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# *Jot Down, Anfibia* and *Panenka*: three audacious forms of understanding digital narrative journalism in the midst of the crisis of the printed press

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## **Abstract**

**Introduction.** This article is part of a large international study on the health of Spanish-languagedigital narrative journalism. To this end, ten online magazines have been analysed in depth: five from Spain (*Jot Down*, *Contexto*, *5W*, *Yorokobu* and *Panenka*), two from Mexico (*Gatopardo* and *Letras libres*), two from Colombia (*La silla vacía* and *Arcadia*) and one from Argentina (*Anfibia*). This article offers the results corresponding to three of these magazines: *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*, as representative examples (within their respective fields) of narrative journalism in Spain and Argentina and, in the case of *Panenka*, of specialised journalism. **Methods.** The case study has been the central method used in this study, which involved nine in-depth interviews with the people in charge of these magazines and the content analysis of their digital and printed versions during the first half of 2018. **Results.** The three magazines emerged between 2011 and 2012 in the midst of the economic crisis and decadence of the printed press. In addition, all three magazines have managed to build their own brand image; have proudly exhibited hybridisation in their genres; have connected with a share of the audience that enjoys their narrative texts; and have had an interesting (although different) reception on the Internet. *Jot Down* has 700,000 monthly unique visitors; *Anfibia* about 200,000 and *Panenka* 86,000. However, there are notable differences between the three magazines in terms of their origins, sources of funding, dominant genres, reader profiles, and their relationship with current news and affairs. **Discussion and conclusions.** The three magazines have shown audacity in their approach,

becoming a model of reference in their respective fields. Nevertheless, this does not dispel the uncertainties looming over their future. Despite all the difficulties and the limited impact of the model, it could be argued that the new age of journalism is giving birth to an alternative and audacious model that rebels against the monotony and boredom of the market.

**Keywords:** narrative journalism, slow journalism, *Jot Down*, *Anfibia*, *Panenka*.

**Contents:** 1. Introduction. 2. Digital narrative journalism. 3. Methods. 4. Results. 4.1. Origins. 4.2. General description. 4.3. Sources of funding. 4.4. General features. 4.4.1. Digital versions. 4.4.2. Printed versions. 4.5. Photography and audiovisual resources. 4.6. Profile of collaborators. 4.7. Content analysis. 4.8. Audiences and social networks. 4.9. Perspectives. 5. Discussion and conclusions. 6. Notes. 7. References.

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## 1. Introduction

The accelerated boom experienced by digital journalism in the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has generated disruptive changes in information consumption. In a few years, reading habits that seemed strongly rooted have weakened or vanished, giving way to other forms of information consumption. At the same time, the brevity and instantaneity imposed by the current digital transition have caused certain deterioration in the quality of information, as shown by several research works (González Gorosarri, 2011; Ramírez de la Piscina *et al.*, 2014; Gómez Mompert, 2013 and 2015). Important sectors of society are becoming more and more critical of the prevailing communication model. The Nobel Prize in Literature, Gabriel García Márquez, through the Foundation for a New Ibero-American Journalism (FNPI), and journalism professors such as Ryszard Kapuściński see narrative journalism (a.k.a. slow journalism) as a useful tool for understanding more and more polyhedral realities.

In recent years the Internet has experienced the emergence of a multitude of platforms that promote and exercise narrative or slow journalism, the post-industrial version of the New Journalism. It is a more narrative way of understanding the profession without stepping into the field of fiction. It is a practice that has recovered genres that are almost banned in today's printed journalism, such as in-depth analysis, investigative reporting and in-depth interview. The complexity of the social, political, economic and cultural changes that the world is experiencing demands a thorough analysis of the causes and consequences of the current developmentalist model.

In this context, this research is part of a paradox that aspires to be creative: it addresses an issue that is old and new at the same time. It is as old as the craft of storytelling and as gratifying as the art of properly analysing events and their protagonists.

The main objectives of the research as a whole and of this particular article are the following:

- Identify the fundamental features of the magazines *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*, which are exponents, within their field, of digital narrative journalism in Spanish. It involves the analysis of their similarities and differences, their origins, contents and audiences and the profile of their collaborators, to identify their main genres and their relationship with current events and affairs.
- Examine their respective business models and sources of financing, their weaknesses, strengths and prospects for the future.

## 2. Digital narrative journalism

Digital narrative journalism is part of the *slow media* movement, a term that first appeared in 2009, although it was not until 2011 when Professor Jennifer Rauch gave it an academic use in a scholarly article. Rauch (2011:6) points out that the term was first used in an American radio show of the NPR network called “Marketplace” produced and narrated by Sally Hershops (Professor of Journalism at Columbia Journalism School) and broadcast on 17 November of 2009. The article offered descriptive data of the evolution and development of the movement in different countries, mainly the USA, some European countries like France, Germany and the UK, as well as Australia. Interestingly, in these countries, it was the public media that paid the most attention to the *slow media* phenomenon.

Susan Greenberg took the leap from *slow media* to *slow journalism* in her contribution to a collective work published in 2012. Both terms have been used in recent years in English-speaking research to designate the movement in its amplitude and to characterise its specific practice. In this way, both terms took over previous historical denominations such as *literature journalism* and *narrative journalism*, without forgetting *new journalism*, which was immortalised in 1973 by Tom Wolfe.

Within regards to English-language digital narrative journalism practiced in recent years, it is important to highlight the work carried out, among others, by prestigious websites such as the *Longform* platform (a long-format collector created in 2010), *Delayed Gratification* (an in-depth journalism magazine launched in 2011), *Aeon* (a provocative, non-profit digital magazine launched in 2012, and with headquarters in London, Melbourne and New York), and the award-winning *Retro Report* (a *New York Times* affiliate that started in 2013 to provide slow audiovisual journalism). In the USA, prestigious publications have been betting on this genre for many years, like *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone* and *The New York Times*, which in 2012 published the audiovisual feature *Snow Fall*, considered as a cult piece in *digital slow journalism*. *National Geographic* deserves similar praise for the publication in 2013 of the journalistic project *Out of Eden Walk*.

