Social Media Basics
A guide for Latino Americans: 500 Years of History grantees
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Why social media?

More Americans get news on Twitter and Facebook than in the past, according to a 2015 report by the Pew Research Center in association with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The survey of 2,035 U.S. adults sheds light on Americans’ evolving news and information habits on the two platforms.

According to another Pew report, more users are getting news from both sites than in the past. Ten percent of U.S. adults get news on Twitter, and 41 percent get news on Facebook. Their interaction with the two sites differs, however: Facebook users are more likely to post and comment on political content, whereas Twitter users are more likely to follow news organizations and political parties.

Who uses social media?

A Pew 2014 recap noted that Facebook continues to be the most popular social media site, but its membership saw little change from 2013. The one notable exception is older adults: For the first time in Pew Research findings, more than half (56 percent) of internet users ages 65 and older use Facebook. Overall, 71 percent of internet users are on Facebook, a proportion that represents no change from August 2013. Also according to the Pew Research Center’s Internet Project, 80 percent of U.S. Hispanic adults use social media, compared to 72 percent for the country overall, with 68 percent of U.S. Hispanic adults stating they used Facebook, Twitter or similar platforms, compared to 58 percent for the U.S. population. Across ethnic lines, teens and young adults are engaging with Twitter and increasingly with Instagram, a photo-driven online engagement tool.

Which social media platforms should I use?

As you talk with your staff and program committee, look into which social media platforms are being used by your target audience and engage with them there — before, during and after your event.

As in your face-to-face encounters, be human and genuine when posting to social media. Reply to posts to foster conversation. Use original and thoughtful language — don't be gimmicky — and strive for a rich mix of messages. You don't necessarily need to replicate the same content to every social channel.
If you have a small organization with a small budget for marketing, you need not worry — you can get a lot out of Facebook and Twitter for free. Assign one person or a small team to develop the social media messages on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Engaging photos, captions and comments will help you connect with your audience. The more compelling and engaging your content is, the more it will be "liked," commented on and, most importantly, shared. Whenever possible, ensure your Facebook profile is completely filled out and use original photography. Instagram and Pinterest are also heavy on visuals. Find out if your audience is using these platforms. If so, would it make sense for you to use them, too?

As a global force, Facebook boasts 900 million users worldwide; however, you will likely want to focus on your local community. Some relevant Facebook public groups include “The New Latino Movement,” “US Latino Issues” and “The Coalition for Latino/Hispanic Issues.” In Facebook’s “Search” bar, type in your geographic area and other keywords to learn about online communities close to you.

Once you join Facebook groups, you may wish to:

- Stay aware of what they’re up to
- Send them messages and information
- Post questions or program details on their walls
- Ask them to share your information
- Invite them to your event(s)
- If the group is local, build a relationship; invite them for a visit, coffee or lunch

Building the relationship, via phone or in person, will help you leverage new items and event postings that get “liked,” elicit comments or ask for “shares.” Activity, in the comment and share section, indicates that you are beginning to expand online awareness and building the right audience of supporters. If users in your network "like," comment on and share your content on a regular basis, then they have become advocates who are pushing your message to their friends.

Social media and your live event

In your planning meetings, think about developing a social media announcement/engagement calendar in anticipation of your event that permits you to roll out a mix of content, such as short polling questions, thoughtful questions, notable quotes, photos and videos.

Live events that attract community members provide an excellent opportunity to spread awareness; you can send representatives to these gatherings to promote your upcoming event in person. You can also encourage people on the spot to share flyers or sign up to receive your organization’s newsletters. At live events, you can also ask people to use their phones to take pictures of themselves interacting in their community or with friends. Engagement can build from there.
National organizations, local nonprofits, local governments, news outlets (especially local public broadcasting stations), libraries, colleges, universities and businesses can all be valuable allies in community engagement. Local partners who have a good track record for attracting community members to local events are especially helpful.

