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JAUME·I**

**DIGITAL MARKETING PLAN  
“VILLARREAL C.F.”**

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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Villarreal Club de Fútbol is a Spanish football club from the first division, well-known by its sustainable project which aims to enhance the role that sports play in its territory. In practice, this company offers entertainment to its fans and followers through the football matches of its teams and the merchandising that the club commercialises.

In this marketing plan, we have carried out an internal analysis to discover which are the main resources of Villarreal C.F., with a posterior external analysis so as to study the context, environment and competitors of the club. Additionally, we have conducted a market research so as to enhance the analytical aspect of this plan, considering the opinion of the customers.

Nowadays, we can observe notable changes in the Spanish society and economy, with new concerns for the customers and a lower purchasing power during the years of the pandemic caused by COVID-19. People are becoming increasingly worried about principles as gender equity, sustainability or social justice, which shall be taken into account by the companies.

Moreover, we have contacted with two different employees of the club: Tino Traver and Pilar Álvaro. Tino is in charge of the institutional relations of Villarreal C.F., while Pilar works at the Marketing Department of the club. In this case, we interviewed Pilar in October 2022, including questions about different marketing aspects, so as to bring an internal source to the work.

Then, we have established 6 different marketing objectives, which are expected to be achieved through the implementation of this plan. The main objectives are related to increasing the number of final customers, to improve their satisfaction and to enhance the role of the club's website and social networks. To do so, we have set the main marketing strategies for 2023, specified by a total of 12 action programs.

Due to the fact that digital marketing is essential for the club (especially if we think about reaching new customers), several action programs will be based on this kind of techniques, implementing new technologies so as to achieve the previously mentioned objectives. This will be even more important in the case of communication and promotion action programs, which are optimal for the appliance of digital marketing.

Finally, we have established a schedule and a budget for each of these 12 action programs, indicating the duration of each one. In last place, we will present a control system so as to guarantee the achievement of the mentioned marketing objectives.

## **2. SITUATION ANALYSIS**

### **2.1. Internal analysis**

#### **2.1.1. Presentation of the company**

Villarreal C.F. S.A.D. is a Spanish sports club from Vila-real, a 50.500 inhabitants city in the eastern coast of the country, inside of the province of Castellón. As stated in the club's website, Villarreal C.F. develops three main functions towards the sports community and the Spanish society. Firstly, the participation in official sport competitions through its professional football teams. In second place, the promotion and development of different sports modalities. Lastly, the commercialisation of the sport shows and other products, as well as the exploitation of the rights related to the sport, their professional teams and other resources.

As of today, Villarreal C.F. has undoubtedly established itself as one of the most important football teams in the Spanish league and, moreover, in the international football panorama. Being founded in 1923, the club has suffered from various transformations, evolving from a non-professional football team in the lowest Spanish divisions to the Villarreal C.F. that is known nowadays, with 23 seasons in the first division and a European title: the UEFA Europa League achieved in 2021.

Furthermore, it must be highlighted that the club has created a sustainable project for its future, especially since the establishment of its current President, Fernando Roig, who has headed the company during the last twenty-five years. These last decades have brought numerous changes, including notable investment with regards to the club's facilities, staff, youth system and also the continuous enhancement of the team's stadium: "Estadio de la Cerámica" (which currently holds an official shop and the restaurant "El Ceramista").

Moreover, Fernando Roig has created a system in which several synergies are always present and essential for the project. In this case, the President has taken advantage of other companies of its own, especially PAMESA Cerámica, so as to develop beneficial actions between that entity and Villarreal C.F., taking into account that Castellón holds one of the main industrial clusters for pottery companies within Spain.

All in all, these changes have been essential for the image of brand created by the club. As of today, the club defines itself as exemplary in sports, institutional and economic matters, without forgetting its social involvement and commitment.

## 2.1.2. Mission

Villarreal C.F.'s main objective is to offer entertainment to the society, while enhancing the role of sports in Vila-real and the whole province of Castellón through its football teams, which are organised within a sustainable club project based on social actions.

## 2.1.3. Vision

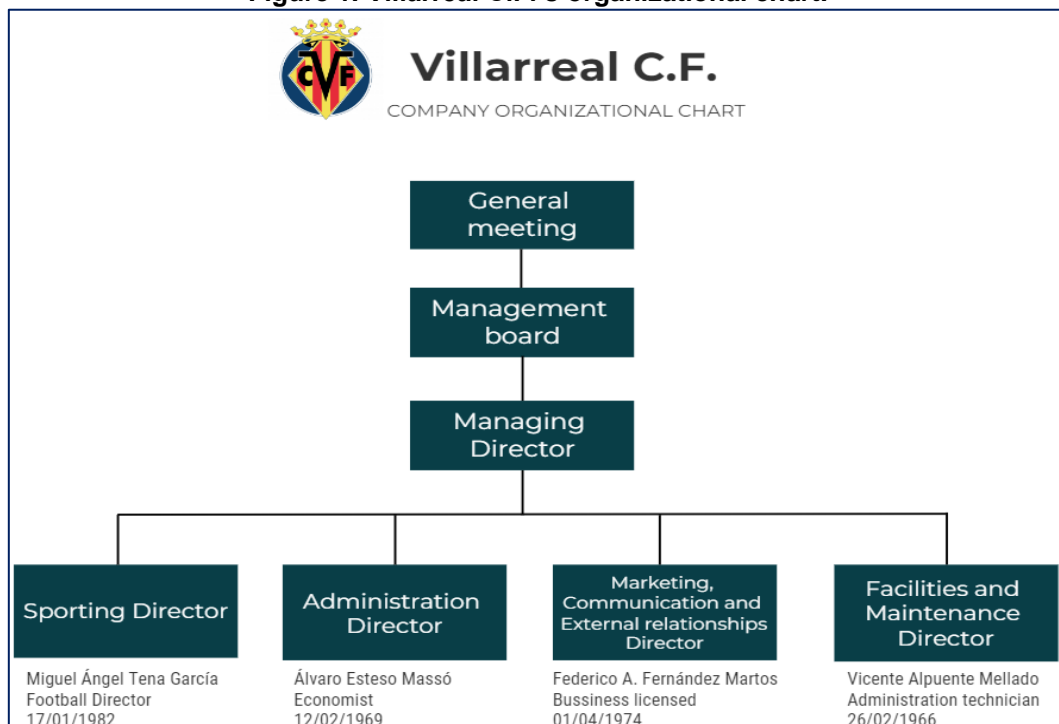
The company's vision is to become one of the most important sports clubs in the world, creating a successful model regarding how to foster local economic growth through football.

## 2.1.4. Company resources

### 2.1.4.1. Human resources

In terms of human resources, Villarreal C.F. is constituted by several directions, which can be observed in the following organizational chart (see *Figure 1*).

Figure 1. Villarreal C.F.'s organizational chart.



Source: own elaboration. Data: Villarreal C.F. website.

More precisely, at the top we find the General meeting, which is shaped by the club's shareholders, who assemble every year in order to take the main decisions of the company, such as naming the members of the Management board (or Administrative board). As of today, the Management board is constituted by the club's President

Fernando Roig and the Managing Director and CEO Fernando Roig Negueroles, among others.

After these three main levels, we find four different directions, which are divided through a functional classification. Specifically, the club relies on a Sporting Director, an Administration Director, a Marketing, Communication and External relationships Director and a Facilities and Maintenance Director.

Finally, it must be noted that Villarreal C.F. was constituted by 334 employees during 2021. Nevertheless, we should highlight that only 42.81% of that people had a permanent contract with the company, while the remaining 57,19% were in a temporary situation.

#### 2.1.4.2. Financial resources

As it can be seen in the following chart (see *Table 1*), the club has managed to achieve notable operating revenues during the last years. As a matter of fact, between both periods, the operating revenues of the club were increased by 44.16% (37.978.822€).

**Table 1. Villarreal C.F.'s financial profile. Periods from 2019 to 2021.**

	2020/2021	2019/2020
<b>Operating revenues</b>	123.981.963,95€	86.003.141,95€
<b>Ordinary profit before tax</b>	-17.938.720,86€	247.960,58€
<b>Total assets</b>	198.029.361,98€	217.093.158,50€
<b>Equity capital</b>	69.575.335.95€	69.575.335.95€

*Source: own elaboration. Data: Villarreal C.F. website.*

However, the growing costs in the company and, especially, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused a descent in the club's profits. In consequence, the club obtained negative results in the period 2020/2021.

### 2.1.4.3. Marketing resources

#### **Product**

In this section, a brief analysis of Villarreal C.F. product mix will be presented, including its portfolio's main characteristics. In this case, we find a portfolio constituted by two main product lines. On the one hand, the main service that the company provides: leisure and entertainment through the access to the stadium (and the other club's pitches) so as to enjoy the football matches of the different teams. On the other hand, the wide range of merchandising created by the club, which will be analysed next.

Regarding the first case, we shall classify the access to the football matches as a speciality service, taking into account that these events create strong preference and loyalty to the company. In consequence, the customers are set to make a special effort regarding the purchase. Furthermore, the prices of the service are relatively high and the distribution is exclusively carried out by the club.

In this case, it must be noted that the service is especially addressed to those customers that live in a specific geographic zone (especially Vila-real and the other Valencian cities, Teruel and Tarragona). That is to say, not every customer will be able to travel to Vila-real every week to attend football matches. Those Villarreal C.F. customers that live in this geographic area will be classified as fans for this work., and they usually hold season tickets (which will be analysed next). Those that follow the team through TV, usually because they live outside this area and cannot attend physically the home matches with some frequency, will be classified as followers (or sympathizers).

Moreover, according to Kotler and Keller (2012), we must consider this as a main service which is offered along with other less important goods and services, such as the food and drinks that can be purchased in the stadium. More precisely, it is a service based in teams and developed by specialized staff, which satisfies personal necessities (leisure and entertainment), with lucrative objectives and that is offered by a private entity (the club is established as a public limited sports company).

In practice, the service is offered through two different tools: season tickets and individual tickets. The first ones represent a long-term service, which in the current season allows the customer to attend every Villarreal C.F. home match in the Spanish league, the groups stage of the UEFA Conference League, the Spanish Cup (until the round of 16) and also every Villarreal C.F. second team and women's team home matches. Thus, these tickets have a useful life of approximately 9-10 months. Furthermore, the season



tickets confer other benefits, such as discounts in some Spanish theme parks, gas stations and music festivals.

More precisely, for the present season, the club offered up to fourteen different season tickets with their respective prices, fixed depending on the stadium's zone associated to the ticket. Additionally, the Central Tribune and "Supertribune" season tickets allow the access to every home match of the season, with food and drinks included in the last case.

On the other hand, we find the individual tickets. In this case, the tickets allow the access to the Villarreal C.F. stadium for a single football match. In consequence, the price of the service will change notably depending on the specific competition, round, rival and stadium zone, as it will be explained in the next section. However, these tickets do not grant any of the accessory benefits that the season tickets confer (mainly discounts).

Regarding the variety of services offered in this subline, it must be noted that not every zone will always be available, taking into account that the season tickets occupy a notable part of the stadium's capacity every year. This year, for example, the club has managed to sell every season ticket available (more than 20.000) to its fans, while the stadium has capacity for 23.500 people.

On the other hand, we must put the focus on the Villarreal C.F.'s merchandising line. Firstly, this type of goods shall be considered as comparison products, understood as those products whose purchase requires more effort and time compared to cases of convenience products. However, we do not find the exclusivity that characterises speciality products (as seen before): these products are distributed in a wider way.

Furthermore, it must be noted that salesforce is essential in the marketing strategy regarding this kind of products, according to Vallet-Bellmunt et al. (2015). Finally, we must highlight that merchandising is addressed to both Villarreal C.F. fans and followers.

Regarding the specific products offered, the club's merchandising is divided in 11 different sublines: the 3 sublines of the Official Joma collection (Player, Training and Leisure), Scarves, Miscellaneous, Casual, Baby, Home, Jewellery, Stationery and Outlet.

Firstly, the Official Joma collection, which is shaped by the previously mentioned 3 sublines. The Player subline is composed by 7 items, including the official jerseys that the players wear (see *Image 1*). The Training section offers 9 products, especially t-shirts

and shorts. Finally, the Leisure section, which brings another 4 different items, such as anoraks and two jackets.

**Image 1. Villarreal C.F. Official Joma collection.**



*Source: Villarreal C.F.'s shop webpage.*

Then, we find the Scarves subline. As of today, there are only two different scarves available.

In fifth place, we must analyse the Miscellaneous section. This subline is constituted by ten distinct items, including flip-flops, pin badges and masks.

Posteriorly, the Casual subline, inside of which we find socks, caps and a Villarreal C.F. mug. This section has a depth of six products.

In seventh place, the Baby section. This division has, again, a depth of six products, including a baby scarf and a Villarreal C.F. bib.

The eighth subline is the Home one. This section contains, nowadays, a single product, which is the Villarreal C.F. 1923 mug.

Regarding the Jewellery section, it must be noted that the club offers two different ornaments: the Yellow/blue keyring and the Kids bracelet.

Then, we reach the Stationery subline. This division is constituted by nine distinct items, especially books, folders and a puzzle of the team's stadium.

Finally, we find the Outlet section. This subline contains clothes from the Official Joma collection from last season (2021/2022) for a reduced price, with nine different items.

Lastly, the focus shall be put on the consistency of this product mix. According to Kotler and Keller (2012), consistency describes how close the different product lines are, taking

into account aspects such as their final use, their production requirements, its distribution channels, etc.

In this case, the two main product lines (the access to the stadium and the merchandising) are not really close regarding the production requirements but are highly consistent concerning other characteristics. For example, lots of Villarreal C.F. fans usually wear the official jerseys and scarves when they attend a match at the stadium, so as to increase their sense of belonging to the club. Additionally, both product lines satisfy the necessity of leisure and entertainment and share some essential distribution channels: the Villarreal C.F.'s website, app and official physical shops.

## **Price**

Price is an essential variable to consider by any company worldwide, due to its influence towards the customers within the purchase process. In this case, however, we must remember that Villarreal C.F. offers two main product lines, one of which is composed by speciality products, which are not that sensible to price changes. Nevertheless, that does not mean that price decisions are not important inside the club.

On the one hand, we must analyse the prices of the mentioned first product line, which is divided (as previously explained) in two tools; the season tickets and the individual tickets. The first ones are, for obvious reasons, more expensive than the second ones. We will briefly review the specific prices next.

With regards to the season tickets, we must highlight that the average price of these products for the 2022/2023 season was 365,36€ in case of renewals from the previous season, and 417,14€ in case of new season tickets, which are some of the lowest prices of the Spanish league. Moreover, for the fans which were born in 1996 or after, the club offered a discount of 50% (except for the "Supertribune"). Finally, the lowest price in case of renewal for this season was 90€, while the most expensive one was, by far, the "Supertribune" season ticket with a price of 1600€.

On the other hand, the club has already announced a rise of prices for the 2023/2024 season so as to recover from the negative results of the last years. However, for the next season the club will implement an already-used formula in the past: the Gold Season Ticket. This ticket modality confers the same rights as a common season ticket for a lower price, but it is only available if the specific fan attended a minimum number of matches at the stadium during the previous season.

The specific season tickets for the current and the next season, with their respective stadium zones and prices can be checked in the following table (*Table 2*).

**Table 2. Villarreal C.F. season tickets and prices for the 22/23 and 23/24 seasons.**

	PRICES SEASON 2022/2023		PRICES SEASON 2023/2024	
STADIUM ZONES	NEW TICKETS	RENEWALS	NEW TICKETS	GOLD TICKETS
NORTH STAND CORNER PREFERENCE OR GRANDSTAND / ANIMATION STAND	125€	90€	235€	125€
SOUTH STAND CORNER PREFERENCE OR GRANDSTAND / DISABLED	140€	125€	260€	140€
NORTH STAND	210€	160€	295€	210€
SOUTH STAND I	230€	225€	325€	230€
SOUTH STAND II	230€	200€	325€	230€
CENTRAL TRIBUNE PREFERENCE	440€	315€	600€	440€
CENTRAL TRIBUNE PREFERENCE 1 <sup>ST</sup> ROW	480€	315€	650€	480€
LOW CENTRAL TRIBUNE PREFERENCE	440€	405€	600€	440€
LATERAL TRIBUNE PREFERENCE	300€	225€	430€	300€
LATERAL TRIBUNE PREFERENCE 1 <sup>ST</sup> ROW	340€	225€	480€	340€
LOW LATERAL TRIBUNE PREFERENCE	300€	270€	430€	300€
CENTRAL TRIBUNE	630€	600€	900€	630€

LATERAL TRIBUNE	375€	360€	515€	375€
SUPERTRIBUNE	1600€	1600€	1850€	1850€

Source: own elaboration. Data source: Villarreal C.F. website.

Regarding the individual tickets, we must highlight again that their prices are much more variable than in the previous case. In fact, the season tickets' prices are set before of the start of the official season (usually before August), while the individual tickets' prices are established when the season has already started, only days before each match.

As explained in the previous section, there are several elements that have influence in the price of each individual ticket, especially the rival, the competition and the stadium's zone chosen (demand is essential when talking about price decisions in football). As an example, last season Villarreal C.F. sold tickets for a match of UEFA Champions League against Juventus F.C. for 60€-180€, depending on the specific zone. In the Spanish league, however, the prices of Villarreal C.F. tickets tend to be notably lower, costing between 25€ and 50€, as last year home match versus Real Sociedad.

In both cases, we can conclude that these prices are highly competitive in the current panorama, compared to the prices that other clubs are fixing nowadays. For example, the only available tickets for a match between Real Madrid C.F. and Girona F.C. in the lateral preference this season had a minimum price of 295€. Finally, it must be mentioned that Villarreal C.F. tends to offer discounts for the fans that hold a season ticket, so they can purchase individual tickets for the not-included matches for a reduced amount. In the previously mentioned case of the match against Juventus C.F., the prices for season-tickets holders were fixed between 10€ and 50€.

With regards to the club's merchandising line, the prices vary notably (see *Table 3*). As an example, inside the Official Joma collection sublines we can find prices from 25€ (training shorts) to 200€ (a limited-edition player Villarreal C.F. Jersey). However, the most popular items tend to be the official players jerseys, which are sold for 53,90€. To compare, other football teams such as Valencia C.F. have set the price for their official jerseys in 120€. This information will be deeply analysed in the section referred to competitors.

**Table 3. Villarreal C.F. merchandising sublines and prices.**

<b>Subline</b>	<b>Minimum price</b>	<b>Maximum price</b>	<b>Average price</b>
<b>Player</b>	23€	200€	61,86€
<b>Training</b>	25,90€	57,90€	38,66€
<b>Leisure</b>	40€	100€	55€
<b>Scarves</b>	12€	12€	12€
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	1€	45€	12,7€
<b>Casual</b>	3€	18€	9,17€
<b>Baby</b>	6€	20€	13,83€
<b>Home</b>	10€	10€	10€
<b>Jewellery</b>	12,95€	12,95€	12,95€
<b>Stationery</b>	2€	24,95€	12,25€
<b>Outlet</b>	10€	50€	20,97€

*Source: own elaboration. Data: Villarreal C.F. website.*

On the other hand, the products of the other sublines have widely variable prices: from the pin badges which cost 1€ to the puzzle with a price of 24,95€, including mugs for 10€ and scarves for 12€. In general, we can conclude that Villarreal C.F. offers highly competitive prices, considering the average prices of the sector. All this information can be checked in the Villarreal C.F. official shops, both physical and online.

## **Distribution**

Regarding distribution, we shall difference again between both Villarreal C.F. product lines. On the one hand, the service of accessing the stadium is distributed through a “zero-level” channel or direct channel. In other words, there is not any middlemen between the club and the final customer. More precisely, the season and individual tickets can be purchased through the Villarreal C.F. official website and app with online payment, the club’s ticket offices (which are in the Estadio de la Cerámica) and two official physical shops: one in the stadium and other in the Plaça Major, 19, Vila-real.

Finally, the club has set a telephone number -(+34) 902 488 488- which also allows the final customers to purchase tickets.

On the other hand, we find the merchandising line. In this case, the Official collection is manufactured by Joma, a Spanish company which has provided Villarreal C.F. of their leisure, training and playing clothes since 2016. Then, these products are sold through the club's website (specifically, via the online shop), app and the previously mentioned official shops. Thus, we can conclude that the club is using a "one-level" channel in this case, in which Villarreal C.F. acts as a retailer between Joma and the final customer. Finally, it must be noted that Joma (as manufacturer of these products) does also offer part of this collection through its physical and online shops. Furthermore, Joma also uses other retailers to sell this collection, including marketplaces as Amazon.

Lastly, the other merchandising sublines are also distributed through a "one-level" channel, in which the club plays a retailer role. In this case, the company collaborates with lots of different manufacturers, taking into account the wide range of items offered, from mugs to scarves or puzzles. Then, Villarreal C.F. distributes these sublines through the mentioned official shops.

In practice, the club delivers its products through external shipment companies to almost every country worldwide. Specifically, shipping is carried out within 72 hours within Spain, reaching between 5 and 7 working days in the other cases. Finally, the shipping costs depend on the specific destination of the products (usually between 8€ and 30€). If needed, more information is available in the Villarreal C.F. shop website, which even contains a Frequently Asked Questions' section concerning online distribution (*Image 2*).