The phenomenon has also extended to other languages and countries (the French *Revue 21* magazine deserves a brief mention), although it is fair to underline the important presence of this practice in Latin America. Some authors and professionals, such as Rodríguez Rodríguez and Albalad (2012), Sierra (2012) and Rodríguez Marcos (2012), speak openly of a new “boom” of Latin American slow journalism, suggesting a certain parallelism to the “boom” of the 1950s and 1960s that preceded the

new American journalism. Others like Lago and Callegaro (2012) and Bonano (2014) speak of “new tendencies” and underline that it is a phenomenon on the rise in the American continent. In 2008 and 2012, the Foundation for a New Ibero-American Journalism (FNPI) sponsored two conferences for the “New Chroniclers of the Indies”. In recent years, universities such as California, Menéndez Pelayo (Santander) and San Jorge (Zaragoza) have also organised academic and literary competitions in this same line. This trend has become visible to a large extent thanks to the anthologies of Carrión (2012) and Jaramillo Agudelo (2012), both scholars, writers and journalists. Other theorists speak of a new generation of “in-depth journalists.” Such is the case of the Mexicans Juan Villoro and Fabrizio Mejía, the Chileans Pedro Lemebel and Cristian Alarcón, the Colombian Alberto Salcedo Ramos, the Peruvians Julio Villanueva and Gabriela Wiener, the Argentinians Leila Guerriero and Martín Caparrós, and the Spaniards Jordi Costa and Guillem Martínez, among others.

At this point, and based on the contributions made by Gloria Rosique-Cedillo and Alejandro Barranquero-Carter (2015), we could say that by narrative or slow journalism we refer to the journalistic practice that, fleeing immediacy, produces texts that encourage reflection and analysis, through the use of literary formulas, but without stepping into the limits of fiction, and rigorous and quality information.

According to Robert Herrscher (2012:28), there are five aspects that define the good narrative journalist: the voice, the view of “others”, the way in which voices come to life, the revealing details and the selection of stories, pictures and approaches. For her part, Professor Megan Masurier (2015:138-152) considers that slow or narrative journalism must basically be *good, clean, and fair*. That is to say, it must be well crafted and provide relevant information for the community; must be ethical, complete, transparent, uncorrupted. In other words, it must be accessible and promote the participation of citizens, creating a favourable environment in the community and defending decent conditions for workers.

We conclude this section by referring to the hopeful forecasts made by Blumtritt, David and Köhler (2010) in *The Slow Half Manifest*, which addresses the second decade of the present century:

In the second decade [of the 21<sup>st</sup> century], people will not search for new technologies allowing for even easier, faster and low-priced content production. Rather, appropriate reactions to this media revolution are to be developed and integrated politically, culturally and socially.

### **3. Methods**

The methods used in this research has been eminently qualitative. The study started with direct observation to identify the ten narrative journalism websites in Spanish language that —based on their trajectory and proven quality— deserve most attention. Subsequently, case studies were carried out of the selected websites.

Direct field observation is increasingly present in the literature related to the analysis of the media (Anderson and Burns, 1989; Lindlof and Taylor, 2011). This technique is useful for the correct contextualisation of the subject matter under analysis, for the determination of dependent and

independent variables, the formulation of theories, as well as for the subsequent implementation of qualitative techniques (Wimmer and Dominick, 1996:146). The direct observation carried out in the first stage of the research allowed us to identify the ten most representative websites in narrative journalism in Spanish language. Initially, we reviewed more than 30 websites in this field. Given that we had to select ten, the selection was based on the following criteria: Degree of content updating, presence of context in published texts (about events and/or protagonists), presence of narrative texts (stories that excite and enlighten), diversity of genres (chronicle, interview, reportage, profile, critique, essay, opinion, etc.), level of referentiality and/or influence in its country or subject area (certified audience, followers in social networks, etc.), and finally, layout design quality. Each of the six sections was assigned a score that ranged from 0 (nil contribution) to 5 (maximum). The highest possible score was 30 points. Finally, for the research team it was very important that the sample was geographically and thematically representative. The following table summarises all the previous criteria:

**Table 1. Narrative journalism websites in Spanish. Score, country and main theme**

Magazines	Score	Country	Main theme
<a href="http://www.jotdown.es">www.jotdown.es</a>	26.54	Spain	Culture
<a href="http://www.letraslibres.com">www.letraslibres.com</a>	25.5	Mexico	Culture
<a href="http://www.revista5w.com">www.revista5w.com</a>	24.5	Spain	International politics
<a href="http://www.gatopardo.com">www.gatopardo.com</a>	23.2	Mexico	Culture
<a href="http://ctxt.es">http://ctxt.es</a>	22.4	Spain	General (politics)
<a href="http://www.revistaanfibia.com">www.revistaanfibia.com</a>	22.31	Argentina	General (politics)
<a href="http://www.lasillavacia.com">www.lasillavacia.com</a>	22	Colombia	P. Research
<a href="http://www.revistaarcadia.com">www.revistaarcadia.com</a>	21.88	Colombia	Culture
<a href="http://www.yorokobu.es">www.yorokobu.es</a>	21.05	Spain	Creativity
<a href="http://www.panenka.org">www.panenka.org</a>	20.88	Spain	Football culture

Source: HGH (Hedabideak, Gizartea eta Hezkuntza, Media, Society & Education) research group.

This article has selected *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*, which occupy the first, sixth and tenth positions in the table. This sample is an attempt to reflect the spectrum in all its geographical and thematic breadth.

The cases studies were carried out afterwards. This method is very common in the field of qualitative techniques. It consists of using a wide range of sources to systematically investigate individuals, groups, organisations or events. It has been used very often at the university level (Túñez, 2007: 73),

being Harvard University a pioneer in using this technique in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although its consolidation took place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Robert K. Yin (1992) defends the case study as an empirical research method that uses multiple sources of knowledge to investigate a current phenomenon within a real-life context.

In the case of the three selected magazines, the study involved the carrying out of nine in-depth interviews (in face-to-face or online modes) with the journalistic, economic and technological leaders of these publications, and the analysis of their printed and digital contents during the first half of 2018.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Origins

The three magazines under study were launched at the same time, in the midst of economic crises, between 2011 and 2012. By then, the printed press had shown serious signs of exhaustion and the digital transition had already started. However, their origins are very different. While *Jot Down* and *Panenka* were launched by private initiatives, *Anfibia* receives mostly public funding since its origin. *Jot Down* is the product of a deep debate generated in the Internet. *Anfibia* has been linked to a public university of Buenos Aires and *Panenka* was the initiative of a professional, who managed to socialise his idea to a wider group.

