

FROM A BRAZILIAN TELEVISION STATION TO A MEDIATECH COMPANY

DE EMISSORA DE TELEVISÃO BRASILEIRA À EMPRESA MEDIATECH
DE LA EMISORA DE TELEVISIÓN BRASILEÑA A LA EMPRESA MEDIATECH

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ABSTRACT:

Television companies are going through a process of digital transformation, as can be seen in the transformation of Grupo Globo into a mediatech company, with the objective of technologically integrating the creative departments in order to customize the services offered to users. In the model of a mediatech company, the creation and production of content is no longer linked to different channels and services, but aggregated to an integrative productive platform, generated by a project called Globotech - which involves production and delivery of content, business and technological innovation. Therefore, in this paper the term Globotech designates the digital core of the organization as mediatech. Thus, we intend to discuss the restructuring of companies and analyze their internal interfaces and in relation to other platforms, aiming at positioning Globoplay as a showcase for Grupo Globo, based on its network of Brazilianness.

KEYWORDS: Globoplay; Mediatech; Streaming.

Introduction

In the age of streaming services, the Brazilian television industry is seeking to update itself using content distribution services via digital platforms. Since its arrival in Brazil in 1950, free-to-air television has been delivering entertainment and information through a diversified and, at the same time, massive programming, for different audiences, based on a distribution infrastructure via satellite and on the linear flow of content. In the 1990s, with pay TV, content segmentation and the growth of the niche market began (Jenner, 2015), which intensified with the popularization of streaming as a model for delivering television content over the internet, from the 2010s onwards.

According to William Uricchio (2005, p. 251), the history of television is permeated by changes and that in the face of new technological interfaces, "neither the viewer nor

the television programmer dominates the notion of flow"¹. The streaming distribution model brings a continuous flow of data disseminated over the internet, distinct from the television flow based on the programming schedule. Thus, "a new factor enters the equation: the combination of applied metadata protocols"² (idem). The intertwining of algorithmic logic in the organization of the flow allows the viewer to access content connected between different devices, multiplying consumption possibilities, placing on-demand flow in a complementary relationship with television flow (Massarolo *et al.*, 2017).

This technological change in the distribution model also provokes transformations in the logics of the television market in relation to production and circulation. The transnational character of the platforms is one of the factors that impact regional markets. With the circulation of television content occurring on a global level through services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, television broadcasters are now facing foreign technology companies as competitors in their national territories.

According to Lobato (2019, p. 49), the distribution of content driven by technology companies' platforms "supposedly reshapes national cultures and circumvents national regulations". The Grupo Globo's reaction to the arrival of globalized streaming services was the creation of Globoplay in 2015. Today, the platform works as an aggregator of content from the conglomerate, where the public has access to different subscription packages with channels from open TV (TV Globo and affiliates), pay TV (grouped as Canais Globo³) and the catalog of original and licensed productions. In this way, aggregator platforms such as Globoplay are also understood as a business strategy by offering distinct applications in subscription packages⁴.

By transferring its distribution model from satellite to the internet, Grupo Globo added new value to its productions, delivering them through a platform infrastructure capable of aggregating different modes of communication, participation, and business

¹ According to Williams (2016), television flow is the uninterrupted experience of the viewer who watches the incessant continuity of content organized in the programming schedule - planned to retain attention, with the reiterated promise "that exciting things are to come, if we keep watching" (idem, p. 104).

² Metadata is data that describes other data of digital files, such as videos, contained in a database. Metadata can take the form of keywords or numbers organized as a "set of elements that describe the information contained in a resource, with the aim of enabling its search and retrieval" (Grácio, 2002, p. 23).

³ Since 2020, Globoplay has offered an extra subscription package, with 16 paid channels offered in pay TV plans, in addition to live streaming access to the Globo News, Viva and Sport TV channels. In 2022, the six Telecine channels (Premium, Action, Cult, Touch, Pipoca and Fun) were added as a package outside of Canais Globo.

⁴ Globoplay also integrates with foreign companies in the sector, through partnerships for combo subscriptions, as is the case with Discovery+ and Disney+.

models. In this context, content stands as the main unit of value (Parker, *et al.*, 2016), making the platform distinct from its competitors. Due to this, Erick Brêtas, general director of Globoplay, states⁵ that "Globoplay stands out from other platforms in its Brazilianness."

Globoplay concentrates the largest part of the national audiovisual production - "and not only telenovelas, but also series, miniseries, and films, including blockbuster comedies from Globo Filmes" (Padiglione, 2021, n.p.). However, the infrastructure for distributing content to the internet is not enough to compete with technology companies. What companies are now looking for is to develop to the maximum an exclusive and personalized experience with the public - associating TV's knowledge about the public and the data collection resources of platforms. To this end, the integration between platform and television encompasses internal management issues in the company's relationship with the public and between its departments, a process understood by the notion of governance.

