



# Count Me In!

*A Census 2020 Project*



## Tell Your Story!

*A guide to creating an  
AWARENESS and ACTION  
campaign for the  
2020 Census*



**Sacramento**  
Office of Education **County**



**Los Angeles County**  
Office of Education

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## Tell your story!

We've all been there. You have something important to say, but don't know how to say it. Consider these simple tips to create a message that will raise awareness and inspire action!

## START HERE

### What's your message?

To create a good campaign, you have to nail down your message. What is it exactly that you want your audience to know? Why do they need to know it?

### What's the purpose of your message?

You've got your audience, you've got your message, now you have to figure out what is the purpose of your message? Do you just want to make people more aware of something, we call that AWARENESS BUILDING, or do you want them to do something? That's a CALL TO ACTION. Both are very important, but both have different approaches. And don't worry, your message can have both! It is common for a campaign to build awareness (Did you know...?) AND call to action (Here's what you can do about it!)

### Who's your audience?

If you want to create a memorable and informative campaign, you have to know who it is you're speaking to. Different groups of people might need the same information, but the message has to be presented in a way that is most appealing and geared toward them. Once you have your audience identified, you're on your way!

### What's your angle?

Every good campaign has an angle, something that will hook an audience in to pay attention to you. Some groups respond better to a funny or comical campaign while others like a more serious tone. Equally important, some topics work better with different angles. Using the wrong angle on your audience can result in a less than successful campaign.

*finally*

### What's the best way to deliver your campaign?

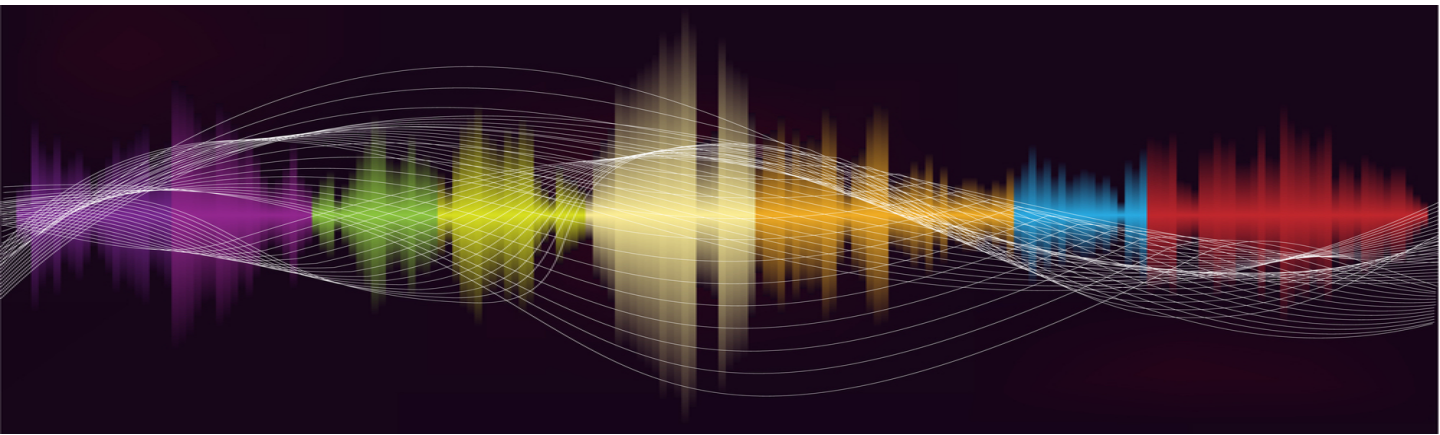
So you've identified your audience, clarified your message, and identified your angle. Now comes the final step before you actually create your campaign: Figuring out the best way to actually get your message across. Should you create a poster? A video? Podcast? A letter to the editor? Social media campaign? Each one of these can be an effective way to raise awareness about your issue and call people to action, but selecting which one is best for your particular audience is critical to the success of your campaign. A social media campaign to an audience without internet access will simply not be effective. Choose wisely!

