

Professional Perspective

Opportunities for Legal Business Growth in the Hispanic and Latino Community

Hugo E. Gomez and Nicolas E. Ascencio, Abogados NOW

**Bloomberg
Law**

[Read Professional Perspectives](#) | [Become a Contributor](#)

Reproduced with permission. Published October 2021. Copyright © 2021 The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. 800.372.1033. For further use, please contact permissions@bloombergindustry.com

Opportunities for Legal Business Growth In the Hispanic and Latino Community

Contributed by *Hugo E. Gomez* and *Nicolas E. Ascencio*, *Abogados NOW*

The 2020 Census revealed unprecedented growth among Hispanic and Latino Americans. Since 2010, the Hispanic and Latino population grew by a [staggering 23%](#) while the non-Hispanic population grew by less than 5%. The growth in this population should not be ignored by legal professionals across the nation.

Hispanics and Latinos have significant market power and have been historically underserved. However, it is important to note that the Hispanic and Latino community is not a monolithic group. This population is comprised of individuals from many different national and linguistic backgrounds. Spanish speakers comprise the great majority of this population in the U.S., but individuals of Hispanic and Latin descent can speak multiple languages, and can be from any country. When this population is in need of legal help, it can be easiest to reach them through targeted, and well-conceived cultural campaigns in Spanish. With projected growth in this community moving rapidly, it is important for attorneys to consider serving Spanish speakers at a greater level in their firms.

Strong Buying Power

The Hispanic/Latino population in the U.S. is massive, and large populations yield influence. [Nielsen](#) predicts that this segment's buying power will reach \$1.9 trillion by 2023. In addition, the Hispanic/Latino population is relatively young, with a median age just below 30. This means that members have decades of earning and buying ahead of them. Appealing to, harnessing the loyalty of, and establishing relationships with this market can lead to incredible returns.

Unique Legal Needs

Members of the Hispanic/Latino population need legal representation in the same areas as other ethnic and racial groups, with a few notable additions.

Immigration status is a hot-button issue for this community. This means that immigration may become a concern, even for legal citizens. In addition, Hispanic and Latino Americans are statistically underrepresented in the legal field, which compounds the problem of finding enough Spanish-speaking lawyers to serve the population. Some members of the Spanish-speaking community may even feel that there is no avenue for them to obtain legal help, due to that lack of representation.

Language barriers also present a significant challenge for Latinos seeking legal counsel. In the U.S., more than 40 million people within our borders speak Spanish at home. Of that 40 million, [16 million](#) are of limited English proficiency, meaning they speak English less than "very well." To capture the full power of this market, bilingual skills are all but required.

Understanding and overcoming these barriers is the key to connecting with this community.

Marketing to the Hispanic/Latino Population

Understanding the key buying behaviors, market needs, and barriers to entry into the legal sphere is a good first step in creating culturally competent outreach.

The term "culture" refers to integrated patterns of behavior that are shared across a group of people. "Cultural competence" refers to an empathetic understanding of a culture to which you do not belong. Legal professionals seeking to connect with Hispanic/Latino clients should research their local Hispanic/Latino population to increase their cultural competence.

Where do the Spanish speakers in your area come from? What struggles do they face? Understanding what each local community needs, fears, and values, will be the foundation of any cross-cultural legal campaign.

Also, consider marketing to the Hispanic/Latino population where they are. The Hispanic/Latino market shops for goods and services differently than other racial and cultural populations. These families are less likely to have a computer in their home with broadband access, but they are just as likely as other populations to [own and use a smartphone](#). Creating

mobile campaigns and providing mobile-friendly collateral goes a long way towards capturing the attention of the Hispanic/Latino market.

Understanding how this population shops and makes decisions about purchasing goods and services is the first step in understanding how to target them with legal marketing.

Cross-Cultural Marketing Tips

Communication is the cornerstone of any legal practice. The first step in targeting this incredibly large and powerful community is establishing bilingual services. If your clients cannot speak to you, they are unlikely to work with you.

If you are in an area of high competition, start researching Spanish-language keywords. Keywords are what consumers use to search for goods and services, such as: "dentist near me," "what time does McDonalds close," and "best esthetician in my city." Marketing professionals strategically build advertising campaigns around the keywords that best represent their business to ensure their content is among the top results shown to consumers.

If you live and work in an area that is dense with legal services, it will be challenging to compete and capture the top, most relevant keywords relating to your practice. Showing up as the first search result for a Spanish-language search term is much easier and much quicker than ranking for an English search term. However, Spanish keywords are often under-targeted.

Conclusion

Be crystal clear in your offerings and your value. The Spanish-speaking population may be understandably wary of the legal profession. Implications might not work with this market. Explicit statements are the best way to cut through the noise and make the Hispanic/Latino population take notice. If immigration status does not factor into someone's case, state that clearly. Do not obscure fee structures or case outcomes. Say what you will do and then do what you say.

Threading the needle of cultural competency is a difficult task. Engage with marketing agencies that specialize in cross-cultural marketing. Consider hiring experts instead of investing the time and energy into learning the nuances of cross-cultural marketing yourself.

Lastly, do not underestimate the power of this market. The census is clear that the Hispanic/Latino population is growing at a staggering pace. Use this information to grow your practice and your business in meaningful and profitable ways.