



The shoppable content strategy on Instagram: the case of El Corte Inglés

La estrategia *shoppable content* en Instagram:
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Ramos Gómez, Sofía Isabella 

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Díaz Lucena, Antonio 

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Vicente Fernández, Pilar 

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyse El Corte Inglés' posts on the social network Instagram, with the main objective of examining the effect of the use of shoppable content on the audience, as well as detecting other communication and marketing strategies in its messages. To this end, this research takes a mixed approach. From a quantitative angle, two types of data analysis tools have been used: a statistical analysis

Ramos Gómez, Sofía Isabella, <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6260-1749>, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, sofiaramosgo@gmail.com

Díaz Lucena, Antonio, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4234-0850>, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, antonio.diaz@urjc.es

Vicente Fernández, Pilar, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4959-7325>, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, pilar.vicente@urjc.es

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of the posts on El Corte Inglés' Instagram account, which have been extracted using the Apify tool (from November 2022 to September 2024) and which total almost two thousand posts. The second quantitative tool was a content analysis that coded a sample of 1,065 Instagram posts from the same period (from 24 September 2023 to 24 September 2024). Finally, a brief email interview was conducted with the head of social media at El Corte Inglés. This research concludes by confirming that El Corte Inglés adapts its digital strategy to current consumption patterns, where immediacy and emotional connection are paramount. Collaborations with influencers strengthen the bond with the audience, while shoppable content has room for improvement at a strategic level.

Keywords: social media, Instagram, El Corte Inglés, shoppable content, engagement, marketing

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar las publicaciones de El Corte Inglés en la red social Instagram para examinar el efecto del uso de la técnica *shoppable content* sobre la audiencia e identificar otras estrategias de comunicación y marketing. El estudio se aborda desde un enfoque metodológico mixto. En el plano cuantitativo, se realiza un análisis estadístico de las publicaciones de la cuenta oficial de Instagram de la marca, extraídas mediante la herramienta Apify entre noviembre de 2022 y septiembre de 2024, junto con un análisis de contenido aplicado a una muestra de 1.065 publicaciones correspondientes al periodo comprendido entre septiembre de 2023 y septiembre de 2024. De forma complementaria, se incorpora una breve entrevista por correo electrónico a la responsable de redes sociales de la marca. Los resultados confirman la adaptación de la estrategia digital de El Corte Inglés a los patrones de consumo actuales mientras que el *shoppable content* presenta un margen de mejora estratégica (mayor inversión en recursos).

Palabras clave: redes sociales, Instagram, El Corte Inglés, *shoppable content*, engagement, marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

Although El Corte Inglés initially underestimated its potential in e-commerce, i.e., the sale of its goods and services via the internet—especially during the Isidoro Álvarez era (Delgado, 2021; Urrutia, 2024)—the situation is now different. In 2020, during the pandemic, they updated their mobile app (Godoy, 2022) and have continued to invest in creating content for social media. Both strategies have been successful. For example,

on social media, the growth of El Corte Inglés' Instagram following over the last ten years has been 5.614%. In 2015, there was hardly any interaction on this social network, either by the company or its audience (Alonso, 2015). However, from 2020 onwards, its activity on social media, specifically on Instagram, began to be noticed (Sicilia & Merino, 2020).

In this context, El Corte Inglés' efforts to increase its digital presence have led the company to close the 2023-2024 financial year with its best results since 2009. Its revenue increased by 5.4% compared to the previous fiscal year, reaching €16.333 billion (El Corte Inglés, 2024). This is facilitating the consolidation of this brand as one of the leading retail operators in Spain (Statista, 2024).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Social media, marketing, and the digital consumer

In today's media ecosystem, characterized by the dominance of information and communication technologies, traditional and digital marketing are intertwined, establishing a new dynamic between information sources, platforms, and users. This convergence favors the proliferation of innovative narratives in which factors such as multimedia and multiplatform prevail and generate forms of communication and discourse that are far removed from the conventional line (Ávila, 2020). As Dutt et al. (2024) argue, the ubiquitous influence of digital technology provides a dynamic landscape where data analysis and narratives play a fundamental role in shaping contemporary marketing practices. Companies can compete using more objective, relational, and interactive marketing techniques thanks to ICT and the variety of tools they enable, with customer satisfaction as the driving force behind digital marketing (Karras et al., 2024). Digitization, artificial intelligence, and robotics, among others, allow marketing professionals to automate search procedures and identify patterns to develop personalized and individualized digital marketing, offering product proposals and messages to both current and potential customers (Kaur et al., 2024).

In this context of digital revolution, the rise of social media, mobile technology, and mass internet accessibility have radically altered the traditional paradigms of interactions between companies and customers (Dutt et al., 2024). Specifically, digital platforms have become one of the determining factors when establishing a business plan, emerging as a decisive digital marketing tool within any company's own media strategy. Thus, "an active presence on social media has a significant influence on customers and is a differentiating factor when choosing a brand" (Zambrano, 2024, p. 1), a circumstance that results in improved brand recognition and competitiveness. These virtual communities, established as spaces for exchanging content and experiences (Gómez-Martínez & Romero-Rodríguez, 2021), are mainly used for entertainment, interaction,

and information, and 35% of users who interact on social media follow brand profiles, which is an increase compared to 2024 (IAB Spain, 2025). In addition, according to data from the same report, 48% of users search for information on social media before making a purchase, with YouTube and Instagram being the platforms of choice. In this regard, Campines' (2023) research concludes that one of the greatest impacts of digital marketing through social media on consumer behavior lies in its ability to provide spaces for customers to exchange information by sharing experiences and opinions about products and services.

Given this situation, and in an era marked by information overload and the democratization of content creation (Berg & Hofmann, 2021), brands require digital marketing approaches and social media strategies that prioritize engagement, personalization, and relevance. Communication is forced to innovate more than ever to survive infotaxation, stimulus saturation, and the high number of available spaces, proposing options to attract recipients who are increasingly immersed in a context of hyperconnectivity, interactivity, and immediacy (Ruiz, 2024). The significance of digital platforms as marketing tools means that they will rank third in terms of investment in controlled media in Spain in 2024 (InfoAdex, 2025). Through them, brands advocate for enhancing their image attributes and committing to quality content (Vicente-Fernández & Díaz-Lucena, 2024), to the extent that the potential of social media in marketing strategies has a positive effect on brand value and company performance (Laradi et al., 2024).

