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Digital Communication Strategies and Corporate Identity: The Case of Alltech

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates how Alltech, a multinational company operating in the agri-food industry, constructs and communicates its corporate identity across its digital communication channels: corporate website, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and press releases. The first part of the dissertation introduces the theoretical framework, covering key concepts from corporate identity to the linguistic construction of corporate discourse. The analytical chapters examine each sub-corpus separately, focusing on four grammatical categories (pronoun use, verb choices, evaluative adjectives and lexical fields) as well as visual elements. The cross-channel discussion then brings together the findings of the individual analyses to address the study's research questions. The findings reveal four recurring themes (scientific expertise, sustainability, people and founding legacy) that directly reflect Alltech's declared corporate identity and values. The analysis also identifies that despite the register variations a coherent corporate narrative emerges, one in which the same values and themes are consistently expressed through communicative forms appropriate to each channel and its target audience. The interviews with Alltech communication professionals further confirm that the patterns identified in the corpus are the result of conscious strategic choices, revealing a high degree of alignment between the company's declared communication strategy and its actual linguistic and visual practices.

RIASSUNTO

Questa tesi analizza come Alltech, un'azienda multinazionale operante nel settore agri-food, costruisce e comunica la propria identità attraverso i suoi canali di comunicazione digitale: sito web istituzionale, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn e comunicati stampa. La prima parte della tesi introduce il quadro teorico, coprendo i concetti chiave dalla corporate identity alla costruzione linguistica del discorso corporate. I capitoli analitici esaminano separatamente ciascun sub-corpus, concentrandosi su quattro categorie grammaticali (uso dei pronomi, scelte verbali, aggettivi e campi lessicali) nonché sugli elementi visivi. La discussione cross-canale raccoglie poi i risultati delle singole analisi per rispondere alle research questions dello studio. I risultati rivelano quattro temi ricorrenti (competenza scientifica, sostenibilità, persone e legacy del fondatore) che riflettono direttamente l'identità e i valori dichiarati da Alltech. L'analisi evidenzia inoltre che, nonostante le variazioni di registro, emerge una narrativa aziendale coerente, in cui gli stessi valori e temi vengono costantemente espressi attraverso forme comunicative appropriate a ciascun canale e al suo pubblico di riferimento. Le interviste con i professionisti della comunicazione di Alltech confermano ulteriormente che i pattern identificati nel corpus sono il risultato di scelte strategiche consapevoli, rivelando un elevato grado di allineamento tra la strategia di comunicazione dichiarata dall'azienda e le sue pratiche linguistiche e visive concrete.

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Introduction

"The future of corporate communication is unreservedly digital" (Badham, 2022, p. 1). The technological revolution and the advent of the Internet have completely transformed the ways people and companies communicate. As the primary means through which organizations interact with their stakeholders, digital channels are paramount in the corporate world and developing an effective digital communication strategy has become essential for firms seeking to build and maintain their reputation. In this context, digital channels are not only mere communication tools but rather communicative spaces where corporate identity is continuously constructed and projected to a wide range of audiences.

Although the need for a thorough digital communication strategy concerns all firms, some industries face stronger societal expectations that require them to be more transparent and accountable in their communication. That is the case of companies operating in the agri-food industry, a sector which is constantly under pressure due to its environmental impact and societal relevance. In light of this, agri-food companies are increasingly leveraging the power of digital channels to take control of their narrative and legitimise their actions in the eyes of their stakeholders.

The present study focuses on Alltech, a multinational company operating in the agri-food industry specialised in animal nutrition and crop science solutions. Alltech has fully embraced the digitalization of corporate communication and is currently active on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and X. Moreover, as *Tell the Story* is one of the corporate values, it becomes particularly relevant to analyse how the company enacts this value across its digital channels. The choice of Alltech as a case study is motivated by the researcher's direct access to the company through an internship experience. The internship provided the researcher with an insight into the company's culture and communication processes which will be relevant for the interpretation and the contextualization of the materials.

Although a substantial body of research has explored corporate communication in the digital era, studies combining a linguistic approach with the analysis of corporate identity construction in the agri-food sector remain scarce. Moreover, most scholars focus on single channels, overlooking how the discursive construction of corporate identity may vary across different platforms. The objective of this study is to fill the gap in the literature by adopting a multi-channel approach in the analysis of Alltech's digital communication. In particular, the analysis will focus on how the company builds its corporate identity across three categories of digital channels: website, social media platforms and press releases.

In order to address this objective, the present study will be guided by the following research questions:

MAIN RQ: How does Alltech construct and communicate its corporate identity across its digital communication channels?

RQ1 - Themes and values

What values and themes recur most frequently in Alltech's digital communication, and how do they reflect the company's declared corporate identity?

RQ1.1: What values and themes recur most frequently in Alltech's digital communication?

RQ1.2: How do they reflect the company's declared corporate identity?

RQ2 - Linguistic patterns across channels

How do Alltech's tone of voice, pronoun use, verb and adjective choices, and lexical fields vary across its digital communication channels, and what do these variations reveal about the company's communicative strategies towards different audiences?

RQ2.1: How do Alltech's tone of voice, pronoun use, verb and adjective choices, and lexical fields vary across its digital communication channels?

RQ2.2: What do these variations reveal about the company's communicative strategies towards different audiences?

RQ3 - Narrative coherence

To what extent does a coherent corporate narrative emerge across Alltech's digital communication channels, and how does the company balance the promotion of its core business with broader values of sustainability, innovation and inclusivity?

RQ3.1: To what extent does a coherent corporate narrative emerge across Alltech's digital communication channels?

RQ3.2: How does the company balance the promotion of its core business with broader values of sustainability, innovation and inclusivity?

These research questions will be answered combining quantitative and qualitative analysis, as it will be explained in the next chapters.

As for the structure of the thesis, it is organised as follows. Chapter 1 outlines the theoretical framework encompassing notions of corporate identity, corporate communication, digital tools for

corporate communication and linguistic construction of corporate identity. Chapter 2 concerns the methodology adopted for the study as well as the presentation of the company. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 focus on the analysis of website, social media and press releases. Findings and differences regarding the digital channels are discussed in Chapter 6 while Chapter 7 includes interviews with Alltech's marketing and communication specialists.

Chapter 1 - Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical background that underpins this study. Drawing on scholarship in corporate communication, applied linguistics and digital media studies, it introduces the key concepts and analytical tools that will guide the analysis of Alltech's digital communication in the following chapters. The chapter begins by examining the notions of *corporate identity* and *corporate image* and their relationship with *corporate communication*, before moving on to explore how these concepts have evolved in the digital era. It then focuses on the linguistic and multimodal features of corporate discourse, with particular attention to the tools that will be applied in the analysis.

1.1 Corporate identity: definitions and models

1.1.1 Corporate identity: a contested concept

Corporate identity has increasingly been recognised as a strategic asset that firms must actively develop and manage. As Van Riel states: "The identity of a corporation has been recognized as a strategic resource and source of competitive advantage" (Van Riel, 1995, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p.76). According to the researcher, a strong and clear corporate identity meets the needs of various stakeholders contributing to motivating employees and building customers' trust in the company.

Notwithstanding the relevance of the concept, Melewar argues that "the actual definition of corporate identity is highly contentious and many have opted not to define the term precisely" (Melewar, 2002, p. 76). The absence of a univocal notion of corporate identity has created confusion about the term. Melewar therefore decided to report some of the most agreed-upon definitions. Van Riel defines it as "the self-presentation of an organization, rooted in the behaviour of individual organizational members, expressing the organization's 'sameness over time' or continuity, 'distinctiveness,' and 'centrality'" (Van Riel, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 79). The idea of continuity and stability over time has been adopted by other scholars like Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, who describe corporate identity as something that "goes back to the existence of a system of characteristics which has a pattern and which gives the company its specificity, its stability and its coherence" (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1995, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 79). Both definitions emphasise that corporate identity is not based on a single organisational characteristic, but it emerges from the combination of different characteristics and their continuity over time. Olins refers to corporate identity as "the explicit management of all the ways in which the organization presents itself through experiences and perceptions to all its audiences" (Olins, 1995, p. XVII). The same idea of presentation is recalled by Markwick and Fill whose definition of corporate identity is: "the organization's presentation of itself

to its various stakeholders and the means by which it distinguishes itself from all other organizations" (Markwick and Fill, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 77).

Drawing on a systematic review of the corporate identity literature, Balmer (1998) identifies three distinguishing features that emerge consistently across scholarly definitions. First, corporate identity is about the reality of an organisation including "its strategy, philosophy, history, business scope, the range and type of products and services offered, and its communication, both formal and informal" (Balmer, 1998, p. 979). Secondly, corporate identity is a multi-faceted concept since it comprises elements such as "corporate culture, corporate behaviour, products and services, communication and design as well as market conditions and strategies". Lastly, corporate identity relies on the *corporate personality* of the company, i.e. "it is based on the values present within the organisation" (Balmer, 1998, p. 980).

1.1.2 Dimensions of corporate identity

In his literature review, Melewar outlines four dimensions of corporate identity: *communication/visual identity*, *behaviour*, *corporate culture* and *market conditions*. Each one includes different elements.

Corporate communication is described by Van Riel as

> an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communications are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible, so as to create a favourable basis for relationships upon which the company is dependent. (Van Riel, 1995, as cited by Melewar, 2002, p. 81)

Corporate communication includes different types of communication: *management*, *marketing* and *organizational communication*. Melewar argues that management communication is crucial as it is the tool used by top managers to inspire internal stakeholders. Corporate communication also includes several forms of *uncontrollable communication*, which is a critical element nowadays as companies are increasingly under media scrutiny. As Hatch and Schultz point out "the media is taking more and more interest in the private lives of organizations and in exposing any divergence it finds between corporate images and organizational actions" (Hatch and Schultz, 2005, p. 116). According to Olins, *architecture* and *location* are also determining factors for corporate identity, as both the design of buildings and their geographical setting contribute to the image a firm projects. Lastly, this dimension encompasses *visual identity* which "consists of the corporate name, logotype and/or symbol, typography, and color" (Melewar and Saunders, 1998, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 83). Melewar also highlights the power of visual identity in guiding consumers' purchase decisions.

Behaviour, which is a difficult dimension to measure and evaluate, covers corporate, management and employee behaviour. Many scholars agree upon the relevance of the actions of the corporation in shaping its identity. According to Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, "the organization communicates by sending signals that have not been created in a deliberate and conscious way" (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 83). As far as management behaviour is concerned, Hatch and Schultz link the importance of top management behaviour to "the increased interaction between the organization and its stakeholders and the multiplicity of roles that stakeholders now play" (Hatch and Schultz, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 83). Some scholars emphasise the role of employees' behaviour in determining the identity of a company. Kiriakidou and Millward (2000), for instance, argue that it is thanks to employees' activities that the features of a company are presented to external stakeholders.

For the third dimension, *corporate culture*, different definitions exist depending on the relationship that scholars attribute to corporate identity and corporate culture. Downey describes corporate culture as "a company's shared values, beliefs and behaviour" and he sees it as something that "flows from and is the consequence of corporate identity" (Downey, 1986/87, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 84). Hatch and Schultz define culture as "a context within which interpretations of organizational identity are formed and intentions to influence organizational image are formulated" (Hatch and Schultz, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 84). Culture includes *goals, philosophies* and *principles, nationality* and *organizational imagery and history*. Concerning nationality, Avison explains that "different strengths and weaknesses are associated with different countries" (Avison, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 84) and that consumers pay attention to the company's nationality. As for imagery, Moingeon and Ramanantsoa define it as a set of rites, myths and taboos which represent "the visual part of the identity or the culture of the organization" (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 84). The same scholars see history as something that helps defining corporate identity and is in turn influenced by identity.

The last subdimension of corporate identity is *market conditions*, a category that includes the *nature* of the industry and corporate and marketing strategies. With respect to the nature of the industry, some scholars point out that when the generic industry identity is strong, it may be more difficult for single firms to project a strong individual identity. Markwick and Fill (1997) focus on the corporate strategy process and they argue that it is the strategy, not the content, that is linked to a sense of continuity over time and is therefore relevant when analysing corporate personality.

1.1.3 Identity, image and reputation

When approaching corporate identity, it is useful to retrace the steps of the evolution of this concept as several conceptualisations have been proposed since the 1950s. In his paper, Balmer underlines that during the first stages, scholars mainly "focused on the concept and management of corporate image" (Balmer, 1998, p. 963). Consultants, in particular, highlighted the role of graphic design in summarizing a company's values. Only in the 1980s the focus shifted from visual perception to reality, with a growing number of scholars who referred to identity as the distinct attributes of an organization, i.e. "what it is" (Balmer, 1995, p. 31).

Balmer identifies three disciplinary approaches to corporate image, namely the *psychology paradigm*, the *graphic design paradigm* and the *marketing and public relations paradigm*. The psychology paradigm interprets image as "the picture which your organisation has created in the minds of your various publics" (Bristol, 1960, as cited in Balmer, 1998, p. 966). Graphic design is at the core of the second approach and Balmer argues that graphic design mainly serves four purposes: i) it communicates "the organisation's mission and philosophy"; ii) it encapsulates "the organisation's cultural values"; iii) it underpins "the organisation's communications efforts"; and iv) it is a means of "keeping the visual identity fashionable" (Balmer, 1998, p. 966). Lastly, according to the marketing paradigm, corporate image is "the net result of the interactions of all the experiences, impressions, beliefs, feelings and knowledge that people have about a company" (Bevis in Bernstein 1984, as cited in Balmer, 1998, p. 967).

The concept of corporate image is therefore problematic and many scholars have raised concerns over its vagueness and negative connotations. As for the multiplicity of interpretations, Grunig argues that

> all of this confusion about image production and consumption and about the different ways in which people consume messages […] suggests that image is an umbrella term covering all of the communication activities and their effects that occur between an organisation and its publics […]. In another sense, image defines the symbolic relationships among organisation and public relationships that occur strictly through communicative interaction". Olins (1979), on the other hand, highlights that corporate image "implies the use of sophisticated techniques of manipulation and as such is both pretentious and sinister. (Grunig, 1993, as cited in Balmer, 1998, p. 969)

Being image a problematic concept, research in the field has therefore shifted towards identity, a notion considered more grounded in the reality of what an organisation truly is, rather than in the perceptions of its publics.

Another notion that is widely explored is the one of *corporate reputation*. Weigelt and Camerer define it as "a set of attributes ascribed to a firm inferred from a firm's past actions" (Weigelt and Camerer, 1988, as cited in Balmer, 1998, p. 970). In other words, a company's reputation is a perception which is built over time and depends on the company's behaviour. With these concepts in mind (reputation, image and identity) it is important to note that these three elements may not go in the same direction. In fact, "Quite often there are differences between an organisation's identity (or identities) and its image(s) and reputation(s)" (Balmer, 1998, p. 978). For example, even though the identity of a company (its reality) may be positive, the image (perception) stakeholders retain may be negative, and the other way round is also possible. Balmer concludes by stating that it is important for companies to consider "changes in the environment and thus, over time, acquire a favourable corporate reputation which reflects a positive and strategically advantageous corporate identity". From his point of view, there is no advantage for a company in having "a favourable corporate identity if the corporate image and corporate reputation are bad" (Balmer, 1998, p. 979).

1.1.4 Corporate culture and corporate identity

As already mentioned above, corporate culture and corporate identity are intertwined concepts. In this sense, it is interesting to highlight divergences among scholars when defining the relationships between the two concepts. Downey, for instance, affirms that "identity […] is to culture what cause is to effect". According to him, "corporate culture - which has been described as a company's shared values, beliefs and behaviour - in fact flows from and is the consequence of corporate identity". Furthermore, he refers to identity as "the fundamental style, quality, character and personality of an organization, those forces which define, motivate and embody it" (Downey, 1986/87, p. 7). This point of view differs from the theory elaborated by Hatch and Schultz according to whom

> "organizational culture is not a determinant or variable of corporate identity, but is in fact 'a context within which interpretations of organizational identity are formed and intentions to influence organizational image are formulated'" (Hatch and Schultz, 1997, as cited in Melewar, 2002, p. 84).

They also define organizational culture as "the tacit organizational understandings (e. g., assumptions, beliefs and values) that contextualize efforts to make meaning, including internal self-definition" (Hatch and Schultz, 2005, p. 121).

The studies of the two scholars are particularly relevant for their theory on *identity dynamics*. They argue that organizational culture is nowadays increasingly "open and available for scrutiny to anyone interested in a company". This is due to the fact that organizations are trying to build personal

relationships with their external stakeholders who, in turn, "are encouraged to think of themselves and behave as members of the organization" (Hatch and Schultz, 2005, p. 116). Therefore, their identity dynamics maintains the idea that

> organizational identity is not an aggregation of perceptions of an organization resting in peoples' heads, it is a dynamic set of processes by which an organization's self is continuously socially constructed from the interchange between internal and external definitions of the organization offered by all organizational stakeholders" (Hatch and Schultz, 2005, p. 128).

This dynamic is based on four processes: *mirroring*, "the process by which identity is mirrored in the images of others", *reflecting*, "the process by which identity is embedded in cultural understandings", *expressing*, "the process by which culture makes itself known through identity claims", and *impressing*, "the process by which expressions of identity leave impressions on others" (Hatch and Schultz, 2005, p. 117). To summarize this theory, Hatch and Schultz explain that

> just as individuals form their identities in relation to both internal and external definitions of self, organizations form theirs in relation to culture and image. we will argue that organizational identity is neither wholly cultural nor wholly imagistic, it is instead constituted by a dynamic set of processes that interrelate the two. (Hatch and Schultz, 2005, p. 122)

Among the four processes outlined by Hatch and Schultz, expressing is particularly relevant to the present study, as it describes how an organisation's internal culture becomes visible through external identity claims, such as communication, behaviour and symbolic practices. In the case of Alltech, this internal culture may be observed in several concrete practices that will be explored in the next chapters, all of which embody a strong organisational emphasis on storytelling and a shared sense of belonging.

Building on this framework, the present analysis approaches Alltech's digital communication as a site where this internal culture is externally expressed. Examining the company's website, social media platforms and press releases can therefore be understood not merely as a study of communicative choices, but as an investigation into how Alltech's organisational identity is constructed and projected through these channels.

1.2 Corporate communication

1.2.1 Defining corporate communication

After analysing the interrelation among corporate identity, image and reputation, it is worth introducing corporate communication, its role and its relationship with the concepts which were mentioned above.

Cornelissen defines corporate communication as

> a management function that offers a framework and vocabulary for the effective coordination of all means of communications with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favourable reputations with stakeholder groups upon which the organization is dependent. (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 23)

Additionally, he distinguishes corporate communication from *business* and *management communications*. As a matter of fact, while corporate communication prioritizes "the organization as a whole" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 20) and how it is presented to the stakeholders, business and management communications are more practical concepts: they focus on "writing, presentational and other communications skills" and they relate to more "interpersonal situations […] within the organization". In sum, corporate communication is a broad concept that does not only include technical skills but also "concepts, principles and management approaches". Cornelissen highlights the need for communications practitioners to master management skills in order to

> analyse the position and reputation of their own organization with all of its stakeholders, determine the corporate profile or 'identity' (i.e. the corporate values, messages, images and stories) that needs to be projected, develop and plan communications programmes for it, and evaluate the results that these programmes have achieved afterwards. (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 21)

The umbrella-like nature of corporate communication is further explained by Cornelissen in his historical overview of marketing and public relations functions. Having different scopes (marketing deals with segments of the market and public relations concerns all the publics), these two functions were traditionally planned individually. Cornelissen cites Kotler and Mindak's stance on these activities: "marketing exists to sense, serve, and satisfy customer needs at a profit', while 'public relations exists to produce goodwill with the company's various publics so that these publics do not interfere in the firm's profit-making ability" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 38). More recently, the need to align the two functions has been emphasized and now they "are balanced and managed together from within an overarching framework" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 41), which is corporate communication.

Van Riel, for its part, articulated his own definition of corporate communication as such:

> Communication is the lifeblood of all organizations: it is the medium through which companies large and small access the vital resources they need in order to operate. It is through communication that organizations acquire the primary resources they need (such as capital, labour, and raw materials) and build up valuable stocks of secondary resources (such as "legitimacy" and "reputation") that enable them to operate. (Van Riel, 2007, p. 18)

Van Riel therefore directly links the way a company communicates to its possibility "to acquire resources and to influence the context within which it carries out its activities". Like Cornelissen, Van Riel includes under this term all types of communications developed within a company, focusing

on four major categories: marketing communications, public relations, investor relations and employee communications. He also includes all those initiatives undertaken by companies as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility efforts. These efforts, Van Riel points out, "are important in helping a company to build a more favourable and welcome social environment for its routine operations" (Van Riel, 2007, p. 19, 20).

1.2.2 Identity, image, reputation and legitimacy

In exploring corporate communication, Cornelissen identifies the dynamics existing between communication, identity, image and reputation which then leads him to the concept of stakeholder legitimacy.

At the core of communication lies identity, which serves as "an anchor around which all activities and communications can be structured and carried out". If the same identity is at the basis of all the communications, actions, behaviours and products of a company, then it may be easier for the same company to produce consistent messages. Identity ensures companies distinguish themselves from competitors and allows stakeholders to "recognize" and "have a clearer picture of the organization" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 68).

Then, in order to link corporate communication to image and reputation, the scholar explains that

> Corporate communication is geared towards establishing favourable corporate images and reputations with all of its stakeholder groups, so that these groups act in a way that is conducive to the organization. In other words, through favourable images and reputations existing and prospective customers will purchase products and services, members of the community will appreciate the organization, investors will grant financial resources, and so on. (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 27)

Despite being both expressed as a product of communication, Cornelissen distinguishes image and reputation. While the first is "the immediate impressions of individuals when confronted by a signal or message that comes from an organization", the latter concerns "more enduring general estimations established over time" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 84). The scholar points out that, in an ideal situation, "such a corporate reputation is in line with the communicated corporate identity and thus broadly consistent with the way in which the organization wants itself to be understood" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 56).

Stakeholders represent another key element of Cornelissen's theory. Following the stakeholder model, he argues that companies need to identify their stakeholders and provide each one of them with the information they are interested in. Although each group of stakeholders receives specific information, there must be the same corporate identity that guides and unifies all communications.

The ultimate objective of this process is to be considered legitimate by all groups of stakeholders which ensure the prosperity of the company. The concept of *legitimacy* goes beyond financial accountability and includes both social and ecological actions undertaken by the company. Furthermore, it is not a stable notion as every stakeholder group has different expectations regarding the company and what feels acceptable. According to Cornelissen,

> having a *reputation* as a financially solid organization with a proven social and ecological track record (particularly in such areas as labour conditions, environmental performance and promotion of human rights) normally provides sufficient ground to be found legitimate by most, if not all, stakeholder groups. (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 60)

This broader concept of legitimacy is particularly relevant to companies such as Alltech which attach great importance to social and environmental accountability in their communication, as will be explored in the following chapters.

1.2.3 Coordinating communication across channels: the sustainable corporate story

Another important aspect of corporate communication highlighted by Van Riel is the need for coordination between all the channels used by companies to communicate with their stakeholders. As he puts it: "When orchestration of communications is limited, an organization's image and reputation are put at risk" (Van Riel, 2007, p. 20). This danger is particularly concrete when multiple senders of information exist within an organization, especially if they are not well coordinated. Another obstacle to communication coordination is the one faced by multinational firms, "where the coordination of communications often appears to be a balancing act between corporate headquarters and the various divisions and business units involved" (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 23).

One way of overcoming these difficulties is to create a strong and coherent *sustainable corporate story* that "serves as a frame around which to hang the full array of communications the organization disseminates" (van Riel, 2001, as cited in Van Riel, 2007, p. 27), thus laying the foundation for all expressions of the company. It becomes therefore particularly relevant to understand how companies employ language to tell their story, especially in the case of Alltech, one of whose values is *Tell the story*.

1.3 Corporate communication in the digital era

1.3.1 The shift towards digital corporate communication

Before explaining the role of language in corporate communication, it is necessary to introduce the implications of its digitalization. As Badham points out, "the future of corporate communication is

unreservedly digital" (Badham, 2022, p. 1). The already occurring digital transformation is defined as "an effort to enable existing business models by integrating advanced technologies" (Bughin et al., 2019, as cited in Badham, 2022, p. 8). According to Badham (2022) these technologies have a major impact on corporate communication practices. This leads to redefining corporate communication from a digital perspective. Badham offers the following definition of *digital corporate communication*:

> An organization's strategic management of digital technologies, digital infrastructures and digitalization processes to improve communication with internal and external stakeholders and more broadly within society for the maintenance of organizational tangible and intangible assets. (Badham, 2022, p. 9)

Badham describes the changes caused by the advent of the digital in corporate communication as "seismic", referring to the way social media and digital platforms have fundamentally democratised corporate communication. Social media and digital platforms have, as a matter of fact, redefined the power relations between companies and stakeholders regarding communication by "empowering digitally savvy stakeholders and disempowering organizations, often challenging old fashioned attitudes to stakeholder relationships and communication" (Badham, 2022, p. 1). This means that companies have lost part of the control they held on their communication since now stakeholders may influence the way a company is perceived through comments and reviews.

1.3.2 Opportunities and challenges of digital communication

There is a new field within communication which specifically addresses how "digital technologies can modify communication processes along the whole stakeholder journey with the organization" (Badham, 2022, p. 5). The aim of this field, called *CommTech* (Communication Technology), is to assist companies in the creation of a new type of relationship with their stakeholders which includes the creation and the delivery of personalized content and the management of online feedback.

Badham (2022) presents a series of opportunities and challenges for companies due to the advent of digital corporate communication. On the one hand, it is true that digital platforms and social media enable companies to share messages quickly across all continents to build stronger relationships with their stakeholders, on the other hand it is easier for such messages to be manipulated and used against the company. In many cases, "activists make use of digital tools to target organizations across supply chains to achieve their socio-political aims". This phenomenon concerns especially companies operating in highly criticized industries. Criticism may lead to *brandjacking* and character assassination which occur when activists use social media "to disrupt organizations' narration through character assassination of organizational leaders and hijacking organizations' communication campaigns" (Badham, 2022, p. 11). Such phenomena pose a serious threat to companies' reputation.

As Badham highlights, “corporate crisis forming among posts in one Facebook account can spread fast and furiously across online social networks, damaging a corporation’s reputation within hours” (Badham, 2022, p. 1).

However, the scholar insists on the fact that crisis emerge when the organization fails in managing stakeholders’ complaints. He points out that companies need to learn “how to take advantage of digital technology to manage diverse stakeholder relationships and respond to complaints” as corporate communication may mitigate those complaints “before they collectively escalate into socially-mediated crises in digital arenas” (Badham, 2022, p. 11).

To sum up, the use of digital technologies for corporate communication has led to a stakeholder-centric approach which allows companies to build more intimate relationships with them. The other side of the coin is that companies are more exposed to criticism from the so-called “hateholders”. As a result, company reputation is continuously shaped due to “positive, negative and neutral social evaluations of organizations expressed in social media” (Badham, 2022, p. 10).

1.3.3 Identity construction in the digital era

As already introduced by Badham, in the digital era corporate identity is not unilaterally constructed by the company but it is increasingly built together with stakeholders. Melewar explains that

> As the economic environment becomes more customer-driven, corporate and brand identity become essential aspects of organisation strategy driven by customer demands for value co-creation. Hence brands – corporate, products, service – today are collectively defined by their customers, based on personal or business requirements for economic, emotional or experiential value, deriving from personal experiences and word of mouth. (Melewar, 2022, p. 23)

Melewar introduces a recent view on corporate identity that goes beyond the mere visual side of identity to include non-visual aspects. It is a holistic perspective which “incorporates all sensory stimuli based on the five human senses (i.e. seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching)” (Melewar, 2022, p. 22). The result is *corporate sensory identity* and it implies that companies may convey their identity by leveraging all five senses. In the digital era this is particularly relevant as digital platforms are used to create immersive experiences for consumers that “enable brand associations” (Melewar, 2022, p. 25). An example cited by the scholar is Gucci App which, thanks to augmented reality, enables users to virtually try items on.

Badham and Melewar agree on another aspect of the digitalization of corporate communication, that is the fact that companies are increasingly expected to “be more accountable and report their commitments to environmental and socially responsible efforts”. Social media, indeed, has “allowed

organizations to create interactive and personalized experiences about diverse corporate social responsibility (CSR) topics and activities with different stakeholders" (Badham, 2022, p. 10). Melewar refers to this phenomenon as a "humanistic tension", that is the pressure companies feel to uphold and show commitment to human and social values. This "has become a fundamental embedded dimension of an ethical corporate branding strategy that leverages on consumer clicktivism" (Melewar, 2022, p. 27). Nowadays, consumers are more aware of certain societal issues and therefore expect companies to be socially engaged. As a consequence, it has become extremely important for firms to include these aspects when projecting their identity. This strategy exploits the phenomenon known as *clicktivism* which implies the use of simple digital actions (like, repost, share, comment) to show support for social causes. Companies often create content that leverages on this tendency to strengthen the reputation of the brand.

1.4 Websites and social media: digital channels as corporate communication tools

1.4.1 Corporate websites: the institutional digital presence

As previously anticipated, the digitalization process has pushed companies to adopt new online communication channels. Corporate websites were the first digital channels companies embraced to adapt to the digital era. Malavasi (2017) states that

> Websites are unanimously regarded as a virtual shop window, which is functional not simply to divulge multimodal information about firms and their products cheaply and in a timely manner, but also to showcase the admirable values and commendable principles which guide them in the management of their everyday businesses. (Malavasi, 2017, p. 24)

In this sense, a *website* is a functional tool because it enables firms to showcase their products while communicating their values to their stakeholders. This means that corporate websites contribute to the construction of corporate image and identity.

However, in order to be an efficient communication tool, websites need to fulfil certain criteria. Described as tools that "deliver good value to both end users and principal organization in *mature information formats*" (Farrell, 2014), websites "mediate knowledge that is *useful* as it meets the information needs of stakeholders and the public at large, and is adequate to their varied background and search skills" (Cacchiani, 2025, p. 34). Over the years, some features have been identified to ensure "positive user experiences on corporate websites" (Loranger, 2015).

Usability research highlights the need for corporate websites to adopt plain language, that is "writing digital content for clarity, brevity and scannability". Clarity allows firms to include both domain experts, "who want clear, concise information devoid of unnecessary jargon or complex terms"

(Cacchiani, 2025, p. 35), and international audiences. Loranger suggests avoiding long sentences and high-sounding words which "result in great sacrifices to readability and credibility, and do not make the principal organization sound smarter" (Loranger, 2015). This means that companies need to focus on brevity in their digital content, "using short sentences and paragraphs, removing dependent clauses, doing away with unnecessary words" (Dykes, 2023). The last criterion, *scannability*, concerns the layout of the website and how information is structured. Scholars highlight the need for information to be displayed in a hierarchical order. Some techniques that favour a better in-page scannability are "itemized lists of hyperlinks, FAQs and jump links that separate questions and answers" (Farrell, 2015) as well as links that direct the reader to specific subsections of the website. Moreover, scannability is positively influenced both by the strategic use of text formats such as "bolding and highlighting, applying color and high contrast, white space and indentation, and variation in typeface and size" (Tognazzini, 2014) and by "chunking content by topic in visual representation tools such as bullets, callouts and tables" (Loranger, 2015). Although websites can still be considered as the institutional digital channel for companies, new digital platforms are now available and increasingly essential for organizations that want to build a strong digital presence.

1.4.2 Social media: definitions and classifications

According to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), social media is an evolution of websites that goes "back to the Internet's roots, since it retransforms the World Wide Web to what it was initially created for: a platform to facilitate information exchange between users" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60). They define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content". They refer to *Web 2.0*, "a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion", and *User Generated Content*, "the various forms of media content that are publicly available and created by end-users" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Social networking sites differ from traditional media because they "allow firms to engage in timely and direct end-consumer contact at relatively low cost and higher levels of efficiency than can be achieved with more traditional communication tools" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 67). However, the rise in social media has led companies to lose control on the information: "communication about brands happens, with or without permission of the firms in question" (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 242).

Kietzmann et al. suggest a *honeycomb framework* to identify the seven building blocks of social media. Each block represents a feature that may be more or less relevant for a particular platform. The seven blocks are: *identity*, *conversations*, *sharing*, *presence*, *relationships*, *reputation* and

groups. Identity is "the extent to which users reveal their identities in a social media setting", conversation "represents the extent to which users communicate with other users in a social media setting" and sharing stands for "the extent to which users exchange, distribute, and receive content". While presence is described as "the extent to which users can know if other users are accessible", relationship "represents the extent to which users can be related to other users". Finally, if reputation "is the extent to which users can identify the standing of others, including themselves, in a social media setting", groups refer to "the extent to which users can form communities and subcommunities" (Kietzmann et al., 2011, p. 244-247).

The scholars were able to distinguish social media platforms on the basis of the relevance given to each block of the framework. For instance, while LinkedIn strategically focuses on identity, relations and reputation, Facebook is built around relations, identity and conversations (Kietzmann et al., 2011). As a matter of fact, if LinkedIn is primarily used as a professional networking tool and as a self-branding tool, Facebook is linked to hobbies and maintaining pre-existing friendships. Therefore, it will be interesting to explore whether these differences emerge in the way Alltech communicates in both platforms.

