


# The Daily: How Hispanic Americans use media differently, who uses social media the most, and how kids use the internet

Audio



On today's podcast episode, we discuss which digital behaviors Hispanic Americans over-index on, how they get their news, and what advertisers should consider when trying to reach and market to these folks. "In Other News," we talk about where in the world people use social media the most and how kids use the internet. Tune in to the discussion with our analysts Matteo Ceurvels and Paola Flores-Marquez.

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## Episode Transcript:

Marcus Johnson:

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Paola Flores-Marquez:

With the majority of the population being incredibly young, they'll do it on behalf of their parents. And they'll make these accounts for them, and they'll be like the password keepers. And like even if you think a US Hispanic adult is operating on a platform, it's more likely that their adult child, not even an adult, their teenage child is running their account.

Marcus Johnson:

Hey, gang. It's Monday, April 8th. Paola, Matteo, and listeners, welcome to the Behind the Numbers daily, an eMarketer podcast, made possible by Walmart Connect. I'm Marcus. Today I'm joined by two people. Let's meet them. We start with our demographics analyst based in New York. It's Paola Flores-Marquez.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Hi, everybody. Thanks for having me.

Marcus Johnson:

Hello, there. Of course. Also hanging out with her in New York, same state, different places is our principal analyst covering Latin America and Spain. It's Matteo Ceurvels.

Matteo Ceurvels:

Hey, Marcus. Thanks for having me. Great to be here.

Marcus Johnson:

Of course. Welcome to the show, folks. Today's fact, didn't have one, so I just opened this book I've got on my desk. I'm just going to read from it. It could be anything, but that I'm about to read. It could be reading *The Giving Tree*.

Matteo Ceurvels:

I'm excited. Let's see.

Marcus Johnson:

Why was the dishwasher invented? Not to make doing dishes easier apparently. Its main purpose was to reduce the number of breakages caused by servants rather than to act as a labor saving device. So the first practical mechanical dishwasher was invented in 1886 by Josephine Garis Cochran of Illinois. She was the daughter of a civil engineer, and on her mother's side, the great-granddaughter of John Fitch, the inventor of the steamboat, apparently.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Oh, all right Josephine. Go Josephine.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah. Well, she was apparently really annoyed that the maids were chipping her precious China. They'd been the family since the 17th century. And so one night she tried to do the dishes on her own and saw that it was a difficult job and she didn't want anyone else to do it, so she invented this machine to do it instead. And then she lost her husband. So with the help of an engineer friend, she designed the machine in a wood shed. It was a small foot pedal driven version. Then there was a steam driven one later and was able to wash and dry 200 dishes in two minutes. Where's that gone? Mine takes two and a half hours, like three cups and half a plate.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

And then you have to run it again.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. They were expensive though. No one could afford them in homes because they're like \$250 each, which was a lot of money. So some hotels and restaurants bought them, but the electric dishwasher first appeared in 1912 and the first automatic dishwasher, 1940, full history of the dishwasher. You're welcome.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Nice, nice.

Marcus Johnson:

The things you learn will have to suffer through before the episode starts, either or. Today's real topic, how Hispanic Americans use media differently and the same. In today's episode first in the lead, we will cover how US Hispanic consumers use media. Then for another news, Matteo will tell us how digital use in Latin America is shattering stereotypes he says. And Paola will lay out the most interesting internet habits for kids. But we start, of course, with the lead, we're talking about Hispanic Americans and yeah, how they're using the internet in different ways. Let's start by defining what we mean Paula by Hispanic, who are we including?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

So historically, Hispanic refers to Spanish speakers or those Hispanic descents. And so we use it as an organization when we're writing about the population because it's the most commonly preferred pan-ethnic term in the United States. About 53% of people with origins within Latin America or Spain, self-identify as Hispanic, followed by Latino. But there's a lot of conversation over what is the right term. Some people feel that Hispanic is too tight to Spanish colonization, but that tends to be stronger among those who have more of a recent history of immigration. People who have been here for generations really don't have a preference. Men kind of just default to Hispanic. And then of course you have terms like Latino, Latinx, Latin A if you're from Latin America. But yeah, I mean we default to Hispanic just because it tends to be the most commonly used.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Matteo Ceurvels:

