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DESIGNING AN EFFECTIVE WEB PRESENCE FOR THE HISPANIC AUDIENCE

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What We'll Cover Today

- Overview of Hispanic Community and Latinos Online
- Best practices / recommendations for creating more usable websites for the growing Hispanic Community.
- Best practices and key considerations in conducting usability analysis with Hispanic users.



Why Should we be Concerned?

- Largest minority group in the U.S.
- 2010 Census counted 50.5 million or 1 of 6 people.
- US Hispanic Population: 50.5M (16.4%)
- Buying power –
 - Will grow 50 % in the next five years, \$1 trillion in 2010 to \$1.5 trillion in 2015
- Very diverse community with different needs



U.S. Hispanic Population

BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, 2010

Mexican	31,798,000
Puerto Rican	4,624,000
Cuban	1,786,000
Salvadoran	1,649,000
Dominican	1,415,000
Guatemalan	1,044,000
Colombian	909,000
Honduran	633,000
Ecuadorian	565,000
Peruvian	531,000



Latinos Characteristics and Values

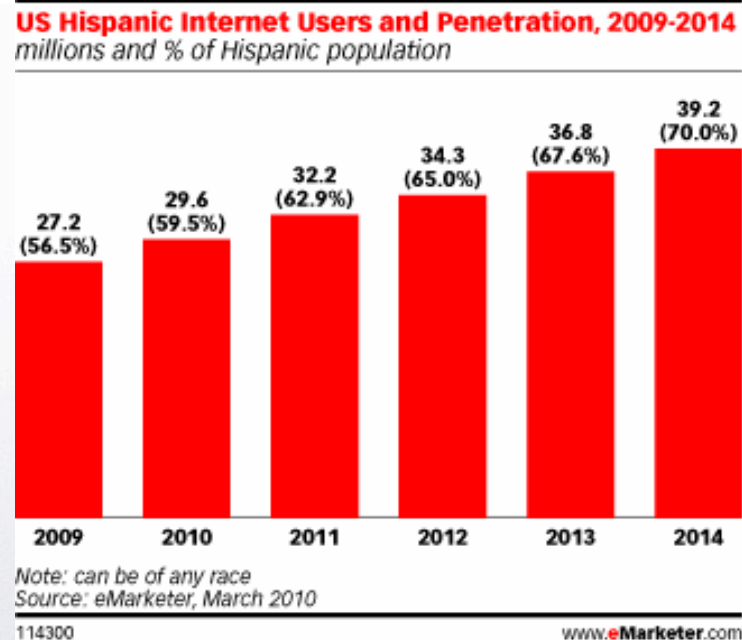
Latinos in U.S. diverse, but share certain common cultural values / tendencies.

- Use of the Spanish language
- More family-oriented
- More collective vs. individualistic
- Maintain a strong connection to country of origin – even third generation



Latinos Online

- 32 Million online representing 63% of the Hispanic population and 14% of total online users.





Compared to non-Hispanics, Hispanic adult Internet users...

...are younger:

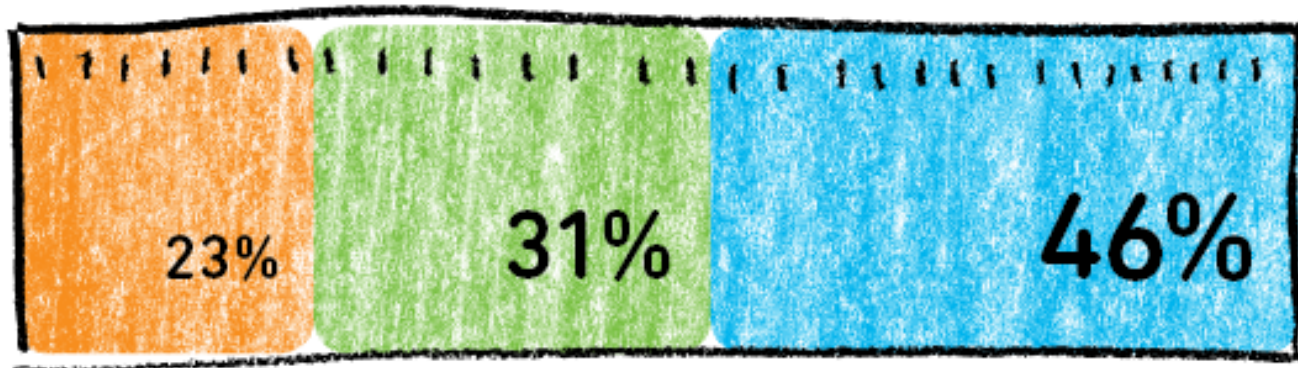
- On average, 8 years younger
- Twice as likely to be 18-24

...live in larger households:

- On average, 1 person more per household (4 vs. 2.9)
- 3x as likely to live in 5+ households
- twice as likely to live in households with 3 or more children



Language Preferences



Hispanic Dominant

- Predominantly speak Spanish at home
- Most media consumption in Spanish
- Foreign-born
- Mean age 40
- Lived in the US seven years average

Biculturals

- Speak both languages at home
- Most media consumption in English
- Foreign and US-born
- Mean age 34
- Lived in the US 22 years average

US Dominant

- Speak English at home
- Most media consumption in English
- US-born
- Mean age 37
- Lived in the US 36 years average



Culture is as or more important than language

Understanding language preferences is important, but developing culturally-relevant content and designs by understanding cultural predispositions is as or more important when it comes to reaching this community.



