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# Agility in marketing teams: An analysis of factors influencing the entry decision into a trendy social network



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#### ABSTRACT

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Given the rise of new social networks, companies must decide whether to incorporate each new network into their social media marketing strategy. This research analyses the factors that influence a brand's entry into a trendy social network, integrating two traditional paradigms of innovation adoption –the TOE and the UTAUT–with the concept of marketing agility, to incorporate the strategic perspective of marketing departments. We conduct a mixed methods approach, through a focus group with managers and a quantitative analysis based on a questionnaire with a sample of 161 managers, complemented with a fsQCA to identify specific configurations of factors that determine that entry. The study validates marketing agility's relevance, emphasising the importance of market monitoring beyond speed. Three company characterizations are proposed, including differences in expectations, effort perceptions, and competitors influence. We offer an explanatory model of the adoption conditions of technological innovations undertaken by marketing departments, applicable to future innovations in communication tools.

# 1. Introduction

The global discourse surrounding the exponential growth of social media usage and its profound impact on businesses has been ongoing for years. Social media has become an indispensable element for any brand, and strategies developed in social networks are now key pillars for the growth of most brands in the online environment (Kumar et al., 2016; Marchand et al., 2021). Yet the portfolio of available social networks is by no means static, since new ones are constantly emerging and because they experience different levels of growth. The most recent one to experience considerable growth and to position itself as one of the main social networks in terms of size is TikTok, which was born in 2017 and which is now surpassed only by Instagram and Facebook (Table 1). It boasts over one billion active users (The Guardian, 2022) and was the most installed app in 2022, with 672 million downloads (Statista, 2022). Whereas the decision faced by brands a few years ago concerned whether or not to venture into the realm of social media on a general scale, the current challenge lies in selecting which specific platforms to participate in once a general presence has been established.

Parallel to this, previous literature has focused on exploring social media marketing as a new tool to be incorporated by a firm's business communication strategy. Consequently, the process of adopting social networks for the first time has been extensively studied (Aspasia and Ourania, 2014; Dahnil et al., 2014; Kumar et al., 2019; Shaltoni, 2017; Siamagka et al., 2015), and the strategies developed and their effectiveness (Balaji et al., 2023; Felix et al., 2017; Godey et al., 2016; Lipsman et al., 2012) have been analysed from an operational point of view. Thus, the question of deciding whether or not to be present in social networks is no longer relevant, given that the latter have established themselves as an indispensable tool (Forbes, 2023). Having recognized companies' generalized adoption and the relevance of social networks in business results, and considering the constant emergence of new social networks, academic interest must now go a step further and evolve towards the current business reality (Dwivedi et al., 2021). The key question now lies in the ability to discern whether a new social network fits in with a company's strategy, whether it makes sense to adopt it, and whether allocating resources to it is justified. Furthermore, the decision concerning whether or not to enter a new social network is framed within the topic of exploring how useful information technologies are as a source of competitive advantage and can therefore be considered a research priority (Mikalef and Pateli, 2017). However, this crucial aspect about social media marketing still lacks the necessary research attention: hence the importance of addressing this research gap in order to contribute to the ongoing literature on social media

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#### Table 1

Birth, active users, and growth of the principal social networks.

Social Network	Birth	Monthly active users 2024 (millions)	Growth worldwide 2022–2023
LinkedIn	2003	310	4.19 %
Facebook	2004	3,049	2.30 %
Twitter (now X)	2006	619	-3.90 %
Instagram	2010	2,000	5.47 %
TikTok	2016	1,562	10.50 %

Source: own elaboration with data from Statista (2024).

#### marketing.

The current paper therefore looks at the combination of factors that will lead companies who already have a social media strategy to decide whether or not to enter a new social network. This is a challenging process, since it involves making decisions that imply adaptation at the departmental level in a context of uncertainty. The question to be addressed is therefore: under what conditions do marketing departments decide to enter a new social network? What do they value when making such a decision? Our aim is to explain the decision that brands take when considering entry into a new social network –with specific focus on TikTok– given the current growth it is experiencing (Fig. 1). Specifically, we seek to model this decision, establishing the key variables that wield significant influence over the entry decision, in order to be able to draw conclusions that allow brands to act with greater certainty when the new social network successor emerges.

If we understand the emergence of a new social network as a technological innovation –a novel tool that brands can use to enhance or sustain their market presence– then the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) offers a general analysis framework, while the UTAUT (Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology) model provides specific variables to understand adoption processes (Venkatesh et al., 2003). However, while this model proves effective in examining technology adoption, it overlooks the possible impact of characteristics related to organizational aspects that may prove to be pivotal (Dahnil et al., 2014). The characteristics of marketing departments –in terms of their ability to listen to and respond to changes in the environment and the market– have a significant impact on decision-making. This influential factor is referred to in the marketing literature as the concept of marketing agility, and we propose incorporating it in order to capture its impact on the decision-making process analysed. The lack of general research exploring entry into a new social network as an innovation in company communication leads us to propose this conceptual framework for our research. In addition, by applying qualitative analysis through focus groups, we validate the relevance of these concepts and tailor them to our specific research context.

This study is relevant from both a theoretical and a practical point of view. Theoretically, this research aims to propose a useful model that can effectively predict the strategic decisions of companies entering social networks -thereby contributing to the existing literature. Moreover, by introducing the concept of marketing agility, we innovatively propose an extension of the UTAUT model that fits in better with companies' technology adoption than its previous versions and, more specifically, in marketing departments. From a broader perspective, this research is also relevant because of its contribution to developing the general literature on social networks and to current understanding of social networks as a strategic tool that may have a significant impact on business results (in contrast to the tactical approach of previous literature). From a practical standpoint, this modelling approach seeks to provide marketing departments with actionable insights, allowing them to identify and focus on key internal aspects that are crucial for successfully navigating and evaluating entry into future social networks (as well as other marketing tools) as they emerge. By establishing clearly defined criteria, marketing departments can effectively prepare and adapt to these evolving digital landscapes.

The research is structured as follows. We begin with a comprehensive literature review on social media marketing, marketing agility, the TOE approach and the UTAUT model, and which serves as the theoretical foundation for the study. We then introduce the research methodology, with a justification for adopting the sequentially mixed methods approach. Subsequently, the article describes the studies carried out. The first study is qualitative and is based on the focus group technique.



Fig. 1. Social network growth worldwide 2021-2024.

In the second study, the hypotheses are justified, and a questionnaire is used to collect data for a quantitative analysis based on logistic regression is conducted. Finally, we employ a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), providing a more in-depth and detailed explanation of the results obtained. Finally, the article concludes with a discussion section, presenting the study's conclusions, limitations, and future research perspectives.

#### 2. Literature review

The use of social networks as part of companies' digital strategies has gained increasing importance due to the former's immense potential (Bannor et al., 2017). The concept of social media marketing refers to the use of social networks by companies or brands to achieve specific business objectives, with a focus on value creation within these platforms (Felix et al., 2017). One key characteristic of social media marketing is the ease and cost-effectiveness it offers brands in establishing connections with users (Kim and Park, 2013; Moe and Fader, 2004), enabling personalized one-to-one interactions (Li et al., 2023b). This enables interactivity, which is impossible through other media channels. Furthermore, the content generated by brands on social networks exerts a tangible impact on essential business-level metrics for the company, such as spending, cross-buying and profitability (Kumar et al., 2016).

Social media literature has extensively examined social networks from five distinct perspectives (Li et al., 2023a): as a promotion and selling outlet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2015; Rohm et al., 2013; Spotts et al., 2014), as a communication and branding channel (Choi et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2017), as a monitoring and intelligence source (Feit et al., 2013; Moe and Schweidel, 2017; Schweidel and Moe, 2014), as a CRM and value co-creation platform (Heidenreich et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2016; Wang and Kim, 2017) and finally, as a general marketing and strategic tool (Brink, 2017; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Rydén et al., 2015; Siamagka et al., 2015). Our research is situated within the framework of the latter approach, which highlights the strategic value of social networks within marketing strategy and their impact on company structure (Wu et al., 2020). From this perspective, the literature has focused on studying initial adoption or first entry on social networks as part of a company's digital transformation process (Verhoef et al., 2021). A brand's decision to adopt social networks is influenced by different factors that can affect this decision either positively or negatively (Felix et al., 2017). These factors have been explained by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the theory of resources (Siamagka et al., 2015), or in terms of organizational aspects such as a company's sensemaking capacity (Rydén et al., 2015). However, as yet there are no studies that combine aspects of the technology and specific variables that affect the behaviour of organizations and their departments. Moreover, there are no studies that analyse entry into a new social network when the brand already has a current social network strategy.

This work aims to explore company adoption of social networks by extending the models of technology adoption to include departmental variables. While prior studies employ two distinct approaches –TAM and sensemaking– to explain general adoption in social networks, our study proposes a combined approach that considers the complementarity between innovation adoption models and marketing agility within a more general framework –the Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE). Our work represents the first approach to the relevance of the concept of marketing agility vis-à-vis the strategic communication decisions made by marketing departments.

# 2.1. Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) approach and unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)

An appropriate theoretical framework to study the incorporation of new information and communication technologies in companies is the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) approach proposed by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990). According to this approach, the effectiveness of a business decision depends on its fit in internal and external factors, such that adopting a technology should take into account environmental, organizational, and technological factors. Technological factors refer to the characteristics of the technology that can influence the adoption process. Organizational factors are the characteristics of the organization, such as firm size, structure, or available resources and capabilities. Environmental factors are constraints and opportunities for technological innovations that stem from other actors –mainly industryor market-related factors (Wang et al., 2010).

Although this general framework is considered appropriate to understand the decision to adopt an innovation (Abed, 2020; Dehghani et al., 2022), it does not specify specific factors or variables, but rather depends on the context in which the study is conducted (Wang et al., 2010). Based on this theoretical approach, we thus propose an explanatory framework for brand entry into new social networks grounded on the UTAUT approach, which fits in to the TOE approach.