**Image 2. Frequently Asked Questions regarding Villarreal C.F. online distribution.**

<p><b>How to order?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Select the correct size of the item(s) (if applicable).</li><li>◦ Make sure to correctly indicate the amount of the item(s) you want.</li><li>◦ Click "Add to Cart".</li><li>◦ Choose all the products you want to buy and you will see that they will be added to your shopping cart accordingly.</li><li>◦ Click on your cart.</li><li>◦ Verify that the items there are those that you wish to purchase.</li><li>◦ Click "Finish Order".</li><li>◦ Enter your user information. In the case of it being your first shop, you must enter your billing information and agree to the terms and conditions of the service.</li><li>◦ Check that the shipping address is correct and click "Next".</li><li>◦ This will take you to the "Method of Shipping" page.</li><li>◦ Click "Next". This will take you to the "Confirm Order" page.</li><li>◦ Confirm that your order is correct and click "Confirm Order".</li><li>◦ You will receive an email confirming that your order has been successful.</li></ul>
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*Source: Villarreal C.F. online shop website.*

## Communication

With regards to the communication and promotion of its products, Villarreal C.F. has developed several means, whose main functions are the creation of positive attitudes towards the club and the stimulation of purchases. In this section, a brief analysis of the main tools used by the club will be presented.

In first place, we must highlight advertising, understood as any non-personal paid form of presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services, according to Kotler and Keller (2012). In this case, we could mention some actions such as setting the club's logo in the official jerseys of TAU Castelló (the most important basket team of the province), which is sponsored by Villarreal C.F. Another example could be the 2016 UEFA Europa League semi-final home match versus Liverpool F.C., in which every attendant received a Villarreal C.F. free scarf.

Secondly, we find sales promotion, defined as short-term incentives to encourage the trial or purchase of a product or service. With regards to this tool, we have already mentioned some actions carried out by the club. For example, the continuity program of "Gold Season Tickets", which is based on reduced prices, so as to encourage the creation of long-term relationships with the fans. On the other hand, the club offers several discounts, such as 50% of the price of season tickets for the customers that were born after 1996. Finally, we shall mention again the discounts for individual tickets of matches that are not included in the season tickets for the holders of this last product.

Moving on to the next tool, we must highlight the role of experiences and events within the club. Villarreal C.F. organises, from time to time, shows and play areas (such as football mini pitches) in the club's Fan Zone, located outside the stadium in the El Madrigal Square. For example, the club created a singing contest ("Groc Talent") last season, in which the artists performed for free near the stadium, hours before home league matches. Thus, the fans could enjoy this shows while waiting for the start of the match, with the club's stadium as landscape (*Image 3*).



**Image 3. “Groc Talent show”.**



*Source: Villarreal C.F. website.*

In third place, we find public relations and publicity, understood as programs directed to promote or protect the company's image or its individual product communications. In this case, the club has developed different initiatives, such as “#CuentaConmigo”, which consisted in giving more than 200 meals per day to needed people during the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the club is characterised by its transparency, with constant publications of the company's situation on its website (including financial information).

Finally, we must mention direct marketing, which is essential for the club's communication strategy. Direct marketing is defined as the use of mail, telephone, fax, email or the Internet to communicate directly or request a response or dialogue with specific and potential customers. Villarreal C.F. uses these tools, especially the email, telephone and Internet to communicate with the customers for several purposes, including the offer of tickets for away matches.

On the other hand, we must highlight here the role of football matches' transmissions. Since decades ago, football has been commercialised by TV channels and now also digital operators (like Movistar or Orange). Those companies, jointly with the Spanish first division league (LaLiga), pay notable amounts of money every season to each club, as a compensation for the exploitation of their TV rights.

In practice, the clubs receive more or less money for their rights depending on three factors: the sports results obtained the year before, the revenues obtained through ticket sales in the previous five years and the number of TV viewers of their matches. These TV viewers are, thus, essential for football clubs. As explained before, they are usually known as followers or sympathizers. In fact, the audience is also a key element when

any football club negotiates with its sponsors, allowing them to negotiate better conditions and prices if the team is highly popular.

Regarding our case, it must be noted that Villarreal C.F. is currently one of the most popular LaLiga teams. Despite that LaLiga has not published the audience data by teams since years ago, we must highlight that in the 2020/2021 season, Villarreal C.F. obtained 73,3 million euros for its TV rights, the same as Valencia C.F., occupying the fourth place in this matter (see *Image 4*).

**Image 4. Distribution of broadcasting revenues of the 2020/21 in LaLiga.**

	Income	Obligations
ATHLETIC CLUB	72,2	-6,1
FUTBOL CLUB BARCELONA	165,6	-14,1
REAL MADRID CLUB DE FUTBOL	163,0	-13,9
CLUB ATLETICO DE MADRID, S.A.D.	130,1	-11,1
SEVILLA FUTBOL CLUB, S.A.D.	84,2	-7,2
REAL BETIS BALOMPIE, S.A.D.	59,5	-5,1
REAL SOCIEDAD DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	66,4	-5,6
LEVANTE UNION DEPORTIVA, S.A.D.	50,3	-4,3
CADIZ CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	47,3	-4,0
VALENCIA CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	73,3	-6,2
CLUB ATLETICO OSASUNA	49,7	-4,2
DEPORTIVO ALAVES, S.A.D.	51,1	-4,3
ELCHE CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	47,3	-4,0
VILLARREAL CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	73,3	-6,2
REAL CLUB CELTA DE VIGO, S.A.D.	53,3	-4,5
REAL VALLADOLID CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	48,5	-4,1
GRANADA CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	52,5	-4,5
SOCIEDAD DEPORTIVA EIBAR S.A.D.	51,8	-4,4
SOCIEDAD DEPORTIVA HUESCA, S.A.D.	46,8	-4,0
GETAFE CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	58,5	-5,0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1.444,7</b>	<b>-122,8</b>

Figures in millions of euros

Source: LaLiga website.

#### 2.1.4.4. Digital marketing resources

In this section, we must highlight the importance of social networks for the club, as explained by our internal source in the interview. As of today, Villarreal C.F. manages active accounts on Twitter (more than 600.000 followers), Instagram (more than 1.400.000 followers), YouTube (more than 60.000 subscribers and 1600 videos), Facebook (more than 1.200.000 followers), and TikTok (more than 700.000 followers). Those numbers are similar to the ones of Valencia C.F.'s social networks, reaching even higher numbers on Instagram and TikTok.

Through these social networks, the club frequently posts information about its teams, as well as merchandising offers and other elements of interest. To do so, it uses community managers, who are in charge of the official accounts of the club. That is to say, the management of the social networks is carried out by professionals.

On the other hand, we find the mentioned website of the club. The Villarreal C.F. webpage is an essential element for the club, especially regarding digital marketing. As of today, it holds lots of different sections, including Fans, News, Club Information, History and, especially, the Online Shop.

Additionally, the club holds its own app so as to interact with its fans and followers, available on iOS and Android. This tool offers similar information to the one contained on the website, but it has other benefits. For example, it allows the user to access the teams' news, matches information, videos and social networks in a faster way. Moreover, this app is completely downloadable for free, with more than 10.000 downloads and a qualification of 4,7 out of 5 on Play Store.

Finally, we shall analyse other digital marketing elements. For example, the utilisation of SEO ("Search Engine Optimization") and SEM ("Search Engine Management") campaigns. In this case, our internal source explained that the club is not currently using each of these online positioning methods. However, it is not discarded for the future.

To end the interview, our internal source concluded that digital marketing is basic for the club, especially at international level. It is in fact the way that Villarreal C.F. has to reach its international followers, to expand its brand and product, and also to get sponsors in the international market. Additionally, she explained that LaLiga has its own digital marketing strategy in which the club is participant. In that way, LaLiga develops specific campaigns in which they have diffusion through the channels of each club.

## **2.2. External analysis**

### **2.2.1. General analysis of the environment (PESTEL)**

For the external analysis of the company's macroenvironment, a PESTEL analysis will be presented next. This analysis contains the main political, economic, social, technological, ecologic and legal factors that influence Villarreal C.F.

#### **2.2.1.1. Political factors**

- **Political instability, both at national and international level**

The notable discrepancies between the different political parties that aspire to take power in Spain may have negative effects on the professional sports sector. More precisely, the uncertainty about the greater or lesser intervention of the State in the fixing of prices, variation of the tax rates concerning products, or the issuance of new legislation that may affect the sector, generate insecurity.

Nowadays, Spain is under its first-ever governmental coalition since the Spanish transition to democracy, an uncertain situation for the country. Additionally, the current international political panorama is not much stable than the national situation.

On the contrary, we are living times of insecurity, uncertainty and instability, including events such as huge fires (especially in Australia between 2019 and 2020), pandemics (COVID-19), natural disasters (La Palma volcano and Ian hurricane) and wars occurring worldwide (as the well-known Russian invasion towards Ukraine).

- **COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had notable negative effects worldwide, at both economic and social levels, during the last three years. It is true that the sanitary situation is not as worrying as it was at the start of the crisis, but the virus has not been eradicated yet. Thus, we must highlight here the insecurity that brings the unpredictable establishment of restrictions due to the pandemic, as we saw during 2021 and 2022, when the fans were not allowed to attend the Spanish league football matches, with a clear negative impact for the clubs.

### 2.2.1.2. Economic factors

- **Macroeconomic projections at both Spanish and international levels**

The predicted fluctuations of the economy are essential when a company is taking decisions, especially when talking about financial and investment issues. In Spain, the most reliable organism in this matter is the Bank of Spain, which published the last macroeconomic national projections on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October of 2022 (see *Image 5*).

**Image 5. Macroeconomic projections for the Spanish economy (2022-2024) (a).**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
GDP	-11.3	5.5	4.5	1.4	2.9
HICP (b)	-0.3	3.0	8.7	5.6	1.9
Employment (hours worked)	-11.4	7.2	4.0	0.8	2.5
Unemployment rate (% of labour force) (c)	15.5	14.8	12.8	12.9	12.4

**SOURCES:** Banco de España and INE.  
**NOTE:** Latest QNA figure published: 2022 Q2.

a Projections cut-off date: 30 september 2022..  
b Harmonised index of consumer prices.  
c Annual average.

*Source: Bank of Spain.*

As we can observe in the previous chart, the Spanish GDP is expected to decrease during 2022 and 2023, with a “small” predicted recovery in 2024. Regarding the HICP

(inflation in terms of the EU), the Bank of Spain expects a notable growth in 2022 (especially due to price rises of electricity, fuel and nourishment) with decreases in 2023 and 2024. Finally, the unemployment rate is forecast to maintain its levels until 2024, when it would decrease.

At international level, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) expected, in October 2022, that global growth would slow to 3.2% in 2022 and 2.7% in 2023. Additionally, this report also established that global inflation is forecast to rise from 4,7% in 2021 to 8.8% in 2022, declining to 6,5% in 2023 and to 4.1% in 2024, which is a positive prediction despite the expected global growth decrease.

To sum up, we observe different predictions which are not all optimistic, especially regarding 2022 and 2023. The previously mentioned pandemic, wars and other unexpected events have been disastrous for our societies and companies. That is why almost every football club has struggled to maintain its financial situation in the last years, as seen with the negative economic results of Villarreal C.F.

- **European Union**

The EU offers great stability regarding possible fluctuations in currency exchange rates. In consequence, Villarreal C.F. can benefit from this fact, taking into account that Spain has been a Member State of the EU since 1986. However, it is true that in 2022 the Euro suffered a notable decrease in its value, causing new Euro crisis.

- **Economic agreements**

During the last years, the external investments within the professional sports sector (specially concerning professional football) have grown notably, playing an essential role. In the Spanish league, we must highlight the “CVC agreement”, through which the mentioned Britannic fund acquired 8.2% of the profits generated by the exploitation of the competition for the next 50 years in exchange of 1.994 million Euros, which would be divided between LaLiga football teams.

### 2.2.1.3. Social factors

- **New concerns and social changes**

During the last decades, we have observed several social changes which have huge impact in cultures nowadays, especially referring to environmental awareness, sustainability, communication, digitalisation, social justice and equality. Additionally, the Ukrainian war and COVID-19 pandemic have enhanced values such as freedom, security, health (physical and mental), peace and human contact. In practice, all

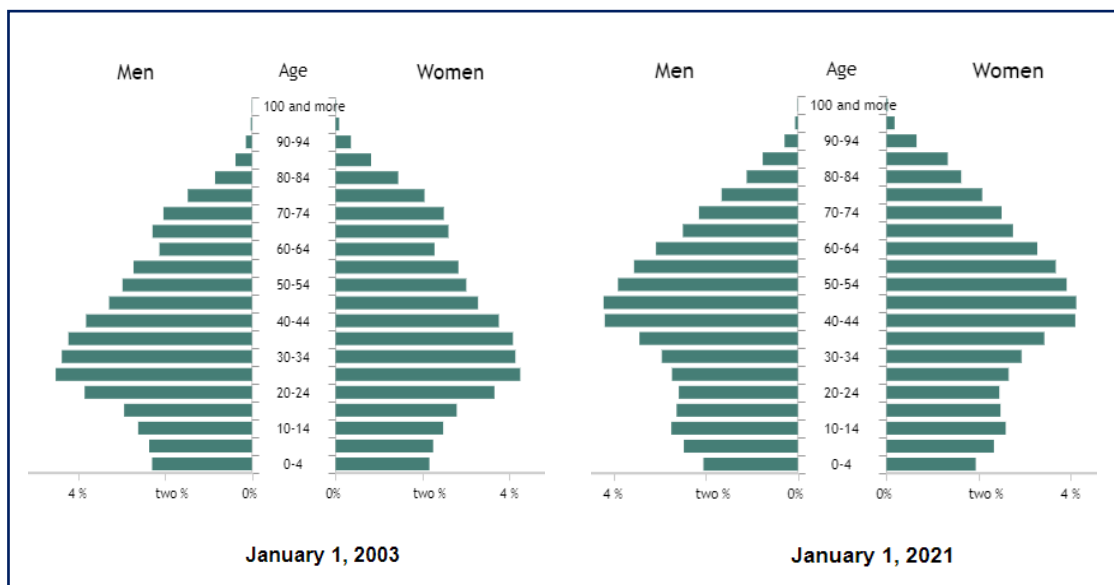
these elements should be taken into account by those companies that want to connect truly with their customers.

- **Population aging**

One of the main consequences of the progress of a society is the increase in the life expectancy of its members. Spain, like Europe, is suffering an inversion of its population pyramid since the last decades, increasing its life expectancy by 1.24% and reducing the birth rate by 0.88% in 2021 according to the Spanish Statistics National Institute (INE).

In other words, despite not being at the forefront of medicine and technological development, Spanish society has changed so that the elderly sector has increased to the detriment of the youth (see *Figure 2*). This causes changes in consumer demand, who will spend less income on leisure and entertainment products and more on health expenses, care time and support for the elderly.

**Figure 2. Spanish population pyramid comparison 2003-2021.**



Source: INE.

This is a fact that every Spanish business should analyse when taking decisions about its demand, even though this pyramid inversion will not always have the same impact in every company. A football team like Villarreal C.F. is addressed to people of all ages, but this issue should always be considered.

- **Increase of migrants**

In contrast with the previous variable, the departure of more and more individuals from undeveloped countries to other nations where they can be given new chances,

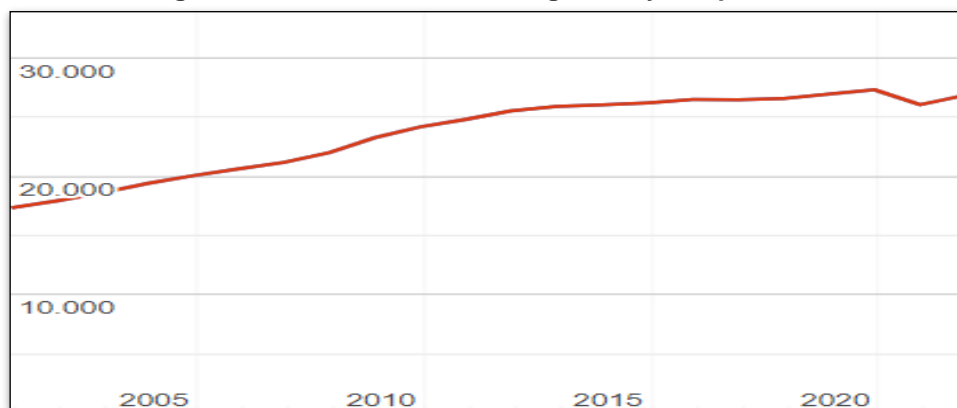
entails changes in the way employees are hired. Thus, it is possible to hire new young people, who generally tend to be less demanding in terms of hiring conditions.

In the case of Spain, it must be noted that the main nationalities of immigrants nowadays are Moroccans (776.222 people in 2022), Romanians (632.859 people) and British (316.529 people), according to the INE. Additionally, we must highlight the notable rise in the number of Ukrainian immigrants since the start of the Russian invasion towards the country. As stated by the Spanish Government in June of 2022, more than 124,000 Ukrainian refugees already have temporary protection in the country and 8,100 have found work in three months.

- **Average salaries evolution**

During last years, the average salaries in Spain have been rising constantly, except from a decrease in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (the average salary that year was 26,028€). However, the last data available from 2021 shows a recovery in this area, reaching 26,832€ last year. Thus, we expect a greater purchasing power for Spanish workers during the next years and, consequently, the possibility of spending more money on professional sports.

**Figure 3. Evolution of the average salary in Spain.**



Source: *Datamacro.com*

#### 2.2.1.4. Technological factors

- **Interconnection and digitalisation**

Interconnection or “Smart Factory”, refers to the ability to connect different devices to each other, through the use of new software and technological innovation, being a great resource in the sector, especially with the new technologies and post-pandemic situation, in which digitalisation and social networks are essential.

- **Monitoring**

Technological development has allowed the installation of smart facilities that allow their processes to be monitored in real time. Thus, it is possible to control and visualize several production and administrative processes at the same time.

- **Diversification and personalization**

Big Data brings information about which the tastes of consumers are, facilitating the reduction of costs, manufacturing the desired products in shorter periods, in addition to achieving a much more diversified variety of products. Thus, companies are able to carry out, not only the production of generic products, but to also products that are as personalized to the customer's tastes as possible.

- **Production and distribution changes**

Thanks to the fact that technology makes it possible to reduce useless and inefficient stages, production plants are capable of streamlining the production chain, producing much more quickly than before. Additionally, companies can now even predict both the type and the amount of product that will be demanded in a given period.

#### 2.2.1.5. Ecologic factors

- **Greater environmental awareness**

The new values instilled in the current societies differ greatly from those that were held in other ancient societies. Currently, people, largely motivated by global warming, climate change and excess waste, tend to buy those products that have a better reputation because they maintain standards of care with the environment. In consequence, companies should nowadays take into account the possibility of offering environmentally friendly and sustainable products.

- **Environmental law changes**

Governments should implement legislation that tends to protect the environment, which may change from one year to another. Examples of this in Spain may be the Law 21/2013, of December 9, on Environmental Assessment, or the Law 26/2007, of October 23, on Environmental Responsibility.

- **Growing environmental impact**

The greater awareness of current societies regarding the care and respect for the environment, means that individuals are increasingly looking for products that are



sustainable with the environment. Especially, taking into account that businesses and companies worldwide constitute one of the main pollution sources.

Thus, reality does not invite to optimism, and there are numerous consequences that climate change is producing in nature. Therefore, companies that base their productive activities on values of environmental care, will be better seen by customers and supported by the governments.

#### 2.2.1.6. Legal factors

- **Professional football legislation**

As of today, the normative concerning Spanish professional football teams is constituted by several norms, creating a relatively complicated legal system. This legal order contains national norms (such as the Sport Act 10/1990, of 15 October or the Royal Decree 1251/1999, of 16 July, on Public Limited Sports Companies/SADs), European regulations (as the Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and Council of 27 April 2016) and Federation Standards from FIFA, UEFA and the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF).

- **Collective agreements**

In Spain, we must highlight the Resolution of November 23, 2015, of the General Directorate of Employment, by which the Collective Agreement for professional football activity is registered and published. This norm has supposed an important force of support to the players, imposing several conditions to the clubs.