Focus of this Presentation

- Primary focus of this presentation on less-acculturated audiences, but many of the findings are applicable across the board
- This segment of the audience is:
 - Going online (via the web and mobile) in greater numbers as technology costs drop
 - Typically Spanish-dominant or bilingual
 - Less savvy in terms of understanding how to use the Internet



Design Considerations



General Design Guidelines

Guidelines

- User-centered design & evaluation especially important when designers and target audience are so different.
- Consider internationalization issues early on. (e.g., Navigational labels in Spanish will usually require more space for more letters or words to describe the navigational element.)



Understand Your Audience

- Most important to understand how culture and background affects perception and understanding of the information you want to communicate



Access to Hispanic Content

- Provide prominent access in-language to Spanish site on bilingual sites.
- Dedicated URL is useful for access and SEO
- A completely separate Spanish site may have merit in some situations.



Content

- Latinos often conceptualize web pages like a book (helpful to put the next page link at the bottom of the page).
- Use of large size and easy to read fonts in “serif” style are recommended as most appropriate for less acculturated, Spanish-preferring audience.
- Use neutral Spanish for general U.S. and a more targeted, country-specific Spanish for subsegments.



Content

- Plain language – clear / concise – is particularly important for lower literacy audiences who tend to read word-for-word and more important when working in two languages
- Readability and comprehension are more critical issues – designing for 6th grade level may not be sufficient.



Content

- Develop content specifically for your Hispanic users (or at least transcreate) as opposed to just doing word for word translation.
- Avoid the use of automated translation!
- Add relevant regional examples where possible.
- Allow switching back and forth between English and Spanish content (but consider content consistency issues).



Visual / Multimedia Design

- Visual design (imagery and color) is more important to Hispanic audiences than non-Hispanic. Can establish cultural awareness of the website—an important consideration for the Hispanic audience.
- Use images focused on family and extended family.



Visual / Multimedia Design

- Imagery (graphics) as content can also facilitate understanding.
- Latinos like and consume a lot of video content. Use multimedia to reach lower literacy groups.
- Useful to tie site branding into the community and how your company or organization supports it.



Linking and Document Types

- In addition to displaying information on downloadable documents (what types of document and any required software) and links to external sites, need to indicate when linking to English content



Data Entry

- Less acculturated users may be unfamiliar with typical data entry requirements, e.g., phone numbers, ZIP codes, etc.
- Greater need for:
 - field-level online help
 - Identification of essential data required
 - Consider allowing different data variants and process them on the backend.



Sharability

- Surrogate users more common in the Hispanic community
- Younger Latinos who are online more often will share info with their offline family and friends.
- Provide prominent access to print, save, email, and share the page with a friend



Search

- Ensure that the search functionality allows for Spanish-language searches with Spanish-language search results & searching with or without accents



Maintenance

- Users often compare the EN and ES site and judge the ES site's worth accordingly
- If it is a parallel site, users may get lost.



Testing Considerations



Recruiting Issues

- “Spanish speaking” is not a sufficient (or only) requirement. Full, Hispanic profiles should be developed and used in testing.
- Include cultural issues AND acculturation issues in your recruiting
- Use an appropriate recruiter—Hispanic recruiting is as different from non-Hispanic recruiting and testing is with these different audiences.



Prior to Testing

- Test to see what users see if they have their browser settings to Spanish before any user-based testing.
- Test for readability / comprehension (e.g., Huerta Index) before any user-based testing.
- In addition to testing for ease of navigation and information, need to determine how credible do users deem the site.



Format

- In-lab testing is best. Remote testing, especially for less-aculturated groups, may present difficulties.
- Accommodate for family - kids often help their parents find info on the Internet. Even if they don't get involved, they are more likely to come along.



Format (concluded)

- Engage in small talk (platicar) prior to testing to establish rapport.
- Use a neutral Spanish for task descriptions to increase objectivity.
- Provide increased time for time on task.



Evaluating Feedback

- Less acculturated groups who have less web experience may blame themselves for problems (as opposed to the site). Often reflected in feedback comments.
- Machismo (both the negative overly masculine connotation and the "one to be imitated") and Marianismo (passivity but also that women are morally superior and spiritually stronger than men) can affect feedback



Who should facilitate?

- If at all possible, don't use an interpreter in the room. It is off putting to the participant in general, it is too disruptive to the natural process of tasks, and it increases the power distance in the test.
- Use a Hispanic facilitator (matched to the participant ethnicity if possible). Use a private intercom if needed to guide the facilitator.



Questions?



Sources and Resources

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- **Language Barriers in Healthcare Information, Communicating with Bilingual Users** - http://www.upassoc.org/upa_publications/user_experience/past_issues/2010-4.html#salazar
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