Using Digital Marketing to Increase Participation in the Child Support Program

Grantee: California Department of Child Support Services
Project Title: Digital Media Engagement for Spanish Speakers
Project Site: San Diego County Department of Child Support Services (SDDCSS)
Target Population: Spanish-speaking parents
Geographic Location: San Diego County, CA
Planned Interventions: Social Media Marketing, Digital Flyer Campaign, Website Live Chat

Project Summary
Decreased child support program participation in recent years has created a need for innovative marketing efforts to expand knowledge of program benefits. SDDCSS also seeks to provide a convenient, customer-centered approach to participant enrollment. The 2016 U.S. Census reports that over 24% of San Diego County residents identify Spanish as their primary language, while internal data indicates just 10% of the SDDCSS caseload identifies Spanish as their preferred language. The discrepancy between San Diego’s program-eligible Spanish-speaking population and current representation of Spanish-speaking parents in the SDDCSS caseload presents a significant opportunity for enhanced outreach and enrollment among this population. SDDCSS will use digital marketing to increase participation in the child support program among the Spanish-speaking population. SDDCSS will create social media-based advertisements and videos targeting specific audiences by age, gender, parental status, and language preferences.

Project Approach
For this project, SDDCSS will use a multi-staged approach centered on three unique digital marketing interventions. These interventions are designed to increase child support program awareness, effectively communicate the benefits of the program, and streamline digital enrollment for prospective participants. Providing targeted direct marketing to San Diego County’s Spanish-speaking population will support the underlying goal of increasing total caseload of Spanish-speaking participants.

Intervention One: Social Media Marketing
Description: SDDCSS does not currently engage with members of the public through any form of social media. Through this project, SDDCSS will create social media based advertisements and videos targeting specific audiences by age, gender, parental status, and language preferences. The advertisements will use content designed and created by staff — such as videos, images, and flyers in Spanish — using principles of behavioral economics to ensure that the messages are conveyed in a clear, concise, and practical manner. SDDCSS will target advertisements to social media users matching specific target audience specifications or with an internet search history related to government assistance programs, child support services, and general parenting topics. Each advertisement will link to the SDDCSS webpage.

Evaluation Plan Highlights: SDDCSS will use social media data reporting tools to determine the effectiveness of the advertisements. Data will be collected monthly and will be used for program evaluation and correction. Reporting tools will allow SDDCSS to identify the number of viewers reached, amount of time spent viewing an advertisement, user retention, dates and times users are engaging with content, user demographics, and the device used to view the advertisement. SDDCSS will measure conversion data and the percentage of users who take a desired action on the SDDCSS website. Conversion data will be useful in correlating project success to advertisement effectiveness.
Intervention Two: Digital Flyer Campaign

**Description:** For this intervention, SDDCSS will provide digital flyers to the parents of children attending San Diego County schools via school email distribution lists. The specific target population is families who may benefit from child support services, but are unaware of the program, are unsure of the process for obtaining services, or are hesitant to seek assistance from a government agency. The focus of emailing efforts will be to local schools that have the highest rates of Spanish-speaking families. Efforts will also be made to identify schools with the highest rates of poverty based on the number of students that qualify for free or reduced lunch in each school.

**Evaluation Plan Highlights:** SDDCSS will track performance in each school with the following email metrics: sends, opens, and clicks. These metrics will provide insight into which topics generate the greatest response from the targeted audience. Additionally, a link to the SDDCSS website will be provided in the digital flyers and web traffic and online applications will also be tracked as another measure of the effectiveness of this campaign.

Intervention Three: Live Chat

**Description:** SDDCSS will implement a live chat feature on their website, enabling existing and prospective customers to communicate with staff in real-time from a web-connected device. Prospective participants will be able to ask questions and address concerns prior to, during, and after the application process. The live chat feature is intended to assist prospective participants who have been directed to the SDDCSS website via a social media advertisement or email notification with completing the online application for child support.

**Evaluation Plan Highlights:** Customer service effectiveness and satisfaction will be measured using the following metrics: total chats, chat satisfaction, chat duration, response times, required staffing predictions, availability, agent activities, goals, queued visitors, and chat surveys.