Governance refers to the "set of rules about who can participate in an ecosystem, how to share value, and how to resolve conflicts" (Parker *et al.*, 2016, l. 317/674). It establishes norms both for user interaction with content and for administrative dynamics that shape different types of content and services - "through contracts and policies, in the form of terms of service, license agreements and developer guidelines" (Poell, Nieborg & Van Dijck, 2020, p. 8). In order to prepare for these new dynamics in the television market, Grupo Globo announced in 2019 the goal of transforming itself into a *mediatech*⁶ company. A process in which, according to Jorge Nóbrega, then president of the conglomerate, Grupo Globo will not "abandon its content DNA" (Rosa, 2019, n.p.), despite the new technological focus.

Aiming to understand the challenges involved in transforming a television company into a mediatech company, this article analyzes the strategies used by the Globotech project, as we call it in this work, to establish horizontally integrated management of content production, business and technological innovation areas. Through exploratory research, we seek to problematize the boundaries of mediations between the

⁵ Erick Brêtas' online lecture was held on July 15, 2020, at the invitation of Unisinos/RS. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/Er1csports> Accessed on: July 27, 2020.

⁶ The neologism "mediatech" is an abbreviation for "media technology company" and is used to refer to companies that operate in the development of innovative platforms to create or provide efficiency to the services provided in the media sector, such as businesses in the music, film, TV programs, games, short videos for social networks, among other products aligned with technological distribution formats. Examples of media technology companies include YouTube, Spotify, Netflix, and others (Carder, 2020).

conglomerate's sectors, by analyzing the relationships between the new digital policy and the valorization of its content, qualified by its Brazilianness for the national imaginary.

In addition to the bibliography, this work adopts as a research source the managerial discourses of Grupo Globo executives, published in the mainstream media or on the company's own websites, addressing the strategies used to promote changes in organizational structures and the conglomerate's thinking. For Johnson, Kompare and Santo (2014, p. 2), this methodological approach helps to show that media management in the entertainment industry involves "a culture of changing discourses, dispositions and tactics that create meaning, generate value or shape the work of the media during each moment of production and consumption."

For Catherine Johnson and Paul Grainge (2018, p. 23), communication researchers always warn "against the dangers of uncritically accepting the insights offered by high-level professionals who provide scripted answers to questions.", however, it is up to the researcher to consider the meanings underlying the discursive statements. The interviews and documents released by Grupo Globo can be considered discursive statements, as they offer a view on how the company discursively constructed the transformation of its structure into a mediatech company.

Modelo mediatech de empresa televisiva

Historically, studies on television media and technology have always been present in the field of communication, mainly due to the fact that, throughout its history, television has undergone numerous technological and cultural transformations. For Raymond Williams (2016), a pioneer in research on the development of television technology, television media does not derive solely from its inherent technological capabilities, but also from the relationship between industrial practices, cultural understandings, and textual characteristics. In this sense, Napoli and Caplan (2018, p. 149) emphasize that technology and media are ventures that do not have "completely different professional skills and abilities," therefore, there is no basis for separating the two areas in media history.

Therefore, the notion of mediatech seems redundant at first glance, after all, media companies have always depended on their technological infrastructure, but this term marks a business vision based on computational resources, with the advent of digital platforms.

The term mediatech began to be used between the 2000s and 2010s to refer to emerging online social networking companies, such as Facebook and Twitter,

understood as media platforms for disseminating news and other user-generated content - but without regulation of their activities. It doesn't matter if the mediatech company creates content, "but rather the fact that it has a media product (video, audio, image), using technological tools to deliver/distribute and collect, analyze and understand data so that the user experience becomes increasingly complete" (Junior, 2021, n.p.),

In this perspective, mediatech companies are content aggregators because they have effective organizational tools for collecting and reading user data and use platforms as "facilitators for the creation and dissemination of content" (Napoli & Caplan, 2018, p. 150). There is then a "greater potential for revenue in the technology sector than in the media sector" (idem, p. 152). In the dispute not only for the audience but also for investments, companies like Grupo Globo seek to encompass the structure and operation of these platforms" (idem, p. 157). By reconfiguring its infrastructure based on mediatech logic, Globo updates its image with the public and the market, aligning itself with foreign media technology companies.

The Globotech project can be considered to have begun in 2017, with the 'Milhões de Uns' campaign⁷, which sought to bring the company closer to the external public, promoting a direct relationship with users/subscribers/viewers by making its internal research and social projects public. Subsequently, the group created Globo ID - a unique user identification system for all group services, forming a unified database. This strategy, according to executive Jorge Nóbrega, was created with the aim of valuing the "viewer experience: how they consume, where they consume, associated with what" (Rosa, 2019a, n.p.).