Since its formulation (Venkatesh et al., 2003), the unified theory of technology acceptance and use (UTAUT) has become the generalized model to explain the intention to adopt and the effective adoption of a technology. This model is able to group the eight main theories of technology acceptance: the technology acceptance model, the theory of reasoned action, the motivational model, the PC utilization model, the innovation diffusion theory, the theory of planned behaviour, a model that combines the technology acceptance model and the theory of planned behaviour, and the social cognitive theory.

The UTAUT model posits four basic determinants of technology acceptance: effort expectancy, performance expectancy, facilitating conditions, and social influence. Performance expectations refer to the belief that the adoption and use of a particular technology will bring positive results (Brown et al., 2016; Venkatesh et al., 2003). For their part, effort expectations relate to the ease of use of the technology to be adopted (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Both effort and performance expectations are closely related, and lower effort expectations improve performance expectations in the online context (Chaouali et al., 2016). Facilitating conditions reflect the extent to which an infrastructure is considered to exist -in terms of organization and technology- that favours the use of the system to be adopted (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Finally, social influence refers to the degree to which an individual perceives that others believe that one should be using the tool or system (Venkatesh et al., 2003). It refers to the psychological principles that influence behaviour (Rashotte, 2007).

Although there are subsequent updates of the model (UTAUT2 and UTAUT3), they focus on incorporating variables that provide value from the consumer perspective: hedonic motivation, price value, and habit in the case of UTAUT2 (Venkatesh et al., 2012), and personal innovativeness in UTAUT 3 (Farooq et al., 2017). The first UTAUT approach is therefore more suitable from the point of view of organizations. Moreover, applying the UTAUT model to predict an organization's technology adoption is consistent with the TOE framework. The UTAUT model fits in with this proposal because effort expectancy and performance expectancy refer to technological factors; facilitating conditions allude to organisations' characteristics, and social influence is an aspect that comes from the environment.

In the specific case of company adoption of social networks, the UTAUT model has been used to explain the general adoption of social networks by small businesses (Humaid and Ibrahim, 2019), microbusinesses (Mandal and McQueen, 2012), and NGOs (Curtis et al., 2010; Lim et al., 2019). These studies analyse the decision to incorporate social networks into the firm's marketing strategy from a situation where social networks were not previously used. Using UTAUT to explain the influential variables in this adoption makes sense to the extent that social networks can be considered an innovation –according to Rogers et al. (2014): "an idea, product, program or technology not used before by the organization".

# 2.2. Marketing agility

Since the UTAUT model is mainly geared towards explaining the adoption of innovations by individuals, when we try to apply this model to a company's adoption of a social network, we realize that it lacks the importance of the moment of adoption. Joining the market earlier or later –and doing so on the basis of a well-founded decision– may have a significant impact on either achieving or maintaining the company's competitive advantage (Mikalef and Pateli, 2017; Rodríguez-Pinto et al., 2011)– hence the importance of taking into account the marketing team's agility in this context (Carbonell and Rodríguez-Escudero, 2009). As a result, the concept of marketing agility is incorporated into the UTAUT model, which allows the required nuances to be added in order to apply the model from a business perspective.

The concept of agility has received significant attention in the business literature. Starting from its classical definition applied to production (Yusuf et al., 1999), it has been adapted to different areas of business under a common premise: agility is based on the ability to detect and respond promptly to market changes. In the marketing area -where market dynamics and consumer preferences evolve rapidly (Syed et al., 2020)- agility has emerged as a critical factor for effective organizational functioning. Consequently, there has been a growing focus on agility from a marketing perspective. Kalaignanam et al. (2021) define marketing agility as "the extent to which an entity rapidly iterates between making sense of the market and executing marketing decisions to adapt to the market". This definition allows marketing agility to be seen as a dynamic capability of the firm (Khan, 2020; Zhou et al., 2019). Building upon the work of scholars who have attempted to operationalize the components of marketing agility (Khan, 2020; Kalaignanam et al., 2021, Zhou et al., 2019), we can identify four fundamental components of marketing agility: sensemaking or proactivity, speed, responsiveness, and flexibility.

Sensemaking or proactivity involves the ability to study and analyse ambiguous and uncertain contexts (Maitlis, 2005) employing continuous monitoring practices (Mu et al., 2018). Given this detection capacity, responsiveness emerges as another critical element in companies' strategic marketing decision-making. Responsiveness goes one step further and is understood as the ability to adjust and respond to these emerging changes (Zhou et al., 2019), the ability to react and decide in the face of relevant stimuli that makes it possible to get it right and make a difference. In this process, speed plays a crucial role in facilitating prompt responses to opportunities identified through market monitoring (Zhou et al., 2019). Finally, flexibility within the scope of marketing agility refers to the ability to respond by efficiently choosing the best alternative to possible changes pinpointed in the market (Braunscheidel and Suresh, 2009; Grewal and Tansuhaj, 2001), and to do so iteratively (Kalaignanam et al., 2021). Although defined individually, these components collectively constitute the concept of marketing agility.

In the area of social media, application of the marketing agility concept has been relatively limited. Existing studies tend to focus on its operational aspects, examining how it affects user engagement (Chuah et al., 2020) and customer-based brand equity (Gligor and Bozkurt, 2021). These studies approach the concept through specific constructs, such as social media agility (Chuang, 2020) and fan page agility (Chuah et al., 2020; Mandal et al., 2017).

#### 3. Research methodology

To bring us closer to the current business reality, the network that is always mentioned in studies is TikTok –which is justified by the growth this social network is currently experiencing (Guarda et al., 2021; He et al., 2021). Table 1 shows the year the main social networks were created, the total number of monthly active users in 2024, and the growth experienced between 2022 and 2023. As can be seen, TikTok is the youngest social network and has experienced the highest growth rate, while also having a high number of monthly active users (surpassed only by Facebook and Instagram).

Additionally, Fig. 1 shows a breakdown of this annual growth from 2021 to 2024. While other social networks are experiencing small growth rates –with some even declining– TikTok stands out as the social network with the highest annual growth over the past four years.

Its recent expansion means that it is at the same time the network with the most incipient attraction for research and also the one on which the least research has been done. TikTok content has been characterized since its emergence by its entertainment-based nature (Wang, 2020), especially through dancing (Haenlein et al., 2020), always using short videos -the only format supported by the platform (Haenlein et al., 2020; Wahid et al., 2023). It is also considered an influencer-mediated model of communication, focused on building social influence (Varadarajan et al., 2022). The rise of other types of content on the platform has encouraged the entry of companies into the platform, and which claim to obtain results from its use from a marketing perspective (TikTok, 2021). From a marketing perspective, some studies have been conducted to analyse the impact of content strategies on the web. Wahid et al. (2023) analyse how characteristics such as the informative or emotional nature of the message and the use of verbal and nonverbal language influence user engagement. Barta et al. (2023) study the determinants of success in terms of originality, quality, quantity and the use of humour, while other research focuses on content analysis in specific sectors, such as media outlets (Mudra and Kitsa, 2022), sports (Su et al., 2020) or luxury (Castillo-Abdul et al., 2022).

To investigate the determinants of the strategic entry decision in TikTok, this study uses a sequential mixed-methods approach, employing both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques (Vivek and Nanthagopan, 2021). Specifically, we apply a combination that connects the data in three phases: an exploratory design, which follows a sequential distribution from a qualitative to a quantitative analysis (phases 1 and 2) and an explanatory design, which in this case follows an opposite sequential distribution, moving from the preceding quantitative analysis to qualitative analysis (phases 2 and 3).

The use of a sequential mixed-methods approach is justified for several reasons. The exploratory design is suitable for this study as it allows for the sequential examination of qualitative data through a focus group followed by quantitative analysis based on data collected through questionnaire. This enables us to determine the relevance and applicability of the theoretical foundations of this research, particularly the variables derived from the UTAUT model and marketing agility, within the specific context of the study.

It is essential to understand whether these variables are determinant in the real business context and to understand whether they make sense when analysed in conjunction, since we consider that they are two concepts that converge but that have not been examined together before. Moreover, this analysis facilitates a contextual understanding of the phenomenon and substantiates its relevance at the business level, enhancing the robustness of the results. Following the completion of the qualitative study and the confirmation of the variables' interest and relevance, the quantitative analysis is performed with confidence in the appropriateness of the selected variables. This quantitative analysis is based on a logistic regression carried out on the data obtained from a questionnaire distributed to 161 brand social network managers. Subsequently, the explanatory design builds upon the previous quantitative analysis, as the subsequent qualitative analysis employing Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) provides a more concrete, comprehensive, and detailed explanation of the results obtained in the quantitative analysis.

# 4. Study 1: Qualitative research

Study 1 was conducted in a real context through the use of a focus group. The primary aim of this initial study was to identify the significant factors that influence the strategic decision-making process of companies when entering social networks. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate the potential complementarity between variables related to marketing agility and the UTAUT innovation adoption model. By doing so, the study sought to determine the relevance and applicability of these variables in the context of real-world decisions made by companies when considering entry into social networks. The secondary objective of Study 1 was to draw conclusions that serve to outline the hypotheses of our research, which will subsequently be argued in Study 2.

# 4.1. Methodology

Study 1 adopts a qualitative research approach employing the focus group technique (Wilkinson, 1998). This study seeks to analyse the perspectives of social network managers regarding the decision to enter social networks -particularly for brands that are already substantially and actively present on these platforms- by means of organic firm generated content, i.e., strategies that do not include paid advertising content, such as ads or influencer campaigns. Selecting the focus group method over individual interviews is justified by the desire to generate a specialized discussion on the topic and to delve deeply into industryrelated issues and current affairs which -individually in a conversation between interviewer and respondent- may not appear. In other words, the active listening of other similar professionals and the possibility of intervening to emphasize issues discussed or to highlight different viewpoints benefits the development of the topics to be investigated (Thomas et al., 2004). Moreover, bearing in mind that this is an exploratory phase of the research, the use of a focus group is appropriate as it enables a preliminary understanding of the phenomenon prior to conducting more conclusive analyses.