2.2 Instagram: beyond a visual showcase for brands

Social media is an effective way for brands to connect with their users due to its popularity, segmentation capacity, and low cost, among other distinctive advantages. Based on the importance of the brand experience in the digital realm (Iturriaga, 2023), brands are designing new languages and dynamic identities that materialize on digital platforms. These help to “strengthen ties, bring issues closer together, and create the engagement that companies/institutions seek with their audiences” (Segarra-Saavedra & Hidalgo-Marí, 2020, p. 39).

The 2025 Social Media Study conducted by IAB Spain points to Instagram as the second most used social network in terms of intensity, behind only WhatsApp and followed by TikTok. It is associated with image qualities such as visual, modern, photographic, entertaining, and inspiring. Conceived as the main social network for generating engagement, stimulating participation, and forming communities (Velar-Lera et al., 2020), the findings of the work by Terán and Mena (2025) suggest that interactions depend on the content published: the more interactive and entertaining it is, the more acceptance it generates among the public. In line with this positioning, its impact on

digital marketing transcends its aesthetic status: in the relationship between social media and e-commerce, Instagram and Facebook are identified as the main purchasing channels. In Spain, approximately a quarter of all purchases are now made online (Statista, 2025). Fashion, beauty, technology, and home are the most purchased categories; however, in 2025, only 16% of people have purchased directly from social media, although the frequency of regular use has grown compared to 2024 (IAB Spain, 2025). Therefore, the integration of Instagram into brands' commercial strategies goes beyond communication as a showcase, as the digital platform is used to implement direct conversion techniques through social media conversion strategies.

This approach to Instagram as a primary social network for digital marketing cannot be understood without the role that opinion leaders or influencers currently play. These influencers, recognized figures with a community of followers loyal to their recommendations, have proven to be a useful draw as long as the brand and product fit the prescriber's personal brand image and the principle of credibility underlies the relationship (Janssen et al., 2022). With a range of options ranging from direct and informative exposure to more subtle preaching integrated into the influencers' lifestyles and social activities (Hogsnes et al., 2024), their communicative activity on Instagram is particularly noticeable in the retail sector, favored by the visual design, creativity, and aspirational logic of the platform (Caro-Castaño, 2022; Rivas-Herrero & Igartua, 2021). Digital transformation has reshaped conversion mechanisms in the retail sector, combining the concepts of integration, experience, and personalization to optimize commercial results (Wilson et al., 2024). In a scenario of interactivity and immersion, among the various direct conversion techniques offered by the platform, alongside IG Shopping, the trend towards shoppable content stands out. This is defined as interactive content such as posts, videos, or blogs that allow users to purchase products directly from the content itself, without having to leave the environment in which they consume it (Social Native, 2024). This technique eliminates the need to scroll, allowing users to click directly on the shoppable content and purchase it instantly, without having to navigate through several pages: it instantly converts passive viewers into active buyers (Yuvraj, 2025). In the highly competitive retail sector, these tools make it possible to differentiate oneself and consolidate stronger relationships with consumers, who demand better prices, confidence in the purchasing process, and clarity in return policies (IAB Spain, 2025).

3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this research is to analyze the effect that El Corte Inglés's posts have on its audience through the Instagram channel, with a special emphasis on the use of shoppable content and other communication and marketing strategies. Derived from this, the following specific objectives are established: 1) to analyze El Corte Inglés' own

and joint posts; 2) to determine which formats are capable of generating greater interaction with the audience; 3) to evaluate the presence of shoppable content in both its own and joint posts; 4) to examine the predominant marketing trends, objectives, and strategies during the period analyzed; 5) to identify those posts that have had the greatest impact on the audience.

In view of the objectives set out, some research questions are added to facilitate a better reading and understanding of the nature of this work: What causes consumers to interact with El Corte Inglés' publications? Which format works best? What is the primary objective of its publications? To what extent does interaction vary depending on the integration of functionalities or strategies (shoppable content, influencer marketing, branded content, and events)?

Brands constantly resort to new trends, formats, technologies, and innovative methods to capture consumers' attention, improve their positioning, or encourage a specific action from their audience. Based on these premises, the following working hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Formats that can be considered more dynamic, such as video, generate a higher volume of interactions than posts without static image formats.

H2: Messages posted by the official El Corte Inglés account in collaboration with one or more other accounts yield better results in terms of interaction than posts in which only the brand participates.

H3: Content geared toward direct conversion (such as shoppable content) may be perceived as less appealing by the Instagram audience.

To this end, this research has applied a methodological triangulation from a mixed approach, using two types of data analysis and an interview. First, a statistical analysis was chosen, based on other established research on social media (Díaz-Lucena et al., 2022; Peña-Fernández et al., 2022). The Apify platform was used for data extraction. This application was used to extract El Corte Inglés' posts on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/elcorteingles/>) from November 6, 2022, to September 24, 2024. There were a total of 1,996 messages. The study variables in this statistical analysis were: number of posts, number of interactions (likes, comments), type of format (image, video, carousel), music, and number of characters and hashtags in the caption. In a second segment, a content analysis was carried out, following the research work on social media marketing by Vicente-Fernández and Díaz-Lucena (2024), on a sample of 1,065 posts by El Corte Inglés itself and, separately, 158 joint posts by El Corte Inglés

with other accounts, published in the same period (September 24, 2023, to September 24, 2024). The coding variables used are as follows:

Table 1. Coding variables (source: authors' own material)

Own publications	
Publication classification	Product type
	Purpose of the publication
	Direct mention of product in the copy
Type of strategy	Type of marketing strategy used
	Use of influencers in publishing
Publication format	Format type
	Video length
Drive-to-store campaigns	Presence of shoppable content
	Shoppable publication format
	Relationship between publication variables and shoppable use
Joint publications	
Publication classification	Number of accounts involved
	Type of account involved
	Direct mention of product in the copy
Type of strategy	Type of marketing strategy used
	Use of influencers in publishing
Publication format	Format type
	Video length
Drive-to-store campaigns	Presence of shoppable content
	Shoppable publication format
	Relationship between publication variables and shoppable use

Finally, in a third section, we were able to conduct a brief interview via message with Cristina Martínez Barbero, head of social media at El Corte Inglés. The questions were answered on August 13, 2025. However, it should be noted that, for reasons of confidentiality, the interviewee was unable to share detailed information about El Corte Inglés' strategies on Instagram, but data was extracted that has enriched this research.

