

CHAPTER

19 Media Ownership and Concentration in Argentina

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Abstract

This chapter describes media ownership and concentration in Argentina. Following an overview of the Argentine media landscape, the remainder of the chapter looks at print media (newspapers, book publishing, magazine publishing), audiovisual media (radio, broadcast television, multichannel TV platforms, film), telecommunications media (wireline and wireless telecom), and Internet media (Internet Service Providers, search engines, online news market). The high levels of concentration in Argentine media are mainly the result of deregulation in the 1990s, when restrictions on media cross-ownership were removed. As a result, small media producers have largely disappeared, and independent media producers in the provinces have been acquired by the media majors based on Buenos Aires. One area where concentration has not increased, though, has been in content production for the audiovisual market, particularly in cable television programming. The major media company, Grupo Clarin, has been targeted by the Kirchner government due to its political opposition. The telecom market is mostly controlled by foreign firms, and highly concentrated.

Keywords: [Argentine media market](#), [media industry](#), [online news](#), [print media](#), [Buenos Aires](#), [telecommunications](#), [Internet](#), [Kirchner](#), [Clarín](#), [Telefonica](#), [Carlos Slim](#) [Argentine media market](#), [media industry](#), [online news](#), [print media](#), [Buenos Aires](#), [telecommunications](#), [Internet](#), [Kirchner](#), [Clarín](#), [Telefonica](#), [Carlos Slim](#)

Subject: [Economic Sociology](#), [Social Research and Statistics](#)

Introduction

Argentina is one of the most developed Spanish-language media markets in South America due to its high literacy rates and well-developed communications infrastructure. State intervention has characterized the market during the financial difficulties of the early 2000s. New subsidy policies were implemented in 2002 and 2003, and since 2004 the government has passed legislation that exempts media firms from a national bankruptcy law that would allow foreign creditors to purchase their assets, extended their licensing arrangements, and granted tax exemptions. According to figures from the Cultural Information System of Argentina (SINCA), media production represented 3.5% of the GDP in 2009, up from 2.4% in 2004.¹

Argentine newspapers are confronted with declining subscriptions and advertising revenues, while digitization has opened up many new possibilities for audiovisual producers.² Traditional print media companies are looking for ways to retain traditional customers by applying new business models: the daily *La Nación*, for example, has an agreement with other companies to give its subscribers special discounts for a variety of retail and food purchases, as well as club memberships.

The government has promoted the expansion of digital TV platforms in the country, in part because it is increasing its own programming in this medium. The state has subsidized the construction of antenna sites, offered free decoders to low-income households, and appropriated funding for content production on

new government-sponsored channels.³ The analog-to-digital conversion process was undertaken for cable TV in 2007. By 2009, terrestrial broadcasters had adopted the Japanese ISDB-T (SBTVD) standard that was introduced to Latin America by Brazil. Of Argentine households, 98% have access to a television set, and this sector is the main recipient of advertising investments.

Digitization has also spurred the entry telecommunications and online actors in the audiovisual sector. Since the 1990s, telecom companies and Internet service providers (ISPs) have wanted to offer video content directly to customers. However, regulations have not kept pace with these developments, so those regulations in place have actually contributed to the creation of vertically integrated multimedia groups in the supply chain, resulting in greater concentration.

Two milestones for concentration in Argentina took place between 1989 and 2012 and are the focus of this chapter. The first was the privatization of the audiovisual and telecom sectors in the 1990s through deregulation and the legalization of foreign direct investment in media production. This process culminated in the consolidation of two leading commercial media groups: the Buenos Aires-based Grupo Clarín, and Telefónica Argentina, a subsidiary of Telefónica (Spain). With the privatization of the state telecom operator, the mobile telecom and ISP markets have become increasingly concentrated.

The second milestone was a series of laws enacted under the Néstor Kirchner Administration (2003–2007) that greatly favored established media groups. During that administration's time in office, the government aimed at preserving the status quo of national media groups that faced heavy debts from an economic

crisis that saw a huge devaluation of the country's currency.⁴ The most significant regulation passed between 2003 and 2007 was the Law 25.750 for the Preservation of Cultural Goods and Property (2003), which placed a 30% cap on foreign direct investment in Argentine media companies. Complementary measures included Decree No. 527/2005—which suspended existing TV licensing agreements for a decade—and the state's 2007 authorization of Grupo Clarín's acquisition of Cablevisión and Multicanal, the country's two main cable TV operators.⁵

Increased state focus on the sector since 2001 through ownership reforms has had a mixed impact on concentration, with the earlier policies tending to help increase concentration and newer policies working to undo this legacy. In fact, due to Grupo Clarín's dominance over the market—and, its supporters contend, the critical editorial line many of its properties have taken against the Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner administrations—significant tensions have emerged between this media giant and the government since 2008. At the start of her administration, a proposal to raise the agricultural export tax led to nationwide strikes and demonstrations. This conflict eventually boiled over into an open dispute between the government and Grupo Clarín. As a result, the ruling Judicialist Party moved to amend Broadcasting Law No. 22.285, which dated back to the military dictatorship era (1976–1983), in order to break up Grupo Clarín's hold over the cable TV market.⁶ Grupo Clarín strongly opposed this policy, contending that the government was motivated only by a desire to shut down criticism of its policies. A new regulatory framework was introduced for audiovisual services in October 2009, the Audiovisual Communication Services Law (Ley de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual No. 26.522), including among its key objectives the deconcentration of the industry and the launching of new state-run media initiatives.

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There are few quantitative studies on the concentration processes in Argentine media, and media producers do not often disclose their annual reports. This situation has partially improved because public companies must now publish annual financial statements, and the state has pressed for financial disclosures by all media producers.

Margarita Graziano conducted a sociological analysis of terrestrial broadcasters in 1974 based on the composition of their boards of directors. She found that the owners were deeply involved in the economic system as a whole, most noticeably in agribusiness and commercial advertising. Military officers and clergymen were also represented among the boards of directors for media providers, reflecting the role of the military and the Catholic Church as part of the ruling elite. Graziano also demonstrated how audiovisual content production was concentrated in Buenos Aires while in the rest of the country most private channels purchased TV programs from the capital: for political reasons, in Argentina there are no audiovisual providers with full national coverage (except for those operated by the state, which do not have large audience shares).⁷ Also in 1974, Heriberto Muraro published a series of articles in the political magazine *Crisis* that closely analyzed the business models of Argentine media producers.

During the military dictatorship from 1976 to 1983, studies dealing with the social sciences, and with communications in particular, were paralyzed by state censorship and the harassment of writers. It was not until the 1990s that interest in the economic dynamics of the media could resume in academia. A key author was Octavio Getino. Writing in 1995 as liberalization, concentration, and foreign direct investment were becoming the norm, his work did not focus on concentration in particular. In 2003, the Ministry of Culture published a study analyzing the structure of the national media market and discussed in detail how concentration increased during the late 1990s and how many smaller enterprises went bankrupt after 2001 due to the currency crisis.⁸

Print Media

Newspapers

Our 2006 research examining concentration in multiple Latin American markets was the first published study in Argentina that included an analysis of concentration in the telecom sector in the country.⁹ We found that in all of the Latin American countries surveyed, the concentration levels of traditional print and audiovisual media producers were lower than those of the telecom providers, but that Argentine print concentration was comparatively high because two publishers control over 50% of the market. In Argentina, there are approximately 180 daily newspapers, which are defined as those that publish more than four times a week. Of those, only 37 publish seven days a week and few dailies have nationwide coverage. Except for the two leading dailies, *Clarín* and *La Nación*, whose sales outside of the capital's metropolitan area account for approximately 20% of their audience shares, sales for other dailies are concentrated in the cities where they are published.

p. 578 In 2010, *Clarín* had a national market share of nearly 30% and a daily circulation of approximately 315,000 copies. In comparison, *Clarín*'s closest competitor, the family-owned daily *La Nación*, had a circulation slightly less than half of that (155,000). Though it remains the market leader, since 2000 *Clarín*'s market share has declined: in 1996 it reached a national market share of 45.4%, and this had fallen by 2010 to 28.9%. On top of that, overall industry sales fell due to the growth of online news (Table 19.1).

Table 19-1. Daily Newspapers (Market Shares by Circulation), 1984–2010

	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2010
Grupo Clarín ¹	43.9	38.8	46.9	50.3	30.3	34.7	34.9	28.9
<i>Clarín</i>	38.5	38.8	41.3	45.4	30.3	34.7	30.3	14.2
<i>La Voz del Interior</i>	5.4		5.6	4.9			4.7	8.3
La Nación (La Nación, Mitre Family)	14.1	17.3	13.4	13.0	11.1	13.4	12.9	4.9
El Día (<i>Diario Popular</i>)	8.2	7.2	7.5			6.2	7.4	
Crónica					14.9	9.7		
Ámbito Financiero					7.3			
Others	33.8	36.6	32.3	36.7	36.4	36.0	44.8	43.7
Total Daily Circulation (1,000)	1,432	1,403	1,549	1,361	1,507	1,160	1,196	1,090
Total Revenue (mil ARS) ²						1,229	1,422	
Total Revenue (mil US\$)						418	455	
C4	66.2	63.4	67.7	63.3	63.6	64.0	55.2	56.3
HHI	2,195	1,861	2,431	2,702	1,315	1,514	1,441	1,130
N (>1%)	3	3	3	2	4	4	3	4
Noam Index	1,267	1,074	1,404	1,911	657	757	832	565

Source: IVC.