And then basically too, I mean when you think about Latino as well, that can also, in some instances it's referring to people from Latin America, sometimes include Brazil, where we have that Portuguese aspect as well. But from Latin America, while Hispanic is just more in that Spanish-speaking sense. So these lines get very blurred.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Yeah, it's really hard to come up with a pan-ethnic term for everybody because there's so much diversity and so much nuance. I mean, most people commonly just prefer to identify as their country of origin. Right.

Marcus Johnson:

Right.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

My family's from Mexico, my family's from Portugal. It's just easier than trying to come up with a all-encompassing term.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay. So yeah, you mentioned, we're talking about Hispanic, but you also mentioned the word Latino and the census, the US Census combines the two. So it says Hispanic or Latino, and that makes them the second-largest ethnicity. And it's not even close. They're the second largest by a long shot. So according to the US Census, 19% of Americans identifying as Hispanic or Latino, that's 63 million people. But Paola within that, what's the breakdown of their kind of national origin?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

The Mexican population tends to be the largest due, of course to proximity to Mexico and history of the country. The second largest tends to be Puerto Rican followed by Salvadoran, Dominican, Cuban, Guatemalan and so on.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

And so Mexican tends to be the most dominant across the country, but it's much more diverse when you look at second-largest populations within the state. And so you get much more variety in terms of secondary populations. But then when you look at primary ones, variations occur with, there are more Salvadorans in DC, like that is the highest number of Salvadorans in the United States, Puerto, Ricans and Dominicans in the Northeast, Cubans in Florida. So it really just depends. You're not just talking about who the largest populations are. You're talking about where are they concentrated as well, which is something to think about when thinking about a campaign targeting a group.

Marcus Johnson:

Yes, and I want to talk about by state in a second, but just to zoom out again, this is a lot of people, like 63 million people. I went and looked, if that group of folks started their own country, they would be the 24th largest country in the world by population right behind France.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Nice.

Marcus Johnson:

So it's a lot of folks. There's one in every five Americans, and that would be one and a half times the number of people who identify as black according to the Census.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

And there'll be 25% of the entire country by 2050.

Marcus Johnson:

Right. And growing. Exactly. Exactly right. So that's 20 to 30 years ish. 25 to 30 years, and we'll be 25% of the population up from close to 20 today. And so it's a growing number. But I want to go back to by state, because certain states have higher populations of Hispanics and there are three US states where Hispanic and Latino populations are the majority. New Mexico, 50%, California 40%, and Texas also 40%. So it really does matter where you're looking, which is the point yeah, that Paola you were just mentioning, especially for advertisers trying to target folks. Okay. So that's what we're talking about.

Matteo Ceurvels:

Also, if we look at the US as a Spanish-speaking nation or the amount of people in the US that speak Spanish, the US would be the fifth-biggest Spanish-speaking population in the world for it. So it's like slightly on par with Spain ahead of Venezuela.

Marcus Johnson:

I mean, the size of this audience just is undeniable. And so Paola, you were looking at some of the digital behaviors of these folks and so and some research, and so what digital behaviors to Hispanic people over index or maybe even under index on, but let's start with over index on.



Paola Flores-Marquez:

It's definitely social media and video, but generally they have a higher adoption rate than the total US population on seven of the eight social media platforms that we forecast in 2024.

