

# **Computadoras al Alcance de Todos:**

**Successful Computer Literacy Programs for  
Spanish Speakers at Three California Libraries**

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# Why Present on this Topic?

“Latinos comprise 14% of the U.S. adult population and about half of this growing group (56%) goes online. By comparison, 71% of non-Hispanic whites and 60% of non-Hispanic blacks use the internet.”

Source: Latinos Online. 2007. Pew Internet Project.

[http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/204/report\\_display.asp](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/204/report_display.asp)

***Libraries and Librarians can help bridge  
this “Latino” digital divide!***

***¡Juntos Si Podemos!***





## Goals of this presentation:

- That you feel motivated to create a computer literacy program in Spanish at your library if you don't have one already.
- That you learn new tools and practices to improve and expand your library's existing computer literacy program in Spanish.

# I. Starting a Computer Literacy Program in Spanish at your library.

**First of all, consider the following:**



*Are there any community organizations outside the library already offering computer classes in Spanish? Are they free?*

*How large is the demand for computer classes in Spanish in your community? What type of computer classes are needed? Group? One-on-one?*

# Getting Support for the Program:

## Become an Advocate for Computer Classes in Spanish at your Library:



- Ask Spanish speaking patrons to fill out library feedback forms asking for Computer classes in Spanish.
- Get support from your colleagues.

## Justify the Program to your Library Supervisors and Administrators:

- **Cite recent research:** *Pew Internet's Latinos Online & ALA's Serving Non-English Speakers in Public Libraries*

**Your Main Argument: No computer skills means no access to the library catalog or databases.**



## Six Steps for Implementing the Program:

- **Secure Computer Space:** must be a place where other computer users are not disturbed.
- **Recruit bilingual tutors:** it is best to begin with library staff. Later on, you can recruit volunteers to teach.
- **Set an accessible schedule:** survey interested patrons about best times.
- **Write a teaching plan or curriculum and become familiar with available teaching tools:** Books (of course!), Mouse tutorials in Spanish online, Webjunction.org, etc.
- **Prepare Forms:** Student Profile, Sign up Sheet, Computer Vocabulary.
- **Market the Program:** Take flyers to schools and community organizations that serve Latinos and immigrants.

## II. How to be an effective and sensitive computer tutor for Spanish speakers.

### What to do first

- Fit the lesson to the student's needs: is it Internet or Word processing that they want to learn?
- Find out how much knowledge the student knows already and build on that. Provide student questionnaire.
- Start with a basic Spanish-English computer vocabulary
- One-on-one vs. group computer tutoring



**Their Need will be their motivation to learn!**

# Dissipate the Fear of Computers



- Be welcoming and introduce yourself
- Encourage them to feel and touch the computer and its parts
- Tell them that they do not need to know English to operate a computer

Let them know that it's OK to make mistakes

# Make Learning Divertido!

- **Use mouse tutorials and typing tutorials available online**
- **Tell stories about how much fun you had looking for information – find pictures of their hometowns.**
- **Show them websites in Spanish, newspapers in Spanish online, and Latino entertainment news.**



# III. Teaching “Springboard Skills”

## What are the Obstacles to Learning?

- Technological apprehension
- Extenuating circumstances



# E-mail

- Computer literacy
- Staying connected
- Branching out



# Types of Programs



- What?
- When?
- Where?

## **IV. Latinos and the Internet: The information they seek and the tools they need to find it**



- **It's about survival! Economic, educational, legal, medical, etc!**
- **Break them in with search sites like Google that have Spanish interfaces.**
- **Email is a necessity for submitting resumes. Yahoo.com or google.com are great for beginners.**

# Latinos and the Internet

- State employment websites have Spanish interfaces in many cases: [www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov) – California's site
- Sites like [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org) are great for posting offers of service. As well, students can look for community agencies that help with employment and survival issues.
- Do your research to find the local community support social agencies websites. Point them out to your students.



# Latinos and the Internet

- **Maps and images are fun. They give a sense of the extent of the cyberworld:**

[www.maps.google.com](http://www.maps.google.com)

[www.images.google.com](http://www.images.google.com)



- **Teach students how to set search engine preference to Spanish & English languages.**

# Latinos and the Internet

- **Tell parents they need to learn as their children will definitively be on the Internet.**
- **<http://medlineplus.gov/spanish/> is a great general health website. Try their tutorials in Spanish! (Tutoriales Interactivos de Salud)**
- **Emphasize their right to health, services, and information. Teach the internet as an empowerment tool!**



# Questions, Answers and Sharing

