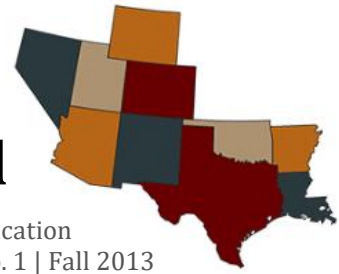


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Best Practices for Community Relations: Case Study of the Hispanic Wellness Fair

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Improving image and reputation for educational institutions requires effective community relations, an integral component of marketing and communications. While public relations research has determined the characteristics of effective community relations programs overall, little research exists on community relations efforts at educational institutions, in particular medical schools, focusing on the unique aspects of improving relations with the Hispanic community. This case study analysis of the 2005 American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Best Community Service Program reviews award-winning methods for creating and continuing effective community relations programs that focus on the Hispanic community. A literature review compares other best practices in community relations to this case, and interviews with participants are analyzed to understand the internal workings of the event. A first person, participant observer analysis of the event and an intercept survey administered to participants provided deep analysis of the fair and its marketing efforts. While community relations allows an organization to engender mutual trust with its community, in this instance the Hispanic community, community relations is also focused on improving image and reputation. Improved image and reputation can result in a variety of real outcomes: increased funding, increased donations, and increased visits to institutional medical clinics in this particular case study; therefore, the impact of effective community relations goes beyond perceptual benefits. An almost textbook example of community relations, this case study makes use of the three principles of effective communication that should be emphasized to ensure a successful community relations program. An intercept survey administered when participants were exiting the Fair demonstrated the effectiveness of the blanket approach of community relations in this award-winning campaign. With more than half of the survey participants indicating that they were first time attendees, it is clear that community trust, which is generally built over time, was less important than increased marketing efforts. Because many people seemed to be getting the message from multiple venues, the blanket marketing approach that the Market Task Force took for the 2005 fair was effective. A concerted effort to include Hispanic media significantly increased the attendance of the fair, and a drive to stay grassroots with a focus on community kept people on the Marketing Task Force from year-to-year. The way this case study unfolded lends credence to textbook instruction on communicating with multicultural markets.

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Running head: BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Best Practices for Community Relations:

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Abstract

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this award-winning campaign. With more than half of the survey participants indicating that they were first time attendees, it is clear that community trust, which is generally built over time, was less important than increased marketing efforts. Because many people seemed to be getting the message from multiple venues, the blanket marketing approach that the Market Task Force took for the 2005 fair was effective. A concerted effort to include Hispanic media significantly increased the attendance of the fair, and a drive to stay grassroots with a focus on community kept people on the Marketing Task Force from year-to-year. The way this case study unfolded lends credence to textbook instruction on communicating with multicultural markets.

Best practices for community relations: Case study of the Hispanic Wellness Fair

Introduction

To attract people to a free health fair seems like a no-brainer. If you plan it, they will come. But the organizers of the Hispanic Wellness Fair in Fort Worth, Texas, knew that targeting a predominantly Hispanic population, including documented and undocumented people, offered many challenges. Some of those challenges included letting the intended audience know the organizers understood their needs and could be trusted; creating trust among the population to be served; finding healthcare providers to provide healthcare without seeking documentation; providing referral networks for those people too sick to treat. To address these issues and more, the organizers collaborated with several entities to make the free services offered at the fair a reality. This multi-dimensional approach to marketing a community relations event resulted in one of the largest free health and wellness fairs in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex in just seven years. How did they do it? Through an award-winning marketing approach that has developed over the seven years. This article will analyze the award-winning tactics of the 2005 American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Best Community Service Program, using case study analysis and the participant observer approach.

History of the Hispanic Wellness Fair

In 1998, the City of Fort Worth conducted a survey of residents regarding their use of local health facilities and the overall public health of the city. This community assessment provided some astounding results: Almost half of the population of people

who lacked health insurance in Fort Worth were Hispanic. Hispanics had limited access to healthcare because of their lack of health insurance. Hispanics also had other factors that contributed to poor health outcomes: lack of transportation, lack of consistent telephone service, lower levels of education, and lack of exercise coupled with a high cholesterol diet that resulted in chronic diseases at disproportionately higher levels. These contributing factors, along with a language barrier, painted a gloomy picture of the health status of Hispanics in Fort Worth (HWF website). Director of Public Health Robert Galvan also discovered that many people got what little healthcare they received from free health fairs. For Hispanics, particularly undocumented workers, free health fairs were the dominant means of receiving health care (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, March 10, 2005).

