvaje, 2019). It gives voice to issues related to rural areas. It publishes stories that take place outside the city and traditional media. This philosophy fits perfectly with Redeia's values and its comprehensive outreach strategy, aimed at identifying, articulating, and activating human initiatives with a high positive impact. In this example, it discusses the importance of Posidonia in combating climate change, and specifically the project being developed by Redeia, together with IMEDEA, to rege-



nerate this plant in the Mediterranean. The content has the following characteristics associated with good *branded content* practice:

- It is interesting and relevant to the target audience.
- It deals with a highly topical and interesting subject.
- The content is presented in an attractive report format (although the brand is visually present, it is not an intrusive message).
- The use of unconventional media is also appropriate and allows Redeia to position itself as a benchmark within its target audience. This feature could also serve as an action that goes beyond good *branded content* practice from the perspective of reaching new audiences and rejuvenating the brand.

Case 3: “El Confidencial.” This is an opinion piece by Redeia’s president, Beatriz Corredor, in which she discusses the importance of encouraging girls to study STEAM subjects from an early age. The content analyzed is considered:

- Very interesting for the target audience and for the brand’s reputation and values (it is a good practice of *branded content*).
- Not very creative, original, or impactful in its presentation, making it difficult to excite or be shared by potential users (arguments that are far from being related to good *branded content* practice).

Case 4: “Europa Press.” This is an informative video about the investments that Redeia will make to advance the ecological

transition. The content has the following characteristics:

- It addresses a topic of interest that is highly topical. This topic also ties in perfectly with values that are fundamental to the brand’s identity. All these issues are in line with what is considered good practice in *branded content*.
- The way the content is presented, from a financial point of view, does not make it interesting or attractive. This makes it difficult for the brand to achieve a powerful connection with its potential audience. This content will not go viral or be sought after en masse by users of interest to the brand, who would then become part of its community. It is purely informative content without a creative presentation; it is neither relevant nor original, and does not appear to be designed to generate conversation and interaction. All these issues distance the analyzed content from what should correspond to good *branded content* practices.

(table 6)

## Quantitative

The content analysis of the four pieces of branded content produced by Redeia, taking into account the six categories identified in the study sheet, reports the following quantitative results:

Relevance. 75% of the publications analyzed, i.e., three out of four, meet the category of offering content of interest that is truly relevant to the brand’s target audience.

Reputation. Three of the four publications investigated, representing 75%, work

	El Asombra- rio & Co.	Salvaje	El Confidencial	Europe Press
Topic	Sustainability: rural repopulation	Sustainability: Posidonia	STEAM girls	Investments for the energy transition
Type of media	Digital	Print	Digital	Digital
Type	Awareness	Informative	Informative	Informative
Highlights	Topic of interest to the general public and en- trepreneurs in particular. Related to brand values.	Topic of environ- mental interest to the general public and local residents. Related to brand values.	Topic of interest for the future de- velopment of wo- men in rural areas.	Nothing.
To be improved	Uncreative format	Uncreative format	No connection with brand values. Media not focused on the target audience. Uncreative format.	It is not organic content, it is paid for. It does not meet any other characteristics of branded content.

Table 6. Summary of the branded content cases analyzed for Redeia.

Source: own elaboration.

on the brand's reputation in their content by projecting its identity and values.

**Emotion.** Fifty percent of the publications analyzed, two of the four pieces that form part of the research, present content that directly works on the emotional connection with audiences. The other 50% does not meet this criterion.

**Strategic approach.** 75% of the pieces analyzed, three of the four studied, approach content from a purely strategic perspective aimed at projecting and conveying the brand's identity, values, and positioning (medium/long term) to its target audiences through content of interest, addressing relevant topics.

**Creativity.** Fifty percent of the pieces studied, i.e., two of the four publications included in the research, use creativity as a relevant element in content generation. This means that the other 50% do not meet this criterion.

**Resonance.** As with the categories of emotion and creativity, 50% of the pieces studied, i.e., two of the four investigated, meet the resonance criterion by making the content conversational, shared, and multiplied thanks to the community that makes up the brand. On the contrary, there is another 50% that fails to meet this criterion.

Table 7.

Characteristics	El Asombrario	Salvaje	El Confidencial	Europa Press
Relevance				
Reputation				
Excitement				
Strategic focus				
Creativity				
Resonance				



 Yes, it does
  Does not comply

Table 7. Categories analyzed in the branded content cases of Redeia.

Source: own elaboration.

