



Case Study

Meta Un Gool Reciclando | Enhancing Recycling in the Hispanic Community

In 2004, the City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services, one of 14 departments, was responsible for weekly collection for over half a million residents. Operating within a managed competition business structure, the department constantly needed to improve business processes for competitive costs. Based on analytical insights from recycling tonnages, garbage disposal costs, and Census data, the department pinpointed the north service zone for a campaign to increase recycling participation. Of the two campaigns planned - one for Hispanics and another for non-Hispanics, this study delves into the Hispanic-targeted effort.

Goals:

The primary goal was a robust 33.4% surge in recycling participation within the north zone's Hispanic community, aiming for a comprehensive 2.5% uptick in the entire north zone. This was not only intended to curb garbage disposal expenses but also aimed to uplift operational efficiency and produce a positive environmental impact.

Execution:

Recognizing the intrinsic values and cultural insights of the Hispanic community was paramount. With the aid of a Hispanic consultant and an internal review team, the plan was shaped around the community's deep love for family, children, soccer, faith, and religion.

Strategic highlights included:

1. Merging the Hispanic community's passion for soccer with recycling.

2. Rallying support from organizations in touch with the Hispanic populace.
3. Crafting designs that resonated with popular culture.
4. Introducing illustrations for the CURB IT! program.
5. Steering messages towards family, church, and moral values.

The theme, **Meta Un G-O-O-O-L Reciclando** (Score A Goal By Recycling), encapsulated these sentiments. Several tactics were employed, like community presentations, outreach partnerships, collateral distribution, and media placements.

Results:

The campaign's efficacy was assessed through the broader objective of increasing recycling in the north zone. The target was ambitious - a 33.4% increase within the Hispanic demographic. The Double Oaks Apartment complex, housing over 80% Hispanic occupancy, was chosen as a benchmark. From a baseline of 0% participation in September, the initiative spurred a 12% average boost in recycling by January 2005.

Apart from the tangible results, the Meta Un Gool campaign secured accolades, bagging Best of Show in the 2005 IABC Crown Awards and attaining runner-up status in the International City/County Manager Awards. Its innovative approach also garnered attention in industry publications and was presented as a webinar.

Conclusion:

The Meta Un Gool Reciclando campaign is a testament to tailored community engagement's power. By intertwining cultural values with environmental initiatives, the City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services carved a unique and impactful pathway in promoting sustainable practices within a significant community segment.