When Adela Gonzalez, former Director of Public Health for the City of Dallas, saw the results of the survey, she approached Galvan about organizing a free health fair that targeted the Hispanic community in Fort Worth. At the time, Gonzalez was a professor of public health at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. She convinced administrators at the medical school to support the effort with administrative services. Galvan helped Gonzalez work out the details for 75 healthcare providers to provide services at the first Hispanic Wellness Fair in 1999. Between 1,000 and 2,000 people attended the first Fair. Figures vary on the number of participants based on the source (HWF website, TIHH website). The Fair provided medical screenings and free immunizations for anyone who came through the doors, no questions asked (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, March 10, 2005).

From the beginning, the Hispanic Wellness Fair's main goal was to provide access to healthcare providers, services and information for those who couldn't afford

such services; to introduce the Hispanic community to what services were available in Fort Worth; to break down barriers between service providers and the Hispanic community, and to build trust between the healthcare system of Fort Worth and the Hispanic community (HWF website). With each subsequent year, the Fair came closer to reaching its goals.

In 2000, the Fair quadrupled in size, drawing more than 4,000 people in need of free health screenings and immunizations. In 2001, more than 120 providers cared for more than 6,000 adults (HWF website). As the Fair began to grow, more and more people with serious illnesses came to see doctors and seek treatment. During the 2001 Fair, several attendees were rushed to the emergency room for medical treatment because of heart conditions, stroke, and advanced stages of cancer (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, March 10, 2005).

The Fair continued to grow until it reached maximum capacity for its venue in 2005 with approximately 16,000 people receiving services during the six-hour Fair. More than 200 booths were set up throughout the venue, providing not only basic medical care, but such services as dental care, eye exams, bicycle safety clinics for children, and free school supplies (Campus Connection, June 2005).

Methodology

A predominant qualitative data gathering procedure was undertaken to complete this case study analysis. A literature review of Silver Anvil award-winning case studies prior to 2005 from the Public Relations Society of America and how-to articles from PRSA's newsletter and magazine was undertaken to compare public relations industry best practices in community relations to the case of the Hispanic Wellness Fair. Specific cases and articles were chosen that focused on reaching the Hispanic community. In-

depth interviews with one of the co-founders of the Fair were completed in 2004 and 2005 to discover the history of the Hispanic Wellness Fair and gain perspectives on the Fair's success. A first person, participant observer analysis of the event based on my work with the Marketing Task Force of the Hispanic Wellness Fair in 2004 and 2005 yielded greater depth on how multi-dimensional the approach to the Fair had become and helped provide a list of tips for planning a community relations event focusing on the Hispanic community. To provide cross validation of my observations and analysis, a survey of 116 actual participants at the Hispanic Wellness Fair in 2005 was also analyzed. The survey was an intercept survey administered in English and Spanish on a convenience sample of Fairgoers. Two Hispanic Wellness Fair organizers stood at the main exits of the building from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and handed attendees a pen and paper survey, which 116 attendees filled out and returned prior to leaving. Everyone who was approached to fill out a survey completed the survey. Seventy-four of the returned surveys or 64% were in Spanish, and 42 or 36% of the surveys were in English. The survey contained 20 questions, but several were multi-part to assess overall health of the participants, demographic data, and exactly how the participants learned about the Fair. Because the Hispanic Wellness Fair required no formal registration for participants, no official demographic data of participants exists, and even the exact number of attendees, 16,000 in six hours, is an educated guess, based on door monitor clickers. With the 116 completed surveys, certain questions of a demographic nature were ignored by respondents, yet the surveys were included by the organizers when analyzing data and therefore included in this paper.