*Extend your social media reach with a targeted event focus*

Introducing the event online as part of a time-limited campaign can achieve greater community awareness and participation. You can roll out daily or weekly announcements such as film highlights and video clips, share information about the community partners involved and highlight the speakers, panelists or moderators. Once people start receiving messages, they can be invited to share the content and spread the word.

*Activate Facebook’s “Pin” feature to heighten visibility*

Facebook recommends taking advantage of the "Pin to Top" option on your Timeline for one post per week to extend the life of the content. When you pin something onto the timeline, it not only becomes larger but also becomes the first item people see when they visit your Timeline page.

*How long should my posts be?*

Facebook research has shown that posts between 100 and 250 characters — one or two lines of text — get 60 percent more “likes,” comments and shares than ones that are more than 250 characters. Like Twitter, keep the content short and sweet. It is advised that posts on Facebook differ from your posts on Twitter, or else your fans don't have a reason to follow you on both platforms.

*Best practices for Twitter*

On Twitter, the pound sign (or hashtag) turns any word or group of words that directly follows it into a searchable link. This allows you to organize content and track discussion topics based on those keywords. So if you wanted to post about Latino issues, you would include #Latinoissues in your tweet to join the conversation. Click on a hashtag to see all the posts that mention the subject in real time.

Note: Given Twitter’s influence, Facebook now uses hashtags too.

*The real limit is less than 140 characters*

While each Twitter post is limited to 140 character, the *real* limit is 140 minus "RT @YourName:" Stopping short of 140 characters gives followers enough leftover characters to retweet your content (approximately 20 characters for a standard *retweet* of a phrase or short sentence). Leave even more characters so people can add a comment. The more retweets, the
more conversation, the more engagement. Again, make it easy for your followers to spread your message.

**Compose tweets with care**

Edit and write only the words that “count” to convey meaning. Proofread your tweets, read them aloud when possible and leave enough characters for a retweet, which will allow followers to amplify your message with minimal effort.

Free resources such as Hootsuite can help you manage, organize, plan and consolidate your social media work. It also provides tracking charts and information so you can view your online media plans and learn if your posts are being read by your target audience(s).

**Shorten URLs**

Twitter automatically adjusts links to 22 characters, even if the link is shorter than 22 characters to begin with. You may also shorten the links in your tweets using Bit.ly or Google Url Shortener. These free shortening services will buy you characters (depending on the platform from which you're tweeting) and help you track clicks.

**The “@” symbol is silent**

The “@” symbol is for replying and tagging only; it does not serve the dual purpose of replacing the word "at."

**To use or not to use text messaging?**

Given the flurry of messages from myriad sources and our increasing short-term attention spans, is connecting with your audience on the device they most frequent a tactic you would consider?

Among Latino youth, college students and even mid-career professionals, personal messaging continues to gain traction. Facebook and other social media platforms are good places to promote your web content, post content directly and engage with community members and local organizations on a large scale.

People often use text and similar interpersonal messaging services to share links with their friends. These carry substantial weight of both personal recommendations and frequency of contact, i.e. Apple iPhone’s iMessage as well as standard text messaging.

When obtaining people’s contact information for database building, include a line asking them their preferred method of contact. Would they provide you with their cellphone number? Ask if sending a personal text message would be agreeable to them.
Is texting a practice your organization has conducted? Is it a practice you might consider testing with a small group, such as a meeting of your community advisors or a private event for a group under 50 people?

To learn more about how text messaging can add to your outreach media mix and how its conversions are even more successful than with email, read “SMS Starter Kit: A Guide to Nonprofit Text Messaging Campaigns.”

Resources to draw upon

Feel free to employ as much PBS LATINO AMERICANS content as you wish.

Keep people engaged and excited about your organization and its upcoming programming. Different kinds of posts drive different kinds of engagement; experiment with a variety to deliver a well-rounded engagement experience (as opposed to simply posting a PDF of a flyer online, which doesn’t work well in today’s dynamic online environment). For example, someone might comment on a question post, share a photo and "like" a video, so it's best to give your network diverse ways to engage with your organization’s event.