4. RESULTS

Taking into account the variables mentioned above, the two types of analysis that have been carried out are presented below in chronological order.

4.1 Statistical analysis of El Corte Inglés' Instagram posts

Table 2 lists all the variables used in the statistical analysis, and at first glance, a significant finding can be detected, as the volume of posts varies differentially each month within the study period. However, the figures are similar only during the months of June and

July 2023 (92). In addition, there are also peaks in posts in specific months due to seasonal campaigns for collection launches or offers, as in the case of November 2023. The latter also stands out for having the highest number of publications (130) in response to Black Friday discounts, in which the retail sector traditionally participates, as well as in June and July 2023, which coincide with the summer sales.

Continuing with the analysis, during the month of April (2023), the spring campaign “Ya es Primavera en El Corte Inglés” (It's Spring at El Corte Inglés) kicks off, one of its most important and traditional launches, which has been running since the 1950s (El Corte Inglés, 2024). This campaign has a strong visual component, with a carefully crafted editorial line commonly supported by influencers and celebrities. This explains the increase in posts in both April 2023 (112 posts) and 2024 (86 posts).

Similarly, the conversion of some of the posts into likes is also noteworthy, as in the case of January 2023, when 54 posts obtained 62,737 likes. Comparing these results with those of the following year, we can see that in January 2024 there was a 53.7% increase in the number of posts (83 posts), which translated into more than four times as many interactions (likes), reaching a total of 271,447 likes.

Table 2. Total data from publications extracted from November 2022 to September 2024 (source: author's own material)

Year	Month	Likes	Comments	Number of publications
2022	Nov	81,897	940	105
2022	Dec	73,181	770	116
2023	Jan	62,737	1,395	54
2023	Feb	46,162	689	45
2023	Mar	82,246	1,069	62
2023	Apr	178,261	4,935	112
2023	May	194,488	1,235	100
2023	Jun	354,584	29,409	92
2023	Jul	370,186	1,908	92
2023	Aug	361,434	1,525	91
2023	Sept	513,217	3,771	82
2023	Oct	342,833	1,859	106
2023	Nov	496,985	2,858	130
2023	Dec	425,445	2,978	102
2024	Jan	271,447	1,600	83
2024	Feb	252,043	2,202	73
2024	Mar	267,781	1,202	76
2024	Apr	283,992	3,241	86
2024	May	242,866	1,097	90
2024	Jun	346,780	5,803	88
2024	Jul	162,167	561	74
2024	Aug	217,428	774	75
2024	Sept	161,359	1,059	55

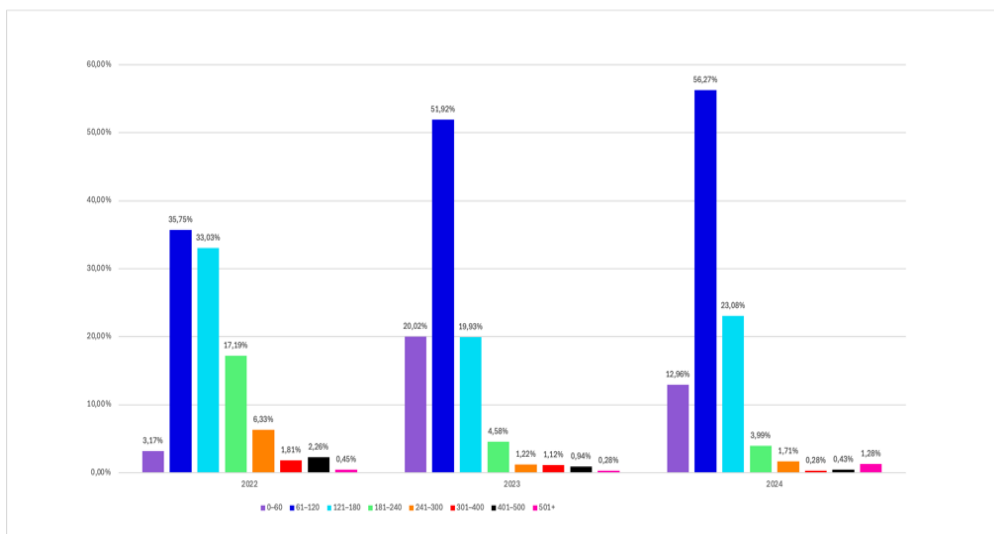
Although this metric has been growing steadily in recent months, it is projected to fall significantly from January 2024 onwards (September 2024 with 161,359 likes). One of the factors that may explain this decline is the 32.97% decrease in posts in 2024 (55 posts) compared to 82 posts in September of the previous year.

Likewise, if we look at the number of characters and hashtags included in the captions or photo captions of Instagram posts, we can also see a close relationship with interactions. Table 3 shows the interactions obtained in 2023, with a total of 2,265,358, generated by 595 posts that included between 2 and 3 hashtags. Compared to the following year, there was a significant drop in both the number of posts (-65%) and interactions (-68.5%), which therefore consolidates the relationship between the two variables.