Limitations

Using a case study approach to research has its limitations. Relying on the memory of participants means that recollections of the events may not be complete or perceptions may vary. Because the intercept survey was designed by the Fair organizers and not the researcher and then analyzed by Fair organizers, the researcher was not able to collect raw data. This is a limitation to this study. Based on the Fair's idea of anonymity and lack of documentation, gathering historical data was challenging at best. While a more precise method of data collection began in 2004, data collected at the Fair in 2005, including the intercept surveys, may lack the statistical rigor of quantitative analysis, which was why a case study approach was used for this study. Providing a more valid framework for data analysis would be a welcome idea for research purposes, but the mission of the Fair itself would likely prohibit such an inclusion.

Why community relations?

Community relations is a specific type of public relations with a special focus on developing relationships with the community. Community relations is defined as a "planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that both benefits the organization and the community" (Wilcox and Cameron, 10). Community relations allows an organization to engender mutual trust with its community. Trust can be communicated in a variety of ways; however, many community relations practitioners, textbooks, cases and academic articles about effective community relations practices advocate active involvement in the community. In this academic discussion, the community is defined as the geographic area where a company or organization is headquartered (Hendrix and Hayes, 2007).

In the case of the Hispanic Wellness Fair, a different kind of community was targeted, the Hispanic community, located in the specific geographic area where the organization was headquartered, Fort Worth, Texas. While community relations has an altruistic component, it has traditionally been part of a complete public relations program to improve the image and reputation of a company or organization within the community. Improved image and reputation can result in a variety of real outcomes for corporations and organizations: increased funding, increased donations, and increased visits to institutional medical clinics in this particular case study; therefore, the impact of effective community relations goes beyond perceptual benefits.

Another aspect of community relations is assessing the needs of the community where the organization resides and filling any unmet needs, especially needs that are aligned with the mission and business goals of the organization (Hendrix and Hays, 2007). This is what Gonzalez and the University of North Texas Health Science Center administrators accomplished when they began the Hispanic Wellness Fair in 1999. Through the City of Fort Worth's community assessment, Gonzalez saw a need for the growing Hispanic community in Fort Worth: Free health services provided in a non-threatening, anonymous environment. Pairing the provision of health services for a community, the need, with a specific organization that focused on healthcare education, UNT Health Science Center, provided an almost textbook example of a special community relations project.

Literature Review

In reviewing the Public Relations Society of America Silver Anvil Award-winning cases prior to 2005, several cases appeared when searching the PRSA database using the practice area heading "Community Relations" with the keyword "Hispanic" and the

practice area heading “Multicultural Diversity” with the keyword “Hispanic.” One case study from 2004 was the “Break the Silence Campaign” regarding domestic violence in Texas. Vollmer Public Relations firm used a multicultural approach, specifically focusing on the Hispanic community because its research revealed a higher level of domestic violence in the Hispanic community. Vollmer’s focus on bilingual media markets went beyond mere translation and included the creation of public service announcements for radio and television that were culturally appropriate. The campaign also included spokeswomen who were anchors from the Univision stations throughout Texas and a special press conference and town hall meeting in Spanish scheduled in McAllen, Texas, a town located on the border of Texas and Mexico. The first month after the campaign saw a 93% increase in Spanish-speaking calls to the domestic violence hotline and a 69% increase in English-speaking calls to the domestic hotline (<http://www.prsa.org/awards/silveranvil/index.html>).

A second Silver Anvil Award-Winning case study, “The Heart of Diabetes: Understanding Insulin Resistance,” relied more heavily on the celebrity power of Rita Moreno to drive its predominantly media relations program. While the American Heart Association and other entities associated with this campaign hired a health care consulting firm that specialized in Hispanic/Latino health care, the groups did not hire a marketing or communications firm that specialized in this market. Some grassroots efforts were focused on connecting with Hispanic/Latino cardiologists when Moreno visited cities throughout the United States with large Hispanic populations. Bilingual patient materials and publicity were attempted, but the campaign was designed more like a traditional media relations tour rather than a true grassroots effort that created

and fostered community involvement

(<http://www.prsa.org/awards/silveranvil/index.html>).

