

The Digital Voice of the Cuban People

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The opinion of Cuban citizens is being increasingly taken into account thanks to new technologies. Fast and convincing answers boost the trust of those who use such ways of communicating.

Perhaps these “new technologies”, referring to devices and means that help us to text someone, the social networks, or digital forum are getting too old. As a matter of fact, these technologies are widely used around the world for some time now.

Cuba does not go that way. Such brand-new category falls short here. When the issue is related to the voice of common Cubans in digital platforms, it is very-well justified the term novelty.

Not so long ago, professional communicators, journalists, institutions were the only ones that published contents in the media due to the restricted access to those technology advances. But Wifi was gaining space, along with other navigation alternatives. Certainly the landscape has changed due to cell phones and their ability to send SMS.

I cannot say it is hullabaloo, but it is much more than just whispers from the population in the digital world. One of the most recent examples is the discussion forum summoned by the Ministry of Communication in its digital website so the people could give their own opinion on citizen services and institutional communication.

Other subjects like citizens' engagement and voters' approach management, customers and users' protection, management of products quality, simplification and integration of procedures and services, government, e-commerce, and digital citizen; ITC, Law, Psychology, and Information management were discussed as well. It is all part of the Citizen Service Workshop CALIPROT 2016, to be held next October.

The second season of TV show *Sonando en Cuba* is other example of how people are increasingly getting used to express their views in the digital world. It was impressive to watch the charts of how many viewers voted for one or other contestant by either fixed or cell phones, or the show online website.

True, it is not the same to talk about a singer rather than a tricky issue. And I am referring to subjects related to the impact on the quality of life of Cuban citizens.

Therefore, it is about an inevitable phenomenon and should be welcomed. It is a source, in different ways, very important to good governance in every sphere affecting Cuban people.

With the development of technological possibilities to the population, parallel to a price decrease, greater will be the stream of criteria. It would allow to know firsthand about expectations, satisfactions, dissents, denounces, and congratulations from citizens.

Then, it needs sympathetic hearings and trained personnel who respect other viewpoints in order to guideline such *vox populi*.

Along with social sciences, we should turn those thoughts into working plans and particular actions to impact living standards if citizens.

Besides helping to lead and implement projects, such fast and online communication with the population —voters, customers, clients, workers— would certainly allow the necessary dialogue between people and executives, leaders, or renowned people.

The permanent and agile flow of opinions in both ways is also synonym of respect to the citizen.

The exchange between government institutions and population would help to deny ill-intended rumors. However, if our fears, opportunism, and censoring jeopardize the agility it requires, then those of ahead will go far, because those of back run poorly.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Diaz / Cubasi Translation Staff**