

# Resources

## Listening Track Hearken Engagement Innovation Summit October 2019

The art and practice of deep listening is essential to build engagement with your audiences over time. In these articles, adapted from sessions in the Listening track at the 2019 Hearken Engagement Innovation Summit, you'll learn how to listen in ways that allow you to better understand, reach and inform those you serve.

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*Official event photographer: [DDC - Digital Development Communications](#)*

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## Listening and engaging Latino audiences around sports, culture and more

To listen to Latino audiences, you need to know where and how to reach the specific segment of people you're aiming for (segmented by cultural and racial identity, age, location, and more).

Luis Miguel Echegaray, session facilitator and Sports Illustrated's head of Latino/Spanish content, says language is important, but

it's secondary to understanding the culture. For example, the way a 60-year-old Central American experiences things and consumes news is very different than a 17-year-old Mexican American.

### **Dive deeper:**

Understanding the different terminology:

- **HISPANIC:** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. Except Brazil (since Brazil was settled by the Portuguese, not Spanish).
- **LATINO/A:** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.
- **LATINX:** A gender-neutral term from Latin American cultural or racial identity.

**“As a minority in the newsroom, it can feel like the more you speak up to try to help everyone do the right thing, eventually you feel like others see you as lecturing them.”**

*–Luis Miguel Echegaray*

- **AFRO-LATINO/A/ LATINX:** Latin American descendants with African roots.

### Understanding three key subgroups:

1. **The Latin American audience** (those who still live in Latin American countries).
2. **The Latino immigrant** (mainly baby boomers) who still mainly consumes content in Spanish (Univision, Telemundo). They often do understand English-language content, and engage with U.S. culture, but prefer to consume in Spanish. (E.g. watching Friends dubbed in Spanish.)
3. **The New Wave** - Americans 30 and younger who understand traditional American culture as much or more than the culture of their parents and grandparents. Consume/interact in English for 90 percent of their day. They really connect with both cultures and want to see themselves represented in news and other media.

### Build your strategy for reaching Latino audiences by:

- **Latinize your content:** What can you add that's showing things from this audience's perspective?
- **Create specific verticals** to speak to this audience based

### Statistics

- Latinos in the U.S. had a median age of 30 in 2018, 14 years younger than the median age for whites.
- In 102 U.S. counties, Hispanics made up at least 50% of the population in 2018.
- The U.S. Hispanic population reached a record 59.9 million in 2018
- The South saw the fastest Latino population growth of any U.S. region.

Source: [Pew Research Center, July 2019](#)

on culture/subgroups (not just language!).

- If you're trying to reach a younger audience, **incorporate mobile video** heavily into your strategy.
- Latinize your newsroom/office. **Hire people!** And support them.
- **Go to schools** and begin a relationship with young Latinos.

### More on reaching out to students:

You can go out and ask high schoolers or college students to produce content for you; you can teach and pay them. Let them know this industry exists. It's not "if you build it, they will come." If you go to them, they will come. They

have to know this field is an option.

Go to middle schools! Even at that age, students can write about what they know and what they think about the news.

### How can you pitch that a newsroom should hire someone Latino/a/x?

Frame it as: "I can help you revolutionize this place. You need this, the country is getting younger, darker and more diverse."

Start with the statistics, about the power and size of the audience, and how doing this can help make money. Example: "Latinos interact with brands all the time, at more than double the rate of non-Latinos. If you want to succeed in this business, you have to reach this audience."

### Resources:

#### For statistics:

- [U.S. Hispanic population reached new high in 2018, but growth has slowed](#) (Pew Research, 2019)
- [Facts on Latinos in the U.S.](#) (Pew Research)
- [Among U.S. Latinos, the internet now rivals television as a source for news](#) (Pew Research, 2018)

### English-language Latinx creators to listen to and follow:

- [Radio Ambulante](#)
- [Remezcla](#)
- [Latino USA](#)
- [Tanzina Vega](#)



# Using consensus and The Open Newsroom to better understand parents' information needs

The community you serve will always be larger than your audience. EdNC.org and THE CITY used a combination of technology (in the form of EdNC's Reach platform) and THE CITY's Open Newsroom model to identify issues that a community cared about, surface some of their information needs, and find out what sources members of the community turn to for information. (Hint: Generally not our own organizations!)

## Dive deeper:

The Open Newsroom is a series of community meetings that all tie into each other, each one building off the next through a series of structured questions asked in small groups to identify specific ideas, issues, troubles and challenges that are affecting a neighborhood. As part of this year-long initiative, THE CITY has partnered with Brooklyn Public Library, a trusted institution, to develop a collaborative way to gather information that is relevant to the community and, alongside them, create a useful and effective output of that information.

For our session, we wanted to apply this model to a specific topic and not a specific neighborhood. We didn't have the luxury of a year and we also realized that many people will never be able to attend an event at a set time in a set location. But we wanted to use as many



*Session facilitators  
Nation Hahn,  
EdNC.org,  
and Terry  
Parris Jr.,  
THE CITY*

voices as possible to identify the topics we wished to explore.

For this first collaboration, we focused on learning differences.