“El Cerdo es Bueno,” a Silver Anvil Award-winning campaign from the National Pork Board was designed to expand its marketing campaign into the Hispanic community. The board hired the San Jose Group, which specializes in Hispanic marketing, to help design the campaign. In its research, the San Jose Group discovered that the perception that pork was unsafe was the biggest barrier for the Hispanic community. The group approached the campaign very much like a traditional media relations campaign, focusing predominantly on media messages and using dietitians to create a third party endorsement. The execution of the campaign seemed to be focused on creating press kits with a “Hispanic” flair rather than focusing on the community (<http://www.prsa.org/awards/silveranvil/index.html>).

A 2002 case study from Fleishman-Hillard and the California Department of Food and Agriculture was designed to move beyond media relations and advertising by focusing on grassroots community relations efforts. The case, “Be on the Lookout for Red Imported Fire Ants,” created multilingual posters, magnets, direct mail pieces, and some traditional media relations to reach the intended audience. A special focus was placed on the use of radio and television public service announcements featuring celebrity spokesmen. A focus on key stakeholders, otherwise known as opinion leaders, was also undertaken in the campaign, including ethnic chambers of commerce. The program saw a 400% increase in calls to the state’s hotline for reporting fire ant information (<http://www.prsa.org/awards/silveranvil/index.html>).

Several how-to articles from PRSA also focused on the importance of media relations in reaching the Hispanic market, with the recommendation that special

attention be focused on ethnic media outlets (Billingsley, 2002; Experts Highlight, 2003; Maza, 2004). Radio and television seemed to be preferred media rather than newspapers.

For articles that focused more on community relations and building grassroots support, the emphasis on developing partnerships and coalitions with organizations in the Hispanic community seemed to be a preferred method to reach a Hispanic audience (Ford, 2004; Gaschen, 2003; Kirk, 2001). Ford (2004) recommended that organizations reach out to the community to bridge the gaps and see how the organization's goals and mission can positively impact the community. Building coalitions, particularly with the Hispanic community, should begin with respect, reciprocity, resources and representation (Ford, 2004). These how-to ideas were what organizers had in mind when they began planning the Hispanic Wellness Fair.

Designing the Hispanic Wellness Fair

From the inception of the Hispanic Wellness Fair, a strong link to the community was already established: The cofounders were of Hispanic descent with Hispanic surnames; they spoke Spanish; one was the current Director of Public Health for the City of Fort Worth, who had been active in the Fort Worth community, and the other was the former Director of Public Health for the City of Dallas, who had been active in the Dallas and Fort Worth communities. These attributes of the cofounders made recruitment of healthcare providers and sponsors easier to accomplish. While healthcare providers were necessary to make the Fair a reality, private funding was also essential to starting and continuing the Fair. UNT Health Science Center provided administrative support, volunteers and doctors, but there were still tens of thousands of

dollars needed to plan and implement the event. In 2005, the Hispanic Wellness Fair accomplished all of its activities through volunteers and a \$70,000 budget (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, March 10, 2005)

While having cofounders who were integrated into the healthcare community of Fort Worth helped convince individuals and local healthcare providers to donate their money and their time, convincing the target community to come to the Fair would take a different kind of effort. Toward that end, Galvan and Gonzalez began calling on their contacts within the Hispanic community. Both had already forged a strong relationship with the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and its executive director. This relationship would be integral to expanding the network of volunteers and volunteer services offered that had a distinctly Hispanic flavor.

HWF 2004 Marketing Efforts: A Personal Perspective

When I joined the public relations staff at UNT Health Science Center in 2004, it was late July—too late to really get into the planning stages of the Hispanic Wellness Fair. Instead, I was tasked with providing media relations help the day of the Fair and limited media relations the week prior to the Fair.

The day of the Fair, I handed out maps of the venue, contacted doctors when needed, and connected reporters with official spokespeople who were bilingual. This gave me little idea of what was entailed in the planning of the Fair; however, just a few weeks after the 2004 Hispanic Wellness Fair was over, I was invited to the Marketing Task Force Meeting for the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair. The Sixth Annual Hispanic Wellness Fair in 2004 had seen an estimated 15,000 people come through the doors from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in one single day. People began lining the sidewalks at 6 a.m. to be the first to come through the doors when the ribbon was cut at 10 a.m. The Seventh

Annual Hispanic Wellness Fair in 2005 was expected to, once again, break all records for attendance; therefore, planning began in October 2004.