- **Other norms and conditions**

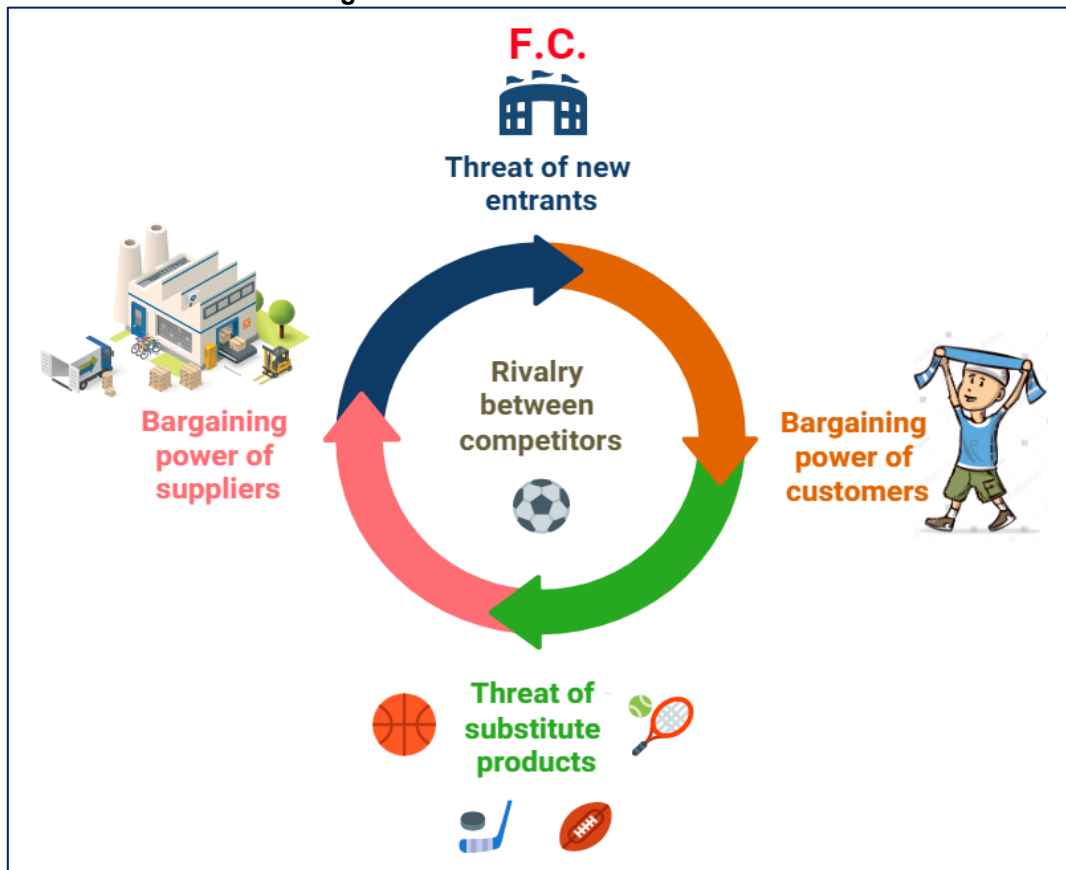
Aside from the previously mentioned legislation, we find other instruments such as the ones that regulate compensation and dismissals (Article 7e of the IRPF Law; 1 and 73 of the IRPF Regulation) or working conditions (Resolution of July 9, 2019, of the General Directorate of Labour).

That is to say, the Spanish professional football clubs have to comply with a great diversity of current legislation, which imply an essential element to consider, so as to assure the legal and righteous development of their activities.

## 2.2.2 Microenvironment (Porter)

In this section, we will follow the Porter's five forces theory, so as to analyse the professional football sector and its degree of competition (see *Figure 4*). Taking this into account, we will later be able to establish the optimal business strategies and action programmes for Villarreal C.F., analysing the sector's main characteristics to obtain an advantageous position.

Figure 4. Porter's five forces model.



Source: own elaboration.

### 2.2.2.1 Bargaining power of customers

The bargaining power of customers is understood as the grade of power they have with regards to the prices and conditions of the products in a specific market. If the market is characterised by a large demand and/or a low number of competitors, the customers will have less bargaining power. On the contrary, if there are only a few customers and/or a large number of competitors, their bargaining power will be much higher.

In this case, we are analysing a sector which has a huge number of customers, taking into account that football is, by far, the most popular sport worldwide. As a matter of fact,

this sport has roughly 3.5 billion fans and 250 million players internationally. In Spain, as per Statista (2018), there were more than 25 million followers of LaLiga in 2018—which only has 20 teams—, making it more than the 53% of the Spanish population. Furthermore, 16 out of those 25 million of Spanish people were ardent fans, which should be considered as real customers, considering that they usually own promotional items for their team and find out about football several times a week. According to this source, each fan of a LaLiga team spent around 796 euros a year on their passion, and the most fanatical ones up to 1,047 euros.

On the other hand, we must highlight that the cost of changing for the fans is arguably high, taking into account that football tickets and merchandising are relatively expensive. Moreover, the 20 LaLiga teams are widely spread through all the Spanish geography, which does not make it easier for fans to change clubs and attend other stadiums. Additionally, football fanaticism is usually based on a strong belonging feeling, which is not easy to change from one day to another.

However, in the case of followers, that cost of changing is not that high. Considering that they do not necessarily attend the stadiums every week, they do not need to acquire a season or even individual ticket. In fact, digital operators have created season-packs that allow followers to watch every football match of any team through their TVs.

To sum up, the vast number of customers compared to the amount of LaLiga teams causes the bargaining power in this sector to be notably low. However, we must not forget that those 16 million people may also be interested in other football teams, either from other divisions or other countries. Moreover, football fans and followers constitute an essential part of every club's operating revenues and external image, which enhances the customers' power.

#### 2.2.2.2 Bargaining power of suppliers

In this case, the bargaining power of suppliers depends on several factors. In general, it must be noted that those markets in which the number of suppliers available is low, will be characterised by their high bargaining power, and vice versa. Then, we find other variables such as the difficulty of access to some materials and the higher or lower volume of the purchases.

In the sector of Spanish professional football, each team chooses its main brand for the creation of the official collection, which usually gets renewed every season. Nevertheless, it is true that the contracts with those brands tend to be signed for several

years. In the case of Villarreal C.F., it was mentioned before that Joma has provided the official collection since 2016 until today.

In general, however, we find a large number of sports clothes' brands that aim to work with LaLiga teams, considering their previously mentioned popularity. Additionally, the football teams purchase a large number of jerseys and other products every year, so as to satisfy the huge demand.

All in all, we find a sector in which companies find a large number of suppliers available, with whom they tend to create long relationships, purchasing high volumes of products every year. Thus, we can affirm that the bargaining power of the suppliers within this sector is low.

### 2.2.2.3 Threat of new entrants

The threat of new entrants depends on different barriers that characterise each market. In the case of Spanish LaLiga teams, new possible clubs shall consider:

- **The lack of experience and know-how.** This is a key barrier, taking into account that long time is usually required to acquire this knowledge. Thus, for new-creation clubs, it would be very difficult to be successful at the beginning, considering the large number of variables that must be controlled when managing a football club. However, the fact that football leagues are organised by divisions, causes that every year three experienced Spanish second-division teams ascend to LaLiga and vice versa, which is a real danger for every first-division team.
- **Strong customer loyalty.** In football, fans and followers tend to create a strong feeling regarding their football team, making it difficult to change from one day to another. In practice, this feeling appears in the early ages, choosing the team of the city in which the fans were born or the team which their family is fan of. Thus, it is not strange to find teams in the second and third Spanish division with more fans than some LaLiga clubs. In the case of new-creation clubs, this feeling would be very difficult to create in the first years.
- **Initial financial outlay.** The establishment and maintenance of a professional football club is very expensive, while it is true that they tend to obtain notable revenues. In this case, it must be noted that the second and third division teams lean on certain economic support, which is lower than the LaLiga teams' budgets but allows them to compete. However, for a new-creation team it would be almost

impossible to compete with the wealthiest Spanish teams, unless the new club got huge investments at the beginning.

All in all, we find a sector in which the barriers to entry for new clubs are quite notable. New clubs would find several disadvantages in comparison to the current ones, which is obviously not attractive. Thus, the threat of these new competitors is low. However, with important initial investments this could change (see young important clubs such as R.B. Leipzig in Germany). On the other hand, if we talk about already-existing teams from lower divisions, the barriers are not that important for them (only the financial outlay) and three teams will access LaLiga every season, so the threat is quite higher in this case.

#### 2.2.2.4 Threat of substitute products

For this section, it must be noted that substitute products are those that satisfy the same needs, but with different characteristics or properties. Regarding football, it is not risky to say that the threat is not very high, taking into account the previously mentioned popularity of this sport worldwide. Thus, despite that other sports and leisure activities are growing in importance (e.g., padel, Formula 1 or Electronic Sports) it is difficult to think about a real threat for football, as of today.

In other words, football (especially European) is expected to be the most popular sport worldwide for, at least, the following decades, which creates a stable base for development. However, the changing costs for customers (especially followers) are not that high, considering that streaming companies such as DAZN offer packs with different contents, including football, basket, Formula 1 and more sports.

#### 2.2.2.5 Rivalry between competitors

As the popularity of football grew during the last decades, the competitiveness of football teams grew too. Nowadays, we find up to 20 LaLiga teams, between of which we must highlight Real Madrid C.F. and F.C. Barcelona, which attract an immense percentage of football fans in Spain (and also worldwide). Then, there are other top-flight Spanish teams which have important numbers of fans, such as Atlético de Madrid, Sevilla C.F. or Valencia C.F. In other countries, the most popular teams are Manchester United, Juventus F.C., Chelsea F.C., Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern München. All this wide range of teams constitute a very competitive environment for any team that aspires to create a stable project with a large number of followers.

However, these last examples were specially related to followers, which usually watch their team through TV. If we are talking about fans, the geographical area of the

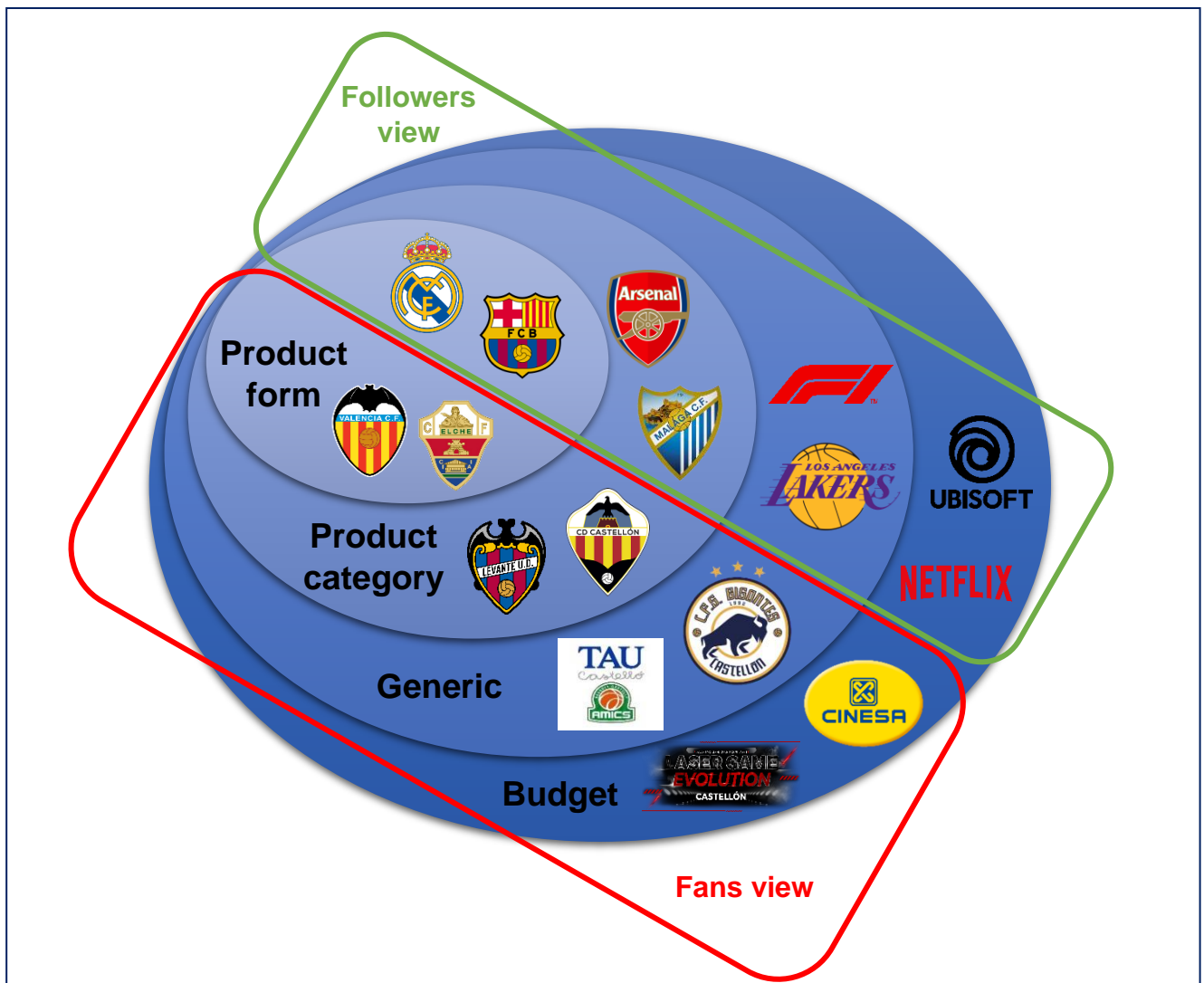
competitors is notably reduced. In this case, the rivalry of competitors will be higher or lower depending on the specific zone: e.g., in the Valencian Community we only find three LaLiga teams. Additionally, we must highlight again that fans are usually characterised by a strong belonging feeling that attaches them to a specific club. Thus, the rivalry between competitors for fans will usually be lower than in the followers' view.

### 2.2.3. Analysis of the competition

#### 2.2.3.1. Classification of competitors

In this section, an analysis of the main Villarreal C.F. competitors will be presented, establishing the different options for both fans and followers. To do so, we will follow the four-level competition classification of Munuera and Rodríguez (2007). In virtue of these authors, we find the following competition levels (see *Figure 5*):

Figure 5. Levels of competence of Villarreal C.F.



Source: own elaboration.

- **Competition in product form**

This first level is referred to those products and brands that provide the same service or satisfy the same necessity within the same market segments. In the case of Villarreal C.F., we are talking about a Spanish professional football club, which offers first-division and European competition matches (top-level football) among other products, covering the necessities of leisure and entertainment.

In consequence, the main examples of competitors in product form for Villarreal C.F fans would be other LaLiga teams from the same geographic area, as Valencia C.F. or Elche C.F. Regarding the main competitors in the followers' view, we find any other Spanish football club, as Real Madrid C.F., Barcelona F.C. or Atlético de Madrid.

- **Competition in the product category**

In this case, we must consider those companies that offer products and brands with the same attributes but in a slightly different way. The technological alternative is the same in each case.

Here, concerning fans, we must highlight other Spanish teams from the same zone that play in lower divisions, such as Levante U.D. or C.D. Castellón. In the case of followers, the competition would be any professional football team from a different zone, including non-Spanish teams (Arsenal C.F. or Borussia Dortmund) or Spanish teams that play in lower divisions (Málaga C.F or Huesca S.D.).

- **Generic competition**

The third competition level is the generic category, which contains every product and brand that satisfies the same necessity. In this case, each company should persuade the market that the category of product that the company manufactures is the best for satisfy the specific need.

Within this category, we find clubs and associations specialized in sports other than football, such as basketball, tennis or volleyball. For the fans, we could think about Valencian clubs such as TAU Castelló (basket), Valencia Basket, Bisontes Castellón F.S. (futsal) or C.V. Mediterráneo (volleyball). Regarding followers, we find several examples worldwide such as Los Ángeles Lakers (basket), Formula 1 (racing) or the ATP World Tour (tennis).

- **Competition at the budget level**

This final level is focused on the products and brands that target the same customer's budget. In this case, we shall put the focus on the leisure and entertainment budget.

Consequently, marketing actions should be aimed at convincing that the best possible option to spend the money is to do it in the specific product.

Here, we find a wide variety of competitors, including cinemas, theatres, museums, theme parks or videogames companies. With regards to the fans, we could highlight some companies in the zone, such as Ocine, Cinesa or Laser Game Evolution Castellón. Concerning followers, some competitors could be Netflix, HBO or Ubisoft.

### 2.2.3.2. Description of the main competitors

As explained before, we find a large number of competitors within the professional football sector, especially if we focus on the followers' view, whose cost of changing is lower. On the other hand, the rivalry between competitors regarding the fans' view is not that intense, considering the geographic limitations of these customers.

In practice, however, fans constitute the most profitable part of all final customers, due to the fact that they purchase season and individual tickets, while the followers usually pay subscriptions to digital operators in order to follow football matches through TV. Moreover, fans tend to spend more money than followers in other products and merchandising, including food and drinks at the stadium.

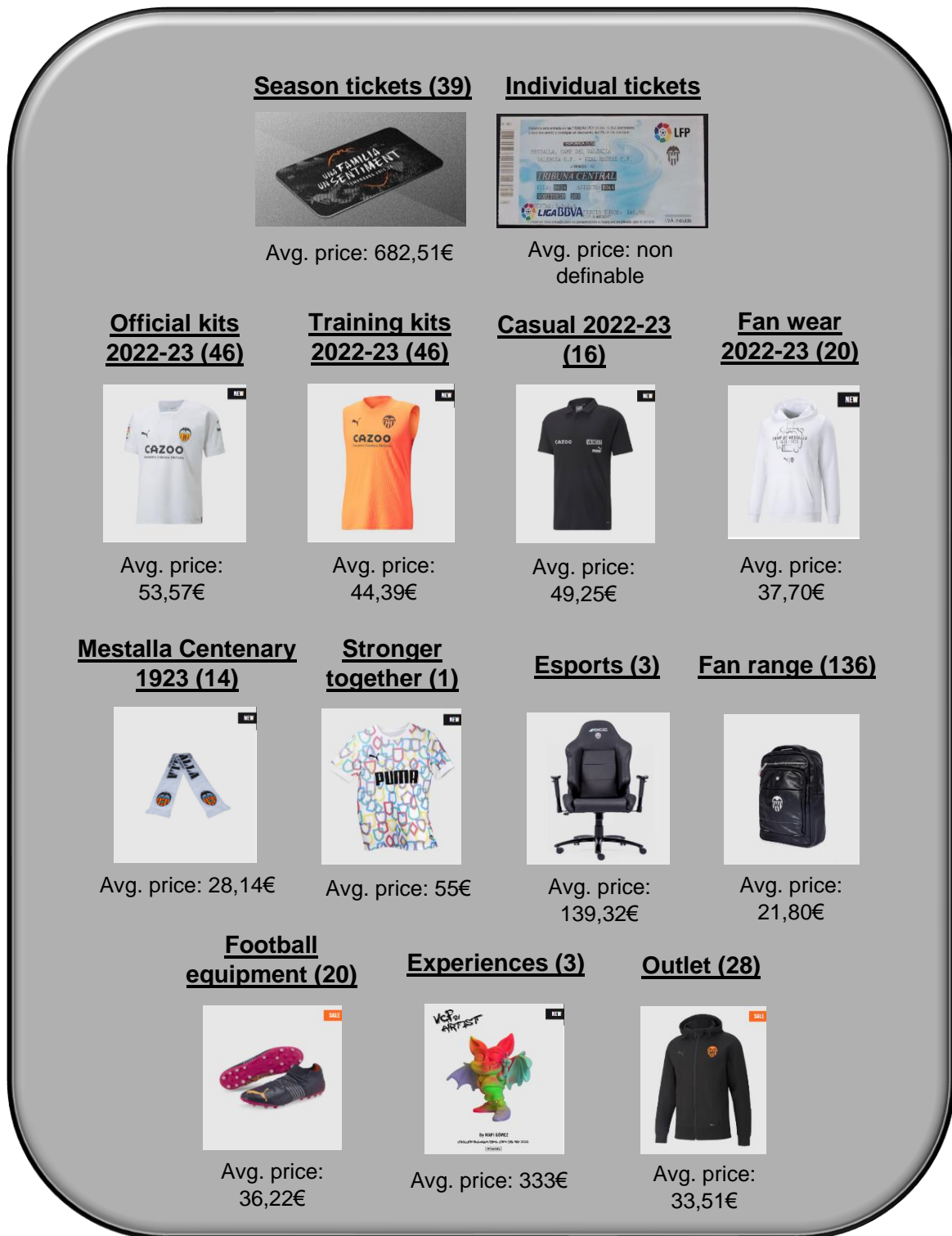
To sum up, considering that fans are globally more beneficial than followers, in this section we will analyse the main competitors for the club in both product form and product category levels in the fans' view. In the case of followers' view, we will only describe the main competitors within the product form level. These main competitors are the following:



**Valencia C.F.** is one of the most important Spanish football teams historically, founded in 1919. In fact, this club from, the capital of the Valencian Community (which is 57,33km away from Vila-real), has played 61 seasons in LaLiga, winning 8 Spanish Cup titles, 6 LaLiga titles, 3 UEFA Europa League titles and 2 UEFA Super Cup titles, among others. The club's stadium is Mestalla, one of the most famous ones in LaLiga, with capacity for 55.000 people. Next, the Valencia C.F.'s product portfolio will be presented (see *Figure 6*):



Figure 6. Valencia C.F.'s product lines, number of products and average prices.



Source: own elaboration. Data: Valencia C.F. website.

As it can be seen in the previous figure, the Valencia C.F.'s portfolio is constituted by a wide variety of sublines (up to 13, as Villarreal C.F.'s), including from the season and individual tickets to the Official kits or Esports products. We must highlight here some

interesting sublines. For example, the fact that the Fan range subline is constituted by more than 136 different products, which talks about the deep product mix of the club. In fact, within this subline we can find products such as padel racquets, smart bands or even headsets, which are not always present in football clubs' product portfolios. Finally, it must be noted that the brand that provides every clothing collection to the club is Puma.

Regarding the prices, we observe again a wide variety depending on the specific subline. All in all, however, the presented prices are among the average prices established by the most important Spanish teams (with the exception of Villarreal C.F.) The cheapest line is the Fan range one, while the most expensive section is Season tickets.

Concerning the distribution of these products, we must highlight that the club follows the same distribution channel strategies as Villarreal C.F., obtaining the products from its providers and then acting as a retailer. So as to do that, the club has established two physical shops, one close to Mestalla and the other one —known as “Megastore” — in the Town Hall's Square. On the other hand, Valencia C.F. has its own online shop within its website, which allows fans and followers to purchase merchandising no matter their location.