*Jot Down* ([www.jotdown.es](http://www.jotdown.es)) began to materialise in 2011, in an internet forum called *Areopagus*, which gathered very diverse people [1] who shared a common diagnosis: they were bored with the cultural news offered by the large media (Barranquero, 2016). Its founding partners include Carles A. Foguet (political scientist), Ricardo J. González (Graduate in Hispanic Philology), Ángel Luis Fernández (computer scientist) and María Jesús Marhuenda [2] (with studies in law). The latter two founded 50% of the civil society *Wabi Sabi Investments*, the publisher of this website and of printed magazines and books linked to the same brand. According to Ángel Luis Fernández, editor of the magazine, the name of the magazine is actually “a cognitive dissonance, because *Jot Down* means ‘taking short notes’ and what we do is long articles”.

Digital magazine *Anfibia* was launched on 14 May 2012 at the General San Martín National University (UNSAM), a public Argentinean institution born in 1994, located in the northern part of Greater Buenos Aires. Since its inception, *Anfibia* has been linked to the *Reading Mundi* programme of the aforementioned university, an initiative that sees “the act of reading as an experience of doing and being in the world” [3]. *Anfibia* is classified as a digital magazine of the UNSAM featuring articles and essays. The project cannot be understood without the charismatic figure of its editor, writer and professor Cristian Alarcón [4], and without its wide network of 1,600 collaborators, including journalists, scholars, photographers and illustrators. *Anfibia* shares a news room (even if they are independent products) with *Cosecha Roja* magazine, a digital medium —also edited by Cristian Alarcón— that encourages readers to “think about violence and security from a broad perspective, with a vision where human rights and gender equality prevail” [5].

On the other hand, *Panenka* [6] was launched in 2011 by historian and journalist Aitor Lagunas [7], who recruited photographers, journalists, illustrators and designers with whom he tries to cement a

new journalistic idea [8]: to publish the first football culture magazine in Spain, which already existed in other European countries, such as *SoFoot* in France and *11Freunde* in Germany [9]. After several months testing the product, on 20 June 2011, the first number was launched in digital format (pdf), with the collaboration of a team of journalists, writers, illustrators, photographers and infographic artists, as well as footballers and coaches [10]. *Panenka* is run from the Barcelona headquarters by a great team: Aitor Lagunas, editor; Roger Xuriach, coordinator; Alex López Vendrell, manager; Carlos Martín Rio, editor-in-chief; Jorge Giner, writer; Marcel Beltran, web and social networks editor; and Anna Blanco, art director. The *Panenka* team is also made up of a wide network of collaborators [11].

## 4.2. General description

The three magazines share a common house: digital slow journalism in Spanish language. However, they furnish their rooms with completely different styles. While *Jot Down* has made black and white design one of its main identity signs (along with its long-format cultural interviews), *Anfibia* uses the feature article and essay as an instrument to analyse Latin American issues (especially Argentina's). Finally, *Panenka* approaches the football culture from political, social, historical and cultural perspectives without giving up on any genre and from a point of view that completely departs from the big sports newspapers.

*Jot Down* has a clear objective [12]: “to analyse serious issues with humour, to approach culture and leisure from another perspective and to debate with its protagonists in a different way”. Although culture predominates, it also includes sports, politics, science, sex and international conflicts. Its most prominent features are: the free nature of its contents (access the website without advertising costs 30 euros per year), its black and white design, the timelessness of the chosen themes, the high quality of the texts and photographs, the prestige of its collaborators and the prevalence of long-format interviews (some of which come close to 10,000 words). In addition to the free digital contents (until February 2019), the publisher had three pay-to-read printed publications; the monthly *Jot Down Smart* (a magazine that was distributed until January 2019 as a supplement of *El País* newspaper) and the quarterly *Jot Down Kids* (children's magazine) and *Jot Down Magazine*, which is distributed to subscribers. It also publishes an average of four books a year with the *Jot Down Books* brand.

On the other hand, *Anfibia* defines itself [13] as “a digital magazine of articles, essays and non-fiction stories that works with the rigour of journalistic research and literary tools”. As the directory *sembramedia.org* [14] points out, the magazine usually publishes long-format stories accompanied by illustrations and images. Addresses current and timeless issues (mainly related to Argentina), not from the breaking-news point of view, but based on the in-depth analysis of problems. It has the support of the Foundation for a New Ibero-American Journalism, and its editors have won international awards. The magazine's website specifies more of its objectives: “In times when the news is a *commodity* that is copied, pasted and published, *Anfibia* bets on quality sustained in permanent research and an agenda that seeks to reach the core of each subject without ever ceasing to be contemporary”. Its online content is free of charge. In its seven years of existence, it has published two pay-to-read books, in 2015 and 2018.

*Panenka*'s name pays homage to Czech player Antonín Panenka, who scored the famous winning penalty in the 1976 European Championship. All of its contents are free of charge except for the monthly magazine that is sold via subscription. Its website combines interviews, historical articles, investigative reports, profiles, feature articles, stories, photo-reports, infographics, literary notes, essays and even comic stories. Most of its articles focus on football, but at the same time are the way of entry to know and to explore historical events. *Panenka* is absolutely convinced of the role of football in social transformation and, above all, its writers believe that football is culture. Its motto is “*Panenka*. Football you can read” [15].

### 4.3. Sources of funding

In today's complex media context, the fact that three magazines like *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka* Take have seven and eight years in the market is almost a miracle, which is a positive fact in itself taking into account the adverse economic panorama that the publishing world is facing. It should be noted that, although they are digital products, their main income comes from the sale of their printed versions (as in the case of *Jot Down* and *Panenka*).

They are small business structures with work forces ranging from six to fourteen employees and budgets ranging from 200,000 to about one million euros per year. Before analysing each one of the funding models of these magazines it is worth highlighting two issues: the difficulties faced by the research team—especially in the cases of *Anfibia* and *Panenka*—to obtain specific data and, on the other hand, their different funding systems. While *Jot Down* and *Panenka* subsist thanks to the sales of their printed products, *Anfibia* is financed by the UNSAM, which provides in 80% of its income. In any case, the three media have serious economic difficulties and are going through a period of reflection to improve their sources of funding in the coming years.

