



New Research Shows How to Connect With U.S. Hispanics Online

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The opportunities to reach U.S. Hispanics, one of the fastest growing groups of super consumers, have been largely untapped—until now. New research into the online behavior and preferences of this audience provides insight into how to connect with them. And it all starts with mobile and culture.

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Underserved and untapped. These were just two of the conclusions we came to last July when we wrote about the power and potential of [U.S. Hispanic consumers](#). Almost a year later, the audience continues to garner significant attention—and rightly so.

U.S. Hispanics are one of three rising groups of super consumers, according to a recent [Nielsen](#) report (African-Americans and Asian-Americans being the other two). Why “super” consumers? The U.S. Hispanic population is fast-growing (the [Census Bureau](#) projects an increase of 86% between 2015 and 2050) *and* has tremendous [economic clout](#) (estimated to reach \$1.5 trillion in buying power in 2015, a 50% increase from 2010). These are the kinds of numbers that should have every marketer sitting up and taking notice.

“66% of U.S. Hispanics say they pay attention to online ads—almost 20 percentage points more than the general online population.”

To better understand the online behavior of this [digitally savvy group](#), we partnered with Ipsos MediaCT to study how language and culture influence brand consideration, trends in mobile habits, and variables that impact purchasing decisions. More than 4,500 self-identified U.S. Hispanics ages 18–64 (who access the internet via a digital device and have made a purchase in the past six months*) were recruited either online or in person to complete an online survey. The study explored their online behavior and preferences about online sources, digital ads, and search. This new research uncovered some compelling new insights and best practices for engaging this audience.



Insight #1:

U.S. Hispanic consumers are online and on mobile

U.S. Hispanic consumers are going online, and they're increasingly turning to search. More than three-quarters of those surveyed (79%) said they're using search engines on a daily basis. It's their #1 online source for gathering information about a purchase, and they rely on it heavily during their research. (Of those who use search in any phase, 73% use it during research.)

Given the [high rate of ownership and use of smartphones among Hispanic consumers](#), it's no surprise that 68% of the respondents who search at least monthly do so on their mobile devices to find the information they need. More than half of U.S. Hispanic consumers who use online sources are using their smartphones specifically to gather information before making a purchase. And 83% of those who access the internet on a mobile device use it while in a store to inform a purchase in real time. This is an opportunity for marketers to connect with these consumers and provide them with the information they need to [make a purchase—online or in-store](#).



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of U.S. Hispanics who access the internet on a mobile device **use it while in a store to inform a purchase in real time.**

Source: Google/Ipsos
MediaCT, Digital Hispanics:
The Role of Culture and
Language Online study,
April 2015.

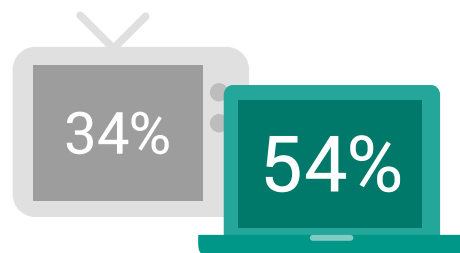
What marketers need to know: Search is the top online resource used by U.S. Hispanics for gathering information about a purchase, and many of these searches are done on mobile. Make sure you're connecting with members of this tech-savvy audience on the devices they're using most.



Insight #2: Online sources and ads influence U.S. Hispanic consumer behavior

U.S. Hispanics use online sources at a higher rate than the general online population (54% vs. 46%) throughout the many [micro-moments](#) in the purchase journey, from inspiration to purchase. When it comes to gathering information about something they're considering buying, these consumers favor online sources over family, radio, and TV. Online sources actually ranked 20 percentage points higher than TV (54% vs. 34%)

Source: Google/Ipsos
MediaCT, Digital Hispanics:
The Role of Culture and
Language Online study,
April 2015.



U.S. Hispanics say they
use the internet
more than TV
when gathering information
about a purchase.

When it comes to online ads, 66% of U.S. Hispanics say they pay attention to them—almost 20 percentage points more than the general online population. This data point alone can justify focusing more advertising attention and online efforts on this growing audience.

This influence of online ads, in terms of their level of effectiveness, is true across platforms: video, display, and search. Among those who recall seeing online ads, 93% of them take action—whether that’s performing a search, visiting a company’s website, or making a purchase.

What marketers need to know: U.S. Hispanics turn to online sources to inform their purchases more than the general online population. They also pay more attention to ads and take action. With such high engagement, they’re well-positioned to become a key target group for many industries. Don’t miss the opportunity: Be present with relevant content and ads across platforms and devices.



Insight #3: Cultural relevance drives engagement and influence

So how do brands engage U.S. Hispanics online in a *meaningful* way? In a word, culture. Seventy percent of survey respondents said it’s important for a website’s content to be culturally relevant when they’re gathering information about a purchase. This applies to ads, too. When an ad includes aspects of Hispanic culture, regardless of language, 88% pay attention, and 41% feel more favorable about a brand that aims to be culturally relevant.

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Marketers have asked us for years about the elements of marketing initiatives that U.S. Hispanics find most appealing. Here are the top five things brands can do to make their content culturally relevant, according to our survey respondents.