1.4.3 Corporate communication on social media: strategies and engagement

Several studies on digital corporate communication focus on social media as "an important public relations tool with which companies create dialogues with their publics" (Men & Tsai, 2012, p. 723), thus highlighting the role of social media in fostering stakeholders' engagement. According to scholars, there are three main strategies for cultivating relationships on the internet: *disclosure*, *information dissemination* and *interactivity*. Disclosure "refers to the willingness of the organization to engage in direct and open conversation with publics" (Men & Tsai, 2012, p. 724). In order to be extremely open, organizations may consider providing "a full description of the organization and its history, mission, and goals" while using "logos or other visual cues to provide intuitive identifications" (Waters et al., 2009, as cited in Men & Tsai, 2012, p. 724). Information dissemination "addresses the needs, concerns, and interests of publics while disseminating organizational information". As already mentioned, each stakeholders group seeks a specific kind of information coming from the organization and companies need to address those needs to be effective in their communication. Information dissemination reaches its full potential when companies "redirect users through hyperlinks to such external content as media coverage and microsites" (Men & Tsai, 2012, p. 725). Lastly, interactivity, which is one of the main advantages of social media with respect to traditional media, may be divided into three categories: human-to-computer interactivity (i.e. navigation), human-to-human interactivity (i.e. users contact the organization) and human-to-content

interactivity (i.e. commenting on the organization's posts) (McMillan, Hoy, Kim, and McMahan, 2008, as cited in Men & Tsai, 2012, p. 725).

Social media communication is described as "interactive but also personal, and simultaneously communal, participatory, and collaborative" and these features enable companies to "engage publics in constant conversations" (Men & Tsai, 2016, p. 2). Moreover, engagement has a direct influence on authenticity and transparency. It is pointed out that:

> The open and user-empowered model of social media engagement has increased both users' expectations and organizations' opportunities to share information and knowledge, and in turn, reinforce organizational transparency. (Men & Tsai, 2016, p. 3)

Since building relationships is a strategic goal of corporate communication on social media, a range of studies have analysed how companies should act in order to "nurture quality relationships with publics on SNSs" (Waters, et al., 2009; Men & Tsai, 2012, as cited in Men & Tsai, 2016, p. 6). Disclosure, information dissemination and interactivity translate into practical attitudes such as "sharing truthful and unbiased information in an open, transparent, timely manner" but also "being attentive and responsive to the publics' comments, inquiries, or even complaints" since this indicates "a company's commitment to its publics, showing openness in its communication and willingness to address the publics' needs and concerns". These features characterise a two-way communication which "facilitates dialogues, builds mutual understanding, and ultimately, quality relationships" (Men & Tsai, 2016, p. 6).

While some scholars only focus on mere analyses of the phenomenon, others try to provide companies with a set of measures aiming at capitalizing "the potential of social media to engage publics in a dialogical, interactive, personal, authentic, and genuine manner". For instance, it is important to "understand publics' motivations of engagement and develop customized messages that tailor to publics' needs and interests" (Men & Tsai, 2016, p. 8). Customized messages benefit from a prior segmentation of the public according to specific criteria such as demographics and localization. Moreover, companies should aim at providing their audiences with enjoyable content which satisfies the need for entertainment. Men & Tsai (2016) lastly address the need for firms to "build a unique corporate character that is congruent with organizational culture, values, and goals". Therefore, Men & Tsai suggest that companies "strive to personify itself and project an agreeable, honest, sincere, empathetic, pleasant, supportive, and responsible character on social media" (Men & Tsai, 2016, p. 9). Apart from reinforcing corporate culture and identity, a corporate character which is aligned with the corporate values also enables the company to distinguish itself from competitors.

1.4.4 The role of corporate leaders on social media

In the last years, research in the field has delved into another essential aspect of the way companies communicate online which is the role of corporate leaders on social media and their impact on the relationship companies build with their stakeholders. Scholars point out that not only do stakeholders expect more transparency from companies, but they also "expect greater access to the insights and vision of corporate leaders in more open dialogues" (Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1849). These expectations are well known in the corporate world and more than 80% of CEOs "believe that social media is an important platform for them to deepen connections with customers, employees, and investors" (Brandfog, 2013, as cited in Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1849). In fact, the previously highlighted features of social media, reduce the traditional power distance between the public and executive figures thus allowing them to adopt a more symmetrical communication which "may further enhance a company's transparent communication represented by the accessibility and sociability of its CEO" (Men & Stacks, 2014, as cited in Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1849). Overall, the online presence of CEOs "may work to personify and humanize their corporations and ultimately help their organizations to get closer to their online stakeholders" (Vidgen et al., 2013, as cited in Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1849).

This phenomenon is linked to *parasocial interaction* (PSI). PSI is defined as "a user's interpersonal involvement with a media personality (including CEOs on social media) through mediated communication.". Although in most cases PSI involves a difference in status, "the personal nature of social media serves to humanize the CEOs, bringing them closer to the publics, and thus may engender stronger PSIs" (Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1852).

In analysing the role of CEOs' online presence, scholars have also distinguished between two communication styles that CEOs may decide to adopt. While the responsive style is associated to sincerity, friendliness and compassion, the assertive style characterises CEOs who act as strong leaders and are more aggressive, competitive and dominant. Findings suggest that

> although CEOs as top leaders are expected to speak up and be assertive and even dominant, the responsive communication style should be adopted for relationship-building purposes. Especially on social media where the communication hierarchies have been reduced, CEOs' images may be expected to transform from being distant and intimidating to being approachable and amicable. (Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1859)

Although one may think that the assertive tone is more beneficial to the CEO's image, scholars suggest using a mix of both professional and personal tone to "actively foster conversations and personal relationships with their social media followers". The responsive style, in particular, positions CEOs "as empathetic, caring friends whom publics aspire to meet in person". This phenomenon, in turn, improves stakeholders "trust of, satisfaction with, and advocacy for the company" and for this

reason a CEO can be considered "as chief engagement officer in developing meaningful interpersonal interactions and relationships with today's media savvy publics" (Tsai & Men, 2017, p. 1859).

The importance of CEOs' online presence and their influence on the stakeholders-organization relationship is particularly relevant in the context of this analysis. As a matter of fact, Mark Lyons, Alltech CEO, is active on all social media platforms and his posts are often reposted by Alltech social media profiles. In light of the above-mentioned notions, it will be interesting to analyse how Mark Lyon's voice is exploited by the company and what effects it produces.

1.5 The linguistic construction of corporate identity

1.5.1 Transparency and trust in corporate discourse

As previously mentioned, nowadays companies face intense public scepticism and stakeholders expect them to openly share information regarding their actions, especially those related to Corporate Social Responsibility efforts. In this context, the notions of *transparency* and *trust* assume great importance in the linguistic construction of corporate identity. Bondi and Poppi (2025) explain that "transparency and trust form the bedrock of robust business communication strategies, enabling organizations to navigate the complexities of modern corporate environments effectively" (p. 1).

Despite being interrelated concepts, transparency and trust have different objectives. According to Bondi and Poppi (2025), transparency helps companies project accountability thus "creating a positive impact on organizational reputation and fostering stronger relationships with stakeholders" (p. 1). Transparency, which is considered as a dynamic multifaceted process rather than a static quality, concerns an "accurate, comprehensive and accessible" sharing of information (Bondi and Poppi, 2025, p. 1). However, transparency goes beyond the mere sharing of information as companies who aim at being perceived as transparent may also attend to the type of information their stakeholders need and be objective in their reporting. Rawlins (2009) refers to this concept as "participation of stakeholders in identifying the information they need; and objective, balanced reporting of an organization's activities and policies that holds the organization accountable" (Rawlins, 2009, p. 74). As far as trust is concerned, it is considered as a tool which helps organizations engage stakeholders. It is "built through consistent and honest communication" and it is "essential for maintaining stakeholder confidence and support". (Bondi and Poppi, 2025, p. 2).

Concerning transparency, other scholars view it as a strategic use of text and images "to create effective and trustworthy communication while fostering ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders and the public" (Cacchiani, 2025, p. 32, 33). Cacchiani highlights the intentional side of transparency and describes it as the "perceived quality of the information intentionally shared from a sender to their

recipient" (Cacchiani, 2025, p. 33). She evaluates it along three dimensions theorised by Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2016): "information disclosure, clarity, and accuracy" (Schnackenberg and Tomlinson, 2016, p. 1789). Disclosure is defined as the availability of relevant information, clarity stands for linguistic and semantic coherence, and accuracy is the precision of the information shared in relation to the sender-receiver relationship.

1.5.2 Dialogicity: engaging stakeholders through language

Alongside transparency and trust, *dialogicity* is another linguistic device exploited by companies for constructing their identity. In the context of corporate discourse, Malavasi defines dialogicity "as an interactive communication practice taking place between the company and a multifaceted audience of stakeholders"(Malavasi, 2024, p. 146). Like transparency and trust, this notion reaffirms the importance of stakeholder engagement in today's corporate communication. As Malavasi points out: "organizations' success in building or maintaining their reputation and legitimacy depends on their ability to engage stakeholders in dialogue by addressing them in relation to the stake(s) they hold" (Malavasi, 2024, p. 146). Each stakeholder group has a different interest with regard to the organization. While investors may look for signs of risk minimizations, employees seek identification and consumers seek quality and distinctiveness (Malavasi, 2024, p. 147).

Another way of defining dialogicity is "the ways authors situate themselves in the text, and address and guide readers through an unfolding argument" (Malavasi, 2024, p. 147). In order to analyse the dialogical dimension, Malavasi draws from Hyland's framework and refers to the notions of *stance* and *engagement*. The first one represents the presence of the author in the text and "concerns the ways we present ourselves and convey our judgments, opinions, and commitments". The latter is related to the audience involvement and refers to "the ways writers rhetorically recognize the presence of their readers to actively pull them along with the argument, include them as discourse participants, and guide them to interpretations" (Hyland, 2014, as cited in Malavasi, 2024, p. 147).

Concretely, dialogicity is realised through the means of some linguistic strategies. *Self-mention*, which implies the use of personal pronouns such as *we* and *our*, is "used by the firms to personally position themselves in the text" (Malavasi, 2024, p. 150, 151). With constructions such as *we aim to, we continue to, we will continue, we are working, we have developed, we are committed*, and *our commitment to, our approach to* and *our efforts to,* companies "foreground their past successes and future goals in an attempt to create an impression of reliability and credibility" (Malavasi, 2024, p. 151). Other organizations prefer using self-reference forms such as the hypernym *Group*. Despite its impersonal nature "this form of self-reference occurs in constructions that encode a company's positive evaluation of its activities, plans for the future and its orientation to stakeholders" (Malavasi,

2024, p. 149). Intensifiers are another instrument and they "help the author to express his subjective attitude to objects and phenomena, to form the desired emotions and assessments in the addressee". In particular, the intensifier *more*, "plays a strategic role in adding emphasis to sensational figures and achievements" but it is also used in "constructions such as *find out* or *read more about*, and *more on* or *more in*, which direct the reader to other content in the report or on the website" (Malavasi, 2024, p. 155). Additionally, companies often recur to the direct mention of specific stakeholder groups to "establish a connection with their stakeholders by addressing their concerns" (Malavasi, 2024, p. 151). This helps companies demonstrate that they are actively responding to their stakeholders' needs.

1.5.3 Personal pronouns as identity markers in corporate discourse

Pronouns are another essential element in the creation of intimate relationships with audiences. Pronouns are defined as "words that substitute an element that is being referred to (e.g., people, animals, ideas, or things)" (Nordquist, 2010, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 38). Although business English particularly favours nominalization and avoids verbs and pronouns when possible, pronouns, when used, signal specific communicative strategies adopted by companies in an attempt to convey particular meanings. Casan-Pitarch (2016) explores the pragmatic implications of the adoption of each pronoun in the context of corporate communication, specifically in companies' websites.

First person plural pronouns help convey "an image of corporate union and team work; subsequently, this may transmit a sense of tranquillity and security to the audience". The use of *we* or *our* imply collaboration, cohesion and "the participation of all of the members of a company". Moreover, this type of pronouns "share responsibility between the speaker and the other members of the company" and this is helpful "when the information is uncertain or tricky because it may reduce responsibility" (Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 40). Some scholars define *we* as a pronoun which "is always simultaneously inclusive and exclusive, a pronoun of solidarity and of rejection" (Pennycook, 1994, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 40). On the contrary, first person singular forms are "rare in business contexts" because they imply a focus on the writer's opinion and "companies usually avoid focusing their image on one single person". Moreover, Klijunaite and Nauseda suggest that

> the singular form can have negative effects; for example, the audience could understand that the speaker is making an attempt at placing himself or herself above the listeners or readers and it can somehow break the sense of community acquired through the plural form. (Klijunaite and Nauseda, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 40)

However, as mentioned above in the section about CEO's online presence, leaders' personal involvement in social media discourse may be an effective way of humanising brands and developing stronger interpersonal relations with stakeholders.

Second person pronouns imply a direct interaction and "mutual recognition between the speaker and the addressee" (Mackiewicz & Riley, 2002, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 40). Scholars recommend avoiding directness "when the purpose of the text is to inform rather than persuade" (O'Hair, Rubenstein & Stewart, 2004, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 40). *You* has therefore a persuasive objective and it can be found in work-with-us sections which aim to "encourage people to send their resumes, and then recruit the best professionals" (Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 50). However, due to its informality and its use in familiar contexts, this pronoun may be considered impolite in some countries.

Lastly, third person pronouns are the opposite of second person pronouns since they "do not directly refer to the speaker or the addressee but to other people or things that are not present at the moment of the speech". Casan-Pitarch highlights that the masculine and feminine forms are rare in business contexts, although they may be found in website sections where people working for the company are described. Regarding the neutral form, it "refers to things, animals or ideas" but it can also "be used as subject in impersonal verbs or as anticipatory subject". *It* "can refer to direct and indirect ideas or things within the text without revealing the identity of these" (Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 41). This strategy is useful to establish objectivity so this form is particularly used in history sections: "when past events are described, it is necessary to look reliable and trustworthy [and] this is gained with the depersonalization of facts, with the inclusion of third person singular neutral forms" (Pennycook, 1994, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 47). Moving on to the plural forms of the third person, *they* refers to the other, "an unspecified authority" (Pennycook, 1994, as cited in Casan-Pitarch, 2016, p. 41). Therefore, the writer signals their exclusion from the group and removes self-responsibility.

In conclusion, brand tone of voice and pronouns are two pillars of corporate communication. By choosing to adopt a human-like tone, brands promote the establishment of social presence while favouring some pronouns in spite of others helps them project the image of a united team. These tools will indeed be of significant importance in the context of this analysis.

1.5.4 Persuasion and evaluative language

Malavasi (2007) also identifies linguistic devices that serve as a persuasion tool in corporate communication. The underlying assumption is that persuasion is most effective "when it takes place in an implicit and pragmatic manner" (Malavasi, 2007, p. 181). Furthermore, being indirect enables

the speaker to "authorize the inference that he is tactful, non-imposing, non-coercive, while avoiding responsibility for the potentially face-damaging interpretations of his acts" (Bertuccelli Papi, 2000, as cited in Malavasi, 2007, p. 181). If persuasion needs to be implicit, the scholar highlights the linguistic strategies that express evaluation in an implicit way. These strategies are known as *evaluative lexical items* and they "represent the ways in which writers enter the text and express their attitudes towards the entity they are talking about" (Thompson & Hunston, 2000, as cited in Malavasi, 2007, p. 174).

According to Malavasi (2007) some adjectives, verbs and nouns carry an explicit evaluative meaning. Some examples cited by Malavasi (2007, p. 177) are: adjectives (*best, prime, first-rate, prestigious, premier, first-class, world-class, top, excellent, outstanding, superb, successful*), verbs (*outperform, improve, streamline, reach, meet, top, attain, gain*) and nouns (*excellence, soundness, sophistication, innovation, importance, achievement, improvement, efficiency*).

However, "laudatory meanings are more frequently expressed in an indirect and more implicit way" (Malavasi, 2007, p. 177). Many adjectives, verbs and nouns that may seem neutral often "carry a heavy weight in the realization of connotatively evaluative meanings" (Malavasi, 2007, p. 178). This is the case of "lexical patterns which, even apparently neutral, assume a positive connotation because of either their surrounding favourable context or the positive value they recall" (Malavasi, 2005, as cited in Malavasi 2007, p. 177). As for adjectives, many of them take on a positive connotation thanks to the context or because they recall a competitive advantage. Malavasi (2007) cites adjectives of quality (*global, big/bigger/biggest, integrated, focused, international, new, client-oriented, customer-related*) and hidden superlatives and implicit comparatives where the competitor is not explicitly mentioned (i.e. *launching more personalised products*). The same thing happens with nouns which evoke success and business solidity in the corporate world: *internationality, spread, expansion, growth, creation, development, performance, ability, array, range, capability, contribution, diversity.*

Malavasi points out that "apart from adjectives, subplicit attitudinal verbs carry a heavy weight in the realization of connotatively evaluative meanings" (Malavasi, 2007, p. 178). Some verbs implicitly praise the company by referring to "thriving performance and profitable advantages resulting from responsibly decided courses of action" (Malavasi, 2007, p. 178). These are action-oriented verbs such as *offer, maintain, undertake, provide, establish, perform, deliver, launch, experience, operate.* Likewise, Malavasi distinguishes involvement-related verbs (such as *focus, intend, support, encourage, commit, pursue, believe, seek, aim, foster, aspire, desire*) and verbs referring to the irrealis dimension, i.e. future projects (*This service will provide clients with customised...*).

In addition, Malavasi sheds light on the management of negative information. The scholar highlights that "negative results are generally presented as a consequence of the uncertain economic background". In this case, a difference emerges between non-human agents which serve as "subjects of sentences which report on negative situations" and human agents, such as the company's name or the personal pronouns, "used to detail positive performance" (Malavasi, 2007, p. 179). The use of mitigators such as *despite* is equally associated to the neutralization of negative performances (*continued to enjoy sustained growth despite a difficult stock market environment*).

1.5.5 Interpersonal meaning and modality

According to Lyons, *subjectivity* is "the speaker's choice of one word rather than another" and it "reveals his/her attitudes towards what s/he is talking about" (Lyons, 1977, as cited in Malavasi, 2007, p. 173). Poppi (2025) draws from Halliday's concept of *interpersonal meaning* to explore how language conveys the writer's attitude. As a matter of fact, Halliday points out that "while construing, language is always also enacting: enacting our personal and social relationships with the other people around us". Therefore, the concept of interpersonal meaning focuses on "language as action" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013, p. 30). The main components of interpersonal meaning that are relevant to the present analysis are *mood* and *modality*. Mood "is the major interpersonal system of the clause" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013, p. 97) and it includes, for instance, the type of clause. Halliday distinguishes between different types of clauses according to mood:

> A free major clause is either indicative (giving or demanding information) or imperative (demanding goods-&-services) in mood; if indicative, it is either declarative (giving information) or interrogative (demanding information); if interrogative, it is either 'yes/no' interrogative or 'WH-' interrogative. (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013, p. 97)

If mood is more about polarity (yes or no), modality constitutes "the region of uncertainty that lies between 'yes' and 'no'" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013, p. 176). In other words, it "expresses the writer's degree of certainty, obligation, or possibility" (Poppi, 2025, p. 121). Three degrees of modality exist. *High modality* includes modal verbs which imply a strong commitment and obligation: *must, ought to, need, have/has/had to*. *Medium modality* includes modal verbs which express future intentions with a lower certainty degree: *will, would, shall, should*. Lastly, *low modality* includes modal verbs expressing possibility or permission with a fragile commitment: *may, might, can, could*.

In this context, modality may be seen as another tool for companies to project their image and build their identity through corporate communication. All the linguistic strategies above mentioned will

guide the linguistic analysis in the following chapters in order to explore Alltech communication in its digital channels.

1.6 Brand tone of voice in corporate discourse

Building on the linguistic strategies discussed above, *tone of voice* represents a further powerful tool through which companies project a specific identity and foster closer relationships with their audiences. Unlike nouns, adjectives and verbs, which primarily carry semantic content, this element shapes the overall communication style of an organisation and determines how it is perceived by different stakeholder groups.

1.6.1 Brand tone of voice: definition and functions

The previous sections developed the idea that corporate identity is a dynamic construct and that what companies try to communicate is always mediated by the interpretation of different stakeholders. Similarly, Delin describes brands

> not as static objects, but as sets of qualities that a provider seeks to project and which are interpreted by potential consumers both dynamically and partially. The appreciation is dynamic because it changes constantly and varies a great deal between consumers, and partial because the match between the intended values and the actual values perceived is not complete. (Delin, 2005, p. 7)

Due to this dynamic appreciation, Delin evokes another concept that was mentioned before in the text: nowadays companies have less control on the way they are perceived by the public. Delin therefore describes *brand communication* as

> avenues through which providers can attempt to express intended qualities, but consumers' encounters with the different channels through which brands are communicated, the attention they pay them, and the meanings they attribute to them are not under the control of the provider. (Delin, 2005, p. 7)

Starting from this idea about brands, the scholar defines *brand tone of voice* as a tool for communicating "the distinctive nature of a brand". The main purpose of tone of voice is to ensure that "the values, personality, or essence of the brand is uppermost in every situation in which people come into contact with the brand's language". The aim is not to "just sell things" but to "express a distinctive personality or set of values that will differentiate its brands from those of competitors" (Delin, 2005, p. 10) while fostering people's engagement.

In order to analyse the brand tone of voice, Delin suggests four main frameworks, each one focusing on a different way of analysing the relation between branding and language. The first one concerns *chains of reference* which explore "how the brand and concepts related to it are evoked and kept activated in the mind of the hearer/reader" (Delin, 2005, p. 12). Analysing chains of reference means

looking at "how brand concepts are referred to, activated, or allowed to decay, by the choice of different types of referring expressions" (Delin, 2005, p. 13). It is noteworthy that, despite the widespread idea that companies may prefer leveraging their name, this strategy may not be beneficial for all organizations: "brands seeking a more subliminal presence might be better reinforced by typography, layout, image, and colour" (Delin, 2005, p. 18). A further technique involves analysing which roles are attributed to the brand and its customers. Here the focus is on the meaning of verbs associated with each category in order to assess whether the company describes itself and its customers as doers or as more passive agents. For the third framework, *presupposition and assumption*, Delin explains that "the use of presupposition and assumption can be a convenient means of recruiting genuine shared knowledge as an aid to the economy of explanation". Through the means of some strategies, companies "attribute to readers apparent 'shared knowledge' that is in fact newly constructed in the process of interpretation" (Delin, 2005, p. 26). Resources that are helpful in doing so are the use of *the* and *our* which "linguistically presuppose, require, or force the reader to infer the existence of their referents without these things having been introduced beforehand" (Delin, 2005, p. 27). Likewise, "*again* and *any more* give rise to implicatures that the situation has happened before" (Delin, 2005, p 28). Lastly, *tenor* looks at "how social relationships are assumed or constructed through the texts by means of markers of social distance such as formality or informality" (Delin, 2005, p. 12). Scholars point out that informal and conversational language "is used to create an impression of social closeness, even in institutional, public texts". On the contrary, formal and impersonal language "serves to construct and reinforce hierarchical relationships of power, in which greater social distance is created and maintained between the 'voice' of the text and its readers" (Delin, 2005, p. 29, 30).

1.6.2 Tone of voice in the digital context: human vs. corporate

Research about tone of voice distinguishes between two main types of tone of voice: *human tone of voice*, which adopts a "more natural, intimate, and interpersonal tone in brand interactions with consumers", and traditional *corporate tone of voice*, "which appears to be more distant and official in its text format of brand interactions" (Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4233). These two styles have different objectives and are therefore found in different contexts. Traditional corporate tone of voice, for instance, is more likely to be found on "corporation-owned media, such as advertising brochures, websites, and blogs" (Kelleher, 2009; Kelleher & Miller, 2006; Sung & Kim, 2021, as cited in Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4233) but also on social media for official and formal communications. Human tone of voice, on the contrary, "plays a core role in mitigating both interpersonal distance from consumers and uncertainties regarding the brand or its products during encounters with

consumers on social media" (Barcelos et al., 2018; Grétry et al., 2017; Sung & Kim, 2021, as cited in Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4234). Companies adopt this tone of voice "in light of social media's always-on, interactive, and relationship-oriented features" (Men & Tsai, 2015, as cited in Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4231). Organizations mainly use social media to build closer relationship with their stakeholders "and corporations thus strive to refine personified brand communications to increase consumer engagement" (Chen et al., 2015; Hayes et al., 2020, as cited in Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4232). After the rise of social media commerce, companies pay even more attention to how they communicate their presence online since "nearly 71% of purchase decisions are influenced by social media posts" and "about 52% of online and offline purchases are made after consumers are exposed to a brand post on Facebook" (Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4235).

Regarding human tone of voice, scholars point out that when brands present themselves as "human-like communication partners" they "close psychological distance to consumers" (Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4234). Interactions with humanized brands on social media "enhance consumers' perceptions of being present with brands as "real" individuals and gaining access to brands' thoughts and feelings" (Biocca, 1997, as cited in Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4233). Scholars therefore link human tone of voice to the creation of *social presence*, which is defined as "the degree of salience of the other person in [an] interaction and the consequent salience of the interpersonal relationship" (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976, as cited in Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4234). This definition indicates that despite the lack of physical contact, "people experience psychological presence in media-mediated communication by feeling a sense of being present with communication partners and building closeness with them" (Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4234).

Specific elements that contribute to brands being perceived as humans are "brands' one-to-one responses to consumer questions", "friendly and intimate communications" and the use of paralanguage (emojis). Together, these elements create "brand humanness" which makes consumers think "that they are interacting with actual humans" (Jeong, Chung & Kim, 2022, p. 4234, 4235).

1.7 Corporate storytelling

In the wide field of corporate communication, many scholars have identified *corporate storytelling* as a fundamental tool for building a strong emotional bond with stakeholders. Before delving into the topic of corporate storytelling, it is necessary to introduce storytelling and the power of narration in our society.

1.7.1 What is storytelling?

Storytelling has been defined as "the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination" (National Storytelling Network, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 443). Scholars have examined the role of storytelling in many fields, from politics to professional settings and have reached the conclusion that "it is a form of discourse that is imposed in all sectors of society" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 443). Regarding the pervasiveness of storytelling, Crocchi points out that

> we live in a narrative dimension. From the car to the bedroom, from cell phones to television reality shows, our daily life is constantly wrapped in a narrative network that filters perceptions, stimulates thoughts, evokes emotions, excites senses, and determines multisensory responses. (Crocchi, 2019, p. 432)

Moreover, the ubiquity of storytelling, both in professional and private lives, has been amplified by digital technologies and social media. In fact, Carmagnola explains that "the media are much more than a simple mechanism of dissemination and transmission of images and end up becoming one of the forms of deployed social and productive intelligence" (Carmagnola, 2002, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 433).

The reasons behind the importance of storytelling in everyday life may be attributed to human nature. Fontana, for instance, suggests that

> narratives are successful because whenever a story is told, a self-delusion mechanism that derives from the natural propensity of the human being to believe in something is activated in the human mind (Fontana, 2009, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 445).

Because "man has a psychological need to believe", whenever a story is told listeners enter a sort of "narrative listening trance that consists in lowering the mental defences and in the total abandonment towards what is told" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 445).

Another aspect that explains the strong communicative power of stories is their ability to evoke emotions. According to Crocchi "the main objective of a story is precisely to generate an emotional reaction in its recipients and create an emotional connection with them". A scientific reason underlying this phenomenon was highlighted by Kirwin (2005) and Hsu (2008) who discovered that when people are exposed to a story their brain produces oxytocin and cortisol. While cortisol "is related to the ability to focus attention on something important and it is directly related to the level of anxiety", oxytocin concerns the creation of "social bonds, empathy, and trust". Together, these hormones allow "the creation of an emotional connection between the listeners and the storyteller" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 448). The creation of an emotional connection with their stakeholders is precisely what companies seek nowadays.

1.7.2 Corporate storytelling: definition and functions

If scholars widely acknowledged the importance of the above-mentioned emotions in traditional narratives, the relevance of emotions has been recognized also in the context of the purchasing decision-making process. Crocchi explains that "marketing studies have attributed increasing centrality to sensory and emotional performances in the consumption experience" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 447). Marketing campaigns aim at associating the brand with specific emotions in order to influence purchasing behaviours. By "highlighting the perception of certain feelings or thoughts", companies "create a need that must be satisfied through the purchasing experience" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 448). For this reason, many scholars agree that the increasingly competitive market scenario forces firms to establish emotional connections with their customers. Many argue that "the world's best and most enduring brands are what we like to call storytelling brands" (Papatados, 2006, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 449) thus reinforcing the idea that only those firms who are good at storytelling are able to succeed in today's fierce competition.

Another fundamental aspect is the fact that nowadays consumers are overwhelmed with information about companies and advertising. The result is that "about 79% of people do not read a text word by word but look at general content" and "about 82% of consumers ignore advertising if it is considered intrusive". In order to capture the attention of consumers, companies need to "set up communication strategies that convey effective and credible messages capable of affecting consumers and positively influencing their attitude towards products" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 439). Among these strategies that turn out to be essential for the survival of companies is corporate storytelling. Crocchi points out that "an increasing number of brands use storytelling as a communication technique which has in many cases proved to be the key to attract and retain consumers" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 440).

1.7.3 Storytelling, interactivity and audience engagement

A final phenomenon that explains the need for corporate storytelling is the transition from an economy of goods and services to an economy of experiences. As a matter of fact, nowadays consumers value experiences more than material products or services. In addition to this, scholars argue that

> consumption has become pure narration: cars, cell phones, clothes, furniture, creams, companies, individuals, territories ... everything is accompanied by a narrative framework that justifies and promotes its existence. (Fontana, 2010, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 441)

Starting from this assumption, it is important to note the implications of narrations and storytelling on corporate communication. In fact, narratives imply the creation of a dialogue between subject and recipient which evokes the concept of dialogicity mentioned above. Eco affirms that "whenever the

speaker is about to end a sentence, we as readers or listeners make a bet (albeit unconsciously): we predict his or her choice, or anxiously wonder what choice will be made" (Eco, 1994, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 437). Moreover, technological revolution has changed the status of the consumer from passive receiver to active participant who "can establish a direct dialogue with organizations, politicians, and authorities by implementing continuous feedback and response mechanisms" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 440). This means that

> the relationship between consumers and companies is no longer monodirectional but is instead characterized by interactivity, conceived as the possibility for users or consumers to influence the other components of the system (other users, means, and contents) and to be mutually influenced by the same. (Pastore, 2008, as cited in Crocchi, 2019, p. 440)

This interactivity, as already explained, enables companies to establish intimate relationships with their stakeholders. Crocchi's studies also confirm what was previously mentioned about the construction of tailored messages for specific stakeholders. The scholar suggests that "organizations must track down their audience in order to communicate properly in the same way as the author has their model reader in mind" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 439). When telling their stories, companies should therefore always bear in mind who their stakeholders are, what they expect, what they need, fear, value etc. According to Crocchi, "we create a level of empathy in the reader thanks to a careful and very detailed study of the public (or target, to use a term dear to marketing) that allow us to talk about stereotypical stories" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 452).

In conclusion, corporate storytelling, apart from being a necessary tool in today's business world, encompasses many of the concepts that were previously highlighted regarding the relationship between organization and stakeholders. When companies comprehend that "telling the story is more important than selling" (Crocchi, 2019, p. 452) they foster a relationship based on trust and empathy with their consumers. Corporate storytelling enables companies and their consumers to have a more direct and interactive relationship, thus reinforcing the dialogicity of their communication style. The sustainable corporate story is another concept that links directly to corporate storytelling and demonstrates its significance in the field of corporate communication. In the context of this analysis, the relevance of corporate storytelling lies in two main reasons. On the one hand, given that *Tell the Story* is one of Alltech's core values, one may presume that the company is highly committed to the practice of storytelling. On the other hand, World Without Cows, one of the company's most important projects that will be explained in the next chapters, is the perfect example of how Alltech embraces the telling-rather-than-selling approach in order to build a stronger connection with stakeholders while legitimizing its business.

1.8 Multimodality in corporate communication

As a last theoretical reference for this research, some notions of multimodality will be introduced in this section. These concepts will be helpful in the context of this analysis which aims at exploring both the linguistic elements and the visual items that collaborate in the overall digital communication of Alltech.

Adopting a multimodal approach for this study is necessary because, as scholars point out, "all texts are multimodal" (van Leeuwen & Kress, 1995, as cited in Delin, 2005, p. 5). Although linguistic tools will be the main focus of the analysis, "it is important to note that other modes of communication do play a role in creating the meaning of the kinds of texts that we will be looking at: in particular, images, typography, and layout" (Delin, 2005, p. 5). The underlying idea to multimodality, in fact, is that "*different means of meaning making* are not separated but almost *always appear together*: image with writing, speech with gesture, maths symbolism with writing and so forth". Based on this, Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2025) have summarized the basic principles of multimodality as follows: "people combine semiotic resources to make meaning", "each semiotic resource makes meaning in distinct ways" and, consequently, "if we want to study meaning, we need to attend to all semiotic resources being used to make a complete whole" (Jewitt, Bezemer, O'Halloran, 2025, p. 2). In his study regarding multimodality, Kress highlights the importance of non-linguistic elements in conveying messages by saying that "with writing alone, the message would, quite simply, be too complex" (Kress, 2010, p. 1). He therefore explains the importance of the three modes (writing, image and colour), considering the benefits of each one:

> image *shows* what takes too long to *read*, and writing *names* what would be difficult to *show*. Colour is used to *highlight* specific aspects of the overall message. Without that division of semiotic labour, the sign, quite simply, would not work. Writing *names* and image *shows*, while colour *frames* and *highlights*; each to maximum effect and benefit. (Kress, 2010, p. 1)

As far as the relationship between images and text is concerned, Marsh and White (2003) propose a taxonomy of image-text relationships that groups the functions of images into three broad categories according to the closeness of the conceptual relationship between image and text, as presented and discussed in Bateman (2014): *little relation to text*, *close relation to text* and *going beyond text*. Given the nature of Alltech's digital corpus, encompassing a corporate website, social media platforms and press releases, the present analysis adopts a selective application of this taxonomy, focusing on the six categories most relevant to corporate digital communication.

