



HEALTH CARE GOLD WINNER Evercare - A Personal Touch

Business Situation and Objectives

Given the burgeoning Latino senior population, as well as Latinos' propensity to over-index in chronic illnesses and poverty status, Evercare has started to focus on reaching the Hispanic market. There are currently 2.3 million Hispanic Seniors aged 65+, and this number is projected to grow to double by the year 2020, and reach an estimated 15.2 million by 2050. Evercare, knows that Latino seniors will be a large component of their future growth and vitality, and in the past two years has begun to focus efforts on the Hispanic senior adult.

As one of the nation's largest care coordination programs, Evercare assists seniors who are chronically ill or indigent, and those who are both. Evercare provides long-term solutions for these dire situations and sets out to educate seniors on its variety of healthcare plans.

As we got involved in the Medicare category, we learned of the major knowledge gap and confusion about healthcare among Hispanic Seniors. The alarming lack of information/understanding confirmed the significance and importance of clearly communicating these plans in-language and in a culturally relevant manner.

Having a Special Needs Plan (SNP), such as Evercare, could be the best ally our target could ever have, especially as they enter a more vulnerable stage in their lives. The MAP plans offer more services and benefits than the Original Medicare (government plan) helping seniors get the healthcare they need at lower costs.

Objectives

The objectives for this assignment were fairly straightforward: develop a campaign that would raise awareness and interest for Evercare among our Latino senior audience. Campaign success would be measured on how many qualified consumers were captured to the Evercare database for a successful close rate.

Objective 1: Raise Awareness and Educate

We were dealing with a category our Hispanic target knew little about. According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Hispanics have the lowest awareness of Medicare services compared to Non-Hispanic Whites, 27% vs. 48%, respectively. It was

also fundamental to educate our target on the category, prior to informing consumers about Evercare's various plan offerings.

Objective 2: Raise Interest by Generating Leads

Not only was this category extremely confusing, but also very impersonal. Similar to the financial and insurance categories, uncongenial service could lead to a "dead end" with Hispanic consumers. Oftentimes the key to gaining entry is by approaching this segment in a personal and friendly manner. As with doctors and banks, Hispanics need to build a relationship with persons involved when making important decisions, especially when it concerns their health and well-being. We needed to create a personal touch in this impersonal category to break through to our seniors.

Marketing Strategy

We were charged with breaking through to our consumer and motivating them to call the 800 number and visit the Evercare website www.planesdesaludevercare.com, to help gain a larger customer base. This would be done via broadcast TV, print and online. The total budget for this campaign was \$2.3MM (including both media and production). Although the assignment was basic, the challenge was not, given some hurdles that our research uncovered.

Research and Insights

Target Audience

Our primary target was the Hispanic senior market, aged 65+ with Medicare, with low income (\$15k or less annual income) and/or chronically ill condition (with at least two chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension, asthma, etc). Approximately 62% of Latino Medicare beneficiaries are below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, and approximately 38% of Medicare Beneficiaries are in fair-poor health. This means that the total base of potential customers was between 874,000 and 1.4 million Latino seniors.

Advertising also had to appeal to the broader family of the senior, given that children and/or other family members assume the responsibility of caring for their elderly family members, helping to make important medical and financial decisions. It is in Hispanics' collectivist nature to not only take care of but also revere the elderly as a valued (not nuisance) part of the Latino community.

Research Approach

Keeping the Hispanic collectivist nature in mind, we conducted qualitative research among both seniors and the family members that cared for them (caregivers). We wanted to understand the mindset, challenges and potential bonds that Evercare could have with each group. A mini-focus group setting was used, given the personal subjects of both financial and health concerns. Additionally, some follow-up in-depth interviews were held to provide even more trust and comfort with the seniors.

We also used a variety of projective techniques, such as picture sorts and story telling, making it easier for seniors to talk about these sensitive subjects. Finally, we wanted to gauge reactions to images of seniors in other advertisements, so we showed selected TV and print ads for feedback.

