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## **Estrategias de redes sociales para la promoción de macanas artesanales de la provincia del Azuay**

### **Social media strategies for the promotion of artisan woven cloth in the province of Azuay**

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## ABSTRACT

The social media strategy, also called the online communication and interaction platform between the customer and the seller, is used by users constantly because it allows the posting and marketing of products of all kinds, including artisanal ones through social networks. The objective is to design a model of social media strategy for the commercial promotion of artisan woven cloth that enhances the positioning and image of the Gualaceo canton, Azuay province. Methodologically, it is a mixed type research with a qualitative transversal approach. From the results obtained, it is emphasized that there is a weak commercialization of woven cloth due to the commercial unawareness and cultural representativeness that these artisan garments have, being essential to apply the social media strategy model as a marketing strategy, position and improvement of image of the offered product.

**Descriptors:** Social media; marketing; supply and demand; market research. (Words taken from the UNESCO Thesaurus).

## INTRODUCTION

Ecuador, with its 24 provinces, is a country that has stood out throughout history for its ancestral traditions, the richness of its Amazon, its coastal profile and the indigenous communities that for years have preserved the roots and culture of their peoples. However, one of the main characteristics that highlight among them is the diversity of their crafts, since the variety of their products come from the nature that surrounds them. The main ones are: toquilla straw that is used for making beautiful hats, as well as alpaca wool, sheep wool and leather to manufacture garments.

Within this cultural framework, the province of Azuay is located in the south of the country. It is an area surrounded by lakes, rivers and valleys that mark its beauty. It has a political division that includes 15 cantons, it also has a culture full of traditions that distinguish it from other cities; especially, the cantons of Chordeleg and Gualaceo. The province has an outstanding craftsmanship in the production of clothing fabrics in alpaca wool, toquilla straw hats and jewelry. Its capital is the city of Cuenca, which has a colonial and pre-Inca history displayed in its sanctuaries and museums.

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Regarding the clothing of its inhabitants, it is traditionally considered as a source of cultural heritage because they are laboriously embroidered and hand-woven since colonial times with indigenous elements that prevail today having small modifications but the same essence. Likewise, garments have a significant cost due to the inlaying of stones incorporated into the fabrics, highlighting the social level of the families according to their use; that is, the more decorations exhibited in the garments, the higher was the social level of the community, thus enhancing their image in the cultural environment that surrounds them.

The Gualaceo canton is located in the south-eastern Ecuadorian province of Azuay, recognized nationally as a cultural heritage of Ecuador. Therefore, it is interesting to observe national and foreign tourists who visit it because of its warm climate and the products offered. One of them is a distinctive wool garment called cloth or macana (woven cloth), made with the IKAT technique in the Bullcay and Bullzhún communities, which highlights the culture and identity of people that have maintained their roots over time.

The problem in this research lies in the commercial ignorance about the artisan macanas made in the communities of the Gualaceo canton, which leads people to have scarce knowledge about its attributes, benefits and distinctive characteristics towards possible national and foreign consumers. It causes that the artisan macanas place in a low position not only in the canton, but also in the provinces and the nation in general. It also causes its inhabitants to acquire imported products with similar characteristics. The general objective is aimed at designing a social media strategy model based on the commercial promotion of artisanal macanas that enhances the positioning and image of the Gualaceo canton, Azuay province.

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## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodological process was focused on a non-experimental design. Also, it was a mixed-methods research with an emphasis on the quantitative approach. Regarding the scope, it was descriptive - explanatory because the variables under study were exposed in a general way, according to the theory of (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014). The deductive-inductive method was applied, organizing the facts found systematically. Finally, with the systemic method, a digital strategic plan was designed to improve the commercial positioning of artisan macanas made in the Gualaceo canton of the Azuay province (Trelles-Méndez, Erazo-Álvarez, & Narváez-Zurita, 2019).