Within the little relation to text category, three functions have been identified as applicable. *Decorate* refers to images that "make the text more attractive without aiming to produce any real effects on the

reader's understanding or memory" (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 666). Cacchiani observes this function in her analysis of corporate websites, noting that images in some institutional pages tend to have a predominantly decorative function and may even risk "hiding and reducing accessibility to useful content" when overused (Schade, 2015, as cited in Cacchiani, 2025, p. 49). *Elicit emotion* encompasses images that " encourage emotional response from reader through display of content or style that is especially arresting or disturbing " (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 667). Marsh and White illustrate this category with a photograph of piled bones from the Rwandan genocide, used on a US government website on war crimes, which simultaneously concretizes the notion of war crimes and evokes a strong emotional reaction in the viewer (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 654). *Engage* refers to images that "hold the attention of the reader" (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 667). In her analysis of Gap Inc.'s website, Cacchiani identifies this function in clickable video thumbnails positioned at the top of the page, whose primary purpose is to capture and direct the reader's attention (Cacchiani, 2025, p. 45).

Within the close relation to text category, three functions are relevant. *Humanize* refers to images that "represent elements within the text in the form of a living being; thereby making the text more accessible" (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 668). Marsh and White illustrate this category with the cartoon turtle Dewie used by the US Federal Trade Commission “to personify its message on internet safety for children” (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 658). *Describe* encompasses images that " represent or give an account by definition; concretize" (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 668), providing a visual rendering of the content described in words. Finally, *Complement* refers to cases where "one mode helps the other to convey the message" (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 671) that is, where text and image together communicate something that neither could fully express alone. Marsh and White illustrate this category with a NASA timeline where photographs of aeronautical achievements accompany dates and descriptions, with text and image together conveying the scale and significance of each accomplishment that neither could fully express alone (Marsh & White, 2003, p. 659-660)

In the context of this analysis, these six categories will be applied descriptively to the most significant image-text combinations in each sub-corpus, with the aim of assessing how visual elements contribute to the construction of Alltech's corporate identity alongside the linguistic analysis.

Chapter 2 - Materials and methods

2.1 Alltech: company profile and context

Before conducting the analysis, it is crucial to introduce the company focusing on its history, its business and its declared identity while positioning it in the broader context of the agri-food industry.

2.1.1 The American dream

As reported on the company's official website[1], Alltech's origins follow a trajectory reminiscent of the classic American Dream narrative: an immigrant with scarce financial resources but full of ideas and potential. Dr. Pearse Lyons, an Irish scientist, brewer and distiller arrived in the US in the late 1970s on a distinguished scientist visa. He thrived in the emerging "gasohol" movement and his first job involved training distillers to create fuel alcohol as a petroleum supplement.

In 1980, after building a relatively strong customer base, he established a distilling school (The Alcohol School) and he launched Alltech with only $10,000. His vision was clear: "sustaining our planet and all its inhabitants through scientific innovation". At the beginning, the company specialized in producing and selling yeast products for the alcohol industry and as flavourings for livestock feed. With master's and doctoral degrees in brewing science, Dr. Pearse Lyons decided to put his knowledge about yeast at the service of the livestock industry. Drawing on his expertise in fermentation science, Dr. Lyons identified a parallel between the industrial fermentation process and the natural digestive function of the bovine rumen, which led him to explore the potential benefits of yeast supplementation in cattle feed.

Alltech launched its first proprietary brand, Yea-Sacc®, in 1983. The underlying principle was that yeast could enhance the rumen's microbial activity, thus improving energy extraction, nutrient absorption and overall animal productivity. After that, Alltech strengthened its positioning in the animal nutrition sector with the development of more than 70 nutritional technologies in its first decade. But it was not only about animal nutrition, it was especially about supporting a more sustainable agri-food industry. In 1989, during the annual Alltech International Symposium, Alltech's founder declared the company's commitment to the ACE principle which means prioritizing the safety, benefit and well-being of the Animal, the Consumer and the Environment. An idea that seemed so radical at the time and that set the tone for the future of the company.

In ten years Alltech expanded in new markets and launched a new division, Alltech Crop Science, which uses the expertise in fermentation to develop solutions for better soil health, crop yields and

[1] Alltech, n.d., https://www.alltech.com/our-history

plant resilience. Thanks to these new products Alltech aimed at helping agri-food producers address any type of challenges and the company became internationally well-known for some of its key technologies. The next step for the company was about strategic acquisitions of more than 20 companies, including industry players such as Ridley USA, Masterfeeds and Guabi, which consolidated Alltech's position in the sector.

Today, Alltech is a recognized leader in the agri-food industry. The company employs more than 5,000 people worldwide and the research is supported by five global bioscience centres and more than 20 formal research alliances. The company produces specialty ingredients, premixes, supplements and feed for animal agriculture in its 75 manufacturing facilities worldwide. Alltech operates primarily in a B2B (business-to-business) context, meaning that its products and services are directed towards other businesses rather than end consumers, specifically farmers, feed manufacturers, and other players within the agri-food value chain. Its portfolio includes a wide range of animal species, including cattle, swine, poultry, aquaculture and pets, as well as crop science solutions. This reflects the company's ambition to address the agri-food industry comprehensively, rather than focusing on a single segment.

In terms of geographical reach, Alltech has established a strong global presence, with the United States representing its primary market. However, the company has significantly developed across multiple regions, including Asia, Europe and Latin America, distributing its products in more than 140 countries. This international expansion has been driven by the establishment of local subsidiaries across different countries, allowing the company to enter new markets and adapt its business to diverse agricultural contexts and regulatory environments.

2.1.2 A family business

The philosophy of the company has always been centred on people. Dr. Lyons took any chance to meet in person with team members around the world and customers. Remembered as an innovative and motivational leader, he was deeply committed to charitable causes and educational programs, especially in disadvantaged communities.

When he founded Alltech, Dr. Pearse Lyons put his family at the centre: the name of the company was inspired by the initials of his daughter's name (Aoife Louise Lyons), while the logo colour was chosen by his son (Mark Lyons). His wife, Deidre is the company's director of corporate image and design and she is also in charge of the philanthropic efforts.

Dr. Pearse Lyons passed away March 8, 2018, at the age of 73 after undergoing heart surgery. Dr. Lyons's legacy continues to be a source of inspiration within the company, remembered for both his innovative spirit and his personal warmth.

His son Mark became president and CEO after his father's passing. However, he was not new to the company's operations and practices. When he joined the company at the beginning of the 2000s, he had already travelled a lot with his father and gained practical experience in all the departments and regions the company worked in. His idea was not to emulate his father but to approach the company with the same mentality:

> "When I was six years old, a customer came up to me as my father was speaking and said, 'You know, someday you're going to have to do that.' I always knew this was the plan," Mark said. "But I also knew that no one could replace my father. I couldn't replace Pearse Lyons, but I knew that if I could think like him, I could multiply the impact of my actions. This thought guided me through that transition and continues to guide me today." (Alltech website)

Dr. Mark Lyons' priority became to build on his father's legacy and mentality in a way that allowed Alltech to remain forward-thinking and aligned to the customers' needs. This is why the ACE principle stated in 1989, became the basis for the new vision of the company in 2019: Working Together for a Planet of Plenty®. This is not just a motto, it describes the company's commitment to leverage the innovation in the agri-food industry in order to replenish the planet's natural resources.

2.1.3 The company's values

The purpose of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty®, despite being a relatively new concept for the company, is based on the same values and culture that Dr. Pearse Lyons shaped when founding the company.

Those values, which the company defines as "the values that unite us" (Alltech, n.d.), are seven core principles that are also displayed in each one of the company's subsidiaries around the world. They do not only serve as guides for the business leaders when planning the company's trajectory, but they also act as behavioural guidelines for all the team members.

The seven values are: *Stay Curious*, *Seize the Opportunity with Speed*, *Tell the Story*, *Make a Friend*, *Do Everything with Fun, Passion & Excellence*, *Wear the Pin* and *Make a Difference* (Alltech, n.d.). Some similarities exist between them. They are informal and action-oriented and they depict a company that prioritises human relations, gumption and a belonging spirit. They also embody Dr. Pearse Lyons's behaviour during his years as leader of the company: his travels around the world to

meet with and build close connections with team members and customers, his commitment to science and innovation and his desire to change the world for the better.

Tell the story is a particularly relevant value in the context of this study as it makes it clear that storytelling is not just part of the communication strategy but also an organisational principle. Each week Alltech employees receive in their mailbox a digital journal called Herald where the company shares important news and noteworthy stories from customers and team members. The Herald also acts as a cohesion tool as it allows members to feel part of a unified entity, despite being spread across all continents. Similarly, *Wear the pin*, which is a reference to the physical Alltech pin worn by employees, reveals a strong emphasis on collective identity and pride in belonging to the company.

Together, these values provide a key to understanding the tone, language and themes that characterise Alltech's digital communication, which will be examined in the following chapters.



Figure 1. Alltech's corporate values. (Alltech website, Careers section, 2026)

2.1.4 The power of storytelling

Nowadays, as information spreads quickly and people's perception gets easily distorted by misleading stories, it is crucial for companies to be in charge of their own narrative. As Badham (2022) points out, the digital transformation has "empowered digitally savvy stakeholders" while "disempowering organizations" (p. 1), making a strong online presence and a clear storytelling strategy increasingly essential. As Crocchi (2019) affirms, in this context "telling the story is more important than selling" (p. 452).

Alltech's new president understood that a company's actions are not only measurable by the achieved results but also by the way these actions are narrated. For this reason, Alltech started investing in storytelling initiatives meant to tell the world the power of science and innovation in the agri-food

industry for a sustainable future. The results of this philosophy are World Without Cows and Planet of Plenty®. The first one is a documentary, realised by two commissioned journalists, aimed at exploring the multifaceted significance of cows from a cultural, economic, nutritional and environmental point of view. The documentary also explores the implications of a world without cows. The latter is a business entity whose aim is to expand the documentary's reach while supporting science-driven storytelling, advocacy and education.

These initiatives are managed and supported by the corporate media team. While the majority of companies operating in the sector started only recently to develop an online presence, for Alltech being able to *Tell the story* has always been a priority. For the Kentucky-based company this means investing in an internal corporate media team, whose members travel the world to capture the essence of the company and its customers, and developing a 360° online presence. Alltech completely embraced the digitalized era and is currently active on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and X where posts are shared daily. The corporate English website serves as the primary institutional platform, providing information on its products, research initiatives, corporate values and sustainability efforts. However, the company is working to provide each local subsidiary with its own website in order to be more linguistically close to customers in every country.

In conclusion, Alltech is a multinational company operating in the agri-food industry. The company's history and values tell the story of a company that is fully committed to innovation in pursuit of a more sustainable industry while always keeping human relationships at the heart of its actions. Given that *Tell the story* is one of Alltech's core values, it becomes particularly relevant to examine how the company narrates its identity across different channels. Therefore, the goal of this study is to assess how Alltech constructs and communicates its corporate identity across different digital environments, and whether a coherent narrative emerges across platforms.

2.1.5 The agri-food industry and digital communication

Prior to conducting the analysis, it is useful to contextualise Alltech within the agri-food industry and examine how the sector has embraced digital communication as a strategic tool in response to growing stakeholder expectations, particularly regarding sustainability.

The European Commission defines the agri-food industry as follows:

> the agri-food sector encompasses all operations within the food supply chain, including farmers, food industry, food retail, wholesale, food service, as well as their suppliers of inputs and services such as seeds, pesticides, fertilisers, machinery, packaging, repair, transport, finance, advice, and logistics. (European Commission, n.d.)

Similarly, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) includes in the sector “all the interconnected activities and actors involved in getting food from field to fork”. The aim of such a broad definition is to highlight “the critical role of economic, social, and environmental factors in shaping how food reaches our plates” (Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.). In fact, it is widely acknowledged that the agri-food industry

> is one of the most relevant systems for the environment due to the resulting burdens (such as the loss of biodiversity, soil degradation, climate change, water use and pollution), but it is also significant for its social, cultural and economic dimensions (Brankatschk and Finkbeiner, 2014, as cited in Esposito et al., 2024, p. 65).

The FAO emphasises that food systems nowadays face many pressures and that they “are contributing to, and affected by, extreme weather events as associated with climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss” (Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.). It is therefore important for companies operating in the sector to “make visible improvement of the eco-efficiency of a process or a product and communicate to stakeholders their strategic choices of environmental value” (Esposito et al., 2024, p. 65).

In this context for the agri-food industry, social media platforms are “becoming increasingly strategic in marketing, communication and disclosure strategies” because they “enable companies to directly reach their stakeholders, allowing two-way communication, thus accelerating opportunities for interactivity, discussion and interpersonal relationships” (Esposito et al., 2024, p. 66). They also “provide agri-food chain actors with the capability to communicate at a low cost and with a potential massive influence at the global level” (Ruggeri & Samoggia, 2018, p. 76). These features make social media particularly suitable for agri-food companies to respond to the growing demand for transparency regarding sustainability. As Esposito et al. (2024) point out, agri-food organisations adopting sustainable business models “pay particular attention to communicating information about their strategies, policies and practices for consumers ever-more sensitive to these issues, but also to increase stakeholder awareness of sustainability issues” (p. 65).

However, despite the growing strategic importance of social media in the agri-food sector, research suggests that companies have not yet fully exploited their dialogic potential. Esposito et al. (2024) found that, although agri-food companies show a high level of engagement on sustainability topics, "the messages published by agri-food companies are predominantly informative in nature" (p. 75), thus suggesting that companies tend to use social media primarily as a one-way communication tool rather than as a platform for genuine two-way dialogue with their stakeholders. Agri-food companies are more likely to use social media “with the purpose only of communicating and disclosing their initiatives and performance, without the specific aim of interacting with stakeholders” (p. 75). This

gap between the communicative potential of social media and its actual use in the sector is particularly relevant in the context of this analysis. As the following chapters will demonstrate, examining whether Alltech's digital communication goes beyond mere information dissemination to embrace a more dialogic and interactive approach is one of the key questions this study seeks to address.

2.2 Corpus selection and delimitation criteria

The corpus (64.652 words) for the present study is subdivided into 5 sub-corpora, which represent the 5 main digital channels where Alltech maintains an active presence. The five channels were selected as they represent the main digital platforms through which Alltech communicates with its stakeholders, encompassing both institutional communication (website and press releases) and social media engagement (Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn). These channels may be distributed into three categories:

1. Website
2. Social media
    a. Instagram
    b. Facebook
    c. LinkedIn
3. Press releases

Overall, the corpus includes 314 documents which are distributed as follows:

Sub-corpus 1: website (8.204 words)
It includes all the website sections available (33)

Sub-corpus 2: Instagram (15.907 words)
It includes all the posts published in 2025 (148)

Sub-corpus 3: Facebook (2.697 words)
It includes all the posts from 2025 that differ from the ones published on Instagram (55)

Sub-corpus 4: LinkedIn (2.756 words)
It includes the first 44 posts from 2026 (until May 2026)

Sub-corpus 5: Press releases (20.650 words)
It includes 34 documents published between March 2025 and May 2026

The corpus was built and designed following the criterion of *relevance sampling* (Krippendorff, 2004), i.e., selecting texts that contribute to answering the research questions of this study. In some

cases, the time frames of the sub-corpora do not coincide, although the differences are minimal. For instance, while the Instagram and Facebook sub-corpora cover the year 2025, the LinkedIn sub-corpus includes posts from 2026 and the press release sub-corpus spans from March 2025 to May 2026: a maximum overlap of approximately 14 months across all channels. This choice is due to several reasons. Firstly, the present study adopts a synchronic approach. The objective of the analysis is not to retrace an evolution in the digital communication strategy but rather to understand how the strategy differs across channels. Consequently, the time frame is a secondary aspect, especially in this case where the differences are negligible. Secondly, this decision is due to practical constraints related to how each platform displays past content to users. While Instagram and Facebook allow users to scroll back through all posts published in a given period, LinkedIn does not offer the same level of accessibility to older content, which is why only the most recent posts were included in the corpus. A further criterion adopted in the corpus selection concerns the Facebook sub-corpus. Since Instagram represents Alltech's primary social media platform in terms of stakeholder communication, the company often reposts the same content on Facebook. Therefore, it has been decided to remove from the Facebook sub-corpus all the posts that were already present in the Instagram sub-corpus, so as to avoid redundancy and to ensure that each post contributes unique data to the analysis. The Facebook sub-corpus thus consists exclusively of content published only on Facebook, allowing for a more focused examination of the communicative choices specific to that platform.

Regarding the practical construction of the corpus, for each website section, social media post and press release, a dedicated Word document was created containing text and images. Videos and reels were excluded from the corpus as the present analysis focuses on textual and visual (static) elements.

2.3 Methodological procedures

The methodological approach adopted for the present study combines corpus-assisted discourse analysis (Baker, 2006) and qualitative content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004; Mayring, 2014). Corpus-assisted discourse analysis combines quantitative and qualitative approaches, drawing on corpus linguistics for the identification of recurrent linguistic patterns and on discourse analysis for their interpretation. These findings are further enriched through qualitative content analysis, which allows for a deeper examination of the communicative and identity-building strategies of Alltech within their broader socio-communicative context. Krippendorff and Baker agree on the interdependency of quantitative and qualitative analysis when approaching corpora. Krippendorff points out that “for the analysis of texts, both are indispensable” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 87) and that “all reading of texts is qualitative, even when certain characteristics of a text are later converted into numbers”

(Krippendorff, 2004, p. 16). In introducing corpus-assisted discourse analysis, Baker explains that it relies on both quantitative and qualitative techniques:

> association patterns represent quantitative relations, measuring the extent to which features and variants are associated with contextual factors. However functional (qualitative) interpretation is also an essential step in any corpus-based analysis. (Biber, 1998, as cited in Baker, 2006, p. 2)

The analysis for each sub-corpus is conducted separately following a series of steps using the online corpus software Sketch Engine (Kilgariff et al. 2014). First, each sub-corpus was uploaded on Sketch Engine in order to generate a wordlist, i.e., "a list of all of the words in a corpus along with their frequencies and the percentage contribution that each word makes towards the corpus" (Baker, 2006, p. 51). Wordlists provided an overview of the most frequent lexical items thus allowing the study to address RQ1.1 (*What values and themes recur most frequently in Alltech's digital communication?*). Sketch Engine also allowed to identify specific lemmas and this may helped retrieving recurrent themes and values. A lemma is defined as a "'set of lexical forms having the same stem and belonging to the same major word class, differing only in inflection and/or spelling" (Francis and Kučera, 1982, as cited in Baker, 2006, p. 55).

The second step concerned collocations, "the phenomena of certain words frequently occurring next to or near each other" (Baker, 2006, p. 95). This step of the analysis was particularly important because, as Baker explains,

> Words (or signifiers to use Saussure's term (1974)) can only take on meaning (that which is signified) by the context that they occur in. So in order to understand the meanings of words, we have to compare them in relation to other words. (Baker, 2006, p. 95, 96)

Collocational analysis revealed "the most salient and obvious lexical patterns surrounding a subject, from which a number of discourses can be obtained" (Baker, 2006, p. 114). The collocates of the most frequent and thematically relevant nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns were therefore examined in order to uncover the associations and connotations that characterise Alltech's communication across channels. This step contributed primarily to RQ1.2 (*How do recurring themes reflect the company's declared corporate identity?*) as it reveals the semantic associations and discourse patterns surrounding the most relevant terms.

The third step consisted in analysing concordances. Baker defines a concordance as a "list of all of the occurrences of a particular search term in a corpus, presented within the context that they occur in; usually a few words to the left and right of the search term" (Baker, 2006, p. 71). Concordances of the most frequent words were sorted and examined in order to identify grammatical, semantic and

discourse patterns. This step was particularly relevant to RQ2.1, as it allowed for a close examination of how specific linguistic choices (including pronoun use, verbs and evaluative adjectives) functioned in context and varied across channels.

Following these steps, the quantitative patterns identified through wordlists, collocations and concordances were interpreted qualitatively. Specifically, the recurrent linguistic patterns (including pronoun use, verb and adjective choices and lexical fields) were examined in relation to Alltech's declared identity and values, in order to assess what these patterns reveal about the company's communicative strategies.. This step addressed RQ2.2 (*What do these variations reveal about the company's communicative strategies towards different audiences?*) and RQ1.2 (*How do they reflect the company's declared corporate identity?*) by connecting the linguistic patterns to Alltech's declared identity and values.

The fifth step was the analysis of the visual elements of the corpus. Static images accompanying texts in each sub-corpus were analysed selectively using six categories from Marsh and White's (2003) taxonomy of image-text relations, as presented and discussed in Bateman (2014): *decorate, elicit emotion, engage, humanize, describe* and *complement*. These categories were selected as the most relevant to corporate digital communication, since they capture the primary functions that images serve in institutional and social media contexts. Rather than applying the taxonomy systematically to all image-text pairs in the corpus, the analysis focused descriptively on the most significant combinations in each sub-corpus, examining how visual elements contributed to the construction of Alltech's corporate identity alongside the linguistic analysis.

Findings from each sub-corpus were brought together in the last chapter (Chapter 6) where a cross-channel analysis is conducted in order to answer all the Research Questions. As explained in the following section, the results of textual and visual analysis were further discussed and compared to the interviews with Alltech's communication professionals (Chapter 7).

2.4 The interviews: structure and objectives

It has been decided to include interviews with Alltech employees as a complementary and ethnographic tool of investigation for this research. The inclusion of such interviews aims at providing an insider perspective to the research thus deepening the textual and visual analysis with the inclusion of professionals' perceptions and strategies. In particular, the responses will be analysed qualitatively and discussed in a dedicated chapter, where they will be compared with the findings emerging from the textual analysis of Alltech's digital channels.

The participants selected for this study are Alltech employees and they represent the marketing function of the company at three different levels. Giulia Lauriola is marketing manager at Alltech Italy, Henrik Mygind is marketing manager for Alltech Denmark and Central-Eastern Europe and Elisa Boschi is global head of marketing for resource efficiency. Together, these three profiles offer complementary perspectives, spanning local, regional and global levels of the organization, as well as different areas of expertise within Alltech's marketing and communication function.

As for the modality of the interviewing process and the structure of the questions, they were conceived to provide interviewees with the necessary time to think and formulate thorough answers and to avoid interpretation issues linked to oral interviews. Therefore, for this analysis, a written remote format was chosen, in which interviewees were provided with a set of open-ended questions which cover different aspects of Alltech communication.

Chapter 3 - Website analysis

3.1 The website as a corporate communication tool for Alltech

Alltech, like other companies, uses the website as the primary digital communication channel since it represents the primary platform through which potential customers gather information about the company. However, as Malavasi explains, websites do not only serve the purpose of selling products (they act as "virtual shop windows"), but they also "showcase the admirable values and commendable principles" (Malavasi, 2017, p. 24) behind the actions of a company. This concept is clearly evident on Alltech's website, where product descriptions are as prominent as sections on the company's history and its ESG commitment.

In the website sub-corpus there are 33 documents. These include all the sections from the website and their respective sub-sections. From product overviews to ESG objectives, the website is both a commercial platform and an institutional communication tool which addresses different stakeholders with different informational needs. The following analysis will examine how this dual purpose emerges in the linguistic choices.

3.2 Quantitative overview

The quantitative analysis of the website sub-corpus was conducted using Sketch Engine, which generated a wordlist of all the words in the corpus along with their frequencies. The following table presents the most frequent items by grammatical category (nouns, adjectives, verbs and pronouns) thus providing an initial picture of the lexical landscape of Alltech's website and a first answer to RQ1.1.

Noun	Freq	**Adjective**	Freq	**Verb**	Freq	**Pronoun**	Freq
Alltech	134	More	34	Be	139	Our	102
Feed	91	Nutritional	30	Support	54	Your	43
Health	81	Animal	28	Improve	51	We	39
Solution	72	Environmental	26	Help	45	Their	33
Performance	63	Sustainable	23	Enhance	34	You	28
Nutrition	52	Nutrient	21	Reduce	28	It	19
Productivity	42	Global	17	Have	27	Its	17
Fish	41	Healthy	15	Optimize	23	I	8
Growth	37	Innovative	14	Promote	23	My	8
Efficiency	36	Overall	14	Deliver	22		
Animal	35	Good	14	Provide	21		

Crop	35	Essential	13	Work	20		
Soil	30	Resilient	13	Learn	19		
Coppens	29	Practical	13	Boost	18		
Production	28	Immune	13	Feed	15		
Team	28	Science-backed	12	Strengthen	15		
Profitability	27	Advanced	12	Build	14		
Technology	27	Biological	11	Meet	14		
Aquaculture	27	Reproductive	11	Drive	14		
Product	26	Great	10	Maximize	13		

Table 1. Most frequent items by grammatical category in the Website sub-corpus.

The pronoun distribution in the website sub-corpus clearly preannounces Alltech's communicative strategy. *Our* [102] outnumbers all the other pronouns combined, suggesting a strong emphasis on collective corporate identity and shared ownership of knowledge and solutions. The presence of *Your* [43] and *you* [28], which rank second and fifth respectively, indicates a significant orientation towards the stakeholders and their needs. As for first person pronouns, they are the least frequent, which is consistent with Casan-Pitarch's (2016) observation that first person singular forms are rare in corporate communication, as companies tend to avoid focusing their identity on a single individual in favour of a collective voice. Section 3.3 will discuss these patterns in depth.

Be [139] dominates the verb frequency list, thus reflecting the website's aim to define and describe the company and its products. Beyond *be*, the most frequent verbs are action-oriented and benefit-driven: *support* [54], *improve* [51], *help* [45], *enhance* [34], *reduce* [28], *optimize* [23], *promote* [23], *deliver* [22], *provide* [21], *boost* [18], *strengthen* [15], *build* [14], *drive* [14] and *maximize* [13]. The presence of *learn* [19] among the most frequent verbs suggests that the website invites readers to deepen their knowledge. This strategy aligns with the dialogic engagement devices identified by Malavasi (2024). The absence of negatively connoted verbs is equally significant. These patterns will be analysed in detail in section 3.4.

The most frequent adjectives in the website sub-corpus can be divided into several semantic groups. The first group covers nutritional science and technical expertise: *nutritional* [30], *nutrient* [21], *innovative* [14], *science-backed* [12], *advanced* [12] and *biological* [11]. The second group encompasses terms related to sustainability: *environmental* [26] and *sustainable* [23]. The third group includes adjectives belonging to the sphere of animal and plant health: *healthy* [15], *immune* [13] and *resilient* [13]. The last group contains adjectives which describe positive outcomes and qualities: *essential* [13], *practical* [13] and *good* [14]. It is important to note that *more* [34] is the most frequent

adjective thus suggesting a systematic use of comparatives which potentially function as implicit superlatives implying superiority without explicitly naming competitors. This strategy is identified by Malavasi (2007) as typical of corporate promotional discourse. *Animal* [28] and *global* [17] also appear frequently, reflecting the company's business (animal agriculture) and its internationality. Section 3.5 will focus on these patterns.

The noun frequency list reveals two main semantic clusters. The first one relates to Alltech's main areas of activity in animal nutrition and crop science: *feed* [91], *nutrition* [52], *animal* [35], *crop* [35], *fish* [41], *aquaculture* [27] and *soil* [30]. The second one is about performance and results and it suggests an orientation towards measurable outcomes: *health* [81], *solution* [72], *performance* [63], *productivity* [42], *growth* [37], *efficiency* [36] and *profitability* [27]. In particular, *team* [28] and *technology* [27] also appear among the most frequent nouns, thus suggesting the importance of people and scientific innovation for Alltech. These clusters will be explored in section 3.6.

3.3 Pronoun use

The quantitative overview of pronouns presents a clear communicative strategy in which different pronouns serve distinct rhetorical functions. As Casan-Pitarch (2016) points out, each pronoun choice carries specific pragmatic implications that shape the relationship between the organisation and the audience.

Our [102], the most frequent pronoun, consistently appears before nouns referring to products and solutions, as shown in excerpts (1) and (2):

> (1) *Our* biological solutions improve soil fertility, stimulate root development and enhance nutrient uptake. (Alltech website, Our Solutions section, 2026)

> (2) *Our* diverse portfolio of nutritional technologies improves aquaculture health and performance. (Alltech website, Our Solutions section, 2026)

In (1), *our* anchors Alltech's scientific expertise to a concrete agricultural result through three positively-connotated verb constructions (*improve*, *stimulate*, *enhance*) which together frame the company's solutions as beneficial. In (2), *our* appears next to *diverse portfolio* thus evoking variety in the company’s range of solutions. In both cases, the possessive pronoun attributes scientific knowledge and solutions to the company as a whole, reinforcing Alltech's identity as a unified and competent organisation. As Casan-Pitarch (2016) explains, first person plural pronouns imply the participation of all members of a company and project an image of corporate unity and teamwork which conveys a sense of shared ownership and collective responsibility. This use of *our* is consistent

with Malavasi's (2024) concept of self-mention as a dialogicity strategy, through which companies "personally position themselves in the text" and give "an impression of reliability and credibility" (p. 150-151).

Your is the second most frequent pronoun and it always occurs in relation to clients' challenges and operations. The concordance analysis revealed that *your* systematically addresses the reader as a professional with specific needs, as shown in excerpts (3) and (4):

> (3) Smarter, more sustainable solutions for *your* beef cattle operation. (Alltech website, Beef Cattle section, 2026)
>
> (4) Our science is *your* strength. (Alltech website, Beef Cattle section, 2026)

In example (3), by addressing directly the readers (farmers) and their specific agricultural *operation*, Alltech positions its solutions as tailored to individual needs rather than as generic. In (4), the parallelism between the possessive pronouns *our* and *your* explicitly indicates that Alltech's scientific expertise (*our science*) serves as the customer's empowerment (*your strength*) thus constructing a relationship of partnership rather than a mere commercial transaction. According to Casan-Pitarch (2016), second person pronouns "imply direct interaction and mutual recognition between the speaker and the addressee" (p. 40) and the fact that they are significantly present on the website reflects an orientation towards customer engagement consistent with the principles of dialogicity outlined by Malavasi (2024).

We [39] emerges in two different contexts. The first is operational and *we* introduces descriptions of the company's activities, as shown in (5):

> (5) *We* combine science-backed biological solutions with expert on-farm support to help you achieve sustainable profitability. (Alltech website, Our Solutions section, 2026)

In the excerpt above, *we* introduces a construction that simultaneously affirms Alltech's scientific authority (*science-backed biological solutions*) and portrays it as a collaborative partner (*expert on-farm support*) while the customer-oriented approach is reinforced by *you*. The second context is more declarative, as illustrated in examples (6)-(9):

> (6) *We* put our people first. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)
>
> (7) *We* act ethically in the marketplace. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)
>
> (8) *We* protect our assets and reputation. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)
>
> (9) *We* think globally and act locally. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)

Excerpts (6)-(9) form a sequence of short statements in the sustainability and governance sections of the website. Each sentence acts as an ethical commitment, thus creating a rhetorical pattern which resembles a corporate manifesto. This strategy reflects what Malavasi (2024) describes as the stance dimension of dialogicity, which may be found when the writer expresses "judgments, opinions and commitments" (p. 147). Moreover, while (5) is an example of operational and collaborative register, in (6)-(9) the company adopts a more authoritative and institutional register.

Finally, the fact that first person singular pronouns *I* [8] and *my* [8] are the least frequent confirms Casan-Pitarch's (2016) observation that such forms are rare in corporate communication, as "companies usually avoid focusing their image on one single person" (p. 40). In particular, all occurrences of *I* and *my* are found only in the Careers section, where they are used to quote Alltech employees who share their personal experiences, like in (10):

> (10) It was the first company culture *I* have experienced where it was not necessary to prove yourself, but to improve yourself. (Alltech website, Careers section, 2026)

In excerpt (10), the pronoun *I* introduces a personal testimony that contrasts with the collective corporate voice which dominates throughout the rest of the website. Moreover, the parallelism between *prove yourself* and *improve yourself*, two verb phrases with the same syntactic structure but opposing values, projects Alltech's people-oriented mindset. This example reveals a deliberate communicative strategy: the individual voice is reserved for human interest narratives that reinforce the company's culture, while the institutional voice of the website remains overall collective.

3.4 Verbs and semantic prosody

According to Malavasi (2007), verbs contribute to conveying evaluative meanings in corporate discourse, as "subplicit attitudinal verbs carry a heavy weight in the realization of connotatively evaluative meanings" through their positive semantic prosody (p. 178). The verb frequency list of Alltech's website sub-corpus perfectly illustrates this phenomenon, as the most frequent verbs are characterised by a positive semantic prosody which frames the company's actions in terms of benefit and improvement.

The high frequency of *be* [139] reflects the website's strong definitional and descriptive function. Beyond *be*, the most frequent verbs can be grouped into two main groups. The first encompasses what Malavasi (2007) labels action-oriented verbs, terms that evoke "thriving performance and profitable advantages resulting from responsibly decided courses of action" (p. 178): *support* [54], *improve* [51], *enhance* [34], *deliver* [22], *boost* [18], *strengthen* [15], *build* [14], *drive* [14] and *maximize* [13]. The second group includes verbs related to involvement. These are terms that

highlight the company's commitment to its customers and stakeholders: *help* [45], *optimize* [23], *promote* [23] and *provide* [21].

The concordance analysis of *support* shows that it collocates especially with *health* [12], *growth* [7] and *integrity* [4]. As illustrated in the following excerpt, this type of collocation positions Alltech as a sustaining force for both animal wellbeing and business performance:

> (11) *Supporting* gut health, immunity, and nutrient absorption with AquateTM premix, including Bio-Mos®, Actigen® and Bioplex®. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

In (11), *supporting* is followed by three nouns (*gut health*, *immunity* and *nutrient absorption*) which are characterised by a positive connotation in the context of animal nutrition. The enumeration also creates a cumulative effect and it suggests that Alltech's solutions provide a comprehensive approach to animal wellbeing.