Key Findings

The combination of the above techniques allowed us to really dig deep and put ourselves in the seniors' and caregivers' lives, to better understand the hurdles they face, and the help that they want and need—especially in the healthcare category. We learned that several important themes exist among the Latino seniors:

Lack of Urgency: “There’s no need to worry about it now”

There are distinct differences with how Hispanic Seniors approach healthcare versus their General Market counterparts. For the most part, Hispanics have a reactive mindset. Unlike the General Market, preventative medicine is not the norm. This behavior is likely related to Hispanic’s “here and now” orientation, as opposed to a long-term planning mindset.

Lack of Empowerment: “It’s in God’s Hands”

Hispanics are a fatalistic culture and tend to believe events in one’s life result from luck, fate, or other powers beyond their control, *Que sea lo que Dios quiera* (It’s in God’s hands). Our primary target explained that healthcare plans, dealing with aging and illness—and especially death—were not topics of discussion because it was out of their hands. These items were not addressed unless something bad happened. It was the “out-of-sight, out-of-mind” mentality that helped seniors cope with serious issues and minimized the possibility of being viewed as a burden to the family.

Liveliness is key

For our Hispanic senior, the ideal state is one of liveliness. The healthier the seniors remain, the less need there is to go to (and pay for) doctor’s appointments (roles which often fall on the caregiver). So, interestingly enough, when we showed seniors some of the ads that feature elderly consumers, they felt that they were negative when they showed seniors in walkers, wheelchairs, and looking frail—even for healthcare ads. They pointed out that while aging and sickness may be a reality, the seniors *felt* great and didn’t want to be “brought down” by this imagery.

Lessening the “Burden”

In the emotional context, seniors yearn to contribute to the family. They feel they are earning reverence by sharing stories, culture and traditions. This was the way seniors felt they could “give back” to the family that was helping them age gracefully. This is more unique to our Hispanic consumer, when you consider the General Market senior, who is likely living in an assisted living complex or alone in their home, and is more independent—both financially and emotionally.

Impersonal Category

Many seniors/caregivers felt that healthcare, much like the financial category, is highly impersonal. Seniors expressed that they felt like an account number instead of a patient when it came to dealing with Medicare concerns. At the root of this distrust in the system is the complicated nature of the category, further compounded by the lack of clear and reliable information in Spanish. They yearned for a more personal interaction to help them feel that others had their best interests at heart.

Campaign Insight

This is where our true insight discovery happened; we unearthed a catalyst that would get our reactive seniors to take action. Because a senior's passage into old age is often marked with loss—the loss of *their* home (and the imposition of living with their child), the loss of a spouse (creating the need for companionship), the loss of income (creating dependence on others), and most importantly, the loss of dignity, we wanted to show seniors what they would *gain* in becoming more proactive with their health and healthcare. The tension our target feels internally (and the key motivator for staying healthy) is so they are not viewed as arduous and “troublesome” to their family. Evercare's complete plans would help empower seniors, and at the same time, the care managers show compassion and reverence for seniors to help put them at ease in a confusing category.

Campaign Description

Communication Strategy

In order to accomplish our objective of developing a campaign that would raise awareness and interest for Evercare, we tapped into a brand pillar we were confident would resonate with our consumers. At the core of Evercare's business is personalized, caring, approachable Individualized Care Service. This is a service whereby care managers and nurse practitioners are assigned to new enrollees for the life of their plan. They provide superior and personalized care coordination, assisting enrollees through any healthcare issue.

This also provides seniors the opportunity to remain active, specifically with their health and healthcare options. Our goal was to leverage this invaluable and unique brand positioning (or personal touch), while empowering seniors to get involved in a plan to stay healthy.

The Big Idea

How great does it feel when someone asks you “¿Cómo estás?” (How do you feel?) and *genuinely* means it? That was the essence of the Evercare campaign. It was bringing to life the warmth and personal care that is at the heart of Evercare; and it all begins with a simple, but important question, “¿cómo estás?”. It is also inviting the seniors to get involved; it is a friendly call to action. Additionally, *¿Cómo Estás?* embodies the Evercare brand personality and care model. It is a powerful and genuine expression in the Hispanic culture that represents care and addresses the Hispanic seniors from a social and health standpoint.