In 2019, a new phase of restructuring was announced, with the 'UmaSóGlobo' program, the basis of the conglomerate's digital transformation in the integrated use of technologies and databases from its different companies for the production of content created from the identification of the viewers' profile by Grupo Globo's different platforms - which allows it to expand the offer of new experiences to the public⁸.

In the same year, Grupo Globo partnered with the Israeli technology company Pixellot, which specializes in automated sports filming, to install artificial intelligence-controlled camera systems in stadiums and sports centers. The technology has artificial intelligence that allows it to monitor the flow of the game, identify important plays, and insert ads, without the need for a team to be present at the sporting event. This demonstrates that the mediatech strategy also involves optimizing content production

⁷ Cf.: <http://redeglobo.globo.com/milhoesdeuns/>

⁸ These transformations are carried out under the consultancy and supervision of Accenture, a multinational technology and information management company (Rosa, 2019b, n.p.).

capacity, and in the words of executive Jorge Nóbrega, the use of "artificial intelligence applied to computer vision⁹ can mean a revolution in sporting events, and Globo wants to be one of the pioneering companies in this" (Agência, 2019, n.p.).

In 2020, the conglomerate's design was reformulated to operate within a new business model in which TV Globo, Globosat, Globo.com, and Globoplay are unified into a single company, Globo, alongside three other companies: Editora Globo, Sistema Globo de Rádio, and Globo Ventures, responsible for direct investments by shareholders in new businesses. According to Jorge Nóbrega, this merger seeks to "adapt the operational model, including processes, governance, and the company's structure, to the strategy of being a consumer-oriented company with various digital products" (Rosa, 2019b, n.p.).

To meet data processing demands, in 2021, Grupo Globo signed a contract with Google Cloud to implement a "data management, artificial intelligence, and machine learning experience, in addition to its global, scalable, and secure infrastructure, to drive the company's digital evolution" (Fuente, 2021, n.p.). Also in that year, Globo's Mediatech Lab developed 'Virtualcast' - a software for creating realistic virtual scenarios for live broadcasts, without the need for post-production. Paulo Henrique Castro, director of Mediatech Lab, stated that the development of the solution "involved several areas of the company working remotely and collaboratively with unprecedented rapid responses" (Redação, 2021, n.p.).

The development of the Virtualcast software illustrates an old practice of Globo's Research & Development Department (DEPED). Since the 1970s, DEPED had a group of "telecommunications engineers and information technology professionals who were mainly responsible for the integration between technological tools and software, which at first 'did not speak' with the specific equipment for television operations" (Portela, 2017, pp. 42-43).

In the news report *The Future Has Already Begun* (Mermelstein & Lauterung, 2005), the authors highlight chronologically the technological challenges that Globo faced through DPED. Changes such as the arrival of videotape (at the time, quadruplex magnetic tape), and its first major technological transition in 1969, with color TV. At this time, portable microwave systems began to be used for live broadcasts, by the first mobile units for compact productions. Between the 1970s and 1980s, the implementation of computer graphics and digitalization of production took place, as well as non-linear

⁹ Computer vision is a technology for "collecting, analyzing and synthesizing visual data through computers, with diverse objectives such as face and biometric identification, analysis of representations of objects, entities, concepts and contexts in images, among others" (Wang, Zhang, & Martin, 2015, p. 2210).

editing and the use of special effects. In 1995, digital capture began with the inauguration of PROJAC. In 2015, the R&D nuclei, until then spread across various sectors, were brought together into a single directorate. In 2017, the department is structured by means of three macro areas.

The first is Exploratory Research, which aims to be the front line in the discovery and monitoring of new technologies that may be useful for the company. The other area is called Applied Research and has the function of developing the potential and applications of technologies, raised by the exploratory team. The third area within the DPED structure is the Globo Play development line. Part of this team is in a kind of "incubation" within the department, however the idea is that part of the professionals continue in the DPED, with the aim of developing innovations for the platform (Mermelstein & Lauterung, p. 44).

When the mediatech project begins its activities, it brings with it the structure of the R&D areas, the Engineering department, and the Analysis and Research sector, integrating technical sectors that have been operating for years, but in a dispersed way. The Analysis and Research department was created in 1971, directed by Panamanian sociologist Homero I. Sanchez, with the aim of investigating the habits and trends of the Brazilian viewer (Aldé, 2020). A pioneer in the sector with this type of research, Globo began to conduct around ten million interviews per year. As a result of the research, the development of the plots and the fate of the characters in the telenovelas began to be modified, and the telenovelas *Selva de Pedra* (1972), by Janete Clair, reached the unprecedented mark of 100% audience (Aldé, 2020). Thus, this merger of departments forms a digital nucleus "that enables business and technology, incorporating skills, processes and tools that make it possible to strengthen the company as a mediatech company" (Hohmann, 2020, p. 53).