With regards to *Jot Down*, the publishing company is *Wabi Sabi Investments*, which is a limited civil society with headquarters in Seville. The corporate structure is shared 50/50 between editor Ángel Luis Fernández and CEO María Jesús Marhuenda. In 2018, *Jot Down* had a workforce of 14 people (10 full-time and 4 part-time) who worked in management, editing, administration, communication, distribution, design, content, promotion and relations with collaborators, among others. In 2018, according to data from *Jot Down*, the three main sources of income for the magazine were the following: the defunct *Jot Down Smart* (300,000 euros; 35.8% of the total); Soiden, the distributor (250,000 euros and 29.8% approx.); and advertising sales (250,000 euros and 29.8%). *Jot Down* had between 600 and 700 subscribers that represented an income below 40,000 euros (less than 5% of the total income).

*Jot Down* has a staff of 399 regular and sporadic collaborators, many of which are prestigious firms. The fee paid to collaborators is not fixed but varies according to the author and also depends on the format and on how many times it is published. At the moment, digital contents are free although, due to a reduction in advertising revenue in the first half of 2018 that caused a crisis in its finances, *Jot Down* implemented an advertising-free subscription fee of €30 a year (€3 per month). Moreover, in 2019 the magazine contemplated the implementation of a paywall to stop depending on advertising fluctuations. The magazine has different subscription types. The most common is the yearly



subscription, which costs 60 euros and includes the mailing of four 254-page quarterly paper magazines.

*Jot Down* has shares in a distribution company, Soiden, which in addition to *Jot Down*, distributes other magazines such as *Altaïr*, *Granta* (in Spanish), digital books and publications of other magazines that also practice narrative journalism as in the case of *5W*. Furthermore, *Jot Down* regularly organises culture-related events, art exhibits and scientific events [16].

In economic terms, *Jot Down* has gone through several stages. After a hesitant start, it finally had positive results in 2017, but faced regression in 2018. The aim of the company is to reach a turnover of around one million euros per year. The evolution of the last four years is shown in the following table.

**Table 2. *Jot Down*'s economic data (2014-2017)**

	2014	2015	2016 <sup>oo</sup>	2017
Total turnover	579,103.39	641,215.42	869,627.66	852,974.58
Ordinary income	557,873.16	616,219.45	861,234.39	836,637.79
Other income	1,537.23	2,648.47	19.57	144.9
Ministry subvention	12,208.52	11,799.20	-	22,325.6
Balance (+/-)	-7,484.48	-10,548.30	-8,373.70	6,133.71

Source: *Jot Down*

The losses in the first years resulted in a reduction in salaries in 2015. The 2018 balance was not closed at the time of completing this research, although the management estimated a loss of about 30,000 euros. Most of the expenses correspond to salaries and the payment of collaborators that, in total, represent about 75%. In September 2015, an agreement was reached with *El País* for the distribution of *Smart* magazine. On a monthly basis, *Jot Down* delivered a pdf file with the contents of the 144-page magazine and in return it received 25,000 euros per month (300,000 euros per year) and 60% of the advertising *Jot Down* managed directly. *Ediciones El País* printed and distributed the magazine and collected 40% of the advertising revenue in addition to the sales of the magazine in kiosks. This agreement ended in January 2019 due to the ostensible variations in the conditions imposed by *El País* to *Jot Down*. The end of the agreement meant a serious setback for the magazine since it meant losing its main source of income in 2018 (35.8% of the total). The magazine's management team was analysing new strategies for the next few years. Ángel Luis Fernández shared the following reflection [17]: "The future of the magazine requires us to increase the number of subscribers, especially the digital ones, who pay monthly fees, which is what we have just launched. We will offer them pdf downloads of books and magazines, as well as access to digital content free of advertising. We have conversations with other media to make new products, but no agreement has been reached yet".

*Anfibia*, on the other hand, has always been dependent on the budgets of a public entity. When it emerged, in 2012, 100% of the magazine's budget was provided by the *Lectura Mundi* programme of the UNSAM. In 2018, that proportion changed to about 80%, while the remaining 20% would come from the fees paid by the 500 people who annually attended the journalism workshops organised by the magazine.

The data collected from the interviews with CEO Ana Sol García Dinerstein [18] and the journalistic editor Cristian Alarcón, among others, indicate that in 2018 the magazine had a staff of eleven people who were in the university's payroll. The magazine's newsroom was located in Belgrano Avenue (n° 768) in Buenos Aires. Only the journalistic editor and the graphic editor were exclusively dedicated to the magazine. Most of the magazine's staff had other professional occupations.

According to CEO Mario Greco, the budget of the magazine in 2018 was almost €200,000 (173,837.46 to be precise). The resources generated by the magazine (mainly through the journalism workshops) were close to \$35,000 (i.e. €30,421.55), which is 17.5% of total expenses. The 2016 financial data published by José María Albalad in 2018 are more precise. Based on these data (Albalad 2018:111, 112, 239 and 240), in 2016 the magazine's budget was 3,707,881.31 Argentinean pesos (230,000 euros). Most of the collaborations were paid with a rate that in 2016 oscillated (Albalad, 2018:113) between 62 and 94 euros depending on the type of work done (photography, illustration or written material).

The data clearly confirms *Anfibia*'s quasi-absolute dependence on the UNSAM, which is an extraordinary circumstance within the panorama of narrative journalism magazines. The leaders of the project are fully aware of this and are firmly involved in the search for new ways of financing.

Legally, *Panenka* is a limited civil society composed by seventeen partners, being its main shareholder and publisher, Aitor Lagunas. Its headquarters are in Barcelona. All people responsible for the publication exercise their functions from the headquarters, although they also work, like the collaborators, from their usual places of residence. *Panenka* has six fixed workers and one or two student interns, who are not part of the staff.

The printed version has more than 3,000 subscribers. There is only one type of subscription, the annual one, which costs 45 euros. This subscription has some variants that include the same format but add a gift. Advertising is managed by *Panenka* through two people, one in Barcelona and one in Madrid. Advertising is presented in banners and conventional display formats, but above all and increasingly through branded content, following the general market trend, and always taking into account the qualitative added value of the magazine. It mainly advertises mainstream brands, big food, car, beverage and gambling brands. Some examples are Volkswagen, the gambling house *Luckia*, an online MA programme in Sports direction and management of the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, and the Real Madrid University School. This advertising accounts for 40% of the total budget. The remainder comes from the annual contributions of subscribers (27%), and bookshops and kiosks (4% and 15%, respectively).