In addition to having the correct tone and feel, it was important to have the right “look” of seniors. The imagery of the seniors in the *¿Cómo Estás?* ads is upbeat and lively—

reflecting how they strive to feel good and approach each day with vigor. Anecdotally, this may be one of the hardest working campaigns in our marketplace right now because it manages to educate the target in a simple manner while addressing some of the key cultural barriers identified earlier, and inspires seniors to get involved. Furthermore, it achieves this with a very personal and approachable tone. To deliver our message we leveraged the strength of each medium amplifying the educational factor on print and online vehicles and the emotional factor on TV.

Media Plan

The campaign was in-market for six months and included television, print and online.

TV (Select Markets Only)

New York, Dallas, Houston and El Paso: May 5 - June 1, June 30 - July 27

Print

Segunda Juventud (Summer and Fall Issues), Vista (June and September Issues), Comida y Familia (Summer Issue), Selecciones (May, Aug and Nov. Issues)

Online

AOL Latino, Univision.com, MSN Latino, Terra and Yahoo/Telemundo: May - September

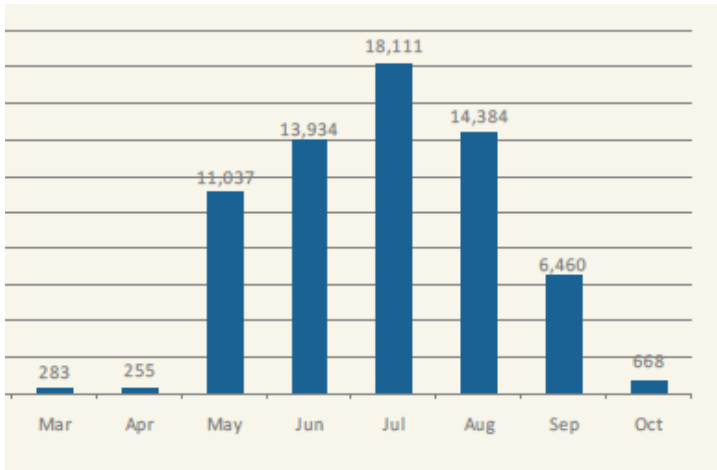
Results

The *¿Cómo Estás?* campaign was and still is a hit; in fact, it has been so successful that our General Market counterparts are considering an adaptation (a rarity in our industry). Beyond that, we truly met and exceeded our initial objectives.

Objective 1: Raise Awareness

In gauging immediate awareness, we looked at the pre/post campaign visits to the Evercare Web site. In the two months prior to the campaign launch, the site garnered an average of 269 visits per month. However, once the campaign hit, that number quickly soared to over 11,000 visits, which is more than 40 times the typical visits. At its peak, the traffic reached over 18,000 visits a month, which is 67 times the amount of visits prior to the campaign launch—or a 6700% increase in traffic! These numbers continued to climb until the campaign ended in October; however, visits were still more than twice the norm.

SPANISH SITE VISITS



Source: RMG Dashboard Online Results, October 2008

Objective 2: Raise Interest

There were approximately 3,400 responses in the 6-month period (far exceeding initial estimates). A record-breaking number of nearly 86% of workable (qualified) leads were obtained and added to the database, and an average of 49% of the qualified leads were sold. This is nearly double the average General Market close rate of 25%. Considering that the broadcast efforts for television were concentrated to four key markets for a total of eight weeks, the reach was that much more impressive. And when calculating the cost per lead and the value of each membership gained, in total, the ROI for this initiative was 7.56 to 1, making it highly worth the investment. Evercare is the only brand in the category that has made a concerted effort to Hispanic seniors; as a result, 40% of the memberships sold are Hispanic.

Beyond marketing metrics, our message struck a chord with our seniors who needed this information to help improve their standard of living. This helps answer our question “¿Cómo estás?” with a resounding answer of “¡Bien!”. This campaign serves as the standard in targeting Hispanic seniors and caregivers because of its qualitative and quantifiable success.