Multi-Dimensional Community Relations Effort

For the 2004 Fair, one person from UNT Health Science Center had planned and implemented the Hispanic Wellness Fair as her full-time job, working in Gonzalez's office. Shortly before the Fair in 2004, that person resigned. The Fair remained in Gonzalez's office, but the duties of planning the Fair had expanded across several offices and included the part-time efforts of seven people from UNT Health Science Center, who were on the Marketing Task Force that held its first meeting in October 2004. The implementation of the Fair itself included many others from UNT Health Science Center. The Task Force meeting included approximately 15 people, with several Task Force members missing. The people at the meeting represented some of the largest employers in Fort Worth, Hispanic-owned marketing and advertising agencies, and UNT Health Science Center staff members.

As the Fair grew from 75 providers in 1999 to 120 in 2005, the number of people who helped in planning had grown as well. The first Fairs focused on getting health care providers interested in providing services to Fairgoers, which explained the low attendance. It wasn't until the second Fair that Gonzalez began enlisting the help of the Hispanic media outlets in the area. By the time of the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair, Gonzalez and some of her volunteers had forged relationships with all of the Spanish-language television stations that served the Fort Worth area, with one—the Telemundo affiliate—serving as a primary sponsor, providing public service announcements beginning a month before the Fair was scheduled and pre-event and post-event coverage (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, March 10, 2005). Gonzalez had also

forged a strong relationship with the publisher of *Diario La Estrella* newspaper, the local Spanish-language daily newspaper. *La Estrella* also provided pre-event and post-event coverage and free advertising beginning about one month prior to the Hispanic Wellness Fair (J. Aldalpe, personal communication, October 26, 2004). Through the efforts of a doctoral student at UNT Health Science Center who was also an employee, the weekly newspapers *Panorama* and *El Hispano News* also joined the sponsorship list and provided free advertising as well as pre-event and post-event coverage of the Wellness Fair. Billboards in geographic areas where the majority of Hispanics live in Fort Worth were also targeted as were bus benches. Outdoor marketing companies offered discounted rates, and several Hispanic marketing agencies offered their services for free in designing the advertisements. Advertising space, in the form of a bill stuffer or flyer inserted in all Fort Worth residents' water bills, was also purchased from the City of Fort Worth's Water Department to reach a larger audience. The flyer was in English on one side and Spanish on the other. Univision radio also offered discounted drive-time advertising for the month prior to the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair, so by 2005, members of the Task Force had planned a blanket approach to using Spanish-language media to reach the Hispanic community, and special advertising venues to reach most residents of Fort Worth. But in community relations efforts, media relations and advertising is only part of the communication plan.

In community relations, three principles of effective communication must be emphasized to ensure a successful community relations program. First is targeting opinion leaders or community leaders. Reaching these leaders is crucial to the success of the program (Hendrix and Hayes, 2007). Gonzalez and Galvan reached out to the medical community in the early years of the Hispanic Wellness Fair, which meant that

sufficient numbers of service providers were available for participants. In later years, Gonzalez began reaching out to leaders of the Hispanic community, such as the executive director of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and government officials (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, September 26, 2004).

For the 2005 Fair, a kickoff luncheon took place in September 2004, where Gonzalez invited leaders of the Hispanic community and the business community to gain their support and funding. Prior to this luncheon, Gonzalez had placed personal phone calls and visited with many of these leaders, soliciting their support for the first time, or thanking them for their continued support (A.N. Gonzalez, personal communication, September 26, 2004). This one-on-one contact is a hallmark of community relations and relationship-building programs. The luncheon, where supporters of the Hispanic Wellness Fair extolled its virtues and thanked participants for their support, used the second principle of effective communication that works well in community relations—group influence. By the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair, the Fair itself had taken on a life of its own, displaying group cohesion and membership. The luncheon highlighted this cohesion, and group members implored those who were not members but were at the luncheon, to join the group. The use of persuasive speakers who are experts on the topic is a recommended way to achieve the goal of group cohesion (Hendrix and Hayes, 2007). That's what testimonials from other volunteers effectively did—putting pressure on those in attendance to “hop on the bandwagon.”