The focus group was conducted face-to-face in November 2022. It was recorded and subsequently transcribed, engaging in a conversation that lasted one hour and 52 min. It involved the participation of eight marketing and social media executives, representing companies in the Spanish market. The selected company profiles represented diverse sectors, including energy, sports, retailing, media, culture, and Fintech. Additionally, two professionals from digital marketing agencies were included as part of the focus group. Inclusion of these profiles allows for a comparison between internal and external management of social networks, which later serves as a control variable in the quantitative model.

Selection of these profiles was based on criteria of both homogeneity and heterogeneity. Homogeneity was ensured regarding their work positions within their respective companies, as all participants held strategic roles in social network management and digital marketing, making them experienced decision-makers in the topics discussed. Moreover, homogeneity criteria were applied to their level of brand presence on social networks –which had to be very high. In turn, heterogeneity criteria were applied in terms of the sectors in which their companies operated and their years of professional experience in the field so as to achieve a comparison of the different possible perspectives according to these variables.

Table 2 provides a description of participants' profiles. The focus group session followed a structured format, dividing the topics into three distinct groups: the current social network strategy employed by their respective companies, the strategies employed when entering new social networks (with a specific focus on TikTok), and the factors influencing the decision-making process for entering new networks (Table 3). The script was designed without including the UTAUT and marketing agility variables as part of it in order to verify whether these concepts really emerged spontaneously.

# 4.2. Data analysis

Data analysis was supported by thematic analysis. After a thorough reading of the transcript, codes were identified and from these, themes Table 2

Description	of	partici	pants.
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Brand	Information	Brand	Information
Iberdrola	Sector. Supply of electric power, gas, steam and air conditioning. Market. International (Spain, United Kingdom, USA, Brazil, and Mexico) Social media size. 400 K Position. Digital & Social Media Director Experience. 27 years	Verse	Sector. Fintech Market. International (Europe) Social media size. 1.5 M Position. Head of Social Media and Influencers Experience. Seven years
El Corte Inglés	Sector. Wholesale and retail trade Market. International Social media size. 3.4 M Position. Digital Marketing Director Experience. 19 years	SocialMood	Sector. Digital marketing agencyClient (only for agencies). Ron Barceló Market. National (Spain) Position. Head of creative strategy Experience. 21 years
Museo del Prado	Sector. Museum Position. Head of digital communication Market. National (Spain) Social media size. 5 M Experience. 17 years	BrandCrops	Sector. Digital marketing agencyClient (only for agencies). Legado Ibérico Market. National (Spain) Position. Chief Executive Officer Experience. 10 years
Movistar Team	Sector. Sports Market. National (Spain) Social media size. 2 M Position. Head of communication Experience. 15 years	Código Nuevo	Sector. Digital media Market. National (Spain) Social media size. 1.1 M Position. Social Media Manager Experience. Fight years

\*Social media size: total number of followers on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and X (formerly Twitter).

\*Client: most named client by the agency during the focus group.

Table	3	
Focus	group	script

or of the property of the pro-	
1. Short presentation	Who are you: education and work experience, company and business situation.
2. Current strategy	Social media accounts, intensity of the strategy in each network, importance of each network, form of management: external / internal, form of organization and roles.
3. Entry strategy	Process for assessing entry into a social network. Degree of presence in TikTok and strategy in the network: objective and importance. Entry decision: how and when. Expected / obtained results. Impact for other networks (substitution effect / synergies). Overview in relation to other networks.

and sub-themes were established –following Braun and Clarke (2006). A brief summary of these can be seen in Table 4. The insights obtained from the focus group conversation are presented below and illustrate how the different themes and sub-themes emerged during the conversation.

Participants in the focus group acknowledged that the decision to enter TikTok was a challenge that all their brands had encountered. Interestingly, all the profiles represented in the discussion have decided to enter TikTok with their brands and are currently on TikTok, except for the two participants representing agencies. They recognize that not all the brands they work with have agreed to start a strategy on this new social network. The limited availability of resources and the difficulty for some clients in visualising the possible results of developing a strategy on TikTok seem to be the main reasons for this decision. The constraints imposed by resource limitations led to a need for efficiency

#### Table 4

Overview of concepts.

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Quotes
Marketing agility	Sensemaking	Real time Changes Environment Alert Listen	"The audience evolves and changes, obviously." "You have to be aware of real time."
	Speed	Quickly Reaction Time Be the first	"We take into account the speed to adapt quickly. We have to react."
	Flexibility	Adapt Flex Adjustment	"We also don't rule out changing our strategy a while from now, of course. We always adapt".
UTAUT	Effort expectancy	Know Professional Learn	"We had to learn how to use a social network not as a user, but as a professional. And that implies that you have to have a great deal of knowledge."
	Performance expectancy	Results Failure Conversion	"A lot of people say TikTok isn't right for conversion, for now."
	Facilitating conditions	Easy Preparation Content creation	"You don't have to edit a lot, or you can edit fast, and then the return is unbelievable."
	Social influence	Competitor Society Influence	"You're going to be influenced to decide to go in. Sometimes it's the push from competitors, and sometimes it's the push from society."

in decision-making. Consequently, brands allocated their resources to networks where they could achieve a quicker return –particularly those platforms where strategies were already implemented and did not require a significant initial launch effort.

"There is reluctance on the client's part, a difficulty in understanding what needs to be done or embracing a new mindset in some way. And there is also a resource issue; you have to allocate resources to all the networks, and there is an ever-increasing number of networks. It's time and money that they often aren't willing to invest."

The issue of resource availability sparks a significant debate regarding entry into TikTok. There is unanimous agreement on the significant time investment required to develop a new strategy. The accounts managed by the participants in the study boast hundreds of thousands of followers, creating an impression of having large marketing teams supporting them. However, this is not always the reality, as small teams often take on the challenge of entering new networks without any increase in available resources. In this context, participants indirectly allude to the notions of effort and performance expectations outlined in the UTAUT model at the beginning of the discussion.

The most notable advantage in this context is that all networks are currently trending towards a common content format: short videos. While this presents an opportunity by enabling the creation of content that can be shared across multiple networks, it also poses a challenge. Social network managers must adapt to this new format, and it will require them to acquire new skills and knowledge. In addition to learning how to create content, they must understand the inner workings of the new social network, including its algorithms and operational mechanisms. This learning process involves a significant learning curve as they familiarize themselves with the intricacies of the platform.

"We had to learn to use a social network not as a user, but as a professional, and that means you have to have a deep understanding of the algorithms. You need to learn, you have to start trying things out and see what works."

Contradictions do, nevertheless, arise: some participants highlighted the perceived difficulty of starting from scratch and acquiring new skills, while others emphasized the ease of content creation and the potential for a trial and error approach. They argued that the content demanded by the platform does not require excessive effort on the part of the brands to be published. This ease of content creation and its crossplatform applicability align with the notion of facilitating conditions, as described in the UTAUT model.

"At the effort level, it's challenging for us, but well, we're trying." "One of the things that made us get into TikTok is that homemade content is rewarded. You don't have to edit much, or you can edit quickly, and then the return is tremendous."

At this stage, the conversation focused on agility. The profiles of the participants represent various companies with distinct sectors, sizes, and internal organizational processes. Consequently, while some participants acknowledged their agility in execution, others expressed concerns about their lack of agility in decision-making and implementation. Company size emerges as a determining variable in these observed differences and perspectives.

"What we lack most is agility, which smaller brands can have."

All participants agreed that considering the market is essential when making entry decisions. They considered the importance of listening to the market and of understanding trends in order to determine the optimal timing and strategy for entry, and even to anticipate them. They identified the essential need to be aware of real time, of what is happening and changing at all times in the audience and the market.

"Before doing anything at all, it's important to have a deep strategic approach and to try and understand your audience. Because the audience evolves and changes, obviously."

The team's role was also highlighted, as diverse perspectives and ideas from their members contribute to the development and implementation of effective strategies. In the case of TikTok, they recognized the moment when Generation Z began migrating to the platform as a pivotal point for reflection and for considering entry; in short, not doing things without thinking and reflecting on whether their brand has a place at that moment in the social network. These insights align with the concept of sensemaking: that is, a shared understanding of the market based on the market listening to anticipate trends and on the role of teamwork.

During the conversation, the concepts of speed and flexibility –which are core to marketing agility– also emerged organically. Participants agreed that continuously listening to the audience and the market is not only necessary for initial decision-making but also for ongoing adjustments and adaptations. The strategies developed must have structured thinking behind them yet must also allow for constant adaptation. Furthermore, speed is defined as a key element to face all the changes detected so as to effectively implement the answers that need to be given from a strategic level. The need was also mentioned for a solid construction of the brand that allows quick executions without compromising brand coherence.

"From the very beginning, there was a thinking behind it, an initial plan. Then over time, as the social network grew, we grew along with it and adapted our strategies."

And what is the objective to be achieved by entering? Brands recognize that at the current time TikTok is not ready to help companies improve their business conversions (in terms of web traffic and sales). Instead, their performance expectations are focused on the long term. By entering TikTok now, these brands aim to establish a presence and to build a brand strategy that positions them for future success when the platform evolves and becomes more conducive to conversions. Consequently, some of these brands acknowledge that they continue to allocate more resources to other networks such as Instagram or Pinterest because they provide them with results in the short term. TikTok, in their view, is approached as a strategic investment for future

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opportunities rather than as an immediate source of tangible outcomes.

"The day TikTok generates the sales results of Instagram, then my strategy will change radically. But for now, I sell a lot on Instagram because ultimately what I want is to make sales. So, I'll stick with Instagram."