Distributed across each of the cases analyzed, the results obtained are as follows:

Case 1: “El Asombrario.” The content complies 100% in six of the six categories analyzed, with the use of best practices associated with the creation of *branded content*.

Case 2: “Salvaje.” As in the previous case, the content published in Salvaje complies 100% with all categories associated with best practices in the creation of *branded content*.

Case 3: “El Confidencial.” The published piece complies 50% with three of the six categories analyzed for best practices in the creation of *branded content*. It is important to note that the three categories with which it complies positively are related to the strategic area of projecting the brand’s identity, values, and positioning, while the categories with which it does not comply are those related to the emotional and creative execution of the piece, as well as its ability to achieve resonance (being shared, commented on, and interacted with, achieving a situation of *engagement*).

Case 4: “Europa Press.” This case does not positively comply with the require-

ments established for good practices in the creation of *branded content* in any of the six categories.

Based on the categories analyzed and the results obtained, it is essential to interpret the data from the two main dimensions that make up the *branded content* analyzed by Redeia:

- Strategic dimension. This dimension includes the categories of relevance, reputation, and strategic focus. It has to do with the strategic conception of content around the communication of the brand’s identity, values, and positioning. Seventy-five percent of the content analyzed for these categories, i.e., 9 out of 12, complies with best practices associated with creating strategic Redeia brand communication campaigns through *branded content*.
- Execution dimension. This dimension is composed of the categories of emotion, creativity, and resonance. It has to do with the technical scope, format, production, and conception of content execution to ensure that it connects with the target audience. Fif-

ty percent of the content analyzed within these categories, i.e., 6 out of 12, complies with best practices associated with creating strategic Redeia brand communication campaigns through *branded content*. This means that the other 50% does not comply with these best practices within the execution dimension.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results of the research allow us to identify a series of strengths and areas for improvement in the content analyzed.

From a qualitative perspective, the four cases analyzed reflect varying degrees of alignment with *branded content* best practices. The content published in “El Asombroso” and “Salvaje” represents the strongest examples in terms of the comprehensive application of this strategy, complying with all the categories analyzed. In these cases, there is effective communication of the brand’s identity and values, as well as a high degree of relevance, creativity, and resonance in the content generated. The choice of these specialized media, aligned with Redeia’s philosophy, contributes to a positive and consistent perception of the brand and its strategic positioning, helping to generate a relevant and deep connection with its potential audiences.

In contrast, the content published in El Confidencial and Europa Press has shortcomings in terms of execution. While the opinion piece in El Confidencial stands out for its relevance and potential to strengthen the brand’s reputation, its lack of creativity and emotional appeal limits its ability

to generate *engagement* and interaction within the community. On the other hand, the informative video in Europa Press fails to adhere to the fundamental principles of *branded content* because, although it addresses a key strategic issue for the brand, its presentation lacks appeal and emotional connection with the audience. This suggests the need to explore more innovative formats and more captivating narratives to strengthen the impact, thereby enhancing the interest of the content.

The quantitative analysis reinforces these conclusions by highlighting a clear contrast between the strategic and execution dimensions. In strategic terms, the content evaluated meets the criteria of relevance, reputation, and strategic focus, demonstrating that Redeia has worked in accordance with the best practices identified for *branded content* in this dimension, aimed at projecting the brand’s identity, values, and positioning. However, in the execution dimension, the results show that only half of the content meets the criteria of emotion, creativity, and resonance, which limits the potential of these materials to generate interaction and deeper connections with the audience. This moves away from the best practices identified for the creation of *branded content* pieces.

These findings highlight the need to strengthen the creative execution of Redeia’s branded content. Although the brand has managed to build a solid discourse around its identity, values, and strategic positioning, the lack of emotional elements and innovative formats prevents these messages from achieving their maximum impact. In this regard, it is recommended to explore more immersive narratives, opt for audiovisual formats with greater emotional im-

pact, and encourage interaction with the audience through participatory dynamics on digital platforms, as evidenced in the use of best practices related to characteristics, methodologies, types, and trends in *branded content*.

Likewise, the selection of distribution media plays a key role in the effectiveness of *branded content*. While specialized media such as “El Asombrario” and “Salvaje” have proven to be ideal spaces for communicating Redeia’s values, the inclusion of content in generalist media such as “El Confidencial” and “Europa Press” poses a challenge in terms of adapting and formatting the message, working on fundamental issues such as creativity and emotionality.

In conclusion, the *branded content* developed by Redeia reflects solid strategic work in brand communication through the projection of its identity, values, and positioning, but there are significant opportunities for improvement in the creative and emotional execution of the content.

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