



Tips for U.S. Hispanic research

APPEAL TO HISPANICS AT EVERY LEVEL OF ACCULTURATION

Some U.S. Hispanics may be third-generation, and completely acculturated into the United States, while others are bi-cultural or remain unacculturated. It is therefore important to carefully word survey questions, so they are understandable and non-offending to the entire spectrum of acculturated to non-acculturated Hispanics. If broad-spectrum question design is too difficult, use branching to route acculturated and non-acculturated respondents to separate question blocks. When surveying acculturated Hispanics, be extra careful to avoid references to stereotypical tastes and behaviors, and do not assume acculturated respondents remain connected to Spanish language usage or Hispanic culture. Acculturated Hispanics may not even identify themselves as “Hispanic”. For example, it would be acceptable to ask if they would like to take the survey in English or Spanish, but may be considered offensive to assume they shop at a grocery store that serves primarily Hispanic clientele.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT TERMINOLOGY: HISPANIC, CHICANO OR LATINO?

Before using the terms “Hispanic”, “Chicano” or “Latino”, it is important to first understand their respective definitions. “Chicano” refers to Mexican-Americans and their descendents, while “Latino” and “Hispanic” refer to those of Spanish-speaking or Latin-American descent. While there has been no official consensus on the proper terminology to use, the U.S. Census Bureau and other government agencies use the term “Hispanic”.¹

CONDUCT RESEARCH IN BOTH ENGLISH AND SPANISH

Use both English and Spanish in your research because the level of acculturation of the U.S. Hispanic population is so varied. Even those who are highly acculturated often remain bilingual and preserve their cultural identity. Ninety-five percent of the GMI Hispanic Panel has the ability to take surveys in Spanish, even though two-thirds of our panel classify themselves as being semi-acculturated or acculturated.

WHO SHOULD BE CONDUCTING HISPANIC RESEARCH?

Anyone who is conducting market research in the United States should include U.S. Hispanics in their projects. The current U.S. Hispanic population accounts for 15% of the total U.S. population and is projected to grow to 50 million by the year 2012, representing a purchasing power of \$1.8 trillion by 2017.²

¹ The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, 2006, Houghton Mifflin Company

² 2007 Hispanic Market Monitor, Global Insight