From this goal of generating value through the association of business and technology, the technology team works together with the business and advertising solutions areas. According to the Group's technology director, Raymundo Barros, the technology area operates on three main pillars: "content production in any genre and for any platform; distribution, including all management of the open TV network, technology relationship with the affiliates' network and the b2b2c distribution model¹⁰; the business areas are also integrated with technology." This dynamic between teams from different areas in the structure of a mediatech organization is explained by Luana M. Hohmann (2020, p. 44) as follows:

¹⁰ Acronym for Business to Business to Consumer, a business model in which there is an intermediary for the product to reach the final consumer.

The digital nucleus of the mediatech organization is the digital solutions team that has a diverse portfolio of products and services, such as journalism, sports, entertainment, and video products. The organization's structure has professionals directly involved in multidisciplinary squads that work together to optimize, evolve, and maximize the results of the products and are composed of software engineers, data scientists, [...] and designers.

In the business and content production environment linked to the digital nucleus, Grupo Globo works with a focus on becoming one of the largest players in digital products and services in Brazil in the Direct to Consumer (D2C) modality, creating tools and services focused on direct relationship with the consumer. One of the conglomerate's digital services planned in partnership with Google Cloud is the integration of Globoplay with Android TV, an operating system for televisions, combining the programming of open TV (broadcast) and TV via the internet (broadband), delivering to the public new ways of interaction when watching the broadcaster's open channel.

For Jorge Nóbrega (Globo, 2021, n.p.), innovations like this "impact not only the public's experience - with more fluid navigation and complementary between digital and linear - but also new possibilities for hyper-segmentation of content offerings and personalized recommendations in real time." In this way, the mediatech structure combines the ability to produce content with technological expertise and distribution under the Globo brand on various platforms: open television and its affiliates; pay TV channels; Globoplay on streaming; digital journalism products, by G1; sport on the Ge portal, which also houses the Cartola FC game¹¹; and entertainment on Gshow.

Associated with this more technological dimension, Carlos Tristacci, executive of Globo's Digital Hub, comments that the merger required the horizontalization of processes and metrics: "all teams use the OKRs methodology¹², to cite one example of these standardizations, ensuring that short-term goals are aligned with the long-term vision" (Oliveira, 2021, n.p.). From the perspective of researcher Reis (2020, p. 2), horizontal innovations are related to the interaction between "distinct and multiple actors,

¹¹ Cartola FC is a free game launched in 2005 by Grupo Globo, available on the ge.globo.com portal and mobile application, in which players simulate sports leagues. In 2016, the paid subscription version, Cartola FC PRO, was launched, with prizes for each round of the Brazilian Championship, as well as access to exclusive content. In 2022, Cartola Express was launched, with cash prizes for participants, focused on daily disputes.

¹² Objectives and key results (objectives and key results), work methodology developed by engineer Andrew Grove (1995), in the 1970s and documented in the book *High Output Management*, in 1983. The methodology defines how to achieve goals through concrete, specific, and measurable actions.

from distinct and multiple sectors, who integrate the production of various products-services," which operate in a non-hierarchical way.

In this sense, the conglomerate invests in a decentralized innovation system, with access to data available to all departments involved in the creation and development of products and services, in addition to the possibility of remote work for teams. Since 2019, for example, Globo Studios has been using its own recording and editing system that allows files to be stored in the cloud, enabling editing to be done in the company's post-production center or anywhere with an internet connection, optimizing production costs (Lauterjung, 2019).

Companies like YouTube, Netflix, and Globo have distinct business models and strategies, but they all share the understanding that data collection is the central input, and datafication¹³ is the logical support of their activities. In an era of communications marked by personalized content and solutions, user, subscriber, and viewer profiling is a distinctive trait of companies in their positioning against competitors. In this regard, data analytics influence everyone from professionals responsible for managing the Globotech project to content creators, enabling the delivery of personalized content. These changes in the audiovisual distribution ecosystem have had effects on contemporary telenovela production.