As for *improve*, the concordance analysis illustrated a similar pattern, with the verb collocating most frequently with *health* [13], *efficiency* [5], *immunity* [4] and *performance* [3], as shown in example (12):

> (12) Made with beneficial microorganisms, our biological solutions *improve* soil fertility, stimulate root development and enhance nutrient uptake. (Alltech website, Crop Science section, 2026)

In the excerpt above, the verb *improve* is followed by *soil fertility*, a key agricultural indicator, while the three verb constructions (*improve, stimulate, enhance*) reinforce the sense of 360-degree support. The pronoun *our* at the beginning of the sentence maintains the collective corporate voice identified in section 3.3.

It is also important to note the role of *help* [45] and its collocates. Unlike the other frequent verbs, which mostly collocate with abstract processes or results, *help* occurs predominantly with human agents: *farmers* [6], *animals* [5], *producers* [3], *growers* [2] and *owners* [2], as shown in (13) and (14):

> (13) Alltech Crop Science (ACS) develops sustainable solutions to *help* farmers combat everyday challenges that occur in the soil and in the plant. (Alltech website, Crop Science section, 2026)

> (14) Alltech brings science-backed nutrition and practical on-farm know-how to *help* small-flock owners overcome those everyday challenges. (Alltech website, Backyard Poultry section, 2026)

In both excerpts, the direct object of *help* is a human agent (*farmers* and *owners*), instead of an abstract phenomenon. This pattern reflects what Delin (2005) describes as the analysis of participant roles: the way in which the brand and its audiences are positioned as agents or recipients of action in the

text. By making agricultural producers the direct objects of *help*, Alltech describes itself as an enabler of human agency rather than a mere product supplier.

Reduce [28] deserves a specific mention as it is the only frequent verb with an inherently negative connotation. However, as shown in example (15), the verb consistently refers to negative phenomena:

> (15) Our biological crop science solutions improve soil health, enhance crop performance and maximize productivity while helping *reduce* agriculture's reliance on synthetic inputs. (Alltech website, Crop Science section, 2026)

In excerpt (15), *reduce* collocates with *reliance on synthetic inputs*, a negative phenomenon. The sentence thus suggests that Alltech is actively working to eliminate this problem. This reveals a typical rhetorical strategy for corporate promotional discourse: negative results are attributed to external factors or industry-wide challenges, while the company is presented as the agent that actively works to address them (Malavasi, 2007).

Lastly, *learn* [19] deserves special attention since the concordance analysis showed that the vast majority of its occurrences take the form of the call-to-action formula, as shown in the following example:

> (16) ...supporting profitability and environmental sustainability. *Learn* more (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

In excerpt (16), *Learn more* functions as a direct engagement device, an invitation for the reader to get further information immediately after a product or topic description. This is consistent with Malavasi's (2024) observation that constructions such as “find out more” or “read more about” “direct the reader to other content in the report or on the website” (p. 155) and they function as signs of dialogicity that keep the reader engaged with the text.

3.5 Evaluative adjectives

Malavasi (2007) explains that adjectives play a key role in corporate communication as evaluative lexical items that “represent the ways in which writers enter the text and express their attitudes towards the entity they are talking about” (Thompson & Hunston, 2000, as cited in Malavasi, 2007, p. 174). In the context of Alltech’s website, the adjective frequency list reveals three main semantic categories, each of which contributes to a distinct dimension of the company's corporate identity.

The first and most prominent group includes adjectives related to scientific expertise and innovation. *Nutritional* [30] mostly collocates with *technology* [18] and *solution* [8]. As shown in (17), it also

frequently co-occurs with *innovative* (7 times), suggesting that scientific expertise and innovation are consistently presented as inseparable qualities.

> (17) Our diverse portfolio of innovative *nutritional* technologies improves aquaculture health and performance, boosting productivity and profitability while reducing environmental impact. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

In the excerpt, *nutritional* modifies *technologies*, the most frequent collocation, and the co-occurrence with *innovative* further reinforces the company's scientific positioning and its contribution to the sector with up-to-date solutions. In fact, *Science-backed* [12] collocates with *solutions* [6] and *nutrition* [2]:

> (18) Alltech brings *science-backed* nutrition and practical on-farm know-how to help small-flock owners overcome those everyday challenges. (Alltech website, Backyard Poultry section, 2026)

In excerpt (18), *science-backed* functions as an implicit promotional device: rather than directly claiming scientific superiority, it presupposes that the company's solutions are grounded in scientific evidence, thereby building credibility without falling into explicit ostentation. This strategy is consistent with Malavasi's (2007) observation that "laudatory meanings are more frequently expressed in an indirect and more implicit way" (p. 177).

In the second category there are adjectives related to environmental responsibility. *Environmental* [26] collocates primarily with *impact* [10], *assessment* [4] and *footprint* [2]. Notably, all three nouns refer to challenges to be addressed rather than achievements to be celebrated. As shown in (19) and (20), in the website *environmental* accompanies phenomena that Alltech positions itself as actively working to solve:

> (19) Our diverse portfolio of nutritional technologies improves aquaculture health and performance, boosting productivity and profitability while reducing *environmental* impact. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

> (20) For more than four decades, the Fennoaqua team has championed *environmental* stewardship, local economic growth and community engagement. (Alltech website, Alltech Fennoaqua section, 2026)

In excerpt (19), *reducing environmental impact* describes Alltech as actively trying to eliminate a negative phenomenon, while in excerpt (20), *environmental stewardship* frames the company's commitment as an ongoing responsibility rather than a past achievement. This category also encompasses *sustainable* [23], which frequently co-occurs with *responsible*, *efficient* and *profitable*, as shown in excerpt (21):

(21) Enhance performance and build a more *sustainable* and profitable future. (Alltech website, Beef Cattle section, 2026)

In the example, *sustainable* appears with *profitable* in a single noun phrase which describes sustainability not as a standalone ethical commitment but as an integrated dimension of business performance. This aligns with the concept of legitimacy expressed by Cornelissen (2004, p. 59), according to whom organisations must demonstrate accountability across both ecological and financial dimensions to be considered legitimate by their stakeholders.

The third category of adjectives includes those that relate to international reach and leadership. *Global* [17] collocates with *leader* [2], *team* [3] and *responsibility* [1], as illustrated in the following example:

(22) Alltech E-CO2 is a *global* leader in on-farm environmental assessments, helping farmers and agribusinesses turn sustainability into a driver of efficiency and profitability. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)

In (22), *global* modifies *leader:* this pattern positions Alltech as an authoritative international player in the agri-food industry. According to Malavasi (2007), neutral adjectives such as *global* "assume a positive connotation because of either their surrounding favourable context or the positive value they recall" (Malavasi, 2005, as cited in Malavasi, 2007, p. 177).

To conclude, *more* [34] is the most frequent adjective overall. Although it mostly occurs in the call-to-action formula *Learn more,* it is also employed as a comparative adjective. In particular, its co-occurrence with *pressure* is particularly revealing:

(23) Today's aquaculture farmers and feed producers face *more* complexity – and *more* pressure – than ever before. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

This example illustrates a deliberate rhetorical strategy: *more* is used to amplify the challenges faced by customers rather than to promote Alltech's superiority. This way the company builds a sense of urgency in the stakeholders that implicitly frames the company's solutions as necessary rather than desirable.

3.6 Lexical fields

Through the concordance analysis of the most frequent nouns, three main lexical fields emerged in the sub-corpus, each corresponding to a distinct dimension of the company's corporate identity: the scientific and technical field, the sustainability field and the people and community field. Together, they reflect the values and themes that Alltech seeks to project through its website communication.

The most prominent lexical field includes terms related to scientific expertise and technical performance. As revealed by its concordance analysis, *solution* [72] collocates with *biological* [9], *nutritional* [8], *science-backed* [6] and *sustainable* [8]. This pattern creates a recurrent formula that frames Alltech's products as simultaneously scientifically proven and environmentally responsible, as shown in (24):

> (24) Made with beneficial microorganisms, our biological *solutions* improve soil fertility, stimulate root development and enhance nutrient uptake. (Alltech website, Crop Science section, 2026)

In the example, *biological solutions* and the three parallel verb constructions (*improve, stimulate, enhance*) create a cumulative effect of technical benefit which contributes to the perception of a multi-level approach discussed in the other sections. In a similar way, *health* [81], the second most frequent noun, contributes to defining the breadth of Alltech's scientific scope through its collocates: *animal* [11], *gut* [5], *reproductive* [5], *plant* [4] and *soil* [3]. Together, these collocations cover the full spectrum of the company's areas of expertise, from livestock and aquaculture to agriculture, as illustrated in example (25):

> (25) ACS delivers science-backed biological *solutions* that restore soil balance and strengthen soil health, maximize crop yields, improve plant resilience, and promote stewardship and value creation across the food chain. (Alltech website, Crop Science section, 2026)

In (25), the presence of several agricultural dimensions (*soil, plant* and *crop*) in a single sentence demonstrates that Alltech adopts a comprehensive approach to crop science and it positions the company as a partner that helps clients in every stage of the agricultural production cycle, from soil health to final yield.

The second lexical field concerns performance and business results. *Performance* [63], *productivity* [42], *growth* [37], *efficiency* [36] and *profitability* [27] form a cluster of result-oriented nouns that frame Alltech's solutions in measurable economic terms. The concordance analysis reveals interesting patterns within this cluster: *efficiency* collocates with *feed* [15] thus reflecting the sectoral concern with optimising feed use, while *performance* collocates with *economic* [6], explicitly connecting animal health to financial results, as shown in excerpt (26):

> (26) Our innovative nutritional technologies improve health and productivity, increase yields, drive economic *performance* and foster a more resilient future. (Alltech website, multiple sections, 2026)

In the excerpt, the sequence of positive verbs (*improve, increase, drive, foster*) frames Alltech's solutions in extremely positive terms by describing beneficial outcomes across biological, economic and environmental dimensions simultaneously.

The third lexical field relates to people and corporate culture. The concordance analysis of *team* [28] revealed a clear strategy: *team* is modified by *global* [3] and *knowledgeable* [1], appears as the object of *join* [3] and *connect* [2], and as the subject of *shape* [2] and *embrace* [1], as shown in (27):

> (27) Join a global *team* shaping the future. Be part of a mission-driven, globally connected *team* that is redefining what's possible. (Alltech website, Careers section, 2026)

In excerpt (27), *team* is not merely described as a workforce but as a collective agent of change: *shaping* and *redefining* suggest active transformation rather than passive execution. This is consistent with the expressing process described by Hatch and Schultz (2002), whereby an organisation's internal culture becomes visible through external identity claims: the wide use of *team* suggests that Alltech's people-focused culture, articulated through the value *Make a Friend*, is often projected through the website's institutional communication. It is also important to note the association of *team* and *global* and *globally connected* which emphasizes Alltech's international reach.

Finally, the concordance analysis of *Alltech* as subject showed that, rather than presenting itself as the dominant agent of its own success, Alltech foregrounds collaboration and support:

> (28) *Alltech* works alongside you to enhance operational efficiency, build healthier herds and create a more sustainable, resilient future. (Alltech website, Beef Cattle section, 2026)

> (29) *Alltech* seeks to engage with business partners who share our commitment to ethical, responsible and sustainable practices. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)

In excerpt (28), *works alongside you* implies partnership and equality rather than authority. This is confirmed by example (29), where *seeks to engage* frames Alltech as an active but non-imposing firm. Considering Delin's (2005) analysis of participant roles as a key indicator of brand positioning, choosing collaborative verbs projects the image of a company that values partnership instead of authoritative dominance.

3.7 Visual elements

The visual analysis of the website sub-corpus focuses on the most significant image-text combinations, applying the six selected categories from Marsh and White's (2003) taxonomy. As outlined in the methodology section, the analysis is selective and descriptive rather than exhaustive: instead of classifying every image in the corpus, the analysis focuses on the most representative examples of each category, with the aim of assessing how visual elements contribute to the construction of Alltech's corporate identity alongside the linguistic analysis.

The engage function is systematically realised through the graphics that appear across the whole website (Fig. 2). In the example, each card combines an icon which symbolizes the topic, a headline, a brief description and a *Learn more* link meant to capture the reader's attention and direct it towards further information in other sections of the website. The use of brand colours (in this case Alltech's shade of orange) for the icons reinforces the brand identity and visually preannounces each paragraph before the audience reads the text.

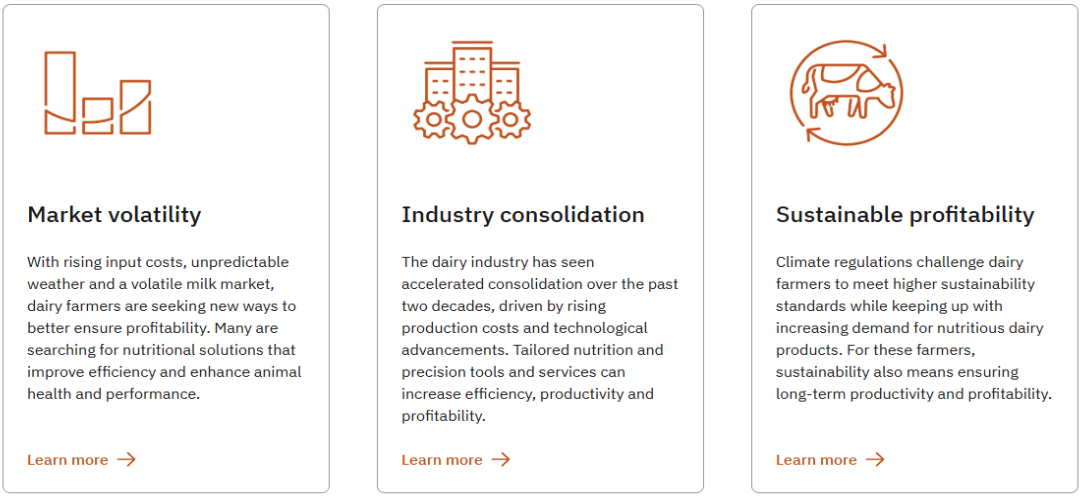


Figure 2. "Learn more" button (engage). (Alltech website, Dairy Cow section, 2026)

The humanize function is particularly evident in the *Our Leaders* section of the website, where portrait photographs of the leaders of the company are displayed alongside their names and roles (Fig. 3). Each photograph is also clickable, redirecting to a dedicated page for each leader with further information. The photographs are shot in a professional but approachable style (formal attire, direct gaze towards the camera, neutral or office backgrounds). The fact that each leader smiles creates a balance between institutional authority and personal accessibility. It also helps the audience empathize with the company. This visual strategy is consistent with Marsh and White's (2003) definition of humanize: by associating real faces with institutional roles, the website transforms abstract corporate positions into recognisable people. This visual choice is also coherent with the linguistic analysis in section 3.6, where the prominence of *team* among the most frequent nouns was identified as a marker of Alltech's people-first culture.

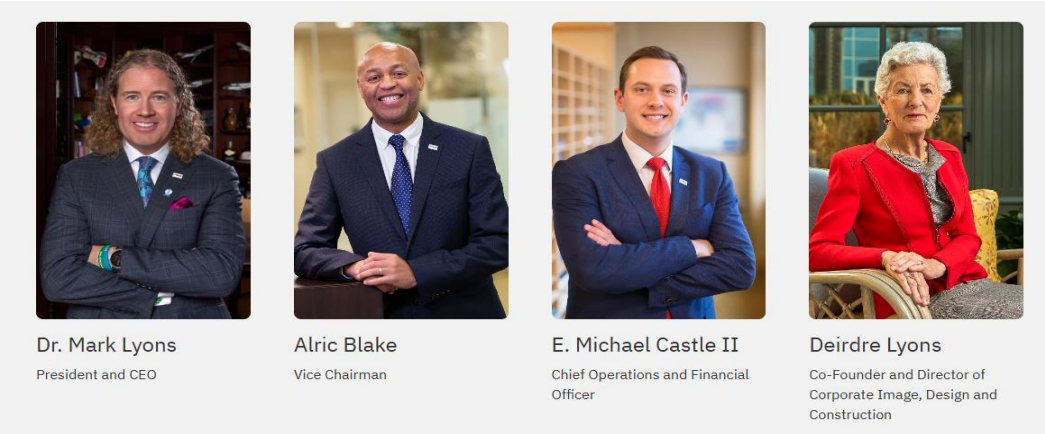


Figure 3. Leadership team portraits (humanize). (Alltech website, Our Leaders section, 2026)

The describe function is exemplified in the world map below from the *Who We Are* section (Fig. 4), which visually represents Alltech's global presence across 140+ countries. The map uses colours to distinguish four regions: North America (orange), Latin America (green), Asia-Pacific (yellow) and Europe, Africa and the Middle East (blue) accompanied by icons and numerical data. This visual organisation translates geographical and quantitative information into an immediately readable map that makes the company's international reach clearly visible. The map is also coherent with the occurrence of *global* identified in section 3.5, where the adjective was found to systematically evoke Alltech's international scope.



Figure 4. World map (describe). (Alltech website, Who We Are section, 2026)

The elicit emotion function is evident in the banner photograph of the homepage (Fig. 5), which shows an Alltech representative and a farmer at sunset in a farm setting. The composition is carefully constructed in a way that evokes positive emotions: the warm, golden backlight creates an atmospheric glow, while the relaxed posture and proximity of the two figures suggest a relationship

of mutual trust and collaboration. The cattle in the background, a symbol of an authentic agricultural context, reinforce the credibility of the image. Together, these visual choices evoke emotions of trust and partnership, reinforcing the message *Alltech works alongside you*, one of the most significant sentences analysed in section 3.6. This image therefore simultaneously elicits an emotional response and visually embodies the company's collaborative behaviour projected through the website's linguistic choices.



Figure 5. Alltech representative and farmer at sunset (elicit emotion). (Alltech website, homepage, 2026)

Finally, the complement function is illustrated by the sustainability data panel in the *Our Impact* section (Fig. 6). In the example, numerical statistics (22% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions since 2021, $2.72 million invested in energy efficiency projects and 15,837 metric tons of CO_2 reduced per year) are accompanied by thematic icons that visually represent each statistic. Text and image together convey the company's sustainability commitment better than either mode could achieve alone: the icons allow for immediate visual recognition while the numbers and text deliver the specific content.

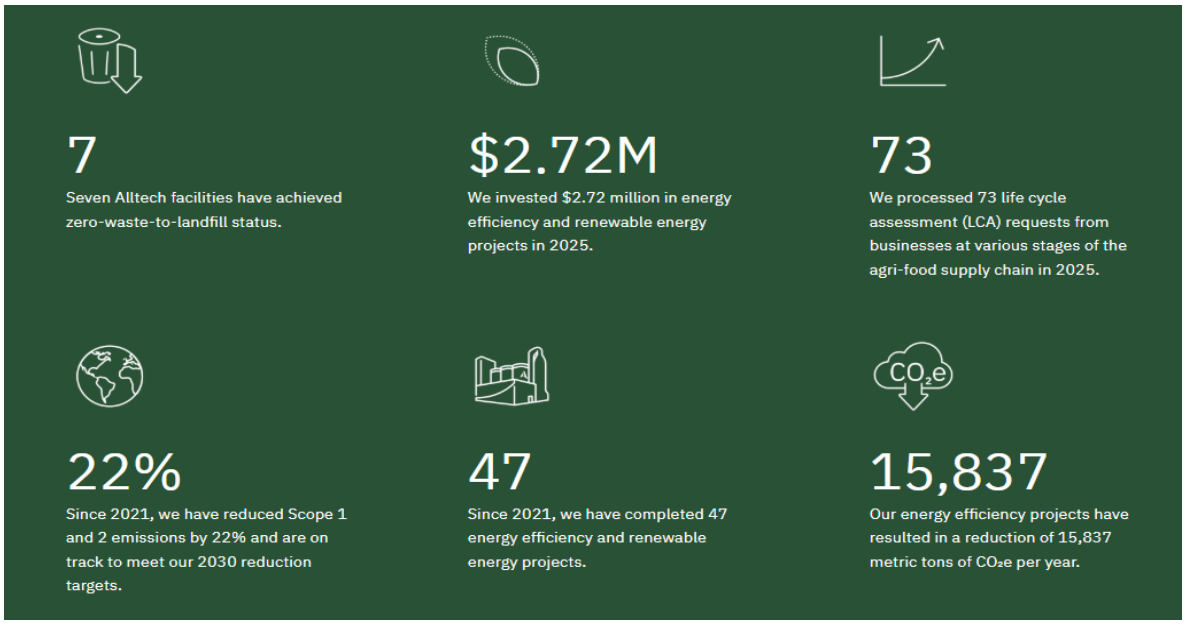


Figure 6. Sustainability performance data with icons (complement). (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)

Overall, the analysis of Alltech's website sub-corpus reveals a communicative strategy that combines scientific authority and customer orientation. The website adopts both institutional formality and emotional engagement in order to promote the company and highlight the values of sustainability and community. These patterns will serve as a reference point for the analysis of the remaining sub-corpora, enabling a cross-channel comparison in Chapter 6.

Chapter 4 - Social Media analysis

4.1 Instagram analysis

4.1.1 Instagram as a corporate communication tool for Alltech

Alltech's Instagram account counts roughly 23,000 followers and it includes mostly visual and emotional content. If the website is primarily used as an institutional and commercial channel, Instagram focuses more on storytelling by sharing narratives about people and events rather than products or technical solutions.

A unique feature of Alltech's Instagram communication is the systematic reposting of content originally published by Dr. Mark Lyons on his personal profile. This practice creates an overlap between the personal voice of the company's CEO and the voice of the company itself. According to Tsai and Men (2017) and as previously discussed in section 1.4.4, the CEO's voice on social media humanises the organisation and reduces the perceived distance between the company and its audiences. The result is that a significant portion of the Instagram sub-corpus is written in the first person singular, a feature that distinguishes this channel from the website and from the other social media platforms analysed in this study.

The sub-corpus includes 148 posts published throughout 2025 which cover a wide range of topics: from industry events and trade shows to company milestones, sustainability initiatives, employee profiles and cultural events such as the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition. The following analysis examines how the linguistic choices contribute to the creation of Alltech's corporate identity on Instagram.

4.1.2 Quantitative overview

The wordlist generated by Sketch Engine was examined and the following table presents the most frequent linguistic items in the Instagram sub-corpus according to grammatical categories, along with their frequencies. .

Noun	Freq	**Adjective**	Freq	**Verb**	Freq	**Pronoun**	Freq
Alltech	210	Global	40	Be	413	Our	199
Year	62	New	39	Have	105	We	160
Kentucky	61	More	36	Join	62	You	96
Team	57	First	24	Make	56	It	92
Dr.	56	Special	21	Share	40	Us	68
Agriculture	56	Proud	21	Support	35	Your	53

World	53	Vocal	17	Help	34	I	42
Lyons	42	Many	17	Do	32	His	37
Week	37	Sustainable	16	Celebrate	26	Her	37
Challenge	34	Great	16	Bring	23	He	28
Industry	33	Meaningful	15	Build	23	Their	27
P.m.	33	Powerful	14	See	22	She	27
Pork	32	Full	13	Continue	22		
Brazil	31	Key	12	Explore	22		
Future	30	Last	12	Take	20		
Song	30	Incredible	12	Create	17		
Event	30	Animal	12	Work	17		
Celebration	29	Happy	10	Come	16		
Booth	29	Live	10	Drive	15		
Opportunity	28	Vice	10	Shape	14		

Table 2. Most frequent items by grammatical category in the Instagram sub-corpus.

In the pronoun list, *our* [199] is followed by *we* [160], *you* [96], *it* [92] and *us* [68]. Notably, *I* [42] ranks seventh thus reflecting the systematic reposting of Mark Lyons' personal posts. Third-person pronouns, such as *his* [37], *her* [37], *he* [28] and *she* [27], suggest that Instagram often tells stories about specific people. These patterns will be analysed in detail in section 4.3.

The verb frequency list shows *be* [413] and *have* [105] as most frequent verbs, followed by *join* [62], *make* [56], *share* [40], *support* [35], *help* [34] and *celebrate* [26]. The prominence of community-oriented and celebratory verbs suggests a communication strategy that aims at creating participation and engagement as will be discussed in section 4.4.

Global [40], *new* [39] and *more* [36] are the most frequent adjectives and they are followed by a group of emotive and evaluative adjectives: *proud* [21], *special* [21], *meaningful* [15], *powerful* [14] and *incredible* [12]. These emotionally-charged adjectives suggest an emotional register as will be explored in section 4.5.

Lastly, *Alltech* [210], *year* [62] and *Kentucky* [61], followed by *team* [57], *dr.* [56] and *agriculture* [56] are the most frequent nouns. In particular, *Kentucky* and *dr.* reflect Instagram's strong focus on the company's roots and on people's stories. The high frequency of *year*, in turn, suggests a communication strategy focused on anniversaries and milestones. Section 4.6 will further analyse these nouns.

4.1.3 Pronoun use

The list of pronouns in the sub-corpus reveals that, while communication on the platform shares some features with the website, it also has some unique features which are due to the platform's more narrative register.

As on the website, *our* [199] is the most frequent pronoun and consistently occurs before nouns that express collective identity. However, on Instagram it is less frequently associated with products and more often with people and community:

> (30) For *our* Kentucky neighbors, I hope each of you will pour into these students with your presence and encouragement. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

> (31) Thank you to *our* producers who nourish families, support *our* economy and care for the land. (Alltech Instagram, May 2025)

In both excerpts, the use of *our* contributes to framing Alltech not as an external corporate entity but as an active contributor for the well-being of the local community and the sector. This is achieved by associating *our* with *Kentucky neighbors* in (30), where it gives the idea of territorial belonging, and with *producers* and *economy* in (31). Here, in particular, Alltech positions itself as a company that values and praises people working in the agricultural sector for their social contribution. The company thanks the producers for their work, not for purchasing Alltech's products: this symbolizes the platform's focus on more emotional content.

We [160] may be found in two distinct contexts. The celebratory and participatory one is exemplified in excerpt (32):

> (32) *We*'re celebrating the power of milk to nourish, connect, and inspire – across cultures and borders. Join us in raising a glass to the global goodness of dairy. (Alltech Instagram, June 2025)

The second one is narrative and it is used to describe specific actions and lived experiences, as shown in excerpt (33):

> (33) *We* made a meaningful stop along the way – delivering much-needed supplies and a few hours of volunteering around Black Mountain. (Alltech Instagram, October 2025)

In example (32), *we're celebrating* positions Alltech as an active member of a community united by shared values rather than a distant institutional voice. By using international days that are relevant to the industry players, such as World Milk Day, Alltech aligns its communication with broader sector-wide narratives. In (33), the narrative past tense *made*, collocating with *meaningful stop*, frames Alltech as a company that translates values into concrete actions while reporting a volunteering event.

This temporal shift towards the past tense is particularly distinctive of Instagram, where lived experiences are often narrated and recalled.

According to Casan-Pitarch (2016), second person pronouns "imply direct interaction and mutual recognition between the speaker and the addressee" (p. 40). *You* [96] and *your* [53] are used differently from the website where they are mostly oriented towards the customer's business challenges. On Instagram, they more frequently address the audience as members of a community:

> (34) *Your* work nourishes both people and the planet, and we're proud to support *you*. (Alltech Instagram, June 2025)

In excerpt (34), *your work* attributes agency and value to the audience (farmers and producers) while *we're proud to support you* positions Alltech as a supportive presence rather than a commercial entity. This shift from a B2B to a more inclusive, community-oriented tone of voice reflects the need for a more emotive communication on Instagram compared to the institutional website.

As previously mentioned, the most distinctive pronoun feature of this sub-corpus is the significant presence of *I* [42], as shown in (35):

> (35) While *I* can't be there in person this year, *I* will be tuning (and singing along) from afar. For our Kentucky neighbors, *I* hope each of you will pour into these students with your presence and encouragement. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

Example (35), and all occurrences of *I*, were found in posts originally written by Mark Lyons on his personal profile and afterwards reposted on the company's Instagram account. The deeply personal and introspective tone (*I can't be there*, *I hope*) represents a significant difference from the conventional corporate communication and it is consistent with the Social CEO strategy described by Tsai and Men (2017), according to which leaders use personal social media voices to humanise their organisations and build parasocial relationships with their audiences.

Finally, the high frequency of gendered third-person pronouns, *his* [37] and *her* [37], reflects Instagram's strong narrative orientation towards personal stories. *His* mostly refers to Dr. Pearse Lyons and it presents the founder as a living presence whose values continue to shape the company, as shown in (36):

> (36) I hope we also take a moment to remember *his* belief in the power of dreams – and *his* unwavering commitment to helping others achieve them. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

Her appears in posts telling the stories of employees, as shown in excerpt (37):

(37) In *her* role with the Alltech Dairy On-Farm Support team, she'll focus on bilingual training, coaching, and retention. Souza earned *her* bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine before moving to the United States. (Alltech Instagram, January 2025)

In both examples, the pronouns introduce personal narratives that humanise the brand by telling the stories of real individuals that are part of the company. This strategy is consistent with Hatch and Schultz's (2002) concept of expressing. If it is true that an organisation's internal culture becomes visible through external identity claims, by telling the stories of its people on its Instagram channel, Alltech projects its people-first culture outwards.

4.1.4 Verbs and semantic prosody

Like the other grammatical categories, verbs identified in the Instagram sub-corpus reflect a communicative strategy that focuses on community participation and storytelling rather than on technical performance and product delivery.

The most frequent verb after *be* is *join* [62], which is mainly used as an imperative call to action, as illustrated in (38) and (39):

(38) *Join* us in raising a glass to the global goodness of dairy – cheers for milk! (Alltech Instagram, June 2025)

(39) *Join* me at for a special screening of World Without Cows! This documentary asks a big question: Are we better off in a world without cows? (Alltech Instagram, February 2025)

In excerpt (38), *join us* invites collective participation in a celebratory gesture, constructing the Instagram audience as members of a shared community that values agriculture and its products (milk in this case). In (39), *join me*, written in the first person singular by Mark Lyons, creates a more personal and direct invitation, reinforcing the parasocial relationship between the CEO and his audience described by Tsai and Men (2017). Whether it is pronounced through the brand's collective voice or is a direct invitation from the CEO, the use of *join* shows that Alltech's strategy on this platform focuses on the celebration of special occasions and on community engagement.

Make [56] reveals an interesting collocational pattern with *difference* [17], as shown in (40):

(40) His birthday also marks the beginning of *Make* a Difference Day at Alltech, a global celebration of the power we all have to create positive change. (Alltech Instagram, August 2025)

In excerpt (40), *Make a Difference* refers to one of the company's core values and represents one of the most explicit manifestations of the expressing process described by Hatch and Schultz (2002) whereby Alltech's internal culture becomes visible through its external communication. This excerpt

is significant also because it shows how Alltech leverages special occasions (like the late founder's birthday) to project an image of continuity between past and present and to show that the company's social commitment is not recent but rather a founding principle from the beginning. Unlike the action-oriented verbs on the website (*improve, enhance, optimize*), which frame Alltech's value in technical and commercial terms, *make a difference* projects its social commitment.

The verb *share* [40] collocates predominantly with *insight*, *story* and *reflection*, revealing that on Instagram, sharing is always about knowledge and stories rather than products, as shown in example (41):

> (41) Tara *shared* her reflections on LinkedIn – swipe 👉 to see her key takeaways. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

In the excerpt above, the combination of *shared* and *reflections* frames the act of sharing not as product promotion but as the transmission of personal and professional knowledge. This way, Alltech projects the image of a community that shares insights and in which individual voices contribute to a collective narrative. This is also consistent with the company's core value of *Tell the Story*.

The use of the verbs *celebrate* [26] and *support* [35] also reinforces the community-oriented profile of Instagram's verb usage. *Celebrate* collocates with *20 years*, *heritage*, *legacy* and *season*, constructing a narrative of shared history and pride, as shown in (42) and (43):

> (42) We *celebrate* 20 years of the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition. Over the past two decades, more than $12 million in scholarships have been awarded to over 200 students. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

> (43) We *celebrate* heritage, horsemanship and our deep connection to the land. (Alltech Instagram, May 2025)

In example (42), *celebrate* introduces the Vocal Scholarship Competition which will be explored more in greater in this section. In (43), *celebrate* co-occurs with three nouns (*heritage*, *horsemanship* and *our deep connection to the land*) that reinforce the idea that Alltech values agricultural tradition. The possessive pronoun *our* reinforces the sense of shared belonging: Alltech is not merely observing these traditions from the outside but positioning itself as a member of the agricultural community. Together, both excerpts reveal how the use of the verb *celebrate* frames Alltech not as a mere corporation but as a community member.

If on the website the verb *support* collocates with technical outcomes, here it appears in the company of words such as *legacy*, *effort*, *vocalist* and *initiative* thus reinforcing the concept that Instagram

communication is much more focused on narration and emotive language. Alltech positions itself as a supportive presence for both its business partners and the broader community, as shown in excerpt (44):

> (44) We're proud to *support* that legacy through McCauley's – our equine nutrition company and trusted partner to breeders and trainers across the industry since 1938. (Alltech Instagram, May 2025)

The recurrence of both verbs in connection with the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition and the Alltech Celebration of Song, two cultural events that extend well beyond the company's core business, is particularly significant and will be examined in greater depth in section 4.6, where the cultural and artistic dimension of Alltech's Instagram identity emerges as a distinctive lexical field.

Finally, *shape* [14] collocates primarily with *future* and *narrative*, as shown in excerpt (43):

> (43) This isn't just a film — it's a conversation starter. It's about challenging assumptions, engaging in meaningful dialogue and *shaping* the future of meat, milk and eggs in our world. (Alltech Instagram, February 2025)

In (43), the collocation *shaping the future* frames Alltech not merely as a company that responds to industry trends but as an active agent in defining the future of food production. The co-occurrence with *challenging assumptions* and *engaging in meaningful dialogue* reinforces Alltech's positioning as a narrative leader that drives cultural and scientific change rather than a passive market player. This strategy is consistent with the company's Planet of Plenty® mission and its investment in agricultural storytelling through World Without Cows.