Finally, the influence of external factors on the decision to enter TikTok beyond the company itself, its operations and expectations, was discussed. There was consensus: both competition and society can spur the decision to enter. The concept of social influence –as presented in the UTAUT model– resonated with their reflections. In the context of social networks, competition extends beyond companies within the same industry targeting the same audience. Competition now encompasses any alternative content available on the platform. In the case of agencies, participants acknowledged that some clients –after observing their competitors– express a desire to enter TikTok and exert pressure on the agencies to do the same. The role of the agency in these cases is to act conscientiously and not to succumb to a request if they lack clear objectives. The same situation arises for brands that manage their networks internally. When they see that others are entering and taking action, it serves as a catalyst for them to act promptly to avoid falling behind.

"In our case, it wasn't so much due to competitor pressure, but because we saw that people were coming and that we had an audience."

"This brand has entered; this brand has more ideas. It's inevitable to think about it; it's pure psychology."

"When we talk about benchmarking, I believe it's good to look at what others are doing, but what's even better is to understand why they are doing it."

This qualitative analysis allowed us to gain valuable insights into the research objective and to design the quantitative study. First, the focus group revealed the presence of the main variables of the UTAUT model (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Participants mentioned the influence of expected effort and performance, previous learning, and the behaviour of other brands. Moreover, they recognized that entry may reflect short-term and long-term performance expectations. We therefore include in our proposal the following variables: effort expectancy, short-term performance expectancy, long-term performance expectancy, facilitating conditions, and social influence.

Second, in terms of marketing agility, participants referred to speed, flexibility, and sensemaking, while responsiveness was not explicitly mentioned, possibly due to its close association with the other concepts. Indeed, reacting, deciding, and responding quickly to changes are aspects that are implicit to speed and flexibility. As a result of this, and considering the emerging nature of the concept –with multiple studies in other areas that also decided to include some components rather than others in terms of agility (e.g. Chuah et al., 2020; Gligor and Bozkurt, 2021)– we decided to establish our definition of marketing agility based on sensemaking, speed, and flexibility. We also observed that sensemaking implies monitoring and anticipating trends, but also teamwork to approach decisions from diverse perspectives. This underscores the importance of studying both aspects and of determining their relative importance in predicting brand behaviour when making entry decisions in a social network.

# 5. Study 2a: Quantitative analysis

Based on the study variables defined and the findings from Study 1, the second study sought to further investigate and quantify the results obtained. While Study 1 employed a focus group as an initial exploration of strategic decision-making for brand entry into new social networks, Study 2 applied a quantitative approach through questionnaire data to examine the factors identified (UTAUT and marketing agility), both within the study itself and in its theoretical framework, thus providing a more rigorous analysis. This quantitative approach was designed to enhance our understanding of the factors identified and their impact on the decision-making process, thereby offering a deeper level of analysis and interpretation.

# 5.1. Hypotheses development

Following previous literature and the results to emerge from the focus group, we opted to use the UTAUT model and the concept of marketing agility to justify our research hypotheses. According to the UTAUT model, adoption intention and subsequent adoption of a technology can be explained through four determinants (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Notably, performance expectancy has been found to have a significant positive impact on the adoption intention of social networks (Tajudeen et al., 2018), particularly in small businesses (Humaid and Ibrahim, 2019). Compared to the rest of the variables in the UTAUT model, these expectations have the strongest influence on this adoption intention (Puriwat and Tripopsakul, 2021). Zhou and Matsaganis (2020) reach the same conclusion: effort expectancy is a higher-level construct than the rest of the variables in the model. To effectively promote adoption, decision-makers need to demonstrate the real utility of the network. During the focus group discussion, a distinction was made between short-term and long-term performance expectations. While the literature generally acknowledges their overall influence, industry professionals contend that when a new network emerges, said professionals must carefully evaluate its potential results in the immediate moment, which is characterized by novelty and uncertainty. Simultaneously, they consider the long-term future with greater stability and expectations. Based on these insights, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Performance expectancy in the short-term (H1a) and in the long-term (H1b) positively influence a company's decision to enter a new social network.

Similarly, the focus group discussion highlighted the significance of effort expectancy as a crucial variable in the decision-making process of adopting a new network, specifically emphasizing the need to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills before implementing a strategy. Previous literature supports this notion, with Mandal and McQueen (2012) finding that despite recognizing the usefulness and potential of networks such as Facebook, considerable effort is required to create engaging content compared to other advertising channels such as radio or outdoor advertising. Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2021) rank performance expectancy as the second most influential factor and assert that social networks are the digital marketing tool that requires the least effort for companies to adopt. Taking these insights into account, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Effort expectancy positively influences a company's decision to enter a new social network.

Facilitating conditions are recognized as another key element in companies' intention to use social networks. Organizations that perceive their structure as being more prepared show higher adoption intentions (Zhou and Matsaganis, 2020). This viewpoint aligns with the insights shared by the professionals in our focus group, who emphasized the importance of capabilities and the time required for content creation, including ideation, editing, and publishing. Humaid and Ibrahim (2019) similarly find a positive influence of facilitating conditions in terms of physical resources, knowledge and technical support on the intention to adopt social networks. We thus propose the following hypothesis:

H3: The existence of facilitating conditions positively influences a company's decision to enter a new social network.

The last element, social influence, which is also a classic factor of the UTAUT model, appears to have different effects in the context of social networks. Some studies, such as Mandal and McQueen (2012), Vatanasakdakul et al. (2020) and Zhou and Matsaganis (2020) find that social influence is not a significant factor in the overall adoption intention of social networks. They define social influence as the perception that others believe the company should be using social networks. In contrast –and in line with the classical results of this variable applied to other areas outside social networks– Humaid and Ibrahim (2019) and Tajudeen et al. (2018) find that social influence (including influence from competitors, customers, friends, and family) has a major impact on a company's intention to use social networks. The focus group also hints at this possibility of influence –mentioning society and competition as possible drivers of entry decisions. Although previous literature states that the decision to adopt social networks (the decision to start using social networks) is not influenced by the social component, the latter does possibly play a key role in the specific decision concerning whether or not to enter a new network; in other words, deciding to add another social network to the general strategy. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis to test this potential influence:

H4: Social influence positively influences a company's decision to enter a new social network.

The concept of marketing agility has not been applied in academic research to studies on the adoption of social networks but has only been used as a construct to analyse the execution of established network strategies. This means that in the case of this construct, the focus group acquires special relevance in deciding to include a related hypothesis. Its key components -sensemaking, speed and flexibility (Kalaignanam et al., 2021)- were repeatedly mentioned. Sensemaking emerged as the need to closely observe audiences and market conditions, which played a crucial role in the decision-making process of entering a network. Sensemaking also implies considering multiple perspectives when monitoring the market and making decisions. Brands that have marketing teams who listen to the market and who bring together different ideas and perspectives in order to stay on top of trends will steal a march on other brands when entering new social networks. Additionally, flexibility and speed were highlighted as essential qualities for adapting to changes and making timely decisions, even anticipating market trends. Due to the continuous changes that characterize the social media environment, entering a new social network means that companies must be able to adapt to change and, if necessary, quickly implement new activities and proposals for their audience. We therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Marketing agility –in terms of sensemaking (H5a), speed (H5b), and flexibility (H5c)– positively influences a company's decision to enter a new social network.

The proposed hypotheses are represented graphically in Fig. 2.

### 5.2. Sample and data collection

Data collection for this study took place through an online questionnaire distributed between December 2022 and February 2023. Given the novelty and trend of the phenomenon of brand entry in Tik-Tok, we verified that there were no significant differences between the responses of the first and last respondents to the questionnaire ( $\chi^2(1) = 0.898 \ (0.343)$ ). Prior to its distribution, a pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted with three volunteer social network managers. The aim of the pre-test was to identify any possible misunderstandings related to the items. Certain items were seen to exhibit duplicity in meaning, leading to their subsequent removal from the questionnaire.

The target audience were social media department managers in companies with a well-established and structured presence in the Spanish market's social networks -achieved through organic means. Study participant selection was carried out using non-probabilistic judgmental sampling. Selection followed strict relevance criteria in order to control the characteristics thereof. First, a list of companies with a strong presence in social networks in the Spanish market was established. This list was ordered by general brand recognition in the market. Once the list had been established, we identified and contacted the specific person responsible for the company's strategic decisions in social networks. Specifically, the LinkedIn social network was used to identify individuals holding the desired management positions, and they were subsequently contacted via private messages on LinkedIn and email. A total of 161 completed questionnaires were finally obtained for analysis. All the questionnaires were completed by the chief marketing officers or social media managers of the companies.

The sample for this study was carefully composed to ensure a diverse range of perspectives within the model. The participating companies represent various sectors, including food, beverages, health, insurance, banking, automotive, fashion, leisure, e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, mobility, NGOs, real estate, telecommunications, tourism, restaurants, education, energy, cosmetics, and sports. As for their marketing teams, the average size is 11 employees (ranging from 1 to 150) and the average number of people dedicated exclusively to social media management is four employees. Among those who claimed to be registered on the network (71 %), 10.6 % registered before 2020, 17.4 % in 2020, 18.6 % in 2021, and 24.8 % in 2022. These figures are worthy of note in comparison to when constant publication first commenced on the network, where only 4.3 % did so before 2020, 9.9 % since 2020, 19.9 % since 2021 and 37.3 % since 2022.



Fig. 2. Proposed research model.

# 5.3. Measures and validity checks

The questionnaire first asked all subjects for the degree of agreement with a series of possible factors influencing the overall strategic decision-making process in social networks in terms of marketing agility. We proposed a scale of 12 items to measure marketing agility that were extracted and adapted from the measurement of sensemaking proposed by Mu et al. (2018) and Neill, McKee, and Rose (2007), the measurement of speed by Lu and Ramamurthy (2011), and the scale of flexibility proposed by Khan (2020). In a second stage, participants were asked about the factors related to the UTAUT model. Scales measuring the variables of the UTAUT model are adaptations to our study context of the scales by Venkatesh et al. (2003) to measure effort expectancy, performance expectancy, and facilitating conditions. Items concerning social influence were adapted from Stibe and Cugelman's (2019) scale.