The shipping in these cases is made within 3 business days for those customers in Spain's mainland. On the contrary, international and islands deliveries can vary between 3 and 12 business days, depending on the destination. Additionally, it must be noted that the club delivers its country to almost every country worldwide. Finally, shipping costs depend widely on the price and other characteristics of the specific products and also on the country of destination.

In last place, Valencia C.F. carries out several communication actions. Between them, we shall mention advertising (especially through social networks as YouTube, Instagram and Twitter), sales promotion (e.g., shareholders, children, young and elder people benefited from discounts on season tickets this season) and experiences and events (such as the “Mestalla Forever Tour Valencia CF”, or the “Centenary Experience”).



**Elche C.F.** is the last LaLiga team from the Valencian Community, founded in 1923 in the city of Elche, inside of the province of Alicante (which is 193,05 km away from Vila-real). This is another popular team, in spite of not being as successful as Valencia C.F.

with regards to winning titles. Finally, their stadium is the Martínez Valero, with capacity for 31.388 people. Next, the club's product portfolio will be presented (see *Figure 7*):

**Figure 7. Elche C.F.'s product lines, number of products and average prices.**



Source: own elaboration. Data: Elche C.F. website.

In this case, we find again a relatively deep product portfolio (with more than 150 different products), but not as the Valencia C.F.'s one. More precisely, the product mix is constituted by 10 different sublimes, including some interesting sections such as Fans, which contains flags, scarves and even puzzles of Elche C.F.'s stadium and bus. On the other hand, it must be noted that the largest subline is Outlet. All in all, we can conclude that this product portfolio is mainly constituted by sports clothes. Finally, the brand that provides these collections to Elche C.F. is Nike.

With regards to the prices, we find some consistency among several sublines, whose average price is set between 37€ and 50€. However, the last three sublines hold very low prices, especially if compared with other teams' similar sections. Nevertheless, it is true that most of these last products have discounts. All in all, we find very competitive prices, lower than Valencia C.F.'s ones, especially with regards to the season tickets. The cheapest subline is Fans, and the most expensive one is Season tickets.

Focusing now on Elche C.F.'s product distribution, the club utilises, again, the same channel distribution strategies as the other football teams, obtaining its products through Nike and its other providers. Regarding its physical shops, we find two main establishments: one in the Martinez Valero stadium and the new one in L'Aljub Shopping Mall (also in Elche), which opened in 2022. Additionally, we must highlight the online shop within Elche C.F.'s website, through which fans and followers can check and purchase the whole product portfolio.

In this case, the shipping is made in between 2 and 7 days for those customers in Spain's mainland, whereas it can reach up to 15 days in the rest of cases. Finally, the shipping costs depend on the country of destination, no matter the specific product delivered. In case of national shipments, the customer can choose between different types of deliveries (with prices between 0€ and 4€), while international shipments' (which only reach some European countries) prices vary widely but tend to be between 20€ and 30€.

Finally, we put the focus on the communication tools utilised by Elche C.F. Between them, the most important ones are sales promotion (including several discounts in merchandising and also in season tickets, in virtue of age and other circumstances), events and experiences (e.g., the club's presence in "La Vuelta 2022", one of the most popular professional cycling competitions) and direct marketing (Elche C.F. holds active accounts in Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, among others).



**Levante U.D.** is another professional football team from the city of Valencia, which is currently playing in the Spanish second division ("LaLiga SmartBank"). This club, founded in 1909, has been commonly considered as the second-best team of the province, only behind of Valencia C.F. Finally, their recently enhanced stadium is the Ciutat de València. Next, the team's product portfolio will be presented (see *Figure 8*):

Figure 8. Levante U.D.'s product lines, number of products and average prices.



Source: own elaboration. Data: Levante U.D. website.

The presented product portfolio is shaped by 12 different sublines, reaching more than 200 items in total. Within this deep product mix, we find the usual sections referred to players and training kits, jointly with some casual sublines (Concentration, Sportswear or Multimedia), a wide Merchandising subline and some special sections, including one referred to Valencia's traditional celebration, "Fallas", which only brings one product. All

in all, Levante U.D. offers a broad range of products, from baby kits to mobile phone covers or swimsuits. The brand that provides the clothing collections to the club is the Italian company Macron.

With regards to the prices, we find several differences depending on the specific subline. However, it is true that only 4 of those 12 sublimes have an average price higher than 40€, which allows us to conclude that, as a whole, the product mix of the club is quite cheap. Moreover, one of those “expensive” sublimes is referred to season tickets, which tend to be the costliest section (as it is also in this portfolio). On the other hand, the cheapest subline in this product mix is Baby, with an average price of 11,97€. Finally, we must not forget that Levante U.D. plays in LaLiga SmartBank, so the prices should usually be lower than the ones fixed by a first-division team.

Putting the focus now on distribution, Levante U.D. follows the classic channel distribution strategies applied by professional football teams, attending the final customers through its different official shops. To do so, the club holds three physical shops: one in the stadium, one in the centre of Valencia (Plaza de los Pinazos 6) and the last one in the club’s training complex. On the other hand, we find the Levante U.D.’s online shop, through which the club delivers its products to almost every country worldwide.

With regards to the shipping terms, Levante U.D. delivers its products from Monday to Friday, taking between 2 and 3 days within the Spanish territory, in which the shipping is carried out by Correos. In the other cases, the shipping terms are variable, depending on the specific country of destination. Concerning the shipping costs, these are also widely changeable in virtue of the country, with free deliveries if the customer reaches a minimum amount of money (in Spain, for example, this minimum is 50€).

In last place, we shall analyse the Levante U.D. main communication strategies. Between them, the most important ones are sales promotion (with the Promotions subline and the discounts offered in season tickets in virtue of age, among others), public relations and publicity (with the “Levante Foundation”, which carries out social initiatives) and direct marketing (through the club’s active social networks).



**C.D. Castellón** is the main football club of Castellón de la Plana, the capital city of the province (which is only 7 km away from Vila-real). The team, created in 1922, is currently playing in “1ª RFEF” (the Spanish third division), in spite of having played 11 seasons in LaLiga. On the other hand, the club’s stadium is Castalia, with capacity for 15.500 people. Finally, C.D. Castellón’s product portfolio will be presented (see *Figure 9*):

**Figure 9. C.D. Castellón’s product lines, number of products and average prices.**



Source: own elaboration. Data: C.D. Castellón website.



As seen in the previous figure, we find now a more reduced portfolio than in the previous cases. In fact, the club offers hardly more than 50 items, which makes it a quite narrow product mix. On the other hand, it must be noted that 2 of the 10 sublines are constituted by only 1 product, including one of the most important sections: the Official kits. On the contrary, the deepest subline is the one related to fans, with 14 distinct products, including flags, bags and scarves. Additionally, we find several especial-edition items related to the Centenary of the club in 2022. Finally, we must highlight that the brand that provides the official collections to the club is Macron (the same as Levante U.D.).

Concerning the prices offered, we can conclude that C.D. Castellón is the club with the lowest prices that we have analysed until the moment: only 3 of its sublines have prices higher than 30€. However, we must not forget that the club plays in 1º RFEF, so it is normal to find lower prices. Additionally, it must be noted that the Official kits section has an average price of 73€, the highest until the moment. Nevertheless, the cheapest subline is Face masks (9,95€), while the most expensive one is Season tickets (202€).

With regards to the distribution of C.D. Castellón products, the club acts, again, as a retailer. Thus, we shall analyse the official shops of the club, through which the products are offered to the final customers. On the one hand, the team holds two physical shops, one in the city centre (Calle Enmedio 67) and the other new shop established in the stadium in 2022. On the other hand, we find the recently created online shop, which does not work yet. Until then, the online shop is managed by the “Fundació Albinegra”.

Regarding the shipping conditions, C.D. Castellón delivers its products through different companies, in general, within 2 and 3 business days in the Spanish mainland, and within 15 natural days in the rest of cases (reaching only some European countries). Finally, the shipping costs vary notably in each case. If the destination is inside the Spanish mainland, the shipping is free, but only for purchases over 50€. In the other cases, the shipping will be paid by the customer, and the amount will be calculated in virtue of the specific territory or country.

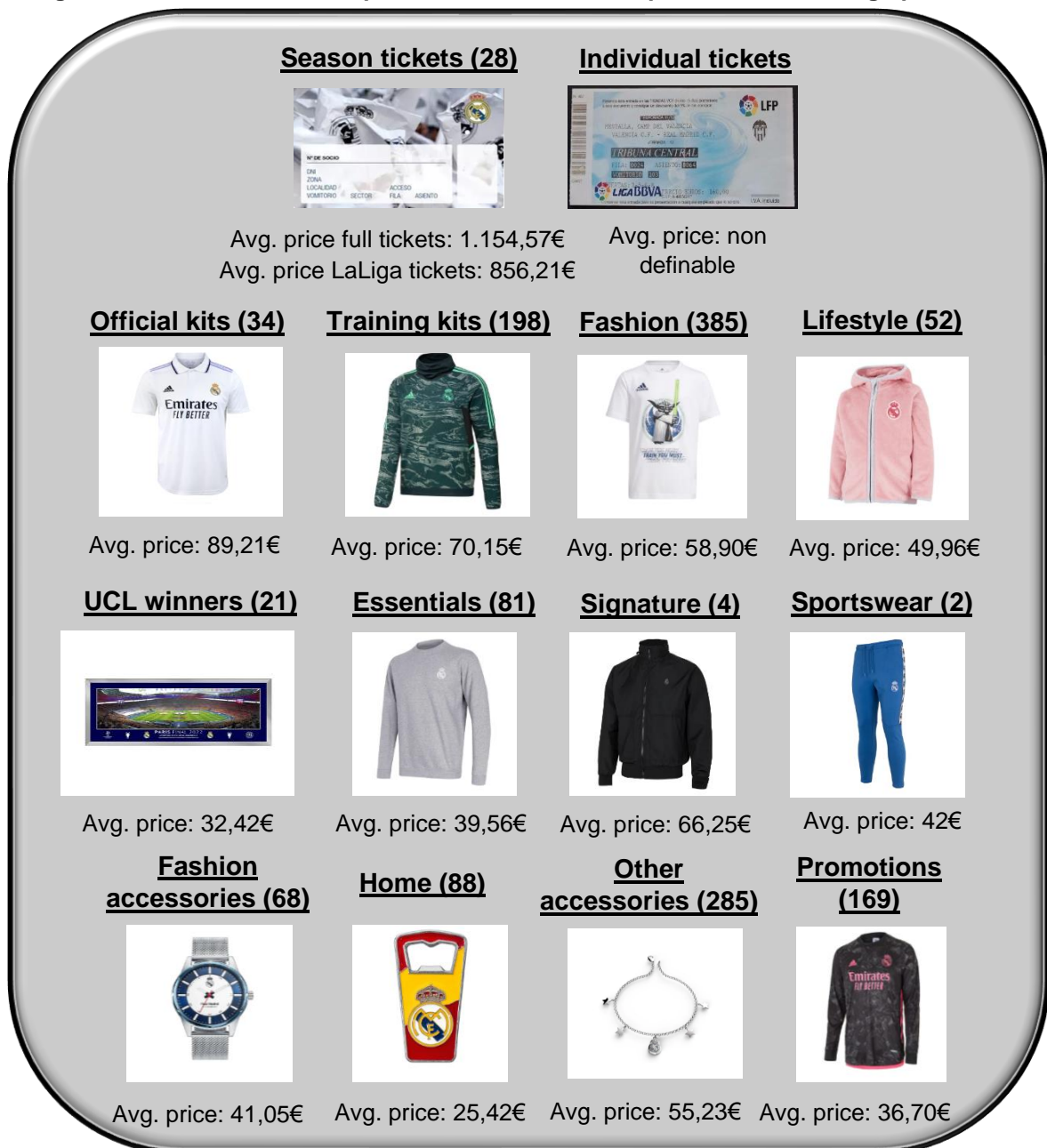
Lastly, we find the communication actions developed by the club. In this case, C.D. Castellón has put the focus on promotion sales (such as the Outlet subline and the discounts offered in season tickets for children and shareholders, among others), public relations (the players often visit hospitals of the city and give gifts to kids) and direct marketing (the club has enhanced its social networks, especially Instagram and Twitter).





**Real Madrid C.F.** is the most popular football club worldwide and one of the most successful ones, having played every LaLiga season. It was founded in the Spanish capital (which is 310 km away from Vila-real) in 1902. On the other hand, the club's stadium is the Santiago Bernabéu, which can hold up to 81.044 people. Now, Real Madrid C.F. product portfolio will be presented (see *Figure 10*):

**Figure 10. Real Madrid C.F.'s product lines, number of products and average prices.**



Source: own elaboration. Data: Real Madrid C.F. website.

In this case, we find the longest and deepest product portfolio until the moment, with up to 14 different sublines which bring more than 1.000 different products. Between all these vast sections, we must highlight the 'Other accessories' one, in which we can find from school bags to jewellery. Additionally, the narrowest one is Sportswear, whereas the deepest one is Fashion. All in all, we can conclude that Real Madrid C.F. has created a huge product mix, which is mainly based in clothing and fashion. Finally, the brand that provides the official clothes to the club is Adidas.

With regards to prices, Real Madrid offers the second-highest prices that we have found until the moment (following Valencia C.F. closely), which is reasonable taking into account its popularity, prestige and success. More specifically, it must be noted that only 4 of those 14 product sublines have average prices lower than 40€. Lastly, the cheapest section is Home, while the most expensive one is Season tickets.

Concerning distribution, the club acts as a retailer, as the other football teams. Nowadays, the club holds 7 different physical shops: one in the stadium, four more in other Madrid locations, one in Barcelona and one in México. Additionally, we find the club's online shop, which delivers its products through the company Legends to almost every country worldwide. The shipping terms are notably changeable depending on the specific case, but the delivery will not take longer than 30 natural days. On the other hand, the shipping costs are calculated by the club's system in each specific case, so the amount depends on the territory of destination, the payment method and the cost and other characteristics of the products.

In last place, we shall analyse Real Madrid C.F.'s main communication strategies. Among them, we find advertising (commercial campaigns with brands as Audi or Codere), sales promotion (with the Promotions subline and the discounts regarding season tickets) and direct marketing (Real Madrid C.F. is the most popular sports institution in social networks worldwide, especially on Instagram and Twitter).



**F.C. Barcelona** is the second most popular football club worldwide, just behind Real Madrid C.F. The club was founded in the capital of Catalonia (which is 250 km away from Vila-real) in 1899. Additionally, it holds one of the biggest and most popular stadiums in the World, the Camp Nou, with capacity for 99.354 people. Finally, the club's product portfolio will be presented (see *Figure 11*):

Figure 11. F.C. Barcelona's product lines, number of products and average prices.



Source: own elaboration. Data: F.C. Barcelona website.

As seen in the previous figure, F.C. Barcelona offers a notable range of products, reaching almost 1.000 different items, which makes it the second deepest product portfolio analysed yet. In fact, this is the longest portfolio of the comparison, with 15 distinct sublimes. Moreover, this product mix contains some especial sublimes that we did

not find in other Spanish clubs, such as Petwear or Memorabilia. Additionally, the least deep section is the mentioned Petwear, while the most profound one is Lifestyle with 328 products. Lastly, the brand that provides its collections to the club is Nike.

Concerning prices, F.C. Barcelona is the club with the highest prices of the comparison, logical considering its popularity and prestige. Furthermore, the club holds the most expensive official kits analysed, with an average price of 96,07€. Finally, the cheapest subline is Homeware (with an average price of 15,22€), whereas the most expensive one is Memorabilia, with an average price of 1078,16€ (this makes F.C. Barcelona the only club whose most expensive section is not Season tickets).


With regards to distribution, the club works with its providers and attends its customers through its different official shops. On the one hand, we find the 12 physical shops of the club: one in the stadium, seven more in Barcelona, two in Gerona, one in Tarragona and one in Palma de Mallorca. On the other hand, the online shop of the club, which delivers its products to the main European countries.

The shipping terms of these products are also variable, but the items are usually delivered between 1 and 7 business days. Finally, the shipping costs policy offers two methods: free delivery for orders over 95€ and standard delivery with a cost of 5,95€ in the rest of cases. However, these options may change in virtue of the address of destination and the availability of the specific products.

In last place, we must put the focus on the communication strategies carried out by the club. Among them, we should highlight advertising (the club constantly collaborates with its partners and sponsors, such as Spotify), sales promotion (e.g., discounts on individual tickets for those that live in Catalonia) and public relations and publicity (with initiatives such as “Barça Foundation” or “Barça and Woman”).


Finally, a comparison chart regarding this section will be presented (see *Table 4*):

**Table 4. Table competition summary.**

Competitor	Product line	Avg. price	Distribution	Communication
 Valencia C.F.	Season tickets (39)	682,51€	Almost every country worldwide.	Advertising: especially in social networks as YouTube, Instagram and Twitter
	Official kits (46)	53,57€		
	Training kits (46)	44,39€		
	Casual (16)	49,25€	Shipping terms: within business 3 days in Spanish mainland, between 3 and 12	Sales promotion: shareholders, children, young and elder people benefited from discounts
	Fan wear (20)	37,70€		
	Mestalla Centenary (14)	28,14€		
	Stronger together (1)	55€		
Esports (3)	139,32€			

			business days in the rest of cases.	on season tickets this season.
	<b>Fan range (136)</b>	21,80€	Shipping costs depend on the price and other characteristics of the product and also on the destination country.	Experiences and events: the "Mestalla Forever Tour Valencia CF", or the "Centenary Experience".
	<b>Football equipment (20)</b>	36,22€		
	<b>Experiences (3)</b>	333€		
	<b>Outlet (28)</b>	33,51€		
 <b>Elche C.F.</b>	<b>Season tickets (17)</b>	245,88€	Spain and other European countries.	Sales promotion: several discounts in merchandising and also in season tickets, in virtue of age and other circumstances.
	<b>Official kits (16)</b>	50,25€		
	<b>Training kits (29)</b>	44,48€		
	<b>Lifestyle (9)</b>	40,56€	Shipping terms: between 2 and 7 days for those customers in Spain's mainland, up to 15 days in the rest of cases.	Events and experiences: presence in "La Vuelta 2022", one of the most popular professional cycling competitions.
	<b>Accessories (14)</b>	38,57€		
	<b>Casual (8)</b>	37,25€	Shipping costs between 0-4€ in Spanish mainland and between 20-30€ in the other cases.	Direct marketing: active accounts in Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, among others.
	<b>Fans (41)</b>	12,19€		
	<b>Outlet (51)</b>	27,24€		
	<b>Promotions (3)</b>	17,60€		
 <b>Levante U.D.</b>	<b>Season tickets (25)</b>	340,84€	Almost every country worldwide.	Sales promotion: especially the Promotions section and the discounts offered in season tickets in virtue of age, among others.
	<b>Official kits (28)</b>	48,75€		
	<b>Training kits (11)</b>	36,09€		
	<b>Concentration (13)</b>	51,35€	Shipping terms: between 2 and 3 days in Spain, very changeable in the other cases.	Public relations and publicity: the "Levante Foundation", which carries out social initiatives.
	<b>Sportswear (45)</b>	22,51€		
	<b>Merchandising (140)</b>	14,73€		
	<b>Multimedia (16)</b>	19,94€		
	<b>Baby (7)</b>	11,97	Free deliveries if the customer reaches a minimum amount of money (in Spain, for example, this minimum is 50€).	Direct marketing: through the club's active social networks.
	<b>Ranning club (3)</b>	34,95€		
	<b>Promotions (34)</b>	31,81€		
	<b>Fallas (1)</b>	75€		
 <b>C.D. Castellón</b>	<b>Season tickets (10)</b>	202€	Spain and other European countries.	Promotion sales: the Outlet subline and the discounts offered in season tickets for children and shareholders, among others.
	<b>Official kits (1)</b>	73€		
	<b>Fans (14)</b>	10,28€		
	<b>Home (5)</b>	14,80€	Shipping terms: within 2 and 3 business days in the Spanish mainland, and within 15 natural days in the rest of cases	Public relations: the players have visited hospitals of the city and given gifts to kids.
	<b>Fashion (5)</b>	29,40€		
	<b>Face masks (1)</b>	9,95€	Free deliveries in Spanish mainland, but	Direct marketing: the club has enhanced its
	<b>Accessories (3)</b>	16,12€		



	<b>Centenary (9)</b>	25,97€	only in purchases over 50€. In the other cases, the shipping will be paid by the customer and will depend on the specific territory.	social networks, especially Instagram and Twitter.
	<b>Outlet (4)</b>	36,50€		
 <b>Real Madrid C.F.</b>	<b>Season tickets (28)</b>	1005,39 €	Almost every country worldwide.	Advertising: commercial campaigns with brands as Audi or Codere.
	<b>Official kits (34)</b>	89,21€		
	<b>Training kits (198)</b>	70,15€		
	<b>Fashion (385)</b>	58,90€	Shipping terms: notably changeable depending on the specific case but will not take longer than 30 natural days.	Sales promotion: the Promotions subline and the discounts included in the season tickets.
	<b>Lifestyle (52)</b>	49,96€		
	<b>UCL winners (21)</b>	32,42€		
	<b>Essentials (81)</b>	39,56€		
	<b>Signature (4)</b>	66,25€		
	<b>Sportswear (2)</b>	42€	Shipping costs calculated by the club's system in each specific case. Depends on the territory of destination, the payment method and the characteristics of the products.	Direct marketing: Real Madrid C.F. is the most popular sports institution in social networks worldwide, especially on Instagram and Twitter.
	<b>Fashion accessories (68)</b>	41,05€		
	<b>Home (88)</b>	25,42€		
	<b>Other accessories (285)</b>	55,23€		
<b>Promotions (169)</b>	36,70€			
 <b>F.C. Barcelona</b>	<b>Season tickets (42)</b>	518,43€	Spain and the main European countries.	Advertising: the club collaborates constantly with its partners and sponsors, such as Spotify.
	<b>Official kits (88)</b>	96,07€		
	<b>Training kits (76)</b>	64,21€		
	<b>Training equipment (23)</b>	19,78€		
	<b>Bestsellers (90)</b>	123,87€	Shipping terms: quite variable, but the items are usually delivered between 1 and 7 business days.	Sales promotion: e.g., discounts on individual tickets for those that live in Catalonia.
	<b>Lifestyle (328)</b>	59,43€		
	<b>Collection (119)</b>	52,22€		
	<b>Memorabilia (6)</b>	1078,16 €	Two main options: free delivery for orders over 95€ and standard delivery with a cost of 5,95€ in the rest of cases.	Public relations and publicity: initiatives such as "Barça Foundation" or "Barça and Woman".
	<b>Accessories (64)</b>	27,78€		
	<b>Equipment (19)</b>	22,98€		
	<b>Homeware (31)</b>	15,22€		
	<b>Petwear (5)</b>	22,40€		
	<b>Electronic and games (16)</b>	46,94€		
	<b>Match day (26)</b>	22,15€		

Source: own elaboration.