4.1.5 Evaluative adjectives

As far as adjectives are concerned, the Instagram sub-corpus reveals a different evaluative profile compared to the website. While on the website there is a predominance of technical and scientific adjectives, Instagram is characterised by emotional and experiential terms that reflect the platform's narrative and community-oriented register.

The most frequent adjective is *global* [40], which collocates primarily with *headquarters* [8], *president* [7] and *conversation* [2]. Excerpt (46) shows that, whereas on the website *global* was used to evoke Alltech's international reach, on Instagram it more frequently occurs in institutional contexts and in references to collective action:

> (46) His birthday also marks the beginning of Make a Difference Day at Alltech, a *global* celebration of the power we all have to create positive change. (Alltech Instagram, August 2025)

In (46), *global* modifies *celebration*: this collocation evokes inclusivity and collective purpose rather than market dominance and it reframes the company's international reach not as a commercial achievement but as an invitation to participate in something bigger. The phrase *the power we all have to create positive change* is also significant: by using *we all*, Alltech erases the differences between the company and the audience thus positioning both as equal participants in a shared mission.

New [39] collocates with *opportunity* [4], *way* [2] and *year* [2]. As can be seen in example (47), rather than signalling product innovation as on the website, *new* on Instagram consistently evokes openness to change and future possibility:

> (47) Creating sustainability partnerships with customers and taking bold action to tell agriculture's story in a *new* way. (Alltech Instagram, 2025)

In (47), there is a combination of two of Alltech's core values: *Stay Curious* and *Tell the Story*. In the construction *tell agriculture's story in a new way, new* implies a detachment from traditional narratives and it is consistent with Alltech's intent to change how the industry is told and perceived.

What is important to note in Instagram's adjective profile is the high presence of emotional adjectives such as p*roud* [21], which may be found almost exclusively in the formula *we're proud to support/stand with/champion*, as shown in excerpt (48):

> (48) Your work nourishes both people and the planet, and we're *proud* to support you. (Alltech Instagram, June 2025)

In the example, the company shows that it values and respects farmers and producers for their endeavours. By doing so, Alltech projects the image of an empathetic partner, rather than a distant product supplier. As Jeong, Chung and Kim (2022) observe, emotionally resonant language is a key aspect of the human tone of voice that brands adopt on social media to reduce psychological distance and build social presence with their audiences. The systematic use of *proud* on Instagram is a clear marker of this register.

Special [21] collocates predominantly with *screening* [5], *singer* [4], *guest* [3] and often in reference to cultural events. In the same way, *meaningful* [15] collocates with *dialogue* [3], *discussions* [2] and *stop* [1]. Both adjectives describe Alltech's activities not in terms of commercial value but in terms of human significance, as shown in (49) and (50):

> (49) The 20th anniversary of the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition began with a truly *special* moment. Mayor Linda Gorton presented a proclamation declaring March 2, 2025, as Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition Day. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

(50) We made a *meaningful* stop along the way – delivering much-needed supplies and a few hours of volunteering around Black Mountain. (Alltech Instagram, October 2025)

In excerpt (49), the adjective *special* frames an institutional moment as a community celebration. In excerpt (50), *meaningful* modifies *stop* in a post that reports a volunteering event organized by the company. In both cases, the adjectives are used to emotionally charge a narrative of action.

Example (51) shows the use of *powerful* [14], which mostly collocates with *reminder*, *demonstration* and *moment* in order to introduce reflective and inspirational statements:

(51) For both the team and the community, the visit was a *powerful* reminder of resilience and the impact of lending a helping hand. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

In (51) the phrase *powerful reminder* helps frame the post not as a corporate announcement but as a moment of reflection for everyone. The recurrence of this collocation is significant as it gives the idea that the company uses Instagram to promote moments of inspiration and deep thinking on values such as resilience and community support.

4.1.6 Lexical fields

Through the concordance analysis of the most frequent nouns, four main lexical fields emerged in Alltech's Instagram sub-corpus. Each one corresponds to a distinct dimension of Alltech's identity.

The first lexical field includes nouns related to heritage and family. *Dr.* [56] collocates almost exclusively with personal names, systematically humanising the company by referring to specific people. *Lyons* [42] is a powerful identity marker and it refers to both the founder, as shown in excerpt (52), and the current CEO. *Kentucky* [61] is also very frequent in the sub-corpus thus signalling the importance of territorial roots for Alltech.

(52) August 3 would have marked the 81st birthday of our founder, *Dr*. Pearse Lyons. He believed real change starts by hearing the needs of others: our customers, our team members and our communities. (Alltech Instagram, August 2025)

In excerpt (52), *Dr.* is used to refer to the founder of the company while the possessive pronoun *our* signals collective ownership of the founder's legacy (*our founder*) thus projecting the image of the company as a family with shared values. This lexical field is consistent with the expressing process described by Hatch and Schultz (2002), whereby Alltech's internal culture, deeply shaped by its Irish-American founding family and its Kentucky roots, becomes visible through the platform's linguistic choices.

The second lexical field concerns community participation and events. *Event* [30], *booth* [29] and *celebration* [29] reveal Instagram's strong function as an event documentation and promotion channel. The high frequency of time references, such as *p.m.* [33], further confirms this function, as Alltech systematically informs its audience of upcoming screenings and other cultural events, as shown in (53):

> (53) 📆 Tuesday, February 4, 2025 🕖 7:30*PM* - 9:00P*M* Hope to see you there! Let's keep the conversation going – stop by the Alltech booth to connect. (Alltech Instagram, February 2025)

The excerpt shows a post that is structured as a direct invitation which includes date and location, aiming at encouraging the audience's physical participation. This is reinforced by the formula *Hope to see you there* which exemplifies the community-oriented and emotive language on the platform. *Opportunity* [28] and *week* [37] also belong to this field, frequently appearing in posts that frame industry events and trade shows as occasions for connection and growth:

> (54) This *week*, Alltech Canada and Masterfeeds joined industry leaders in Banff, Alberta, for the prestigious Banff Pork Seminar. (Alltech Instagram, January 2025)

In (54), *this week* functions as a temporal anchor that situates the corporate event in the immediate present, creating a sense of real-time participation and community involvement.

The third lexical field is perhaps the most unexpected: the cultural and artistic sphere. *Song* [30] and *vocal* [17] appear almost exclusively in reference to the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition and the Alltech Celebration of Song, as shown in example (55):

> (55) We celebrate 20 years of the *Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition*. Over the past two decades, more than $12 million in scholarships have been awarded to over 200 students, giving them the opportunity to pursue what truly makes their hearts sing. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

In (55), the Vocal Scholarship Competition is described not only as a corporate sponsorship but as an investment in people's passions and dreams. The frequency of this field in the sub-corpus creates an association between the brand and artistic investment which frames Alltech's identity beyond its core business, reflecting the growing expectation for companies to demonstrate social commitment. In fact, companies are increasingly expected to demonstrate social commitment beyond their sector: what Cornelissen (2004) describes as the need to be perceived as legitimate not only in financial terms but also in social and community ones. Moreover, this contributes to building the trust and transparency that Bondi and Poppi (2025) identify as central to robust corporate communication strategies.

The fourth lexical field relates to global engagement and social impact. *Agriculture* [56] collocates with *advance*, *education* and *animal* thus consistently framing the sector as something to be actively promoted and defended. *Brazil* [31] reflects the significant presence of COP30-related content and the *World Without Cows Brazil: The Battle for Balance* documentary, positioning Alltech as an active participant in global sustainability debates, as shown in excerpt (56):

> (56) On her last day at COP30, Alltech's global vice president of ESG, Tara McCarthy, explored the AgriZone and connected with innovators from around the world who are working to build a more sustainable food system — including in *Brazil*. (Alltech Instagram, November 2025)

The excerpt is an example of COP30-related content, one of the most significant global forums on climate change and sustainability. Tara McCarthy's full professional title justifies her presence and her engagement at the event. The sentence also positions Alltech not as a passive observer but as a member of a global network of *innovators working to build a more sustainable food system*. The final reference to Brazil projects the image of Brazil not merely as the location of COP30 but as a country with a particular stake in the future of sustainable agriculture. This also explains why the company has decided to devote a full documentary to the Brazilian context.

Challenge [34] collocates with *push-up*, *personal*, *wellness* and *bold*. A particularly significant example is the 2025K Charitable Challenge personally launched by Dr. Mark Lyons with the goal of completing 25,000 push-ups in a year while raising $100,000 for the Pearse Lyons ACE Foundation:

> (57) It's more than a fitness goal; it's a movement with heart. About 30 others have joined the *2025K Charitable Challenge*, and together, we've already completed over 30,000 pushups in the first week. (Alltech Instagram, January 2025)

The excerpt shows that *challenge* on Instagram does not refer to industry challenges as in the website. Here, it refers to a collective act of solidarity which includes the CEO and all the employees for a philanthropic purpose. This exemplifies how Alltech uses Instagram to blur the boundaries between corporate communication and community engagement. It also reinforces the company's core value of *Make a Difference* which is not only an abstract principle but a concrete commitment.

4.1.7 Visual elements

The visual analysis of the Instagram sub-corpus applies the six categories from Marsh and White's (2003) taxonomy to the most significant image-text combinations across the 94 posts that include static images. If the website uses more professional photos or graphics with an informative function, Instagram's visual profile reflects the platform's more informal and emotional register.

The decorate function is illustrated by a photograph of an ice sculpture on Lyons Farm in Kentucky (Fig. 7). The image accompanies a post regarding the Banff Pork Seminar, Alltech's 45th anniversary and the 2025K Charitable Challenge, topics to which the sculpture has no direct visual connection. Its function is purely decorative and aesthetic in order to make the post visually appealing and to create an atmospheric, wintry mood without adding informational content. This use of decorative images is frequent on Instagram where users need to abide by the platform's aesthetic conventions.

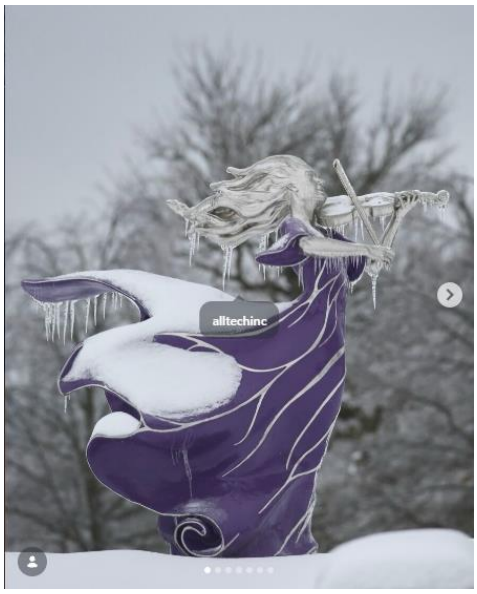


Fig. 7. Ice-covered sculpture (decorate). (Alltech Instagram, 10/01/2025)

The elicit emotion function is exemplified by a Halloween post featuring a photograph of a dog dressed in a ghost costume (Fig. 8). The accompanying text (*Happy Halloween from your furry friends at Alltech!*) has no connection to the company's core business. The image's sole function is to evoke an emotional response of tenderness and playfulness in order to connect with the audience on a deeper level. This type of content is consistent with the human tone of voice described by Jeong, Chung and Kim (2022), whereby brands adopt informal and emotionally resonant communication styles to reduce psychological distance with their audiences. It also subtly references Alltech's pet nutrition line in a more engaging rather than commercial format.



Fig. 8. Halloween post featuring a dog in a ghost costume (elicit emotion). (Alltech Instagram, 31/10/2025)

The engage function is exemplified by a promotional graphic published during COP30 which announces Martha Baker's participation in a panel discussion (Fig. 9). The graphic combines the Alltech logo, the panelist's name and photograph, the event details (date, time and location) and a call to action (*Learn more*). The graphic also uses the company's brand colours of blue and orange. Its primary purpose is to capture the reader's attention and direct him/her towards the event and the accompanying link.

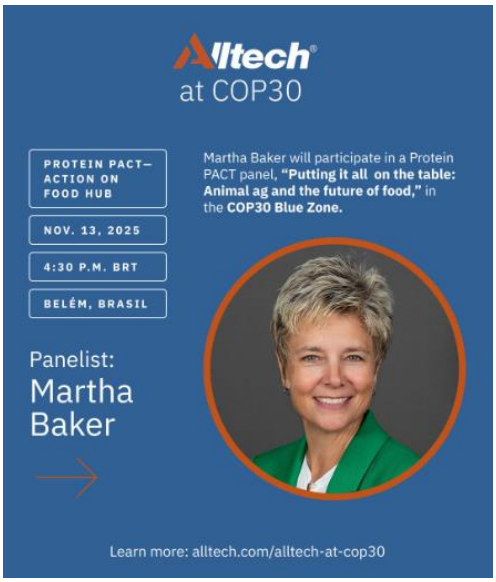


Fig. 9. Promotional graphic for COP30 panel (engage). (Alltech Instagram, 13/11/2025)

The humanize function is particularly evident in the post published on 8 March 2025, dedicated to the memory of Dr. Pearse Lyons (Fig. 10). The post includes photographs of the founder accompanied by a text that describes his legacy: *The legacy I would like to make is "We made a difference".* By

placing a human face and a deeply personal narrative at the centre of the communication, this post represents “elements within the text in the form of a living being, thereby making the text more accessible” (Marsh and White, 2003, p. 668). In general, the systematic use of photographs of named individuals across the Instagram sub-corpus (founder and employees) reinforces the people-first identity that emerges consistently from the linguistic analysis.

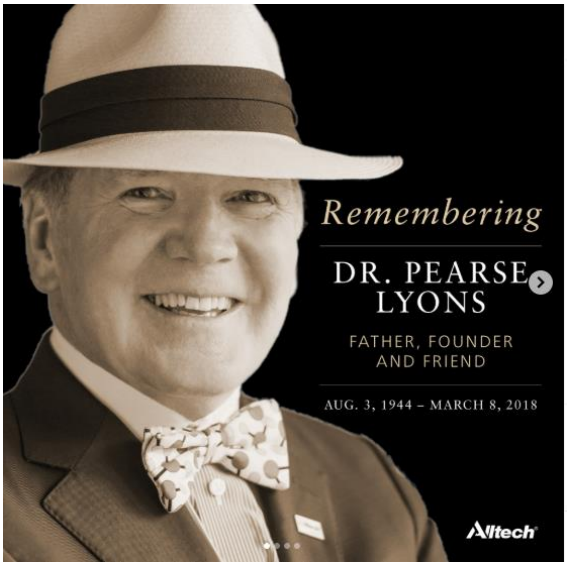


Fig. 10. Memorial post for Dr. Pearse Lyons (humanize). (Alltech Instagram, 8/03/2025)

Finally, the complement function is illustrated by the post published after IPPE2025 which takes the form of a sequence of several photographs documenting different moments of the event (Fig. 11). The accompanying caption (*From live podcasts and award presentations to happy hour, we've been inspired by the conversations and connections this week*) provides a general narrative frame, while each image in the carousel adds specific visual and textual details that the caption alone cannot deliver. In this way, text and images together construct a more complete picture of the event. This use of the carousel format as a storytelling device is particularly characteristic of Instagram by adopting this communicative style, Alltech shows that it is able to adapt their communication according to the platform’s features.

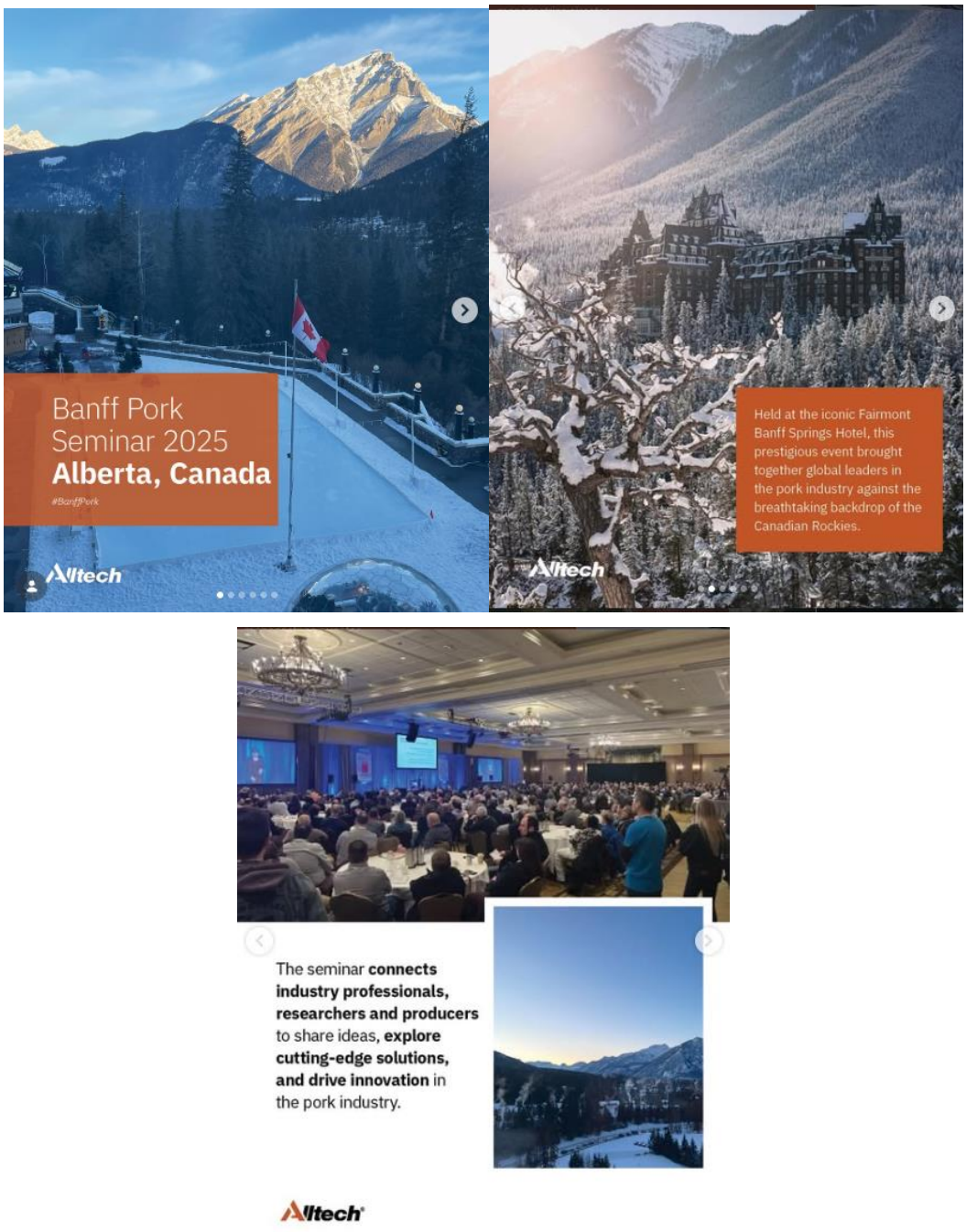


Fig. 11. Event documentation post from IPPE2025 (complement). (Alltech Instagram, 10/01/2025)

Overall, the analysis of Alltech's Instagram sub-corpus reveals a communicative strategy centred on storytelling and emotional engagement of the community. The platform's linguistic and visual choices consistently foreground human connection and shared values over product promotion. This strategy projects a warm and personal corporate identity and it reflects both Alltech's people-focused culture and its commitment to activities that go beyond its core business in animal nutrition and crop science.

4.2 Facebook analysis

4.2.1 Facebook as a corporate communication tool for Alltech

Alltech's Facebook profile has 227,556 followers and is therefore the most followed of the three social media platforms included in this study. If Instagram functions as a storytelling and community-building platform, Facebook has a more informative and professional objective. Alltech mainly uses this channel to share technical content and expert knowledge with a professional audience.

The Facebook sub-corpus consists of 55 posts published in 2025 that differ from those published on Instagram. As outlined in the methodology section, posts shared across both platforms were excluded from the Facebook corpus in order to avoid redundancy and to focus specifically on the content that the company chooses to publish exclusively on Facebook. Furthermore, the fact that some posts differ between the two platform suggests that Alltech consciously adapts its communication strategy to the specific audience of each platform. While Facebook shows more technical content, emotional narratives are chosen for Instagram.

The following analysis examines the linguistic and visual choices that characterise the content published only on Facebook thus exploring how they contribute to Alltech's corporate identity on this platform.

4.2.2 Quantitative overview

The wordlist generated by Sketch Engine was examined and the following table presents the most frequent linguistic items by grammatical category and with their frequencies for the Facebook sub-corpus.

Noun	Freq	**Adjective**	Freq	**Verb**	Freq	**Pronoun**	Freq
Alltech	39	Global	12	Be	78	It	22
Dr.	18	More	9	Have	18	Our	21
Team	14	Many	6	Do	14	We	20
Business	11	New	6	Help	10	Their	15
Producer	11	On-farm	5	Read	9	He	13
Sustainability	9	Next	5	Go	9	You	11
Support	9	Good	4	Make	8	They	10
Blog	9	Vital	3	Learn	7	Its	7
Dairy	9	First	3	Hold	6	His	7
Mycotoxin	8	Key	3	Get	5	Your	6
Feed	8	Same	2	Take	5		

Specialist	8	Organic	2	Explore	5		
Poultry	7	Fast	2	Think	5		
Technology	7	Late	2	Build	5		
Health	7	Low	2	Join	4		
President	7	Healthy	2	Discuss	4		
Beef	7	Technical	2	Move	4		
Year	7	European	2	Share	4		
Line	6	Sustainable	2	Stay	4		
Kentucky	6	Bilingual	2	Want	4		

Table 3. Most frequent items by grammatical category in the Facebook sub-corpus.

The pronoun distribution is led by *it* [22], *our* [21] and *we* [20], while *I* [6] is rarely used. The predominance of *it* suggests a relatively impersonal and descriptive register as will be shown in section 4.2.3.

Apart from *be* [78], the most frequent verbs are *help* [10], *read* [9] and *make* [8]. The use of *read* (almost exclusively in the formula *Read the blog* or *Read more*) reflects the function of Facebook as a content distribution channel. These patterns will be discussed in section 4.2.4.

The adjective list is led by *global* [12], *more* [9], *many* [6] and *new* [6], but there are also functional terms such as *on-farm* [5], *vital* [3] and *key* [3]. These adjectives will be examined in section 4.2.5.

The noun frequency shows *Alltech* [39], *dr.* [18], *team* [14], *business* [11], *producer* [11] and *sustainability* [9] as the most used nouns. The use of *blog* [9], *mycotoxin* [8] and *specialist* [8] signals that Facebook is used to promote technical and informative content directed at a professional audience, as will be demonstrated in section 4.2.6.

4.2.3 Pronoun use

Even though the collective corporate voice is maintained, the pronoun distribution suggests that the tone of voice on Facebook is more formal and impersonal than on Instagram.

The most distinctive feature concerning pronoun use on Facebook is the fact that *it* [22] is the most frequent pronoun. It mainly functions as a referential pronoun referring to principles and ideas as shown in (58) and (59):

> (58) *It*'s a reminder that the finish line won't be crossed only on foot – but through giving. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)
>
> (59) The truth is, confidence doesn't just arrive. *It*'s built – layer by layer – by doing hard things. (Alltech Facebook, July 2025)

Excerpt (58) comes from a post about a charity walk organized to raise funds for Hazel Lube, a team member's daughter struck by a serious illness. In the sentence, *it* introduces an inspiring statement that reframes the physical challenge as an act of generosity. Example (59) is another example of inspirational and reflective post about leadership. Here, *it* refers to *confidence*, a quality that is often discussed as something that can be acquired. In both examples, *it* frames abstract concepts (values and qualities) in terms of something concrete that can be built. This impersonal use creates distance thus allowing for a more universal and philosophical register that characterises Facebook's communicative style.

As for the website and Instagram, *our* [21] signals a collective corporate identity and shared values:

> (60) It has defined *our* business for over 45 years. Next week, we will bring many of *our* global team members back to *our* Kentucky headquarters. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

In example (60), there are three instances of *our* (before *business*, *global team members* and *Kentucky headquarters*) and it suggests collective ownership of both commercial and human dimensions of the company. In this context, as in the examples from the other sub-corpora, *our* portrays Alltech as a unified collective voice. As a matter of fact, Casan-Pitarch (2016) affirms that first person plural pronouns project an image of corporate unity and teamwork.

We [20] emerges in two distinct contexts. (61) shows the institutional and announcement-oriented one, while (62) exemplifies a more reflective and philosophical tone.

> (61) *We*'re pleased to announce the expansion of our mycotoxin testing program Alltech® RAPIREADTM, which now includes a new collaboration with WatersTM | VICAM®. (Alltech Facebook, February 2025)

> (62) This week offers an opportunity to pause, reflect and ask: How can *we* do more? (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

In excerpt (61), Alltech uses a classic formula (*we're pleased to announce*) in order to announce corporate news. The choice of *pleased* makes the statement less formal despite the overral professional register. Differently, excerpt (62) with *how can we do more?* shows a more reflective register where the company directly invites the audience in an act of self-examination. This second context, which differs from the overall formal register of the platform, introduces a more personal dimension that focuses on values.

He [13] is the third most frequent gendered pronoun and, as illustrated in example (63), it almost exclusively refers to Dr. Pearse Lyons, the company's founder:

(63) No matter the setting – from the field to the throne – *he* believed every person should be treated with dignity and respect. (Alltech Facebook, December 2025)

In the excerpt, *he* attributes a universal principle to the late founder: *dignity and respect* for every person regardless of status. This type of content helps the audience empathise with Dr. Lyons who is seen not only as a business leader but as a role model from a moral point of view. Furthermore, it contributes to building an image of the founder as an ongoing moral authority whose values continue to guide the company.

Example (64) shows the typical use of *you* [11] and *your* [6] on Facebook where the content has a more professional orientation:

(64) Check out these six key strategies to ensure *your* herd stays healthy and productive this winter. (Alltech Facebook, January 2025)

In the excerpt, *your herd* addresses directly a professional audience of livestock producers. The post refers to *six key strategies* that help producers face winter challenges thus positioning Alltech as a trusted partner who comprehends and answers to specific operational needs. According to Casan-Pitarch (2016), second person pronouns imply direct interaction and "mutual recognition between the speaker and the addressee" (p. 40), and their use here constructs a relationship of professional partnership and trust.

Finally, *I* [6] can be found rarely and almost exclusively in posts written and published by Mark Lyons on his personal profile and then reposted by the company, as shown in (65):

(65) Looking back, *I*'m not sure *I* was ever truly "ready" for any of the roles *I*'ve held. (Alltech Facebook, July 2025)

The example comes from a post where the CEO talks about his insecurities. So, the first person singular introduces a moment of personal vulnerability and self-reflection. This tone contrasts with the institutional register that dominates throughout the rest of the Facebook sub-corpus and it represents a deliberate proof of uncertainty that humanises the CEO in the eyes of the public. This strategy aligns with the concept of social CEO described by Tsai and Men (2017), though it is significantly more adopted on Instagram.

4.2.4 Verbs and semantic prosody

The verb profile of the Facebook sub-corpus reflects a communicative strategy that combines two distinct registers: an informative and technical one that aims at sharing expert knowledge, and a reflective and philosophical one, rooted in the personal voice of Mark Lyons.

As on the website and on Instagram, *be* [78] is the most frequent verb which reflects the platform's use of descriptive and definitional constructions. After *be*, *read* [9] deserves particular attention since it is often used as an imperative call to action. The following excerpt is a clear example of this use:

> (66) Learn more about how sustainable solutions drive better results – *read* the blog now! (Alltech Facebook, February 2025)

In (66), *read* directs the audience towards longer written content (a blog article in this case). As Malavasi (2024) observes, corporate texts frequently employ linguistic devices to guide readers towards additional content. This formula differs from Instagram's *join us*, which serves as a community engagement and invitation tool, *read* positions the audience as consumers of expert knowledge and it reveals Facebook's primary function as a content distribution channel. However, the tone is not as impersonal and formal as one might expect: the exclamation mark at the end introduces a sense of enthusiasm that softens Facebook's register and makes it different from LinkedIn's more neutral and formal style.

Help [10] emerges mostly in professional and technical contexts as can be observed in the following example:

> (67) Laurentia van Rensburg, Alltech's global head of commercial nutrition, explores how organic trace minerals *help* producers optimize performance and profitability. (Alltech Facebook, April 2025)

In (67), the object of *help* is *producers*, a professional entity with specific operational needs. The actions that follow (*optimize performance and profitability*) concretize Alltech's expertise in measurable. This collocation further positions Alltech as a provider of solutions for specific professional challenges. If on Instagram this verb is used in more social contexts, here its professional use highlights a more B2B communicative style.

As on Instagram, *Make* [8] collocates with *difference* and here is an example:

> (68) Alltech serves customers in more than 140 countries, and there was one principle my father carried with him everywhere he went: *make* a difference. (Alltech Facebook, December 2025)

In the excerpt, *make a difference* is a reference to the company's core value and is framed as something that comes directly from the founder, like a form of legacy. However, (69) shows another context where *make* is employed:

> (69) Its origins may trace back to the Latin adage Festina lente – "*make* haste slowly" – a principle that feels paradoxical, yet it has defined our business for over 45 years. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

In excerpt (69), *make* appears in a Latin aphorism cited by Mark Lyons (*Festina lente*, which means *make haste slowly*) in a post from Mark Lyons. The two uses of make in *make a difference* (a corporate value highlighting social commitment) and *make haste slowly* (a classical quote used to talk about leadership) reveal that Facebook combines two types of registers. On the one hand, the company adopts a more informative and technical tone. On the other, the platform also hosts reflective posts in which Mark Lyons' voice emerges with a more philosophical tone. This philosophical register allows the company to be perceived as a source of wisdom that goes beyond its core business expertise.

Finally, *go* [9] and *do* [14] deserve attention for their predominantly citational use, as shown in (70) and (71):

> (70) If you want to *go* fast, *go* alone. If you want to *go* far, *go* together. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

> (71) *Don't* get it right, get it going. You *don't* need to feel ready. You just need to take the next step. (Alltech Facebook, July 2025)

Excerpt (70) comes from a post from Mark Lyons where *go* is used to illustrate the collaborative and team-oriented culture of the company. In (71), *do* is present in two motivational constructions that describe feeling ready and being perfect as barriers to action and growth. These verbs confirm that Facebook is used to share inspirational and philosophical reflections. Since it goes beyond the company's business, this type of content allows for the construction of a broader corporate identity: one that positions Alltech as a provider of general wisdom. This approach reflects Crocchi's (2019) observation that in contemporary corporate communication "telling the story is more important than selling" (p. 452): rather than promoting products directly, Alltech uses Facebook to construct a narrative of shared values.

4.2.5 Evaluative adjectives

As with the other grammatical categories, the adjectives on Facebook are more functional and technical than on Instagram.

Global [12], the most frequent adjective, collocates with *team* [3], *headquarters* [2], *family* [1], *impact* [1], *technical support* [1] and *changemakers* [1]. On Facebook it can be found in two distinct contexts: one is more institutional, as in excerpts (72), and the other is more focused on values, as in (73):

> (72) Next week, we will bring many of our *global* team members back to our Kentucky headquarters. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

(73) Until the end, he was thinking about his people – because he didn't build a *global* business; he built a *global* family. (Alltech Facebook, December 2025)

In excerpt (72), *global team members* evokes Alltech's international reach in institutional terms. The formality is softened by the use of *our* which makes the sentence more personal and less detached. In example (73), the deliberate substitution of *business* with *family* gives another dimension to the concept of global scale: from commercial to human terms. This is a particularly significant rhetorical move that foregrounds people and relationships rather than commercial success.

The collocational patterns for *new* [6] reflects Facebook's function for both product announcement and industry trends discussions. It collocates with *treats* [1], *collaboration* [1] and *challenges* [3], as shown in examples (74) and (75):

(74) an Alltech company, has introduced two *new* treats to its product offering: Mindful MinisTM and Barnyard BestiesTM. (Alltech Facebook, July 2025)

(75) *New* challenges emerge for hen health as production systems shift toward cage-free environments. (Alltech Facebook, May 2025)

In (74), *new*, paired with *treats*, is an example of product announcement, in line with the company's focus on scientific and technological innovation. Excerpt (75), on the other hand, comes from a post where Alltech discusses an emerging industry challenge (the shift to cage-free systems). By addressing these topics, the company implicitly positions itself as an agent that has the required expertise and solutions to understand the producers' concerns and help them solve these problems.

The remaining frequent adjectives (*vital*, *key* and *on-farm*) also signal a technical and professional register and some examples are illustrated in (76), (77) and (78):

(76) That's why nutrition is a *vital* tool to help shrimp stay healthy and farms remain profitable. (Alltech Facebook, September 2025)

(77) Dr. Roy Brister, poultry strategic advisor, and Dr. Alexandra Weaver, global technical support, discuss *key* findings from the 2024 Alltech Harvest Analysis and their implications for the broiler, layer, and turkey sectors. (Alltech Facebook, February 2025)

(78) Dr. Sebastian Mejia Turcios, *on-farm* sustainability specialist at Alltech, shares his insights with Progressive Cattle on how bilingual training can help retain farm workers. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

The example for *vital*, excerpt (76), frames nutrition as a tool for both animal health and business profitability, a pattern that was already identified in the other sub-corpora. This way, the company's

expertise is seen as a necessity to ensure both the productivity of the livestock and the economic return for the producer. In (77), *key findings* refers to the technical data present in the Alltech Harvest Analysis in a way that is typical of scientific and professional discourse. The reference to the *Alltech Harvest Analysis* is particularly significant: it is the company's annual global report on mycotoxin contamination. By sharing and commenting on its own research findings throughout the year, Alltech elevates its position from product provider to knowledge authority in the sector. The insights from the Harvest Analysis attract industry players and serve as a basis for the promotion of specific products. In (78), *on-farm* is a compound adjective that anchors Dr. Mejia Turcios' expertise to the farm level. In adding this adjective to the professional role, the company adds a sense of practicality to the expert's knowledge which may be more appealing to producers and professionals.