*Panenka* usually sells about 8,000 printed copies, including subscriptions. The higher costs are production costs, approximately 40%, which includes design and layout, photographs and above all, printing. The next biggest expense is staff and collaborations, with 30% and 20%, respectively. The rest, 15%, is for other expenses like rent and supplies. The online shop, which sells the magazine and books from other publishers, T-shirts and merchandising, provides 13% of the income. *Panenka* does not receive any private contributions.

Finally, it must be noted that, despite its insistence, the research team has been unable to obtain more specific economic data on this magazine.

#### 4.4. General features

Several common features define the projects of *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*. The three projects dared to swim against the currents of the media, which are more turbulent than ever. Against the instantaneity and superficiality of contents that predominate in most news media, these magazines offer long texts, contextualised, analytical and full of nuances. This is what distinguishes them, as well as the fact that they have taken very good care of the quality of their texts and the design of their digital and printed products. Below we offer a cross-sectional analysis of these projects.

##### 4.4.1. Digital versions

The digital versions of *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka* exhibit different styles.

Figure 1. Homepage of *Jot Down* on 10 July 2018.



The layout of the website of *Jot Down*, for example, is based on a simple *WordPress* template featuring a predominantly black and white palette. The texts are renewed daily (usually two a day). The length of these articles ranges from 1,500 to 4,000 words. The predominant style is free, heterodox and against the “golden rules” of journalism. Many of its texts are a hybrid between reportage, chronicle, analysis and opinion column. Interviews are the flagship genre of its website. Its texts can reach up to 10,000 words.

Figure 2. Homepage and intro of *Anfibia*, 22 October 2018.



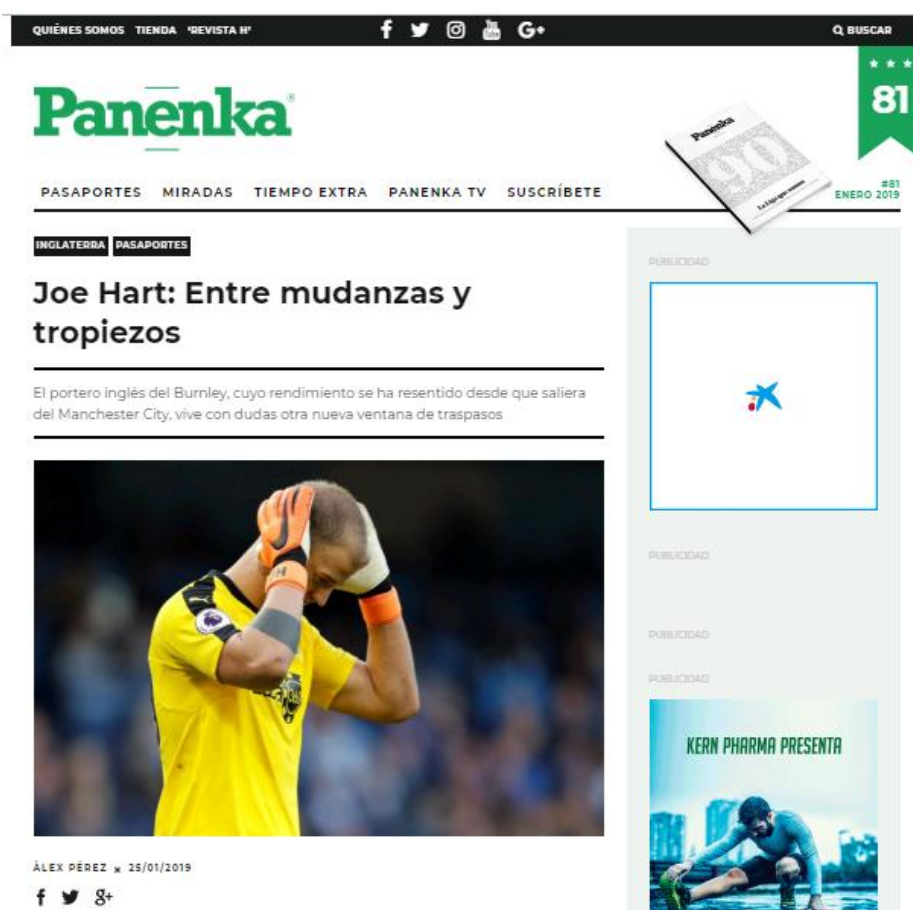
**La violencia simbólica y real que trae el triunfo de Bolsonaro tiene un nuevo protagonismo cotidiano. No sabemos si crece, pero se hace pública sin prejuicios en distintos países de la región: un sentimiento anti-pobre, anti-negro, anti-progresismo emerge al pasar en las charlas familiares, entre amigos, en periodistas que jamás imaginamos llegarían a tanto. ¿Cuándo pasó todo esto?**

The online version of *Anfibia* is very visual, fast to access, and hassle free. The first thing that stands out there is the day’s featured chronic or essay, which is advertised with a good quality picture or illustration that carries the title of the piece (often formulated as a question) and occupies the entire width of the screen. Scrolling down the screen we reach the always-suggestive lead of the piece. The

edition of these pieces is an essential part of the brand image. The length of its texts ranges from 1,500 to 5.000 words.

*Panenka*'s website is simple, non-pretentious and linked to social networks, which reinforces its brand image. Content is updated every day (between four and five texts). The central part is dedicated to the featured piece of the number. The main element is a colour photograph that presents the news event and its protagonist, together with the headline. The bottom of the page presents the contents of the printed magazine and web-exclusive articles. The average length of the texts ranges from 1,500 to 10,000 words.

**Figure 3.** *Panenka*'s cover, 28 January 2019.



#### 4.4.2. Printed versions

The printed version of the magazines is the prolongation of their digital editions. All three magazines have made a visible effort to find complementarity between both formats.

In the case of *Jot Down*, its digital magazine is an invitation to approach its printed versions, either the now defunct monthly *Smart* (144 pages with some content already published in the web), the quarterly *Jot Down* (254 pages) with unpublished articles, the quarterly version for children (the colourful 64-page *Jot Down Kids*), and its books published by the same editorial, without a predetermined periodicity. The search for quality and originality in the texts is a constant that has led the magazine to select recognised collaborators, especially journalists, writers, columnists, artists and scholars.