- 1 Our figures do not include all of Grupo Clarín newspapers, such as those put out by Cimeco, only *Clarín* and *La Voz del Interior*.
- 2 This revenue figure is an estimate based on data collected in this study: it is based on average per capita revenues reported for several other countries in this study with similar per capita income.

Grupo Clarín has expanded its print operations through capital reinvestment in its newspapers.¹⁰ In addition to *Clarín*, Grupo Clarín also owns the Cimeco publishing house, which controls several regional newspapers, including the fourth best-selling paper in the country, *La Voz del Interior*.¹¹ Grupo Clarín also controls the majority shareholding of the main free daily, *La Razón*. *Clarín*'s dominant position in this sector is augmented by its effective monopoly over traditional classified advertisements (with a 41.5% share of the national market). Since the late 1970s, it has also held a significant stake in Papel Prensa S.A., the country's main newsprint producer alongside the owners of *La Nación*, further enhancing its dominance in the print sector.

p. 579 In 2008, the entire daily newspaper market in Argentina accounted for 31.6% of total national advertising spending, worth US\$649 million (Argentinian Peso [ARS]2 billion). Of that, newspapers based in the capital's metropolitan area accounted for 85% of the share, while the rest of the country combined accounted for the remaining 15%.

Concentration has been gradually declining in the newspaper market. Since 2004, five new newspapers have been launched in Buenos Aires in competition with the four mainstream papers. Though their financial position is still unstable, they have managed to achieve a combined market share of approximately 20%. The decline in overall C4 is mainly the result of these new dailies competing with *Clarín* at the regional level.

Book Publishing

Until the 1970s, Argentine book publishers were the market leaders in the Latin America. The domestic market was not excessively concentrated, and there were very few foreign-owned publishing houses. But with the military coup in 1976, publication and readership plunged due to state censorship. Book sales began to approach precoup levels after civilian government returned in 1989, but the most noticeable event for the sector during the 1990s was the concentration of ownership in production and distribution. Several publishing houses based in Spain acquired the main Argentine publishing companies. The industry was also affected by the government's decision to set the ARS-US\$ exchange at a 1:1 ratio during the 1990s, such that book production was moved abroad to reduce overhead.

Following the delinking of the ARS and US\$ in 2001, the Argentine publishing industry began to regain its international competitiveness. Though the market is still characterized by concentrated production, distribution, and marketing, publishing and sales for both the domestic and foreign markets have increased considerably, as has the traditional role of native publishers. During the 2000s, most firms operating in the Argentine market fell under the umbrella of two groups: Cámara Argentina del Libro, which accounts for most of the small- and medium-sized domestic publishing houses, and Cámara Argentina de Publicaciones, which comprises the larger, foreign-owned publishers (Table 19.2).

Table 19-2. Book Publishing (Circulation), 1996–2007

	Edited Titles	Average Printed Copies per Title	Total Annual Circulation
1996	8,835	4,787	42,296,878
1997	10,374	5,137	53,289,819
1998	11,535	4,724	54,490,652
1999	12,291	5,851	71,914,910
2000	11,717	6,338	74,264,135
2001	12,378	4,444	55,005,271
2002	9,537	3,534	33,708,268
2003	14,375	2,650	38,096,586
2004	18,828	2,974	55,985,843
2005	19,636	3,430	67,346,651
2006	22,598	3,761	84,998,863
2007	26,320	3,525	92,768,996

Source: SINCA, 2007.

p. 580 The book publishing market is not very transparent when it comes to disclosing sales data. Cámara Argentina del Libro does issue an annual report on its members' output, but this does not include information on sales or comparative market shares. Therefore, we have been unable to calculate concentration indices for this sector.

We were able to calculate market shares by type of publisher, of which Brazil has three, each defined by their total annual turnover. Smaller publishers—those reporting annual revenues less than or equal to US\$1 million (ARS3.1 million)—accounted for 42% of all published annual titles. Medium-sized publishers, defined as those with annual turnovers in the range of US\$1 to 10 million (ARS3.1 to 31.2 million) published 48% of all titles in circulation. Finally, the large publishing companies, those with an annual income greater than US\$10 million (ARS31.2 million) only published 10% of all titles. It is clear, however, that this 10% accounts probably for a significantly higher percentage of income from sales.

Magazine Publishing

Before 1976, the magazine market was highly concentrated: four publishing houses—Julio Korn, Atlántida, the Abril Group (Brazil), and Dante Quintero—dominated the sector. Circulation declined during the period of military rule, however, and the sector only began to regain its former vitality after the early 1990s. By 2000, the old market structure had undergone several significant changes. Two of the main publishers fell away from their former dominant positions: Atlántida did not recover a large market share, and the Abril Group chose to refocus on its Brazilian operations (one of its former holdings became the independent publisher Editorial Publiexpress). Grupo Clarín has since entered the market through its print publishing arm AGEA. Another newspaper publisher—Editorial Perfil, the publisher of the *Perfil* tabloid—has also entered the book publishing market. Grupo Clarín and Editorial Perfil entered the market partly to expand their advertising revenues through the magazines that are sold with the Sunday editions of their papers, in particular Grupo Clarín's *Viva* magazine.

The Mexican media conglomerate Grupo Televisa has also entered the market to sell magazines promoting its audiovisual content (Table 19.3).

Table 19-3. Magazine Publishing (Market Shares by Circulation), 1984–2013

	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2013
Editorial Atlántida (Vigil Family)	24.6	19.4	22.8	16.7	9.3	11.6	14.6	28.7
Editorial Perfil		11.2	15.5	26.5	14.5	11.3	13.6	14.4
<i>Editorial Perfil</i>		9.7	15.5	23.7	13.2	9.9	13.6	
<i>Editorial Primavera S.A.</i>		1.5		2.8	1.3	1.4		
Artegrafico Editorial Argentina (Grupo Clarín)				1.6	6.1	8.8		
Editorial Publiexpress (Grupo Publiexpress)				4.4	5.3	7.3	12.0	13.1
Editorial Televisa Argentina (Azcárraga Family, Grupo Televisa, Mexico)		11.0	10.0	2.4	2.4	2.6	8.2	10.7
Others	75.4	58.4	51.7	48.5	62.5	58.5	51.6	33.1
Total Annual Circulation (1,000)	1,446	1,135	1,367	2,068	2,495	2,065	9,991	8,620
Total Revenue (mil ARS) ¹						1,000	1,438	
Total Revenue (mil US\$)						340	460	
C4	24.6	41.6	48.3	50.0	35.2	39.0	48.4	66.9
HHI	606	593	860	874	334	371	609	1,317
<i>N</i> (>1%)	1	2	2	6	6	6	4	4
Noam Index	606	419	608	357	136	151	305	659

Source: IVC.

- 1 This revenue figure is an estimate based on data collected in this study: it is based on average per capita revenues reported for several other countries in this study with similar per capita income.

The main source of income for the sector is advertising, valued at US\$110 million (ARS344 million) in 2008, representing 5% of total national advertising spending. Due to the C4 index fluctuating between 40% and 50% since 1988, it is not possible to determine concentration trends for the sector.

One phenomenon that is not measured in these data but deserves mention is that of magazines that are distributed by cable TV providers. Subscribers to these magazines pay lower prices than the rest of the

market, and given that cable TV penetration is very high in Argentina (over 70% of households), magazines linked with TV distributors are among those with the highest readership.

Audiovisual Media

Radio Broadcasting

Radio broadcasting is the smallest media sector in the country measured in market shares from advertising revenue, and while there are a large number of independent private broadcasters in total nationally, the market is still strongly concentrated because of regionalism. Argentina has one of the highest rates of radio ownership in Latin America, with 99% of households capable of receiving broadcasts, but only the national public broadcaster, Radio Nacional, covers most of Argentina. In the 1990s, the state planned to promote chain stations in order to increase the range of regional actors, but because the economic downturn began just as the plan went into effect, advertising investment in radio collapsed, scuttling the initiative. The Audiovisual Communication Services Law (26522/09) in 2009 imposed new restrictions on the development of a national commercial network: under the law, only 30% of all broadcast content can be retransmitted nationally, thus limiting the reach of powerful commercial entities, like Grupo Clarín, in radio.

p. 581 The radio broadcaster with the largest audience share is the AM station Radio 10, which belongs to Grupo Infobae, a media enterprise led by the entrepreneur Daniel Hadad that also includes the FM radio stations FM Mega, Pop, Vale, and TKM. In 2012 Grupo Infobae sold Radio 10, Vale, TKM, Mega and Pop, as well as C5 N to Grupo Indalo. In the AM radio market, Radio Mitre belongs to Grupo Clarín, and Telefónica held AM Continental until it sold it to its rival, the PRISA Group (Spain). Even though the law does not allow foreign investors to hold more than a 30% stake in a radio broadcaster, PRISA is allowed to circumvent this legal limitation with the acquiescence of the state. There are also several FM stations with national audience shares, such as Rock&Pop, recently acquired by Grupo Montena, and PRISA's FM 105.5 Hit (Table 19.4).