It is also important to note the absence of emotionally evaluative adjectives. This choice means that Facebook's communication prioritises expertise and information over emotional engagement and is therefore consistent with Jeong, Chung and Kim's (2022) traditional corporate tone of voice, which maintains greater formality and professional distance from the audience.

4.2.6 Lexical fields

Through the concordance analysis of the most frequent nouns, two main lexical fields emerged in the Facebook sub-corpus. The first relates to knowledge sharing while the second concerns business performance.

As for the first lexical field, *blog* [9] deserves particular attention as it is employed almost exclusively in the imperative formula *Read the blog* or *Read more in our blog by*. It functions as a tool to direct readers to longer technical content authored by Alltech specialists, as shown in the following example:

> (79) Read more in our *blog* by Dr. Henry Wong, commercial development director for Asia at Alltech. (Alltech Facebook, September 2025)

In (79), the formula *read more in our blog* encourages the audience to expand their knowledge by reading an article written by a named expert (*Dr. Henry Wong*). As usual, the professional title (*commercial development director for Asia*) increases the perception of authority while defining the geographical reach. *Specialist* [8] and *Dr*. [18] reinforce this pattern. Excerpt (80) shows that they are used to name the authors of blog posts and to position them as credible sources of knowledge:

> (80) *Dr*. Sebastian Mejia Turcios, on-farm sustainability *specialist* at Alltech, shares his insights with Progressive Cattle on how bilingual training programs can help retain farm workers. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

In (80), both *Dr*. and *specialist* appear in reference to one of Alltech's experts. Adding these nouns to the title increases the credibility of the expert while combining two key dimensions: the technical one (*on-farm*) and the focus on values (*sustainability*). Unlike on Instagram, where *dr*. appeared predominantly in reference to Dr. Pearse Lyons and Dr. Mark Lyons in a context of continuity and heritage, on Facebook it frequently introduces the names of technical experts. *Mycotoxin* [8] deserves particular attention as a highly technical term that reflects the platform's function as a channel for addressing specific industry challenges. As shown in example (81), it is used in posts that target producers and experts rather than general followers:

> (81) *Mycotoxins* in animal feed are becoming increasingly complex, with multiple toxins often occurring together. Traditional approaches are no longer enough. (Alltech Facebook, October 2025)

Mycotoxins appears at the beginning of the excerpt in an attempt to frame mycotoxin management as an *increasingly complex* challenge that requires innovative solutions. This type of post implicitly positions Alltech as the provider of more efficient solutions.

The second lexical field concerns business performance and producer support. *Producer* [11] collocates with *small beef*, *dairy*, *cage-free* and *proactive*, as shown in excerpt (82):

> (82) In the United States, small beef *producers* play a significant role in shaping the industry's economic impact and ensuring its future. (Alltech Facebook, January 2025)

This example positions *small beef producers* as important industry players that contribute to the success of the sector. This linguistic structure elevates the audience while positioning Alltech as a company that recognises and values them for their contribution. Excerpt (83) shows a typical collocation of *sustainability* (9), which mostly collocates with *profitability*, *growth* and *innovation*:

> (83) The future of agriculture lies at the intersection of *sustainability* and profitability. (Alltech Facebook, September 2025)

The example is particularly revealing in the context of this analysis as it illustrates how the company often combines *sustainability* and *profitability* thus framing environmental responsibility and business performance as the two cornerstones of the future of the industry. In doing so, Alltech implicitly projects the image of a company that cares for those aspects. Finally, *business* [11] emerges in both commercial and values-driven contexts, as shown in excerpt (84):

> (84) Farms and ranches are more than *businesses*; they're family histories. But without a plan, those histories can disappear in a single generation. (Alltech Facebook, October 2025)

In the example, the word *businesses* contrasts with *family histories*. The aim is to shift the perception of farms and ranches from commercial entities to guardians of family traditions. This rhetorical move positions Alltech as a company that values the human and cultural relevance of agricultural industries while also supporting them from a technical point of view. The example shows the reflective and inspirational tone that is typical of Mark Lyons' posts.

4.2.7 Visual elements

Before conducting the visual analysis of Facebook, it is worth noting that the majority of posts in the sub-corpus (36 out of 55) contain no static images. This is because in some cases the posts included a video while other posts consisted of text only. The predominance of text-only content is significant as it reflects Facebook's function as an informative platform where written technical content is more important than visually appealing images. Instead of images, many posts include hyperlinks redirecting the audience to external resources (blog posts, technical reports, event registrations and press releases) thus reinforcing the platform's role as a content distribution channel. This pattern is consistent with the presence of the verb *read* and the name *blog* and therefore confirms that Facebook’s first aim is to direct the professional audience towards longer-form written content.

The humanize and complement functions are the most prevalent in the sub-corpus. The humanize function is typical of event documentation posts. The first example shows the Fall 2025 Back 2 Basics class with 56 team members captured in moments of learning and celebration at Alltech's Global Headquarters (Fig. 12). The second example shows the 2025 Alltech Dairy Summit at Lambeau Field and it includes photos of producers and Alltech team members during awarding sessions and networking moments (Fig. 13). In both cases, real people are photographed in authentic professional contexts which help humanise the company's institutional communication.



Fig. 12. Back 2 Basics Fall 2025 (humanize). (Alltech Facebook, 13/10/2025)



Fig. 13. 2025 Alltech Dairy Summit at Lambeau Field (humanize). (Alltech Facebook, 20/12/2025)

As for the complement function, it is particularly evident in two examples. The first one is a post by Mark Lyons where the photo shows a leadership model to which the CEO makes reference in the accompanying text (Fig. 14). In this case, text and image complement each other in the sense that together they communicate something that neither could achieve alone: the text explains the personal meaning that Mark Lyons gives to the model, while the image shows the model itself which would otherwise remain unknown to the audience. The second example is a post about World Without Cows. The post includes a sequence of images from screenings around the world and a text on the power of storytelling in agriculture (Fig. 15). The images here provide a concrete visual proof of the documentary's global reach thus highlighting its role in engaging the audience and telling the story of agriculture in a new way.



Fig. 14. Mark Lyons presenting a leadership model at Back 2 Basics (complement). (Alltech Facebook, 10/07/2025)



Fig. 15. World Without Cows screening at Kentucky Theatre (complement). (Alltech Facebook, 29/08/2025)

Finally, there is one relevant example of the elicit emotion function. It is a photo of Alltech team members who run and smile during the charity run organised in Ireland in support of Hazel Lube, the daughter of a team member (Fig. 16). The text of the post by Mark Lyons, which revolves around the meaning of *Make a Difference*, is deeply personal and, together with the image, it evokes emotions of warmth and solidarity.



Fig. 16. Team run in support of Hazel Lube (A2 Elicit emotion). (Alltech Facebook, 08/08/2025)

Overall, the analysis shows that, on Facebook, Alltech uses a communicative strategy that prioritises expert knowledge sharing and professional engagement over Instagram's emotional storytelling. The platform has a dual function: on the one hand, it distributes technical and informative content authored by Alltech specialists and directed at a professional audience, on the other, it also shows more reflective and philosophical posts in which Mark Lyons highlights the company's values through

personal reflections. This second function adds a human side to the otherwise scientific and authoritative register of the platform.

4.3 LinkedIn analysis

4.3.1 LinkedIn as a corporate communication tool for Alltech

LinkedIn is the most professionally-oriented of the three social media platforms included in the study and Alltech's profile has 124,000 followers. The company's communicative strategy on this platform respects its B2B and networking nature. Since the audience mainly consists of industry professionals and potential business partners, Alltech adopts a highly technical register.

The company's LinkedIn profile presents the organisation as a global leader in biotechnology research: "Founded in 1980 by Irish entrepreneur and scientist Dr. Pearse Lyons, Alltech delivers smarter, more sustainable solutions for agriculture"[2]. This presentation fosters the scientific credibility and the focus on sustainability. Unlike Instagram, where the emphasis is on storytelling, and Facebook, which combines technical content with philosophical reflection, LinkedIn serves as a channel for disseminating expert knowledge and announcing industry events in order to position Alltech as a thought leader within the agri-food sector.

The LinkedIn sub-corpus includes 44 posts published in 2026. The following sections examine the linguistic patterns that emerge from the sub-corpus and how they shape Alltech's corporate identity on this platform.

4.3.2 Quantitative overview

The wordlist generated by Sketch Engine was examined and the following table presents the most frequent linguistic items by grammatical category and with their frequencies for the LinkedIn sub-corpus.

Noun	Freq	**Adjective**	Freq	**Verb**	Freq	**Pronoun**	Freq
Alltech	47	Global	11	Be	71	Our	30
Industry	15	More	9	Help	11	Your	22
Dr.	15	Pet	8	Join	9	You	16
Team	14	Late	7	Do	9	We	13
Feed	13	Good	5	Explore	8	It	10
Poultry	13	Next	5	Shape	7	Us	9
Year	12	Technical	4	Feed	7	His	6
Production	12	Commercial	4	Share	7	Her	3
Producer	10	Annual	3	Take	7	Their	3
Beef	9	Long-term	3	Support	7	He	2

[2] Alltech, n.d., https://www.linkedin.com/company/alltech/about/

U.S.	9	Ready	3	Attend	7	Yours	2
Manager	8	Professional	3	Visit	6	They	1
Challenge	8	Social	3	Connect	6	I	1
Silage	8	Practical	3	See	6		
Eli	8	Future	3	Read	5		
Mycotoxin	8	Proud	2	Include	5		
Booth	7	Happy	2	Bring	5		
Future	7	Real	2	Feature	5		
Sale	7	First	2	Learn	5		
Technology	7	Charitable	2	Continue	5		

Table 4. Most frequent items by grammatical category in the LinkedIn sub-corpus.

The pronoun *our* [30] is the most predominant and is followed by *your* [22], *we* [13], *it* [10] and *us* [9]. The near-absence of *I* reflects the more institutional register of the platform, as it will be examined in section 4.3.3.

As in the other sub-corpora, *be* [71] is the most used verb. The verb frequency list also shows *help* [11], *join* [9], *explore* [8], *share* [7] and *shape* [7]. *Explore*, which appears as a call to action, and *shape*, which evokes a proactive role in defining the future of agriculture, are particularly distinctive of LinkedIn and their qualitative implications will be explored in section 4.3.4.

The adjectives *global* [11], *more* [9], *pet* [8], *late* [7] and *technical* [4] are the most frequent within the adjective list, which will be discussed in section 4.3.5. The use of the word *pet* reveals that the platform shows more content dedicated to companion animal nutrition.

The most relevant nouns in the noun frequency list are *Alltech* [47], *industry* [15], *feed* [13], *team* [14] and *poultry* [13], followed by *year* [12], *production* [12], *producer* [10] and *beef* [9]. The presence of highly sector-specific terms confirms LinkedIn's orientation towards a specialised professional audience, as it will be demonstrated in section 4.3.6.

4.3.3 Pronoun use

The pronoun frequency list of this sub-corpus shows a more formal and impersonal register which is consistent with LinkedIn's professional context.

Our [30] is the most frequent pronoun and can be found before nouns related to knowledge sharing, as well as before collective nouns that frame the company as a unified entity, as shown in (85) and (86):

(85) The 2026 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook presents the findings of *our* 15th annual Alltech Global Feed Survey and emphasizes the key trends shaping *our* industry's future. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

(86) *Our* team will be sharing insights on feed quality, mycotoxin risk and emerging trends shaping the dairy and beef supply chains. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In excerpt (85), *our* occurs twice with two distinct functions. Its use before the phrase *15th annual Alltech Global Feed Survey* suggests a projection of the collective ownership of one of the company's major annual publications (together with the *Harvest Analysis* mentioned before), which positions Alltech as a leader in the production of knowledge. In *our industry's future*, *our* is used to frame the entire agricultural sector as a shared responsibility. This way Alltech is described as a stakeholder invested in the collective future of the industry. In (86), *our team* is an example of the inclusive *our* as a marker of community and team spirit. Its appearance next to *sharing insights* furthe frames the team's participation in an industry event as an act of knowledge transmission.

Examples (87) and (88) illustrate two uses of *your* [22], which mostly addresses the reader as a professional with specific operational needs and constructs a relationship of professional partnership and expert guidance:

(87) Visit Alltech at booth #2018 to explore how mineral form and bioavailability can support *your* formulas. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

(88) Are *you* prepared to lose 25% of *your* silage? Protecting silage isn't just about storage – it's about performance. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (87), with *your formulas*, the company addresses people working in feed formulation, a very specific target audience. Alltech therefore identifies professionals' challenges and concerns in order to be seen as a trusted advisor that speaks directly to each stakeholder group. Another example is (88), where farmers concerned with silage loss and quality are the main target. Alltech addresses them through a rhetorical question (*Are you prepared to lose 25% of your silage?*) which refers to a potential financial loss thus creating a sense of urgency in the audience. Furthermore, these examples show that Alltech is aware of current challenges and can therefore be considered an actor helping producers face these problems.

The next excerpts show that *we* [17] occurs in contexts of institutional announcements to convey collective pride:

(89) *We*'re honored to be named one of America's Most Innovative Companies by Fortune. This recognition reflects the work of our global team and partners who continue to push boundaries across agriculture. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

(90) In a list dominated by technology, health care and financial sectors, *we*'re proud to be part of a group driving meaningful change for farmers, ranchers and producers. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

The institutional announcement in (89) introduced by the expression *we're honored* simultaneously celebrates the company's achievement and attributes it to the collective effort of the team. It is also important to note that the recognition the post refers to (being named one of *America's Most Innovative Companies* by Fortune) aligns with one of Alltech's most important values, namely scientific innovation. This time, instead of self-promoting itself, the company exploits an award that comes from an external, authoritative source. This type of post increases the overall credibility of the company and contributes to its positioning as an innovation leader in the agri-food sector. This positioning is similarly reinforced in example (90), where the company acknowledges that agriculture is not typically associated with technological innovation and therefore highlights the significance of this award while implicitly asserting its superiority with respect to the other companies working in the sector.

As shown in excerpt (91), *his* [7] occurs almost exclusively in references to Dr. Pearse Lyons:

(91) A family of thousands who continue to think, act and lead with the generosity, curiosity and empathy that defined Dr. Pearse Lyons. The Alltech Celebration of Song was a place where *his* passions converged. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In the example, *his* refers to the founder's passions and legacy. The presence of this type of content focused on heritage on LinkedIn is particularly relevant. It is in fact unusual to observe such personal narratives on the platform, which privileges professional posts. This choice suggests a strategy that adds a human and personal touch to the otherwise technical communicative register. It is also important to note the reference to the Alltech Celebration of Song, which has already emerged in the Instagram and Facebook sub-corpora. The recurrence of this cultural event across three different platforms confirms its role as an identity marker in Alltech's digital communication. It also signals that the company’s investment in artistic and cultural engagement is not confined to a single channel but it is systematically integrated into its corporate narrative across platforms.

Finally, unlike Instagram, the first person singular is almost absent. This observation confirms that LinkedIn functions as an institutional channel where personal voices, especially that of Mark Lyons, which is prominent on Instagram and Facebook, are replaced by a collective corporate voice that prioritises professional credibility over the construction of personal connections.

4.3.4 Verbs and semantic prosody

In the verb list, *be* [71] is the most frequent and it deserves particular attention on this platform where it frequently occurs as a copular verb introducing assertive, authoritative definitions of industry phenomena, as shown in (92) and (93):

> (92) High-quality grass silage *is* a cornerstone of livestock diets. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)
>
> (93) With rising input costs across the industry, producing superior silage *is* more essential than ever. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In both excerpts, *is* introduces a definitive statement about the relevance of silage. *Grass silage is a cornerstone of livestock diets* frames silage as an indispensable part of animal nutrition. *Producing superior silage is more essential than ever* intensifies an industry challenge (*rising input costs*) and frames the production of quality silage as an urgent challenge for producers. The two examples demonstrate how the verb *to be* on LinkedIn introduces assertive statements that position Alltech's expertise as indispensable in today's difficult context.

After *be*, the most used verb on LinkedIn is *explore* [8]. Examples (94) and (95) show that it occurs almost exclusively as a call to action:

> (94) *Explore* the findings in our latest blog. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)
>
> (95) Ready to cultivate your own path? *Explore* careers here. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

The two examples show two typical functions of the platform. While in (94) *explore* directs the audience towards technical content, consistent with the publication of articles on LinkedIn, in (95) *explore* addresses potential employees, in line with LinkedIn's main objective of cultivating professional relationships. Differently from Facebook's *Read the blog*, *explore* gives a sense of curiosity and is particularly suited to LinkedIn as the audience is expected to appreciate informative articles.

Share [7] collocates with *insights*, *research* and *findings*, as shown in excerpt (96):

> (96) Each year, Alltech's Harvest Analysis provides a global snapshot of mycotoxin risk – and 2025 brought new challenges. Dr. Alexandros Yiannikouris, director of Alltech's mycotoxin research programme, joined to discuss mycotoxin prevalence around the world and *share* key findings with producers. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In the example, *sharing key findings* frames the post as an act of scientific knowledge transmission. The post also mentions the Harvest Analysis, an important informative tool that reinforces Alltech's credibility in the sector. The credibility of the shared information is further reinforced by the title of

the expert (Dr. Alexandros Yiannikouris). The fact that he is a mycotoxin expert justifies his contribution to the discussion and, like the other professional titles, gives the perception of the Alltech team as a highly specialized group of professionals.

Join [7] was found in two distinct contexts on LinkedIn: to welcome new team members and to invite the audience to physical and online events:

> (97) *Join* us in welcoming Jorge Noricumbo to our U.S. team as a territory sales manager. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)
>
> (98) *Join* us for "From Field to Feed: 2025 Crop and Mycotoxin Analysis" on Thursday, Jan. 15. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (97), *join us in welcoming* is a conventional LinkedIn formula for announcing new employees and it makes the register more formal and institutional than the one used on other social media platforms. In excerpt (98), *join us for* is used to invite professionals to a technical webinar. This pattern is consistent with LinkedIn's function as a knowledge-sharing platform.

Example (99) shows how Alltech uses the verb *shape* [5] on the platform. In particular, the verb collocates with *future* and *industry*:

> (99) The 2026 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook presents the findings of our 15th annual Alltech Global Feed Survey and emphasizes the key trends *shaping* our industry's future. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In the excerpt above, the findings from Global Feed Survey are elevated to a higher degree of relevance because they are described as the trends that are *shaping our industry's future.* This collocation positions Alltech as a company that understands nowadays challenges while leading the way for the future of the agri-food sector.

Finally, (100) shows the use of *help* [6] which collocates with *producers*, *reduce* and *support*:

> (100) Laurentia van Rensburg, Alltech's global head of commercial nutrition, explores how organic trace minerals *help* producers optimize performance and profitability. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In the example, the object of *help* is *producers* as its direct object and this type of collocation was found also in the other sub-corpora. However, here the focus is on the technical and economic benefits (*optimize performance and profitability*) which justify Alltech's support in measurable and appealing terms. In this case, like in other example, the subject of the clause is not Alltech as a collective entity but a named expert with a specific professional title, a strategy that reinforce the credibility of the shared information.

4.3.5 Evaluative adjectives

Similarly to the other grammatical categories, also the adjectives found on LinkedIn are technical and sectorial, which reflects the platform's professional orientation and its audience of specialists.

The most frequent adjective is *global* [11], which collocates with *feed survey*, *agri-food industry*, *team* and *harvest broadcast*. It therefore appears in contexts that highlight the scope of research and professional community rather than commercial scale, as shown in (101):

> (101) Earlier this month, leaders from across the *global* agri-food industry gathered in Amsterdam for the WFA Summit. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (101), *global* modifies *agri-food industry* in order to emphasize the provenance of the attendees of the WFA summit in Amsterdam. Alltech implicitly positions itself among those global leaders that took part in an event, the Women in Food and Agriculture, which is particularly significant. By participating, Alltech signals its commitment to gender equity and inclusion and these aspects are increasingly valued by customers, especially in an industry where women are often underrepresented.

More [9] is used predominantly as an intensifier as the following examples show:

> (102) With rising input costs across the industry, producing superior silage is *more* essential than ever. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

> (103) This shows how smart use of early flock data – and sometimes the simplest models – can help commercial producers make better, *more* timely decisions. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (102), *more essential than ever* frames silage production as an increasingly urgent priority while in (103) *more timely decisions* occurs in a sentence where data is framed as a fundamental tool for making decisions. This last example is particularly significant as Alltech often uses data to increase the credibility of its solutions.

Pet [8] frequently co-occurs with *food* and *nutrition* or within professional titles. All these uses are exemplified in the excerpt below:

> (104) Don't miss Alltech's technical *pet* food manager tomorrow on the 2026 Petfood Tech Talk Stage for her presentation: "From Kibble to Kangaroo: How Exotic Proteins Are Reshaping *Pet* Nutrition." (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

Example (104) is a typical LinkedIn post where the company sponsors an event and invites the audience to participate in order to acquire knowledge on an extremely specific topic, pet nutrition in this case. This topic is less promoted on the other social media platforms and this means that it may

be easier to reach professionals of this specific segment on LinkedIn rather than on Instagram and Facebook.

In (105) it is possible to observe a typical example of the use of *late* [7], which always emerges in the formula *our latest blog* or *our latest research*:

> (105) Read more in our *latest* blog by Dr. Richard Lally, technical manager for business development at Alltech. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

The use of the superlative *latest* marks a continuous knowledge production and it signals that Alltech continuously generates and shares up-to-date expert content.

The remaining frequent adjectives, *technical* and *commercial*, are particularly revealing of LinkedIn's professional register. Both appear in professional titles (as it can be observed in the excerpt above) to increase the perceived expertise of Alltech's team members. By adding these adjectives to the authors' titles, the articles published by Alltech on the platform acquire more credibility and validity. Similarly to the other examples in the sub-corpus, these two adjectives signal a communicative register in which expertise is systematically foregrounded and this strategy aligns with LinkedIn's function as a platform where professional authority is both expected and valued.

4.3.6 Lexical fields

Through the concordance analysis of the most frequent nouns, one main lexical field emerged in the LinkedIn sub-corpus, alongside a unique element that reveals an unexpected dimension of Alltech's communication on this platform.

The dominant lexical field encompasses terms related to expert knowledge and industry research, consistent with what was discovered in the other grammatical categories. *Industry* [15] collocates with *agri-food*, *beef*, *pork* and *poultry*, consistently framing Alltech as an active participant in sector-wide conversations, as shown in example (107):

> (107) Mark Hulsebus, general manager of U.S. pork at Alltech, shares his take. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (107), *industry* collocates with *pork* and it frames a specific agricultural sector in a specific territory (the U.S.) as the topic of one of the experts' analysis. The rhetorical question (*What did 2025 really mean for the U.S. pork industry?*) is a linguistic device which is strategically meant to capture the attention of the audience and spark curiosity among them while immediately pre-announcing what the post will be about: the trends of the US pork industry in 2025. As mentioned before, in this sub-corpus, *dr.* [15], does not refer to Dr. Pearse Lyons but it introduces the names of Alltech's experts:

(108) Featuring insights from: Janella Hurst, global head of marketing for nutrition in Alltech's Technology Group; *Dr*. Max Hawkins, global technical support for Alltech's Technology Group; *Dr*. Alexandros Yiannikouris, director of Alltech's mycotoxin research programme. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (108), *Dr.* introduces the names of two experts with specific technical roles (Max Hawkins and Alexandros Yiannikouris). It is important to note the difference between Janella Hurst, whose role is in marketing and is referred to without Dr., and the other two team members who carry the academic title. This subtle difference signals that Dr. marks scientific authority and technical expertise and is used to increase the legitimacy of the company's shared knowledge.

Excerpts (109) and (110) illustrate how *poultry* [13], *production* [10], *producer* [10] and *beef* [9] also appear in technical contexts:

(109) Global agri-food and animal feed *production* are under pressure – and the feed *producers* who thrive in 2026 will be the ones who see the threats coming and take action. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

(110) Dr. joins The Future of *Beef* Show to explore how innovation, efficiency and systems thinking are shaping the next generation of *beef production*. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

Example (109) describes *producers* as active agents who must anticipate and respond to industry challenges. This type of content creates urgency in the reader while implicitly positioning Alltech as a trusted partner to face those challenges. Excerpt (110), where *beef production* occurs with *innovation*, *efficiency* and *systems thinking*, frames livestock farming as a field of continuous advancement. All these excerpts show that LinkedIn's content is highly technical and that it addresses an audience of specialists interested in discovering the latest research, innovation, trends and threats that characterise the industry.

A particularly distinctive element emerges, however, from the concordance analysis of *Eli* [8], a proper name that can be found exclusively in a single post dedicated to the memory of Eli Sloan, the son of an Alltech employee who passed away from cancer, as shown in (111):

(111) In 2025, *Eli* Sloan, the son of our North America Operations Manager, Chris Sloan, became unexpectedly ill with a form of kidney cancer. Last week, we received the heartbreaking news that *Eli* passed peacefully, surrounded by his loving family. Inspired by *Eli's* passion for life and love for others, the Sloan family has launched the fund. Proceeds will support scholarships at local Lexington schools *Eli* attended and organisations across Central Kentucky that were meaningful to *Eli* and his family. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In (111), Alltech uses LinkedIn, conventionally a platform for professional announcements and industry knowledge, to share a deeply personal and emotional narrative about loss and philanthropy. This post exemplifies Alltech's people-first philosophy: the company publicly mourns the death of an employee's child and mobilises its community to support the family's charitable fund. This use of a professional platform to foster solidarity reveals that even on LinkedIn Alltech's identity is ultimately rooted in human relationships.

4.3.7 Visual elements

As for the other sub-corpora, the visual analysis of the LinkedIn sub-corpus is made by applying the six selected categories from Marsh and White (2003).

Figure 17 illustrates the engage function. The post promotes the participation in the PEAK convention, an American trade show dedicated to poultry. It is relevant to note the text in the image (*See you at PEAK 2026*) which is specifically made to capture the attention of the audience and invite them to the event. The promotion of industry events is consistent with LinkedIn's main usage as a professional platform and it also aligns with the linguistic patterns that were analysed before.



Fig. 17. PEAK convention promotional post (engage). (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

The describe function is exemplified in figure 18, which comes from a promotional post for Egalis, a product for silage production. The images first attract the reader through a rhetorical question that creates discomfort in the audience, and then they present the product's benefits. This pattern is typical of promotional discourse and it is particularly interesting in the context of this analysis since the linguistic patterns did not reveal any sign of product promotion on this platform, which is more focused on information sharing.



Fig. 18. Silage management graphics (describe). (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

The elicit emotion function is particularly evident in figure 19, the post dedicated to the memory of Eli Sloan. As seen in section 4.3.6, the post shares the news of the death of an employee's child while asking for the audience participation in the family's fundraising. Publishing a photo of the mourned child reinforces the emotional impact of the text and evokes compassion thus facilitating the solidarity response among the audience. As mentioned before, this is an atypical use of the platform, where such deep content is usually avoided. However, from a corporate image point of view, it describes Alltech as a company that deeply cares for its employees and their families.



Fig. 19. Post dedicated to Eli Sloan (elicit emotion). (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

As for the humanize and complement functions, these two categories co-occur in LinkedIn's employee spotlight posts, like the one in figure 20. The example comes from a post dedicated to Maggie Fu Lou and her career at Alltech. While the portrait has the objective of humanising the employee, the rest of the images contain longer textual formats about her career path and experience at Alltech. These texts complement the caption of the post which alone does not provide such information. Furthermore, the caption opens up with "*Here, every effort is seen, and every moment of growth is nourished"* which frames Alltech's workplace in a positive way through the voice of the employee rather than through institutional language. The following part of the caption (*Maggie Fu Lou, corporate communications director for Alltech China, is ready to take on her next 20 years with Alltech — are you ready to start yours?*) is a recurrent formula on LinkedIn where first a company presents an employee as proof of the company's value as an employer and then potential future employees are invited to candidate. This format is typical of the employer branding function of LinkedIn.



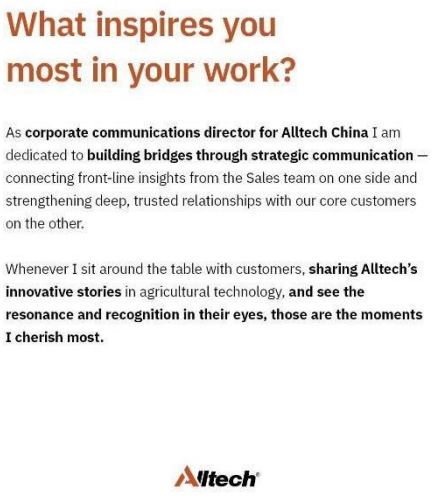




Fig. 20. Employee spotlight, Maggie Fu Lou (humanize and complement). (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In conclusion, the analysis of this sub-corpus highlights a communicative strategy that aligns with the requirements of the platform. The company focuses on fostering credibility while publishing informative and technical content aimed at a specialized audience. The platform's linguistic and visual choices build a corporate identity characterized by scientific authority, differently from the other sub-corpora. However, both the visual and the linguistic analysis highlight the human side of the company's identity. This tension between scientific authority and human depth is the most unique feature of Alltech's strategy on LinkedIn.

Chapter 5 - Press releases analysis

5.1 Press releases as a corporate communication tool for Alltech

The press release sub-corpus includes 34 documents that were published between March 2025 and May 2026 on the dedicated website. The topics of these documents range from product announcements to cultural events, covering all of Alltech's activities.

The following analysis will explore how the company adapts its communication strategy to this particular genre which occupies a distinctive position within corporate communication. If social media posts address general or professional audiences, press releases are meant to be read by journalists and industry professionals and they are written in a way that allows for reproduction or summarization by third parties. This may significantly shape the company's language which is expected to be more formal and conventional.

5.2 Quantitative overview

Table 5 provides a quantitative overview of the most frequent items from each grammatical category that are analysed in the following sections.

Noun	Freq	**Adjective**	Freq	**Verb**	Freq	**Pronoun**	Freq
Alltech	328	Global	94	Be	454	Our	112
Feed	126	More	88	Have	126	We	95
Company	83	Sustainable	51	Say	76	Its	94
Production	80	New	51	Include	54	Their	54
Year	75	Agricultural	35	Support	49	It	54
Sustainability	72	Animal	25	Provide	41	His	28
Kentucky	69	Strong	24	Help	41	He	27
Industry	68	Environmental	21	Continue	37	They	21
Solution	60	First	20	Produce	33	Us	20
Agriculture	55	Key	19	Make	30	Them	17
Mt	54	Local	19	Work	29	I	17
World	53	Pet	18	Serve	29	You	10
Dr.	49	Biological	17	Deliver	27		
Crop	48	Annual	16	Create	26		
Nutrition	48	Natural	16	Improve	25		
Leader	43	Overall	15	Grow	25		

Challenge	43	Other	15	Award	24		
Food	42	Innovative	14	Expand	23		
Business	41	Vice	14	Reduce	23		
Team	41	Proud	13	Offer	23		

Table 5. Most frequent items by grammatical category in the press releases sub-corpus.

The pronoun frequency list shows that while *our* [112] and *we* [95] still appear at the top positions, *it* [94] is also particularly used, which is consistent with the formal register of press releases. It is also interesting to note that first person singular and second person pronouns are nearly absent. This suggests that press releases do not seek to find a dialogue with stakeholders or to share personal points of view, as will be shown in section 5.3.

The verb distribution, which will be further explored in section 5.4, is dominated by *be* [454] and *have* [126]. However, the most distinctive verb is *say* [76], which is used to introduce quotes from company representatives. The other verbs (*support*, *provide*, *help*, *continue*, *deliver* and *expand*) characterise an action- and benefit-oriented register.

Unsurprisingly, the most frequent adjectives are *global* [94] and *more* [88], a pattern that was also identified in the other sub-corpora. Other frequent adjectives, like sustainable, biological and environmental, reflect the press releases' objective of projecting a positive image of the company, specifically as far as the environmental impact is concerned. These adjectival patterns will be analysed in section 5.5.

The noun list shows *Alltech* [328], *feed* [126] and *company* [83] as the most frequent nouns. Together with *leader* and *award*, they signal the press releases' function to position the company as an industry leader and communicate its achievements, as will be demonstrated in section 5.6.

5.3 Pronoun use

As mentioned before, the pronoun distribution in this sub-corpus reflects the genre formality conventions. Although first person plural pronouns rank higher in the frequency list, their use is different from the one registered in the other sub-corpora.

Press releases' most distinctive pronoun is the possessive *its* which refers to Alltech, or one of its subsidiaries, as shown in the following excerpt:

> (112) The EcoVadis process validates Alltech's sustainability performance and offers a clear roadmap for enhancing *its* impact. Alltech shares *its* annual progress in the Alltech Sustainability Report, which

> outlines actions taken to align the business with *its* commitments to the United Nations Global Compact. (Alltech Press Release, April 2026)

In (112), *its* is used three times and always refers to Alltech as an entity that is committed to environmental sustainability. The fact that the company periodically publishes its sustainability report aligns with the need for firms to demonstrate commitment to a more sustainable industry. The fact that these objectives are presented through third person pronouns is justified by Casan-Pitarch's (2016) observation that these pronouns create distance and objectivity, thus increasing the perceived credibility of the statements.

Our and *we*, instead of characterizing a collective corporate voice, are used within direct quotes mainly by managers and executives of the company:

> (113) "Sustainability at Alltech is not a slogan – it's embedded in how *we* operate every day. The PDMM team's dedication to reducing carbon emissions, improving efficiency, and innovating with purpose is driving measurable progress," said Tara McCarthy, Alltech's global vice president of ESG. (Alltech Press Release, August 2025)

In example (113), *we* can be observed in a quote by Tara McCarthy, whose professional title (global vice president of ESG) justifies her affirmations about sustainability objectives. The excerpt also shows the distinctive alternation between the third singular and the first plural person pronouns of the press releases' institutional register which both conveys objectivity and authenticity.