### 3. MARKET RESEARCH

#### 3.1. Research objectives

The overall objective of this market research will be to discover which are the basis of the decisions carried out by final customers inside the professional football sector, putting the focus on Villarreal C.F.

On the other hand, this research will follow other specific objectives. Firstly, discovering in which way and with what frequency do people enjoy consuming football. Secondly, which are the most followed Spanish teams and why.

Then, which are the main attributes considered when deciding to purchase merchandising. Posteriorly, how and with which frequency do customers purchase merchandising and where do they look for information. Moreover, it would be essential discover the consumers' opinion regarding merchandising prices. Finally, segmenting Villarreal C.F.'s customers, so as to know better who the club's final customer is.

## **3.2. Methodology**

### **3.2.1. Technical details of the investigation**

In the next table, the technical details of the research will be presented (see *Table 5*):

**Table 5. Technical details of the investigation.**

<b>Universe</b>	Inhabitants of Spain, with focus on Castellón
<b>Information collection method</b>	Structured Google Forms questionnaire
<b>Size of the sample</b>	103 valid questionnaires
<b>Sampling procedure</b>	Random
<b>Sampling error</b>	±5% (p=q=0,5)
<b>Level of confidence</b>	95%
<b>Questionnaires</b>	Structured questionnaires with a limited number of closed-ended questions, multiple-choice grids and checkboxes
<b>Date of fieldwork</b>	October 2022

*Source: own elaboration*

### **3.2.2. Measured variables**

This structured questionnaire is constituted by three main sections, each of them with different characteristics and objectives (see *Annex 1*). The main elements of each one will be exposed next.

The first section is "Ranking questions". Within this part, we find questions 1-6. Question 1 is an open question regarding the email address of the respondent. On the other hand, questions 2-6 are all closed questions, referred to age, gender, monthly household income, studies level and place of residence. The goal of this sector is to know about the personal characteristics of the survey respondents, for analytical purposes only.

The second section is called "Questions referred to professional football" and holds questions 7-16. These questions have different shapes and objectives. In fact, there are closed-ended questions, multiple-choice grids and checkboxes, among others, whose main purposes are to discover the customers' attitudes towards professional football in

general, their opinion about the main Spanish teams and their habits when deciding to purchase merchandising or consume football.

The last part is “Questions referred to Villarreal C.F.” Here, questions 17-30 hold similar characteristics as the ones in the previous section. However, in this case the questions chase the objective of knowing the customer’s opinions, attitudes and habits regarding Villarreal C.F., as it will be seen next.

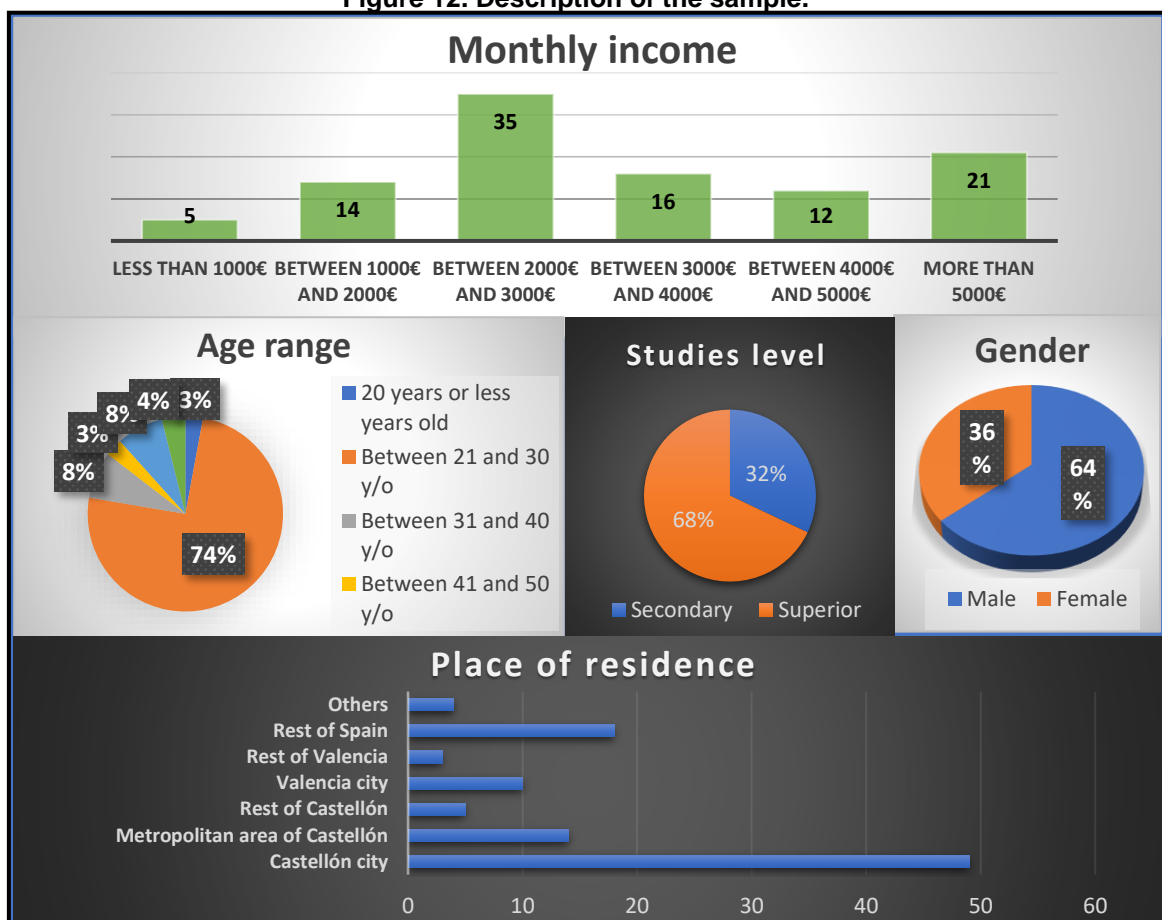
### 3.3. Results

In this section, a detailed analysis of the survey results will be presented. To do so, a descriptive analysis will be developed first, focusing on frequencies and averages. Then, we will carry out an ANOVA analysis, which will offer us a deeper view of the results.

#### 3.3.1. Descriptive analysis

As mentioned before, the first section of the questionnaire is referred to classification questions. In consequence, the answers to these questions allow us to create a sample description, which will be presented in the following figure (see *Figure 12*).

Figure 12. Description of the sample.



Source: own elaboration.



In conclusion, the general profile of this survey respondent would be a male with superior studies in its twenties, who resides in Castellón de la Plana and whose monthly household income is between 2000€ and 3000€.

In second place, we shall analyse the results of the section “Questions referred to professional football”:

A) Attitudes towards professional football.

As we can see in the following table (see *Table 6*), there is a growing inclination regarding this topic. In fact, only 6 of the 103 respondents (5,8%) considered themselves as not interested in football. From this point, the frequency grows constantly: only 14 people feels indifference about professional football, while 24 respondents are occasional consumers and other 24 are interested in the sport. Finally, 34 respondents consider themselves as real football fans.

**Table 6. Attitudes towards professional football.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Not interested</b>	6	5,80%
<b>Indifferent</b>	14	13,60%
<b>Occasional consumer</b>	24	23,30%
<b>Interested</b>	24	23,30%
<b>Fan</b>	34	35%

*Source: own elaboration.*

B) Spanish football TV streaming contracted.

In the following table (see *Table 7*), the frequencies and valid percentages of question 8 will be presented. As we can observe, 43 respondents affirm that they have nowadays contracted Spanish football streaming services. On the contrary, 52 people does not have this service. Finally, 8 people are not sure about this matter.

**Table 7. Spanish football TV streaming contracted.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Yes</b>	43	41,70%
<b>No</b>	52	50,50%
<b>N/A</b>	8	7,80%

*Source: own elaboration.*

C) Preferences between watching football in the stadium or on TV.

In the following table (see *Table 8*), we can see that a notable majority of people prefer to attend football matches in person (64,10%) instead of watching them on TV (25,20%). Lastly, 11 people did not know what to answer.

**Table 8. Preferences between watching football in the stadium or on TV.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>In the stadium</b>	66	64,10%
<b>On TV</b>	26	25,20%
<b>N/A</b>	11	10,70%

Source: own elaboration.

D) Annual expenditure on watching football.

In the next table (see *Table 9*), we will analyse the annual expenditure on watching football, including streaming services and tickets purchased. In this case, the inclination is declining: the highest frequency is found on “Less than 50€” (40 people), but then it decreases in each section, reaching only 10 people in “More than 500€”.

**Table 9. Annual expenditure on watching football.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Less than 50€</b>	40	38,80%
<b>Between 50€ and 200€</b>	17	16,50%
<b>Between 200€ and 350€</b>	13	12,60%
<b>Between 350€ and 500€</b>	11	10,70%
<b>More than 500€</b>	10	9,70%
<b>N/A</b>	12	11,70%

Source: own elaboration.

E) Most interesting football teams.

In the following table, we will analyse which are the most interesting teams for the respondents. This was a multiple-choice checkbox question, so each person could choose one or more options.

In virtue of this table (see *Table 10*), the most popular teams for the sample were Real Madrid C.F., Villarreal C.F. and F.C. Barcelona, with 55, 45 and 31 responses, respectively. Then, we find other interesting teams such as Valencia C.F. and C.D. Castellón, which were interesting for 22,30% and 10,70% of the people.

**Table 10. Most interesting football teams.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Real Madrid C.F.</b>	55	53,40%
<b>F.C. Barcelona</b>	31	30,10%
<b>Valencia C.F.</b>	23	22,30%
<b>Sevilla C.F.</b>	3	2,90%
<b>Villarreal C.F.</b>	45	43,70%
<b>Atlético de Madrid</b>	8	7,80%
<b>Real Betis Balompié</b>	8	7,80%
<b>C.D. Castellón</b>	11	10,70%
<b>Others</b>	4	3,90%
<b>None</b>	5	4,90%

Source: own elaboration.

F) Attributes of Spanish most popular teams.

In the next table (see *Table 11*), we find the answers to a multiple-choice grid question, which allowed the respondent to choose different attributes for each football team. The best results for attribute are shown in green and the worst ones in red.

Real Madrid C.F. is seen as the club with the best history and brand image, but also with the highest prices. F.C Barcelona is the worst regarding sustainability, while Valencia C.F has de worst brand image and Atlético de Madrid holds the worst social model for the respondents. Finally, Villarreal C.F. is seen as the club with less history but it is the best concerning social model, sustainability and low prices.

**Table 11. Attributes of Spanish most popular teams.**

Frequencies	History	Brand image	Social model	Sustainability	High prices
<b>Real Madrid C.F.</b>	91	75	36	27	67
<b>F.C. Barcelona</b>	72	67	34	12	64
<b>Valencia C.F.</b>	59	32	28	15	31
<b>Sevilla C.F.</b>	47	33	27	14	27
<b>Villarreal C.F.</b>	28	52	62	48	12
<b>Atlético de Madrid</b>	53	38	26	15	44
<b>Real Betis Balompié</b>	44	37	50	22	17

Source: own elaboration.

G) Prices of football teams' merchandising.

In the following table (see *Table 12*), we will analyse the opinion of the respondents with regards to merchandising prices. In this case, the minimum punctuation was 1 ("very low prices") and the maximum possible was 5 ("excessively high prices"). As the results show, the average answer was 4,417, a notably high figure, which means that the survey respondents consider that football merchandising is, in general, too expensive.

**Table 12. Prices of football teams' merchandising.**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
<b>¿Are football merchandising prices low or high?</b>	103	1	5	4,417	0,649

*Source: own elaboration.*

H) The importance information sources when buying merchandising

In the following table (see *Table 13*), we can see the results of this question, in which "1" meant "Not important", "2" was "Not very important", "3" was "Important", "4" was "Very important" and "5" was "Decisive".

**Table 13. The importance of information sources when buying merchandising.**

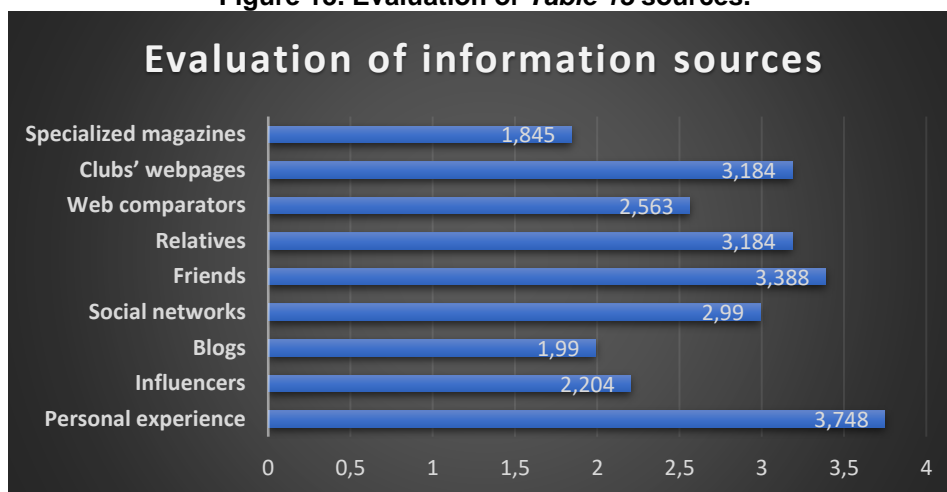
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
<b>Specialized magazines</b>	103	1	5	1,845	1,073
<b>Clubs' webpages</b>	103	1	5	3,184	1,235
<b>Web comparators</b>	103	1	5	2,563	1,226
<b>Relatives</b>	103	1	5	3,184	1,186
<b>Friends</b>	103	1	5	3,388	1,198
<b>Social networks</b>	103	1	5	2,990	1,192
<b>Blogs</b>	103	1	5	1,990	1,098
<b>Influencers</b>	103	1	5	2,204	1,191
<b>Personal experience</b>	103	1	5	3,748	1,281

*Source: own elaboration.*

As we can observe in the table and the next figure (see *Figure 13*), the less important information sources for the respondents were specialized magazines and blogs (none of them reached an average of 2), while influencers, web comparators and social networks

averages were between 2 and 3. Finally, the most decisive sources were the teams' websites, relatives, friends and, especially, personal experience (average of 3,748).

**Figure 13. Evaluation of Table 13 sources.**



Source: own elaboration.

l) The importance of attributes when buying merchandising.

In the next table (see Table 14), we can observe the results of question 15, in which the values 1-5 meant the same as in the previous question. Thus, we can conclude that the less important attribute considered when buying merchandising was its environmental impact (average of 2,350), jointly with the brand of the products, which did not reach an average of 3 either. Then, the other four attributes are seen as quite important, almost reaching 4 points. Among them, the most important one was the design of the products (3,893), closely followed by its price (3,825), quality (3,728) and durability (3,553).

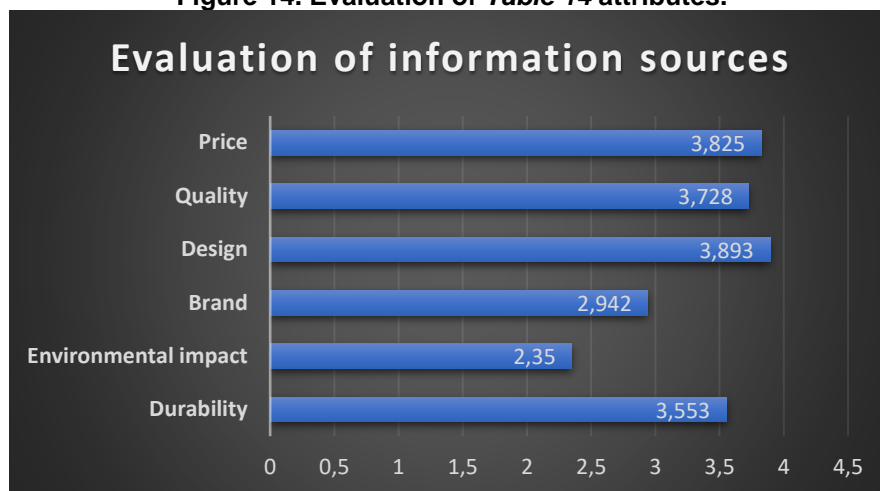
**Table 14. The importance of attributes when buying merchandising.**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
<b>Price</b>	103	1	5	3,825	1,033
<b>Quality</b>	103	1	5	3,728	0,952
<b>Design</b>	103	1	5	3,893	1,102
<b>Brand</b>	103	1	5	2,942	1,065
<b>Environmental impact</b>	103	1	5	2,350	1,144
<b>Durability</b>	103	1	5	3,553	0,987

Source: own elaboration

This can also be checked in the following figure (see *Figure 14*).

**Figure 14. Evaluation of *Table 14* attributes.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

J) Annual expenditure in football merchandising.

In the next table (see *Table 15*), we will analyse the annual expenditure on football teams' merchandising. As we can see, the majority of respondents spend less than 25€ in football products annually (52,40%), while only 14,60% of the people spend between 25€ and 50€. Additionally, 21,40% of the respondents spend between 50€ and 100€, while 9,70% spend between 100€ and 200€ and only 2 people spend more than 200€.

**Table 15. Annual expenditure on football merchandising.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Less than 25€</b>	52	52,40%
<b>Between 25€ and 50€</b>	15	14,60%
<b>Between 50€ and 100€</b>	22	21,40%
<b>Between 100€ and 200€</b>	10	9,70%
<b>More than 200€</b>	2	1,90%

*Source: own elaboration.*

Finally, we should analyse the results of the questions contained in the third section of the survey, "Questions referred to Villarreal C.F.":

A) Attitude towards Villarreal C.F.

In the next table (see *Table 16*), we can observe which is the attitude that the respondents have towards the club, in a scale from 1 ("Very unfavourable") to 5 ("Very favourable"). As we can see, the average punctuation was 3,534, meaning that most people had a positive opinion of Villarreal C.F.

**Table 16. Attitude towards Villarreal C.F.**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
<b>Attitude towards Villarreal C.F.</b>	103	1	5	3,534	1,274

*Source: own elaboration*

B) Frequency of watching Villarreal C.F. matches.

In the next table (see *Table 17*), we will analyse the habits when talking about frequency of watching Villarreal C.F. matches. As it can be observed, 12,60% of the respondents never watch them, while most people (31,10%) hardly ever watch them and other 19,40% consume them occasionally. On the other hand, 19,40% of the respondents watch important matches and the remaining 17,50% try to watch every match.

**Table 17. Frequency of watching Villarreal C.F. matches.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Never</b>	13	12,60%
<b>Hardly ever</b>	32	31,10%
<b>Occasionally</b>	20	19,40%
<b>Only important matches</b>	20	19,40%
<b>Always if possible</b>	18	17,50%

*Source: own elaboration.*

C) Habits when watching Villarreal C.F. matches.

In the following table (see *Table 18*), we can observe the habits of the respondents when watching Villarreal C.F. matches with regards to their companion. In this case, 20,80% of the respondents choose to watch these matches alone, while 32 people watch them with relatives and most of the sample (44%) consume them with friends.

**Table 18. Habits when watching Villarreal C.F. matches.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>With relatives</b>	32	35,20%
<b>With friends</b>	40	44%
<b>Alone</b>	19	20,80%

*Source: own elaboration.*

D) Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets.

In the following table (see *Table 19*), we can observe the number of Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets in the sample. In this case, only 13,60% of the respondents hold one of these products, while the remaining 86,40% do not.

**Table 19. Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Yes</b>	14	13,60%
<b>No</b>	89	86,40%

*Source: own elaboration.*

E) Villarreal C.F. followers.

In the following table (see *Table 20*), we can observe the number of Villarreal C.F. followers in the sample. As it can be seen, almost half of the respondents (44,70%) consider themselves as followers of the team, whereas the other 55,30% do not.

