



Speaking to Multicultural California: Ethnic Media as an Effective Channel

What Is Ethnic Media?

Ethnic media outlets (EMOs) are part of the media ecosystem. As mission-driven organizations, they provide news and information catered to diverse audiences in many different languages and formats, including TV, radio, newspapers, websites, and social media.

What Are Ethnic Media's Key Roles?

Ethnic media creators wear many hats. They are, first and foremost, **journalists**. They make the news relatable to their audience. They show how current events are directly impacting their communities and often focus on issues overlooked by mainstream media. As **social activists**, ethnic media creators spotlight disparities and make certain that under-represented voices become part of the conversation. Ethnic media creators are also **recorders of history**, highlighting what is important in multicultural California and preserving their perspectives for future generations.

Why Partner with Ethnic Media?

1. Community news outlets have strong ties to the community. They **reach large and often bypassed audiences**, including many underserved, monolingual communities.
2. Ethnic media creators highlight the work CBOs are doing and **amplify community voices**. They also help synchronize those voices when it really matters.
3. Because they understand the historical, social and emotional context, communities are more receptive to messages received through ethnic media. Ethnic media are well-positioned to share essential information and **enhance public awareness**.
4. As trusted messengers, ethnic media outlets can also help **combat misinformation**.

What Ethnic Media is Saying and Doing

How do ethnic media strengthen the work of CBOs?

Regina: News outlets help us focus on things and lift them up higher so that you can break through the noise...The stuff that really hits home is when everybody is talking about one thing at one time. It's coordinated in a sense that if I am talking about Stop the Hate, I can talk about Stop the Hate on a lot of different levels. If we're talking about Shot of Faith and COVID, we now get to see it from all these different perspectives. And that is the uniqueness of what ethnic media can do. I believe that CBOs have the opportunity to work with us to build relationships in communities so that our voices can be heard.

Action Brief

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This **Action Brief** is a product of the series "**Learning Labs: From Discovery to Action**." It is based on the third session, held on March 10, 2023, and features excerpts from a discussion with Regina Brown Wilson, Executive Director, California Black Media; Lisa Collins, Founder and Publisher, L.A. Focus; and Julian Do, Co-Director, Ethnic Media Services. Recordings are in [English](#), [Spanish](#) and ASL.

What is an example of how ethnic media outlets have elevated public health concerns?

Lisa: There was a story in the Black community, and I think ethnic media covered it too, about Black maternal health, about Black women in the hospital whose pain is ignored and who have lost their lives giving birth because doctors ignored them. Elevating that story has taught them and the community that they have to be advocates...Now people are more aware. And with that awareness, there are fewer people going into the hospital and just blindly accepting that their pain is normal. It is not normal. So, in that respect, our stories help to save lives.

What are some innovative projects you've recently worked on?

Julian: EMS (Ethnic Media Services) has organized many roundtable meetings between ethnic media outlets, CBOs and government agencies to understand each other's work. Hate stems from lack of understanding and appreciating each other's cultures. We have facilitated cross-cultural reporting...Covering each other's communities is a way of introducing each other and showing how we are so much alike given we have so many common interests and concerns. [Our] stories show you can cross boundaries and people find happiness and we can overcome differences. These are inspirational stories to encourage people to get to know each other. And we believe that leads to more understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures.

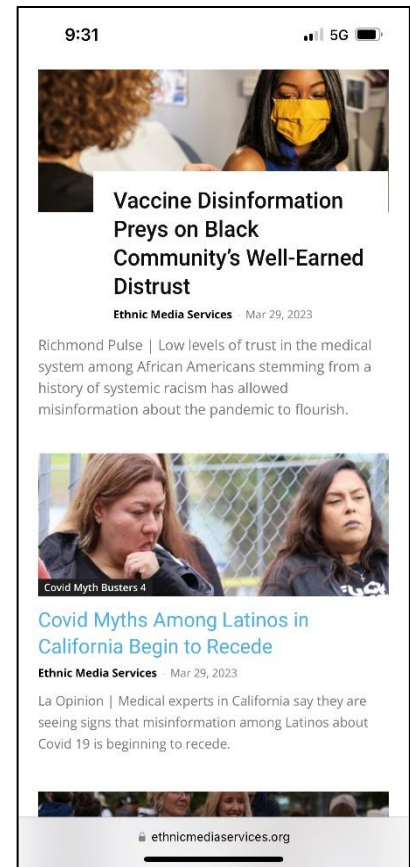
Lisa: Most have a misconception that they can reach the African American community, particularly through mainstream media. Mainstream media plays a role, but there is a critical difference in what Black media does...The news impacting us is news that the mainstream community doesn't always cover or doesn't see as important or relative to social justice or to Black folks...We are close to the news, to the stories we write. We know all of the players in the community. And so we are able to provide the best story and the best coverage.

What is the best way to approach ethnic media as partners?

Julian: I have a cheat sheet, a national and California [directory of ethnic media outlets](#) and the national directory is coming soon. And you can go to where there is a concentration of [ethnic] businesses (markets and restaurants). There are bound to be some newspaper racks. Many of these media now also have their own websites or social media accounts. By doing research on the internet, you can find these media outlets in your area. And you can contact them. They are very friendly...They know the information in and out of their own communities. If they don't have the answers, they know somebody in the community they can refer you to.

Regina: Reach out to us so that we can help best match you. We'll be able to put you in touch with the media so it makes sense, making sure we get it to the right places so the right eyeballs see it...We are all connected to this office [OPCSC] now, which is so wonderful. And I think this matchmaking is going to make it even more powerful with us working together.

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The Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications,

housed within the Office of Planning and Research, initiates and executes campaigns related to the state's highest priority public awareness and community outreach efforts. The intent of a single state entity coordinating California's most important campaigns is so that the state can realize more inclusive and effective outcomes while preventing equity gaps in statewide outreach.