Marcus Johnson:

Wow.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

So that's almost all of them. The only one they,-

Marcus Johnson:

Which one do they not? Yeah.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Reddit. The only one they don't over index on is Reddit.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

But that's us tracking Reddit logged in users, so they might not just be logging in, but yeah, in general, they spend 10% more time with CTV than the general population and of the time they spend with TV, half of that time is spent streaming. So they're very active digitally. In terms of social media, more than half of the population is on some sort of Meta platform. Obviously Facebook at 59.3%, almost 60%, which Matteo can talk about how that mirrors Latin American activity. WhatsApp, they're the biggest WhatsApp user population in the United States, which I think has a lot to do with talking to people abroad. And then Instagram, they're also pretty much rivaling Facebook for that at 58.6%. But TikTok is the only non-meta platform that kind of cracks the lineup. Other than that,-

Marcus Johnson:

In terms of?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Yeah, in terms of highest use, so TikTok is slightly above WhatsApp usage. I think part of that also is tied to the fact that 68% of the US population in the US Hispanic population is under the age of 44. It's an incredibly young population. There are more people of Hispanic descent being born in the U.S. than are migrating, which is contributing to their growth. Right.

Marcus Johnson:

So WhatsApp is what they over index on the most in terms of the gap between them and the total population. Right. So 34% on WhatsApp, the total population 20%. So it's a 14 point over index. And then for Instagram, 52% using Instagram versus 40% of the population.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Correct.

Marcus Johnson:

And that would be a 12 point gap. So they're the two big ones in terms of over indexing.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Correct. Yes. I think Matteo and I were discussing this prior to this meeting, but yeah, there tends to be a love of humor and visual media that I think is transferring over to their love of Instagram in a certain way that I think is more anecdotal and more just cultural observation.

Matteo Ceurvels:

I was just going to add to that the Latin American countries has the highest rate of social media usage in the world, one of the highest daily times spent with digital platforms. So a lot of these trends that we see in the original regional of origin have migrated with them to the US and have helped over index a lot of these trends. And then when we think about in particular within the demographic makeup of that US Hispanic population with about 60% of Hispanics being of Mexican origin, and we look at say that TikTok usage or that over indexing a bit on TikTok, that harks back to the fact that in Mexico, TikTok is now the number two platform per social media usage there ahead of Instagram.

So you do see a lot of these habits that have their origin or have an explanation rooted in habits that have come from their home countries of origin for the recently arrived ones. And then those cultural ones, so say maybe Hispanics born in the US, but they have friends in

Mexico or they have friends in their other countries that they want to keep up to date with what they're doing. So you have that cultural adoption of said platforms to do that.

Marcus Johnson:

Interesting.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Yeah.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, that's a really good point.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

In addition to that, a lot of that too is fueled by a history of texting being incredibly expensive in Mexico and other Latin American countries. So like,-

Marcus Johnson:

Right.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

You kind of revert to using these digital platforms like WhatsApp and social sites in order to communicate.

Marcus Johnson:

No, that's a great point as well. So you mentioned video. CTV definitely a fan favorite. Close to half of Hispanic folks media use is spent watching CTV compared to just a third for the total population according to Nielsen. And older Hispanics actually are the ones who are over indexing there, which is interesting. What do Hispanic folks in America under index on, apart from Reddit maybe? Nothing. They're like they do it all.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

When they need to, they do. Where there's a will, there's a way. Something to touch on that I don't think gets touched on a lot is that even those who don't know how to use a lot of these platforms have strong social networks where they rely on kids or people within their

households to do it for them. Right. And so you have children who are, the majority of the population being incredibly young, they'll do it on behalf of their parents and they'll make these accounts for them and they'll be the password keepers. And even if you think an US Hispanic adult is operating on a platform, it's more likely that they're adult child, even not even non-adult, their teenage child is running their account. So,-

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, in your research, you do write that you say about how the predominance of multi-generational households impacts digital behaviors. This being the main way?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Yeah, I would say so. I mean, this is more true for recently arrived families who are still trying to figure out how to navigate a lot of these systems. They often rely on members of their family who are more confident in their English-speaking abilities and more technologically adept. And so there's some sort of a symbiotic relationship or a dependent relationship there.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Or a lot of our websites translate into Spanish, right, which is a huge assistance if they really wanted to.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Right.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, that's true. So we were looking at a piece of research from Pew on how Hispanic Americans get their news, the headline figure being that over half of all Latinos preferred to get their news in English, the study said. When you split that group into US born and immigrants, US born Latinos overwhelmingly preferring to get their news in English. It's over

80% versus 26% of immigrant Latinos healthy share of each group said they like to get their news in both languages. But Matteo, I'll start with you. What stood out to you the most about how Hispanic Americans get their news?