Since its birth in 2012, *Anfibia* has published two collective books, in 2015 and 2018. The first one is titled “*Anfibia. Chronicles and essays I*”, a 400-pages long compilation of the most outstanding works of the first two years of the digital version of the magazine. The second one was a 196-page book entirely devoted to love, written by prestigious Latin American authors and launched in December 2018 (on digital pre-sale since October).

*Panenka* publishes a colour 116-page long monthly magazine (eleven numbers a year). The average extension of the texts ranges from 2,500 to 3,000 words. The magazine tries to abandon routine journalism, by telling interesting stories through an attractive design, always looking for the coherence of the project. Image has a lot of weight in the publication. The interview and the report are the most used genres, while investigative articles are included sometimes. Sometimes they turn an interview into a reportage or vice versa. Genre hybridisation is part of its identity.

#### **4.5. Photography and audiovisual resources**

The three magazines are proud of the quality of their images, be they photographs, infographics, drawings or illustrations. As far as audiovisual resources are concerned, there is a greater effort on the part of *Anfibia*.

*Jot Down* has a wide panel of graphic collaborators. In all cases, one could speak of a common denominator in its photographs: generous size, great black and white contrasts, the facial expressiveness of the protagonists portrayed and, in many cases, an irreverent, provocative, underground touch that makes them especially creative.

The Argentinean magazine vindicates the concept of *Anfibia photography*, which implies being open to questions and challenges of all kinds. In 2015 *Anfibia* opened its own YouTube channel dedicated to the production of audiovisual resources, like documentaries and videos of different duration (some in 360-degree format). All these products are distributed through social networks and have had, to a greater or lesser extent, an important acceptance. *Anfibia* also publishes podcasts that are made available in its website.

*Panenka* also grants great importance to its photographs and infographics and recently made an important effort to expand its range of audiovisual resources through apps for iPad, Android tablets and smartphones.

#### 4.6. Profile of collaborators

Renowned journalists, writers, photographers and personalities from the world of culture are among the contributors of these magazines.

In August 2018, the list of collaborators in the website of *Jot Down* contained a total of 399 people, although about one hundred are among the most regular collaborators, including prestigious professionals such as Enric González, Martín Parros, Rosa Montero and Mónica Prieto.

*Anfibia* has a wide network of collaborators (more than 1,600 including writers, journalists, scholars, photographers and illustrators). *Anfibia* is indelibly united to the profile of its editor Cristian Alarcón, a scholar and professor who has been recognised as one of the 100 most outstanding personalities of Argentinean literature. Other illustrious collaborators of the magazine are Federico Bianchini, Leila Guerriero and Graciela Mochkofsky.

Finally, the most common contributors of *Panenka* are journalists in 80-90% of the cases, although their work is complemented with the help of illustrators and photographers.

#### 4.7. Content analysis

A common characteristic of the contents of the three magazines is the hybridisation that is proudly exhibited by their journalistic genres. This is particularly evident in the case of *Jot Down*. In addition, the contents of *Anfibia* show a commitment to defend the civic and social rights of Argentina's society and a strong commitment to quality, which is reflected in the careful editing of its texts. *Panenka* produces quality cultural journalism and is also a pioneer in the approach to such a stereotyped sport as football, which is used as a vehicle to tackle any issue. The contents of these three magazines maintain a different relation with the news events: it is closer in the case of *Anfibia*, much more unresponsive in the case of *Jot Down* and halfway in the case of *Panenka*.

The texts of *Jot Down* avoid servitude to current events. They often use techniques of literary narrative, without delving into fiction. They move away from the strict limits set in journalism schools with respect to the features of headlines, the structure of news stories, the hierarchy of the inverted pyramid, the non-use of the first person in texts and the distance required from the narrator regarding the event described or the person interviewed. Despite this, it is a successful formula according to its audience statistics.

The interview is the star genre in *Jot Down*. It tries to publish two a week on the website, all of them with a very special stamp. For Carlos Foguet, head of communications at *Jot Down* in 2012 [19], it was very clear that the quality of the texts was and should be paramount, as well as the duration of the interview (at least one hour of recording), its non-promotional character (no talking about the next book, record, political campaign, etc.) and always avoiding the tabloid style. Interviews are precisely the most wanted products among the readers of *Jot Down*, although this does not always coincide with the most read articles, which are those related to sex, cinema or sports [20], which are issues with a marginal presence on its website.

On the other hand, *Anfibia* defends and practices an agenda committed to the human rights and social fights that have splashed Argentina in the last decade. It publishes new contents on a regular basis, and they are closely related to current issues. It usually updates its star content three times a week, in the form of feature articles, essays or other type of content. The pursuit of narrative excellence has been permanent as shown, for example, in the meticulous editing work of the texts (which are without a doubt of the keys to its success). The headlines and leads of chronicles and essays follow the same pattern: they act as a “hook” for the reader to consume the whole text.

The texts of the magazine are, often, deeply literary and incorporate elements with an important sociological or anthropological burden. Today, its most popular genre is the essay, but according to its editor, Cristián Alarcón, “this is a *chronicled*, narrative essay”.

The magazine organizes annually between 20 and 25 seminars, delivered by prestigious Argentinean writers and professionals and attended by about 500 people interested in the writing and culture promoted by the magazine. The workshops introduce students to the techniques of the chronicle, essay, cultural journalism, gender narratives, digital journalism and sports chronicles, for example.

*Panenka* has used the famous penalty taken into 1976 by the player of the same name as the perfect metaphor to illustrate a way to understand and disseminate football culture, a formula that departs from the style of big sports newspapers. *Panenka* targets a football fan that feels the purity of this sport in all its dimensions, whether political, historical, social or cultural.

The magazine approaches football from the perspective of cultural journalism. Its contents are relatively linked to current events: they reject the journalism based on statements and avoid what they call the *yoke* of current events, although it takes advantage of certain ephemeris to publish monographs that may be of interest for the audience, like the 90<sup>th</sup> edition of the Spanish league, the anniversary of Johan Cruyff’s death, and the relationship between football and cinema.

*Panenka* is a pioneer magazine since it addresses the phenomenon of football from a rather unknown perspective in Spain, approaching this sport in a freer, more natural, less stereotypical way. The information it offers is rigorous and try to awaken the curiosity of readers through engaging stories related to their context. The genres cultivated the most by the magazine are the historical piece, the interview and the investigative report. Their headlines always seek to go beyond today’s events and for this reason the interview is the journalistic genre that best suits its objectives.