Example (114) illustrates a typical use of third person plural pronouns (*they* and *their*), which mostly refer to customers and stakeholders as the beneficiaries of Alltech's solutions:

> (114) From day one, our focus is on delivering nutrition our customers can rely on, support *they* can count on and partnerships that help *their* animals and businesses thrive. (Alltech Press Release, February 2026)

In the excerpt, the pronoun *they* refers to *customers* while the possessive *their* collocates with *animals* and *businesses*. The whole sentence is highly representative of Alltech's positioning and similar to what was discovered in other sub-corpora: instead of positioning itself as a mere product supplier, Alltech describes itself as a partner whose contribution has a beneficial impact on animal health and business profitability, two aspects that frequently co-occur in the company's communications.

Gendered masculine pronouns are also quite frequent and, as shown in the following excerpts, they either refer to Dr. Pearse Lyons or to Alltech's professionals:

(115) Dad also encouraged and challenged *his* friends and colleagues to consider why *his* dreams for us were bigger than our dreams for ourselves. (Alltech Press Release, March 2026)

(116) *His* extensive career in the poultry industry has equipped him with skills and expertise in the fields of animal nutrition, poultry vaccines, strategic planning, sales operations and leadership. (Alltech Press Release, August 2025)

(115) is an example of the use of his inside a quote by the company's CEO about his father, the founder. This type of narratives is extremely different from the typical press release content and highlights the importance that the company gives to heritage and familial roots. This familial dimension is further foregrounded by the use of *dad*, a very informal appellative that breaks from the formality of the genre. Example (116), on the contrary, exemplifies a new hire announcement where *his* refers to the new employee. The sentence details the person's experience thus increasing the perception that hiring them adds value to the team.

5.4 Verbs and semantic prosody

As across all channels, be [454] is the most frequent verb and it is used to introduce companies, products, people and achievements in assertive and institutional statements. However, the most important verb of this sub-corpus is *say* [76], which is usually employed in its past tense form said, as shown in (117), to introduce direct quotes:

(117) "For Alltech Brazil, achieving the Gold Medal demonstrates that it is possible to combine scale and sustainability," *said* Paulo Rigolin, Alltech's vice president for Latin America. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

In the example, the direct quote is introduced by the reporting verb *said*, followed by the name of Alltech's representative and their professional title in a fixed structure that repeats across the sub-corpus and contributes to the institutional and formal register in press releases. The fact that the professional title is always included increases the credibility of the statements.

All the other verbs in the list are positively connoted and they contribute to an overall positive projection of the company's action. *Continue*, as shown in (118), always emerges in infinitive constructions:

(118) Alltech *continues* to reach for ambitious ESG targets, find areas for improvement and innovation, and strive to nurture a culture of continuous improvement. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

In example (118), the collocation continues introduces three infinitive constructions (reach, find and strive) that frame Alltech's sustainability commitment as an ongoing process instead of a completed achievement. This type of construction positions Alltech as a company whose sustainability objective continuously evolves and this is particularly valued by consumers nowadays.

The collocations of *expand* with *presence*, *reach* and *portfolio* are typical of an institutional corporate communication style that foregrounds the company's achievements and scale, as shown in the following excerpt:

> (119) A leader in agricultural research and development in Europe, Ideagro, headquartered in Murcia, Spain, is *expanding* its international presence with the opening of its first agricultural research center on another continent. (Alltech Press Release, May 2025)

The collocation *expanding its international presence* appears in a statement describing Idragro's (one of Alltech's companies) entry into Brazil. The overall language of the statement frames Ideagro's expansion by highlighting its scientific authority rather than the commercial aspect. Another example featuring one of Alltech's companies is the one chosen for the verb *deliver* in the next example:

> (120) "Our vision is to become the most trusted name in animal nutrition by *delivering* high-performance feeds and partnerships that drive results," said Akralos chief executive officer Brian Gier. (Alltech Press Release, February 2026)

Excerpt (120), where *deliver* co-occurs with *high-performance feeds and partnerships*, frames Akralos's mission with a result-oriented register. This is further obtained by the use of *trusted* and *results*, which combine trustworthiness and outcomes in order to appeal to both the emotional and commercial dimensions of the target audience.

Another verb that deserves special attention is *help* [41], which mostly appears in combination with human agents (*customers*, *farmers* or *producers*), as shown in the following example:

> (121) "It reflects our commitment to solving challenges in the field and delivering trusted solutions that *help* our customers protect what matters most: the health and performance of their animals and the success of their business." (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

The sentence above shows the verb *help* in the construction *help our customers protect*. The use of *our* inside a direct quote is consistent with the pattern identified in the pronouns sections while the fact that *customers* is the direct object of *help* is consistent with the analysis of the other sub-corpora. As in excerpt (114), the company highlights its dual purpose of fostering animal health and business performance.

5.5 Evaluative adjectives

The adjective profile of this sub-corpus is quite varied and it reflects the variety of topics in the press releases thus allowing for the identification of three semantic groups.

The first group relates to geographical reach and it includes two adjectives which have opposite meanings: *global* [94] and *local* [19]. Global is the most frequent adjective and it can be observed both in professional titles (such as *global vice president of ESG*, Tara McCarthy's role) and in collocation with *leader* and *purpose*, as shown in the following examples:

> (122) Alltech, a *global* leader in sustainable agriculture, is proud to announce the launch of the next generation in its trusted Mycosorb® range of mycotoxin management solutions. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)
>
> (123) "Asia plays a vital role in Alltech's *global* purpose of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty®," said Dr. Mark Lyons, president and CEO of Alltech. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

In (122), *global* modifies *leader* while referring to Alltech thus claiming the international authority of the company while in (123) *global* modifies *purpose* and is a reference to Alltech's mission (Working Together for a Planet of Plenty). By describing the company's mission as global, Alltech highlights the scope of its activities and its multinational nature. Conversely, *local* foregrounds another dimension of the company's identity, as shown in (124):

> (124) Our continued investment in the region – from advanced nutritional technologies to sustainable production practices – reflects our deep commitment to supporting our customers, strengthening *local* economies, and advancing the future of sustainable agriculture. (Alltech Press Release, August 2025)

In the excerpt, the collocation *local economies* occurs in a statement where the company affirms its commitment to investing in specific territories in order to support the development of local businesses. The contrast between global and local suggests a communicative strategy that both evokes international presence and local impact. This way, Alltech projects the image of a company that thinks globally but acts locally, consistent with excerpt (9) from the website.

The other field concerns Alltech's green sphere and it includes adjectives such as *sustainable*, *environmental*, *biological* and *natural*. The two following examples illustrate this semantic field:

> (125) These medals are a testament to the company's purpose and its commitment to implementing environmentally and economically *sustainable* solutions, fostering ethical business conduct, and prioritizing the efficient production of nutritious food. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

(126) By expanding production here in Kentucky, we can bring farmers *natural*, science-based solutions that improve soil health, strengthen crops and reduce reliance on synthetic fertilizers. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

The occurrences of *sustainable* with *environmentally* and *economically* in (125), reinforce Alltech concept that environmental responsibility and business performance are two strictly related dimensions. In (126), the adjective *natural* co-occurs with the adjective *science-based* in a way that associates *solutions* with two different spheres: the ecological responsibility evoked by *natural* and the technological innovation inspired by *science-based*. Furthermore, both examples include topics that are widely discussed in the industry thus suggesting that Alltech understands current challenges faced by producers: the production of *nutritious food*, the improvement of *soil health* and the *reliance on synthetic fertilizers*.

The third group includes adjectives that are typical of institutional and technical corporate discourse: *strong* [24], *key* [19] and *annual* [16]. While *annual* almost exclusively appears in reference to the Harvest Analysis and the Agri-Food Outlook, two annual publications, strong is used to emphasize analytical concepts:

(127) Most regions and sectors experienced growth, and the numbers suggest a *strong* recovery phase for animal agriculture; however, the data show that growth was uneven, increasingly regionalized and driven by localized demand dynamics. (Alltech Press Release, April 2026)

Excerpt (127) comes from a press release commenting on the results of the Agri-Food Outlook and *strong* is used to modify *recovery phase*. It is therefore employed to qualify the performance of the industry rather than promote a company's product. This type of press release shows that the company uses this genre, alongside the other channels, to share its research with stakeholders.

Lastly, it is important to mention *proud* [13], as it occurs in the conventional institutional formula *Alltech is proud to announce/support/partner*, as shown in the excerpt:

(128) Alltech, a global leader in sustainable agriculture, is *proud* to announce the launch of Mycosorb® A+ Evo and Mycosorb® Evo, the next generation in its trusted Mycosorb® range of mycotoxin management solutions. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

In the example, the formula announces two new products with a formal and institutional register that is typical of press releases. It is also important to note the recurrence of *trusted*, as a way of enhancing the trustworthiness of the company's solutions.

5.6 Lexical fields

Two main lexical fields emerged from the concordance analysis of the most frequent nouns. The first lexical field relates to agri-food sector expertise and institutional positioning. This field is denoted by sector-specific nouns such as *feed*, *production*, *industry*, *solution*, *agriculture*, *crop*, *nutrition*, *food* and *business*. Some of these terms appear in the following excerpt:

> (129) Akralos Animal Nutrition debuts, delivering advanced *feed* and *nutrition solutions* across North America. Formed through a joint venture between global *agriculture* leaders ADM and Alltech, Akralos combines Alltech's U.S.-based Hubbard *Feeds* and Canada-based Masterfeeds *businesses* with ADM's U.S. *feed* operations. (Alltech Press Release, February 2026)

In (129), various terms belonging to the semantic field of the agri-food industry are combined to introduce Akralos, a joint venture between Alltech and ADM, in a way that is typical of commercial announcements.

Challenge, another frequent noun, collocates with *mycotoxin*, *climate*, *disease* and *industry* and it always emerges in contexts where Alltech's products are presented as solutions to the problems, as is evident in the following example:

> (130) These latest technologies are designed to provide feed and livestock producers with the most advanced and targeted tools available to address this critical *challenge*. (Alltech Press Release, October 2026)

In (130) the collocation *critical challenge* increases the perceived urgency while *targeted tools* frames Alltech's products as specifically designed solutions to those challenges. This pattern positions Alltech as a company that is always ahead of industry needs.

Within this field, *leader*, *sustainability* and *world* also play a role in defining the institutional positioning of the company. *Leader* [43] often appears in the formula *global leader*, as illustrated in the previous sections, while *sustainability* [72] collocates with *report*, *performance* and *standard*:

> (131) The EcoVadis process validates Alltech's *sustainability* performance and offers a clear roadmap for enhancing its impact. Alltech shares its annual progress in the Alltech *Sustainability* Report, which outlines actions taken to align the business with its commitments to the United Nations Global Compact, the U.N. Ten Principles and the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

Excerpt (131) adds external validation to the company's sustainability commitment. Referring to EcoVadis, the United Nations Global Compact and the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals adds

credibility and legitimacy to the company's commitment, which is constantly reported through the Sustainability Report.

The second lexical field concerns heritage and cultural engagement. *Kentucky* [69] often co-occurs with *headquarters* thus referring to the local roots of the company. This is visible in the following excerpt:

> (132) "We're proud to strengthen our presence at our global headquarters in *Kentucky*, creating an innovation and manufacturing center that will serve U.S. farmers, strengthen our local community and continue to advance the science of agriculture," said Dr. Mark Lyons, president and CEO of Alltech. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

In the example, the opposition between *global headquarters* and *local community* recalls the same local/global opposition identified in the precedent section. Also in this case, the dichotomy marks the company's international scale while reinforcing its belonging to the community. this kind of statement is particularly relevant as it shows how Alltech's investments and business expansions are always described as something that benefits all the community.

In Alltech's press releases, *year* [75] evokes longevity and continuity:

> (133) Backed by more than 40 *years* of scientific research, Alltech is dedicated to providing solutions and products that contribute to the success of the global animal health industry. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

In the example, *40 years* functions as an evidence of the company's expertise and reliability. The first part of the sentence (*Backed by more than 40 years of scientific research*) also recalls the adjective *science-backed* which was identified and discussed in the website section. Apart from framing its products as scientifically tested, the company elevates them to the level of a collective broader mission (*contribute to the success of the global animal health industry*).

Team [41] collocates with member, global, experienced and passionate, as exemplified below:

> (134) Akralos is dedicated to helping customers gain a measurable advantage, bringing together passionate *teams*, proven products and shared values. Its experienced *team* works closely with customers to deliver tailored solutions, consistent performance and actionable insights. (Alltech Press Release, February 2026)

In (134), *team* occurs both with *passionate* and *experienced*. While *passionate* evokes commitment and personal investment, *experienced* refers to professional competence and expertise. By associating these two adjectives, Alltech frames the ideal employee and, as an extension, the ideal company.

Finally, *award* [39] represents the cultural dimension of this field, as shown in example (135):

> (135) "I am grateful to the LPC for honoring me with this *award* and helping fund my education," said Whitaker. "The agricultural industry is responsible for providing safe, high-quality food to the world. Through my career, I hope to tell the stories of those making that happen." (Alltech Press Release, July 2025)

In (135), *award* is mentioned by the winner of the LPC (Livestock Publications Council) Student Award Program, a scholarship sponsored by Alltech that supports young agricultural communicators. The whole statement is particularly relevant for different reasons. By sponsoring scholarships Alltech demonstrates social commitment and, by quoting the recipient of the award rather than using the corporate institutional voice, this award is described as a personal turning point rather than a corporate achievement. Furthermore, the choice of funding a scholarship for agricultural communicators is itself revealing: it perfectly aligns with the Planet of Plenty mission and the Tell the Story value. With this investment, Alltech is not only investing in a person's career, it is investing in the future of agri-food storytelling, something the company aims to be a leader in.

5.7 Visual elements

The visual analysis of the press release sub-corpus reveals a difference that distinguishes this channel from the others. In fact, only one image is contained in the 34 documents of the sub-corpus. This absence of visual content is revealing: it confirms that press releases function as a textual genre aiming at communicative authority. If social media and the website play more with images in an attempt to make the content more attractive for the audience, the objective of press releases is to deliver information in an authoritative and formal way.

The only image that the sub-corpus includes comes from a press release announcing the upcoming new biofertilizer manufacturing facility in Nicholasville, Kentucky. The photograph, which shows the Alltech Crop Science headquarter in Spain (Fig. 21), is included in the document as an example to show what the new facility will look like. It can be therefore considered an example of the complement category as the image complements the text by providing a visual reference, making the announcement more tangible and easier to visualise for the reader.



Fig. 21. Alltech Crop Science facility in Spain (complement). (Alltech press release, July 2025)

In conclusion, the analysis reveals that press releases prioritise institutional authority over emotional engagement. This is consistent with the purpose and the audience of press releases and it is evident in the use of conventionalized and formal linguistic patterns which are different from the ones retrieved in the other sub-corpora. Notwithstanding the constraints of the genre, Alltech's identity remains visible in the references to scientific authority in the agri-food industry and in the commitment to socio-cultural and environmental objectives.

Chapter 6 - Cross-channel discussion

In the previous chapters the five digital communication channels were examined in order to uncover recurrent linguistic patterns and visual choices and to assess how they contribute to the construction of the company's corporate identity in each platform: website, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and press releases. In this chapter, the findings of the individual analyses will be brought together so as to address and answer the research questions, also by referring to the examples discussed above.

6.1 Recurring themes and values (RQ1.1 and RQ1.2)

RQ1.1: What values and themes recur most frequently in Alltech's digital communication?

The analysis of the five sub-corpora revealed that some values and themes recur across all of Alltech's digital communication channels. These themes and values are: scientific innovation, sustainability, people and founding legacy.

The focus on scientific innovation is the easiest to spot across all channels, where it emerges as a distinctive semantic field with varying degrees of technicality. On every platform, Alltech's communication frames the company's solutions as based on solid scientific research. On the website, *science-backed* is one of the most representative adjectives, as in (18):

> (18) Alltech brings science-backed nutrition and practical on-farm know-how to help small-flock owners overcome those everyday challenges. (Alltech website, Backyard Poultry section, 2026)

This institutional tone and the reference to years of scientific research are present also in press releases, with the typical register used for this genre, as can be seen in excerpt (133):

> (133) Backed by more than 40 years of scientific research, Alltech is dedicated to providing solutions and products that contribute to the success of the global animal health industry. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

On LinkedIn, the positioning as a leader in scientific research in the industry emerges through the repetition of *dr*. in order to increase the credibility of technical articles authored by Alltech's experts, as in example (108):

> (108) Featuring insights from: Janella Hurst, global head of marketing for nutrition in Alltech's Technology Group; *Dr*. Max Hawkins, global technical support for Alltech's Technology Group; *Dr*. Alexandros Yiannikouris, director of Alltech's mycotoxin research programme. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

The second recurring theme, sustainability, is signalled by the adjectives *sustainable* and *environmental*, which rank very high across all sub-corpora. It is important to note that, while the

company stresses its commitment to more sustainable solutions for the agri-food sector, this value is never presented alone but as a crucial dimension of business performance. This is evident in (19) retrieved from the website:

> (19) Our diverse portfolio of nutritional technologies improves aquaculture health and performance, boosting productivity and profitability while reducing *environmental* impact. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

On Facebook, the intersection of sustainability and profitability is even more explicitly evoked in the example (83)

> (83) The future of agriculture lies at the intersection of *sustainability* and profitability. (Alltech Facebook, September 2025)

While in press releases the commitment to sustainability is validated through external recognitions such as the EcoVadis process described in excerpt (131):

> (131) The EcoVadis process validates Alltech's *sustainability* performance and offers a clear roadmap for enhancing its impact. Alltech shares its annual progress in the Alltech *Sustainability* Report, which outlines actions taken to align the business with its commitments to the United Nations Global Compact, the U.N. Ten Principles and the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

The third theme relates to people and corporate culture. The company conveys its commitment to the wellbeing and the prosperity of its workers and their families. The word *team* is as a frequent term across all channels and it collocates with positive qualifiers such as *global*, *passionate* and *experienced*, as shown in (134) from the press release sub-corpus:

> (134) Akralos is dedicated to helping customers gain a measurable advantage, bringing together passionate *teams*, proven products and shared values. Its experienced *team* works closely with customers to deliver tailored solutions, consistent performance and actionable insights. (Alltech Press Release, February 2026)

Notably, Alltech projects the image of a company that fosters a positive work environment through employees' direct quotes both on the website, as shown in (10), and on LinkedIn's employee spotlights identified in the visual analysis:

> (10) It was the first company culture *I* have experienced where it was not necessary to prove yourself, but to improve yourself. (Alltech website, Careers section, 2026)

Alltech's people-first culture encompasses also their employees' families and communities. This is evident in Facebook's excerpt (58), about the charity walk organized for Hazel Lube, the daughter of an Alltech employee fighting cancer, and in (111) from LinkedIn about the passing of Eli Sloan:

> (58) *It*'s a reminder that the finish line won't be crossed only on foot – but through giving. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

> (111) In 2025, *Eli* Sloan, the son of our North America Operations Manager, Chris Sloan, became unexpectedly ill with a form of kidney cancer. Last week, we received the heartbreaking news that *Eli* passed peacefully, surrounded by his loving family. Inspired by *Eli's* passion for life and love for others, the Sloan family has launched the fund. Proceeds will support scholarships at local Lexington schools *Eli* attended and organisations across Central Kentucky that were meaningful to *Eli* and his family. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

Lastly, the figure of Dr. Pearse Lyons and his legacy is a transversal element throughout the entire corpus, where the masculine pronouns consistently refer to him in an attempt to remember the values that are at the core of the company and that originate from him. On Facebook, this is expresses in excerpt (63):

> (63) No matter the setting – from the field to the throne – *he* believed every person should be treated with dignity and respect. (Alltech Facebook, December 2025)

Stories about the founder are often told by the CEO, Dr. Mark Lyons, in longer posts where the founder's figure is framed as a guide who still guides the company's actions, as shown in excerpt (36) from Instagram and example (115) from the press releases:

> (36) I hope we also take a moment to remember *his* belief in the power of dreams – and *his* unwavering commitment to helping others achieve them. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

> (115) Dad also encouraged and challenged *his* friends and colleagues to consider why *his* dreams for us were bigger than our dreams for ourselves. (Alltech Press Release, March 2026)

RQ1.2: How do they reflect the company's declared corporate identity?

The themes and values mentioned above reflect Alltech's declared corporate identity in the sense that they align with the company's core values as well as the ACE principle and the Planet of Plenty vision.

While the innovation theme is consistent with the value of Stay Curious, Alltech's commitment to continuous learning and advancement, the sustainability theme reflects both the ACE principle (which aims at the wellbeing of the Animal, the Consumer and the Environment) and the Planet of Plenty

vision, the company's commitment to contributing to the agri-food sector with solutions that do not jeopardize the future of the planet.

The people-first theme reflects *Make a Difference* and *Wear the Pin*. The communicative style of the company shows that the company prefers to be considered a friend by both consumers, employees and communities. As far as clients are concerned, Alltech projects the image of a trusted partner, rather than a mere product supplier. Employees, for their part, are framed as something the company cares about both at work and outside (by helping family members in difficult times). The communities where Alltech inserts itself are also described as benefitting from the company's presence in terms of economic return. However, this aspect is further highlighted by the company's charitable initiatives, which mostly involve the sociocultural field (as shown by the scholarships and the Alltech Vocal Competition). The *Wear the Pin* value, which evokes a strong sense of belonging and collective pride, is particularly evident in the visual analysis of all sub-corpora, where employees are always shown wearing the company's pin.

Tell the Story, however, is the value that recurs the most across the entire corpus. This concept justifies the wide presence of personal narratives and individual testimonials. Mark Lyons' deeply emotive and personal reflections are a perfect example for the communicative enactment of this value and they confirm that telling the story is not only a declared value but a value that guides the communication strategy of the company. As observed by Crocchi (2019), when companies understand that "telling the story is more important than selling" (p. 452), they create stronger relationships with their stakeholders, and this is exactly the approach that characterises Alltech's communicative strategy across all digital channels.

6.2 Linguistic variations across channels (RQ2.1 and RQ2.2)

RQ2.1: How do Alltech's tone of voice, pronoun use, verb and adjective choices, and lexical fields vary across its digital communication channels?

	Instagram	**Facebook**	**Website**	**LinkedIn**	**Press Releases**
Register and tone	Informal/personal	Hybrid	Semi-formal	Formal/professional	Formal/institutional
Pronouns	Our/we (community), it, I (Mark Lyons)	It, we (quotes)	Our (products/solutions)	Our (research)	Its, our (quotes)

Verbs	Join, celebrate, share, make	Read, go, do	Support, improve, help, learn	Explore, share, shape	Say, continue, expand
Adjectives	Proud, meaningful, powerful, special	Global, on-farm, vital, key	Nutritional, science-backed, sustainable	Global, more, pet, latest	Global, sustainable, strong, proud
Lexical fields	Heritage, community, global engagement	Expert knowledge, values/leadership	Science, performance, people	Expert knowledge	Agri-food expertise

Table 6. Summary of linguistic findings across platforms

6.2.1 Register and tone

The shift in the tone of voice is the most evident variation in the corpus. Considering Jeong, Chung and Kim's (2022) distinction between human tone of voice, more personal and emotionally engaging, and corporate tone of voice, more distant and institutional, it is possible to map Alltech's five digital channels along a continuum. As illustrated in Table 6, the five channels can be positioned along a continuum that ranges from the informal and emotionally engaged register of Instagram to the formally regulated language of press releases, with the website, Facebook and LinkedIn occupying intermediate positions. Each channel is characterised by a distinctive combination of pronouns, verbs, adjectives and lexical fields that reflects both the affordances of the platform and the expectations of its target audience

The most pronounced human tone of voice, which Jeong, Chung & Kim (2022) describe as informal and intimate, may be found on Instagram where a series of elements contribute to a more community-oriented type of communication: first person singular pronouns (in personal posts by Mark Lyons), emotionally charged adjectives such as *proud* and *meaningful* and celebratory verbs such as *celebrate* and *join*. Facebook's tone of voice is rather hybrid since it combines technical content and impersonal pronouns with philosophical reflections shared by Mark Lyons. Differently, LinkedIn's tone of voice is the most formal among the social media platforms analysed. The overall content on the platform and the language used are purely technical and professional with the only exception of the emotional post in honour of Eli Sloan. The website mainly adopts a formal register and institutional tone of voice in products and sustainability sections while a more personal register may be found in the careers section thanks to direct quotes by employees. Finally, press releases represent the most formal

register across the entire corpus and this is due to the conventions of the genre which prioritise objectivity over emotional engagement.

6.2.2 Pronoun use

Our is the most frequent pronoun across all sub-corpora and it contributes to the construction of a collective corporate identity. According to Casan-Pitarch (2016), first person plural pronouns help convey "an image of corporate union and team work" while implying "the participation of all of the members of a company" (p. 40). However, the collocations of *our* vary depending on the platform. On the website, for instance, this pronoun is often associated with product-related terms such as *solutions* and *nutritional technologies*, consistent with the channel's commercial function and its orientation towards customers' needs. Conversely, on Instagram *our* emerges in a community-related context that project the company as an entity inside the community rather than an external detached institution. This is exemplified in (31):

> (31) Thank you to *our* producers who nourish families, support *our* economy and care for the land. (Alltech Instagram, May 2025)

On LinkedIn, *our* modifies Alltech's publications and research, such as the Global Feed Survey, reflecting the platform's function as a professional knowledge-sharing channel. In press releases, this pronoun appears always inside direct quotes by the company's representatives, a pattern that reflects the genre convention of alternating between third-person institutional narration and first-person quoted speech, which simultaneously conveys objectivity and authenticity.

The most distinctive feature concerning pronouns is the high frequency of *I* on Instagram compared to its near-absence in the other platforms. As mentioned previously, the first person singular is usually associated to deeply personal and emotional posts by Mark Lyons. The high frequency of *I* on Instagram suggests that this platform values more emotional engagement and a personal warm narrative as compared to the others. This strategy also aligns with the Social CEO phenomenon described by Tsai and Men (2017), whereby corporate leaders use personal social media voices to humanise their organisations and build parasocial relationships with their audiences.

Press releases deserve special attention for the high frequency of *its*, a third person pronoun referring to Alltech and its subsidiaries. Unlike the first person pronouns that dominate the social media sub-corpora, *its* creates institutional distance and objectivity, reflecting the formal register and genre conventions of press releases: as documents addressed to journalists and media professionals, press releases are expected to report on the company, producing the systematic alternation between impersonal third-person narration and first-person direct quotes that characterises this sub-corpus.

6.2.3 Verbs and semantic prosody

The verbs identified across the entire corpus characterise a positive semantic prosody. In fact, as Malavasi (2007) explains, verbs used in corporate discourse usually carry implicit positive meanings that describe the company's actions and products in terms of benefit, rather than making explicit promotional claims. Although this pattern is valid in all the analysed channels, some specificities reveal the communicative strategies adopted for each one of them.

Support, *improve*, *enhance* and *help* are the most frequent verbs in the website sub-corpus and they describe Alltech as a company that contributes to better health conditions for animals and business profitability for producers. This verb profile is consistent with the website commercial function: as the primary channel for addressing potential clients, the website uses verbs that highlight tangible and concrete benefits thus positioning Alltech's scientific expertise in terms of direct value creation for the customers.

Instagram's particularity is the frequency of *join*, *celebrate* and *share*, verbs that suggest the community orientation of the platform and a communicative strategy that aims at participation and celebration, as in (39):

> (39) *Join* me at for a special screening of World Without Cows! This documentary asks a big question: Are we better off in a world without cows? (Alltech Instagram, February 2025)

These verbs align with Instagram's function as a space for emotional engagement and community building rather than mere technical information: unlike the website and its action-oriented verb profile, the verbs of this sub-corpus frame the company in terms of shared identity and collective belonging.

On Facebook, *read* is a particularly interesting verb since it reveals the platform's function of sharing technical and professional content aimed at a professional audience. This verb often occurs with the noun blog, as exemplified in (66):

> (66) Learn more about how sustainable solutions drive better results – *read* the blog now! (Alltech Facebook, February 2025)

Similar to the verb *read* on Facebook is the verb *explore* on LinkedIn, which always invites the audience to deepen their knowledge by reading the company's articles on the platform. However, unlike Facebook's "read the blog", *explore* implies a sense of agency and curiosity which is consistent with LinkedIn's professional use and its audience of specialists who expect stimulating and authoritative content. The use of *read* and *explore* also reflects Malavasi's (2024) notion of direct engagement devices which direct the reader towards additional content.

As for press releases, the most frequent verb, *say*, is always used in its past-tense form *said* so as to introduce direct quotes from the company's representatives. As documents addressed to journalists and media professionals, press releases must attribute every claim to a named source in order to be credible and reproducible. The systematic use of said is therefore a functional requirement of the genre.

6.2.4 Evaluative adjectives

The difference in the adjective distribution is extremely revealing of each platform's register and objective. Instagram distinguishes itself from the other channels for its cluster of emotionally evaluative adjectives such as *proud*, *meaningful*, *powerful* and *special*. Among these, *proud* is often used in constructions such as *we're proud to support* in excerpt (48) which reduces the psychological distance with the addressee, in this case agri-food producers:

> (48) Your work nourishes both people and the planet, and we're *proud* to support you. (Alltech Instagram, June 2025)

This cluster of adjectives reflects Instagram's function as a platform for emotional engagement. The audience on this platform expects more personal and warm content and these adjectives contribute to the overall emotional and informal register of the channel. Emotional adjectives are absent in the other sub-corpora, where technical and specialized terms prevail. On Facebook and LinkedIn, for instance, the most used adjectives (*on-farm*, *vital*, *key*, *technical*, *commercial*) suggest that these platforms highlight professional expertise thus neglecting emotional engagement. The adjectives that prevail in these platforms reflect their B2B orientation and the expectations of professional audiences who seek helpful content.

A noteworthy adjective is *global*, which appears among the most frequent adjectives across the entire corpus but its collocational patterns show differences among the platforms. *Global* is one of those adjectives of quality that "even apparently neutral, assume a positive connotation because of either their surrounding favourable context or the positive value they recall" (Malavasi, 2005, as cited in Malavasi 2007, p. 177). The four examples below illustrate how this positive connotation is conveyed differently according to the channel:

> (22) Alltech E-CO2 is a *global* leader in on-farm environmental assessments, helping farmers and agribusinesses turn sustainability into a driver of efficiency and profitability. (Alltech website, Our Impact section, 2026)

> (46) His birthday also marks the beginning of Make a Difference Day at Alltech, a *global* celebration of the power we all have to create positive change. (Alltech Instagram, August 2025)

(60) It has defined our business for over 45 years. Next week, we will bring many of our *global* team members back to our Kentucky headquarters. (Alltech Facebook, August 2025)

(122) Alltech, a *global* leader in sustainable agriculture, is proud to announce the launch of the next generation in its trusted Mycosorb® range of mycotoxin management solutions. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

Both in the example from the website (22) and in the example from the press releases (122), *global* modifies *leader*. This pattern is widely used by the company as a self-positioning formula which evokes international commercial authority and is therefore used in the channels where a more institutional register is required. On the contrary, the Instagram example (46), where *global* modifies *celebration* shapes Make a Difference as a collective and shared commitment rather than a corporate initiative. In (60) from Facebook, *global* modifies *team members* and it evokes diversity and internationality in Alltech's workforce. Together these examples show that *global*, despite its high frequency in the entire corpus, is not a fixed modifier but an identity marker whose meaning depends on the communicative context.

6.2.5 Lexical fields

The analysis of lexical fields revealed the most striking variation among channels. Like the differences concerning the other grammatical categories, this variation suggests that each channel/platform has a target audience with specific needs in terms of information and language adopted.

The website is the only channel with a strong accent on commercial performance (*efficiency*, *profitability*, *productivity*, *growth*) which reflects its function as a commercial platform aimed at addressing customers' business needs. Commercial performance is often accompanied by another aspect, biological outcomes, as demonstrated in (26):

(26) Our innovative nutritional technologies improve health and productivity, increase yields, drive economic performance and foster a more resilient future. (Alltech website, multiple sections, 2026)

By pairing these two dimensions, Alltech frames its expertise and innovation skills as fundamental for animal and crop productivity as well as business success.

Differently from the other channels, the analysis of Instagram shows a cultural and artistic lexical field, represented by *vocal*, *song* and *celebration* which are due to the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition and the Celebration of Song. These two initiatives show Alltech's investment in sectors that go beyond the company's core business. The relevance of this theme on Instagram demonstrates

that the company uses the platform to convey the identity of a company that not only invests in the industry but also in the community through social projects. Example (55) illustrates this concept:

> (55) We celebrate 20 years of the *Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition*. Over the past two decades, more than $12 million in scholarships have been awarded to over 200 students, giving them the opportunity to pursue what truly makes their hearts sing. (Alltech Instagram, March 2025)

Facebook's hybrid function is reflected in the two distinct lexical fields. The first one, with words such as *blog*, *specialist*, *mycotoxin* and *dr.* reflects Facebook's function as a platform for sharing technical content authored by Alltech's professionals. The other one, more centred on values, represents Mark Lyons' voice and his deep and philosophical messages, often centred on life lessons or his father's legacy, as shown in (73):

> (73) Until the end, he was thinking about his people – because he didn't build a global business; he built a global family. (Alltech Facebook, December 2025)

Similarly to the website, also LinkedIn presents a single dominant lexical field centred on expertise and industry professional discourse. In fact, most frequent nouns refer to the different realities of the agri-food sector: *industry*, *feed*, *poultry*, *production*, *producer*, *beef*. The homogeneity in the lexical field of this platform is particularly revealing of its professional audience and its function, sharing highly technical content. Therefore, Alltech's communicative strategy on LinkedIn aims at reinforcing the company's authority in the eyes of the specialised readers.