Table 19-4. Radio Group (Audience Shares by Ratings), 2000–2010¹

	2000	2004	2008	2010
Grupo Infobae				
<i>Radio 10</i>	11.3	34.3	36.2	15.6
<i>FM Mega</i>	7.4			
PRISA Group (Polanco Family, Spain)	8.3	12.3	8.9	5.5
<i>AM Continental</i>		12.3	8.9	
<i>FM 105.5 Hit</i>	8.3			
<i>AM Mitre</i> (Grupo Clarín)	8.2	23.5	16.0	13.5
<i>La Red</i> (Grupo América)		10.4	8.0	
<i>Rock&Pop</i> (Grupo Moneta)			9.8	12.3
<i>Del Plata</i> (Grupo Electroingeniería)			9.6	
Others	65.0	19.5	11.5	53.1
Total Revenue (mil ARS)			703	
Total Revenue (mil US\$)			225	
C4	35.0	80.5	64.5	46.9
HHI	316	1,989	1,897	607
<i>N</i> (>1%)	4	4	6	4
Noam Index	158	995	775	304

Source: IBOPE.

- 1 Audience shares are only comprehensively calculated for the Buenos Aires metropolitan area. Though national chains have been restricted over long periods, broadcasters outside of the capital region do, in fact, often retransmit programming from Buenos Aires, so real audience concentration indicators are much higher than the data in Table 19.4 indicate.

According to the Federal Audiovisual Communication Authority (AFSCA), in 2008 there were 1,940 registered private radio stations in the country, of which only 438 were licensed commercial radio stations. Religious entities, indigenous tribes, frontier schools, and public universities own 9% of these 438 stations, and 67% were commercial radio stations with preliminary permits, which since the 1980s have been granted to “pirate radio” stations to legalize their operations.

Due to low advertising revenues, there is little content production in the sector outside of the networks headquartered in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area. In 2008, advertising revenues barely exceeded US\$60 million (ARS188 million), representing less than 4% of total national advertising expenditures. Advertising income for the most part is concentrated in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area, and to a lesser degree, in the provincial cities of Córdoba and Rosario.

In revenue terms, the sector is highly concentrated: the top four radio stations capture more than 51% of advertising market share, leaving the remaining 49% to be split among hundreds of other broadcasters. For most radio stations outside of Buenos Aires, their business consists of selling airtime to advocacy groups or political activists to promote their own content. Argentine law formally prohibits this practice, so it is impossible to track the amounts involved because statistics are not kept (even though in practice, the government turns a blind eye to this behavior).

Broadcast Television

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The number of terrestrial broadcasting stations is low in Argentina (44), and $N (>1\%)$ has remained steady since the 1970s. From the 1990s on, ownership has become more concentrated because of the Buenos Aires–based channels buying out channels in the rest of the country.¹² As with radio, there are no commercial stations that provide full national coverage, so the majority of provincial stations simply rebroadcast programming content from the leading Buenos Aires–based channels.¹³ The most popular networks are Telefónica’s Telefe (formerly Channel 11) and Grupo Clarín’s El Trece (also known as Channel 13), both of which began as commercial broadcasters in the 1960s, were nationalized under the military dictatorship, and then reprivatized in the 1990s. In the 1990s, the government favored privatization and capital centralization for TV broadcasters. The enactment of the State Reform Law 23.696 in 1989, authorizing the privatization of utilities, amended Broadcasting Law 22.285/80 to legalize the privatization of broadcast television as well.¹⁴

State Reform Law 23.696 (1989) eliminated the legal limit of allowing no more than three TV licenses per legal entity. Cross-ownership was authorized with the elimination of the ban on print media from participating in license bidding. The period from 1995 to 2000 was characterized by foreign direct investment.¹⁵ Telefónica and its then-partner from the United States, Citicorp Equity Investments (CEI), gained control of Cointel (now the holding company for its Telefónica Argentina division), Cablevisión TCI (the first cable TV operator in the country), and Torneos y Competencias (a popular sports channel). This partnership eventually came to an end in favor of Telefónica, thus expanding the role of the media branch of Telefónica International, Admira, which in 1999 acquired the TV broadcaster Telefe and increased its share in Canal 9 (then Azul Televisión), along with three other provincial channels, thereby becoming a major TV provider. Grupo Clarín also saw increased foreign investment in its operations: the US investment bank Goldman & Sachs bought a share of 18% of Grupo Clarín in 1999.¹⁶ Because of the US financial crisis in 2008, though, Goldman Sachs reduced its equity stake here to 9.1% and in 2012 sold it off entirely to the CEO of Fontinalis Partners (US), Ralph Booth.

In the 2001 economic crisis, the broadcasting sector was greatly impacted by the devaluation of the ARS, as the companies held their debts in US\$ and required state bailouts to avoid bankruptcy. The administrations of Fernando De La Rúa (2000–2001), Eduardo Duhalde (2002–2003), and Néstor Kirchner (2003–2007) bolstered the economic recovery of the media system while expanding the scope of government involvement in the sector.¹⁷ To prevent Grupo Clarín from being acquired by international investors, Néstor Kirchner saw to it that the Cultural Goods Act (Law 25.750) was passed in 2003 to cap foreign ownership in Argentine media groups at 30% (Table 19.5).¹⁸

Table 19-5. TV Broadcasting (Market Shares by Revenue), 2000–2010

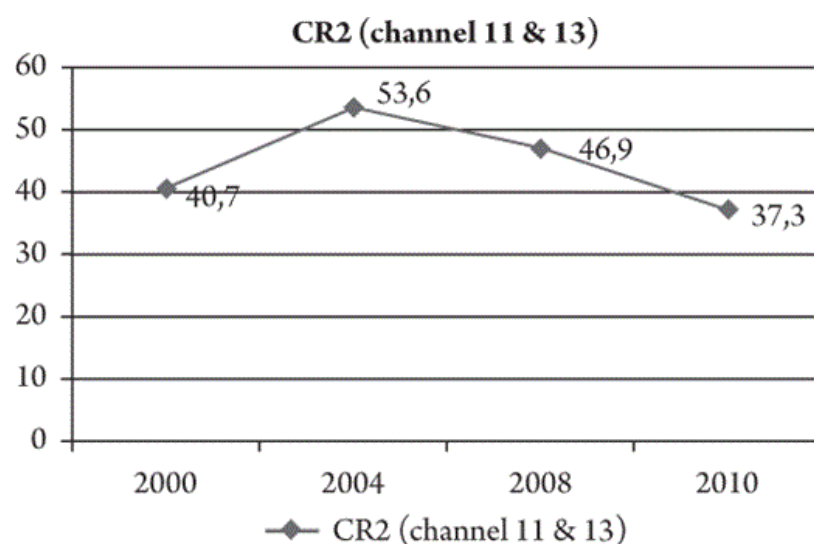
	2000	2004	2008	2010
<i>Telefe</i> (Telefónica, Spain)	24.8	28.2	21.5	13.8
<i>Canal 9</i> (Ángel González, Mexico)	5.9	15.4	19.4	
<i>América TV/Channel 2</i> (Grupo Ávila)		13.1	18.3	
<i>El Trece</i> (Grupo Clarín)	15.8	25.5	24.5	23.5
Others	53.4	17.9	15.4	62.7
Total Revenue (mil ARS)	1,067	1,150	2,669	4,708
Total Revenue (mil US\$)	1,067	391	854	1,224
C4	46.6	82.1	84.6	37.3 (C2) ¹
HHI	903	1,848	1,817	743
<i>N</i> (>1%)	3	4	4	2
Noam Index	521	924	909	525

Source: Getino (1995), IBOPE.

- 1 Figure 19.1 in this text shows the evolution of C2, i.e., the market shares of *Telefe* and *El Trece*. It was not possible to measure C4 in 2010 due to the unavailability of *Canal 9* and *América TV (Channel 2)* data. The C4 levels of the four main channels, which increased from 46% in 2000 to 82% in 2004 to 89% in 2008, are remarkably high.

There are two other broadcasters with significant market shares after the two leading networks: *Canal 9*, which is one of the 30 Latin American channels owned by the Mexican media tycoon Ángel González's Albavision network, and *América TV (Channel 2)*, which is owned by Grupo Ávila in partnership with the politician Francisco De Narváez (despite the existence of laws that prohibit legislators from having shareholdings in audiovisual media entities).