Matteo Ceurvels:

As you see kind of that Hispanic population becoming more acculturated into the US society, we do see then that English language becoming a bit more dominant, but still maintaining that bilingualness and even that hybrid of Spanglishness, which I think that to me was a really interesting takeaway. And I think the other takeaway was just the amount that digital platforms and devices represent in terms of that news consumption, particularly the prevalence of social. I believe it was maybe 21% social, 23% TV.

Marcus Johnson:

Paola?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

The biggest standout note for me was podcast. Podcasting you have 7%. That was huge, particularly when the data that I've seen shows that the more Spanish-speaking side of the population tends to default to traditional radio. So when we talk about podcasts, it's going to be more of the English-speaking population. And we've also seen that the English-speaking population tends to be higher in income, making an average of about \$75,000 in 2022. So that's pretty fascinating to me. I didn't expect it to be that high.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah. I thought the thing that trip [inaudible 00:15:17] me, they follow the news a lot less than the average American, and their interest in news has gone from 31% to 22% from 2020 to 2023. Now that could be because 2020 was an election year, so we may see a spike of interest this year, 2024 for the election. But when you look at the overall share of adults who closely follow the news, that share has fallen from 50% to 38% from 2016 to 2022. So that is going down as well overall. So maybe that's the overall trend. We'll see. We'll see if it ticks up this year. Let's end with this. Paola, in your report, you tackle some of the things advertiser people should consider when trying to reach a market to Hispanic folks. Could you give us two?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Oh, yes. Have a clear understanding of the population that you're targeting. If you're going to be specific or make specific cultural references, don't confuse simple things like tamales and pupusas. So tamales are a Mexican dish. Right.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

And so Mexicans are the majority population, but then pupusas are a Salvadoran dish. Right. And so depending on what location you're advertising in, right, you shouldn't advertise tamales in like the DC area where the majority population is Salvadoran, right? You're just not going to reach your target audience. Be very aware of who you're targeting.

And then the other one is the best time to reach Hispanic consumers tends to be in the lead up to major holidays and events. Right. So it's a time of gathering. A lot of people spend that time together. They travel a lot. So Christmas is one of the biggest annual holiday for almost every Hispanic ethnicity, and most families celebrate the night before. So keep that in mind. They don't celebrate the day of. So also be aware of those cultural differences, but there are other events like the World Cup, right, where a lot of Hispanic communities will start rallying around whatever country is left that is from their region. And so that's another opportunity to sort of tap into that unity in a way that you don't normally get to do because there are so many differences within the population.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Matteo Ceurvels:

Or the forever battle between who created the arepa. Is it Colombian arepa or Venezuelan arepas? That will be a battle for listeners to comment in,-

Paola Flores-Marquez:

I had an old roommate who was Colombian, so I have to side with her out of loyalty to her. I have to say the Colombian.

Matteo Ceurvels:

My partner is Venezuelan, so I got to go with,-

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Oh no.

Matteo Ceurvels:

[inaudible 00:17:29].

Marcus Johnson:

Uh-oh.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

We're continuing this in the office.

Marcus Johnson:

We got conflicts. Well, the full report is the US Hispanic Consumer Media Habits 2024: Above-Average Streaming and Social Media Use Offer a Direct Path for Advertisers. The link is in the show notes or you can head to Emarketer.com if you want to read the full thing. That's what we've got time for. For the lead time for the fourth quarter of the show today. In other news, how are Latin Americans breaking digital stereotypes and how are kids using the internet? Story one, how are Latin Americans breaking digital stereotypes? Matteo, in your latest piece of research, you note that the share of Latin Americans who are now online went from 64% to nearly 74% in the past five years. This 74% is quite a ways behind North America and Western Europe, but 10 percentage points ahead of APACs online population. But Matteo, what was one of the most interesting findings from your research on how Latin Americans digital behaviors are changing?