Sample LATINO AMERICANS social media posts

Twitter (#LatinosPBS)

- Create a video to share what it means to you to be Latino American.  
  http://to.pbs.org/11dn0J3  #LatinosPBS

- What does being a Latino American mean to you? Join the #LatinosPBS project by creating a video http://to.pbs.org/16RjO8w

- Are you more #Latino or more #American? What does being Latino American mean to you? Join tonight's discussion. (LINK TO EVENT INFO)

- How do you feel about the term #Hispanic vs #LatinoAmerican?

- Discover the story of LATINO AMERICANS on @PBS.  
  http://to.pbs.org/15gKk1m #LatinosPBS

Facebook

- Become a part of LATINO AMERICANS on PBS by sharing your story online.  
  http://to.pbs.org/16RjO8w
• What does being a Latino American mean to you? Join the PBS documentary project by creating a video and telling us what being Latino American means to you. http://to.pbs.org/16RjO8w

• Do you think in English or in Spanish? Are you more Latino or American? What are your roots? Share your story http://to.pbs.org/17A97M1

• Read the posts by other of LATINO AMERICANS on PBS. http://to.pbs.org/15gKk1m

Latino Americans: 500 Years of History Links

Homepage: https://apply.ala.org/latinoamericans

News: https://apply.ala.org/latinoamericans/news

Resources (Historical and Cultural Resources, Evaluation and Programming Templates, Local and Oral History, LATINO AMERICANS Film, Community Outreach, Sample Programs): https://apply.ala.org/latinoamericans/resources

For Grantees (Promoting Your Programs, June 2015 Workshop, Online Learning, Mi Historia, Grant Administration, Connect): https://apply.ala.org/latinoamericans/for-grantees

Grant Recipients: https://apply.ala.org/latinoamericans/about/grant-recipients

General LATINO AMERICANS Links

LATINO AMERICANS: http://to.pbs.org/11fzy8e

Mi Historia: http://to.pbs.org/16RjO8w

About the Series: http://to.pbs.org/18JdweP

Timeline: http://to.pbs.org/1dPmaqI

Shop PBS: http://bit.ly/1dn1219

Blog: http://to.pbs.org/15gKk1m

Links to LATINO AMERICANS on PBS VIDEO

Lila Downs Song: http://to.pbs.org/1aWeJP3

Series Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/12Ez6N4

Episode 1 Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/171Q5MH
Episode 2 Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/16n25G9
Episode 3 Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/11RltOM
Episode 4 Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/18MFJUz
Episode 5 Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/14ozG1z
Episode 6 Teaser: http://to.pbs.org/17iPGZr
Rita Moreno: http://to.pbs.org/ZJtZgr
Gloria Estefan: http://to.pbs.org/119DBSD
The Capo Story: http://to.pbs.org/1dEP5zU
El Dorado: http://to.pbs.org/11WP5Ls
Juan Seguin: http://to.pbs.org/13iEhm5
Apolinaria Lorenzana: http://to.pbs.org/1bqPnP0
Journey from Mexico: http://to.pbs.org/162VQcc
Spanish American War: http://to.pbs.org/13ysvDV
LA School Walkouts: http://to.pbs.org/1ck1Ku6
LA Deportation: http://to.pbs.org/16z1Fhh
Jose Marti: http://to.pbs.org/18dh2h1
Hector Garcia: http://to.pbs.org/178Eydl
Guy Gabaldon: http://to.pbs.org/16CjXk8
Julia Alvarez: http://to.pbs.org/17zAwu1
Macario Garcia: http://to.pbs.org/142c8Us
Bernardo Vega: http://to.pbs.org/19kyFwl
Eligio Pena: http://to.pbs.org/1cFNgya
Miguel Antonio Otero: http://to.pbs.org/16oKCma
Dolores Huerta: http://to.pbs.org/1dT6WFX
Vote Mobilization in Texas:  http://to.pbs.org/13oGos6

Carlos Vaquerano:  http://to.pbs.org/18E1SiY

Maria Elena Salinas:  http://to.pbs.org/17AaV7G

Farmworkers Strike:  http://to.pbs.org/1dHPMNf

**Making Connections: Where do I begin?**

The following list provides examples of the types of organizations you may wish to follow and/or inform about your organization, live events, programming, etc.