**Table 20. Villarreal C.F. followers.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Yes</b>	46	44,70%
<b>No</b>	57	55,30%

*Source: own elaboration.*

F) Channels through which people follow Villarreal C.F.

In the next table (see *Table 21*), we can observe which are the most popular channels used by the sample to follow the team. In virtue of this table, we can conclude that the most popular media is TV (used by 63,10% of the people), while we find other relatively important channels, such as Instagram, Twitter, online press and Radio (all of them between 20% and 30%). Then, the less important media are written press, YouTube and, especially, Facebook. Finally, 28,20% of the sample do not follow the team.

**Table 21. Channels through which people follow Villarreal C.F.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>TV</b>	65	63,10%
<b>Radio</b>	21	20,40%
<b>Written press</b>	11	10,70%
<b>Online press</b>	25	24,30%
<b>Twitter</b>	26	25,20%
<b>Instagram</b>	28	27,20%
<b>Facebook</b>	3	2,90%



<b>YouTube</b>	7	6,80%
<b>Other sources</b>	3	2,90%
<b>I do not follow the team</b>	29	28,20%

Source: own elaboration.

#### G) Frequency of attendance at the Villarreal C.F.'s stadium

In the next table (see *Table 22*), we will analyse the frequency of attendance to the Estadio de la Cerámica. As we can see, 33% of the respondents never go to the stadium, while 35% hardly ever does and 11,60% attend occasionally. On the contrary, 4,90% of the respondents attend to important matches and 15,50% to every match possible.

**Table 22. Frequency of attendance at the Villarreal C.F.'s stadium.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Never</b>	34	33%
<b>Hardly ever</b>	36	35%
<b>Occasionally</b>	12	11,60%
<b>Only important matches</b>	5	4,90%
<b>Always if possible</b>	16	15,50%

Source: own elaboration.

#### H) Ways of accessing the stadium

In the following table (see *Table 23*), we can find the same proportion of people that access the stadium through season tickets and individual tickets (both 22,50%). On the other hand, the remaining 55% of people access the stadium through different ways.

**Table 23. Ways of accessing the stadium.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>With my season ticket</b>	18	22,50%
<b>Purchasing an individual ticket</b>	18	22,50%
<b>Other ways</b>	44	55%

Source: own elaboration.

#### I) Purchases in the Villarreal C.F.'s stadium.

In the next table (see *Table 24*), we can observe which are the most popular products purchased by the respondents once in the Estadio de la Cerámica. As we can see, most people do not buy nothing in the stadium (61,40%), while 39,50% of the sample usually purchases food or drinks and only 1 person tends to acquire merchandising.

**Table 24. Purchases in the Villarreal C.F.'s stadium.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Food or drinks</b>	38	39,50%
<b>Merchandising</b>	1	1,10%
<b>Nothing</b>	59	61,40%

*Source: own elaboration.*

J) Purchases of Villarreal C.F. merchandising.

In the following table (see *Table 25*), we can check how 38,80% of the sample has purchased Villarreal C.F. merchandising at least once during their life. On the other hand, the remaining 61,20% have not done it.

**Table 25. Purchases of Villarreal C.F. merchandising.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Yes</b>	40	38,80%
<b>No</b>	63	61,20%

*Source: own elaboration.*

K) Types of merchandising purchased.

In the next table (see *Table 26*), we find the answers to a multiple-checkbox question. As we can observe, 64,30% of the respondents have ever purchased official jerseys, and 59,50% of them has bought other types of clothes (including scarves). Finally, the less popular objects are fans' products, decorations and ornaments.

**Table 26. Types of merchandising purchased.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
<b>Official jerseys</b>	27	64,30%
<b>Other clothes</b>	25	59,50%
<b>Fans' products</b>	7	16,70%
<b>Decorations and ornaments</b>	7	16,70%

*Source: own elaboration.*

L) Favourite channels for purchases.

In the following table (see *Table 27*), we can observe which are the most popular places for the respondents to purchase Villarreal C.F. merchandising. Through this multiple-checkbox answer, we can conclude that the main channel are the club's physical shops (81,60% of the respondents usually buy there), followed by the club's website (26,50%). Then, we find other residual channels, such as other physical shops, shopping malls or other websites, which are only used by between 8%-10% of the respondents.

**Table 27. Favourite channels for purchases.**

	Frequency	Valid percentages
Club's physical shops	40	81,60%
Other physical specialised shops	5	10,20%
Shopping malls	4	8,20%
Club's website	13	26,50%
Other websites	5	10,20%

Source: own elaboration.

M) Villarreal C.F. merchandising prices.

In the following table (see *Table 28*), we can observe the opinion of the sample regarding the prices fixed by the club. Here, the values 1-5 had the same meaning as in *Table 12*, which was referred to all football clubs' prices in general. In that question, the result was 4,417, while in the case of Villarreal C.F. the average is 3,594. Thus, the respondents feel that the prices of the club are quite lower than the average in the sector.

**Table 28. Villarreal C.F. merchandising prices.**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
¿Are Villarreal C.F. merchandising prices low or high?	79	1	5	3,594	0,7428

Source: own elaboration.

N) Satisfaction with Villarreal C.F. merchandising.

In the next table (see *Table 29*), we can check how satisfied are the respondents that have purchased Villarreal C.F. merchandising. Here, the minimum value was 1, meaning "Not satisfied" and the maximum was 5, understood as "Very satisfied". As the results show, the average satisfaction was 3,609, a notably positive result for the club.

**Table 29. Satisfaction with Villarreal C.F. merchandising.**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
¿Are you satisfied with the club's merchandising?	69	1	5	3,609	0,988

Source: own elaboration.

### 3.3.2. ANOVA analysis

This analysis will be developed with the objective of discovering significant differences between two distinct groups of the sample. In this case, the discrete variable chosen has been whether the respondent is a Villarreal C.F. fan with season ticket or not (Yes/No in *Table 19*). On the other hand, the continuous variables chosen were those included in the previous questions that followed the Likert scale system (1-5). Firstly, we will focus on which continuous variables show significant differences between both groups and which do not. Then, we will deeply analyse those that are significantly different.

In first place, we find the question regarding the respondents' opinion about football merchandising' prices in general. As we can see in the following table (see *Table 30*), there are not significant differences between groups in this matter, due to the fact that the significance level (0,417) is higher than the alpha value employed:  $p > 0,05$ .

**Table 30. ANOVA analysis of general football merchandising prices.**

	Yes	No	Significance (p)
¿Are football merchandising prices low or high?	4,285	4,438	0,417

*Source: own elaboration.*

With regards to the information sources question, now we must observe the following table (see *Table 31*). In virtue of this chart, we can discover two variables —highlighted in blue— that hold significant differences. That is to say, in those cases:  $p < 0,05$ .

**Table 31. ANOVA analysis of information sources regarding merchandising.**

	Yes	No	Sig.
Specialized magazines	1,643	1,876	0,452
Clubs' webpages	3,929	3,067	<b>0,0145</b>
Web comparators	2,643	2,568	0,821
Relatives	3,214	3,180	0,920
Friends	3,714	3,337	0,276
Social networks	3,071	2,978	0,786
Blogs	2	1,989	0,972
Influencers	2	2,236	0,493
Personal experience	4,714	3,629	<b>0,003</b>

*Source: own elaboration.*

Concerning the analysis of the question about the attributes considered when purchasing merchandising, contained in *Table 14*, now we find *Table 32*. In this case, we observe

another continuous variable that is significantly different ( $p < 0,05$ ), which is the one corresponding to Environmental impact.

**Table 32. ANOVA analysis of attributes when buying merchandising.**

	Yes	No	Sig.
<b>Price</b>	3,857	3,843	0,961
<b>Quality</b>	3,929	3,697	0,399
<b>Design</b>	3,857	3,899	0,896
<b>Brand</b>	2,857	2,955	0,751
<b>Environmental impact</b>	1,786	2,438	<b>0,047</b>
<b>Durability</b>	3,714	3,528	0,515

*Source: own elaboration.*

The next question analysed is the one referred to the respondents' attitude towards Villarreal C.F. As we can see in *Table 33*, this question is also significantly different.

**Table 33. ANOVA analysis of attitude towards Villarreal C.F.**

	Yes	No	Sig.
<b>Attitude towards Villarreal C.F.</b>	4,571	3,371	<b>0,0008</b>

*Source: own elaboration.*

Then, we find the question with regards to Villarreal C.F. merchandising prices. In this case, the next table (see *Table 34*), does not show any significant difference.

**Table 34. ANOVA analysis of Villarreal C.F. merchandising prices.**

	Yes	No	Sig.
<b>¿Are Villarreal C.F. merchandising prices low or high?</b>	3,286	3,662	0,0860

*Source: own elaboration.*

Finally, the last question analysed is the one referred to the respondents' satisfaction with the Villarreal C.F. merchandising. In the next table (see *Table 35*), we can observe how, again, there is not any significant difference in this question:  $p > 0,05$ .

**Table 35. ANOVA analysis of satisfaction with Villarreal C.F. merchandising.**

	Yes	No	Sig.
<b>¿Are you satisfied with the club's merchandising?</b>	3,714	3,582	0,658

*Source: own elaboration.*

As mentioned previously, it is time now to study thoroughly those continuous variables that have shown significant differences. Firstly, we will analyse the interesting results obtained in *Table 31*, referred to the information sources used by season-ticket holders fans and not fans of the club before purchasing merchandising.

As it can be seen in the following table (see *Table 36*), Villarreal C.F. fans tend to give more importance to the official clubs' webpages when looking for information before taking decisions about purchasing merchandising than non-fans. More specifically, Villarreal C.F. fans reached an average of 3,929, which is notably higher than the 3,067 achieved by non-fans, which prefer other sources as relatives, friends or personal experience.

**Table 36. ANOVA details of variables with significant differences in question about information sources.**

No	Information source	Group	N	Average	Sig.
13.2	Clubs' webpages	Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	14	3,929	0,0145
		No Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	89	3,067	
		Total	103	3,184	
13.9	Personal experience	Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	14	4,714	0,003
		No Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	89	3,629	
		Total	103	3,748	

*Source: own elaboration.*

Additionally, the mentioned personal experience is also a more important information source for Villarreal C.F. fans than for the non-fans. In fact, in the first group, it reaches levels of an almost decisive element (4,714), more than one point over the average of the non-fans (3,629).

To sum up, we can conclude that both analysed sources become important for all groups, despite being even more essential for Villarreal C.F. fans. Between these two, we must highlight previous experience, which becomes by far the most important information source for Villarreal C.F. fans. Thus, it should be taken into account by the club.

In second place, we find a significant difference contained in *Table 32*, regarding the most important attributes considered when purchasing football merchandising in general. In this case, the following table (see *Table 37*), shows clearly that non-fans of Villarreal

C.F. care more about the environmental impact of football merchandising than the fans of the club. More precisely, these non-fans reached an average of 2,438, which is not quite high, but it is more than the 1,786 average achieved by the fans of the team.

**Table 37. ANOVA details of variables with significant differences in question about merchandising attributes.**

No	Attribute	Group	N	Average	Sig.
14.5	Environmental impact	Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	14	1,786	0,047
		No Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	89	2,438	
		Total	103	2,350	

*Source: own elaboration*

To sum up, this attribute was the less important one for the whole sample (see again *Table 14*). However, this becomes even more obvious in the case of Villarreal C.F. fans, who value more other elements such as design, price or quality.

Finally, the last significant difference found in this ANOVA analysis was contained in the question regarding the respondents' attitude towards Villarreal C.F. This difference is observable in *Table 33*.

As we can see in the next table (see *Table 38*), we find a logical more positive opinion of Villarreal C.F. by the fans of the club than by the non-fans. The first group reached an average of 4,571, while the second one achieved a relatively positive result of 3,371.

**Table 38. ANOVA details of variables with significant differences in question about the attitude towards Villarreal C.F.**

No	Question	Group	N	Average	Sig.
16	Attitude towards Villarreal C.F.	Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	14	4,571	0,0008
		No Villarreal C.F. fans with season tickets	89	3,371	
		Total	103	3,534	

*Source: own elaboration*

It must be noted, however, that inside the second group we also find Villarreal C.F. fans that do not hold a season ticket right now, as well as followers but not fans of the club, which constitute a big percentage of the sample. Thus, it is fair to think that the difference between the averages of both groups is not as evident as it could have been.

In last place, we must highlight again the previously mentioned fact. The presence of other Villarreal C.F. fans and followers in the "non-fans group", explains that we do not

find significant differences in questions such as the ones contained in *Tables 34* and *35*. In other conditions, these tables could have shown bigger differences between groups.

### **3.4. General conclusions of the research**

Once having carried out both descriptive and ANOVA analysis, it is now time to establish the main conclusions of the research. This way, we will try to accomplish the objectives in which the questionnaire was based.

As it has been explained, we have discovered that the main part of the survey respondents are, at least, occasional consumers of professional football, despite not having contracted TV streaming services in most cases. Additionally, most of them would rather attend the matches physically than watch them through TV.

On the other hand, we have confirmed once again that Real Madrid C.F. is the most popular football team. However, Villarreal C.F. was considered the second most interesting team, while F.C. Barcelona was the third one. Furthermore, we must highlight the general appreciation of Real Madrid's history and brand images and also Villarreal C.F.'s social actions, sustainability and low prices.

Regarding customers' decisions when purchasing football merchandising, it must be noted that design, price, quality and durability are the most important attributes for them, while personal experience, friends, relatives and the clubs' webpages are the main information sources consulted within the process.

Additionally, the most popular purchasing channels for Villarreal products are the club's official website and physical shops. Regarding these products' prices, the respondents consider them quite high, but not as expensive as the other teams' merchandising.

If we divide now between current Villarreal C.F. season-ticket holders fans and "non-fans", we find several differences, discovered through the ANOVA analysis.

Firstly, the fans consider essential both the clubs' webpages and their previous personal experience when looking for information about merchandising, whereas non-fans give these sources high importance, but not reaching the same levels. In fact, personal experience is the most important source for both groups, but webpages are the second most important one for fans while it is only the third one for non-fans (behind friends).

Secondly, Villarreal C.F. non-fans value more the reduced environmental impact of the products than fans. In this case, however, there are not larger differences: this attribute is the less important for both groups.

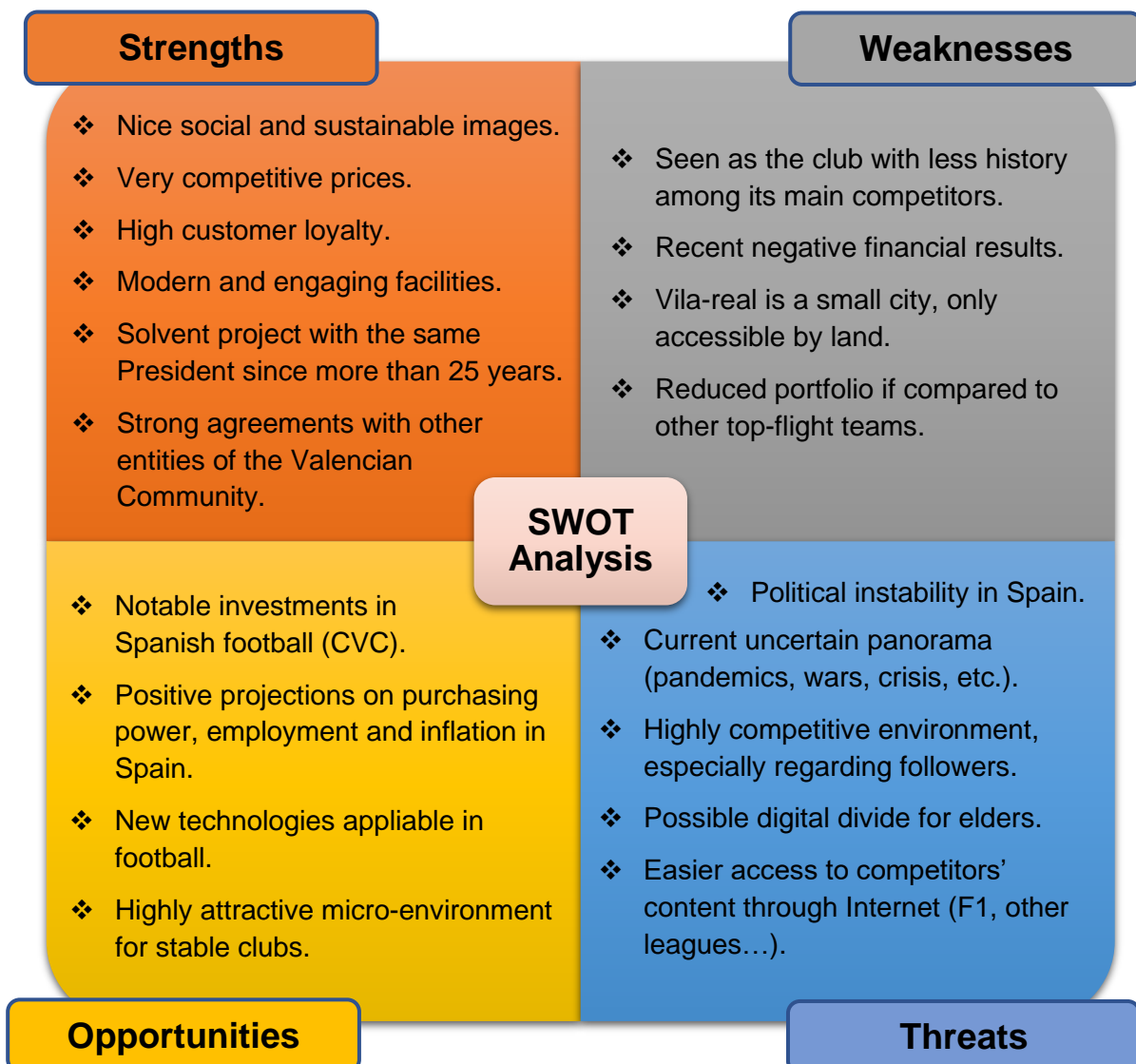


Finally, the third difference is their attitude towards Villarreal C.F. In this case, it is obvious that the club's fans hold a more positive attitude towards the team than the non-fans (despite the fact that this last group contains other Villarreal C.F. fans and followers).

#### **4. SWOT ANALYSIS**

So as to present a brief summary with the most important elements of the previous sections, now we will develop a SWOT analysis (see *Figure 15*). This method stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. In other words, it is both an internal and an external analysis, which covers positive but also critical factors for the club.

**Figure 15. SWOT Analysis.**



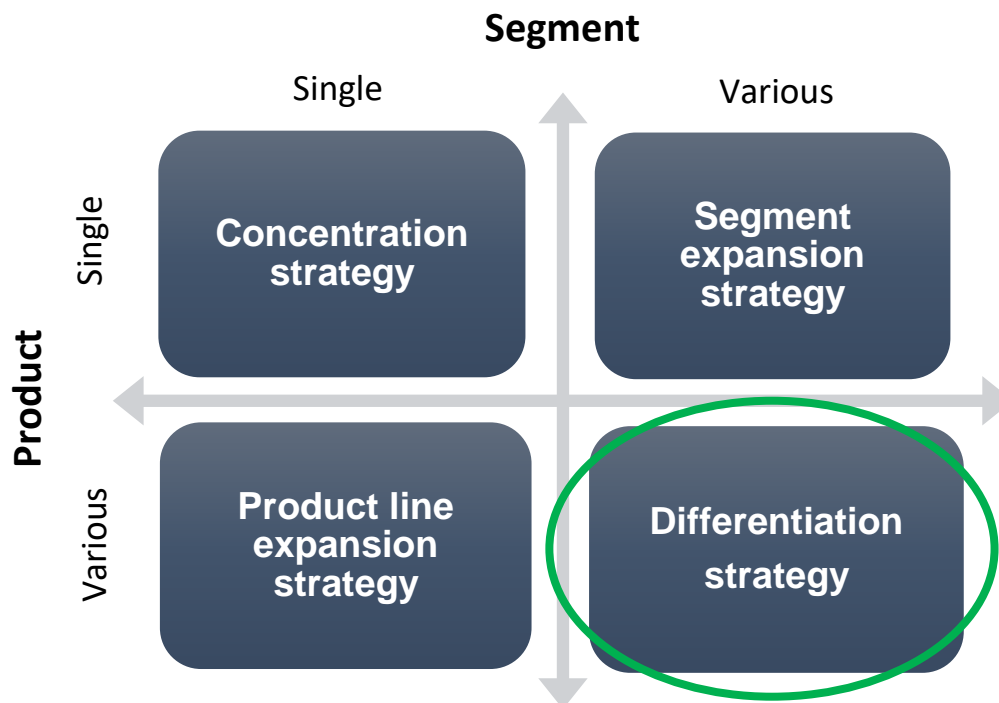
Source: own elaboration.

## **5. SEGMENTATION STRATEGY, TARGET AND POSITIONING**

### **5.1. Segmentation strategy**

In this point we will briefly define which is the segmentation strategy chosen by Villarreal C.F. As mentioned in the previous sections, the club targets lots of customer segments at the same time, not excluding anyone by its age, gender or other personal characteristics. Moreover, the product portfolio of the club contains some products especially addressed to some of these segments. In consequence, in the next figure (see *Figure 16*), we can conclude that Villarreal C.F. follows a differentiation strategy, according to Munuera and Rodríguez (2007).