The third principle of effective communication in community relations is audience participation. This is why the Hispanic Wellness Fair was created. “Most important, the client should reach out to the community by sponsoring attractive activities” (Hendrix and Hayes, p. 156). The Hispanic Wellness Fair was such an event.

While community media are a specific target in community relations programs, other targets such as community leaders are just as important. To focus on this target, the Marketing Task Force included representatives from some of the largest employers in Fort Worth. These employees weren't just on the Task Force, they served as liaisons between the Task Force and employers. They provided entrance into company newsletter postings, intranet postings, bulletin board postings, and flyers included in paycheck envelopes. Their presence meant that news of the Hispanic Wellness Fair filtered into businesses throughout Fort Worth as well.

Another primary target in community relations campaigns is the education system, and Task Force members used their influence with Fort Worth Independent School District so that flyers were included at all schools. The event was also posted on bulletin boards and on the intranet so that FWISD employees could take advantage of the free healthcare services offered at the Fair.

Finally, a prime target in community relations is religious leaders. The churches located in the predominately Hispanic areas of Fort Worth were blanketed with flyers, and religious leaders were encouraged to announce the upcoming 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair from the pulpit.

The multi-dimensional approach to communicating with Hispanic people in Fort Worth was addressed in the first meeting of the Marketing Task Force in October. The timeline for implementation of this community relations communications plan was also discussed at the meeting. Traditionally, the public relations department spearheads any community relations efforts; however, this effort was coordinated by Gonzalez, vice president for community relations and institutional diversity at UNT Health Science Center. Because this was the case, the public relations efforts from the institution were

limited, focusing mostly on press releases to English-language and Spanish-language media, postings on community calendars, and story inclusion in the internal UNT Health Science Center newsletter before and after the Fair. A separate press release to recruit 400 bilingual volunteers was sent out four times beginning two months prior to the Hispanic Wellness Fair. This press release was not originally in the communications plan; however, an increased need for volunteers left organizers scrambling for much needed help at the last minute. Otherwise, the implementation of the communications plan was spread among the Task Force members with each member taking ownership of the part of the plan that was directly related to him or her. This increased the group identity of the Hispanic Wellness Fair and bonded Task Force members to the Fair itself, focusing on the goal.

2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair Results

Following the almost year-long effort to plan, coordinate, and implement the communications program for the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair, more than 400 bilingual volunteers were recruited to provide interpretation services for service providers who lacked Spanish-language skills. Based on Fair administrator reports, approximately 16,000 people attended the six-hour long Fair, which included more than 20,000 services and screenings provided to participants from more than 120 providers. Services had expanded from the Fair's original offerings to include vision exams, prostate cancer screenings, HIV/AIDS tests, respiratory screenings, dental exams, mammograms, glucose tests, immunizations for children, diabetes screenings, nutrition screenings, bicycle safety clinics, free school supplies, and live entertainment for the children. With these added services and additional people in attendance, the Fair had reached its maximum capacity for the venue in just seven years.

As participants exited the Hispanic Wellness Fair through the main entrance, an intercept survey was distributed to 116 people, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. by two Fair organizers. Everyone who was approached to fill out a survey completed the survey. Seventy-four of the returned surveys or 64% were in Spanish, and 42 or 36% of the surveys were in English. More than half of the people who filled out the survey, 63%, were first time attendees of the Hispanic Wellness Fair. Almost all of the survey participants, 97%, said they would be interested in attending the Fair again in 2006.