For these variables –and given that we found companies which had entered TikTok and others which had not– we needed to adapt the verb tense of some of the items to reflect the current situation of the company's incorporation of TikTok. We used present and past tenses for companies which had entered, and future or conditional tenses for those which had not (e.g., "It is useful in the short term" vs. "It may be useful in the short term").

As control variables, subjects were asked about the number of employees in the company (48 % reported less than 50 employees, 52 % more than 50), the number of followers in social networks (44 % reported less than 100,000; 56 % more than 100,000), the form of management of their social networks (17 % externally through an agency, 83 % internally), the team's social media experience (seven-point Likert scale), and the team's exclusive dedication to social media (seven-point Likert scale). We analysed the relationship between the control variables and found that the number of followers was positively related to the team's social media experience and to its exclusive dedication to social media. When an account acquires more followers, greater team dedication and expertise is likely to be required. Having more specialised and dedicated staff may even help the accounts to grow. As a result, we considered the number of followers as a proxy variable for team experience and team exclusivity and we did not incorporate them into the regression model.

The dependent variable "entry on TikTok" was reflected through the question "Is your brand on TikTok?", the response options for which were "No", "Yes, only with an advertising account", "Yes, only with an organic account" and "Yes, with an advertising and organic account". In addition to obtaining the response of the dependent variable yes/no, the possible information bias caused by brands using TikTok with a Social Ads advertising account but without organic content was thus avoided. This variable was recoded to obtain the binary variable with unique yes/ no values (29 % no, 71 % yes), removing in the "yes" option those who were only present with an advertising account.

In order to validate the dimensions of marketing agility, we first conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with principal axis factoring to verify that the items referring to each dimension were grouped as proposed in the measurement scales. EFA (Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy = 0.786 and Bartlett's test of sphericity sig. = 0.000) revealed four factors that reflected speed, flexibility, and two dimensions of sensemaking: the capability to anticipate new trends – sensemaking advance – and teams able to integrate different perspectives and points of view – sensemaking team. This result confirms the two aspects that cover sensemaking and that were already manifested in the focus group.

We then conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with these four dimensions as first-order constructs, which indicated an acceptable goodness of fit ( $\chi^2(21) = 30.42$  (p = 0.084), GFI = 0.96, AGFI = 0.914; CFI = 0.974; RMSEA = 0.053). As for the UTAUT variables, we also conducted an EFA (KMO = 0.781; Bartlett's test sig. = 0.000) that yielded a five-factor solution reflecting the five constructs. We thus performed a CFA using AMOS to validate the five scales, with results

showing an adequate goodness of fit ( $\chi^2$ (79) = 132.25 (p = 0.000), GFI = 0.906, AGFI = 0.857; CFI = 0.956; RMSEA = 0.065).

Table 5 shows the items in the study, the descriptive statistics and the loadings. We assessed the scales' reliability and verified that composite

# Table 5

Constructs and measures.

	meun	30	loadings
Sensemaking-advance (CR:0.825; AVE:0.704)			
We continuously monitor information on new trends in social networks.	6.12	1.027	0.779
We anticipate social media trends before they are fully evident	4.37	1.461	0.895
Sensemaking-team (CR:0 797: AVE:0 668)			
We consider all possible perspectives when making	5.16	1.533	0.930
We make decisions using different points of view from	5.07	1.791	0.686
all team members.			
We reduce as much as possible the time between	4.99	1.537	0.908
decision-making and its implementation in our social media strategy			
We are quick to make decisions based on market or	4.98	1.539	0.862
user changes.			
expected results.	5.03	1.575	0.680
Flexibility (CR:0.864; AVE:0.763)			
We are flexible in dealing with changes that arise and that may affect our strategy.	5.52	1.295	0.788
When unexpected situations arise, we work to make	6.14	1.012	0.951
adjustments or changes rather than remain static.			
AVE:0.681)			
It is useful in the short term for the company.	4.43	1.964	0.798
It improves our performance (results) in social networks in the short term	4.69	1.877	0.903
It helps to improve our business results at the	3.72	1.871	0.731
conversion level (considering conversion as the key			
business metric, be it sales, turnover, traffic, etc.) in			
It helps to maintain and/or improve our brand	5.45	1.642	0.858
positioning and branding in the short term.			
Long-term performance expectancy (CR:0.930; AVE:0.770)			
I think it will be useful in the long term for the	5.92	1.346	0.948
company. I think it will improve our performance (results) in	5.80	1.396	0.904
social networks in the long term.	F 07	1 694	0.702
the conversion level. (considering conversion as the	5.27	1.034	0.793
key business metric, be it sales, turnover, traffic,			
I think it will help to maintain and/or improve our	5.98	1.206	0.859
brand positioning and branding in the long term.			
Facilitating conditions (CR:0.903; AVE:0.758)	0.07	0.000	0.014
we have enough employees to incorporate 11k1 ok into our social media strategy.	3.37	2.002	0.914
We have enough time to incorporate TikTok into our	3.39	1.778	0.962
social media strategy. We have enough knowledge to use TikTok in our social	4.88	1.672	0.717
media strategy.			
How TikTok works (from a branding point of view) is	4.57	1.731	0.815
easy to understand.			
Learning how to create professional-level content for	3.65	1.732	0.906
Social influence (CR:0.800; AVE:0.678)			
Before joining TikTok, we learned by observing other	5.00	1.809	0.981
brands before incorporating TikTok into our strategy.			
To decide to join TikTok, we compared ourselves to	4.25	2.000	0.627
other brands.			

 $^{\ast}$   $\alpha$  presents values lower than 0.7 in four of the constructs. However, they have been retained in the study since in the measures of CR and AVE they present adequate values.

reliability (CR) values were all above 0.7, and that average variance extracted (AVE) exceeded 0.6. Discriminant validity was established. In line with the criterion of Fornell and Larcker (1981), the square root of the AVE exceeds the correlations between each construct and any other construct (see Table 6).

Common method bias (CMB) was controlled using a priori remedies: we ensured participants' anonymity, informed them that there was no preferred response. Moreover, we made sure that respondents had enough knowledge to answer the questionnaire, since we selected managers who were responsible for the firms' social networks. We also tested for CMB using an analytical procedure (Podsakoff et al., 2003). We applied the exploratory approach to Harman's one-factor test and conducted an unrotated factor analysis that showed seven factors with an eigenvalue greater than one. These accounted for 68.98 % of variance, with the largest factor only accounting for 22.46 %. We therefore assume that CMV bias is not a major concern in our research.

#### 5.4. Analysis and results

The proposed hypotheses were empirically tested using a logistic binary regression with IBM SPSS Statistics. This methodology is used because it seeks to predict the presence or absence of a dichotomic dependent variable as a function of a set of predictor variables. The dependent variable is the presence (or absence) of the brand on TikTok, where 1 represents brands that are on TikTok. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test yields a p-value of 0.677, which indicates a good fit, with levels of correct predictions of 78.1 % of cases. The Cox & Snell R square is 0.271 and the Nagelkerke R square is 0.388. Table 7 shows the coefficients resulting from the logistic regression.

Firstly, as regards the control variables, the number of followers in the company's social networks is significant ( $\beta = 1.262$ ; p = 0.013), such that the higher the volume of followers, the greater the probability of the brand making the decision to enter this new social network. The form of strategy management (0: external or 1: internal) is also significant ( $\beta = 1.515$ ; p = 0.07), such that the probability of entry is higher when management is internal.

We find support for H1b. We observe that long-term performance expectancy influence entry on TikTok ( $\beta = 0.638$ ; p = 0.002). The perception of facilitating conditions also has a positive impact on the decision to enter the social network ( $\beta = 0.365$ ; p = 0.038), thereby supporting H3. The greater the long-term performance expectations and enabling conditions, the greater the probability of deciding to enter TikTok. However, we found no support for H1a, H2 and H4. Results show no significant effects of short-term performance expectations, effort expectations and social influence on the decision to be on TikTok.

As regards the dimensions of marketing agility, we find partial support for H5. Only speed (H5b) has a significant effect in predicting the presence of a brand on TikTok ( $\beta = 0.479$ ; p = 0.026). The greater the decision-making speed, the greater the probability of brand entry on TikTok. Interestingly, the other dimensions of marketing agility (flexibility (H5c) and sensemaking (H5a)) are not significant, and negative

coefficients are even observed. This result is striking given that all dimensions of agility are positively correlated with brand presence on social networks and no multicollinearity problems are observed. In these situations, performing communality analysis is recommended.

Commonality analysis differentiates for each variable the unique component, i.e., how much of the model fit is unique to a particular variable, and the common component, i.e., how much of the model fit is common to a set of variables (Roberts and Nimon, 2012). In this case, we decomposed the Nagelkerke R square ( $R^2 = 0.388$ ). To conduct logistic commonality analysis, we used the software solution for R package proposed by Roberts and Nimon (2012). Results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8 shows that although the unique contribution of flexibility, sensemaking advance, and facilitating conditions is low, their common contribution is high (their total contribution is 8.07 %, 14.95 %, and 16.91 % of explained variance, respectively). It can therefore be concluded that they are also relevant predictors of social network entry. We also observe negative common effects of sensemaking team, shortterm performance expectations, effort expectations, and number of employees. This result indicates that these variables are acting as suppressor variables (Roberts and Nimon, 2012). According to Nimon and Reio (2011) suppressor variables increase the predictive power of other predictors' unique effects. In this case, we can interpret that the impact of the other predictors (speed, flexibility, sensemaking advance, long term expectations, or facilitating conditions) is likely to be maximum if we consider in the model certain aspects of sensemaking team, shortterm expectations, and effort expectations that are unrelated to entry on TikTok.