In 2000, the four main Buenos Aires–based commercial channels of *Telefe*, *El Trece*, *Canal 9*, and *América TV* were the undisputed market leaders, with 96% of the aggregate national audience shares and 46.6% of the aggregate national market shares for advertising revenue.¹⁹ *Telefe* and *El Trece* together broadcast 79% of all nationally syndicated programming.²⁰ In 2004, supported by the overall economic recovery, revenues for broadcast TV advertising rose to pre-2001 levels, which enabled broadcasters to increase content production (Figure 19.1).²¹

Figure 19.1

C2 (*Telefe* and *El Trece*), 2000–2010

Telefe and *El Trece* together accounted for 40.7% of national advertising income in 2000, with market shares of 24.8% and 15.8%, respectively. By 2008, *El Trece* had pulled ahead of *Telefe*, with a total market share of 25.4% compared to *Telefe*'s 21.5%. Since then, *Telefe*'s market share has dropped substantially, to 13.8% in 2010, against a smaller decline for *El Trece*, which fell from 25.4% to 23.5% in 2010. The explanation for this overall decline can be attributed to the fact that advertising space for prime-time programming has decreased.²² Advertising costs have also increased due to increased concentration.²³

p. 585 It is still too early to analyze the impact on of the 2009 Audiovisual Communication Services Law (26.522) in terrestrial broadcasting is limited. The new regulatory framework ensures nonprofit players such as community media, service cooperatives, and NGOs a combined 33% national audience share, has set quotas for 4 national (70%) and local (30%) programming content, and restricts commercial airtime to 12 minutes per broadcast hour. However, after almost five years of its enactment the nonprofit players are still awaiting the call for bids to hold an audiovisual communication service license. The implementation of the new regulatory framework is complex. Almost immediately approved, Clarín Group interposed legal measures challenging the implementation of the Law. In October 2013, after a four-year legal battle, the Supreme Court declared the constitutionality of the articles questioned by Clarín.

Multichannel TV Platforms

In 2000, Argentina had the largest number of multisystem operator (MSO) subscribers in Latin America: 5.3 million cable TV subscribers and 150,000 satellite TV subscribers. Of 800 operators, four accounted for 65.6% of total national subscriptions and 55.7% of the total revenues in a market valued at US\$2 billion (ARS2 billion).²⁴ Increased monetary stability from the mid-2000s to the present has further increased the potential subscriber base in the country.²⁵ As was the case with broadcast TV, the 1990s were marked by renewed domestic investment and an influx of foreign capital (Table 19.6).

Table 19-6. Multichannel Video Platforms: Cable MSOs, DBS, IPTV (Market Shares by Revenue), 2000–2008

	2000	2004	2008
Cablevisión (Grupo Clarín)	24.4	30.9	55.1
Multicanal (Grupo Clarín) sAME	23.8	23.2	
Red Intercable (cooperatives)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Telecentro (Alberto Pierri)	0.0	0.0	0.0
VCC (Samuel Liberman)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supercanal (Grupo Vila-Manzano)	7.5		5.8
DirecTV Latin America (DirecTV, US), owned by Liberty	0.0	0.0	19.9
Others	44.3	45.9	19.2
Total Revenue (mil ARS)	2,000	2,353	5,097
Total Revenue (mil US\$)	2,000	800	1,631
C4	55.7	54.1	80.8
HHI	1,218	1,494	3,466
<i>N</i> (>1%) ¹	6	6	6
Noam Index	497	610	1,415

Source: Getino (1995), LAMAC, Mastrini and Becerra (2006, 2009), Convergencia.

1 In addition to the companies presented in the tables, we found several other companies that have market shares greater than 1%.

From 1989 to 1994, the large MSOs were established through the acquisition of provincial cable TV providers. It is estimated that in the mid-1990s, there were around 1,600 such providers, while by 2000, at least half of those had been absorbed by their larger competitors.²⁶ In 1994, foreign direct investment in the sector increased, due to the ratification of Mutual Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements with other countries.²⁷ Grupo Clarín's pay TV channels include Todo Noticias, Magazine 24, Volver, Nickelodeon, and TyC Sport (with a 50% stake). In 2004, the main players were Grupo Clarín's Cablevisión, Grupo Vila-Manzano's Multicanal, and Supercanal, the latter owned jointly by Grupo Vila-Manzano (80%) and Grupo Clarín (20%). Cablevisión and Multicanal held a combined 55.7% of total market revenues. This trend became even stronger in 2007, when Grupo Clarín, in partnership with the US investment fund Fintech, acquired both Cablevisión and Multicanal.²⁸

p. 586 In parallel, the satellite TV market has also become more concentrated. In 1996, Televisión Satelital Directa al Hogar (TDH) was established as a partnership with the Argentine firms Grupo Vila-Manzano (70%), the Argentine firm Tevycom (7%), and the Brazilian investor Laser (23%).²⁹ Until 1998, TDH was the only satellite TV provider operating in Argentina. After 1998, TDH's monopoly was broken as a result of a mutual satellite-broadcasting agreement signed between Argentina and the United States, enabling Grupo Clarín, in partnership with the US satellite TV provider Galaxy Latin America (GLA)—now DirecTV Latin America (US)—to become the country's second largest satellite provider by purchasing a 51% equity stake in DirecTV Argentina. SKY Television, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, briefly participated in the market but suspended its operations in the country in 2002.³⁰ In 2002, Grupo Clarín had to sell off its stake in GLA due to the group's rising debts. DirecTV (US) subsequently acquired the stake, and GLA's operations were rebranded as DirecTV Latin America.

Between 2004 and 2008, DirecTV became the second largest pay TV operator after Cablevisión. In 2008, it counted 750,000 subscribers, and in 2010 it reached 1.1 million subscribers.³¹ By 2008, the four companies that controlled the market (Cablevisión, Red Intercable, Telecentro, and DirecTV) collectively controlled 71.7% of the total subscriber base on the market, with Cablevisión holding onto a 44.7% audience share (Table 19.7).³²

Table 19-7. Multichannel Video Platforms: Cable MSOs, DBS, IPTV (Audience Shares by Subscribers), 1984–2013

	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2010	2013
Cablevisión (Grupo Clarín)	0.3	0.6	4.0	11.8	26.7	30.3	44.7	51.4	42.7
VCC (Samuel Liberman)	0.3	0.6	2.7	14.4					
Multicanal (Grupo Clarín)			0.1	18.2	26.7	27.8			
Red Intercable (cooperatives)				13.6	5.5	6.3	4.6	6.7	
Telecentro (Alberto Pierri)						4.2	4.3	4.3	6.8
Supercanal (Grupo Vila-Manzano)	Article I.				9.1	8.5	6.6	8.0	
DirecTV Latin America (DirecTV, US)							11.5	17.9	25.7
Others	99.5	98.8	93.3	42.0	32.0	22.9	28.3	11.6	17.3
Total Revenue (mil ARS)					2,000	2,353	5,097		
Total Revenue (mil US\$)					2,000	800	1,631		
C4	0.6	1.2	6.7	58.0	68.0	77.1	71.7	88.3	75.2
HHI	0	1	23	863	1,536	1,821	2,217	3,090	2,530
N (>1%)	0	0	2	4	4	5	5	5	3
Noam Index			16	432	768	815	991	967	1,461

Source: Getino (1995), LAMAC, Mastrini and Becerra (2006, 2009), Convergencia.

In 2008, there was a slight decline in C4 that positioned the four leading companies, and a new rebound was seen in 2010, when they reached 88.3% (Table 19.7).

As mentioned earlier for broadcast TV, the 2009 Audiovisual Communication Services Law was meant to reduce concentration in this sector as well. In spite of the new legislation, though, no significant changes have yet occurred in the pay TV market. Cablevisión held onto a 51.4% audience share, followed by DirecTV with 17.9%, Supercanal with 8%, Red Intercable 6.7%, and Telecentro with 4.3%.

Film

The state encourages domestic film production and distribution through subsidy payments. Since 1994, with the passing of Law 24.377/94 for National Movie-Making Promotion and Regulation (Ley de Fomento y Regulación de la Actividad Cinematográfica Nacional), the state has granted substantial funding for national production and has established screening quotas for the distribution of movies produced in-country (Table 19.8).

Table 19-8. Film Production/Distribution (Market Shares by Box Office%), 2000–2010

	2000	2004	2008	2010
Walt Disney Pictures (US)	26.4	23.7	22.9	25.3
Sony (Japan/US)	16.1	8.1		
Distribution Comp.	7.2	8.2	9.6	
United International Pictures (UIP)—Universal (Comcast/GE, US)			25.2	22.6
Warner Bros. (Time Warner, US)			13.3	16.4
20th Century Fox (News Corp., Murdoch Family, US/UK/AUS)				11.5
Primer Plano	3.4	0.7		
Others	47.5	59.3	30.4	25.1
Total Revenue (mil ARS)	165	270	359	662
Total Revenue (mil US\$)	165	91.8	115	172
C4	53.05	40.76	71.0	75.8
HHI	1,019	696	1,427	1,552
<i>N</i> (>1%)	4	4	4	4
Noam Index	510	348	714	776

Source: INCAA.

Thanks to state subsidies, the number of Argentine-made movies premiered per year has increased significantly, though the revenue share of domestically produced films has increased only moderately. In other words, the increase in offerings has not yet been matched by consumption from the Argentine audience, in part because Argentine movies are generally withdrawn from theaters sooner than foreign films are (Table 19.9).

Table 19-9. Domestic vs. Foreign Films (Market and Audience Shares by Box Office%), 2000–2010

	Audience Shares		Market Shares	
	Domestic Films	Foreign Films	Domestic Films	Foreign Films
2000	17.7	82.3	10.9	89.1
2004	22.8	77.2	14.4	85.7
2008	27.2	72.8	25.0	75.0
2010	30.2	69.9	18.8	81.2

Source: INCAA.

p. 588 Argentina is ranked number one in annual film production in Latin America, producing 70–90 pictures a year, a number it is able to sustain in part because of state subsidies. State support has had less of an impact on film distribution, and the bulk of it is in the hands of US-based Hollywood majors. The main Argentine distribution company, Primer Plano, has a very low market share at home. Though not shown in Tables 19.8 and 19.9, Grupo Clarín also has a small stake in this market through the production company Patagonik Films, which consists of Grupo Clarín, Walt Disney Productions (US), and Cinecolor.