**Latino USA on NPR @LatinoUSA**
A 2014 @PeabodyAwards winner. Weekly public radio podcast on @NPR, hosted by @Maria_Hinojosa & produced by @futuromedia.

**VivirLatino @VivirLatino**
VivirLatino: Un Chin Left of Center Commentary on Latin@ politics current events y cultura. All tweets by @mamitamala unless otherwise notified.

**New Latino Movement @LatinoMovement**
NLM works to empower, train, & connect progressive Latinos.

**SmithsonianLatinoCtr @SLC_Latino**
Welcome to Smithsonian Latino Center! Learn more about our programs & exhibits on our website: http://latino.si.edu  Legal: http://s.si.edu/emVrm

**AmericanLatino @American_Latino**
An initiative of @GoParks & @NatlParkService: Preserving the full spectrum of American Latino History & increasing participation of Latinos in National Parks.

**Latino Rebels @latinorebels**
Humor, commentary & analysis of US Latin@ world. Engaging 20+ travies@s. RTs not endorsements. Many admins here. Email: rebeldes@latinorebels.com #SoyRebelde

**Latinos OFA** Verified account @LatinosOFA
Sharing news and community events with the Latino community. This account is run by Organizing for Action staff.

**Latino Times @LatinoTimes**
Something Más Social is coming to http://LatinoTimes.com ~ Be a part of it!
Latino News @latinoticias
Latino + Noticias

Roque Planas @RoqPlanas
Reporter for Huffington Post @LatinoVoices. Tweeting Latino and Latin American issues. Views are my own.

Pa'lante Latino @PalanteLatino
Ferocious advocates of our contributions to the#USA. #Latinos #Education Founders:@efrain_nieves @VickyC713

UrbanLatinoMagazine @UrbanLatinoMag
The focus of Urban Latino is the Latino experience in this country, viewing all sides of our story.

TEDx Latinos @TEDxLatinos
Latinos with ideas worth spreading.

Adrian Carrasquillo Verified account @Carrasquillo
Editor, Latino coverage and political reporter@BuzzFeedNews | Latino stories are American stories and they should be treated that way. adrian.c@buzzfeed.com

Latino Townhall @LatinoTownhall
Empowering #Latinos as transformational #leaders with the capacity to permeate, #influence & transform #culture. | #LasVegas

Latinos4Change @Latinos4Change
Latinos 4 Change is a grassroots organization dedicated to empowering and engaging Latinos; creating a foundation for a politically active community.

Latino Topix @LatinoTopix
All things Latino - #Education #Health #Culture#Familia #Music #Art #Marketing #CivilRights #Politics

Latino Approach @latinosociety
Poltical, Social, Gossip, Hispanic Web Magazine, covering latest news in Latino/Hispanics, Political and social news.

Sandra Lilley Verified account @SandraLilley
Editor, NBC News-Latino. Love the discussion on news, politics and ideas. E-mail me at sandra.lilley@nbcuni.com.

Sandy M. Fernández @FernandezLatino
Editor/Producer at Fox News Latino with a focus on Lifestyle. Tweeting and retweeting Latino culture stories.
Hispanicize @Hispanicize
Pioneers in Latino SM and the leading platform that routinely connects brands and agencies with digital content creators and influencers. #Hispz15

Latino Book Forum @latinobookforum
Discussing all things Latino literary!