#### 6. Study 2b: Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis

A fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) was performed to complement the findings obtained from the logistic regression in Study 2. According to Fiss (2011), fsQCA recognizes the concept of equifinality, which suggests that different combinations of conditions can lead to the same outcome. In marketing –and particularly in the domain of social media– an increasing number of studies have embraced this methodology, as in our case, in conjunction with other methods. Some examples are studies focused on user engagement (Saridakis et al., 2016; Gligor and Bozkurt, 2020; Santos et al., 2023; Gupta et al., 2024), social media strategies in tourism (Capatina et al., 2018; Li et al., 2023b), influencer marketing (Aw et al., 2022) or the effect of social networks on purchase intention (Gunawan and Huarng, 2015), among others.

In our case, it is interesting to investigate which specific configurations of variables are those that represent patterns for identifying companies in their decision-making process when entering a social network. In addition, this new analysis allows us to ascertain whether the components of marketing agility are really relevant, as suggested by the previous analyses. The control variables (followers, management method, and number of employees) introduced in the logistic regression model are not included in the fsQCA analysis, as the objective is to create

Table 6	
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	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
(1) Sensemaking-adv.	0.839								
(2) Sensemaking-team	0.270	0.817							
(3) Speed	0.339	0.145	0.822						
(4) Flexibility	0.180	0.234	0.486	0.873					
(5) ST-performance exp.	0.155	0.127	0.012	0.081	0.825				
(6) LT-performance exp.	0.226	0.126	0.078	0.195	0.481	0.878			
(7) Effort exp.	0.222	0.094	0.154	0.155	0.152	-0.03	0.862		
(8) Facilitating cond.	0.331	0.130	0.261	0.242	0.251	0.237	0.455	0.871	
(9) Social influence	0.045	0.246	0.018	0.093	0.139	0.128	0.017	-0.135	0.823
(10) Entry on TikTok	0.205	0.021	0.306	0.172	0.098	0.304	-0.066	0.244	0.024
<ol> <li>Sensemaking-adv.</li> <li>Sensemaking-team</li> <li>Speed</li> <li>Flexibility</li> <li>ST-performance exp.</li> <li>LT-performance exp.</li> <li>Effort exp.</li> <li>Facilitating cond.</li> <li>Social influence</li> <li>Entry on TikTok</li> </ol>	0.839 0.270 0.339 0.180 0.155 0.226 0.222 0.331 0.045 0.205	$\begin{array}{c} 0.817\\ 0.145\\ 0.234\\ 0.127\\ 0.126\\ 0.094\\ 0.130\\ 0.246\\ 0.021\\ \end{array}$	0.822 0.486 0.012 0.078 0.154 0.261 0.018 0.306	0.873 0.081 0.195 0.155 0.242 0.093 0.172	0.825 0.481 0.152 0.251 0.139 0.098	0.878 0.03 0.237 0.128 0.304	0.862 0.455 0.017 -0.066	0.871 -0.135 0.244	<i>0.82</i> 0.02

(\*) Diagonal values indicate the square root of the AVE.

#### Table 7

Binomial logit regression.

		В	Standard Error	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	95 % C.I.	Exp(B)
							Lower	Upper
Marketing	Sensemaking advance	0.195	0.222	0.772	0.379	1.216	0.580	1.249
agility	Sensemaking team	-0.227	0.182	1.559	0.212	0.797	0.771	1.825
	Speed	0.479*	0.215	4.943	0.026	1.614	1.062	2.467
	Flexibility	-0.178	0.256	0.480	0.489	0.837	0.498	1.358
UTAUT	Long-term performance expectancy	0.638**	0.208	9.432	0.002	1.893	1.246	2.808
	Short-term performance expectancy	-0.293	0.182	2.604	0.107	0.746	0.527	1.068
	Facilitating conditions	0.365*	0.176	4.299	0.038	1.441	1.018	2.024
	Effort expectancy	-0.322	0.177	3.287	0.070	0.725	0.516	1.044
	Social influence	0.048	0.145	0.111	0.740	1.049	0.748	1.421
Control	Total followers	1.262*	0.505	6.232	0.013	3.532	1.299	9.440
variables	(0 = Less than 100,000; 1 = More than 100,000)							
	Management method	1.515**	0.560	7.333	0.007	4.551	1.526	12.394
	(0 = Agency; 1 = Internal)							
	Number of employees	-0.356	0.483	0.545	0.460	0.700	0.262	1.733
	(0 = Less than 50;							
	1 = More than 50)							

\*\*=p < 0.01; \*=p < 0.05.

# Table 8

Logistic commonality coefficients.

	Unique		Common		Total	
	Coefficient	% R <sup>2</sup>	Coefficient	% R <sup>2</sup>	Coefficient	% R <sup>2</sup>
Sensemaking team	0.0106	2.73 %	-0.0101	-2.60 %	0.0005	0.13 %
Sensemaking advance	0.0050	1.29 %	0.0530	13.66 %	0.0580	14.95 %
Speed	0.0342	8.81 %	0.0899	23.17 %	0.1241	31.98 %
Flexibility	0.0032	0.82 %	0.0281	7.24 %	0.0313	8.07 %
Long-term performance expectancy	0.0697	17.96 %	0.0414	10.67 %	0.1111	28.63 %
Short-term performance expectancy	0.0181	4.66 %	-0.0069	-1.78 %	0.01112	2.89 %
Facilitating conditions	0.0299	7.71 %	0.0357	9.20 %	0.0656	16.91 %
Social influence	0.0007	0.18 %	0.0012	0.31 %	0.0019	0.49 %
Effort expectancy	0.0227	5.85 %	-0.0149	-3.84 %	0.0078	2.01 %
Total followers	0.0441	11.37 %	0.0352	9.07 %	0.0793	20.44 %
Number of employees	0.0036	0.93 %	-0.0022	-0.57 %	0.0014	0.36 %
Management method	0.0511	13.17 %	0.0178	4.59 %	0.0689	17.76 %

Unique: proportion of variance explained solely by the predictor.

Common: proportion of variance explained by the predictor in combination with other predictors.

groups based exclusively on the variables examined within the model.

The study uses three anchors to calibrate the fuzzy set: 6, 4 and 2, following the recommendation of previous studies which, like this one, use variables with seven-point Likert scales (Ordanini et al., 2014; Pappas et al., 2016; Pappas et al., 2020). Additionally, to solve the possible problem involving cases whose variables take exactly the value 0.5 after calibration, we add the constant 0.001 to all conditions below 1 (Fiss, 2011). The outcome is a dichotomous variable that distinguishes between companies that are on TikTok (1 = Yes; anchor as 0.95) and companies that are not (0 = No; anchor as 0.05). FsQCA establishes a connection between a condition and an outcome in order to generate a proposition regarding the necessity and sufficiency of that condition for achieving the outcome (Thiem, Baumgartner and Bol, 2016).

Table 9 shows the analysis of the necessary conditions. In order to determine that a condition is necessary, it must have a minimum consistency of 0.90 and a coverage score of at least 0.80 (Pérez-Fernández et al., 2022; Schneider and Wagemann, 2012). Table 10 shows that three components of marketing agility (speed, flexibility, and sensemaking advance), as well as long-term expectancy and facilitating conditions, are shared by all the solutions. However, it does not reach the minimum values proposed for consistency and coverage (see Table 9) to be considered necessary conditions. Therefore, there are no necessary conditions to decide to be on TikTok.

Once the calibration process is completed, we generate the truth table. In this case –and following the minimum recommended consistency (Rihoux and Ragin, 2009)– we set the raw consistency threshold at 0.75. Furthermore, the PRI consistency values provided by the software

Table 9Analysis of necessary conditions.

	Presence (Be on TikTok)		Absence (~ Be on TikTok)	
	Consistency	Coverage	Consistency	Coverage
Sensemaking team	0.74	0.72	0.73	0.28
$\sim$ Sensemaking team	0.26	0.71	0.27	0.30
Sensemaking advance	0.82	0.74	0.71	0.26
$\sim$ Sensemaking advance	0.18	0.61	0.29	0.39
Speed	0.78	0.77	0.59	0.23
~ Speed	0.22	0.58	0.41	0.42
Flexibility	0.89	0.72	0.85	0.28
$\sim$ Flexibility	0.11	0.64	0.16	0.36
Long-term expectancy	0.89	0.75	0.76	0.25
~ Long-term expectancy	0.11	0.53	0.25	0.48
Short-term expectancy	0.62	0.73	0.58	0.27
$\sim$ Short-term expectancy	0.37	0.69	0.42	0.31
Facilitating conditions	0.52	0.79	0.35	0.21
~ Facilitating conditions	0.48	0.65	0.66	0.35
Social influence	0.63	0.70	0.69	0.31
~ Social influence	0.37	0.75	0.31	0.25
Effort expectancy	0.51	0.69	0.58	0.31
~ Effort expectancy	0.49	0.75	0.42	0.26

Note: the tilde symbol (~) indicates the absence of a condition

exhibit values close to the raw consistency and always above 0.65 in all the selected groups, placing in this case the minimum recommended value at 0.5 (Greckhamer et al., 2018). With this configuration, the results are obtained, representing the combinations that lead to the

# Table 10Configurations for "Entry on TikTok".

		1	2	3
Marketing agility	Sensemaking team	•	•	8
	Sensemaking advance	•		
	Speed	•	•	
	Flexibility	•		
UTAUT	Long-term expectancy	•		
	Short-term expectancy			$\otimes$
	Facilitating conditions	•	•	•
	Social influence	$\otimes$	•	$\otimes$
	Effort expectancy	$\otimes$		•
	Consistency	0.79	0.81	0.78
	Raw coverage	0.12	0.27	0.07
	Unique coverage	0.03	0.19	0.02
	Overall solution consistent	cy: 0.83.	Overall s	olution coverage: 0.33

Note: Black circles ( $\bullet$ ) indicate the presence of a causal condition, and open circles ( $\otimes$ ) indicate its absence. Large open circles indicate core conditions, and small circles peripheral ones. Blank spaces indicate "don't care" conditions.

presence of a brand in a new social network. These results are presented visually in Table 10, through the combination of the parsimonious and the intermediate solution obtained (Fiss, 2011). The results show an overall consistency of 0.83 and an overall coverage of 0.33, indicating that a considerable and substantial proportion of the outcome is explained by the three solutions obtained.