Telecommunications Media

Wireline Telecom

p. 589 The state-owned telecommunications company, Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (ENTel), monopolized fixed telephony services between 1950 and 1990, leaving audience shares of just 6% for Ericsson (Sweden) and 4% combined for several independent provincial cooperatives.³³

This changed when, in August 1989, the Carlos Menem Administration introduced the Economic Emergency Law (Ley de Emergencia Económica) and the State Reform Law (Ley de Reforma del Estado 23.696), which granted the president unprecedented powers over the disbursement of state properties.³⁴ In January 1990, an international public bid took place to privatize ENTel. The winning bidders were Telefónica (Spain) and Telecom Argentina, founded as a joint venture between Telecom Italia and France Telecom.³⁵ As a result, the fixed telephony market in Argentina became a geographically defined duopoly, with Telefónica Argentina dominating the southern part of the country and Telecom Argentina dominating the northern part. The sector became an effective a monopoly, though, because Telefónica (Spain) controlled in Europe the holding company, Telco, that in turn controlled Telecom Italia. However, a measure of duopolistic competition has returned to the market because Telecom Italia's stake in Telecom Argentina was acquired in 2013 for \$960 million by the Mexican investment fund Fintech, run by David Martinez, who has had good relations with the Kirchners. That transaction is still subject to governmental approvals. (Tables 19.10 and 19.11).

Table 19-10. Wireline Telecom (Audience Shares by Subscribers), 2000–2010

	2000		2004		2008		2010	
	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%
Telefónica Argentina (Telefónica, Spain)	4,738	56.1	4,180	53.4	4,656	52.0	4,622	52.9
Telecom Argentina (Telecom Italia, Italy/Fintech, Mexico) ¹	3,713	43.9	3,650	46.6	4,300	48.0	4,107	47.1
Total Subscribers (1,000)	8,451		7,830		8,956		8,729	
C4		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0
HHI		5,074		5,023		5,008		5,017
<i>N</i> (>1%)		2		2		2		2
Noam Index		3,588		3,552		3,541		3,548

Source: CNC, 2008.

1 As of 2013, Fintech now controls Telecom Argentina instead of TI/Telefónica.

Table 19-11. Wireline Telecom (Market Shares by Revenue), 2000–2008

	2000	2004	2008
Telefónica Argentina (Telefónica, Spain)	53.0	48.3	61.1
Telecom Argentina (Telecom Italia, Italy/Fintech, Mexico)	47.0	51.7	38.9
Total Revenue (mil ARS)	4,404	6,182	7,688
Total Revenue (mil US\$)	4,404	2,102	2,460
C4	100.0	100.0	100.0
HHI	5,019	5,006	5,246
<i>N</i> (>1%)	2	2	2
Noam Index	3,549	3,540	3,710

Source: CNC, 2008.

Telefónica has expanded largely through acquisitions, starting in the 1990s with its acquisition of 50% of the former state monopolist ENTel's wireline telecom infrastructure, both with its own capital and in partnership with other companies. Telefónica Argentina (and Telecom Argentina) also holds the monopoly over long-distance calling and has benefited from the telecom regulatory framework that allows it to take part in competitive market segments, including cellular telephony and personal communications (PCS), which has significantly increased concentration.³⁶ Even though the basic services became free in 2000, the market is still dominated by Telefónica.³⁷

Small telephone or cable TV companies offer commercial triple-play services through business partnerships.³⁸ In Buenos Aires, the company Telecentro, founded by former politician and entrepreneur Alberto Pierri, pioneered household triple-play services in 2008.³⁹ Nevertheless, Telecentro has, in terms of market share, had more of an impact on pay TV than on fixed telephony, given that many users have acquired their Telecentro packages with IP telephony but run their lines through the ADSL networks offered by Telefónica subsidiaries. Ultimately, all new entrants like Telecentro end up following this route, thus giving the duopolists a distinct advantage. ↵

Movicom, a subsidiary of Bellsouth (US), was the first wireless provider to enter the Argentine market. Miniphone, a joint venture by Telefónica Argentina and Telecom Argentina, then entered the market in 1990. Competition between the two companies led to a significant expansion of services in Argentina. In 1992, CTI was set up to offer a national service alternative to Movicom and Miniphone. CTI's majority shareholder was Verizon (US), until it was bought out in 2003 by America Móvil (owned by Mexican Carlos Slim. In the late 1990s, Miniphone was dissolved by the government and split into two companies: Personal (Telecom Italia) and Unifón (Telefónica Argentina).⁴⁰ In this way, the same companies that held the basic fixed telephony monopoly became the main mobile service providers, competing with each other's own assets (Tables 19.12 and 19.13).⁴¹

Table 19-12. Wireless Telecom (Audience Shares by Subscribers), 2000–2010

	2000		2004		2008		2010	
	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%	Total Subscribers (1,000)	%
Movistar (Telefónica, Spain)			3,632	28.0	15,228	35.9	16,149	33.5
Movicom (Telefónica, Spain; Telecom Italia, Italy)	1,672	25.7						
Unifón (Telefónica, Spain)	1,746	26.8						
Personal (Telecom Italia, Italy/Fintech, Mexico) ¹	2,040	31.3	3,835	29.6	11,844	28.0	16,333	31.1
CTI/Claro (América Móvil, México)	1,052	16.2	3,350	25.8	14,339	33.8	18,812	32.4
Nextel (Bellsouth/NII Holding, US) ²			2,150	16.6	967	2.3		3.0
Total Subscribers (1,000)	6,512		12,967		42,378		36,190	
C4		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0
HHI		2,622		2,602		3,223		3,148
N (>1%)		4		4		4		4
Noam Index		1,311		1,301		1,611		1,574

1 Fintech controls Personal as of 2013, along with TI's other Argentina assets.

2 Nextel 2010 marketshare supplied by editors.

Table 19-13. Wireless Telecom (Market Shares by Revenue), 2000–2010

	2000	2004	2008	2010
Movistar (Telefónica, Spain)		27.7	25.5	30.4
Movicom (Telefónica, Spain; Telecom Italia, Italy)	34.9			
Unifón (Telefónica Spain)	14.3			
Personal (Telecom Italia, Italy)	31.4	31.6	25.5	31.2
CTI/Claro (América Móvil, México) ¹	19.3	28.9	25.2	35.4
Nextel (Bellsouth/NII Holding, US) ²		11.8	23.8	3
Total Revenue (mil ARS)	2,477	4,876	6,671	7,448
Total Revenue (mil US\$)	2,477	1,658	2,135	1,900
C4	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
HHI	2,783	2,740	2,501	3,160
N (>1%)	4	4	4	4
Noam Index	1,392	1,370	1,251	1,580

1 In 2003, América Móvil, which is owned by Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim, acquired Verizon's (US) shares in CTI.

2 Nextel's 2010 marketshare supplied by editors.

In 2005, Telefónica Móviles, part of Telefónica Argentina, acquired 100% of Movicom and merged it with Unifón, forming a new company, Movistar Argentina. Movistar was launched in the Latin American market in April 2005 and became the Argentine market leader.⁴² América Móvil was the first to launch 3G services in late 2007. In 2008, the company introduced a regional brand change and started operating as Claro throughout Latin America.

Internet Media

Internet Service Providers (ISP)

Under Argentine law, the Internet is considered a “value-added service.”⁴³ Its development in Argentina is strongly linked with telephone carriers' licenses. In 1995, Startel, which was jointly owned by Telefónica Argentina and

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Telecom Argentina, first entered the market, at which point access grew rapidly. According to the regulatory agency, the National Communications Commission (CNC), Argentina went from having 1.7 million Internet users in 2003 to 3.75 million in 2008, a 116% increase. By 2008, broadband access had doubled, reaching 3.7 million connections, or 28% of all households. Household access accounted for 91% of all Internet usage in Argentina that year (94% of it broadband). The most widely used broadband platform is ADSL (68%), followed by cable modems (30%) and satellite (2%).

Telecom Argentina and Telefónica Argentina employ ENTel's landline network, which makes ADSL the preferred platform for most users. After privatization, the two companies won a 10-year exclusivity contract to use ENTel's network. In contrast, MSOs such as Grupo Clarín that were consolidated during the 1990s had to build their own private networks from the ground up with cable modem technology to offer Internet and pay TV.