Table 3. Interactions and number of publications according to the number of hashtags (range) per publication (source: authors' own material)

Range of hashtags per post	Year	Number of publications	Interactions
0-1 <i>hashtags</i>	2022	101	59,839
0-1 <i>hashtags</i>	2023	470	1,208,314
0-1 <i>hashtags</i>	2024	497	1,525,167
2-3 <i>hashtags</i>	2022	119	95,595
2-3 <i>hashtags</i>	2023	595	2,265,358
2-3 <i>hashtags</i>	2024	207	712,274
4 or more <i>hashtags</i>	2022	3	1,479
4 or more <i>hashtags</i>	2023	1	4
4 or more <i>hashtags</i>	2024	4	396,875

Graph 1. Percentage of interaction by range of characters used in the publication caption (source: authors' own material)

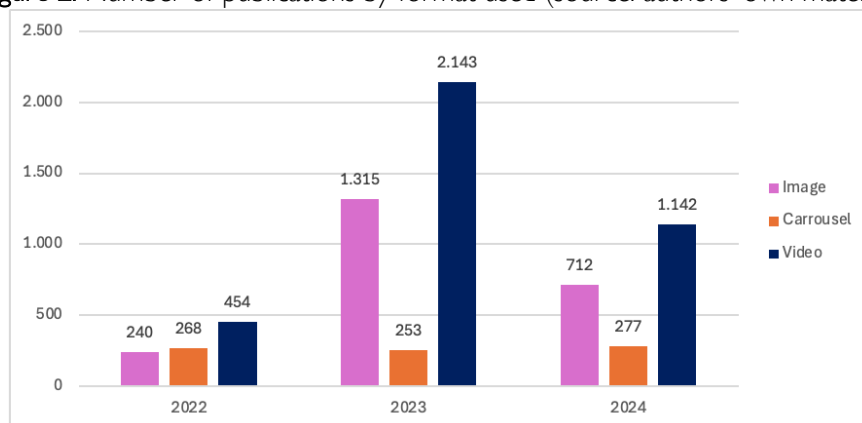


Similarly, it is noteworthy that the range of 0 to 1 hashtags maintains a sustained growth trend. This is mainly due to the fact that in 2023 there were 470 posts that used hardly any hashtags and obtained 1,208,314 interactions. Likewise, in 2024, there was a slight increase in the number of posts (5.74%), which achieved a significant percentage of interactions (26.2%). This represents a consolidation in the reduction of the use of hashtags, as the results in terms of interaction conversion were higher.

Thus, it can be said that this decision is part of their content selection strategy, which favors a reduced use of characters in posts (Graph 1). Therefore, posts containing more than 181 characters have the lowest interaction rates, unlike those with fewer characters. While it is true that there is a tendency toward brevity in texts, a middle ground has been observed through a range of characters that allows the audience to be engaged without the risk of overloading them with information.

Additionally, it has been considered relevant for this analysis to quantify the selection of formats in posts. Thus, Graph 2 quantifies the total number of formats (video, carousel, and image) in the sample period, with video standing out above all others with 454 in 2022, 2,143 in 2023, and 1,142 in 2024.

Figure 2. Number of publications by format used (source: authors' own material)



However, it should be noted that if the interaction variable (Table 4) is crossed with the format type, it can be seen that images generate a greater response from the audience compared to video and carousel.

Table 4. Percentage of likes and total interactions by format type and year (source: authors' own material)

Year	type	Likes	Interactions
2022	Imagen	31.39%	48,940
2022	Carrusel	27.00%	42,143
2022	Vídeo	41.60%	65,074
2023	Imagen	67.37%	2,349,038

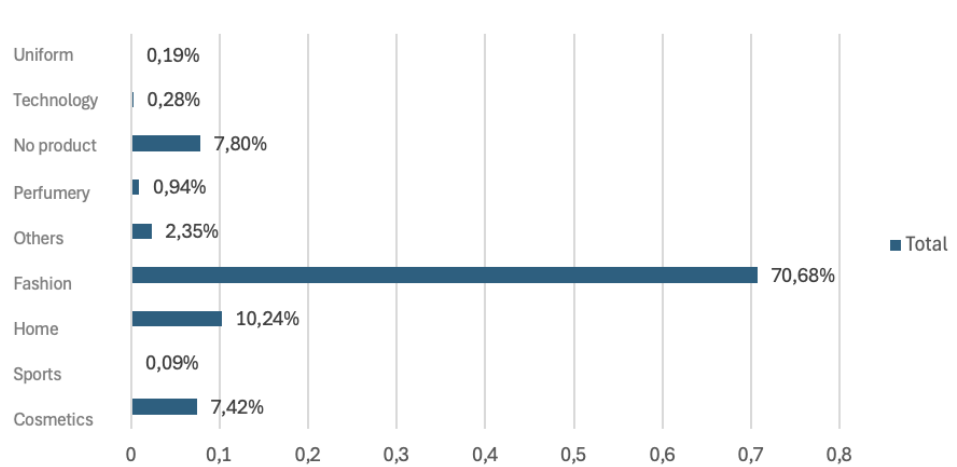
2023	Carrusel	2.80%	98,153
2023	Vídeo	29.83%	1,036,303
2024	Imagen	71.65%	1,598,855
2024	Carrusel	5.90%	132,367
2024	Vídeo	22.45%	506,615

4.2 Content analysis of El Corte Inglés posts on Instagram

The content analysis has been divided into two sections. In the first section, an analysis was carried out on a sample of Instagram posts, the sole contributor to which is the El Corte Inglés account. In the second block, a sample of joint posts was taken, in which several accounts are involved in the same post. The total number of posts in the two samples is 1,065, collected during the period of this research (from September 24, 2023, to September 24, 2024). To this end, the messages in the sample were coded using a list of 20 variables organized into four segments according to the nomination of the posts (Table 1): post classification, type of strategy, post format, and drive-to-store campaigns.

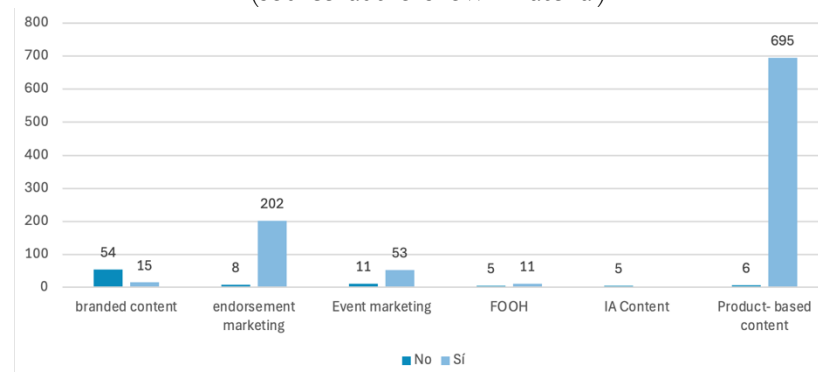
4.2.1 El Corte Inglés' own posts on Instagram

Figure 3. Distribution of publications by product line (source: authors' own material)