Configuration 1 suggests that brands are inclined to join a new social network when they have marketing agility in their team in all its terms (speed, flexibility, and sensemaking). They focus their performance expectancy exclusively on the long term. Even if they have facilitating conditions (time, employees, or knowledge), they realise that entering a new social network implies an effort in terms of learning and creating content. Moreover, the behaviour of other brands (social influence) does not affect their decision. This configuration 1 reflects entry decisions made from agile marketing departments with deep thinking based on an internal company perspective, focused on the long term.

Configuration 2 offers the same configuration of factors in terms of marketing agility (teams who show speed, flexibility, and sensemaking). In terms of performance expectations, both short- and long-term performance expectations are present. Moreover, in solution 2, observing the behaviour of other brands influences the entry decision and, despite including the existence of facilitating conditions, effort expectations are not considered. These are companies that allow themselves to be influenced by observing other brands and that do not consider the possible effort involved in the decision. Configuration 2 thus includes cases of companies who, having agile teams, base their decision on "surfing the wave", joining the trend and thinking short term (without forgetting the long term).

Finally, in configuration 3 we find agile teams, but without team sensemaking. The absence of team sensemaking may be due to the fact that decisions are not made taking into account all the points of view of the whole team (decisions could be of a more individual nature, either because there is no marketing team or because of the authoritarianism of the person in charge of the team). In terms of performance expectations, the focus in this case is entirely on the long term, since firms consider that they will not be able to obtain results in the short term. Moreover, companies in this configuration perceive little effort in entering a new social network, believe that they have the required facilitating conditions, and take the decision without being influenced by societal trends. Configuration 3 would therefore include companies who enter a new social network because it is easy for them. They consider that they must focus on the long term and not on obtaining short-term results, and they are not influenced by the decisions or experience of other brands. Configuration 2 (followed by 1) has the highest raw coverage (0.27), such that it is considered the solution with the combination of conditions that best explains a brand's decision to enter a new social network.

To test the validity of the study, a robustness test and a sensitivity

analysis were carried out, following Fiss (2011). First, a cluster analysis was performed. The findings are not comparable between the two methodologies, so it is only an approximation to confirm that the conclusions reached with this analysis would be similar. The cluster analysis identifies four groups of companies, whose configurations were quite similar to the configurations presented in the fsQCA analysis. Second, an alternative consistency threshold has been used (Skaaning, 2011), changing the cut-offs from 0.75 to 0.7 and 0.8. The results differ from the original model in the number of solutions. The most demanding threshold offers a single positive configurations fulfil the standard, with the interpretation of the configurations being similar to the base model.

Conditions that generate absence of result (~ Entry on TikTok) were also analysed –in line with the asymmetric understanding of the causality of configurations (Fiss, 2011). Consistency values for all solutions were below 0.75, and PRI consistency was below 0.5. This reflects the non-existence of a causal relationship in the configurations, i.e. there are many conditions that lead to non-entry into the social network, although there is no pattern. Therefore –and confirming this principle of asymmetry– we can conclude that there are three configurations that lead to the entry decision, although there is no configuration of agility and UTAUT variables that lead to non-entry.

Finally, a test of predictive validity was performed to verify that the model not only had a good fit but that it also offered good predictions (Pappas and Woodside, 2021). To do this, we divided the sample into a subsample and a holdout sample. We performed the fsQCA analysis for the subsample, using the same conditions as with the full sample. The solutions obtained are shown in Table 11.

After this, the solutions (models) were computed as variables in the holdout sample and were plotted against the dependent variable (entry on TikTok, see Fig. 3). A consistency of 0.84 is obtained for model 1, and 0.80 for model 2. Values are similar to those of the subsample models. Therefore, the predictive validity of the model is high, since these values indicate that the data are consistent (>80 %): i.e. these models are subsets that explain the entry decision.

# 7. General discussion

This study analyses variables of relevance for the decision of marketing teams associated with the entry into a new social network. The study is based on a theoretical approach grounded on the TOE framework, the UTAUT model (Venkatesh et al., 2003), and the concept of marketing agility to explain the entry decision into a new social network. In the context of social media, the UTAUT model has been used in previous literature to explain the initial decision to start the company's social media strategy, at the time when the company does not previously use social media (Mandal and McQueen, 2012; Humaid and Ibrahim, 2019). However, when the decision involves adopting a new social network, marketing team agility is a necessary aspect to take into account and that expands the UTAUT model to the context of business decisions. Indeed, marketing agility is an interesting construct because, apart from being a concept on the rise in the marketing literature

Tat	ole 11		

Solutions	(models)	from	the	subsample.
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Models from the subsample	Raw coverage	Unique Coverage	Consistency	
SP_FL_ST_SA_LTP_STP_FAC_~EFF	0.18	0.04	0.82	
SP●FL●ST●SA●RLP●RCP●FAC●SI	0.28	0.14	0.83	
Overall solution consistency	0.84			
Overall solution coverage	0.32			
SP; Speed, FL; flexibility, ST; sensemaking team, SA; sensemaking advance, LTP; long-				
term performance expectancy, STP; short-term performance expectancy, FAC;				
facilitating conditions, EFC; effort expectancy, SI; social influence; ●; logical				
conjunction (AND), ~; Absence (NOT)				



Fig. 3. Test of models from subsample using data from holdout sample.

Table 12	
Summary	of results.

Hypothesis & variable	Study 1 (Focus group)	Study 2a (Logistic regression)	Study 2b (fsQCA)	Overall results
H1a Short-term performance expectancy	Brands may allocate resources to new social networks to obtain immediate returns.	No significant effect. Suppressor variable (it increases the predictive power of marketing agility, long term expectations, and facilitating conditions).	Some companies enter new social networks searching for short-term returns, others consider it irrelevant, and a third group enters, but do not expect short-term results.	Overall, short-term results do not explain or predict the entry decision, assessments the importance of short- term performance expectations may vary among different types of companies.
H1b Long-term performance expectancy	It is necessary to focus on achieving long-term goals to create a new strategy from scratch.	Positive effect.	All companies set their performance expectations for the long term.	The focus on achieving long-term results is fundamental when deciding to enter a new social network and to predict the entry decision.
H2 Effort expectancy	Brands recognize the need for learning, but similarities with other social networks allow the team to be prepared to enter.	No significant effect. Suppressor variable (when entering is easy, the predictive power of marketing agility, long-term expectations, and facilitating conditions is greater).	One type of companies considers that there is effort required. Another does not consider it, and another believes that no effort is required for entry.	Although effort expectations do not play a decisive role in the decision to enter, each company perceives a different impact of the required effort, based on its available resources.
H3 Facilitating conditions	Entry requires resources in terms of time, skills, and necessary equipment.	Positive effect.	Facilitating conditions are core for all types of companies.	The existence of facilitating conditions is fundamental when deciding to enter a new social network and to predict the entry decision.
H4 Social influence	The presence of competing brands on the social network and the increase in the number of users may motivate entry.	No significant effect.	Social influence is present for one type of companies.	Overall, the strategy of other brands does not explain the entry decision, although for some companies it might be a motive.
H5a Sensemaking- advance	There is a need to listen to the market and its changes in real time.	No significant effect, but high common and total contribution.	Sensemaking advance is present for all types of companies.	Overall, the capability to anticipate market trends is an important condition to enter a new social network.
H5a Sensemaking- team	Emphasis on the role of the team (multiple perspectives and ideas).	No significant effect. Suppressor variable (it increases the predictive power of other marketing agility dimensions, long-term expectations, and facilitating conditions).	Team sensemaking is present in some companies that entered a new social network.	Having a social media team and team- working is important, but it is not a condition that predicts entry decision.
H5b Speed	Widespread importance of the ability to execute and respond efficiently and quickly.	Positive effect.	Speed is present for all types of companies.	Speed in decision-making is fundamental when deciding to enter a new social network and to predict the entry decision.
H5c Flexibility	Need to be capable of making continuous adjustments and adaptations.	No significant effect, but high common and total contribution.	Flexibility is present for all types of companies.	Overall, flexibility is an important condition to enter a new social network.

(Kalaignanam et al., 2021), its components are recognized by companies in a real context, as reflected by the focus group participants. The results yield interesting conclusions for entry decisions. Table 12 includes a summary of the main findings obtained from the three studies performed.

First, we find that speed is the dimension of marketing agility that most impacts the entry decision. Although flexibility and sensemaking were not significant in the model, when performing the communalities analysis we observe that their contribution is small in individual terms, but that they do explain a large percentage of the R<sup>2</sup> and are therefore relevant predictors of TikTok entry. This allows us to conclude that agility is a broader construct in which all the components exert a joint and non-independent influence. This is reflected in the fsQCA analysis. Except for team sensemaking, we find the presence of all the components of agility –i.e. speed, flexibility, and advance– in the composition of the different configurations for entry on TikTok.

These results are in line with the findings of Chuah et al. (2020) who, in terms of the agility of fan brand profiles on social media, conclude that agility is not just about speed, but about the dynamic capabilities that contribute to improving engagement. Similarly, Gligor and Bozkurt (2021) also affirm that social media agility, which they define as detection and response, can improve engagement.

Second, for performance expectancy, we divided return expectations between short and long term, according to the results obtained in the focus group. Our findings support the notion that long-term performance expectancy is significant and is always present in explaining entry into TikTok, as can be seen in both the regression and the fsQCA analysis. Short-term performance expectancy has no significant influence if we look only at the regression result. In this sense, Mandal and McQueen (2012) argued that performance expectations are less important in the context of social media adoption compared to their influence on the adoption of other technologies. Yet if we look at the fsQCA configurations, we see companies who do have a short-term focus on obtaining results and others who decide to enter precisely because they do not expect to obtain results in the short term. For these companies, focusing on obtaining a return when initially adopting a social network seems to make no sense, since a period of adaptation and strategy development is required. As a result, short-term performance expectations alone do not seem to be sufficient to explain the decision to enter TikTok.