Internet access is concentrated in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area, where more than 65% of total connections are located. The provinces of Santa Fe and Córdoba account for 16% of Internet connections,

while the rest of the provinces account for the remaining 17%.⁴⁴ By 2000, Grupo Clarín's, Telefónica Argentina, and Telecom Argentina together controlled 75.6% of the total market revenues, valued at approximately US\$115 million (ARS115 million) (Table 19.14).⁴⁵

Table 19-14. Internet Service Providers (Audience Shares by Subscribers), 2004–2010

	2004		2008		2010	
	Total Suscribers (1,000)	%	Total Suscribers (1,000)	%	Total Suscribers (1,000)	%
Telecom Argentina (Telecom Italia, Italy/Fintech, Mexico) ¹	591	36.9	1,042	27.7	1,380	29.9
Prima (Grupo Clarín)						
Advance/Speedy (Telefónica, Spain)	409	25.6	1,079	28.7	1,439	31.2
Fibertel (Grupo Clarín)			939	25.0	1,128	24.5
Ciudad Internet (Grupo Clarín)	280	17.5				
Uol Sinectis (Brazil)	220	13.8				
Others	100	6.3	697	18.6	662	14.4
Total Subscribers (1,000)	1,600		3,757		4,609	
Total Revenue (mil ARS)						
Total Revenue (mil US\$)						
C4		93.7		81.4		85.6
HHI		2,552		2,563		2,676
N (>1%)		5		4		4
Noam Index		1,141		1,281		1,338

Source: INDEC, CNC, Barometro CISCO.

1 Fintech obtained full control of Telecom Argentina in 2013.

p. 594 Telefónica Argentina has pressed, so far unsuccessfully, to win a license to provide triple- and quadruple-play services. The group instead offers audiovisual services through a business partnership with DTH operator DirecTV (US). And through the Speedy broadband service, it provides audiovisual content under a subscription and rental model. ↵

p. 595 **Search Engines**

In ranking the top 20 websites in Argentina by total traffic, the top search engines were Google (US) and its local platform, Google Argentina. Some other search engines have slowly made their way into the rankings in recent years, including Yahoo!, Bing, and Google Espana (Table 19.15).

Table 19-15. Search Engines (Alexa.com Rankings), 2010–2011

Ranking	2010	2011
1	Facebook (US)	Google Argentina (US)
2	Google Argentina (US)	Facebook (US)
3	Google (US)	YouTube (US)
4	YouTube (US)	Google (US)
5	Windows Live (Microsoft, US)	Windows Live (Microsoft, US)
6	Yahoo! (US)	Blogger.com (US)
7	Blogger.com (US)	Yahoo! (US)
8	Taringa!	MercadoLibre.com
9	MercadoLibre.com (MercadoLibre)	Taringa!
10	MSN (Microsoft, US)	Wikipedia (US)
11	Wikipedia (US)	Twitter (US)
12	Twitter (US)	Clarín.com (Grupo Clarín)
13	Clarín.com (Grupo Clarín)	MSN (Microsoft, US)
14	<i>Ole</i> (Grupo Clarín)	lanacion.com (Mitre Family, La Nación)
15	lanacion.com (Mitre Family, La Nación)	infobae.com (Grupo Infobae)
16	Poringa!	LinkedIn (US)
17	infobae.com (Grupo Infobae)	<i>Ole</i> (Grupo Clarín)
18	Megaupload (Hong Kong)	Wordpress (US)
19	Bing (US)	xvideos.com (US)
20	Google Espana (US)	t.co (Twitter, US)

Source: [Alexa.com](#).

Online News

The emergence of online news platforms have not only changed the relationship between journalists and their audiences, but also have challenged traditional media business models.⁴⁶ Thirteen of the top 100 websites belong to information and news media, and most of them are the online editions of the leading daily newspapers (Table 19.16). As we detailed in our 2012 report “Mapping Digital Media: Argentina”:

[T]he news media website with the highest visitorship is [www.clarin.com](#), Grupo Clarín’s portal, which posts the hard-copy edition of the newspaper together with the latest news updates and other services, and is listed 13th on the overall Argentinean website ranking. The second most highly visited is the portal of the sports paper *Ole* (also owned by Grupo Clarín) and ranks 14th on the general list. It is followed by [www.lanacion.com](#) and [www.infobae.com](#) which are ranked 15th and 17th respectively on the general list. Finally, [www.perfil.com](#) is the fifth most visited news site but is ranked 42nd in the general list. Online-only news sites are ranked considerably lower and outside the top [50] most visited sites in Argentina. The leading sites in this sub-category are [www.primiciasya.com](#) (ranked 53rd overall) and [www.minutouno.com](#) (ranked 58th). The online version of a provincial newspaper with the highest visitorship is [www.lavozdelinterior.com](#) from Córdoba (owned by Grupo Clarín), listed [at] 63rd. Grupo Clarín’s channel TN ranks 70th of online broadcasters, and the terrestrial channel with the highest visitorship is *Telefé* ([www.telefe.com](#)), which ranks 76th. Overall, 13 of the top 100 websites belong to information and news media, and most of them are the online versions of major newspapers.⁴⁷

Website	Overall media site ranking	Alexa Ranking
Clarín	1	13
Ole	2	14
La Nación	3	15
Infobae	4	17
Perfil	5	42
Página 12	6	46
Primicias ya	7	53
Minuto 1	8	58
El Argentino	9	59
La voz del interior	10	63
Cancha llena	11	68
Todo Noticias	12	70
Telefe	13	76

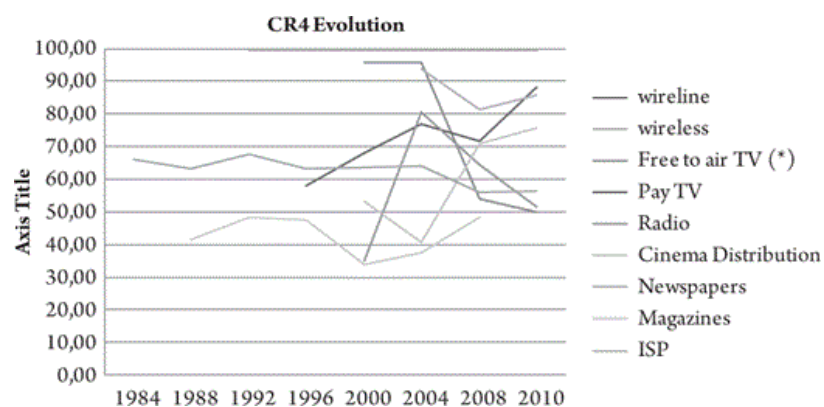
Source: Becerra, Marino, and Mastrini (2012).

Conclusion

The high levels of concentration in Argentine media are in large part the result of deregulation in the 1990s, when restrictions on media cross-ownership were removed. As a result, small media producers have largely disappeared, and independent media producers in the provinces have been acquired by the media majors based in Buenos Aires. One area where concentration has not increased, though, has been in content production for the audiovisual market, particularly in cable television programming. This increased production capacity is reflected in an increase of new content in the country and the range of programs now produced in Argentina to be broadcast in other Spanish-language media markets.

p. 597 Concentration has stabilized in the telecommunications sector, albeit at the maximum possible level for both wireless and wireline. In the print and audiovisual sectors there is considerable concentration, ranging from 50% to 85%, in favor of the largest ISPs, MSOs, radio broadcasters, film distributors, and publishers of newspapers. Only in three markets is C4 below 50%: film production, magazine publication, and broadcast television⁴⁸ (Figure 19.2).

Figure 19.2



C4 Indices (All Media), 1984–2010

While the telecommunications sector remains stable, the audiovisual and print sectors show significant variations. In the pay TV, film distribution, magazine publications, and ISP markets, there has been a steady increase in concentration. In the case of broadcast TV and daily newspapers, concentration indicators have decreased, although the decrease in concentration for broadcast TV is due to change in the measurement criteria made by the organizations that track it. Downward trends in the broadcast TV market and sales of newspapers can be attributed to market transformations and the impact of digitization rather than to governmental action.

The two dominant media groups in Argentina will continue to be Grupo Clarín and Telefónica. Grupo Clarín is the more diversified in its media holdings, and it has achieved a dominant position that has turned it into a privileged stakeholder with large advertising revenues. The group has only a few assets in telecommunications and Internet media (ISPs). Conversely, Telefónica boasts control over the landline and mobile telephony and ISP market, in addition to a significant audiovisual presence through Telefe, but it has disposed of other assets in the cultural industries, such as the sale of AM Continental to the PRISA Group.

The link between media ownership concentration and pluralism and diversity is a complex one. Particularly in Argentina, the issue of diversity and pluralism is one of the drivers of the confrontation between the government and Grupo Clarín. Reforms would redress past government policies of deregulation that have had adverse effects on media consumers. When the outgoing Nestor Kirchner Administration approved the merger of Cablevisión and Multicanal under Grupo Clarín, for instance, service costs soon began to increase substantially and many local signals stopped broadcasting.

Aside from the declarations and policies of the national government aimed at promoting wider diversity in the media market, no fundamental changes have yet been observed in the structure of media ownership. Despite the determination of the state, the largest media groups have so far retained most of their media assets, including Grupo Clarín's much-debated cable TV merger, even though the government has ruled against the merger and demanded it sell off these properties. High concentration will remain present without major structural reforms.

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Argentina—Data Summaries

ARGENTINA HAS THE SIXTH-HIGHEST level of foreign media ownership of all the countries surveyed. Three of Argentina’s top four media service providers are foreign groups: Telefónica (Spain), Telecom Italia, and América Móvil (Mexico). The country’s liberalized ownership laws attracted large investments in the telecom field, and its high rate of cable television penetration means there is a market for foreign video industries. The top four national media companies—Telefónica, Fintech/Telecom Italia (Fintech is in the process of acquiring Telecom Argentina, from Telecom Italia), Grupo Clarín, and América Móvil—have a high combined market share and power index value relative to other countries: Argentina ranked seventh overall for the Pooled Overall Sector C4 in 2008.