For example, the series "As Five" (2020-), is a spin-off of the Brazilian soap opera¹⁴ "Malhação: Viver a Diferença" (2017-18) by Cao Hamburger, which was created based on the collection and monitoring of data provided by a significant number of fans on social media. The first season of the series, consisting of ten episodes, revolves around the relationships of five friends, Benê (Daphne Bozaski), Keyla (Gabriela Medvedovski), Tina (Ana Hikari), Lica (Manoela Aliperti), and Ellen (Heslaine Vieira), who reunite after three years without contact. Unlike "Malhação," which focuses on teenagers, "As Five" targets a young adult audience, exploring themes such as drug use and sexual relationships with a realistic approach to the characters.

During its airing, "As Five" had extensive fan participation, as evidenced by fanfic surveys featuring characters from the series (Sá, Sigiliano, & Borges, 2021). To enable fans to discuss the plot, the 'A5 Five' server was created on the Discord social network,

¹³ It refers to the process by which digital platforms turn various everyday practices into data for various purposes, whether commercial, aimed at social security, public health, etc. (Poell, Nieborg, & Van Dijck, 2020).

¹⁴ A soap opera is a television series produced in the form of sequential episodes, with no scheduled end date, addressing a consistent theme, with likely changes in characters throughout the storyline. In the case of *Malhação* (1995-present), considered the only soap opera in Brazil, character changes result in plot changes, establishing a new narrative within the theme: the teenage universe (Hergesel & Ferreira, 2020).

monitored by Globo. Before the premiere of "As Five," the special "Making Five" was released, featuring behind-the-scenes episodes of the series. Following the success of the special, the "Talk Five" program was created, a live show on Globoplay, aired between 2020 and 2021, where the main actresses were interviewed by rapper and writer Preta Rara. The program was later adapted into a podcast format.

"As Five" illustrates the major concerns of mediatech companies, which is to understand audience behavior to offer a personalized experience and thus ensure consumer loyalty. The mediatech company model, by bringing together content production, business models, and technological innovations, fosters new productions driven by consumer data collection. However, while exploring new content formats, a vast catalog of telenovelas produced since the 1970s, reflecting the Brazilian cultural imaginary, is also made available, accessible from anywhere and through any window on Globoplay.

The Brazilian cultural imaginary can be understood as a form of cultural activation, determined by "the presence of local descriptive elements as a differential trait and criterion of value" (Candido, 2007, p. 30). It is configured as a network because it brings together different views of Brazilian daily life and its cultures, forming a set of "discourses constructing an idea of what it means to be Brazilian" (Varoni, 2008, p. 29). In telenovelas, for example, this network is built over years, as seen within conditions of increasing interculturality combined with the renewal of differences and collective identities (ethnic, generational, gender, territorial, national, regional, local) (Lopes, 2004, p. 126).

Globotech and the network of Brazilian culture

The streaming era represents not only an opportunity for the remastering of Globo's telenovela collection but also for the preservation of the audiovisual heritage of Brazilian culture. Globoplay is a platform that can assist young people in accessing a historical collection of telenovelas to understand and explore an ongoing narrative of the country. The strategy of restoring old works adds value to the streaming service brand, as exemplified by platforms like Mubi¹⁵ or even Netflix, which restored material filmed by Orson Welles in the 1970s (over a thousand reels of unreleased material), releasing the film "The Other Side of the Wind" (USA, 2018). According to Soojin Park (2019, p. 17),

¹⁵ An American streaming service dedicated to feature-length and short films of a more artistic nature and classic cinema. They have a partnership with The Film Foundation, founded by Martin Scorsese, which restores and preserves films from different countries and showcases them especially through Mubi, via the World Cinema Project initiative (Redação, 2022).

the restoration of Welles' film allowed Netflix to "position itself within the film industry as a company concerned with film restoration and enabling access to unreleased films."

Similarly, aware of the symbolic value of the telenovela in the Latin American imaginary, Netflix has advanced in the 'streaming war' and confirmed interest in producing telenovelas in Brazil, in the melodramatic format (in episodes). In an interview, Francisco Ramos, Vice President of Content for Latin America, stated that "Netflix's telenovelas have to be different and original, both in structure and in theme. Structurally, they will be shorter" (Padiglione, 2021, n.d.) - which points to the trend of telenovelas adapting to the dynamics of streaming, with fewer episodes and shorter durations.

The reaction of Grupo Globo to Netflix's announcement initially consisted of making classic telenovelas available on its platform, seeking to reinforce the power of its brand and loyalty among telenovela enthusiasts. In this way, the telenovela began to be shared on a larger scale, reaching other countries and cultures without the mediation of foreign broadcasters. By rescuing and remastering old telenovelas, Globoplay seeks to grow its subscriber base with already established works and adds a value intrinsic to television media, linked to national memory through the collection of telenovelas from different eras.