The existence of facilitating conditions is another explanatory variable for the entry decision. In line with studies that analyse first-time social media adoption (Humaid and Ibrahim, 2019), we find that firms who are more prepared at the resource and knowledge level are more likely to enter a new social network. They feel more ready to adopt this innovation within the organization. On the other hand, the other UTAUT model variables (effort expectations and social influence) are not generally relevant vis-à-vis explaining the decision to enter TikTok. As regards effort expectations, previous literature finds them to be influential in the adoption of social networks (Mandal and McQueen, 2012; Puriwat and Tripopsakul, 2021) although there is no consensus regarding the perceived amount of effort required to enter social networks. This lack of consensus reflects a business reality: when we observe the results of the fsQCA analysis, we find companies that enter a social network because they perceive an easy effort, others that enter even if the adoption process is difficult, and others that do not consider effort expectations to be relevant when making a decision. Previous studies on social media adoption have suggested that the lack of existing technological infrastructure in companies may explain lower adoption of social media marketing (Meier and Peters, 2023). Additionally, a direct relationship between the industry and technology or innovation can facilitate adoption (Veldeman et al., 2017), which may be related to the effort expectations and facilitating conditions for the company.

As for social influence –i.e., other brands' behaviour– fsQCA analysis provides valuable insights into the different patterns of social influence on a company's decision to enter TikTok. Although the regression results indicate that observing the strategy of other brands may not be as a decisive factor in the intention to adopt a new social network, the study does reveal that its impact can vary significantly across different groups of companies. The analysis allows us to identify a specific group of companies for whom social influence does play a significant role. These companies might be more susceptible to the pressure of competitors, which may influence their decision-making process when considering whether or not to enter a new social network like TikTok.

Another interesting point to be considered in the results is the influence of company size in social networks, and the managerial approach. A higher volume of followers on social networks makes it more likely that the brand will enter other social networks. This may be related to the fact that brand size in social networks is synonymous with optimised management of these networks in terms of having specialised and exclusively dedicated members of the team for this role. Companies that have people dedicated exclusively to social media marketing show that they value the potential of social media as a communication tool with the potential to impact business results. In addition, internal management –rather than outsourcing through agencies– makes entry into new networks more likely. This may be because internal management allows for more agile decision-making by eliminating the coordination processes that exist when management is external.

Based on the results obtained, we can conclude that the study analyses variables of real relevance for the decision-making process of marketing teams –in this case associated with entry into a new social network. In addition, the use of the mixed method approach endows the work with greater rigour in terms of the analyses carried out. The consistency found among the results of the different studies provides greater robustness to the proposed model. The interplay and combination of these factors play a crucial role in shaping the entry decision, highlighting the complexity and interconnectedness of the elements involved. The main theoretical and managerial contributions are summarized below.

#### 7.1. Theoretical implications

From a theoretical point of view, the present study makes valuable contributions to both the literature on marketing agility and the field of innovation adoption. Kalaignanam et al. (2021) provide a comprehensive definition of the concept and outline the lines of research interest, arguing the current relevance of the concept. This study therefore proposes a new scenario for applying the marketing agility concept -the entry decision in a new social network. The findings highlight the key role played by marketing agility in a brand's decision to enter a new social network and demonstrate its relevance and applicability in this novel context. Furthermore, the study enriches research into the field of innovation adoption by combining the TOE framework (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990) and the UTAUT model (Venkatesh et al., 2003) with marketing agility (Kalaignanam et al., 2021). While the UTAUT model has been widely used and studied in various contexts (Curtis et al., 2010; Humaid and Ibrahim, 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Mandal and McQueen, 2012), this is the first instance where it is integrated with marketing agility to explain adoption decisions of a new social network. The results indicate that both frameworks play crucial roles in explaining these decisions made by marketing teams. This integration sheds new light on the interplay of various factors that influence technology adoption, and it demonstrates the importance of considering multiple dimensions of agility alongside established innovation adoption models. Based on this -and in relation to the general literature on social media- this study allows us to conclude that traditional theories (such as UTAUT), when considered alone, do not work in this area. Although the topic discussed is a common decision in business practice, from the academic standpoint we face a new phenomenon that requires these traditional approaches to be integrated with newer ones (such as marketing agility). The online world and social networks are evolving rapidly and constantly (Forbes, 2023), such that this new approach allows us to advance in the

construction of the general theory on social networks.

Overall, the study helps to further our current theoretical understanding of marketing agility (Kalaignanam et al., 2021) and its relevance in new social network entry decisions and it also provides fresh insights into the complex dynamics of innovation adoption processes (Khan, 2020; Zhou et al., 2019). In addition, the proposed entry model based on the combination of the UTAUT model and marketing agility holds potential for broader applicability beyond the specific context of TikTok entry. Previous updates of the UTAUT model, such as UTAUT2 (Venkatesh et al., 2012) and UTAUT3 (Farooq et al., 2017), focus on improving the model from a consumer perspective, not from a business perspective. Through the concept of marketing agility, our proposal model introduces new nuances into the UTAUT model in an effort to reflect this underexplored business perspective. The model's general nature allows it to be adaptable to various social networks and other technology adoption scenarios, and it provides a comprehensive framework to understand strategic adoption decision-making by marketing departments. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, marketing departments are faced with the constant emergence of new platforms, features, and trends. By using this combined model, marketing professionals can effectively assess the factors that influence their entry decisions into any new social network or digital platform.

### 7.2. Managerial implications

From a business point of view, the results to emerge from this research provide a clear perspective on how marketing teams -and particularly social media marketing teams- act when making social media entry decisions. These results can help companies to know what is most important when making these types of decisions, such that they can decide -based on how their marketing teams are configured and their characteristics- which variables should be strengthened in order to be more prepared. It is essential to remain constantly alert, to understand the market and to have the skill to adopt changes when new needs are pinpointed, and to do so rapidly. Possessing all of these facets is key to having agile marketing teams. Being fast is not everything, and decisions based exclusively on speed are not necessarily the best. For example, when a new social network appears, a company should not decide to enter simply to 'be the first to be there', but, based on the results obtained, it should make its entry decision according to its vision of the market at that specific moment and its preparation to create content on that network, taking into account its characteristics. Furthermore, companies should not focus exclusively on "being agile" when adopting new social networks in their strategy. It is equally important to consider the necessary resources required for adoption and to have a clear focus on achieving long-term results. Having sufficient and adequate staff or sufficient time to manage an additional network are examples of resources whose availability a company should consider before deciding to enter. Moreover, whether or not to be influenced by the decisions of stakeholders, such as competitors or society, is something that can influence companies' entry decision. Similarly, perceiving the complexity of the decision in terms of the effort involved in initiating the strategy in a new network can also have an impact. Some companies take this into account whereas others do not. Business decisions are never entirely objective, and the same choice (in this case, the entry decision) may be determined by different combinations of characteristics, some of which are shared by all companies, whilst others might only prove relevant for certain companies and be irrelevant for others. For instance, some brands enter new social networks because they are looking for long-term results, because they have the employees as well as the time and knowledge required to devote to these networks and because they have agile marketing teams. Other brands that also have resources and agile teams enter because they are learning from competitors, and expect short- as well as long-term results. Finally, there are brands that are not influenced by competitors and who only expect short-term performance, but who enter because it is easy, because they have the resources, and

because they are agile in terms of speed or anticipation.

The model's strength lies in its ability to consider both long-term strategic perspectives and real-time agility. As marketing departments continue to navigate the digital landscape, this comprehensive approach can help them make informed and agile decisions that align with their overall marketing strategy and organizational goals. Today -and particularly in the online environment- trends change at breakneck speed (e.g. the exponential growth of TikTok in just a few years (Insider, 2023)). Being able to observe and understand the market and to act according to the inputs obtained is key to making decisions. This flexibility is by no means easy to obtain and -especially in large teams- there are today still limitations and, as we observed in the focus group conversation, many departments employ procedures that prevent them from making decisions autonomously given that they review all the content and ideas of the marketing teams, which can often delay their actions. Giving greater freedom to marketing teams and providing them with the confidence to make decisions autonomously may be one key recommendation for success. In conclusion, this study allows brands to understand that agility involves more than just speed, and that constant attention to the market -coupled with the ability to react and be flexible- are also part of this essential agility when it comes to making strategic decisions.

### 7.3. Limitations and future lines of investigation

As future lines of research, it would be interesting to replicate the study when new social networks emerge with sudden exponential growth. The ideal study moment would be the same moment as the current one for TikTok: when brands are facing the entry decision.

Indeed, this is also a limitation since the phenomenon explored –i.e., brand entry on TikTok– is a one-time event and a current trend, and one which will not be replicable until a new social network emerges and starts to be valued by companies. As a further future line, the study could be replicated so as to explore the adoption decision of other tools by marketing teams, such as beginning to use artificial intelligence, NFT technology or brand entry into the metaverse. It would also be interesting to gauge the possible influence of this entry decision-making on another decision: the decision to abandon other social networks and the replacement effect that may occur due to a limitation or transfer of resources.

The research only looks at the entry decision, without assessing the results (in terms of success or failure) obtained or the entry strategy itself. Beyond the success of the decision, other results could be studied, such as how the decision may impact the company's current strategy –for example in terms of content generation or resource allocation. In addition, as control variables the study only uses the size of the company, the size of its networks and how it manages its social networks, but fails to take into account possible differences in other aspects, such as the business sector, which in this case is studied in aggregate form.

# CRediT authorship contribution statement

Itziar Oltra: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. Carmen Camarero: Supervision, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. Rebeca San José: Writing – original draft, Supervision, Investigation, Conceptualization, Methodology.

# Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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# Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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