Telefónica (Spain) increased its company power index in Argentina from 1,078 to 1,275, and it is by far the largest media company in the country with 26.1% of the national market (Table 19.17). But it also has a big TV presence, giving it 5.2% of content (Table 19.18), and its platform market share is 37.8%, the highest of all platform companies (Table 19.19). What used to be the second largest platform enterprise, Telecom Italia, has seen its national market share decline, and as of 2013 it has been in the process of exiting from country, having its 22.7% stake Telecom Argentina bought out by the investment company Fintech.

Table 19-17. National Media Industries Concentration in Argentina

	2004/5		2011 or Most Recent		% Change Annual Average	
	Company Power Index in Country	Company Share of the Overall National Media Market (%)	Company Power Index in Country	Company Share of the Overall National Media Market (%)	Company Power Index in Country	Company Share of the Overall National Media Market (%)
Telefónica (Spain)	1,078	26.5	1,275	26.1	3.1	-0.07
Grupo Clarín	593	13.4	722	16.3	3.6	0.5
Fintech (Mexico)	0.0	0.0	651	18.3	N/A	3.1
Google (US)	26	0.3	160	1.7	86	0.2
América Móvil (Grupo Carso, Mexico)	227	7.9	264	7.5	2.7	-0.07
NII Holdings (Mexico/US) ¹	38	3.2	2	0.6	-15.8	-0.4
DirecTV (US)	0	0.0	72	3.6	N/A	0.6
Canal 9 (Mexico)	15	1.0	51	2.6	39.2	0.3
Radio 10 (Grupo Indalo)	30	0.9	6	0.4	-13.5	-0.08
América 2 (Grupo Ávila)	14	1.1	47	2.7	40.4	0.3
Editorial Atlántida	13	0.8	42	1.5	38.5	0.1
Editorial Perfil	12	0.8	11	0.7	-2.0	-0.01
La Nación	201	1.2	2	0.3	-15.0	-0.15
Grupo Publicexpress	5	0.5	9	0.7	12.4	0.02
Disney (US)	8	0.4	12	0.5	7.58	0.02
Supercanal	7	1.0	6	1.0	-2.9	0.01
Grupo Televisa (Mexico)	1	0.2	6	0.5	136.0	0.06
El Dia	5	0.6	5	0.5	0.8	-0.01
Grupo Monera	0	0.0	4	0.3	N/A	0.05
Del Plata	0	0.0	2	0.24	N/A	0.04
PRISA (Spain)	4	0.3	1	0.14	-13.4	-0.03
Murdoch Interests (US)	5	0.3	3	0.2	-7.6	-0.01
Telecom Italia	1,221	27.2	0	0.0	-16.7	-4.5

Media Concentration Index	2004/5	2011 or Most Recent	% Change Annual Average
Total Revenue: Nat'l Media Industry (mil US\$)	6,091	9,018	8.0%
Total Voices (<i>n</i>)	52	52	0%
Net Voices (<i>n</i>)	47	48	0.4%
Public Ownership (%)	0.0	0.0	0%
Foreign Ownership (%)	68.1	62.8	-0.9%
C4 Average—Weighted	89.5	85.2	-0.7%
HHI Average—Weighted	3,182	3,151	-0.2%
Noam Index Average—Weighted	910	1,171	4.8%
C1 Average—Weighted	42	44	0.0%
Pooled Overall Sector C4	75	68	-1.1
Pooled Overall Sector HHI	1,702	1,374	-3.2%
Pooled Overall Sector Noam Index	148	105	-4.8%
Market Share of Top 10	83.3	81.3	-0.3%
Companies: Nat'l Media			
Industry (%) (Pooled C10)			
National Media Power Index	3,341	3,366	0.1%

1 Formerly Sprint-Nextel; now separate from Softbank/Sprint.

Table 19-18. Top Content Media Companies

	2004/5		2009 or Most Recent		% Change Annual Average	
	Company Power Index in Country Content Sector	Company Share of the National Content Media Market (%)	Company Power Index in Country Content Sector	Company Share of the National Content Media Market (%)	Company Power Index in Country Content Sector (% HHI)	Company Share of the National Content Media Market ("Delta" share)
Grupo Clarín	1,198	30.2	927	24.3	-3.8	-1.0
Telefónica (Spain)	186	6.6	72	5.2	-10.2	-0.2
Canal 9 (Mexico)	55	3.6	143	7.4	26.3	0.6
Radio 10 (Grupo Haddad)	108	3.2	17	1.1	-14.1	-0.3
América 2	50	4.0	131	7.5	27	0.6
DirecTV (US)	0	0	66	3.3	N/A	0.6
Editorial Perfil	44	3.0	30	2.1	-5.4	-0.2
Grupo Publicexpress	18	1.9	24	1.9	5.6	-0.01
Grupo Televisa (Mexico)	2	0.7	16	1.5	100.6	0.14
Grupo Monera	0	0	11	0.86	N/A	0.14
Del Plata	0	0	6	0.7	N/A	0.1
PRISA (Spain)	14	1.1	2	0.4	-14.1	-0.1
Murdoch Interests (US)	17	1.0	7	0.6	-9.7	-0.06
Media Concentration Index						
	2004/5	2011 or Most Recent	% Change Annual Average			
Public Ownership (%)	0	0	0%			
Foreign Ownership (%)	18.6	27.1	1.4%			
C4 Average—Weighted	69.5	69.9	0.1%			
HHI Average—Weighted	1,768	1,914	1.4%			
C1 Average—Weighted	35	35	0%			
National Power Index	2,035		2,114			

Table 19-19. Top Platform Media Companies

	2004/5		2011 or Most Recent		% Change Annual Average	
	Company Power Index in Country	Company Share of the Overall National Media Market (%)	Company Power Index in Country	Company Share of the Overall National Media Market (%)	Company Power Index in Country	Company Share of the Overall National Media Market (%)
Telefónica	1,416	34.1	1,946	37.8	6.2	0.6
Fintech (Mexico)	0	0.0	1,015	28.5	N/A	4.8
Grupo Clarín	363	7.0	608	11.8	11.2	0.8
América Móvil (Mexico)	313	10.9	441	11.6	5.2	0.1
NII Holdings (Mexico/US) ¹	52	4.4	3	1.0	-15.7	-0.6
DirectTV (US)	0	0.0	75	3.8	N/A	0.6
Telecom Italia (Italy)	1,684	37.5	0	0	-16.7	-6.2

Media Concentration Index	2004/5	2011 or Most Recent	% Change Annual Average
Public Ownership (%)	0	0	0%
Foreign Ownership (%)	86.8	82.6	-0.7%
C4 Average—Weighted	97	93.8	-0.5%
HHI Average—Weighted	3,718	3,840	0.55%
C1 Average—Weighted	44.0	50.0	1%
National Power Index	3,836	4,046	1%

1 Formerly Sprint-Nextel; now separate from Softbank/Sprint.

p. 601 Of the content producers, Grupo Clarín holds by far the largest share at 24.3%. It has significant market share in the TV broadcasting, multichannel platforms, and daily newspapers. Its market share of the multichannel industry increased from 54.1% in 2004 to 55.1% in 2008, and its shares in TV broadcast and daily newspapers were stable at 23.5% and 45.1%, respectively, while its

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radio market share fell to 13.5%. On some level, Clarín has been beneficiary of an Argentine climate increasingly restrictive against foreign direct investment in media. However, as part of a growing conflict between Clarín and the Peronist government, new laws were passed that would force the company to reduce cross-ownership by divesting itself of some of its subsidiaries. The regulations, enacted in 2009, aimed to restrict the number of station licenses a single company can own, decreasing the number from 24 to 10, in addition to other restrictions. Clarín appealed the decision, but lost its appeal before the Supreme Court in 2013.