In total, Globo has produced more than 300 telenovelas since 1965. Thus, the network of Brazilian content available on Globoplay, especially the collection of classic telenovelas, strengthens Grupo Globo's strategy of becoming a mediatech company. The collection directly engages with the Brazilian audience, which favors the company in the competition with Netflix and other foreign companies. For Globoplay executive João Mesquita, the platform is made 100% for Brazilians and will always maintain its "Brazilianness" (Stycer, 2018).

The initiative began in 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, when Globo halted the production of its telenovelas and began re-airing on free-to-air television the soap opera "Malhação - Viva a Diferença" (2017-2018), and the telenovelas "Novo Mundo" (2017), "Totalmente Demais" (2015), and "Fina Estampa" (2011-2021), shown in the format of 'special editions'¹⁶, with a "faster-paced editing, cutting various scenes, and with storylines advanced" (Lopes, 2020a, n.d.). Globoplay also started releasing classic telenovelas from the network monthly, which until then totaled 91 works of the genre in the platform's catalog. The company's plan is to release fifty titles, with remastered image

¹⁶ At the time, the recordings of "Salve-se Quem Puder" (Globo, 2020-2021) and "Amor de Mãe" (Globo, 2020-2021) were halted, interrupting the broadcast of both in March, which returned to the schedule in 2021. On the other hand, "Malhação - Toda Forma de Amar" (2019-2020) had its ending anticipated, and the remake of "Éramos Seis" (Globo, 2020) was aired in its entirety because its recordings were already completed.

and sound for high-definition display and for streaming on various devices (Lopes, 2020b).

In a second phase, named the "Originality" project, telenovelas began to be fully aired, in a format different from the 'special editions' and those replayed on the program "Vale a Pena Ver de Novo," available on Globoplay. The telenovela "Avenida Brasil," for example, was replayed with cuts by the program, totaling 150 episodes, when originally there were 179. In this sense, the term adaptation is used broadly and includes all new versions of an intellectual property, linked by a political-economic logic of cultural negotiation with the audience, rather than in the creation of a public historical archive¹⁷, housing versions of telenovelas with cuts, remastered, and full versions of an intellectual property.

At Expocine21, Globoplay's head of content, Ana Carolina Lins, stated that the revival of telenovelas "requires technology because they are contents that need some technological improvement and scene reconstruction," and the older the telenovela, the longer the technological process, as there are more episodes to be treated. According to Lins, the platform's launch planning changes according to fans' requests, making "a huge effort to change when they ask for telenovelas." As of March 2023, Globoplay reached the milestone of 30 million unique users (including subscribers and non-subscribers), against estimates of 15 million for Netflix. Therefore, the Group's platform succeeded in attracting and retaining audiences with the reruns of classic telenovelas. According to Nilda Jacks *et al.* (2020, p. 28), "internal research and the success achieved by the paid channel Viva, one of the audience leaders in pay-TV, supported the criteria for selecting reruns." Among the main reasons for rewatching a telenovela is the desire to see a specific character again (42.10%) and feelings of nostalgia (41.30%). Regarding the main channels and video services for watching reruns, 81.90% prefer Globo, 30.40% prefer Globoplay, and 25.70% prefer the Viva channel. Other mentioned channels and services (SBT, Netflix, and YouTube) did not reach more than 3%. For Jacks *et al.* (2020, p. 29), "telenovelas may have as much appeal for immersive consumption as series. As a differential, they have the ability to bring back memories and revive collective memory."

In this sense, Grupo Globo leveraged its symbolic capital, accumulated over more than 50 years of history, to migrate its network of Brazilianness from open TV to streaming. According to Bourdieu (1987, p. 164), 'symbolic capital' is actually an effect of

¹⁷ According to Busetto (2014, p. 391), "telenovelas produced by the broadcaster only started to be archived, in full or compact versions, from the second half of the 1980s. During the 1970s and early part of the following decade, Globo usually only archived six episodes of most of its telenovela plots: the first two, the last two, a pair of intermediate episodes, and the opening of the telenovela."

the distribution of other forms of capital in terms of recognition or social value; it is the "power attributed to those who have obtained enough recognition to impose recognition." More than a matter of nostalgia, there is a factor of rescue and preservation of the memory of telenovelas, and their importance in the daily life of each era. By representing fictional worlds that stylistically mirror cases arising from the daily life of different Brazils, telenovelas act on both the "collective imagination and historical and affective memories."

The migration of the audience from open TV to Brazilian streaming is largely subsidized by the value of the telenovelas' imaginary, as a record of Brazilian television memory. Telenovelas have a captive audience, around "a narrative of the nation," constituted from a network of Brazilianness forged as an open work, in constant construction, never finished, of a possible Brazilian identity, always taken in the imaginary dimension of what it means to be Brazilian. Moreover, a product adapted for another media, as in the case of remastered telenovelas on Globoplay, already has a portion of the audience interested in a new version of what they already know and consume. Thus, telenovelas adapted from open TV are Grupo Globo's main streaming product.