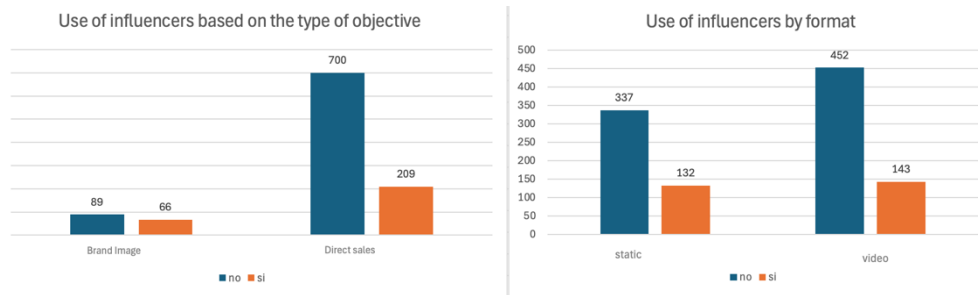


The first element of analysis within the classification of the publication was the type of product section published. Thus, Figure 3 shows that the most repeated product line in the messages corresponds to fashion, with 70.68% (752 publications), followed by home publications, which account for 10.24% of the total publications (109 publications).

Figure 4. Publication and distribution targets according to strategy for 2022 and 2023
(source: authors' own material)

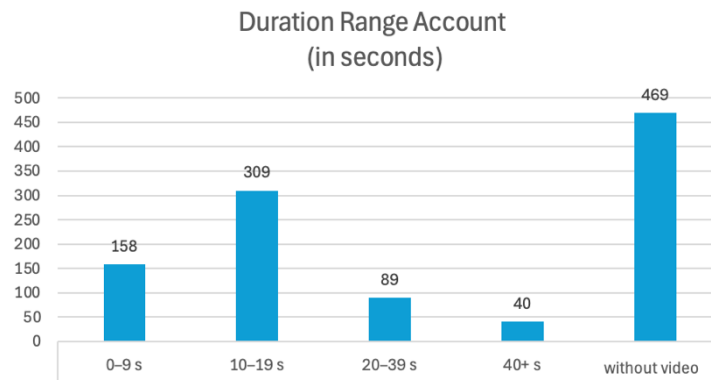


As for the purpose of the posts in this classification (Graph 4), it can be seen that 85.45%, totaling 910 posts, promote a product or service and therefore refer to direct sales. The remaining 14.55%, totaling 155 posts, are dedicated to reinforcing the brand values of El Corte Inglés. These posts would fall under the category of brand image. Thus, it can be seen that the strategy most implemented by El Corte Inglés is product-based content, with 700 posts, of which 694 directly mention the product. This data confirms the sales objective through this channel and the nature of the strategy, since when branded content posts were implemented, most of them (54 posts) did not directly mention the product. Thus, the essence of branded content has been to convey values rather than promote commercial action. Another noteworthy element is the 210 endorsement marketing posts (an advertising strategy that involves collaborating with a well-known figure). These feature celebrities, and 96% (202) make direct reference to the product. This finding confirms the strategy of associating celebrities with the product being sold, a method for building trust. Finally, this analysis presented in Graph 5 also highlights the growth of FOOH (Fake Out Of Home) advertising, which increased by 120% from 2022 to 2023. Outdoor advertising has been evolving since the incorporation of new technologies (Bauer and Lasinger, 2014), and its use by brands has been increasing in recent years, as it is truly effective in surprising users with creative content that translates into increased engagement (Correa-Prudencio and Díaz-Lucena, 2024). Additionally, it should be noted that there is a reduced use of influencers in their own publications (Graph 5). Within this minority group, representing 25.83%, there is an uneven distribution in the category that establishes the type of objective pursued by the publication (direct sales). This group, comprising 209 publications, makes direct reference to the purchase of goods or services, in contrast to the 66 that focus on reinforcing brand image without directly mentioning products. Therefore, the predominant use of influencers as a conversion tool underlies the limited use of this resource and ensures its impact at times of greatest relevance.

Figure 5. Use of influencers by objective and format (source: authors' own material)

Although there is no noticeable difference in the type of publication format used by influencers, there is a preference for audiovisual content, with 143 video posts compared to 132 static posts. This may be attributable to the greater capacity of the audiovisual format to maintain the influencer's personal tone, communicate the essence of the brand, and connect with the audience in a more intimate way.

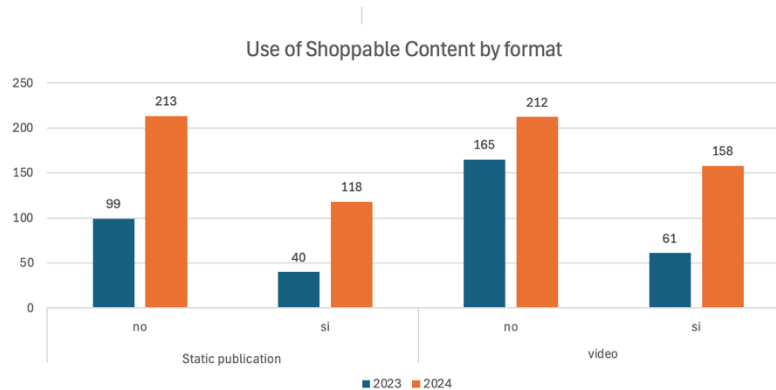
The video format predominates with a total of 596 posts compared to 496 that do not use it (Graph 6). Within this group, the highest concentration is in videos lasting 10 to 19 seconds (309 posts), followed by pieces lasting 0 to 9 seconds (158). As the duration increases, the number of posts decreases. Thus, 89 pieces are between 20 and 39 seconds long, and only 40 exceed 40 seconds. This distribution reflects a preference for short audiovisual pieces due to the confidence placed in short times to capture the consumer's attention in a competitive and oversaturated content context.

Figure 6. Video length range (source: authors' own material)

In terms of conversion, shoppable content is present in 35% of the publications analyzed, while the remaining 65% do not incorporate this functionality. This difference suggests that, although the tool is gaining ground, its implementation has not yet become widespread practice within content strategy. If we analyze the posts dedicated to shoppable content (Graph 7), we can see that the predominant format in this strategy is video, as these increased by 159% from 2023 to 2024, going from 61 to 158 posts.