#### **4.8. Audiences and social networks**

The magazines under analysis have a wide presence on the Internet as reflected in the following tables. In the three cases the number of monthly unique visitors has experienced an exponential growth, although *Jot Down* and *Anfibia* experienced a downward stagnation in 2018. Especially striking is the difference that exists in the average duration of visits, which is much higher in the case of *Jot Down*. This suggest that the visitors of the other two magazines most of the times do not read the articles in their entirety.



**Table 3. Evolution of monthly unique visitors (MUV) and visit duration (VD) for *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*.**

Magazine	Type of data	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Jot Down</i>	MUV	253,532	327,368	447,360	749,201	716,809	689,254	679,510
	VD	[21]			09:11	09:03	08:38	08:36
<i>Anfibia</i>	MUV	28,075	33,974	59,111	161,400	193,531	241,377	198,146
	VD				01:38	01:42	01:46	01:48
<i>Panenka</i>	MUV	[22]	11,792	16,501	40,599	45,000	65,200	86,300
	VD				02:15	01:14	01:28	01:25

Source: Google Analytics.

Presence in social networks is equally important and, in this regard, we should emphasise the leadership of *Jot Down* in comparison to the other two magazines. *Anfibia* have its own *Anfibia community* through its website with more than 2,000 followers that interact with the magazine.

**Table 4. Followers of *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka* in social networks (January 2019).**

Magazine	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram
<i>Jot Down</i>	193,141	277,000	24,400
<i>Anfibia</i>	173,798	75,500	126,000
<i>Panenka</i>	77,725	77,900	10,000

Source: Internet.

Age profiles do not yield significant differences between the three magazines. In all cases, it is mainly a young public, under 44 years of age.

However, according to the data provided by the magazines themselves, there are notable differences in the gender of visitors. For example, *Anfibia* is the only magazine in which women (56.71%) beat men, while *Panenka*'s public is eminently masculine.

*Anfibia's* public, according to Cristián Alarcón, has a clearly progressive profile, identifies with leftist ideas, is young, cultured and preferably feminine. Its journalistic editor elaborates on the profile of its audience (Alarcón, 2018):

**Table 5. Age-group profile of followers of *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*.**

Age Band	<i>Jot Down</i>	<i>Anfibia</i>	<i>Panenka</i>
18-24	12%	12.34%	14%
25-34	34%	35.27%	30%
34-44	23%	22.00%	30%
45-54	15%	12.61%	15%
55-64	5%	12.02%	10%
65 +	11%	5.76 %	1%

Source: Google Analytics.

*The percentage of women is growing. Feminist or in the process of deconstruction. With a belief in deeply human values, from solidarity to loyalty, not understood as fidelity, but as coherence. Ready for novelty and change. Travelers. Connoisseurs of the world. Interested in contemporary arts or contemporary experiences, that will produce pleasure, enjoyment, and knowledge. In general, they have university studies, or higher. Sometimes they are self-taught and mundane.*

**Table 6. Origin of the audiences of *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka*.**

Country	<i>Jot Down</i>	<i>Anfibia</i>	<i>Panenka</i>
Argentina	3,11%	72,1%	2%
Chile	1,56%	2,21%	2-3%
Colombia	1,89%	2,42%	3%
USA	-	2,68%	4-5%
Spain	75%	3,43%	80-90 %
Mexico	3,89%	4,7%	3-4%
Peru	-	1,41%	2%

Uruguay	-	3,42%	
Rest of the world	14,64%	7,63%	3%

Sources. Google Analytics and Netquest (in the case of *Panenka*)

The profile of *Jot Down*'s readers, according to OJD of February 2018, would be as follows: Male living in Spain, aged between 25 and 45 years. 47% of the visitors correspond to women and 53% to men.

Meanwhile, 80% of *Panenka*'s public are men and the remaining 20% are women. Its challenge is to attract more female readers, although it considers that it already has a larger share of women than traditional football media. As explained by Álex López Vendrell, "(...) we would like to have even more [female lectors]. In the end, we want to reach the whole public".

Finally, the following table shows the origin of the audiences. As we can see, almost 28% of the readers of *Anfibia* are from outside Argentina. 25% of the audience of *Jot Down* is from out of Spain. In the case of *Panenka*, most of its public is from Spain.

#### 4.9. Perspectives

Looking at the most immediate future, the major challenge for the three magazines is to expand their number of subscribers (especially *Jot Down* and *Panenka*) and to diversify their sources of funding. *Jot Down* wanted to expand its audience in Latin America, *Anfibia* had innovative initiatives *in mind* (launch a master's degree programme in narrative journalism and street performance journalism projects [23]), while *Panenka* aspired to improve the loyalty of the public of the printed edition of its magazine.

#### 5. Discussion and conclusions

After seven or eight years in the market, and despite the difficulties they face, the three magazines under analysis constitute important models of reference within today's digital narrative or slow journalism in Spanish. *Jot Down*, *Anfibia* and *Panenka* depart from the hegemonic model of journalism and bet decisively on *slow journalism*, proving that the chronicle, the analysis, the in-depth reportage, the context interview, the essay and, in general, the long-format texts have their niche in the market. This approach distinguishes these magazines in a marked characterised by uniformity of content and sensationalist bias.

Despite being eminently digital media (largely as a consequence of the crisis of the printed press), these magazines maintain a relationship of complementarity with their printed versions, which is particularly evident in the cases of *Jot Down* and *Panenka*.

The three magazines have shown high doses of audacity and innovation in their approach. Starting as small business structures, they have been able to swim against the current and assume important risks.

They have built their own brand and have generated added value that distinguishes them from most other magazines in the market.

In the current media context, however, the quality of the product does not guarantee the economic profitability of the project. The end of the agreement reached between *El País* and *Jot Down* for publishing of *Jot Down Smart*, for example, urges the magazine to explore new ways of financing. *Anfibia* also faces challenges. This quality publication is committed with the defence of civic rights but is excessively dependent on public funding that is not guaranteed for the coming years. *Panenka* has the smallest budget and needs to expand its range of sources of income.