The formation of the television's Brazilianness network began in the 1960s, when the telenovela emerged as one of the main products of Brazilian TV, with great popular appeal. The first Brazilian telenovelas were produced by Tupi, Excelsior, and Globo itself but were still a product similar to those of other Latin American countries, such as Cuba and Argentina, in the style of "cloak and dagger, with fantastic plots, set in remote times and exotic countries." These characteristics were present in the seminal *Sua Vida Me Pertence* (1951) from TV Tupi, directed by Walter Forster. The Brazilianization of the telenovela began to gain strength in 1968 with *Beto Rockfeller*, by Bráulio Pedroso, aired by TV Tupi, by showing themes closer to the daily reality of the Brazilian people.

According to Ribeiro and Sacramento (2010, p. 124), this first break with Latin American melodramatic matrices will contribute to enhancing the realism of Globo's television drama. Telenovelas began to address urban themes and colloquial dialogues, seeking "to approach the audience's daily life and address issues related to Brazilian society." The approach to local/regional themes, with a Rio de Janeiro accent, but also represented by northeastern, southern, and southeastern types, among others, consolidates what some authors call the 'Brazilianization of the telenovela,' characterized by the "nationalization of texts, themes, and television language procedures" (Ribeiro & Sacramento, 2010, p. 124).

Thus, the initial formulation of the telenovela's Brazilianness network is inserted in the context of political and behavioral changes of the 1960s, such as Cinema Novo, Tropicalismo, and alternative press. At Globo, this style appears in *Véu de Noiva* (1969-70), by Janet Clair, directed by Daniel Filho, making telenovelas central to the programming and determinant for the consolidation of the 'Padrão Globo de Qualidade' (Globo Standard of Quality). The identities associated with the imaginaries created by the Brazilian style of telenovelas encompass a multiplicity of 'Brazils' - upon which fall problematizations of authoritarian Brazils, as the exposure of a modern and urban Brazilian society was also of interest to the military government and conservative sectors of the time, who supported the process of 'conservative modernization' of television (Ribeiro & Sacramento, 2010).

Telenovelas in the Streaming Era

The mediatech model not only enables the rescue and remastering of telenovela collections but also impacts how they are produced, exploring hybrid works between telenovela and series like "*Verdades Secretas*."¹⁸ Its first season was aired in 2015 on broadcast television, under the name of a superseries - a hybrid format between telenovela and series. The format follows the trend of "telenovela operaization of short seriality formats by explicit adherence to melodramatic plots" (Lopes & Lemos, 2020, p. 21).

Melodramatic plots are common in international serialized fictions, such as *The Sopranos* (HBO, 1999-2007), the Spanish series *High Seas* (2019), and the Korean series *Squid Game* (2021), among others. In recent times, melodramas have become more complex with series that "increasingly bet on long dramatic arcs that span a season, if not the entire series" (Lopes & Lemos, 2020, p. 21), and superseries are a reflection of this trend. According to Mariana Lima and Lucas Néia (2018, p. 64), superseries have narrative extension "both in terms of the quantity of their dramatic units (chapters/episodes) - greater than a series and smaller than a telenovela - and consequently, in their seriality - more concise plots and a mixture of dramatic arcs of chapters and episodes."

The second season of *Verdades Secretas 2* (2021-2022) was released in its entirety on Globoplay and became the first telenovela to receive the platform's original seal, but on streaming, the telenovela exhibits characteristics of a superseries, with more

¹⁸ Telenovela written by Walcyr Carrasco, with collaboration from Nelson Nadotti, Vinícius Vianna, and Márcio Haiduck, is directed by Isabella Gabaglia, Bruno Safadi, Felipe Gamarano Barbosa, Augusto Lana, and Gabriela Amaral. The overall artistic direction is by Amora Mautner.

explicit themes of prostitution, violence, drugs, etc. According to Vaquer (2021), *Verdades Secretas 2* is a test to find out the limit of what the platform's audience accepts, inspired by the exploration of explicit scenes from Brazilian original productions on Netflix and Amazon Prime Video - such as the police series *Good Morning, Verônica* (2020) and *Dom* (2020). The data collected from the audience's interaction with the work will shape the company's actions in a safer and/or more profitable way.

The conglomerate's mediatech model allows innovation within monitorable parameters, as is the case in platform environments, understanding the nature of the audience in each of its windows. However, narrative innovations on Globoplay do not necessarily migrate to free-to-air TV, as Globo recognizes in this window an audience more accustomed to conventional storytelling.