Other	41 (38.0%)
TV	35 (32.4%)
FWISD flyer	12 (11.1%)
Flyer	6 (5.6%)
Health Department staff	6 (5.6%)
Radio	6 (5.6%)
Bus sign	1 (.9%)
Posters	1 (.9%)

Figure 1 How Attendees Heard About the Fair

In Figure 1, 35 people said they had heard about the Hispanic Wellness Fair from television or 32.4% of survey respondents. Twelve people or 11.1% said they had heard about the Hispanic Wellness Fair from the flyer sent to Fort Worth ISD. Six people or 5.6% said they had heard about the Hispanic Wellness Fair from the Public Health Department staff, a flyer, or the radio. One person or 0.9% said he or she had heard about the Fair from a bus sign or poster. The largest group of respondents, 41 or 38%, said they had found out about the Hispanic Wellness Fair from a source other than the one's listed on the survey. Figure 2 provides a list of "Other sources."

• Authority housing	• La Estrella	• TV & School Flyer
• Bethlehem Center	• Neighbor	• TV, Newspaper, Church
• Church	• Newspaper	• TV, Radio & School Flyer
• Family	• Organization who had display	• TV, Radio, & Newspaper
• Friend	• Passing by	• TV, Radio, & Family
• Gran Fiesta de Fort Worth	• Radio & Health Dept Staff	• TV, School Bulletin & Flyers
• HISPA	• Restaurant Flyer	• Water bill
• KISD Flyer	• TV & Flyers	• WIC

Figure 2 Specific sources for “Other” Category

Discussion

“The reason the Fair has grown is community trust. We treat everybody and anybody who comes,” according to Fair co-founder Robert Galvan (Campus Connection, July/August 2004). While that may be the prevailing thought of co-founder Galvan, the survey of participants from the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair shows that it is the multi-dimensional approach to marketing and community relations that made the Hispanic Wellness Fair a success in 2005. With more than half of the survey participants indicating they were first time attendees (See Figure 3), it is clear that increased marketing efforts were effective.

First time	69 (63%)
Twice	16 (14%)
Three times	11 (10%)
More than three times	11 (10%)
Don't know	3 (3%)

Figure 3 How many times have you attended the Hispanic Wellness Fair?

Because many people seemed to be getting the message from multiple venues, the blanketed marketing approach that the Market Task Force took for the 2005 Fair was

effective. However, from a purely anecdotal perspective, word-of-mouth did seem to be an important communication tactic. While working at the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair, I talked with more than 20 people who said they had come to the Fair because they heard about it from a family member or friend. In community relations, word-of-mouth marketing is a powerful resource that cannot be matched through other standard means of marketing or public relations.

Public relations practitioners have recommended that public relations programs that target special publics, such as the Hispanic community, be undertaken with a community relations focus and operational structure (Hendrix and Hays, 2007). Since this particular type of public relations project was already a community relations project, its focus and operational structure were designed to be successful. Because this was the case, the marketing and public relations efforts that were implemented by Gonzalez and Galvan were innate. The two of them had spent years working in community relations as public health directors, so they were familiar with the ways to make a community-oriented health program work. Had this program had a different focus, such as external relations, the results might have been different.

Conclusions

The Hispanic Wellness Fair was so successful because of the co-founders. Their integration in the medical and Hispanic communities allowed the Fair to attract the healthcare providers needed and the participants who needed them. A concerted effort to include Hispanic media significantly increased the attendance at the Fair, and a drive to stay grassroots with a focus on community kept people on the Marketing Task Force from year-to-year. The way this case study unfolded lends credence to textbook instruction on communicating with multicultural markets. Hendrix and Hayes (2007)

suggest that when public relations practitioners communicate with particular groups, the resultant campaign should take the form of a community relations campaign, with the target group serving as the community. That's exactly the approach taken with the Hispanic Wellness Fair, and that's what made the marketing effort so effective—the cofounders and the Marketing Task Force were able to be at home with the Hispanic community in Fort Worth. Organizers reached out, and the Hispanic community embraced the Fair, resulting in an award-winning campaign.

Suggestions for Further Research

This qualitative analysis in the form of a case study reviewed the 2005 Hispanic Wellness Fair. Performing a similar study of current marketing efforts of the Hispanic Wellness Fair would provide additional information of value when reviewing community relations and multicultural relations aimed at the Hispanic market. As multicultural relations becomes an even larger part of public relations efforts, based on demographic changes within the United States, this area of study will become increasingly important.

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**Note: The new Hispanic Wellness Fair website is at <http://www.hispanicwellnessfair.org>.