The three magazines maintain a different relationship with the current affairs and news events, which is more remarkable in the case of *Anfibia* and less evident in the case of *Panenka*, and completely remote in the case of *Jot Down*.

The analysed magazines use hybrid genres, narrative texts that are combine the interview, the analysis, the chronicle, the essay, the report and the opinion article. In any case, these texts manage to delight readers despite they depart from the archetypal structures that are taught in communication schools.

Finally, it should be noted that against the lethargy and uniformity of the big news media, it could be argued that the new age of journalism is giving birth to an alternative and audacious model that proudly vindicates another way to understand journalism. It is a narrative journalism that tells stories and analyses characters in their natural context stepping into the fields of fiction.

## 6. Notes

1. Statements made by the editor of *Jot Down*, Ángel Luis Fernández, for the authors of the report: “We were people who didn’t know each other in person. In fact, most of the staff in *Jot Down* met when the company was already in operation. The idea was conceived by my partner Mar de Marchis [María Jesús Marhuenda], who in principle presents the project to important editors of our country who do not pay her much attention, so she decides to launch it with the help of Ricardo [Ricardo J. González] and myself, among others. The statements of Ángel Luis Fernández that appear in this report were collected in an in-depth interview carried out by the authors of the article with the editor of the magazine in Seville on 15 March 2018.
2. María Jesús Marhuenda, also known as Mar de Marchis, is the CEO of *Jot Down*. She is surrounded by a certain mystery. She has granted very few interviews and has not had her photograph published in any medium. In one of the few interviews she granted in 2017 to the Spanish version of *Vanity Fair* (in which her photo does not appear) she admitted: “I founded *Jot Down* to avoid going crazy”. In the past she suffered long periods of depression and agoraphobia. She stayed at home for long periods of time, even without being able to speak, communicating only via the Internet. In 2011, during those periods of reflection and as a result of the ideas she exchanged with the rest of the members of the aforementioned Internet forum, she came up with the idea of creating *Jot Down*. Full interview

available on online: <http://www.revistavanityfair.es/actualidad/articulos/mar-de-marchis-fundadora-jot-down-revista-marhuenda/24850> [6 July 2018].

3. Available at <http://www.unsam.edu.ar/lecturamundi/sitio/> [Consulta: 08/10/2018].

4. According to the CV published by *Cuadernos del CEL*, Cristian Alarcón worked for the newspapers *Página/12* and *Crítica* and the magazines *TXT* and *Debate*. He coordinates chronicle workshops in Buenos Aires and other Latin American cities. He teaches in the FNPI (Foundation for a New Ibero-American Journalism). Since May 2012, he directs *Anfibia* magazine of the National University of San Martín. Between 2013 and 2015 he directed the judicial news agency *Infojus Noticias*. He is the founder and CEO of *Cosecha Roja*, the Latin American police journalism network. He teaches at the School of Journalism and Social Communication and directs the Postgraduate programme in Cultural Journalism of the National University of La Plata. Visiting professor at the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies of the University of Austin, Texas. His book *Cuando me muera quiero que me toquen cumbia* (“When I die, I want cumbia played on my funeral”), which surpassed 26 editions, won the Samuel Chavkin Award for Integrity in Journalism. His 2013 book, *Un mar de castillos peronistas* (“A sea of Peronist castles”), is a compilation of chronicles published in *Debate* magazine.

5. <http://cosecharoja.org/acerca-de/> [consultation: 08/10/2018].

6. The Panenka is a technique used penalty kick-taking, in which the taker gives a subtle touch underneath the ball, causing it to rise and go over the goalkeeper and fall within the centre of the goal.

7. Works by Aitor Lagunas available online (<http://www.panenka.org/autor/aitor/>) and on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/aitorlagunas?lang=eu>

8. Personal communication with the editor-in-chief of *Panenka*, Carlos Martín Rio, and the coordinator Roger Xuriach: “We started this adventure, it was something new here, an unprecedented idea and *Lagunas* was launched”. The statements of Carlos Martín Rio and Roger Xuriach were collected in an in-depth interview conducted in Barcelona on 9 July 2018.

9. *So Foot* is a French football magazine launched in 2003 by Franck Annese, Guillaume Bonamy and Sylvain Hervé. It is published by the independent company *So Press*. *11 Freunde* is a football culture magazine founded in 2000 by Reinaldo Coddou H. and Philipp Köster. It is published monthly in Berlin. Information available online: <http://www.fofoot.com/> and <https://www.11freunde.de/> [consultation: 22/09/2018].

10. Information available at <http://www.panenka.org/manifiesto/> [consultation: 21/09/2018]

11. The full team is listed here: <http://www.panenka.org/equipo/> [consultation: 21/09/2018]

12. <https://www.jotdown.es/acerca-de-jot-down/> [consultation: 19/09/2018].

13. Available at: <http://www.revistaAnfibia.com/que-es-Anfibia/> [consultation: 15/10/2018].

14. Available at: <https://www.sembramedia.org/medio/revista-Anfibia/> [consultation: 15/10/2018].

15. *Panenka* is part of a European association of football culture magazines together with: *The Blizzard* (England), *So Foot* (France), *Offside* (Sweden), *11 Freunde* (Germany), *Zwölf* (Switzerland), *Josimar* (Norway), *Ballesterer* (Austria), *Socrates* (Turkey) and *Uncidi* (Italy). It also collaborates closely with other international magazines such as *Don Julio* (Argentina), *De Cabeza* (Chile), *El Escorpión* (Colombia), *Howler* (USA) and *Football Critique* (Japan).
16. Scientific dissemination is another objective for the publisher. In fact, since 2014, he organises scientific dissemination events with important specialists in the field.
17. Testimony collected on 25 January 2019.
18. Interview conducted over the Internet on 5 September 2018.
19. Koch, Tommaso, *Parrafadas de éxito 'online'*, *El País*, 30 August 2012. Available at: [https://elpais.com/cultura/2012/08/29/actualidad/1346226060\\_676549.html](https://elpais.com/cultura/2012/08/29/actualidad/1346226060_676549.html).
20. Information extracted from the interview with the CEO Ángel Luis Fernández.
21. Visit duration data begins to be reliable from 2015, when Google Analytics (and OJD) unifies its criteria and begins to use the same algorithm to calculate the data.
22. *Panenka* was born in May 2012. Audience data began to be collected from 2013.
23. Street Performance brings together theatre and journalistic research.

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