The same is true for the integration of purchasing into static content, with growth of 198%, from 40 to 118 publications from 2023 to 2024. The predominant coexistence of the audiovisual format with conversion integration points to the benefits derived from its dynamic nature.

Figure 7. Distribution of shoppable content (source: authors' own material)

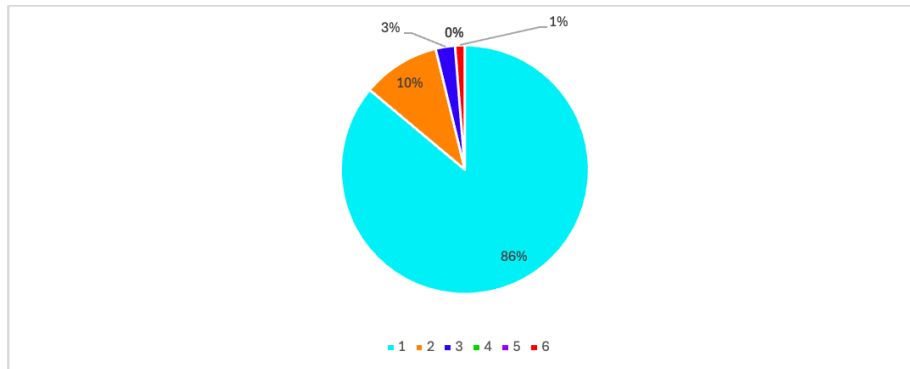


Finally, it is worth highlighting the commercial use of shoppable content. In this field, posts that use shoppable content for direct sales are 2.496% more than those aimed at brand image. The marked gap confirms the conception of shoppable content as a strategic resource that assists the user during the purchasing process and acts as a conversion facilitator.

4.2.2 Joint posts by El Corte Inglés on Instagram

In this second content analysis, a sample of El Corte Inglés messages on Instagram that have been published in collaboration with other accounts has been coded. During this study period, a total of 158 posts were found, representing 15% of the total posts analyzed, in which El Corte Inglés involves one or more accounts in the same post. The maximum number of accounts involved in a single post was six, but this is a marginal number since the trend is to collaborate with a single account, as shown in Graph 8.

Figure 8. Distribution of publications according to the number of accounts involved
(source: authors' own material)

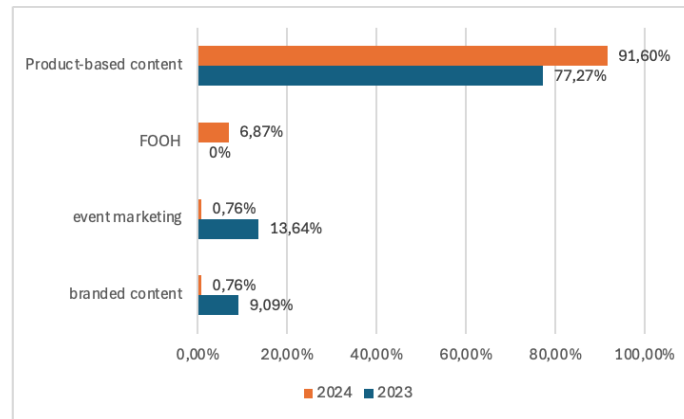


However, differences have been detected in the interactions obtained according to the accounts involved in the posts (Table 5). Although the volume of posts from accounts associated with El Corte Inglés verticals (77) represents 45% more than the posts in which an influencer participates (53), the results in user interactions are very different, as the latter accumulated 2,237,792 interactions, compared to 149,979 interactions from El Corte Inglés vertical accounts. Therefore, the result obtained by using influencers in El Corte Inglés' Instagram strategy is noteworthy.

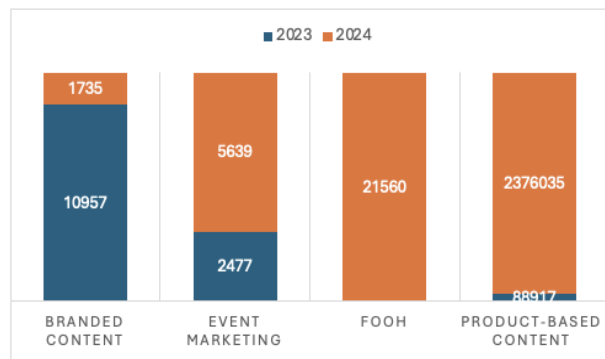
Table 5. Number of publications by account type
(source: own elaboration)

Account type	Number of publications	Number of likes
Influencer	53	2,237,792
Influencer and vertical ECI	28	101,547
Vertical ECI	77	149,979

Likewise, Figure 9 shows the figures for the strategy implemented. These show that during 2024, 91.60% of joint publications made direct reference or mention of the El Corte Inglés brand or one of its products. This figure represents an increase of 18.55% in the use of this strategy compared to the previous year (77.27%). In addition, the product-based strategy also obtained the highest number of interactions in 2024, registering 2,376,035 interactions (Graph 12) compared to 88,917 in 2023.

Figure 9. Type of strategy implemented (source: authors' own material)

Although there has been a decline in the presence of event marketing in publications, significant findings have also been observed in this strategy. In 2023, 13.64% of publications (Graph 10) were based on the promotion of brand events, which achieved 2,477 interactions. In 2024, despite a 94.4% drop in publications, Those that represented 0.76% of the total managed to garner more than double the interactions compared to the previous year, reaching a total of 5,639 interactions (Graph 10).

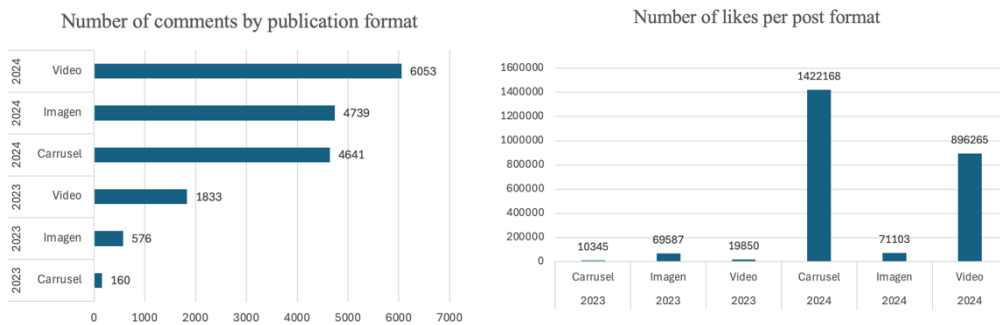
Figure 10. Interactions by type of strategy (source: authors' own material)

Meanwhile, there has been a decline in the use of branded content in joint publications, both in terms of its selection and the performance obtained. In 2023, this category accounted for 9.09% of joint publications, achieving 10,957 interactions. However, in 2024, its implementation was marginal, accounting for 0.76% of the total, and interactions fell to 1,735. This decrease, exceeding 84%, shows a trend toward strategies focused on highlighting product features rather than generating organic content.

The results of the analysis of publication formats show significant findings in the acquisition of various types of interaction with content (Graph 11). In 2024, the video format stands out as the most effective for generating comments (6,053), followed by

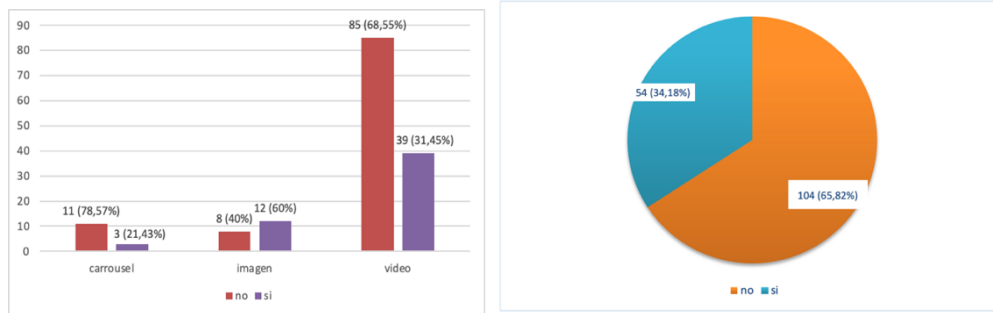
images and carousels, which perform similarly. This confirms that video content tends to generate more comments. However, in terms of likes, the carousel format registers a higher volume with 1,422,168 likes in 2024, above video (896,265 likes). With this data, it can be determined that the carousel format facilitates the display of diverse content in a single post, while audiovisual pieces stimulate dialogue by generating comments.

Figure 11. Number of comments and likes by format type (source: authors' own material)



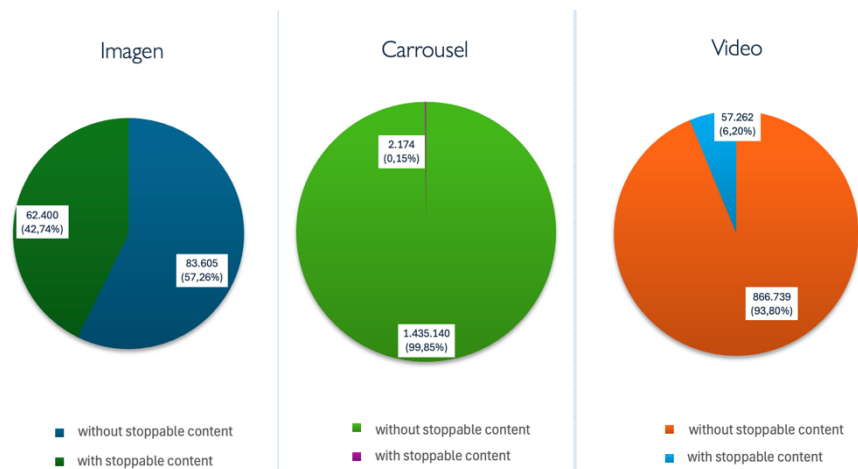
On the other hand, it can be seen that the use of the conversion tool does not predominate in joint publications. Of the total publications analyzed, 65.82% (104) lack banner integrations with shoppable content tags, compared to 34.18% (54) that do include the purchase option. The image format is the one that most includes this functionality, with 60% (Graph 12). Although most video and carousel posts do not integrate this option, the carousel shows the lowest numbers of shoppable content, with 21.43%. This can probably be explained by the carousel's inherent invitation to swipe, which directs attention to the visual content and can cause the purchase tag to go unnoticed.

Figure 12. Percentage of shoppable use vs. distribution by format (source:authors' own material)



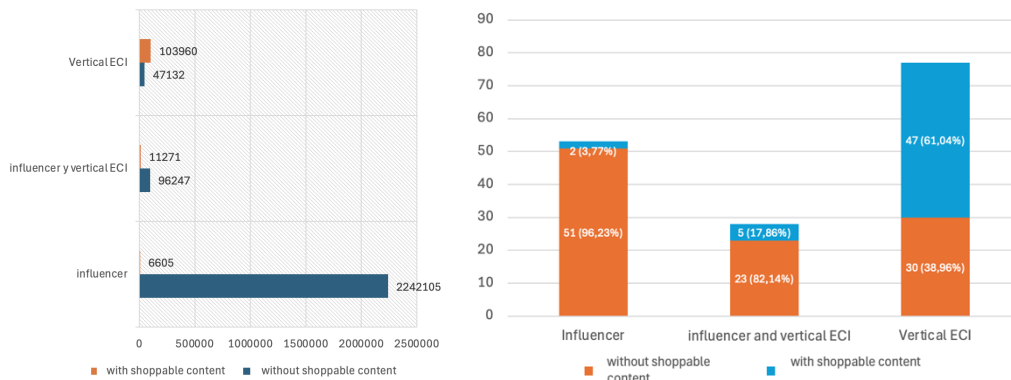
Furthermore, this same behavior also seems to extend to the acquisition of interactions. The image format, despite accounting for 60% of posts with shoppable content (Graph 13), generated 14.52% fewer interactions than those without this functionality. Therefore, these figures may suggest that users are not entirely familiar with this type of functionality or even that they prefer content without direct shopping integration.

Figure 13. Percentage of interactions with and without shoppable content by format. Source: Authors' own material.



It is worth noting that 96.23% of posts featuring influencers do not include a purchase tag (Graph 14). However, this category has the highest audience acceptance rate, with 2,242,105 interactions. This result confirms that the use of external collaborators works, as they foster engagement with values such as authenticity, empathy, and admiration.

Figure 14. Interactions and number of posts by account type (source: authors' own material)



In contrast, 61.04% of posts generated by accounts from El Corte Inglés' specialized services, classified under the "Vertical ECI" label, included the shoppable option and obtained 103,960 interactions (68.83%), which is 37.66% more than posts that did not have the purchase option (47,132). This result is remarkable, although not comparable to that achieved by influencers. Therefore, it is questionable whether a more focused approach to influencer content (including the shoppable feature) might have yielded better overall results in terms of interactions, although it may also suggest that, while the use of shoppable content can boost sales, it does not necessarily ensure a stronger connection with the audience.

Table 6. Interactions and number of publications by type of strategy (source: authors' own material)

Strategy	Without Shoppable Content	With Shoppable Content
Branded content	10,957	1,735
Event marketing	8,116	0
FOOH	21,560	0
Product-based content	2,344,851	120,101

In conclusion, posts based on product strategy are the most widely used (Table 6), compared to the rest, which show lower figures for posts with purchase options. The reduced use of shoppable posts in other strategies such as FOOH, event marketing, and branded content can be justified by the fact that these respond to a more narrative logic than the transactional one focused on the product. Additionally, there is a disconnect between the tool and the degree of acceptance by the audience, because product-focused posts that incorporated this functionality (52) recorded a lower volume of interactions (120,101) than those without a purchase tag (2,344,851).

4.3 Interview with El Corte Inglés' Social Media Department

It should be noted that it has been extremely difficult to obtain any kind of response from El Corte Inglés for this research that could confirm, refute, or add comments to the data found in this analysis. This has also been experienced by other authors who have conducted research (Urrutia, 2024) due to this company's corporate policy. However, El Corte Inglés' social media manager, Cristina Martínez Barbero, was kind enough to briefly answer some questions and refer us to reports published on the company's website; if the location of these reports had not been shared, this information might not have been found. The interview was conducted by email on August 13, 2025, and mainly asked questions related to the integration of shoppable content into the brand's content strategy, as well as the predominant formats used. For reasons of confidentiality, the manager refused to provide specific data that would reveal the internal strategy. However, references of interest to this research were obtained.

All in all, it can be noted that El Corte Inglés is positioned as an opinion leader in the use of social media to communicate brand value. The data obtained from its investment in social media communication shows a 22% growth in its community of followers compared to the previous year. A significant part of this increase is due to its decisions based on personalization criteria. These include the specialization of accounts by sector, the promotion of its own brands, and the creation of the NEW line, designed for the GenZ audience in response to their new communication codes (El Corte Inglés, 2024). In this sense, its activity is concentrated on Instagram and TikTok. Cristina Martínez notes that the most efficient collaborative formats are paid media and the predominance of audiovisual content, stating that "video is king."

In terms of techniques that influence the acceptance of published content, the company reinforces its brand strategy through advertising formats supported by emerging technologies (El Corte Inglés, 2024). These initiatives include a commitment to short videos, the development of 3D designs, and the use of artificial intelligence. These actions have led to a 318% increase in interactions with their Instagram posts compared to 2022.

Finally, the interviewee points out the importance of influencers in the digital strategy due to the affinity that users show towards this type of content. However, she clarifies that their implementation is always carried out "in line with the brand strategy" and explains the difficulties that arise when using an external collaborator and communicating faithfully to the brand's attributes.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this study was to analyze the effect that El Corte Inglés' posts have on its audience, paying special attention to content that implemented the use of shoppable content functionality and other communication and marketing strategies in Instagram posts.

In relation to the first hypothesis (H1), it has been confirmed that audiovisual formats, especially video, account for a greater number of posts and are linked to high levels of interaction. However, the results also reveal that formats such as images or carousels have performed better in certain periods and under certain circumstances. This finding confirms that the dynamism of the format is not the only factor influencing the engagement rate or interactions acquired. Therefore, it must also be analyzed in combination with other elements such as content quality, the strategy employed, or the presence of influencers.

Regarding the second hypothesis (H2), analysis of joint posts has shown that those in which El Corte Inglés collaborates with other profiles—especially influencers—tend to generate a greater number of interactions. Posts shared with celebrities have proven to be more effective in terms of engagement than those developed alone or with internal corporate accounts. This result supports the effectiveness of external collaborations as a strategic resource within the digital ecosystem.

As for the third hypothesis (H3), the results show that, although shoppable content is increasingly being incorporated—especially in video posts—its presence does not necessarily imply a higher volume of interactions. Most content with this functionality is geared toward direct sales, reinforcing its use as a commercial tool rather than a mechanism for building brand image. In fact, posts without a purchase option, especially those featuring influencers, have achieved greater audience engagement. Therefore, there is also a greater preference among audiences for strategies that enhance or reinforce emotional connection rather than transactional intent.

In conclusion, the analysis shows that visual, strategic, and functional decisions on Instagram are not only based on aesthetic criteria, but also respond to specific consumption patterns and digital behavior of the audience. El Corte Inglés seems to have developed a strategy that combines classic elements of its identity with contemporary digital resources, although there is still room for improvement in the integration of features such as shoppable content and the diversification of the use of influencers beyond commercial campaigns.

In the short and medium term, a deeper focus on strategies that generate relational content beyond the commercial approach could strengthen the emotional bond with the audience. In addition, future research could include qualitative variables such as user perception, or expand the analysis to other social platforms to obtain a more comprehensive view of the brand's digital ecosystem. It would also be useful to have

tools that measure the effective conversion rate of posts that integrate shopping features, in order to understand in greater detail the real impact of shoppable content beyond visible interactions.

6. AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT ACCORDING TO CRediT TAXONOMY

Sofía Isabella Ramos Gómez: conceptualization; methodology; validation; formal analysis; resources; data curation; original draft writing; writing-reviewing and editing; visualization; project management.

Antonio Díaz Lucena: methodology; software; resources; original draft writing; writing-revision and editing; supervision; project management.

Pilar Vicente Fernández: research; resources; original draft writing; writing-revision and editing; supervision; project management.

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