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Digital Itineraries:

Platform-based distribution and exhibition of *Marcas da Chuva*

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Abstract

This article analyzes the distribution and exhibition processes of the documentary series *Marcas da Chuva: memórias da Quarta Colônia*, whose production was based on testimonies from residents affected by the 2024 floods in the Quarta Colônia region of Rio Grande do Sul, in Brazil. Against a backdrop of structural limitations regarding audiovisual access, a common issue in small towns, the study investigates how the series' multi-platform circulation constituted a contemporary form of audiovisual itinerancy. The research draws on theoretical frameworks regarding proximity communication, media and film circulation, and the platformization of culture. Methodologically, it outlines the series' distribution strategies and presents data on circulation and reception metrics across Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. The results indicate that digital platforms played a central role in expanding the reach of these narratives, particularly on Instagram, which accounted for the majority of views and interactions. User comments reveal processes of emotional identification, territorial memory and an acknowledgement of the series' significance to the affected communities. The study concludes that multi-platform distribution – combined with local networks of trust and proximity communication – reconfigures the concept of audiovisual itinerancy by enabling audiovisual works to circulate across diverse territories and audiences through digital infrastructures, thus expanding access to audiovisual content in non-metropolitan settings.

Keywords

mediatization; proximity communication; audiovisual itinerancy; platformization; audiovisual documentary.

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Itinerâncias digitais:

distribuição e exibição plataformizada da série Marcas da Chuva

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Resumo

O artigo analisa os processos de distribuição e exibição da série documental *Marcas da Chuva: memórias da Quarta Colônia*, produzida a partir de relatos de moradores atingidos pelas inundações de 2024 na região da Quarta Colônia, Rio Grande do Sul, no Brasil. Partindo de um contexto de limitações estruturais para o acesso ao audiovisual, comumente reconhecido em pequenas cidades, o estudo investiga como a circulação multiplataforma da série constituiu uma forma contemporânea de itinerância audiovisual. A pesquisa articula referenciais teóricos de comunicação de proximidade, circulação midiática e cinematográfica e plataformização da cultura. Metodologicamente, apresenta as estratégias de distribuição da série e levantamento de métricas de circulação e recepção no Facebook, Instagram e YouTube. Os resultados indicam que as plataformas digitais desempenharam papel central na ampliação do alcance das narrativas, com destaque para o Instagram, no qual se concentraram a maior parte das visualizações e interações. Os comentários de usuários evidenciam processos de identificação afetiva, memória territorial e reconhecimento da relevância da série audiovisual para as comunidades atingidas. Conclui-se que a distribuição multiplataforma, articulada a redes locais de confiança e comunicação de proximidade, atualiza a noção de itinerância audiovisual ao possibilitar a circulação entre diferentes territórios e públicos por meio de infraestruturas digitais, ampliando o acesso ao audiovisual em contextos não metropolitanos.

Palavras-chave

midiatização; comunicação de proximidade; itinerância; plataformização; documentário audiovisual.

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Itinerancias digitales:

distribución y exhibición plataformizada de *Marcas da Chuva*

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Resumen

Este artículo analiza los procesos de distribución y exhibición de la serie documental *Marcas da Chuva: memórias da Quarta Colônia*, producida a partir de relatos de residentes afectados por las inundaciones de 2024 en la región de la Cuarta Colonia de Rio Grande do Sul, en Brasil. Partiendo de un contexto de limitaciones estructurales para el acceso a los medios audiovisuales, comúnmente reconocidas en pueblos pequeños, el estudio investiga cómo la circulación multiplataforma de la serie constituyó una forma contemporánea de itinerancia audiovisual. La investigación articula marcos teóricos de comunicación de proximidad, circulación de medios y películas, y la plataformización de la cultura. Metodológicamente, presenta las estrategias de distribución de la serie y un análisis de las métricas de circulación y recepción en Facebook, Instagram y YouTube. Los resultados indican que las plataformas digitales desempeñaron un papel central en la expansión del alcance de las narrativas, destacando Instagram, donde se concentró la mayor parte de las visualizaciones e interacciones. Los comentarios de los usuarios resaltan procesos de identificación afectiva, memoria territorial y reconocimiento de la relevancia de la serie para las comunidades afectadas. Se concluye que la distribución multiplataforma, vinculada a redes locales de confianza y comunicación estrecha, actualiza la noción de itinerancia audiovisual al permitir la circulación entre diferentes territorios y audiencias a través de infraestructuras digitales, ampliando el acceso al contenido audiovisual en contextos no metropolitanos.

Palabras clave

mediatización; comunicación de proximidad; itinerancia audiovisual; plataformización; documental audiovisual.

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Introdução

This article is an analysis of the documentary series *Marcas da chuva: memórias da Quarta Colônia* circulation processes. The series comprises nine episodes, each lasting approximately seven minutes, and was designed based on platform-based screening and distribution strategies. It brings together testimonies from residents affected by the 2024 floods in Rio Grande do Sul (RS), southernmost Brazil, on the border with Argentina and Uruguay. The documentary interweaves these accounts with photographs and footages recorded by the interviewees at the time [1].

Marcas da Chuva is examined through its digital itineraries across platformized environments. Our argument advocates that multiplatform distribution is a contemporary audiovisual itinerancy form because of both the lack of movie theaters in Quarta Colônia municipalities and the structural constraints on the regular in-person screenings organization. This itinerancy enabled narratives emerging from the experience of disaster and heading towards reaching different communities across the territory, and fostering identification and debate spaces supported by communication networks rooted in local communities and circulation strategies across digital platforms.

The series emerged in the aftermath of the largest climate-related disaster in the history of Rio Grande do Sul (RS). In May 2024, extreme rainfall triggered floods, landslides, and inundations that affected approximately 90% of the state's municipalities, with an estimated 2.4 million affected people. Quarta Colônia is located in the state's central region and comprises nine municipalities [2], with a combined population of 58,000 inhabitants. Although it is acknowledged as one of the state's three UNESCO Global Geoparks, the region was severely affected by the disaster. The destruction of bridges and roads disrupted the access to several localities. Communities were temporarily isolated, and residents faced shortages of water, electricity, and other essential services.

Beyond the 2024 event, estimates on the climate change impact on southernmost Brazil over the coming decades led to the development of the following projects: *Governance and the Multidimensionality of Climate Risks: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Proximity Communication, Geoheritage Interpretation, and Ecological Economics Applied to UNESCO Global Geoparks in Rio Grande do Sul* (Fapergs) and *Proximity Communication: Memory, Resilience, and Social Adaptation to Climate Risks and Natural Disasters in Quarta Colônia* (PROEXT/CAPES). Both projects seek to strengthen communities' capacity to respond to, adapt to, and recover from climate-related disasters.

The projects' goals include promoting the digital engagement of communities affected by the 2024 climate disaster and developing a science communication plan. Thus, they seek to strengthen ties between the university and the community by creating

participation and dialogue spaces through narratives produced in collaboration with local residents. In order to do so, the projects committed to produce and outspread a whole range of narrative formats, including podcasts, interactive content, social media posts, a documentary series, and other materials aimed at science communication and local memory preservation.

The article first addresses proximity communication, audiovisual itinerancy, and culture platformization to develop this discussion. It features Quarta Colônia communication context, examines the documentary series configuration series and its distribution strategies. Finally, it provides a data analysis on circulation, distribution, reception, and in-person and online screenings to understand how the interplay between proximity and digital platforms enables new forms of access to audiovisual content in small towns.

The article is in compliance with the thematic axis of the dossier "Models, Uses, and Circulation of Different Contemporary Exhibition Technologies in Small Towns," as well as with its focus on "the involvement of researchers committed to film exhibition and distribution in non-metropolitan contexts." We draw on Meili's (2015) proposition, according to which, film circulation is a complex network involving multiple distribution, screening, and reception processes and windows. All these elements are enhanced by digital environments where formal and informal circulation modes overlap.

The relevance of herein presented findings is underscored by the scarcity of research on film audiences. This gap in the literature was discussed by Mascarello (2004) and identified by Silva (2009). Trindade (2015) argues that Brazilian documentaries distribution and screening have been limited to art-house theaters and, more recently, to streaming platforms. Furthermore, emerging trends highlight the need for incorporating audiences, distributing and screening forms within the digital context. This process expanded the debate initiated in the 1990s concerning the future of cinema amid technological transformations, as well as the recurring discussion on "the end of movie theaters" (Bellour, 2012; Biltereyst & Meers, 2018; Casetti, 2015).

Proximity Communication, Audiovisual Itinerancy, and Platformization

According to studies of the proximity communication network in Quarta Colônia (Fruet; Dalmolin; Silveira, 2024), this region is a news desert where communities "are currently dispersed, unaware of the potential of shared communication protocols capable of interacting systematically to mobilize society" in the climate risk context. Proximity communication is based on building closer relationships with the individuals involved in actions and events; thus, prioritizing their life stories and the narratives they construct about their own experiences (Galvão; Sampaio; Serra, 2023) and about

other actors, such as schools, churches, trade unions, and cooperatives, may also be integrated into this communication network.

Limitations of the existing infrastructure are clear in the audiovisual sector. There are no movie theaters in Quarta Colônia municipalities. Theaters in Santa Maria, which is the main urban center near the region, are limited to multiplexes located in two shopping malls, and to film clubs. This scenario is part of a broader process in the cinema history, namely: reduced presence of movie theaters in small towns and shift from the cinematic experience to private consumption spaces. The moving images circulated through fairs, cafés, sheds, and other community spaces before the consolidation of dedicated exhibition venues. Eventually, these theaters would be incorporated into venues specifically designed for audiovisual viewing (Machado, 1997).

The expansion of multiplexes in shopping malls, back in to 1990s, gave rise to a concentration of movie theaters in larger urban centers, which left smaller municipalities underserved itinerant film screening initiatives reemerged in response to this scenario promoted by film clubs, cultural collectives, and public policies aimed at audience development (Jacks; Silva, 2024). These initiatives enable films to reach audiences that remain outside commercial exhibition circuits. Audiovisual circulation is no longer only dependent on physical spaces for distribution and screening, or on films and spectators' physical displacement due to the streaming services, video platforms and social media. Instead, it increasingly takes place through digital flows featured by sharing, algorithmic recommendations, and multiple screens (Bonin; Silva, 2012).

Thus, the contemporary in-person and online circulation modes turn into calls for the reassessment of the cinematic itinerancy concept, as this practice combines distribution and screening. The experimental approach adopted for series *Marcas da Chuva* emerged from this very context. We understand audiovisual itinerancy as an audiovisual mediatization feature for incorporating the filmic form into media flows. This approach takes each episode as an autonomous documentary short film, as well as recognizes the season as a single, cohesive work. Accordingly, the very notion of itinerancy, herein understood as the distribution and screening across locations, can be expanded in order to encompass online platforms and networks. Several works still circulate among different territories and audiences, but they are currently mediated by digital infrastructures that reorganize how content is discovered, accessed, and received.

The Documentary Series *Marcas da Chuva* and its Circulation Strategy

The serialized work lies within the audiovisual mediatization field (Barone, 2009; Bonin; Silva, 2012; Stam, 2003), and this process shapes how to be in the world as moving image producer. These experiences form audiovisual repertoires mobilized through daily video shooting and sharing based on social mediation (Martín-Barbero, 2009), and on images people consume and produce in their everyday lives (Odin, 2021). These audiovisual experiences cross the production, exhibition, and reception processes of the herein investigated documentary series case. According to Stam (2003), technological developments have been changing reception experiences and viewers themselves since the early 2000s. Audiovisual distribution and screening campaigns must also take these changes into account. We can argue that Marcas da Chuva operates within an audiovisual mediatization environment featured by specific characteristics as it is a counter-hegemonic production situated at the margins of mainstream serialized production, distribution, and screening (Lyra; Santana, 2006). Nevertheless, its release strategies emerge from mainstream conventions since they employ teasers, photographs, cards, promotional announcements, digital posters, and other 'extrafilmic' elements (Silveira; Iuva, 2020), as well as a playlist of the series available on screening platforms. It also enables binge-watching, which is a practice often associated with streaming services.

The series promotion started in April 2026, and its official release took place in May 2026. The episodes were published on the projects' Facebook (Comunicação [...], 2024a), Instagram (Comunicação [...], 2024b), and YouTube (Comunicação [...], 2024c) accounts, every three to five days, from May to early June. Each episode focuses on the testimony from an individual or a family unit. Participants selection aimed at covering the entire Quarta Colônia geographic area. The following table summarizes the interviewees' profiles and the addressed topics:

Chart 1 – Summary of the Marcas da Chuva Series episodes

Episode number	Interviewees' names	Municipality	Ocupation	Approached topic
1	Laura Dickow	Agudo	Nursing technician and veterinary assistant	A 40-kilometer journey on foot to find her parents, who were isolated.
2	Micheli de Pellegrin	Nova Palma	Teacher	How her community was devastated by the heavy rain.
3	Rosane Marion	Nova Palma	Business manager	How the community and her home, located beside a river, were affected by the heavy rain.

4	Igor e Romerito da Silva	Restinga Sêca	Electrician	An accident following the collapse of a bridge approach.
5	Cátia e Clésio Friedrich	Agudo	Rural producer	The destruction of their property and agricultural production by the heavy rain.
6	Ernando Lobler	Santa Maria	Business owner and hiking enthusiast	Efforts alongside other hiking enthusiasts to rescue people and distribute supplies.
7	Roberto Cervo	Faxinal do Soturno	Journalist and radio broadcaster	The day-to-day experience of radio coverage during the heavy rain.
8	Romeu Lemes	Silveira Martins	Retired public servant	Emotional ties to the territory following a landslide that destroyed his home.
9	Luiz Conceição	Dona Francisca	Retired public servant and quilombola community leader	Experiences of community support during the heavy rain

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

These topics addressed the major events at the time, including flooding, landslides, the destruction of homes and access routes, disruptions to basic services, accidents, search and rescue efforts, and shelter provision. The episodes take place in seven of the nine municipalities in the Quarta Colônia region, as well as in Santa Maria Municipality. This configuration highlights how the accounts' geographical distribution plots an affective Quarta Colônia map, even without encompassing all its municipalities. Therefore, it reinforces the disaster's regional dimension within the documentary narrative.

The documentary series was conceived from the notion of proximity in order to bring together communication, territory, and social ties. From this perspective, communication processes are constitutive elements of local identities and community relationships, and they operate at the media/culture/territory intersection (Camponez, 2002). Proximity comprises the symbolic processes through which communities produce, circulate, and consume narratives about themselves and their territory. From this theoretical standpoint, Camponez (2002) understands proximity as a bond set between the enunciator and the recipient through shared references, whether linguistic, cultural, or historical. Proximity work both as a communication strategy and as a reception condition (Camponez, 2002; Serra, 2006).

The series narrates the disaster from within the affected community by selecting interviewees from different municipalities in Quarta Colônia and incorporating images from their personal archives. It gave voice to individuals who belong to and are recognized as members of these territories. Proximity communication is substantiated by an ethics grounded in encounters between openness to others and mutual recognition. Therefore, the series is a device to strengthen proximity communication as it fosters territorial identification, activates collective memory, and creates a shared space between those who receive and those who narrate their local tragedy (Galvão; Sampaio; Serra, 2023).

The role of municipal governments and community associations as catalysts for episodes' circulation within local communities is a relevant aspect of the series' development and distribution given the importance of involving the individuals featured in the narrative about the event in the communication process. These institutions are vectors in an informal circulation network because they (re)share posts through their own official channels, encourage residents to engage with the content, and, in some cases, facilitate the access to interviewees themselves.

The proximity-based relationships set with these institutions had implications for the series' distribution strategies, which were primarily designed for a community that had experienced the disaster firsthand. This trust relationship becomes clear in the episodes' circulation in the society platformization context (Van Dijck; Poell; de Waal, 2018). These relationships take on a role similar to that played by local agents in cinematic itinerancy in the plataformization context. In this case, it facilitates the episodes' circulation in the community through online platforms.

Circulation on Digital Platforms: Reach and Engagement

The low population density in urban areas, and the dispersed settlement pattern, given the lack of movie theaters in Quarta Colônia, required reconsidering the traditional itinerant screening and in-person screening to outspread the documentary series. It first circulated (Fausto Neto, 2010; Recuero, 2012) on digital platforms (Lobato, 2019; Poell; Nieborg; Van Dijck, 2020) used by local residents, as well as through screenings at local events. Strategies designed by the production team sought to address the lack of in-person distribution through a multiplatform approach implemented on Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, on a serialized publication format and a posting schedule. This approach took into account the circulation dynamics on social networking sites, where content persistence and connections broaden the access to information, as messages remain available and can be discovered, shared, and recirculated by different actors (Recuero, 2012).

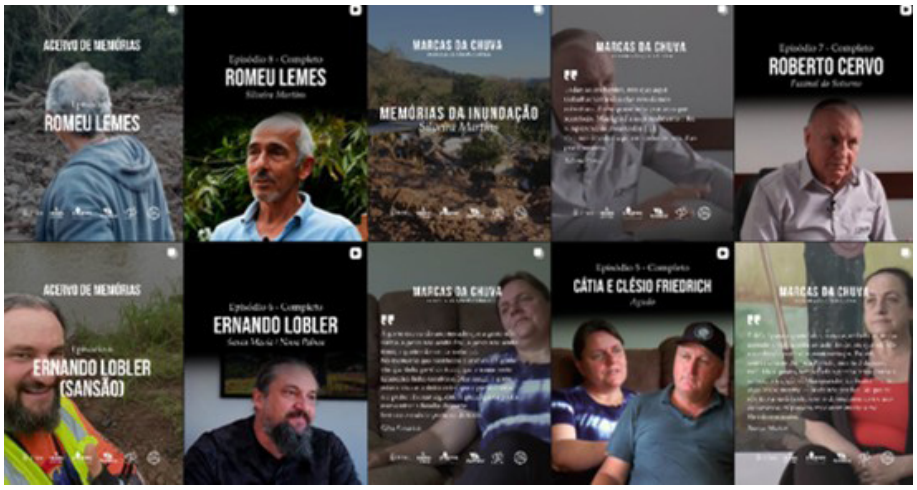
The team diversified its publication formats on Instagram and Facebook combining different content types with different communicative functions in order

to broaden the series' reach. The teasers and individual episodes were developed from short excerpts of the main videos. They were designed as hooks in a short, vertical format to facilitate their circulation as stories and reels. These materials were published to introduce the characters and encourage audiences to watch the full episodes. This strategy takes into account that "information circulation on a social network is carried out through the actors' engagement" (Recuero, 2012), who invest time and effort in selecting, sharing, and outspreading specific contents.

The video opens with an animated rotating phone icon on Instagram inviting viewers to watch the content in landscape orientation. This invitation is followed by the hook, or cliffhanger, and then by the audiovisual sequence. The episode begins with the logos of the funding agencies, a black screen, and a musical soundtrack on YouTube following the conventional format of a cinematic opening.

Other posts on the platforms featured amateur photographs and videos from the time of the flooding. This strategy aimed at activating the collective memory and expanding the series' reach among local audiences. This promotional framework fulfills functions equivalent to those of traditional promotional materials in the digital environment, such as posters, trailers, and final promotional campaigns. The series circulates through shares, direct messages (Direct), and reposts (Repost) in case of lack of traditional screening venues and spaces. This is consistent with Recuero's (2012) perspective, from which, connections persistence broadens the access to information by creating multiple pathways it can circulate through. It is also worth noting that the weekly publication strategy, with episodes released every three or four days, was designed to somehow compensate the lack of collective public premieres.

Figure 1 – Posts on the projects' Instagram accounts



Source: Reproduced from Instagram (Comunicação [...], 2024b)

Circulation Data

tThe series' distribution campaign generated 347,590 views, 7,523 likes, 262 comments, and 1,327 shares across 83 posts on Instagram (Comunicação [...], 2024b), Facebook (Comunicação [...], 2024a), and YouTube (Comunicação [...], 2024c) from April 13 to June 3, 2026. These figures were manually collected from information made available by each of the three analyzed platforms. Views were mostly recorded on Instagram, which accounted for 339,009 views in comparison with 5,655 on Facebook and 2,926 on YouTube. These figures confirm Instagram's centrality as an entry point for audiences and reinforce the role of recommendation algorithms in shaping circulation.

The distribution of formats on Instagram also opens room for insights into audiovisual circulation in platformized environments. The teasers, which are short vertical videos for each episode, are characteristic of the audiovisual logic of social media networks, worked as standalone promotional content (Silveira; Iuva, 2020) and achieved higher view counts, totaling 123,275. The full episodes published on Instagram accumulated 102,158 views across their posts (Table 1).

Table 1 – *Teaser* performance and Full-Episode Formats on Instagram

Interviewee	Video Type	Views	Likes	Shares
Laura Dickow	*Teaser*	24.519	1048	124
Laura Dickow	Full Episode	25.702	541	100
Micheli de Pellegrini	*Teaser*	17890	538	100
Micheli de Pellegrini	Full Episode	12972	215	36
Rosane Marion	*Teaser*	28167	405	45
Rosane Marion	Full Episode	10759	132	15
Igor e Romerito da Silva	*Teaser*	18406	470	61
Igor da Silva e Romerito da Silva	Full Episode	11780	157	99
Cátia e Clésio Friedrich	*Teaser*	12755	376	26
Cátia e Clésio Friedrich	Full Episode	10185	138	39
Ernando Lobler	*Teaser*	8826	174	12
Ernando Lobler	Full Episode	9024	127	20

Romeu Lemes	*Teaser*	9443	146	25
Romeu Lemes	Full Episode	8539	92	22
Roberto Cervo [4]	Full Episode	6665	95	10
Luiz Conceição	*Teaser*	3269	80	8
Luiz Conceição	Full Episode	6532	55	4

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026)

Eight carousel posts were also published under the titles "Memory Archive" and "Memories of the Flood." These posts featured photographs and videos documenting the time and collectively garnered 56,254 views. According to this figure, the collective memory activation plays an outstanding role in audience engagement.

It is worth noting that, videos longer than three minutes on Instagram are not distributed through the recommendation algorithm. Access to this content fully depends on the number of the account's followers and on users sharing the posts. Table 2 summarizes the performance data recorded for the full episodes on Instagram:

Table 2 – Instagram Performance of the Full Episodes

Episode n.	Views	Likes	Comments	Shares
1	25.702	541	18	100
2	12.972	215	8	36
3	10.759	132	4	15
4	11.780	157	6	99
5	10.185	138	7	39
6	9.024	127	5	20
7	6.665	68	4	9
8	8.536	92	11	22
9	6.532	55	3	4

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026)

In addition to episode-level data, a substantial increase in the number of Instagram followers was also observed during the series' promotional time, mainly among users in Quarta Colônia municipalities and in Santa Maria Municipality. In

total, 22.4% of the audience was located in Santa Maria, 17.7% in Agudo, 11.8% in Nova Palma, 7.3% in Restinga Sêca, and 6.5% in Faxinal do Soturno. They were all featured in series' episodes. These findings suggest that the series succeeded in expanding its follower base beyond the projects' academic circles. The total number of followers on the Instagram account is presented in Chart 2.

Chart 2 – Account Followers

Semana	N. de seguidores
1a. semana de abril	457
2a. semana de abril (início do lançamentos dos teasers)	489
3a. semana de abril	714
4a. semana de abril	961
5a. semana de abril	1267
1a. semana de maio (lançamento do 1 episódio)	1731
2a. semana de maio	1828
3a. semana de maio	1912
4a. semana de maio	1950
5a. semana de maio	1972
1a. semana de junho	1981

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026)

The remarkable presence of online comments expressing identification with the series can be observed as the Instagram was the most active platform for the documentary series circulation and had extensive reach across the Quarta Colônia municiplities. The total of 239 comments were recorded during the release of the episodes on the platform. These comments are circulation practices and public expressions individuals construct meaning through. We identified three prevailing categories of comments emerging from the collected data in an initial analysis: (a) affective identification - individuals recognize their own experiences in the accounts of others; (b) territorial memory - the disaster is understood as an event shared by a communal "we"; and (c) validation of the audiovisual production - expressed through recognition of the series as a necessary document. Table 3 presents selected comments exemplifying these categories:

Table 3 – Representative Comments on the Full Episodes on Instagram

Episódio	Comentário	Categoria analítica
1	"There is no way not to be moved... this catastrophe pushed us to our limits... searching for news about our family members... several sleepless nights... only God knows."	Affective identification
1	"Moving! From beginning to end, the narratives and direction are deeply sensitive. Congratulations to the production team, and my deepest empathy for those affected."	Producion validation
1	"We were all moved because we went through this catastrophe too. Its marks will remain forever. But life and the strength to rebuild remained."	Territorial memor
2	"It is always difficult to talk about this tragedy. The people who were in Caemborá weren't sleeping, and neither were we, their family members who weren't there. Those were desperate days and nights. We had no way of communicating with our families, no access, and no news. When news did come, it was frightening and came from every direction. It was difficult to know what was true and what was false. I spent days unable to speak to my family. It was desperate. When I was finally able to see photos, videos, and, above all, hear their voices, I cried and cried without stopping. It was a feeling of relief, and for a fraction of a second, it was as if the nightmare had ended. I looked at the photos, videos, and audio recordings of them, watched and listened to them again and again. My family suffered no material losses, but I know and feel the marks the rains left on them, on me, and on all the residents of Caemborá. Seeing what my place, my home, looked like after the flood was devastating."	Affective identification; Territorial memory
4	"Thank God you're alive today to tell this story. Many others didn't have the same opportunity."	Territorial memory
5	"The resilience of farmers amazes me. What a strong people, fighting to survive and build a legacy. May this family and all the others affected be able to recover emotionally and financially."	Affective identification
5	"How necessary this series is! Few people can imagine how much this flood affected us, especially those of us who are producers. I hope everything you've created gets the attention it deserves. It's what I always say: 'the marks are still here.'" .	Affective identification; Territorial memory; Production validation
6	"Only those who lived through this know how surreal it was... every person who showed up with heart and strength during those moments was essential to keeping the whole 'machine' running. To this day, nobody knows where all that strength came from, because everything happened so quickly. But seeing how quickly people offered help, shelter, and resistance made those long days (which felt like years) feel lighter, more 'bearable'... there were so many of us, and we did so much... we were strength, comfort, conversations, and a little relief for those who lost everything. Thank you for doing so much. Those who received your help will never forget it. You can be sure of that."	Affective identification; Territorial memory

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026)

An analysis of the comments available in Table 3, most of which posted by residents of the municipalities featured in the series, indicates that distribution through social media platforms reached its primary target audience in the Quarta Colônia communities. Episode 1, which tells the story of Laura Dickow, recorded the largest number of views and comments in the series. The audiovisual narrative's structure was based on the Hero's Journey (Vogler, 2015), and it may have contributed

to viewers' preference for this episode. The narrative follows the protagonist's search for her parents in the aftermath of the climate disaster. She recounts her journey, and introduces the allies and challenges she encounters before finally reuniting with her family. At the end, archival footage lends the episode a sense of reality.

YouTube is a repository for the content and exhibits a consumption pattern different from the Instagram and Facebook dynamics. Audiences accessing the episodes on YouTube tend to be more willing to watch the content in its entirety (Table 3).

Table 3 – Watch Time for the Full Episodes

Episodes	Views	Likes	Comments	Shares	Engajamentos
1	1.143	56	4	10	6,12
2	462	23	0	4	5,84
3	309	12	0	1	4,21
4	267	12	1	8	7,87
5	242	13	0	5	7,44
6	124	9	0	0	7,26
7	137	6	0	3	6,57
8	129	4	0	5	6,98
9	78	4	0	2	7,69

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026)

The episode featuring Laura Dickow (Comunicação de proximidade, 2026) also ranked first on YouTube, with 1,143 views, when it comes to absolute view counts. This pattern mirrors the hierarchy observed on Instagram, where the initial episodes achieved greater reach.

The Facebook posts were published through cross-posting right from Instagram and they were not designed specifically for that platform. Nevertheless, Facebook's performance data (Table 4) indicate the presence of an audience accessing the series through this channel, which should not be overlooked.

Table 4 – Full Episodes Published on Facebook

Episode	Views	Likes	Comments	Shares	Salva- Saves	Reach
1	3.200	39	2	6	1	2.137

2	161	5	0	0	0	130
3	32	1	0	0	0	24
4	14	0	0	0	0	12
5	28	1	0	0	0	22
6	54	0	1	0	0	33
7	9	0	0	0	0	8
8	24	1	0	1	0	12
9	8	0	0	0	0	5

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026)

The overall platform data show matching content formats to their respective platforms was essential to the campaign's performance. The teasers are circulation units driven by recommendation algorithms, whereas the full episodes are a format accessible to users with different preferences, besides enabling deeper engagement with an invested audience.

The two projects supporting the series production is one aspect worth highlighting. Together with other initiatives, they accounted for promoting a set of workshops and training courses in educommunication. These activities brought together 145 participants across 11 workshops and 100 participants across six training courses for professionals held in the Quarta Colônia municipalities, in 2025. They reached school students, teachers, and professionals in most of the assessed municipalities, as well as opened new opportunities for face-to-face interaction with the series' creators, who were closely involved in the workshops and courses. Thus, the prior existence of a close relationship may have encouraged participants, to an extent difficult to assess, collaborate in and engage with the series' circulation.

Travel for In-Person and Synchronous Online Screenings

Synchronous screenings, whether in person or online, in turn, enabled discussing and interacting with the team. Six screenings had been held by the time this article was written, in 2026. The synchronous online screenings were:

- An online screening of Episode 1 held via Zoom on March 11, 2026, for an audience of 15 people, including female faculty members and students of several nationalities enrolled in the Master's Program in Environmental Science at Södertörn University (Sweden), as part of the Crisis and Environmental Communication seminar. Before the screening,

a presentation on the series development was given;
- A screening of Episodes 8 and 9 was held via Google Meet on May 25, 2026, during a class in the Journalism Program at Unipampa, for an audience of 20 undergraduate students. The session began with a presentation on the production stages, which iwas followed by the audiovisual works.

The in-person screenings, in turn, took place in the following settings and venues:

- The “Sextou com Café no Museu” event was held at the Museum of Knowledge (Museu do Conhecimento/UFSM) on March 17, 2026, for an audience of 30 people, including university researchers and students. The session included an oral presentation on the specific characteristics of documentary filmmaking, followed by a screening of Episode 1;
- Participation in a course within the undergraduate Journalism Program at UFSM on May 13, 2026, for 20 first-year students, featuring an oral presentation on the production process and a screening of episodes 1 and 3.
- "Viva Antiga Reitoria/UFSM" event, held on June 12, 2026, where the projects were provided with a dedicated space for screening. The entire series, along with teasers, was screened on a loop. The audience mostly consisted of fair exhibitors and the academic community.

The conducted activities indicate that in-person, traveling screenings, change several locations into screening venues; whereas the digital realm, which is facilitated by platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet, enables simultaneous screenings. Each screening space fosters its own specific rituals, rules, and operational logic. The opportunity to present the production process provides context for the work and invites diverse lines of inquiry. Academic environments typically spark debate on production, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies, as well as on the validation of the work by peers. The episodes compete with other attractions amidst movement and noise at fairs reminiscent of early cinema screenings. Attendees may only watch segments of the episodes and engage in one-on-one conversations with the creators. The reception is further shaped by affective identification, territorial memory, and the validation of the audiovisual work in settings where the audience shares common social experiences, such as having lived through the tragedy itself. This dynamic is also observed in the comments left on digital platforms.

Final considerations

Based on what has been presented, the distribution and screening strategies designed for the series *Marcas da Chuva: memórias da Quarta Colônia* can be linked to

"proximity communication" practices. The series helps strengthening community ties and increases the visibility of accounts that remain outside traditional media circuits by both prioritizing narratives rooted in the experiences of the region's own residents and leveraging local circulation networks. Accordingly, the decision for distributing the series via digital platforms was a good strategy to engage audiences within the territory itself bby helping to bridge existing communication gaps in the region.

The results also suggest that the itinerancy concept can be reimagined in contexts lacking movie theaters. The circulation of audiovisual content historically relied on the physical transport of works. The analyzed case, in turn, the circulation took place through digital networks and sharing flows, which was mainly facilitated by local agents. The series episodes circulated between towns via digital platforms and reached new audiences through shares, messages, and recommendations. Therefore, device screens were the contemporary displays for the audiovisual content circulation in small towns. This itinerancy form differs from traditional experiences, as screening spaces become manifold and are defined by the viewers themselves. Furthermore, the act of reception is no longer confined to the moment of screening, it rather incorporates new interaction forms enabled by digital platforms.

Notes

[1] In addition to the core series, which consists of 9 episodes, Marcas da Chuva: memórias da produção, which is a documentary on the behind-the-scenes process, was also released.

[2] The municipalities making up the "Quarta Colônia" (Fourth Colony) are: Agudo, Dona Francisca, Faxinal do Soturno, Ivorá, Nova Palma, Pinhal Grande, Restinga Sêca, São João do Polêsine, and Silveira Martins.

[3]No promotional teaser was released for the episode featuring Roberto Cervo due to operational constraints.

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