Matteo Ceurvels:

I think one of the things we touched on earlier in the show was just in terms of how consumers in Latin America, over index and their time spent with digital platforms, and in particular, if we look at social media. So the worldwide average per daily social media usage is about two hours and 25 minutes. And Latin American consumers spend three hours in 30 minutes every day. So roughly,-

Marcus Johnson:

Thought that was shocking. 45% more time per day.

Matteo Ceurvels:

That was some quick math there. I was just going to say an hour and five minutes more, but that was some quick math there. So that was one thing that definitely stood out to me. We do see in terms of the digital space, that the region continues to remain the fastest growing e-commerce market worldwide. This was a trend that happened for the first time in 2020 where Latin America first held that title as fastest growing e-commerce market, and now we've seen it for 2022, 23, 24, and 2025, it's still going to lead the world in commerce growth.

One thing when we look at in terms of how digital is just really making more inclusive societies in particular, so Latin America, like a lot of emerging markets around the world, does have an issue with the informal economy, the informal labor markets. So you do see people that are not in this formal market on the books with salary benefits and all the things like that, but we have seen that as internet penetration has grown in adoption, we have seen that the share of workers in the informal economy has fallen. So there is a direct correlation that broader digitization has helped really digitize and formalize some of the employment opportunities for people in Latin America.

Marcus Johnson:

Matteo's full report is the Future of Digital 2024: Latin America From Digital Laggard to Leader, the Region Shatters Stereotypes. Link is in the show notes or you can head to Emarketer.com for the whole thing. Story two, how kids use the internet. Paola, you recently wrote about the digital habits of the 36 million under 11-year-olds, aka Gen Alpha. What was one of the most interesting findings from your research?

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Normally we say YouTube, right? YouTube usage is so high, but I don't think that's surprising anymore. So I'm going to go with digital gaming. Of all the kids on the internet, half of them are playing a digital game, and so I think it's really interesting because Gen Z is currently the leading generation, right, even compared to millennials, which are so much bigger than them. Gen Z is like, it's one of the few areas where Gen Z has a higher level of penetration and size. So I think what we're seeing now indicates that Gen Alpha is set to follow in their footsteps.

Marcus Johnson:



You had a bunch in there. The one thing that you wrote about that jumped out to me was don't sleep on the tablet.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Oh, yeah. No.

Marcus Johnson:

In terms of connected device adoption, our numbers show its kid's most device.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Yes.

Marcus Johnson:

It was 80% using one at least once a month versus 60% watching connected TV or way less 30% using a smartphone.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Yeah. Tablets are so easy for parents to be able to transport everywhere. It keeps them entertained. It's really helpful if you have kids with autism or any sort of environmental sensitivities, right? So tablets are incredibly useful for both parents and entertaining for kids, and it gives kids a modicum of freedom, right? They've learned how to use YouTube pretty efficiently, and it gives them some level of control at an age when they're starting to push those boundaries of what that looks like.

Marcus Johnson:

Yes, indeed. That's what we've got time for this episode. Thank you so much to my guests. Thank you to Paola.

Paola Flores-Marquez:

Thank you so much, Marcus. Thanks for having us.

Marcus Johnson:

Yes, of course. Thank you to Matteo.

Matteo Ceurvels:

Thank you, Marcus. Always a pleasure to be here.

Marcus Johnson:

Yes, sir. Thank you so much to Victoria who edits the show, Stuart who runs the team, and Sophie does our social media. And thanks to everyone for listening in. Hit subscribe or follow, and also the bell icon to turn on notifications for new content. Thanks to everyone for listening in to the Behind the Numbers Daily, an eMarketer podcast made possible by Walmart Connect. Tomorrow you can hang out with host Rob Rubin on the Banking & Payment Show, as he talks with Grace Broadbent and Tyler Van Dyke all about cryptocurrency and Bitcoin's resurgence.