**Figure 16. Villarreal C.F. segmentation strategy.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

### **5.2. Target**

Once having explained which is the segmentation strategy carried out by the club, we can now analyse thoroughly which are the specific segments that Villarreal C.F. targets. We will divide those segments in virtue of age and other characteristics, such as power of purchasing, considering that price was the second most important attribute for our sample in the market research. This way, we find up to four segments, represented through illustrative examples:

- **Alex and his friends:** This is a group of young people (between 16 and 25 years old), characterised by their notable energy but low purchasing power and independence (see *Image 6*). They represent one of the most important segments that the club targets, taking into account the way in which these individuals usually understand and live football. In practice, young fans tend to be highly attached to their football club, following and supporting the team as much as possible. In consequence, they are very interested in merchandising products, especially the official jerseys, scarves or flags and also academic products as folders or notebooks.

**Image 6. Alex and his friends.**



*Source: freepik.*

Additionally, young people highly value discounts and promotions. In this case, the club has created an Outlet subline and established discounts on season tickets for people 25 years old or less, as it was explained previously. Furthermore, nowadays young people are highly related to new technologies, so communication through the club's webpage and social networks becomes essential for them.

- **María and Marcos:** These two adults (between 26 and 59 years old) hold unique peculiarities (see *Image 7*). However, we can extract some general characteristics. Adults usually hold a higher purchasing power than young people, which makes them value other attributes such as design, durability or quality over price in some cases. However, they usually have less energy than young people, living a calmer life.

**Image 7. María and Marcos.**

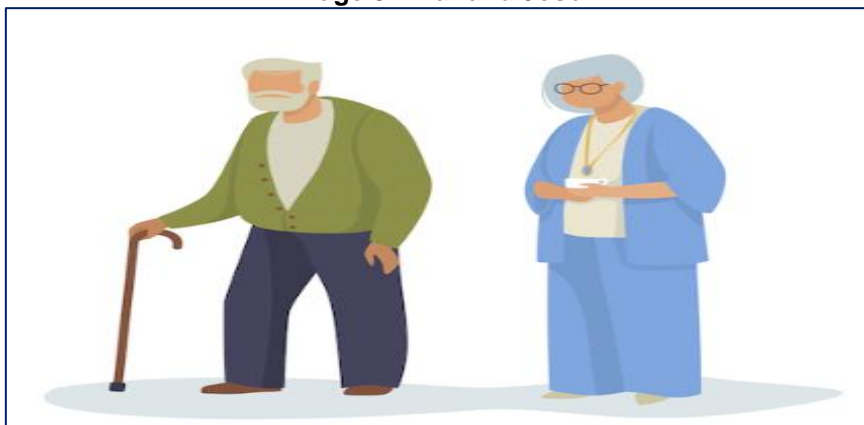


*Source: freepik.*

Thus, they tend to support the team in a more relaxed way, so other product sublines such as Miscellaneous, Casual or Jewellery take more importance here. Finally, despite that nowadays almost everyone has internet access, adults usually prefer other information sources such as TV or radio.

- **Pilar and José:** These two elders (more than 59 years old) play an essential role inside Villarreal C.F., representing a vast segment of the club (see *Image 8*). These people usually have lots of free time but limited purchasing power. This way, they will be able to follow the team regularly, but they are usually attached to the past and they do not react to new products in the same way as young people or adults.

**Image 8. Pilar and José.**



*Source: freepik.*

Additionally, they look for attributes as durability and reliance, as they cannot follow the same life-rhythm than young people. Consequently, the most popular products for them are usually the official jerseys and other products that make them feel comfortable, such as other clothes and home goods. On the other hand, it must be

noted that the club has created discounts on season tickets for pensioners. Finally, they highly trust their previous personal experiences and usually follow written press.

- **González family:** These customers hold some peculiarities over the other groups, including people from all ages (see *Image 9*). In practice, football is often followed by more than one member of the family, which usually support the same team, especially in a small village as Vila-real. Thus, it is essential to give a good service to all the members of the family, who tend to appreciate their relatives' opinion.

**Image 9. González family.**



Source: freepik.

These customers give high importance to quality, durability and security, with price becoming a variable element depending on their purchasing power. In this case, the club has created product sublines for families, and also children and babies specifically (e.g., Baby, Home and Stationery sections). Finally, these customers usually enjoy collective activities as events and experiences organised by the club.

### **5.3. Positioning**

In this section, we will try to explain which is the positioning strategy of Villarreal C.F. compared to its main competitors. To do so, a positioning map will be presented next (see *Figure 17*), based on two variables: quality and price. Price is a relatively simple element to analyse here, taking into account that it was described before in this work. However, products' quality is not easy to evaluate in this case. To do so, we will consider the quality of the brands that provide the products to the clubs and other elements that create value for the customers (purchasing conditions, product design, financing, etc.).

Figure 17. Positioning map.



Source: own elaboration.

As we can see in the positioning map, Villarreal C.F. is in an intermediate position regarding quality, inside the quadrant of low prices. Here, its main competitors regarding quality are Levante U.D. and Valencia C.F. Concerning price, its main competitors are Elche C.F. and, again, Levante U.D, with C.D. Castellón holding the lowest prices of the comparison. On the other hand, we find the high-prices group, constituted by Real Madrid C.F., Valencia C.F. and F.C. Barcelona (which also offer the highest quality).

So as to decide where to place each club in the positioning map, the considered variables have been the following ones. Regarding price, the reference has been the average price of each club's sublines. Concerning quality, the main variables analysed have been the prestige and popularity of the clothes brands (Nike and Adidas hold the highest scores), the flexibility of shipping terms and financing conditions, the design of the products and, finally, the division, prestige, history and popularity of the specific club.

## **6. MARKETING OBJECTIVES**

### ➤ **Objectives of commercial relationships**

1. **Attract 10% new customers in a year.** The club has sold every season ticket available for this season to its fans, but the vast segment of followers offers the opportunity of reaching lots of new customers, no matter their location. To do so, it

will be necessary to enhance the brand image of the club and explore new microsegments, as it will be explained later.

**2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.** The general satisfaction regarding the club and its merchandising is positive —as we saw in the market research—, but it could be higher. If achieved, this objective will foster customers' loyalty, meaning more and better visits in the future and the enhancement of Villarreal C.F.'s brand image.

**3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.** As explained before, the club can still reach lots of new followers —aside with the fans—, which will mainly purchase the products through the website. Moreover, we discovered through the market research that Villarreal C.F.'s physical shops are the main channel for purchases, while the website's role could be fostered. Additionally, this objective will also promote *Objective 1*.

**4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.** Taking into account the importance of digital marketing for the club, it is essential to focus on its social networks. This way, the international relevance of the club and its followers base will grow, reporting several benefits to the entity.

➤ **Management objectives of marketing activities:**

**5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.** This goal will be fostered by the previously presented *Objectives of commercial relationships*.

➤ **Business financial objectives:**

**6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.** This goal will be promoted through the five previous objectives, including more (and more loyal) customers, more traffic in the club's website and social networks and higher sales. This objective becomes essential, taking into account the recent negative financial results of the company.

## **7. MARKETING STRATEGIES**

### **7.1. Generic strategy regarding the competitive advantage**

The generic strategy is constituted by the main actions carried out by the company to acquire a competitive advantage towards its competitors. In this case, the strategy that I propose for Villarreal C.F. is cost leadership. As it was explained within the previous

analysis, Villarreal C.F. is quite popular in Spain, but not that much if compared to other prestigious and historical clubs.

Thus, it would be recommendable to reach a bigger number of customers and grow its popularity through reducing costs and offering low prices (as it is doing nowadays) before thinking of applying a differentiation strategy with higher prices. This strategy will also enhance the loyalty of the customers, when they realize that they are paying lower prices.

## **7.2. Competitive strategy**

On the one hand, according to Vallet-Bellmunt et al. (2015), we can find four different competitive strategies depending on the environment of the company. In this case, Villarreal C.F. should choose the analyser strategy, which is characterised by defending its position while observing the market innovations and new opportunities, then trying to adapt to them. In a stable environment, this strategy will become highly efficient for the club. During periods of uncertainty, the company will follow the example of its most innovative competitors.

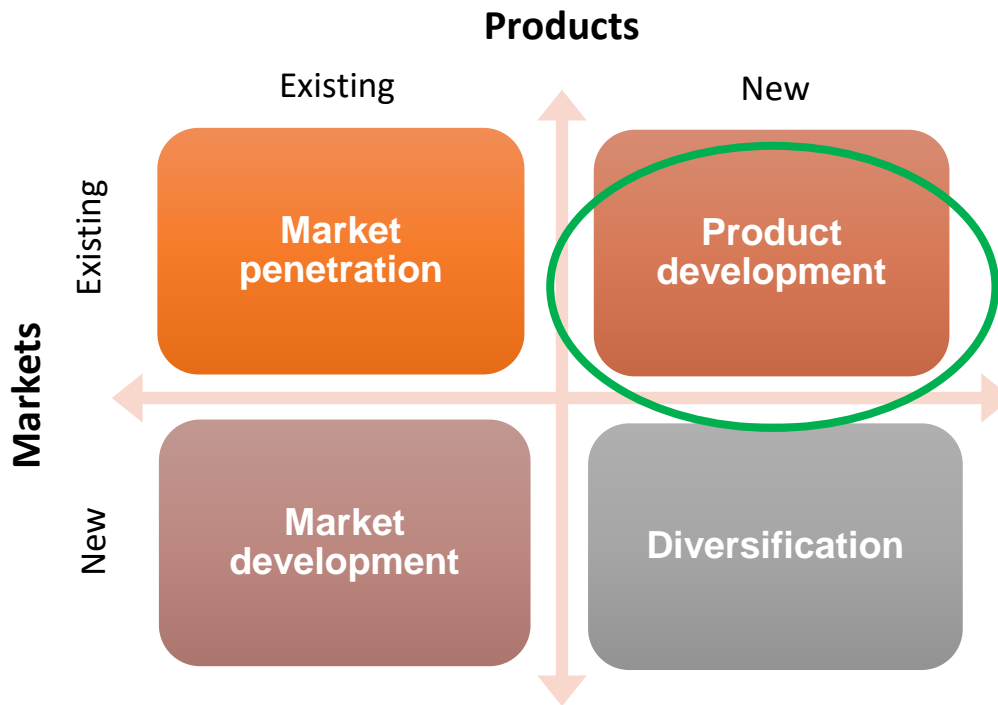
On the other hand, companies can also follow up to four strategic positions regarding its competitors, according to Kotler and Keller (2012). For Villarreal C.F., I propose to adopt the follower strategy. This strategy is based on maintaining its market share (especially through setting low prices and good quality) without taking notable risks. However, this type of companies usually try to become slowly more important in their sector. To do so, it will be necessary to adopt different specific techniques, such as the imitation and adaptation strategies.

## **7.3. Growth and diversification strategies**

In virtue of the Ansoff's matrix regarding growth and diversification strategies included in Ansoff (1976), I firmly believe that the club shall follow the product development strategy so as to achieve its marketing objectives (see *Figure 18*). According to Lambin, et al. (2009), this strategy allows companies to improve their sales through the development of new or improved products, targeting the existing markets. More specifically, this method can include enlarging and rejuvenating the product portfolio, incorporating new functions to the existing products, modifying them in any way that constitutes new benefits for the customers and improving their quality.



Figure 18. Ansoff's matrix.



Source: own elaboration.

## 8. ACTION PROGRAMS

### 8.1 Summary of action programs

Table 39. Summary of action programs.

ACTIONS	OBJECTIVES
<b>Action 1. Creation of a new product line: Electronic and games.</b>	1. Attract 10% new customers in a year. 5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year. 6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.
<b>Action 2. Creation of a new product line: Centenary.</b>	1. Attract 10% new customers in a year. 5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year. 6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.
<b>Action 3. Enlargement of existing following product lines.</b>	1. Attract 10% new customers in a year. 5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year. 6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.
<b>Action 4. Improvement of shipping conditions.</b>	2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year. 5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year. 6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.
<b>Action 5. Creation of a Complaints &amp; Suggestions channel.</b>	2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.
<b>Action 6. Creation of the monthly contest "El Groguet del Mes".</b>	1. Attract 10% new customers in a year. 3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year. 4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year. 5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year. 6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.

<b>Action 7. Performance of monthly raffles.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.</li> <li>3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<b>Action 8. Creation of two discounts periods.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<b>Action 9. Advertisements through influencers.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<b>Action 10. Launch of online advertising campaigns.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<b>Action 11. SEM campaigns through Google Ads.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<b>Action 12. Investment in new community managers.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>

*Source: own elaboration.*

## **8.2. Merchandising and licenses enlargement program**

### **Action 1. Creation of a new product line: Electronic and games**

<p><b>Objectives to which it contributes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Implementation period:</b> long term.</p>
<p><b>Budget:</b> free.</p>

As it was observed during the analysis of the club, its product portfolio is not characterised by its length nor its depth. Thus, Villarreal C.F. has a notable margin to establish new product lines with the purpose of attracting new customers and increasing

its sales. In this case, a new section called “Electronic and games” will be created. The main target of this product line will be young people and also the younger adults. It will have a depth of 6 products, including two electronic-sports t-shirts, headphones, a power bank, a computer mouse and a mouse pad (see *Figure 19*).

**Figure 19. Electronic and games product line.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

**Action 2. Creation of a new product line: Centenary**

<p><b>Objectives to which it contributes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Implementation period:</b> one year.</p>
<p><b>Budget:</b> free.</p>

Following the same reasons in which the first action was based, another new product line regarding the centenary of the club will be created. In fact, this section is expected to become truly important, as the Villarreal C.F.’s centenary is a key moment for the

company, according to our internal source. This product line will include again 6 different items: a t-shirt, two jumpers, two scarves, and a centenary flag (see *Figure 20*).

**Figure 20. Centenary product line.**



Source: own elaboration.

**Action 3. Enlargement of existing product lines.**

<p><b>Objectives to which it contributes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Implementation period:</b> long term.</p>
<p><b>Budget:</b> free.</p>

So as to complete the expansion of Villarreal C.F.’s product portfolio, it will be needed to enlarge two of its currently existing product lines. In this case, the chosen sections will be “Home” and “Jewellery”, due to the fact that these are the least deep sublines of the portfolio. These two sections (with only 1 and 2 items, respectively), will reach a depth of 5 products (see *Figure 21*). Additionally, the “Scarves” section —shaped by only 2 items— will end up containing 4 products, thanks to the centenary scarves.

Figure 21. New Home and Jewellery products.



Source: own elaboration.

We shall now establish the prices of the new products mentioned in the previous three actions. To do so, we will base the pricing on costs, establishing a reasonable profit margin while following the low-price strategy of the club. This way, these new products will become more attractive for the customers, increasing the sales and profits of the company. The specific prices proposed are the following ones (see *Table 40*):

**Table 40. Proposed prices for new products.**

Product	Price
<b>Electronic and games</b>	
First eSports t-shirt	25,90€
Second eSports t-shirt	25,90€
CVF headphones	49,90€
CVF power bank	14,90€
CVF computer mouse	15,90€
CVF mouse pad	5,90€
<b>Centenary</b>	
Centenary t-shirt	16,00€

Yellow centenary jumper	44,90€
Blue centenary jumper	44,90€
First centenary scarf	12,00€
Second centenary scarf	12,00€
Centenary flag	10,00€
<b>Home</b>	
CVF pencil case	8,90€
CVF notebook	5,90€
CVF mug	10,00€
CVF doormat	22,90€
<b>Jewellery</b>	
Black bracelet	29,90€
Silver bracelet	59,90€
CVF watch	79,90€

Source: own elaboration.

#### **Action 4. Improvement of shipping conditions.**

##### **Objectives to which it contributes:**

2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.
5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.
6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.

**Implementation period:** long term.

**Budget:** 2€ per shipment.

As explained in the previous analysis, Villarreal C.F. offers very attractive shipping conditions to its customers, at least if compared to its main competitors. As of today, the club delivers its products to almost every country, taking less than 3 days inside the Spanish territory and less than a week in the rest of countries.

However, the club could make the difference regarding shipping costs. Nowadays, the club establishes these costs in virtue of the destination of the products. These costs usually reach between 8€ and 30€, which is an average amount if compared to its competitors. Nevertheless, we find many differences between each club, with some competitors offering free delivery if a specific price is reached (e.g., F.C. Barcelona).

Taking into account that Villarreal C.F. offers lower prices than its competitors (except from C.D. Castellón), it would be more recommendable to modify the current shipping costs, instead of creating this kind of free-delivery system, which would reduce the profit

margins notably. Thus, I propose to reduce the delivery costs of every shipment in 2€, amount that will be assumed by the club.

This will lead to a final price reduction, fostering customers satisfaction and a larger number of purchases. In the medium-long term, this will enhance the relations between the club and the external shipment companies, which will offer better conditions to Villarreal C.F. if the volume of orders placed grows. Finally, better conditions will mean a recovery of the lost profit margin, which will increase sales and profits.

### **8.3. Loyalty program**

#### **Action 5. Creation of a Complaints & Suggestions channel.**

**Objectives to which it contributes:**

2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.

**Implementation period:** 10 months.

**Budget:** 50€ x 10 months = 500€.

Villarreal C.F.'s website and app offer lots of possibilities to the users, including information of the club, news and the shop, in which they can purchase tickets and merchandising. However, these platforms could be enhanced so as to increase the interactivity with the customers, especially regarding complaints and suggestions.

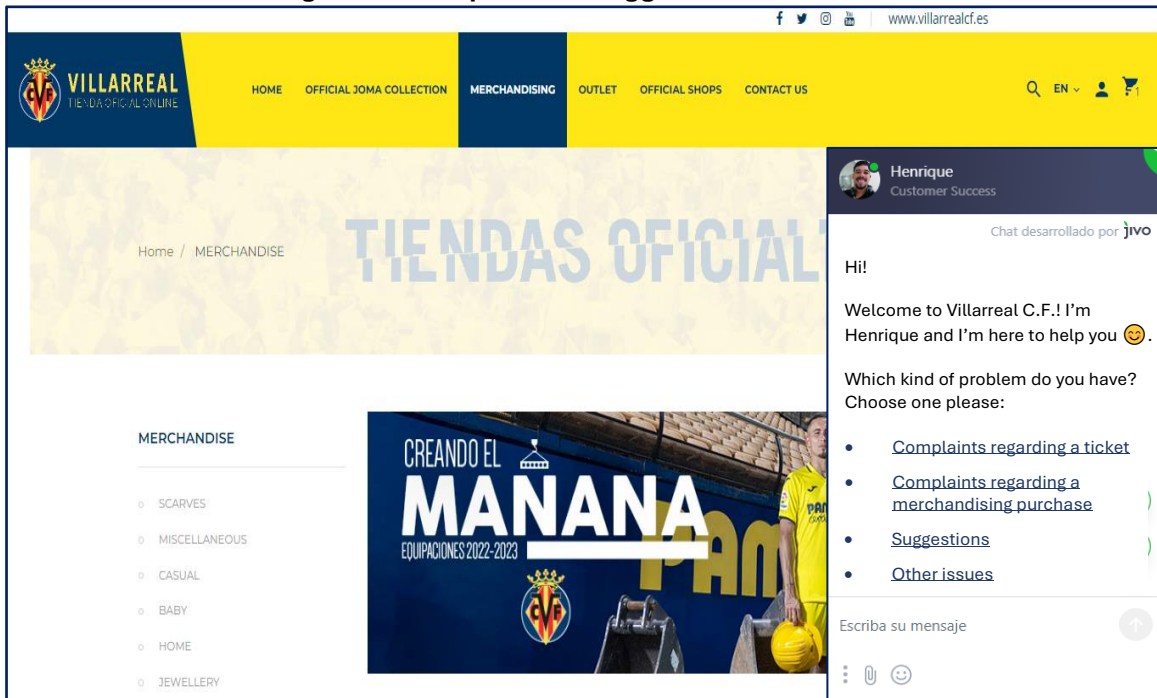
As of today, the club offers a telephone number and an e-mail address for this purpose. Nevertheless, there are cases in which people are not able (or simply do not want) to make a call, while e-mail can be a truly slow tool for some purposes. Thus, it would be recommendable to establish a different technology for those cases in which customers need urgent help from the company or want to make a suggestion.

More specifically, I propose the creation of the "Complaints & Suggestions channel". This will be a digital tool available in both the website and the app and will be based on immediate response. In practice, this channel will be shaped as a text chat, through which the customer will talk to an artificial intelligence in first place, so as to give him/her an immediate response and discover which kind of problem we face. The specific program acquired will be JivoChat, which has a starting price of 13\$ per month, but will probably be higher taking into account the size and needs of our company (we will fix an approximate of 50€ per month). This channel will be open from March 2023, so as to have two months to design, implement and test the program.



The artificial intelligence will filter the issue to one of the four preestablished channel areas: “Complaints regarding a ticket”, “Complaints regarding a merchandising purchase”, “Suggestions” and “Other issues”. When this filter is completed and there is a Villarreal C.F. worker available, this employee will start talking to the customer through the same channel, substituting the artificial intelligence (see *Figure 22*).

**Figure 22. Complaints & Suggestions channel.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

**Action 6. Creation of the monthly contest “El Groquet del Mes”.**

<p><b>Objectives to which it contributes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</li> <li>3. Increase visits of the club’s website by 25% in a year.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.</li> <li>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</li> <li>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Implementation period:</b> one year.</p>
<p><b>Budget:</b> 50€ x 12 months = 600€.</p>

In this case, I propose the creation of a monthly contest. More specifically, a contest called “El Groquet del Mes” (yellow fan of the month), which will reward one person per month during 2023. To participate, it will be necessary to post a photo or video on



Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook or TikTok, citing the Villarreal C.F. official account and the hashtag #ElGroguetDelMes (see *Figure 23*).

