

Social Media as a Tool to Deliver Construction Safety Messages to Latino Workers

Using social media to inform Latino construction workers about fall protection

Todd Wolfson and Barbara Rahke. CPWR Report, January 2015.

Overview

Latino construction workers face higher than average fatalities on construction sites. However, these workers are difficult to reach with occupational health and safety information: many are isolated from conventional communications networks by poor English language skills, a lack of legal status, and/or irregular employment conditions. Researchers sought to explore whether they could use social media to connect more effectively with this hard-to-reach audience. Between January and August 2014, the team used email, text messaging and Facebook to deliver messages regarding the Campaign to Prevent Falls in Construction, then assessed workers' response and engagement.

Key Findings

- Short SMS (text) messages to workers on their cell phones, especially those sent during work hours, generated a positive response, as reflected in “open rates” for the messages and subsequent interviews with the recipients.
- Email results were less promising. “Open rates” for safety messages emailed to this audience were low to start, and dropped further in course of the campaign.
- Messages delivered through a Spanish-language facebook page on the campaign found a wide “reach,” but more limited “engagement” (“likes,” “shares,” etc.). Further study is needed to clarify longer-term growth trends and impact.
- Social media messaging is most effective when augmented with face-to-face work as part of an integrated campaign.
- Traditional media remain important for this audience. Many workers reporting streaming the Spanish language broadcast *Philatinos* over their phones, and/or reading the local Spanish-language newspaper *El Sol*.

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Read the full report:

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