Despite the thematic conservatism of fictional formats aired on free-to-air TV, there is always a tendency for medium-term experimentation, stylistically approaching streaming works. After all, it is common for original Globoplay series to be broadcast on television after a certain period - at least one year, as in the case of *Aruanas* (2019-). Stylistically, as pointed out by Pucci Júnior (2014), Globo telenovelas have already shown potential to reinvent themselves, as seen in works exhibited in the past decade, such as *Avenida Brasil* (2012), *A Favorita* (2008-2009), and *Ti-Ti-Ti* (2010-2011), indicating that the "classic paradigm of audiovisual composition undergoes intensive revisions" in the realm of free-to-air television. What is currently experimentation on streaming, aimed at a segmented audience, may later appear as an element on television, for a broader audience.

Final Considerations

The process of platformization of Brazilian television has been causing changes in the media ecosystem and audience behavior, making it more complex to understand the transformation of media groups into mediatech companies. Production logics in the streaming platform environment have multiple and variable configurations, with interdependent relationships between different sectors of the company - requiring transdisciplinary research to guide the analytical focus of studies. The case study of what we call the Globotech project has shown that the company seeks to offer the audience personalized access to content through multiple screens.

This modernization policy of the company was developed through the reorganization of the creative sectors and the digital nucleus of the organization. Globoplay, positioned as the showcase of the Group, incorporated the archive of Globo's

telenovelas built over its history. Thus, the platform maintains its capacity to produce exclusive works for streaming, while preserving in the audience's imagination the network of "brasilidade," allowing the exploration of the potential of the telenovela as a transnational product.

In this work, we sought to analyze the challenges of Brazilian television in the streaming era and observed the importance of data collection and interpretation in the development of Globotech's products, not only in relation to audience diversity but also to the production model and its distribution. The impact of mediatech on the production of telenovelas contributes to the emergence of a multitude of formats adapted for streaming, based on their melodramatic matrices (Lopes & Lemos, 2020).

One of the conclusions that emerges from this study, among others, is that advances in infrastructure for the audiovisual sector ultimately depend on the regulation of content production, but historically, Brazilian legislation serves the interests of technological infrastructure, rarely focusing on content. However, there is a need for innovation, and "recent legislation, such as that of Portugal in 2020, managed to encompass free-to-air TV, pay-TV, and streaming platforms in the same regulatory body, favoring the promotion of Portuguese audiovisual content" (Vasconcelos, Edde, & Garcia, 2022, n.p.).

Moreover, there are few subsidies for Brazilian companies interested in transforming into mediatech, and few economic agents possess the symbolic capital that Globo holds to support this transformation to compete with foreign companies in the streaming sector. The future of Brazilian audiovisual production, especially independent television production for streaming, depends on regulation that defends intellectual property and diversifies content production models.

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RESUMO:

As empresas televisivas estão passando por um processo de transformação digital, como se pode observar na transformação do Grupo Globo numa empresa de mediatech, com o objetivo de integrar tecnologicamente os departamentos criativos para, assim, personalizar os serviços oferecidos aos usuários. No modelo de uma empresa mediatech, a criação e produção de conteúdo não está mais vinculada aos diferentes canais e serviços, mas agregada a uma plataforma produtiva integradora, gerada por um projeto denominado Globotech - que envolve produção e entrega de conteúdo, negócios e inovação tecnológica. Portanto, nesse trabalho o termo Globotech designa o núcleo digital da organização como mediatech. Pretendemos assim, discutir a reestruturação das empresas e analisar suas interfaces internas e em relação a outras plataformas, visando o posicionamento do Globoplay como vitrine do Grupo Globo, a partir de sua rede de brasilidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

Globoplay;
Mediatech; Streaming.

RESUMEN:

Las empresas televisivas están experimentando un proceso de transformación digital, como se puede observar en la transformación del Grupo Globo en una empresa de mediatech, con el objetivo de integrar tecnológicamente los departamentos creativos para personalizar los servicios ofrecidos a los usuarios. En el modelo de una empresa mediatech, la creación y producción de contenido ya no está vinculada a diferentes canales y servicios, sino que se agrega a una plataforma productiva integradora generada por un proyecto denominado Globotech - que involucra producción y entrega de contenido, negocios e innovación tecnológica. Por lo tanto, en este trabajo el término Globotech designa el núcleo digital de la organización como mediatech. Pretendemos así discutir la reestructuración empresarial y analizar sus interfaces internas y con otras plataformas, buscando posicionar al Globoplay como vitrina del Grupo Globo desde su red brasileña.

PALABRAS**CLAVE:**

Globoplay;
Mediatech; Streaming.

RESUMEN: