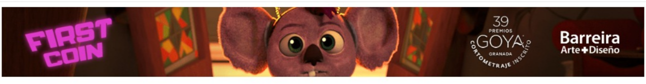
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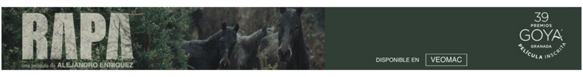
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Conecta DIGITAL: a good collection of examples of how technology can help content

By **AV451 Editorial** - November 8, 2024

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Conecta DIGITAL has offered two intense days of reflection in Madrid on the application of new technologies to the creation of audiovisual content. An event that gives continuity and complements Conecta FICTION & ENTERTAINMENT and which should be attended with an open mind.

"You have to be **humble and curious** , and accept that we don't know everything. I really appreciate that you invited a content creator like me to an audiovisual event. But I'm here to learn, not to teach," said Rodrigo Taramona, who is also a technology entrepreneur, at the opening session. The more than 300 accredited participants were able to meet 41 national and international speakers who shared their experience in, for example, the financing of a feature film through **NFTs** ('Calladita', by Miguel Faus), the application of **augmented reality** for the insertion of advertising in productions of any kind (Triforce Entertainment, represented by Kara Kandarakis), or the use of photogrammetry to digitize thousands of garments and **dress digital characters** (Peris Costumes).

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Géraldine Gonard, director of Conecta DIGITAL.

Optimizing resources, reaching the end user and monetizing. These are the mantras of the new technological tools that can be applied to the creation of digital content. "You need an immersive narrative capable of **making the most of** the "wow" effect of any technology," said Eva Domínguez, from Immersive Creatures, who has spent years "breaking the fourth wall and changing the way we experience stories." In other words, content is, once again, the epicenter from which something great can start.

There is no doubt that Conecta DIGITAL attendees have been able to accumulate a good catalogue of ideas to try out in their companies. Because one of the general recommendations is **to take action** , to spend some time thinking and experimenting with new tools, something that the Portuguese studio Lusco Fusco Animation (Portugal) will do in 2025. Pedro Domingo Luque, founder of this VFX and animation company, commented in Madrid that they will look, above all, for "those technologies that remove the automatic workload in order to fully exploit the talent of the people who make up the team." In this sense, the first edition of the **Technological Radar Report** was presented : communicating technological trends in a visual way, focused on animation, VFX and video games. This is a publication that will be updated twice a year, funded by the Ministry for Digital Transformation and the Civil Service through the Secretary of State for Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure (SETELECO) and authored by Manuel Meijide (Mundos Digitales), Alberto Arenas (Hogarth), Víctor M. Feliz (Motiva CG), Alba Meijide (consultant), and Adrián Pueyo (Orca Studios). The report sheds light on techniques such as **automated rotoscoping** , ***motion tracking*** , **capturing environments with *Radiance Fields*** , or **cleaning up shots** with the assistance of artificial intelligence. In other words, these are tools that streamline processes and save time and money in animation and post-production.

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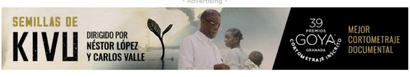
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Another type of task that artificial intelligence is already being seen to be capable of performing is the summary of films and series in short texts, as Prime Video will implement with the X-Ray Recaps function. Giants such as Disney, Meta, Apple, Netflix and Alphabet are fully involved in everything related to these technological advances. There must be a reason for this.

MDC Infinia also stopped by Conecta DIGITAL to talk about the virtual production set it has in Boadilla del Monte (Madrid), where they have recorded, among other things, up to seven music videos in 24 hours. "The experience is getting better and better and we have more and more clients," said Pipo Jiménez, head of virtual production at MDC Infinia, despite the fact that it is a way of filming that still needs a lot of research. Just these days Gran Canaria Platós has inaugurated a virtual production set that will be operational in early 2025, at the same time that EFD Studios announced in September the construction of another space of this type in Madrid.

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Companies like Mediaset España are applying **artificial intelligence to dubbing series** : "We tried it last year and it was still very green. In 2024, we tried it again and the result is so impressive that no one would know if it was done by a real actor or artificial intelligence," confessed Cecilia Mangisch, head of digital innovation at Mediaset España. The Telecinco group has launched two virtual presenters this year and has broadcast during its 9:00 p.m. newscast a piece based on augmented reality on the United States elections that has taken a year and a half of work.

Throughout the event, attendees were able to see two devices pointed at them from the stage. These were **Emogg** 's solution , two sensors that read the audience's feelings live, without having to record them, and offer data in real time. Iralta also spoke about its more than 5,400 minutes of augmented reality production for **'Mapi'** , a daily programme broadcast on La 1, and Spatial Voyagers spoke about the success of the **mixed reality horror experience** they have installed in Port Aventura, 'Hysteria in

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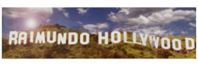
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Boothill'. "We have introduced a virtual layer to a physical experience that already worked on its own and some people experience it so deeply that they get confused if what they are seeing is real or through the glasses," said Edgar Martín-Blas, from Spatial Voyagers.

The art collective MOKA presented **a workflow that allows animation to be created from filmed material** . Their first production will be released next February, a video clip for the Andalusian group Califato 3×4 in anime style. The project, in search of funding, was part of the Pitch Young Minds won by **Ilusiono** , an application that allows parents to personalize magical experiences with the Tooth Fairy, such as AR videos, printables such as letters and diplomas, all in real time.

However, if we talk about Conecta DIGITAL startups, the one that stood out by a landslide with three awards was the Coruña-based **Stik** , which transforms physical entertainment products into social platforms.

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The big question: where is the return?

Regarding financing and monetization, Conecta DIGITAL provided several ideas. One of them, not so new but perhaps less taken into account by producers, is **Verkami** , a crowdfunding platform that has been running for 15 years and has made more than thirteen thousand cultural projects viable, including 'Stockholm' (2012), the debut feature film by Rodrigo Sorogoyen. "We reverse the order of cultural consumption: we have viewers before having shot the film. Crowdfunding not only helps to finance, you are also advertising your work before it is finished and that can open unexpected doors for other people who want to participate, not always monetary. You generate a community before the premiere," commented Jonás Salas, one of the founding partners of Verkami. And he hit on one of the points that anyone who premieres a series or a film is worried about: that the viewer notices its existence and watches it.

Along these lines, Hulahoop was also presented , a platform that connects entertainment producers with investors, selected in the Zinemaldia Startup Challenge 2024 of the San Sebastian Festival. And, of course, as mentioned above, **Miguel Faus** detailed how he raised the bulk of the budget for his feature film 'Calladita' (on Netflix) through NFTs. "I cut the short film I made in 2019 into frames and sold them as NFTs. We raised more than 700,000 euros from 680 patrons from around the world," he repeated on Conecta DIGITAL.

Returning to artificial intelligence, Mediaset España has used it in a new **advertising solution** on Connected Television that they have named Contextu-Ads. The first action, carried out with Nivea, shows how a thematic association is created between the advertising that is served to the viewer and the linear content that is displayed on the screen. Thus, the advertisement is launched in L-Shape format, without interrupting the broadcast. According to a study by Publiespaña, this campaign increases the recall of the advertisement by up to 32% and improves desirability by 24% compared to traditional non-contextual advertisements. "It is contextualized and personalized advertising in real time that is really relevant to that specific viewer and that is effective," says Mangisch. After the tests, Contextu-Ads has become "an industrialized product" and has joined the Publiespaña catalogue.

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Cecilia Mangisch (Mediaset España) and Victoria Cazalla (YouTube) listen to Alessia di Giacomo (RTVE).

For its part, **YouTube** recalled that any television or production company can have its own channel, which, in addition to providing visibility, can generate **income** . "From one thousand subscribers and four thousand hours of viewing, any YouTube channel can enter our partner program and start receiving income from the inclusion of advertising in its videos," said Victoria Cazalla, head of the Films & TV vertical of YouTube Spain. In addition, Google's video platform allows the inclusion of links to online stores in videos and has also launched the paid subscription, YouTube Premium, which can provide proportional income to the channels that the subscriber consumes.

The so-called content creators are very envious of their ability to gather large audiences, whether in their Twitch streams or at physical events such as La Velada del Año. Conecta DIGITAL was attended by Slurp Network, a company that manages, among others, the YouTube channel of Ibai Llanos (+12 million subscribers) and the King's League. Also present at Vizz Agency, a content creator representation agency belonging to Webedia. The conclusion of this panel, in which YouTube also participated, is that any user of any age is going to the Internet in search of the content that interests them the most, and that, in addition, it is a loyal audience. " **Connected television** is the second device on which YouTube is consumed today. Above all, at certain times of the day such as prime time. We detected two and three hours of consumption of a content," commented Pilar Sánchez Macías, head of MCNs and Family partners of the Google service.

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Rodrigo Taramona at Conecta DIGITAL 2024.

> "Audiovisuals are technology. Cameras, microphones, editing software... Are we going to be afraid of technology when we have built an entire industry around it?", mused Rodrigo Taramona.

In the face of those who are afraid and see their jobs in danger, Rodrigo Taramona is clear: "We have to be **grateful to be living in this moment** , we are in a fascinating present that holds an incredible future for us," he said at the closing of Conecta DIGITAL. There is still much to do. For example, at a legal level, the European Union has had a **law on artificial intelligence** since August 1 that, although it falls short, "is interpretable," in the words of María Negro, a lawyer at Auren. Likewise, it is urgent to have **verification systems** , given that it is estimated that half of the content circulating on the Internet has been created by artificial intelligence.

In terms of **training** , the speed at which technological tools are growing makes it difficult to create study plans and find professionals who are sufficiently qualified to teach. And, of course, on a moral level. "There are people and companies that are putting the brakes on artificial intelligence, in the sense that they are applying it carefully," Taramona commented, although he acknowledged that economic interest may take precedence. "Audiovisual is technology. Cameras, microphones, editing software... Are we going to be afraid of technology when we have built an entire industry around it?" Taramona mused.

Conecta DIGITAL is an essential component of Conecta FICTION & ENTERTAINMENT, expanding the event's thematic offering and consolidating its position as a benchmark for professionals in the audiovisual sector. The 2024 edition includes a programme of activities designed to promote the creation and dissemination of digital content in the creative industries, developed in two stages: Toledo (18-21 June) and Madrid (5 and 6 November). Produced by Inside Content, it has the backing of the Ministry of Culture, funding from the European Union – Next Generation EU, and the support of the Madrid Film Office.

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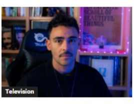
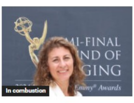


Content creator Rodrigo Taramona will inaugurate Conecta DIGITAL 2024



Géraldine Gonard: "Conecta DIGITAL will dedicate two days to talking about new technologies in the service of creativity"

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