The population was finite, that is, 1,349 people. And we worked with a sample of 461 women belonging to the Gualaceo canton, Azuay province.

## **RESULTS**

The results obtained showed the preference for acquiring the macanas offered in the Gualaceo canton of the Azuay province, for which 100% were women with an age range between 30 and 35 years old. Within the target market, 30% were independent professionals, 40% were public employees; meanwhile, 30% was destined for the purchase between students, housewives and micro-entrepreneurs. Regarding the marketing system, 74% estimated that it was necessary in contrast to 26% who did not consider it necessary.

In relation to the commercial media through which they had knowledge of the marketing of macanas, 76% indicated that it had been carried out by the press published in electronic media; however, 20% indicated by the written press and 4% by social networks, which showed the need to carry out a social media strategy that allowed knowing the product and its feasibility of online purchase.

However, with respect to the production of macanas, 56% of the population was unaware of the product's production system, while 44% briefly knew the place and its production process. In addition, 35% used macanas for cultural identity; however, 25%

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used them according to current fashion and 30% had no preference over the product, to finish a minimum of 10% did not consider the use of the product necessary.

Due to the commercial ignorance about the macanas produced in the Gualaceo canton of the Azuay province in social networks, 60% indicated that they made the purchase of the product directly at the place of production; likewise, 20% acquired them in boutiques and a minimum of 20% acquired them through direct distributors.

To define the process of marketing macanas, 75% of the population stated that it was necessary to do so through social networks, also 20% preferred the use of a web page that identified the national product; and 5% had preference over the media.

According to the valuation system in the acquisition of macanas, 70% did it due to the artisanal cultural identity it represents, 20% valued it as a garment and a minimum of 5% as a cold cover due to the climate of the canton.

Among the marketing alternatives, 70% preferred social networks, 25% website publications and 5% distributors. Based on these results, it is considered necessary to use social networks for the promotion of macanas in the Gualaceo canton of the Azuay province.

## **PROPOSAL**

The digital strategic plan is specifically geared towards promoting a product or service. For this reason, it is important to highlight a model that identifies the brand established on the macanas offered in the Gualaceo canton, considering important factors in the social media application that publishes immediate delivery availability to customers on social networks.

### **Scheme of the proposal. (Own elaboration)**

The social media strategy is developed in 5 phases:

Phase 1. Promote the product offered

Phase 2. Attract users and brand followers

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Phase 3. Interact experiences on the use of the product and its quality

Phase 4. Loyalty requirements in offers and promotions

Phase 5. Monitor the behavior of users and followers of social networks that determine the level of promotional feasibility and sales.

### **Promote**

The marketing process of a product begins, as in this case, macanas made in the Gualaceo canton are promoted by means of social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

### **Attract**

In this phase, the market segmentation that will serve as a link among customers is identified, offering promotions that allow an acquisition in real time and interest in its customers.

### **Interact**

Different information systems are established on the quality of the product: purchases, payment methods and shipping methods.

### **Loyalty**

In the loyalty stage, the defined market is generally obtained through the preferences of designs and colors. The final contact is established to determine the level of consumption and continuity of purchases of the macanas. It is important to define the KPI (Level of consumption, frequencies in purchases, continuous sessions and Shares – comments).

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## **Monitor**

This phase carries out a complete measurement and analysis of the identification, interaction and loyalty with the brand based on the KPIs established for highlighting the macanas' prestige and online positioning in the Gualaceo canton before the competition in the market. It will help to determine the number of followers that the brand has in the different social networks, comparing their social performance in the publications posted.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Taking into consideration the marketing effect of the macanas produced in the Azuay province, a proposal focused on phases related to the social media strategy is projected to implement a better process for customer acquisition when advertising the product. It includes the technique used by artisans for producing a variety of macanas to offer diversity of designs and colors that allow them to choose according to their preferences. In addition, a virtual real marketing system would be established between producers of macanas and users to identify their loyalty to the product through the different systems of interaction.

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