PAID SOCIAL MEDIA TARGETING TACTIC USED TO ENGAGE LATINO COMMUNITY IN FIGHT AGAINST TOBACCO
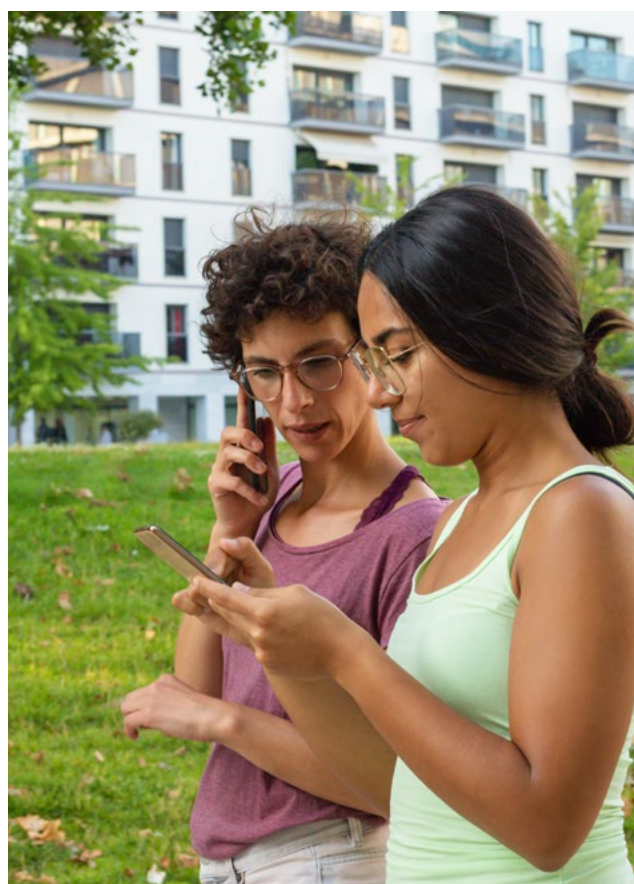
SUCCESS AT A GLANCE

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network's Project VIVE (Vidas Importantes Vecindarios Elevados) employed geofencing, a tactic enabling a campaign to push paid social media to mobile devices within a geographic boundary, to recruit and engage members of the Latino community in eight communities in Riverside, San Bernardino and Imperial counties.

VIVE's use of geofencing to create hyperlocal outreach enabled the organization to reach new community members, engaging them to share their stories about the negative health impacts of tobacco and advocate for smokefree spaces. Initial inroads with new partners – including organizations not previously involved in tobacco control – were also forged through its social media strategy.

"It's a long road, but social media has helped us build trust with non-traditional partners," said Omar Gonzalez, Senior California Tobacco Control Program Manager for VIVE.

APPROACH

Recognizing the potential reach of social media to engage community members in its campaigns for smokefree policies, VIVE first targeted social media users who identified as having families, lived in multi-unit housing, or spoke Spanish, but had limited success. The tri-county region's diversity and scale made it difficult to connect on specific issues with a generalized campaign that wasn't community-specific.

In 2021, VIVE began experimenting with geofencing to reach more potential supporters

by pushing messages to the Latino community on Facebook based on location, rather than interest area.

By thinking about and geofencing where the community went as part of their daily routines, such as laundromats and Latino-specific grocery stores, VIVE was able to create hyperlocal messages that resonated with new audiences and attracted more volunteers.

THE SUCCESS:

The hyperlocal outreach made possible through geofencing proved an affordable and effective strategy to engage the community. During 2021, 387 community members volunteered for VIVE, recruited almost entirely through social media. Geofencing enabled VIVE to recruit volunteers at local universities such as University of California, Riverside and California State University, San Bernardino. Those volunteers signed petitions supporting smokefree space and conducted data collection surveys in their communities, key assets used in VIVE's advocacy campaigns.

VIVE also had success using geofencing during family-focused events or holidays, to collect community stories about the impact tobacco has had on families. Between October 28 – November 1, 2021, VIVE launched geofencing campaigns on flavored tobacco in English and Spanish tied to Halloween trick-or-treating. The 3-day campaign, which cost $150, garnered meaningful results:

› *Reached more than 21,000 social media users between its English and Spanish versions*

› *A Spanish-language version reached 15,000 and netted more than 450 engagements*

› *Netted nine volunteers to complete surveys*

In October 2021, VIVE used geofencing as it boosted a link to an interview of a Bloomington parent about the risks of secondhand smoke for area youth. The post, which cost $100 had a strong response:

› *Reached nearly 10,000 people across five days*

› *Attracted 190 social media users to visit VIVE's site*

› *Netted 46 comments and 62 reactions*

Think hyperlocal. Central to VIVE's success was its ability to push customized messages to Facebook users in each of its eight communities,

identifying issues or places specific to a community. Community-specific data was also important to attracting users to the VIVE site.

"Understanding the individuality of the communities was key," Gonzalez said. "A campaign in Fontana may not work in Rancho Cucamonga, which is right next door."

Consider the entire engagement process.
Hyperlocal Facebook posts were successful at driving community members to the VIVE website, but the contact form wasn't easy to use from a mobile device. VIVE overcame this challenge by modifying its site to take potential volunteers directly to a Take Action form. The organization also made sure that social media posts it shared targeted at Spanish-speaking Facebook users led to Spanish-language materials.

Speak the language. VIVE's campaign is focused on the Latino community, making offering materials in both English and Spanish key to maximizing its audience. Simply translating information, however, isn't enough. Bilingual VIVE staff sought input from Spanish speakers on the VIVE Advisory Board to ensure the messages would resonate and avoid offending cultural, generational or gender sensitivities. "Latinos live in intergenerational households, so we had to be careful about our messages," Gonzalez said. "A young person can't just tell older people not to smoke."

Use your network. A hyperlocal campaign requires strong local insights and underscores the importance of a strong community network. VIVE Advisory Board members provided important details about where community members gathered or shopped, enabling more effective geofencing. VIVE maintained a physical presence using volunteers, posted flyers or other materials while conducting its campaigns to continue to build its network and heighten awareness about its organization in the community.

LEARN MORE

For more information, go to **https://acscanvive.org/** or contact: **Vive@cancer.org** or
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