Previous engaged journalism work between THE CITY and Chalkbeat New York had already crowdsourced more than 600 parents, department of education employees and advocates. This gave us a base leverage and engaged an already engaged community. We developed a way to shrink multiple gatherings into a single meeting with a lot of crowdsourcing work leading up to the event.

We began the process with an open-ended form asking a broad question and shared it with all of

the participants in the database.

EdNC.org previously created Consensus to identify areas of consensus, uncertainty, and disagreement. We decided to use Consensus by turning the open-ended statements into topics and themes we would allow people to vote on — while still collecting additional crowdsourced statements.

From prompts to polls to a priority checklist, this allows us to show up to our one event and have a really good sense of what this community was thinking about and cared about. We were then able to quickly and seamlessly break up into small groups to dig deeper into the priorities that seemed to affect the most folks.

## Example of a Consensus prompt:

Here's your first statement:

Socioeconomic status can determine the quality of service a child with special education needs receives.

DISAGREE UNSURE AGREE

0/3

As we worked through the process, we grew to believe you could take these steps and apply them to a listening funnel. We have heard about all kinds of funnels. Marketing/acquisition funnels. Audience funnels in journalism. What if we instead focused on building a listening funnel that supports engagement and impact?

The idea of the funnel is to figure out some of the smallest units of information, to prioritize and, either as a news organization or with the community, try to understand and solve for that unit of measurement.

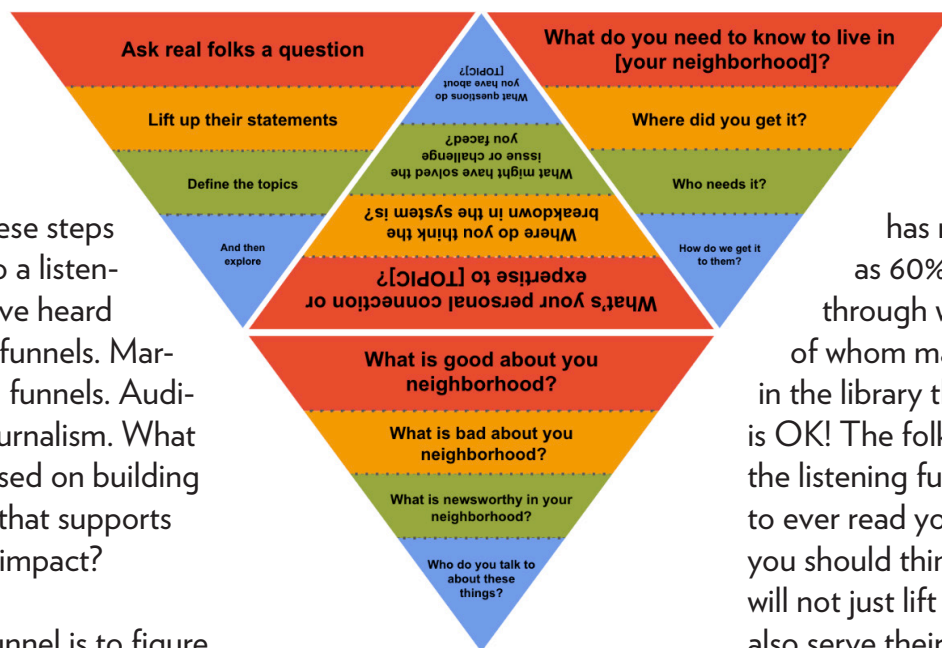
### Build your strategy around a listening funnel:

As we worked, we began to ask: Could we create a series of funnels that connected to one another as we listened to our communities?

[See listening funnel illustration]

Some attendees of the Hearken summit suggested these funnels might be best described as interlocking deltas. Whatever imagery you decide is best, we encourage you to think about how you would move through each of these steps in your own work.

Always remember step one: Begin with people and their daily concerns.



Listening and engagement should not be focused just on your audience. It might include adjacent audiences. For example, we might target educators and parents who currently interact with us for a topic focused around education.

But if we are going to truly engage in a listening funnel, we must also target prospective audiences (maybe including constituency and advocacy groups who engage on the issue), and adjacent audiences (perhaps including citizens who care about engaging on any number of issues in their neighborhood or younger folks who aspire to have kids one day), and, yes, even folks who may not be part of our audience at all.

The Open Newsroom, through partnerships with the Brooklyn Public Library,

has received as many as 60% of their attendees through walk ups — many of whom may have just been in the library that day. And that is OK! The folks you engage in the listening funnel do not have to ever read your publication, but you should think about how you will not just lift up their voices, but also serve their information needs where they are.

How to pitch your newsroom: “Our journalism can’t just live on our own platform if we’re going to reach the people we hope to reach and achieve the impact we desire.” Start with pitching your listening funnel as a direct contributor to your audience funnel, while also noting that the funnel enhances the quality of your product and contributes to your impact. Example: “We can’t just be in the content publishing business; we have to listen and serve a broader community to have the impact we desire.”

### Resources:

[http://bit.ly/time\\_to\\_get\\_serious](http://bit.ly/time_to_get_serious)

People	Inputs (tools)	Outcomes	What's your pitch?
Is it a community? Is it an audience? Is it existing? Is it adjacent? Is it geographical? Is it topical?	Offline Online Text Events	Growth Engagement Brand Trust Action “Journalism”	???????