- 1. Relevant topics and product features:** Incorporate things online that U.S. Hispanics care about or are unique to the Hispanic experience. Speak to their cultural sensibilities. Food, traditions, holidays, and family ranked the highest in terms of appeal.
- 2. Visuals:** Creative should reflect the Hispanic culture in a tasteful and identifiable way. Users want to see themselves reflected in creative that includes the things they care about.
- 3. Language:** While not as important as culture, language does matter. For some U.S. Hispanic consumers, Spanish and bilingual content are still signals that you want to engage with them.
- 4. Entertainment:** U.S. Hispanics value entertainment online that appeals to them culturally, so consider including relevant music and video content.
- 5. Influencers/Testimonials:** Whether it's a celebrity, a YouTube creator, or another influencer online, U.S. Hispanics want to hear from people like them.

What marketers need to know: Cultural signals—food, family, and traditions—resonate with U.S. Hispanics online regardless of language. Including culturally relevant elements in your brand's website and ads can make them more appealing and help drive engagement and action.



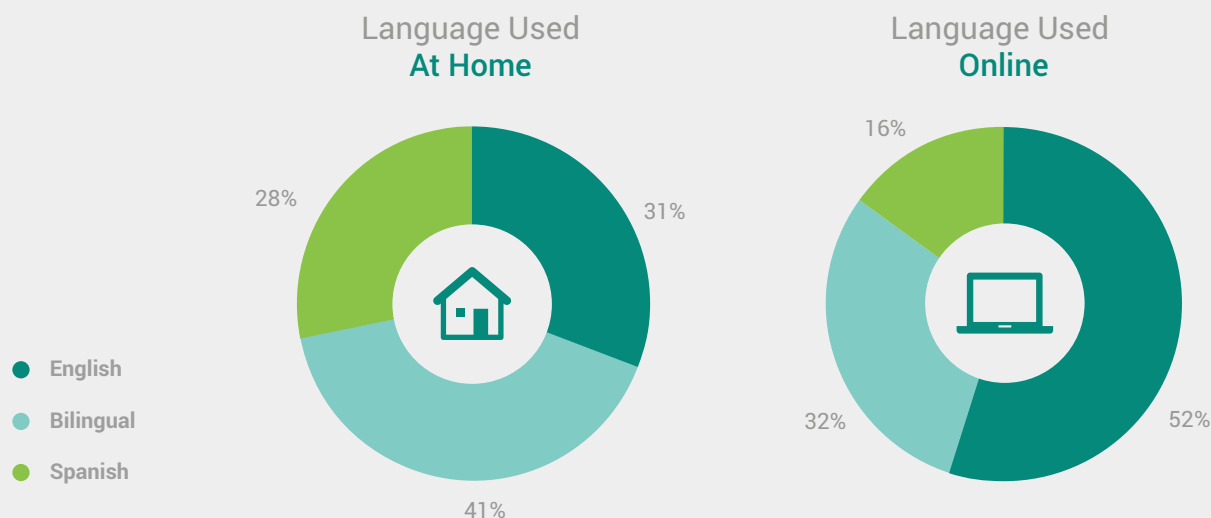
Insight #4:

U.S. Hispanic consumers are highly bilingual online

The idea that Spanish should *always* be used to engage U.S. Hispanics online is an outdated notion. When it comes to language online, this audience is truly bilingual.

To explore the use of each language, we looked at search trends and how our respondents use language at home and online. We found that Spanish language searches are on the rise. The number of Spanish keyword searches has increased from about 65% to 200% across key categories, such as auto, food, beauty, and others, between 2011 and 2014.¹ Yet our survey found that Spanish-dominant speakers often use English online. While 28% of our respondents are Spanish-dominant at home, only 16% said they use Spanish most or all of the time when online. At the same time, 31% identified as English-dominant at home, and more than half (52%) said they use English most or all of the time when online (see chart). Beyond that, 94% of respondents said they felt comfortable consuming English content online for at least one common online activity (sharing, shopping, or researching).

Language Use Online and Offline



Source: Google/Ipsos MediaCT, Digital Hispanics: The Role of Culture and Language Online study, April 2015.

Despite the high number of search queries in Spanish, members of this audience are comfortable consuming content in English. If they land on an English website, for example, only one in five will look for a Spanish site instead. What's most important to them is getting the relevant information they need in the moments they need it.

What marketers need to know: Marketers can reach U.S. Hispanics online during the entire web experience, especially during the research phase of their purchase journey, by leveraging both English and Spanish terms. Given the audience's bilingual nature, consider developing ad campaigns in English and Spanish, even if they direct to an English landing page.

Methodology

Google partnered with Ipsos MediaCT to explore U.S. Hispanics' behavior with regard to online sources, online ads, and search. They also looked at how language and culturally relevant elements impact online behavior. In December 2014, 4,533 self-identified U.S. Hispanics ages 18–64 completed an online survey. Of these respondents, 3,905 were recruited online and 628 respondents were recruited via face-to-face intercept. All respondents were screened to ensure they were the primary decision maker or shared responsibility for a purchase in the past six months (in Travel, Auto, Retail, Tech, Finance, Restaurant, Entertainment, CPG, or Health) and that they regularly used either a smartphone, computer, or tablet to access the internet.

** These individuals are decision makers in relevant sales categories.*



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Sources

¹ Google Data, Auto, Telecommunications, Entertainment, Food, Pharmaceutical, Beauty, January 2011–December 2014.