**Figure 23. Possible logo for “El Groguet del Mes”.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Each month, the Marketing Department of the club will choose its 4 favourite posts, looking for the ones that show the most interesting, fun or emotional videos or photos. Then, they will create a public survey on social networks presenting those 4 posts, so the users can vote for their favourite post of the month. The protagonist of the post that receives more votes will be awarded as El Groguet del Mes, receiving a gift card with a value of 50€ to spend on any Villarreal C.F. official shop (online included).

As an example, users could post goal celebrations, songs, drawings or trip vlogs in which they followed the club to an away match. This way, Villarreal C.F. fans and followers will discover new ways in which they can feel part of the club, also enhancing the interaction and visibility of the team on its social networks.

#### **8.4. New customers attraction program**

##### **Action 7. Performance of monthly raffles.**

###### **Objectives to which it contributes:**

1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.
2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.
3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.
4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.

5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.

6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.

**Implementation period:** one year.

**Budget:** average of 20€ x 3 prizes x 12 months = 720€.

In this case, it would be recommendable to create monthly raffles to foster purchases and interaction with current and potential customers. More specifically, I propose to give 3 prizes per month, each one consistent on a Villarreal C.F. official jersey signed by all the players of the team. Giving away t-shirts will not be a problem for the club, considering that there is enough stock. Thus, we must focus on the shipping costs, with an approximate value of between 10€ and 30€ —depending on the destination—.

So as to participate, there will only be one condition. It will be necessary to have carried out a purchase in a Villarreal C.F. official shop (physical or online) for a value of, at least, 30€. When done, customers will receive a unique physical or digital code that constitutes the participation on the raffle. The last day of each month, the two prized codes will be published, and the winners will receive the signed jersey completely free.

The raffles will be announced at the start of each month on the club's website, app and social networks, fostering the interaction with the users, sales and profits. Finally, an advertising poster about the raffle could be placed in each of both official physical shops.

#### **Action 8. Creation of two discounts periods.**

**Objectives to which it contributes:**

1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.

2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.

5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.

6. Achieve a positive net profit next years.

**Implementation period:** five months.

**Budget:** free.

In this case, I propose to establish two periods of discounts on merchandising prices during 2023, so as to attract new customers and increase the number of purchases. Finally, this will also increase sales and profits.

More specifically, I would set the first promotional period in summer, from June to August (3 months). During this period, there would be a discount of 10% in all three Villarreal

C.F. official jerseys, the most purchased products, as we observed in the market research. This promotion would focus only on these items due to the fact that LaLiga ends on June, and the club will announce the new official jerseys for the 23/24 season on July or August. In consequence, customers will not be so interested in purchasing the current official jerseys, as they wait for the new ones: it will be necessary to attract them through a price reduction. Additionally, this way the club will be able to sell its surpluses.

On the other hand, the second discounts period would start on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November, ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. This way, it would cover both “Black Friday” and Christmas, when customers tend to carry out more purchases than in the rest of the year. Moreover, the club could rename the first event as “Yellow Friday”. In this case, I propose to set a 10% discount again, but now affecting all the Official Joma collection and other selected products from different sublines (those that are more common as gifts).

When the volume of orders starts to grow, it will mean more benefits for the suppliers (especially Joma), enhancing the relations with the brand and improving the conditions for the club at medium-long term. This will help to recover from the effects of the temporary reduction of the profit margins.

## **8.5. Influencers’ marketing program**

### **Action 9. Advertisements through influencers.**

#### **Objectives to which it contributes:**

1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.
3. Increase visits of the club’s website by 25% in a year.
4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.
5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.
6. Achieve a positive net profit next years.

**Implementation period:** four months.

**Budget:** average of 2.000€ x 4 actions: 8.000€.

Taking into account the popularity of influencers nowadays, it would be interesting to collaborate to some of them during 2023 so as to enhance the brand image of the club and attract new customers. Especially, if we think about sports influencers.

During the next year, I propose to start collaborating with two popular Spanish sports influencers: “Cachoo01” and “Delantero09”, both related to football. More specifically, I

propose to carry out two actions with each influencer. In total: one in February, other in May, the third in August and the last one in November.

The club will give them a Villarreal C.F. merchandising kit completely free, so they can wear an official jersey and sport pants while they take a video. Additionally, we could send Cachoo01 a pack of eSports products from the new subline, considering that he usually plays videogames. Then, they will post the video on their Instagram account (e.g., a football challenge or a review), citing the official account of the club and thanking us.

As of today, those two influencers hold between 300.000 and 400.000 followers on Instagram. Despite the fact that it is not possible to determine now exactly the cost of each action, we can use the number of followers to approximate the value. In practice, each action would probably cost between 1.000€ and 3.000€.

## **8.6. Outbound marketing program**

### **Action 10. Launch of online advertising campaigns.**

#### **Objectives to which it contributes:**

1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.
3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.
5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.
6. Achieve a positive net profit next years.

**Implementation period:** three weeks.

**Budget:** 19€ per thousand views of the banner on Marca.com.

In this case, I propose to establish an advertising banner in a famous Spanish sports website, so as to attract new customers and increase the visits to Villarreal C.F.'s website. This is basically a way of implementing digital marketing actions, specifically an outbound marketing technique. The chosen website will be Marca.com (the main Spanish sports newspaper).

Each banner will remain for three weeks on the website: one in June, the second in November and the last one in December (see *Figure 24*). This way, it will cover the two main discounts periods fixed in *Action 8*. This banner will redirect the user that clicks on it to the Villarreal C.F.'s website, specifically to the online shop of the club. Regarding its cost, Marca has fixed a starting variable price of 19€ per thousand views (Cost per mille or CPM).

**Figure 24. Possible advertising banner for November on Marca.com.**



Source: own elaboration.

**Action 11. SEM campaigns through Google Ads.**

**Objectives to which it contributes:**

1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.
3. Increase visits of the club’s website by 25% in a year.
5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.
6. Achieve a positive net profit next years.

**Implementation period:** 4 months.

**Budget:** maximum of 116€ per month = 464€.

This action will be also related to outbound marketing, creating SEM campaigns through Google Ads. This way, we will improve the online positioning of Villarreal C.F.’s website, attracting new customers and increasing the number of visits.

To do so, we will use the Google Ads SEM system. Then, we will establish some key words, such as “Football kits”, “Football merchandising”, “Villarreal”, “Villarreal kits”, “Villarreal merchandising”, “Football offers” and “LaLiga kits”. In practice, I recommend extending this campaign to Castellón and the most populous Spanish cities: Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Seville (see Figure 25).

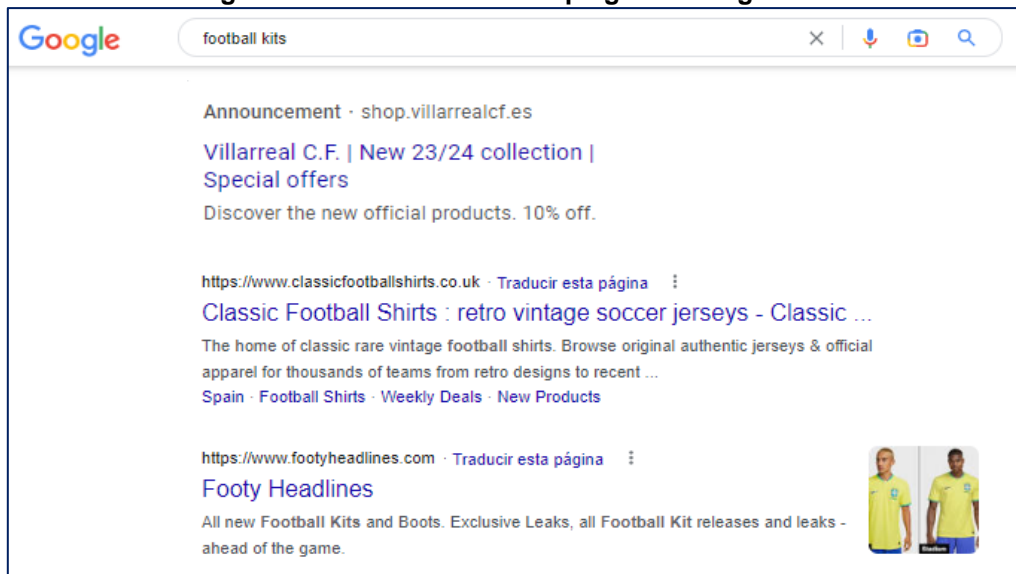
**Figure 25. Proposed scope for the SEM campaign on Google Ads.**



Source: Google Ads.

This campaigns will be established for four months: January, April, July and October. This way, they will not concur with the other similar promotion actions explained before (especially *Action 9* and *10*), extending the general 2023 marketing actions to almost every month. The approximate price established by Google Ads for a campaign like this is 3,80€ per day, with a maximum of 116€ per month. Finally, this plan is expected to obtain between 470 and 1.210 clicks per month (see *Figure 26*).

**Figure 26. Possible SEM campaign on Google Ads.**



Source: own elaboration.

## **8.7. Virtual communities' program**

### **Action 12. Investment on new community managers.**

<b>Objectives to which it contributes:</b>
4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.
5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.
6. Achieve a positive net profit next year.
<b>Implementation period:</b> one year.
<b>Budget:</b> 2.000€ x 12 months = 24.000€.

This last action is completely referred to digital marketing, focusing on the social networks of the club. In this case, I propose to invest on two new professional community managers (CMs), who would support the currently existing ones, so as to enhance the public role and relevance of the official Villarreal C.F. accounts.

More specifically, one would focus on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter (considering that YouTube does not allow high levels of interaction) and the other one on Instagram and TikTok (which are more graphic social networks). This way, it will be possible to enhance the digital content of the club and also increase its frequency. When this happens, the official accounts will receive more views, visits and interaction, leading to new followers that could become new customers in the future.

To do so, the club should look for experienced CMs, who know how to create content so as to engage the social networks users. This could include historic moments' compilations, funny posts related to the club and others, such as the previously mentioned competitions and raffles.

Regarding its terms, I propose to hire the new CMs for one year, so as to study their impact at the end of 2023 and decide whether they stay or not. Additionally, the approximate cost of this action, taking into account that each CM would be in charge of more than one social network, would be between 450€ and 1.800€. Thus, we will fix a cost of, for example, 1.000€ per CM each month.

## 9. TIMELINE

Once having presented all the different action programs regarding Villarreal C.F. for 2023, it is time now to establish the schedule in which those plans will be carried out (see Table 41).

Table 41. Timeline of action programs.

ACTIONS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Action 1. Creation of a new product line: Electronic and games.												
Action 2. Creation of a new product line: Centenary.												
Action 3. Enlargement of existing following product lines.												
Action 4. Improvement of shipping conditions.												
Action 5. Creation of a Complaints & Suggestions channel.												
Action 6. Creation of the monthly contest "El Groguet del Mes".												
Action 7. Performance of monthly raffles.												
Action 8. Creation of two discounts periods.												
Action 9. Advertisements through influencers.												
Action 10. Launch of online advertising campaigns.												
Action 11. SEM campaigns through Google Ads.												
Action 12. Investment on new community managers.												

Source: own elaboration.



## 10. BUDGET

Now, we will present the complete budget for the previously mentioned actions (see Table 42).

**Table 42. Budget for action programs.**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
<b>Action 1. Creation of a new product line: Electronic and games.</b>	Own development.	Free.
<b>Action 2. Creation of a new product line: Centenary.</b>	Own development.	Free.
<b>Action 3. Enlargement of existing following product lines.</b>	Own development.	Free.
<b>Action 4. Improvement of shipping conditions.</b>	Own development.	2€ per shipment.
<b>Action 5. Creation of a Complaints &amp; Suggestions channel.</b>	Acquiring JivoChat for 10 months.	50€ per month = 500€.
<b>Action 6. Creation of the monthly contest “El Groguet del Mes”.</b>	Own development.	50€ per month = 600€ yearly.
<b>Action 7. Performance of monthly raffles.</b>	Own development.	60€ per month = 720€ yearly.
<b>Action 8. Creation of two discounts periods.</b>	Own development.	Free.
<b>Action 9. Advertisements through influencers.</b>	Developed by influencers.	4 actions of 2.000€ = 8.000€.
<b>Action 10. Launch of online advertising campaigns.</b>	Advertising on a webpage.	CPM: 19€.
<b>Action 11. SEM campaigns through Google Ads.</b>	Positioning through Google Ads for 4 months.	116€ per month = 464€.
<b>Action 12. Investment on new community managers.</b>	Developed by professional CMs.	2.000€ per month = 24.000€ yearly.

*Source: own elaboration.*

- ✓ Total fixed budget: 500€ + 600€ + 720€ + 8.000€ + 464€ + 24.000€ = **34.248€.**
- ✓ Total variable budget: 2€ per shipment + 19€ per mille views of the banner.

## **11. CONTROL**

Finally, we will present the control mechanisms created to monitor the achievement of the marketing objectives (see *Table 43*).

**Table 43. Control of marketing objectives.**

<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MEASURING FREQUENCY</b>	<b>CONTROL METHOD</b>
<b>1. Attract 10% new customers in a year.</b>	Quarterly	Analysis of the number purchases made by new customers in the online shop. Review of the sales result.
<b>2. Getting 95% of customers to be satisfied in a year.</b>	Biannual	A satisfaction questionnaire will be sent to customers every six months.
<b>3. Increase visits of the club's website by 25% in a year.</b>	Quarterly	Digital counter system on the website.
<b>4. Increase the number of followers on every social network by 10% in a year.</b>	Quarterly	Review of the current number of followers and compare with the number of the previous quarter.
<b>5. Increase sales by 12% over the previous year.</b>	Four-monthly	Review the income and compare the result of sales from the previous year.
<b>6. Achieve a positive net profit next year</b>	Biannual	Review the global results.

*Source: own elaboration.*

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## 14. ANNEXES

### Annex 1. Market research questionnaire.

#### Formulario Villarreal C.F.

Este cuestionario, de manera anónima, pretende conocer tus hábitos de consumo y actitudes con respecto a diversos clubes deportivos, especialmente aquellos que compiten en la modalidad de fútbol profesional en España. Te pedimos que contestes con la mayor sinceridad a las preguntas planteadas. Te garantizamos que las respuestas serán tratadas estadísticamente de manera global y nunca de manera personalizada.

\* **Obligatori**

##### **Sección 1: Preguntas de clasificación**

1. Dirección de correo electrónico \*

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Rango de edad \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Menos de 20 años
- Entre 21 y 30 años
- Entre 31 y 40 años
- Entre 41 y 50 años
- Entre 51 y 60 años
- Más de 60 años

3. Pregunta de clasificación: Género \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Hombre
- Mujer

4. Pregunta de clasificación: ingresos mensuales de la familia \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Menos de 1000€
- Entre 1000€ y 2000€
- Entre 2000€ y 3000€
- Entre 3000€ y 4000€
- Entre 4000€ y 5000€
- Más de 5000€

5. Nivel de estudios \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Sin estudios
- Primarios (educación básica)
- Secundarios (ESO, Bachillerato, FP)
- Superiores (Grados universitarios, Masters, Doctorados)

6. Pregunta de clasificación: Lugar de residencia \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Castellón de la Plana
- Área metropolitana de Castellón (Almazora, Villarreal, Benicàssim, Burriana)
- Resto de la provincia de Castellón
- Valencia ciudad
- Resto de la provincia de Valencia
- Resto de España
- Otros

**Sección 2: Preguntas acerca del fútbol profesional**

7. ¿Cuál es tu posición con respecto al fútbol profesional? \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Muy aficionado
- Interesado
- Consumidor ocasional
- Indiferente
- No interesado

8. ¿Tienes contratado fútbol de pago? \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Sí
- No
- NS/NC

9. ¿Prefieres ver los partidos por televisión o asistiendo en persona? \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Por televisión
- En persona
- NS/NC

10. ¿Cuánto dinero gastas anualmente en consumir fútbol (incluyendo televisión de pago, abonos y entradas)? \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Menos de 50€
- Entre 50€ y 200€
- Entre 200€ y 350€
- Entre 350€ y 500€
- Más de 500€
- NS/NC

11. ¿Qué equipos despiertan mayor interés en ti? \*

Seleccioneu totes les opcions que corresponguin.

- Real Madrid C.F.
- Barcelona F.C.
- Valencia C.F.
- Sevilla C.F.
- Villarreal C.F.
- Atlético de Madrid
- Real Betis Balompié
- Ninguno de ellos
- Altres:

12. Valora en que grado consideras que los siguientes clubs se asocian con los atributos: si asocias el equipo al atributo márcalo; si no lo asocias déjalo en blanco

Seleccioneu totes les opcions que corresponguin.

	Historia	Imagen de marca	Modelo social	Sostenibilidad	Elevados precios
Real Madrid C.F.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barcelona F.C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Valencia C.F.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sevilla C.F.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Villarreal C.F.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atlético de Madrid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Real Betis Balompié	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. ¿Cómo calificarías, en general, los precios del merchandising (productos oficiales) de los equipos de fútbol? \*

Marque un óvalo.

Muy bajos

\_\_\_\_\_

1

2

3

4

5

\_\_\_\_\_

Excesivamente altos

\_\_\_\_\_

14. Cuando te planteas una compra de merchandising ¿dónde buscas información? Valora en una escala de 1 a 5 la importancia que cada fuente tiene para ti. \*

Marque un óvalo por fila.

	Nada importante	Poco importante	Importante	Muy importante	Decisivo
Revistas especializadas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Páginas webs de los equipos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comparadores web	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Familiares	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Amigos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Redes sociales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Influencers, Youtubers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mi experiencia previa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. ¿Cuáles son los atributos más importantes que valoras en la compra de merchandising? Valora cada opción de 1 a 5 en función de su importancia para ti. \*

Marqueu només un oval per fila.

	Nada importante	Poco importante	Importante	Muy importante	Decisivo
Precio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Calidad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diseño	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marca	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impacto medioambiental	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Durabilidad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. ¿Cuánto dinero gastas anualmente en merchandising de fútbol? \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Menos de 25€
- Entre 25€ y 50€
- Entre 50€ y 100€
- Entre 100€ y 200€
- Más de 200€

### **Sección 3: Preguntas acerca del Villarreal C.F.**

17. ¿Cuál es tu posición con respecto al Villarreal C.F.? \*

Marqueu només un oval.

- Muy desfavorable
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 1
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 2
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 3
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 4
- \_\_\_\_\_
- 5
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Muy favorable
- \_\_\_\_\_

18. ¿Con qué frecuencia consumes partidos del Villarreal C.F.? \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Siempre que puedo
- Solo cuando hay partidos importantes
- Ocasionalmente
- Raramente
- Nunca

19. En su caso, ¿Cómo sueles consumir los partidos del Villarreal C.F.?

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Con familiares
- Con amigos
- De forma individual

20. ¿Eres socio del Villarreal C.F.? \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Sí
- No

21. ¿Eres simpatizante/seguidor del Villarreal C.F.? \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Sí
- No

22. Indica, si es el caso, a través de cuáles de los siguientes canales sigues al Villarreal C.F. \*

*Seleccionen totes les opcions que corresponguin.*

- Televisión
- Radio
- Prensa escrita
- Prensa online
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Facebook
- YouTube
- No sigo al equipo
- Altres:

23. ¿Con qué frecuencia asistes al estadio del Villarreal C.F.? \*

- Siempre que puedo
- Solo cuando hay partidos importantes
- Ocasionalmente
- Raramente
- Nunca

▲ 24. En caso de asistir al estadio del Villarreal C.F., ¿Cómo lo haces?

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Con mi carné de socio
- Adquiriendo una entrada en las taquillas/online
- Otros

25. Una vez en el estadio, ¿Sueles consumir algún producto o servicio?

*Seleccioneu totes les opcions que corresponguin.*

- Comida y/o bebida
- Merchandising
- Otros
- No

26. ¿Has adquirido alguna vez merchandising del Villarreal C.F.? \*

*Marqueu només un oval.*

- Sí
- No

27. En caso afirmativo, ¿Qué productos has adquirido?

*Seleccioneu totes les opcions que corresponguin.*

- Camisetas
- Otras piezas de ropa (chaquetas, pantalones, bufandas)
- Elementos de animación
- Decoraciones y adornos

28. En su caso, ¿Dónde sueles adquirir merchandising?

*Seleccioneu totes les opcions que corresponguin.*

- En las tiendas físicas oficiales del club
- En otras tiendas físicas especializadas
- En grandes almacenes y centros comerciales
- A través de la web oficial del equipo
- A través de otras webs

29. ¿Cómo calificarías, en general, los precios del merchandising del Villarreal C.F.?

*Marque un ovalo.*

Muy bajos

\_\_\_\_\_

1

\_\_\_\_\_

2

\_\_\_\_\_

3

\_\_\_\_\_

4

\_\_\_\_\_

5

\_\_\_\_\_

Excesivamente altos

30. En su caso, ¿Cómo de satisfecho te sientes con respecto al merchandising del Villarreal C.F.?

*Marque un ovalo.*

No satisfecho

\_\_\_\_\_

1

\_\_\_\_\_

2

\_\_\_\_\_

3

\_\_\_\_\_

4

\_\_\_\_\_

5

\_\_\_\_\_

Muy satisfecho