



CRIMSONBRIDGE
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Entrepreneurial Philanthropy for Breakthrough Impact

**10 STRATEGIES
TO REACH AND ENGAGE
HISPANIC COMMUNITIES**





10 WAYS TO REACH AND ENGAGE HISPANIC COMMUNITIES

The Hispanic population has grown from 4.4 percent of the total population in 1970 to 17.6 percent in 2016. As the Latino population has grown, so has the number of Hispanic-serving nonprofit organizations. Many organizations have been successful in working with Latino communities, while others are learning how best to connect and engage with new communities. Fortunately, there are numerous strategies with proven results. Below we offer 10 tips for how organizations can improve and strengthen their communication strategies to effectively reach and engage with Hispanic communities.

1. Know your audience. Take time to understand their backgrounds and preferences.

Know how your Latino community self-identifies, and use that information in your outreach efforts. Some communities may identify as “Latino” while others may identify as “Hispanic,” or by their country of origin.

Know and use your population’s preferred language in your messaging. A growing number of Latinos are English proficient or bilingual, while new immigrant Latino families tend to be monolingual Spanish speakers.

When translating information into Spanish, ensure that you are capturing the language preferences of your target population. Families coming from different regions of Latin America and the Caribbean may be familiar with different words and phrases. Ask Spanish speakers from different countries of origin to review your translated material to ensure your Latino audience can understand your translation.

2. Ask your community about issues that are relevant to them.

Conduct a needs assessment to deepen your knowledge about your target population.

Tailor your message to be relevant to the information your audience is seeking. For example, for parents with young children you could say: *Children who attend quality early education programs do better in kindergarten. Register your child today!*

3. Develop relationships with your audience by building on their cultural strengths.

In your messaging, convey a shared value such as the importance of family and provide information on how their family would benefit from your services.

Communicate with your Latino audience face-to-face. Personal contact is still the most important way to communicate with Latino families. You could do door to door visits or distribute flyers at community events, schools, or bus stops. Look around the community for images and sounds that are familiar or meaningful to your specific Latino audience and use that information respectfully in your outreach strategy.

4. Partner with respected community organizations.

To gain buy-in from your Latino audience, partner with well-respected community organizations to spread the word about your services. For example, partner with organizations and churches that already serve Latinos, restaurants and community stores that the population frequents, and schools.

5. Leverage community leaders or peers that your target audience trusts.

Know who your audience trusts and turns to for advice or council and use them to get to your audience. Some of the people that Latinos turn to for advice include church and religious leaders, medical practitioners, and peers.

6. Use calls and texts to complement your communication efforts.

Although face-to-face is an effective communication strategy for Latino audiences, calling or texting can complement these efforts. This is particularly the case for audiences that have low-to-no literacy skills, and those with whom you've already made an initial contact.

Ensure you text and call in the preferred language of your audience. Note of caution: Before calling or texting, ask your audience for permission.

7. Use traditional media outlets to reach your Latino audience.

If resources permit, use paid media placements to run television or radio ads that advertise your services. Before doing so, know what radio and TV programming your audience frequently uses. To save costs, cultivate relationships with local news reporters to gain regular access to radio and television spots and interviews about your organization or program. This will give you the visibility you need to reach your audience.

8. Take advantage of social media, especially when reaching younger Latinos.

Increase your organization's presence in social media outlets, such as Facebook and Instagram, to reach young Latinos. Even if you are not reaching young Latinos, use social media to increase awareness about your organization and services. This can help your organization build community partnerships, advocacy efforts, and fundraise.

9. Optimize your websites to be user-friendly and include videos.

Mobile-optimize your website to reach Latino audiences that may be mobile dependent to access the internet. Embed short videos in Spanish on your website to welcome families, share testimonials from former participants, offer information about your services, and describe how to reach you directly.

10. Actively learn from your outreach strategies and adjust accordingly.

At the outset, set measurable and achievable goals for each of your strategies. Track the success of each strategy and compare it to your initial goals. Think critically about which strategy was most effective in reaching your goal and which one was not, and why this was the case. For example, set a goal to engage 50 families through your face-to-face interactions by a specified time. Track the number of participants you have reached through your face-to-face efforts and compare this number by the specified time of your goal. Compare this strategy with other ones and think why this strategy might have been successful or not.

These tips come from the report *Reaching and Engaging with Hispanic Communities: A Research-Informed Communication Guide for Nonprofits, Policymakers, and Funders*, created in partnership by Child Trends and the Crimsonbridge Foundation.

Find the full report at: <https://crimsonbridge.org/our-work/research-and-publications/>