1. SINCA. "Cuenta Satélite de Cultura." sinca.cultura.gov.ar, 2012. July 13, 2012 <<http://sinca.cultura.gov.ar/sic/estadisticas/csc/index.php>>.
2. Albornoz, Luis. Periodismo digital. Los grandes diarios en la red. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2007.
3. Bizberge, Ana. Mastrini, Guillermo; and Becerra, Martin. "La Television Digital Terrestre en Argentina: entre la geopolitica regional y la iniciativa estatal." *La transicion a la television digital terrestre en Iberoamerica: diagnostic y prospective*. Badillo, Angel and Sierra, Francisco, eds. Quito: CIESPAL, 2011.
4. In economic terms the 1:1 exchange rate between the ARS and US\$ set forth in the 1990s was broken, and as a result, the economic crisis led to the succession of five presidents in just two years, followed by Néstor Kirchner taking office.
5. Romero, Simon and Schmall, Emily. "Battle Between Argentine Media Empire and President Heats Up Over a Law." *The New York Times*, Nov. 30, 2012. Jan. 11, 2013. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/01/world/americas/media-law-ratchets-up-battle-between-kirchner-and-clarin-in-argentina.html?pagewanted=all>>.
6. Bizberge, Ana. Mastrini, Guillermo; and Becerra, Martin. "La Television Digital Terrestre en Argentina: entre la geopolitica regional y la iniciativa estatal." *La transicion a la television digital terrestre en Iberoamerica: diagnostic y prospective*. Badillo, Angel and Sierra, Francisco, eds. Quito: CIESPAL, 2011.
7. Rivals of the ruling Judicialist Party, which was formed in 1947 by Juan Perón, have long pursued such regionalism in order to keep the "Peronists" from controlling all of the country's broadcasting stations. It is not dissimilar from efforts by Brazilian media owners to maintain control over local and regional broadcasting networks at the expense of the federal government.
8. Becerra, Martin et al. "La concentracion de las industrias culturales." *Industrias culturales: Mercado y politicas publicas en Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Ciccus, 2003.
9. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
10. Grupo Clarín is a family-owned enterprise. The Noble and Magnetto families, represented by Director Ernestina Herrera de Noble and CEO Héctor Magnetto, along with the minority shareholders José Aranda and Lucio Plagiario, own Grupo Clarín with a combined 70.99% stake.
11. "Interior" refers to the towns and cities that are not part of the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires.
12. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
13. TV stations in Argentina are local and do not belong to any one national network. However, the local stations of the country purchase their programming to the Buenos Aires-based stations, creating an informal nationwide network transmission system.
14. During privatization Editorial Atlántida—owned by the Vigil Family—acquired Telefé. By 1997, the station was bought by the spanish telecom operator Telefónica. Rossi, Diego. "La radiodifusion entre 1990–1995: exacerbacion del modelo privado-comercial." *Mucho ruido, pocas leyes. Economia politica de comunicacion en la Argentina (1920–2004)*. 2nd ed. Mastrini, Guillermo ed. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2008.
15. Mutual Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (1991); Amendment to the National Constitution (1994); Decree 1005/99. See Mastrini, Guillermo, ed. *Mucho Ruido y pocas leyes. Economia y politicas de comunicacion en la Argentina (1920–2004)*. 2nd ed. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2008.
16. Albornoz, Luis and Hernández, Pablo. "La radiodifusion entre 1995–1999: concentracion, denacionalizacion y ausencia del control public." *Mucho ruido, pocas leyes. Economia y politicas de comunicacion en la Argentina (1920–2004)*. 2nd ed. Mastrini, Guillermo, ed. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2008.
17. Becerra, Martin and Mastrini, Guillermo. *Los duenos de la palabra. Acceso, estructura y concentracion de los medios en la America latina del Siglo XXI*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2009.
18. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
19. The national public broadcaster *TV Pública* has only a 4% aggregate national audience share. See Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y Concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
20. AFSCA. "11 informe Contenidos de la Television Abierta Argentina." Autoridad Federal de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual (AFSCA), 2011. November 20, 2011. <http://www.afsca.gob.ar/web/Varios/informes/Informe_TV_Abierta_11_marz_a_may11.pdf>.
21. Becerra, Martin and Mastrini, Guillermo. *Los duenos de la palabra. Acceso, estructura y concentracion de los medios en la America latina del Siglo XXI*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2009.
22. AAP. "Argentine Official Advertising Spend Report 2010." Asociación Argentina de Publicidad (AAP), 2010. Nov. 20, 2011. <http://190.220.150.93/webaaap/wp-content/inversion_publicitaria/2010/informe_inversion_publicitaria_2010.pdf>.
23. Crettaz, J. "La Television abierta argentina no es rentable." *La Nación* newspaper, Jan. 9, 2011. Nov. 20, 2011. <<http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1339818-la-television-abierta-argentina-no-es-rentable>>. & Del Río, J. and Quiroga, C. "Queremos ganar la batalla del rating pero no a cualquier precio." *Apertura*, July 29, 2011. Nov. 20, 2011. <<http://www.apertura.com/notas/259680-queremos-ganar-la-batalla-del-rating-per-no-cualquier-precio>>.
24. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y Concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
25. Albornoz, Luis. *Al fin solos... la nueva television del Mercosur*. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2000.
26. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y Concentracion de las industrias culturales en*

- America Latina. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
27. Albornoz, Luis and Hernández, Pablo. "La radiodifusion entre 1995–1999: concentracion, denacionalizacion y ausencia del control public." *Mucho ruido, pocas leyes. Economia y politicas de comunicacion en la Argentina (1920–2004)*. 2nd ed. Guillermo, Mastrini, ed. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2008.
 28. On December 7, 2007, the Anti-Trust Agency (Comisión Nacional de Defensa de la Competencia, CNDC) approved the joint Cablevisión-Multicanal transaction. Grupo Clarín took over 60% of Cablevisión while Fintech (US) kept the remaining 40%. In addition, Cablevisión kept a 98.5% share in Multicanal and 100% of Teledigital (a digital provider in the Interior) and Fibertel. Through Multicanal, it also acquired a 97% stake in Prima. See Becerra, Martin and Mastrini, Guillermo. *Los duenos de la palabra. Acceso, estructura y concentracion de los medios en la America latina del Siglo XXI*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2009.
 29. Albornoz, Luis, et al. "Al fin solos: el nuevo escenario de las comunicaciones en la Argentina." *Comunicación y Sociedad* 35, 1999. Jan. 14, 2013. <<http://catedras.fsoc.uba.ar/gpost/material/006.doc>>.
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 31. "DirecTV cruzo la barrera del millon de abonados en la Argentina." *iProfesional.com*, Dec. 10, 2010. July 16, 2012. <<http://tecnologia.iprofesional.com/notas/108569-DirecTV-cruz-la-barrera-del-milln-de-abonados-en-la-Argentina>>.
 32. Run as a cooperative, Red Intercable is composed of 200 small- and medium-sized cable TV companies operating in 19 provinces.
 33. Bizberge, Ana. "Audiencias publicas por la renegociacion de contratos de telefonía." X Jornadas Nacionales de Investigadores en Comunicación: Una década de encuentros para (re) pensar los intercambios y consolidar la red. Oct. 19–21, 2006, National University of San Juan. REDCOM, San Juan: REDCOM, 2006. <http://www.redcomunicacion.org/memorias/p_jornadas_p.php?id=568&idj=5>.
 34. The Economic Emergency Law allows the Executive Branch to legislate without regard for the National Congress. State Reform Law 23.696 authorized the privatization of state-owned companies.
 35. In 2003, the Werthein Group bought half of the shares that Telecom France owned through Nortel Inversora in Telecom Argentina. In 2010, Telefónica took control over Telecom Italia's operations. In Argentina, the Competency Defense National Commission (CDNC, by its acronym in Spanish) decided that the merger would not influence local companies operations because Telefónica cannot cast votes on Telecom Argentina's board of directors.
 36. For more information on the privatization of ENTel, see Abeles, Forcinito, and Schorr (2001) and López A. and Felder, R. (1997, 1999).
 37. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y Concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
 38. The triple-play offer is not always the result of network convergence: it is sometimes due to the establishment of business partnerships between companies providing services through their own networks, but with a unified billing system.
 39. Bizberge, Ana. "La carrera por la TV digital y el Triple Play en la TV paga en Argentina." Seventh ENACOM National Meeting of Communication Programs. Dec. 10–12, 2009, Universidad Nacional de Comahue. General Roca, Rio Negro, 2009. <<https://www.zotero.org/groups/lecotec/items/itemKey/TX8VBHKM>>.
 40. Decree 266/98 was widely criticized because it was favorable to the operators that had a dominant position in the industry, leading to a considerable market concentration, unlike declared intentions that indicated the need to encourage the development of national wireless communication networks to ensure a competitive landscape.
 41. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
 42. Becerra, Martin and Mastrini, Guillermo. *Los duenos de la palabra. Acceso, estructura y concentracion de los medios en la America Latina del siglo XXI*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2009.
 43. CNT Resolution 1083/95 defines Value-Added Telecommunication Services as "those services which, using networks, links and/or telecommunication systems for support, offer features differentiating them from the basic service, applying processes that make information available, act on Information or even enable subscribers to interact with information." See CNC. "Resolución CNT 1083/1995." Comision Nacional de Comunicaciones (CNC), 1995. July 16, 2012. <[http://www.enre.gov.ar/web/bibliotd.nsf/\(\\$IDWeb\)/943B4F96BE336D9A03257134006E13AA](http://www.enre.gov.ar/web/bibliotd.nsf/($IDWeb)/943B4F96BE336D9A03257134006E13AA)>.
 44. CNC. "Evolucion y penetracion del servicio." Comision Nacional de Comunicaciones (CNC), 2009. July 16, 2012. <<http://www.cnc.gov.ar/ciudadanos/internet/evolucion.asp#iconsumo>>.
 45. Mastrini, Guillermo and Becerra, Martin. *Periodistas y Magnates. Estructura y concentracion de las industrias culturales en America Latina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006.
 46. Albornoz, Luis. *Periodismo Digital. Los Grandes Diarios en la Red*. Buenos Aires: La Crujia, 2007.
 47. Becerra, Martin, Marino, Santiago, and Mastrini Guillermo. "Mapping Digital Media: Argentina." Open Society Foundation (OSI), Feb. 29, 2012. July 16, 2012. <<http://www.soros.org/sites/default/files/mapping-digital-media-argentina-20120404.pdf>>.
 48. The C4 of free-to-air-TV has been calculated over the total TV audiences, including pay TV, because there are no separate measures. In a country with a high penetration of cable TV, this distorts the results.