Finally, press releases are noteworthy for their institutional function conveyed through two different lexical fields. Similarly to the other channels, the field related to the agri-food sector expertise (*feed*, *production*, *industry*, *solution*, *leader*, *sustainability*) positions Alltech as a leader and, in this context, is used to frame the company's announcements within a broader context of sector-specific relevance. The second field, which relates to community and cultural engagement (*Kentucky*, *year*, *team*, *award*), is similar to the one retrieved on Instagram but the overall communicative style is more institutional and less emotional, thus reflecting the audience and function of press releases. While Instagram narrates cultural events through personal voices and emotional language, press releases address the same themes through institutional formulas. This parallel between the most informal and the most formal channel in the corpus is perhaps the most striking example of the adaptive coherence that characterises Alltech's digital communication strategy.

6.2.6 Linguistic variations across platforms and audiences

RQ2.2: What do these variations reveal about the company's communicative strategies towards different audiences?

The linguistic variations mentioned above reflect a deliberate differentiation in Alltech's communicative strategy in order to adapt properly to the specificities of each platform and meet the expectations of its audience.

The website's register balances scientific authority and commercial appeal in a way that addresses a broad and diverse audience that includes clients, potential customers, investors, partners and other types of stakeholders. Instagram's emotional communicative style focuses more on community engagement and the construction of closer relationships with the audience. The platform's audience does not necessarily consist of professionals or clients and the company therefore prioritises personal stories and events rather than product promotion in order to create a sense of belonging based on shared values.

Facebook addresses a dual audience that reflects both the platform's demographic profile and its technical affordances. Facebook's user base tends to include a higher proportion of older users compared to Instagram, which in the context of the agri-food industry may translate into a larger proportion of established industry professionals and producers among Alltech's followers. This demographic dimension may partly explain the more technical and informative register identified in the Facebook sub-corpus. Furthermore, the fact that Facebook allows users to include clickable hyperlinks directly within posts makes it a more effective content distribution channel, allowing Alltech to redirect its audience to blog articles and other technical sources of information. Together, these features help explain why Facebook functions as a hybrid channel that combines professional knowledge sharing with Mark Lyons's personal reflections.

LinkedIn's professional audience made up of producers, nutritionists, scientists and general industry experts is reflected in the most technical and sector-specific register across all channels. Alltech's communication on the platform always foregrounds the expertise of Alltech's professionals behind the company's research. Press releases, for their part, mainly address journalists and media professionals with a formal and conventionalised register. Alltech's strategy in this channel prioritises institutional authority and credibility over emotional engagement, which is more appropriate for platforms such as Instagram.

Alltech's channel differentiation is not merely stylistic but strategic: each platform serves a specific communicative function within the company's overall digital identity construction, contributing to a multi-layered corporate narrative that addresses different audiences without losing its core identity.

6.3 Corporate narrative coherence (RQ3.1 and RQ3.2)

RQ3.1: To what extent does a coherent corporate narrative emerge across Alltech's digital communication channels?

By analysing the five sub-corpora, a coherent corporate narrative emerges across Alltech's digital communication channels, even if this narration manifests differently depending on the platform. The coherence operates at a thematic level and at an identity level.

At the thematic level, the four recurring themes identified in section 6.1 (scientific innovation, sustainability, people and founding legacy) constitute a stable narrative core and each theme is systemically interconnected with the others. If scientific expertise legitimises the sustainability efforts, the people-first culture humanises the technical authority while the heritage theme serves as a solid and human foundation for all the dimensions. The consistency of these themes confirms that Alltech's communication is guided by a unified set of values which permeate every platform, even if in different ways. Together these values converge into a single purpose, that is, depicting Alltech's approach as science-driven but also centred on people and environmentally responsible.

Even at the identity level, the linguistic patterns identified in section 6.2 confirm that a coherent corporate voice ties all Alltech's digital channels despite the differences in tone and register which depend on the audiences and functions of each platform. Although differences exist at the linguistic level, the major aspects remain coherent: the dominance of *our* as a collective identity marker, the positive semantic prosody in the verb profile, the use of *global* as a positioning device and the reference to community and heritage in the lexical fields. This is consistent with Van Riel's (2007) concept of the sustainable corporate story, which "serves as a frame around which to hang the full array of communications the organization disseminates" (van Riel, 2001, as cited in Van Riel, 2007, p. 27). Alltech's sustainable corporate story is rooted in the vision of an agri-food company that aims to contribute to a sustainable future of the agri-food industry through scientific innovation and sociocultural commitment. This story, despite the stylistic differences, emerges across all channels.

A particularly significant identity marker, something that deserves particular attention as one may not expect this from a company working in the agri-food sector, is the cross-channel reference to the company's sociocultural and philanthropic commitments that extend beyond Alltech's core business. This aspect is represented by the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition and the Celebration of Song which associate the brand with artistic excellence and educational investment. The same type of commitment relates to the LPC Student Award Program (excerpt 135), a scholarship for young agricultural communicators. Similarly, the company includes acts of solidarity such as the charity walk organised for Hazel Lube (excerpt 16) and the fundraising campaign for Eli Sloan (excerpt 111)

to signal that its people-first culture extends beyond the workplace to encompass employees' families and communities.

It is also important to note that this commitment is always reconnected to the vision of the company's founder, who personally believed in the importance of charitable causes. By consistently anchoring these initiatives to the founder's legacy, Alltech distinguishes itself from companies that adopt cultural engagement as a marketing practice: rather than presenting these commitments as a response to external stakeholder expectations, Alltech frames them as founding principles. This narrative positioning is rhetorically significant since it transforms what could be perceived as calculated CSR communication into an expression of authentic organisational values. Together, these initiatives confirm that Alltech's cultural and social engagement is not an occasional communication choice but a structural element of its corporate narrative that is conveyed systematically across channels to reinforce the value of *Make a Difference* that lies at the heart of the company's declared identity.

Overall, the analysis shows that Alltech successfully adapts its corporate narrative to the specific features and audience of each channel without compromising the coherence of its core identity. The same values and themes are expressed through different communicative registers demonstrating awareness of digital communication as a practice that requires a diverse set of approaches.

RQ3.2: How does the company balance the promotion of its core business with broader values of sustainability, innovation and inclusivity?

The analysis shows that Alltech integrates its core business promotion with broader values rather than presenting them as separate dimensions. Each value (sustainability, innovation and inclusivity) is incorporated into the company's communication by using a different strategy.

As far as sustainability is concerned, it is never presented as a separate ethical commitment but as an integrated dimension of business performance. As shown in excerpt (19), Alltech mentions the reduction of the environmental impact as a benefit of its products, on the same level as the boost in productivity and profitability:

> (19) Our diverse portfolio of nutritional technologies improves aquaculture health and performance, boosting productivity and profitability while reducing environmental impact. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

Excerpt (83) and excerpt (125) make this framing even clearer:

> (83) The future of agriculture lies at the intersection of sustainability and profitability. (Alltech Facebook, September 2025)

> (125) These medals are a testament to the company's purpose and its commitment to implementing environmentally and economically sustainable solutions, fostering ethical business conduct, and prioritizing the efficient production of nutritious food. (Alltech Press Release, April 2025)

In both examples, the company pairs sustainability and profitability as two inseparable dimensions for the future of the agri-food industry. Excerpt (125), in particular, explicitly shows that sustainability is both one of the company's purposes and a *commitment*: these two terms signal that environmental responsibility is not an external constraint imposed by the expectations of stakeholders but a founding principle that guides the company's operations from within. The centrality of sustainability is so strong that it emerges even in Alltech's official LinkedIn bio, which describes the company as delivering "smarter, more sustainable solutions for agriculture" (Alltech LinkedIn, n.d.). This single phrase integrates commercial performance (*smarter*) and environmental responsibility (*sustainable*), which characterise Alltech's communication across all channels.

The second value, innovation, is conveyed through science-related terms and is framed as a contribution to the broader mission of feeding the world sustainably. On the website, *science-backed* and innovative are frequently used when describing the company's products, as in excerpt (17) and (18):

> (17) Our diverse portfolio of *innovative* nutritional technologies improves aquaculture health and performance, boosting productivity and profitability while reducing environmental impact. (Alltech website, Aquaculture section, 2026)

> (18) Alltech brings *science-backed* nutrition and practical on-farm know-how to help small-flock owners overcome those everyday challenges. (Alltech website, Backyard Poultry section, 2026)

In both examples, Alltech's innovative products are presented as a tool to help producers face industry challenges. On LinkedIn, the company's dedication to innovation is further presented as something that is validated by an external institution:

> (89) We're honored to be named one of America's Most Innovative Companies by Fortune. This recognition reflects the work of our global team and partners who continue to push boundaries across agriculture. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

Furthermore, Alltech acknowledges that this sector is rarely associated with innovation and positions its scientific expertise as a form of social mission rather than commercial differentiation:

> (90) In a list dominated by technology, health care and financial sectors, we're proud to be part of a group driving meaningful change for farmers, ranchers and producers. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

In the excerpt, the company's innovative spirit is put at the service of *farmers*, *ranchers* and *producers*. As can be seen in (18), innovation has the objective of helping agri-food producers in their everyday challenges. In press releases, innovation is further presented as an investment in which benefits the entire community and the agri-food sector:

> (132) "We're proud to strengthen our presence at our global headquarters in *Kentucky*, creating an innovation and manufacturing center that will serve U.S. farmers, strengthen our local community and continue to advance the science of agriculture," said Dr. Mark Lyons, president and CEO of Alltech. (Alltech Press Release, October 2025)

The third value mentioned in the research question, inclusivity, is the least explicitly developed value in Alltech's digital communication. Some signals of inclusivity can be identified, for example, in Alltech's participation in the Women in Food and Agriculture Summit, mentioned in excerpt (101). The fact that the company takes part in such a relevant event suggests that Alltech is aware of gender inequality in an industry that is traditionally dominated by men. It also suggests that the company adopts a proactive approach to change the situation for the better. Another aspect of the analysis that may refer to inclusivity is the frequent reference to *global team* across the corpus. By highlighting that employees are from every corner of the world, Alltech implicitly valorises its workforce diversity. Even if these examples are not a systematic representation of a diversity and inclusion commitment, they are consistent with Alltech's philosophy that people matter beyond their professional role. This concept emerges in excerpt (63), where Mark Lyons quotes his father's belief:

> (63) No matter the setting – from the field to the throne – he believed every person should be treated with dignity and respect. (Alltech Facebook, December 2025)

In conclusion, Alltech incorporates sustainability and innovation into its communication strategy and frames them as fundamental aspects of its contribution to the industry. Inclusion, less present, still emerges in a few examples and in the founder's memory. This integration reveals that Alltech's digital communication operates not as a collection of separate promotional messages but as a coherent narrative ecosystem in which business objectives and broader values are systematically presented as two sides of the same mission: Working Together for a Planet of Plenty®.

Chapter 7 - Interviews

As anticipated in the methodological section, three of Alltech's employees working in marketing and communication were asked to answer some questions related to the subject of this thesis. The interviewees are: Giulia Lauriola, marketing manager at Alltech Italy, Henrik Mygind, marketing manager for Alltech Denmark and Central-Eastern Europe, and Elisa Boschi, global head of marketing for resource efficiency. The aim of these interviews is to provide an insider perspective to the findings of the analysis presented in the previous chapters.

7.1 Communication strategy and corporate identity

The first part of the interview focused on Alltech's broader communication strategy, with particular attention to the main pillars and objectives that guide the company's communication activities and the audience the company seeks to address. Therefore, the first question was: *what would you identify as the main pillars and objectives of Alltech's communication strategy, and who are its primary target audiences?*

> Based on my experience working within Alltech, I would say Alltech's communication strategy is based around science, sustainability, storytelling and long-term partnerships. Rather than focusing on selling products, Alltech aims to position itself as a trusted advisor by providing valuable insights that helps farmers improve productivity, profitability and sustainability. (Henrik Mygind)

> Based on my experience working within Alltech, I would identify 3 key pillars of our communication strategy: science-based and innovative solutions, sustainability and partnerships aimed at building long-term and trusted relationship. The overall objective is to position Alltech as a trusted partner that can support farmers and other industry stakeholders in addressing both ongoing and emerging challenges, while maintaining a strong focus on productivity, profitability and sustainability. The ACE principle and its evolution into our vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty TM provide the broader framework behind this approach. Our primary target audiences are farmers and producers, veterinarians and nutritionists, feed and food industry professionals and other key stakeholders across the agri-food and ag-tech sectors. The specific focus depends on the market, species and business area. (Giulia Lauriola)

> 1. Build Trust Through Science & Expertise. Alltech consistently positions itself as a science-led authority in agriculture. Communications focus on translating technical expertise into practical insights for producers, industry professionals and partners. This includes expert commentary, research

findings, podcasts, educational content, harvest analyses and technical resources. Objective: Build credibility, trust and authority while helping customers make better decisions.

2. Inspire Action Through Purpose & Storytelling. A major theme of Alltech's communications is the belief that agriculture can positively shape the future of the planet. Show how agriculture can create a better future by combining sustainability messaging with real stories from farmers, customers, employees and communities, while supporting commercial growth. Objective: Differentiate Alltech beyond products by demonstrating purpose, impact and leadership in sustainable agriculture. (Elisa Boschi)

Having established the main pillars and objectives, the interview then explored how these elements are reflected in the company's corporate identity and values.

Question: *how does Alltech's communication reflect and reinforce the company's corporate identity and values?*

Our purpose is: Working together for a planet of plenty. We're a science-driven company that focus on improving agriculture. sustainability and innovation and collaboration are key drivers for the communication. The tone is professional, yet approachable. (Henrik Mygind)

Alltech's communication is strongly rooted in our vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty and the belief that agriculture has the power to positively shape the future of our planet. Alltech's communication reflects this identity by combining innovation, science-based knowledge, data-driven insights and expert support, while highlighting our commitment to collaboration and long-term partnerships. Our corporate values also influence the way we communicate: not only through the topics and messages we share, but also though the way we engage with customers, partners, employees and wider industry. (Giulia Lauriola)

1. Science-Led Credibility. Alltech consistently communicates through research, expert knowledge, industry insights and data-driven content. This reinforces the company's identity as an innovation-driven partner that helps customers improve performance, profitability and sustainability through science.

2. Purpose-Driven Agriculture. Alltech's messaging regularly highlights its vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty™, emphasizing sustainability, collaboration, stewardship and the positive role agriculture can play in the future. Through customer stories, producer experiences and

> community-focused storytelling, the company brings its values to life and demonstrates its commitment to serving others and creating a more sustainable food system. (Elisa Boschi)

The three interviewees mention the same core pillars in their responses: science, storytelling, sustainability and partnership. These themes had all emerged from the textual analysis. Furthermore, the explicit mention of storytelling by Mygind and Boschi confirms that Tell the Story is not only a declared value but a principle that guides the company's communication choices.

All of them also highlight the fact that Alltech aims at being perceived as a trusted advisor rather than a product supplier. In order to do so, the company shares technical content which has the objective of helping farmers and producers make better decisions. This insider perspective confirms the pattern identified in the corpus where *help* collocates with human agents. This concept of trust is also consistent with Bondi and Poppi's (2025) argument that trust is nowadays a central dimension of effective corporate communication.

Another recurrent element in the responses is the notion of challenge with Lauriola referring to "addressing both ongoing and emerging challenges". This quote aligns with a pattern identified in the corpus analysis where Alltech refers to industry challenges (such as mycotoxins, environmental impact and rising input costs) as something that the company can address effectively.

Finally, the three interviewees mention Planet of Plenty as the vision that unifies Alltech's communication. As Lauriola explains, "The ACE principle and its evolution into our vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty provide the broader framework behind this approach". This statement confirms the alignment between declared identity and communicated themes that emerged in the corpus analysis.

7.2 Values and themes

The interview also addressed the specific values, narratives and themes that Alltech aims to communicate consistently across its digital channels. This perspective allows to compare the themes identified in the linguistic analysis with the elements that Alltech's communication specialists consider central to the communication of the company.

Question: *are there any specific values, narratives or themes that Alltech consciously seeks to communicate across its digital channels?*

> Working together for a planet of plenty. Overall, Alltech aims to position itself not simply as a supplier, but as a trusted partner helping agriculture become more productive, profitable and sustainable. (Henrik Mygind)

Yes. Our vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty is the overarching narrative that guides our communication and many of our activities. Alongside this, our seven core values are embedded in the way we work and collaborate, both internally and externally, and therefore influence the way we communicate with our audiences. Across our digital channels, recurring themes include science, innovation, sustainability, collaboration, animal health and nutrition, practical solutions, customer success and the Alltech people. The objective is to build a communication approach that goes beyond promoting products and instead reinforces our Alltech values, our expertise, the relationship we build and the impact we aim to create together with our customers and partners. (Giulia Lauriola)

1. Sustainability and a "Planet of Plenty": Agriculture as a force for a more sustainable and abundant future.

2. Science and Innovation: Research, technology and technical expertise as drivers of better outcomes.

3. Partnership and Collaboration: Working alongside customers, producers and industry stakeholders to solve challenges.

4. Real People, Real Impact: Sharing customer, farmer and employee stories to demonstrate tangible results.

5. Education and Thought Leadership: providing insights, data and expert knowledge that help shape industry conversations. (Elisa Boschi)

Within the broader set of values and themes, particular attention was given to the role of sustainability, which emerged as a recurring element in the corpus analysis.

Question: *what role does sustainability play in Alltech's communication strategy?*

Sustainability is a core theme rather than a separate communication topic. Improved efficiency, better animal performance and responsible resource use can create benefits for both producers and the environment. (Henrik Mygind)

Sustainability plays a central role in Alltech's communication strategy. It is one of the key pillars of our communication and is increasingly integrated across our projects, campaigns and initiatives. Rather than being communicated as a standalone topic, sustainability is strongly intertwined with other priorities such as animal health and nutrition, farm efficiency, productivity, profitability and

> environmental impact. This reflects Alltech's broader vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty and our commitment to supporting a more sustainable agri-food sector. (Giulia Lauriola)

> Sustainability is not treated as a separate topic at Alltech, is a core pillar of the communication strategy. It is a central theme that underpins the company's corporate narrative, brand purpose and customer value proposition. Alltech consistently communicates how agriculture can produce more while reducing environmental impact, reflecting its vision of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty™. (Elisa Boschi)

The answers of the three interviewees confirm the findings of the corpus analysis. Regarding themes and values, the list provided by Lauriola ("science, innovation, sustainability, collaboration, animal health and nutrition, practical solutions, customer success and the Alltech people") maps onto the lexical fields identified in the analysis. Boschi highlights another fundamental aspect: the storytelling aspect. She mentions "shape industry conversations" as one of Alltech's objectives and this is evident in the way the company uses its digital platforms (especially Facebook and LinkedIn) to share technical content. Furthermore, *shape* is one of the most frequent verbs across the corpus and it also co-occurs with *industry* and *future*, like in the following excerpt:

> (99) The 2026 Alltech Agri-Food Outlook presents the findings of our 15th annual Alltech Global Feed Survey and emphasizes the key trends *shaping* our industry's future. (Alltech LinkedIn, 2026)

This example, together with the interviewees' answers demonstrates that Alltech tries to position itself as an active contributor to the direction of the sector not only through innovative new products but also in terms of how the industry is narrated. This second objective is achieved thanks to the company's scientific publications (i.e. the Agri-Food Outlook mentioned in the excerpt) and other projects like the documentary World Without Cows.

Another statement that is quite relevant is Lauriola's observation that the seven core values "are embedded in the way we work and collaborate, both internally and externally, and therefore influence the way we communicate". As previously mentioned, all the values emerged in some form in the textual analysis and this statement confirms that they serve as a guide for the company's communication strategy.

The three interviewees also provided unanimous responses regarding sustainability. The analysis showed that sustainability is never treated in isolation but is always integrated with other core values and themes, a finding that is confirmed by the interviews. Mygind describes sustainability as a "core theme rather than a separate communication topic". According to Lauriola it is "strongly intertwined

with other priorities such as animal health and nutrition, farm efficiency, productivity, profitability and environmental impact" while Boschi affirms that it "is not treated as a separate topic". This alignment in the responses therefore confirms that the frequent co-occurrence of sustainability and business performance identified in the corpus is not incidental but the result of a communication strategy.

A noteworthy divergence between the responses and the analysis concerns the founding legacy of Dr. Pearse Lyons. While in the corpus it was identified as one of the main core pillars of the company's communication, none of the interviewees explicitly mentioned this aspect. This absence suggests that the founder's legacy is so deeply embedded in the company's culture that it is not perceived as a deliberate communication strategy.

7.3 Channel differentiation

A further interesting aspect concerned the relationship between Alltech's different digital channels. Since the corpus analysis revealed differences in terms of linguistic features, tone and communicative functions, the interviewees were asked to explain how these channels are strategically differentiated and whether they address specific audiences.

Question: *do different digital channels (website, LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and press releases) serve different communication purposes or target different audiences? If so, how does the communication style vary across these channels?*

> We need an omni-channel approach - no matter what channel you hit, you get the Alltech feeling. However, each channel has their own purpose. The website, is the hub for technical information, resources and product information.
> LinkedIn - professional oriented - B2B partners
> Facebook is more about the communication with farmers or people within the ag community
> Instagram, is often more a visual way of communicating
> PR is the official way of communicating.
> (Henrik Mygind)

> While the Alltech look and feel should remain consistent across all the digital channels to build a strong and recognisable brand identity, each platform has a different role and reaches different audiences. In Italy:

LinkedIn: mainly focuses on professional and corporate communication, including industry insights, articles, company news, events and technical content. The primary audiences are industry stakeholders, veterinarians, B2B customers and prospects, as well as employees. Employees are also encouraged to act as brand ambassadors, sharing their experiences and relevant Alltech content.
Facebook: primarily reaches farmers and an older farming audience. The communication tends to have a warmer, more approachable and relatively informal tone, with a strong focus on practical content, farm stories, events and community engagement.
Instagram: mainly targets farmers, younger generations and people interested in agriculture and the wider food chain. Communication is generally more visual, immediate and informal, while maintaining a professional. Authentic photography, short videos, stories and visually impactful content play an important role.
Website: serves as the main source of corporate and technical information. The renewed global website is being complemented by country websites, which provide more locally relevant content. The corporate website hosts press releases, blogs, article, product and solution information, as well as dedicated landing pages for specific projects and multi-year campaigns as well as dedicated landing pages for specific projects and campaigns.
The objective is therefore not to replicate the same content across all platforms, but to adapt the message and format to the role of each channel while maintaining a consistent brand identity.
(Giulia Lauriola)

Alltech uses different digital channels strategically, adapting tone, format and content to specific audiences while consistently reinforcing its values of science, innovation, sustainability and collaboration.
While the core messages remain consistent, the style is adapted to match audience expectations:
Website and press releases prioritize credibility and detailed information.
LinkedIn emphasizes expertise and thought leadership.
Instagram and Facebook focus more on storytelling, people, culture and engagement.
Across all channels, Alltech balances science-based authority with accessible content tailored to the needs of each audience.
(Elisa Boschi)

The most relevant aspect highlighted in the responses is the concept of adaptive coherence, i.e. the idea that the same identity is maintained across all channels even though the style is adapted to the function and the audience of each platform. Mygind describes this “omni-channel approach” by stating that “no matter what channel you hit, you get the Alltech feeling”. Similarly, Lauriola states that “The objective is therefore not to replicate the same content across all platforms, but to adapt the

message and format to the role of each channel while maintaining a consistent brand identity". This concept of adaptive coherence is consistent with the findings of section 6.3, where the same corporate identity was found to be expressed through different communicative registers without compromising narrative coherence.

The interviewees' characterisation of each platform's audience and communicative style mirrors the findings of the linguistic analysis. The responses confirm LinkedIn's B2B orientation and its emphasis on "expertise and thought leadership" (Boschi). Lauriola describes Facebook's audience as consisting of "farmers and an older farming audience", thus confirming the demographic observation made in section 6.2. She also describes the tone as "warmer, more approachable and relatively informal", a description that partially diverges from the corpus analysis which revealed a more technical and formal register. However, this divergence may be due to the fact that the sub-corpus only included posts that differ from those published on Instagram. Since more informal and community-oriented content tends to be shared across both platforms, the Facebook sub-corpus in this case may overrepresent the technical dimension of the channel while underrepresenting the emotional register.

The findings regarding Instagram are confirmed by the interviewees, who describe the platform as "more visual, immediate and informal" (Lauriola) and focused on "storytelling, people, culture and engagement" (Boschi). At the same time, the website's institutional and commercial positioning is recognized as it is described as "the hub for technical information, resources and product information" (Mygind) and "the main source of corporate and technical information" (Lauriola). Finally, the formal and conventionalised register of press releases is consistent with the prioritization "credibility and detailed information" (Boschi).

"Across all channels, Alltech balances science-based authority with accessible content tailored to the needs of each audience" (Boschi): Boschi's concluding observation is particularly significant as it aligns with the findings from the cross-channel analysis, which confirmed that scientific expertise is combined with more accessible forms of content across all channels.

7.4 Visual elements

The final aspect further explored in the interviews was the role of visual communication in the construction of the company's corporate identity. The interviewees were asked to express their opinion on how colours, images and graphic design contribute to communicating Alltech's identity and values.

Question: *what role do visual elements such as colours, images and graphic design play in communicating Alltech's identity and values?*

> Visual communication plays an important role in creating a consistent global brand identity. The combination of a professional photography, icons and a recognizable color palette helps communicate credibility, innovation and professionalism. In Planet of Plenty, we use the 3 leaves that are used as a pattern and for all our icons. (Henrik Mygind)

> Visual communication plays an important role in creating a consistent and recognisable Alltech identity across markets and channels. Alltech has specific global brand guidelines that ensure consistency while allowing countries to adapt communication to their local markets and audience. The colour palette is centred around the Alltech's terracotta, complemented by a secondary palette of colours inspired by land and nature (i.e. green, yellow and blue) which are particularly relevant when communicating sustainability and our connection with agriculture. Icons and other graphic elements are also used to communicate concepts such as science, innovation and technology in a clear and accessible way. Photography is another key element of Alltech's communication. Authentic images of farms, people, animals, research and real-life experiences help make our communication more human and credible. At the same time, visual content needs to reflect the specific species, agricultural systems and cultural characteristics of each market. (Giulia Lauriola)

> Visual elements play an important role in reinforcing Alltech's identity as a science-led, innovative and purpose-driven company.
>
> 1. Natural and Sustainable Imagery. Alltech frequently uses images of farmers, animals, crops, landscapes and rural communities. These visuals reinforce the company's connection to agriculture, sustainability and its Working Together for a Planet of Plenty™ vision.
>
> 2. People-Centered Storytelling. Photography and video often focus on real producers, customers, employees and industry experts rather than products alone. This supports Alltech's emphasis on collaboration, trust and serving the agricultural community.
>
> 3. Consistent Brand Identity. The use of consistent colours, typography and visual standards across digital, event and marketing materials helps create a recognizable global brand while supporting local market activation. (Elisa Boschi)

All the interviewees agree on the relevance of visual elements in projecting Alltech's identity. In particular, Lauriola mentions "authentic images of farms, people, animals, research and real-life experiences" as a key element of Alltech's communication. In her view, these images "help make our

communication more human and credible", which aligns with the prevalence of the humanize function identified in the corpus. Boschi adds that "photography and video often focus on real producers, customers, employees and industry experts rather than products alone" thus confirming Alltech's tendency to use visual elements in order to humanize the company rather than to promote its products. Boschi describes this approach as "people-centred storytelling" and this is one of the aspects that has emerged throughout the entire analysis.

Another significant element mentioned by the interviewees concerns colours and visual consistency. Lauriola mentions "Alltech's terracotta" and "colours inspired by land and nature (i.e. green, yellow and blue) which are particularly relevant when communicating sustainability and our connection with agriculture". Similarly, Boschi confirms that visual elements "reinforce the company's connection to agriculture, sustainability and its Working Together for a Planet of Plenty™ vision". These responses confirm that colour choices carry semantic weight and contribute to the projection of a certain corporate identity grounded in sustainability and a connection to the natural world. Moreover, both Lauriola and Boschi mention the existence of global brand guidelines that "allow countries to adapt communication to their local markets and audience" (Lauriola). This observation is particularly significant as it points to an often-overlooked dimension when analysing the communicative strategy of multinational corporations: the tension between global consistency and local adaptation in corporate identity communication.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to analyse how Alltech constructs and communicates its corporate identity across its digital channels. The corpus for the analysis consisted of 314 documents including website pages, press releases and posts from Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. The corpus was uploaded on Sketch Engine, which generated frequency lists for each grammatical category (pronouns, verbs, adjectives and lexical fields). The frequent linguistic patterns were then qualitatively interpreted in light of the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 1 and drawing on scholarship in corporate communication, corporate identity and linguistic discourse analysis. The textual analysis was complemented with the analysis of visual elements and a series of written interviews with three of Alltech's marketing and communication specialists who confirmed and contextualised the key findings of the research.

Overall, the analysis revealed a coherent and strategically managed corporate identity with four main themes guiding the communicative strategy: scientific innovation, sustainability, people and founding legacy. These themes recur across all channels and reflect the company's declared values and mission, especially the Planet of Plenty vision and the ACE principle which function as a narrative frame.

For Alltech, scientific authority is a fundamental dimension of its identity and the company positions itself as a *trusted* partner for its customers. The scientific expertise theme is therefore the most evident one across the corpus even though it manifests differently depending on the platform. While *science-backed* is largely used on the website to stress Alltech's commitment to scientific research, LinkedIn foregrounds the specialisation and the professionalism of the team in order to increase the credibility of the articles while press releases prioritize external institutional validation of the company's achievements.

The second recurring theme, sustainability, is so embedded in the company's culture that all three interviewees used almost identical formulations to describe the company's commitment to a more sustainable future for the agri-food industry. What is particularly significant about this theme is that it is never presented as a standalone aspect but always as a dimension of business performance. Indeed, sustainability systematically collocates with *profitability* or *efficiency*, thus suggesting that better business performance in the agri-food sector depends on ability of its players to preserve natural resources and animal health.

The remaining themes, people and the founding legacy of Dr. Pearse Lyons, also emerge consistently across the corpus. *Team* is among the most frequent nouns across all five sub-corpora and several examples demonstrate that the company's attention to people extends beyond its employees to include

their families and communities, as shown by the solidarity campaigns for Hazel Lube and Eli Sloan. Most interestingly, these charitable initiatives and social commitments are often framed as deriving from the founder's personal vision. The figure of Dr. Pearse Lyons permeates the entire corpus and this helps the company project its social engagement as authentic rather than as a mere marketing strategy.

Beyond the thematic level, there are some linguistic patterns that recur in the corpus despite the differences in style and register due to the varying expectations of each channel's audience. First person plural pronouns are the most frequent across the corpus thus projecting a collective corporate identity and an idea of shared values. *Global* is among the most frequent adjectives in all sub-corpora with its meaning varying according to the communicative context of each platform. The most striking cross-channel variations are evident in the lexical fields: while the website is the only channel with a dedicated commercial performance lexical field, Instagram is the only channel with a cultural and artistic field while LinkedIn focuses on expert knowledge. These differences confirm that each platform serves a distinctive communicative function within the construction of the company's corporate identity.

The analysis of the visual elements confirmed that the linguistic patterns and relevant themes are reinforced by visual choices. Notably, the humanise category is the most prevalent across all channels, reflecting the company's people-first culture and its ambition of being perceived as a human organization. The elicit emotion and complement function are also deployed strategically in order to increase emotional engagement and informational depth.

Finally, the interviews with Alltech's professionals complemented the findings of the analysis with an insider perspective. The convergence between the responses, the declared corporate identity and the patterns identified in the corpus suggests that Alltech's digital communication is not the result of individual or random choices but rather the expression of a coherent corporate strategy. The company's values and mission are translated into linguistic and visual choices, confirming that Alltech's digital communication functions as both an expression and a construction of the company's corporate identity.

This study presents some limitations. First, the fact that the Facebook sub-corpus included Facebook-only posts and excluded those posts that were published both on Instagram and Facebook, may have produced a partial representation of the channel's communicative register. Second, the visual analysis would have benefitted from a classification of every image of the corpus, rather than the selective analysis of the most relevant text-image combinations. Lastly, the interviews section, which is limited

to three professionals, may not fully represent the diversity of Alltech's global communication practices and the inclusion of a larger number of interviewees would have provided a more representative insider perspective.

This study also opens several directions for future research. For instance, one dimension that emerged from the analysis concerns the balance between global and local dimensions of Alltech's communication. This aspect may be further explored by examining how the company's narrative and themes are adapted across different national, cultural and linguistic contexts. A second direction concerns the competitive dimension and the examination of how Alltech's communicative strategy compares to those of its main competitors in the agri-food sector. Such analysis would reveal to what extent Alltech's values and themes, and the way they are conveyed, are distinctive or shared across the sector.

Finally, climate change, rising input costs, loss of biodiversity and the need to feed an increasing number of people are only a few of the most pressing challenges that the agri-food industry is facing nowadays. These pressures, together with the growing demand for transparency from stakeholders, reinforce the strategic importance of digital communication as a tool for the construction of corporate identity. Alltech's case, and its value *Tell the Story,* demonstrate that a priority for the companies operating in this industry is to build their own narratives in order to position themselves as responsible players in the global food system. Alltech's story goes beyond mere product promotion and encompasses the stories of its employees, their families and the communities the company serves. It is a *global* story where new technologies meet local traditions and scientific progress intertwines with human authenticity. As the future of the agri-food sector is uncertain, communicating a coherent narrative across multiple platforms becomes essential. Alltech's communication, as this study has illustrated, is ultimately the expression of a mission that started with Dr. Pearse Lyons, continues with Dr. Mark Lyons and is articulated through the work of thousands of employees all over the world, all *Working Together for a Planet of Plenty*.

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