Arturo Conde @Arturo_Conde
Journalist. @AboutenEspanol. Former @NACLAdirector. Galician, Spanish, Latino & American. I cover #immigration, #politics & pop culture.@Columbiajourn alum.

BeingLatino @beinglatino
Most engaging Latino-based community page on Facebook 2M+ followers. Tweets by @LanceRios at#BeLatino.

Claudio I. Remeseira @HispanicNewYork

VOXXI @VoxxiNews
Premier site for independent news, analysis and commentary with a Hispanic focus, & the mission to put Latinos in the spotlight. IG: VOXXI_News | FB: VOXXINews

Fronteras Desk @fronterasdesk
A bilingual reporting team focused on trends transforming the southwestern U.S., including Latino, Native American, demographics and border issues.

Tomas Custer @hispanictips
News Stream representing the DIVERSE, VIBRANT, VITAL & HUGE Hispanic & Latino World. Expert News Curation by @tomascuster since 2005.

Latin Times @thelatintimes
Your guide to everything that's relevant in the growing Latino community in the U.S. News, Entertainment, Sports and Lifestyle!

Teresa Puente @chicanisima
Assoc Prof. of Journalism Columbia College Chicago; Chicanisima blog ChicagoNow.com; Founder Latina-Voices.com. Tweet on immigration, politics & Latino culture.

Latino Initiative @LatinolnitUSA
Connecting the new generation of brilliant latino minds across America and beyond to empower our community! #LatinoInitiative #Latinos #CIR
**R.Evolución Latina** @REVLatina
We are an organization that utilizes the arts through educational and collaborative programming to empower the Latino community to discover their full potential

**LatinoLA** @LatinoLA
Tell Your Stories and List Your Events throughout Southern California and beyond.

**LatinoScoop** @LatinoScoop
Tweeting Latino entertainment to the New Generation Latino!

**All Things Latino** @allthingslatino
All Things Latino #ATLAT #Latino #Latism #Hispanic

**Latinos in DeepSouth** @LatinoDeepSouth
Latinos in the Deep South is coordinated by Latino Commission on AIDS aiming to build Local Leadership, networks & coalitions; while addressing health needs

**Latino Leaders** @LatinoLeadersUS
The national magazine of the successful American Latino. Connecting leaders and inspiring the future.

**Latino Talk Podcast** @rayspodcast
Latino Talk Radio On-Demand Informs | Inspires | Entertains
Founder/Host: @collazophilly Subscribe on iTunes & Stitcher

**NASPA Latino/a KC** @tweetinglavoz
Tweeting all that IS the #NASPA Latino/a Knowledge Community. Follow #salatino! Tweets by @kellymalvarado

**Latino Network** @latnet_PDX
Working for and with the community to ensure a thriving Latino community that is respected and engaged. Advocacy. Education. Leadership. Civic Engagement.

**Eco Latino Magazine** @ECOLATINOmag
Eco Latino the most trusted name in bi-lingual journalism. Eco Latino el nombre de mayor confianza del periodismo bilingüe.

**Latino Arts Network** @latinoartsnet
The Latino Arts Network (LAN) is dedicated to strengthening and promoting California’s Latino Arts.

**Jersey City Latino** @JCLatinoNews
All about Latinos in Jersey City, NJ. Interviews & City info in Spanish and sometimes w/English summaries. Video or website interviews. Contact jclnews@gmx.com
**Latino Public Radio @LPRRI**  
To inform, educate & entertain the Latino radio audience through high quality, cultural and educational programming that reflects the diversity of the community

**Latino2Latino.com @Latino2Latino**  

**Latino News Today @TodayLatino**  
The Latino internet voice. Independent #news and commentary by and for #Latinos and #Hispanics http://www.facebook.com/Latinonewstoday

**Latino Newsdaily @LatinoNewsdaily**  
Follow us to get the latest news about Latino

**WiredLatinos @WiredLatinos**  
The pulse of Latinos online.™