# What's your message?







To create a good campaign, you have to nail down your message.

What is it *exactly* that you want your audience to know? Why do they need to know it?



To help develop your message,  
consider these questions:

-  **Start with the WHY.** Why are you interested in bringing about the change that you want? What will be better if the change takes place? What will happen if it doesn't?
-  **Most important points.** What are the THREE most important things that people need to know about your issue?
-  **What can WE do?** What are some things that people can do to help make a positive change?
-  **The elevator speech.** If you had a 30 second elevator ride with someone, and you were trying to educate them about your topic, what would you say?

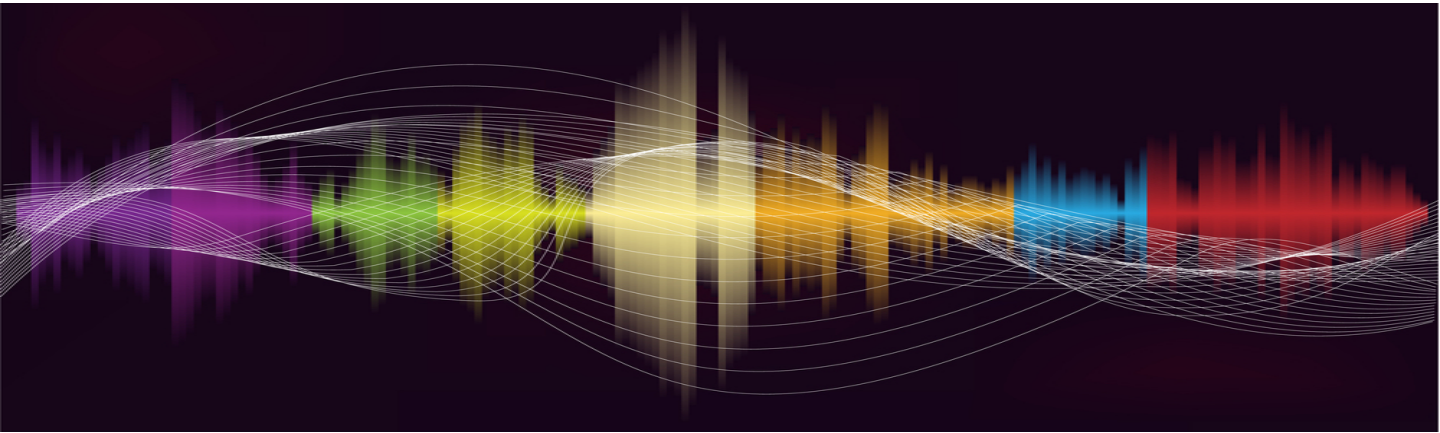


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✓ **Our topic: Making sure that everyone is counted in the 2020 Census**

✓ **Why should people care about being counted?**

✓ **What are the THREE MOST IMPORTANT things people should know about the census?**

☐☐☐

✓ **What can people do to make sure they're counted in the 2020 Census?**

✓ **In 20 words or less, why is it important to be counted in the 2020 Census?**







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**To help identify your target audience,  
consider these questions:**

-  Who has the most to lose if there's an undercount in the 2020 Census?
-  What does this group already know about the Census?
-  Who has (or could have) the most influence or power to help meet your goal?
-  Is there a specific age range of individuals that you'd like to target?
-  What does this group of people value?
-  What concerns does this group of people have about the Census?

# Who's your audience?

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Who has the most to lose if there's an undercount in the 2020 Census?



Can this group do something to make sure they're counted? If not, who can help them be counted?



What does this group of people value?



How does this group get their information (about news, their friends, the world)?


# What's the purpose of your message?



You've got your audience, you've got your message, now you have to figure out what is the purpose of your message? Do you just want to make people more aware of something, we call that **AWARENESS BUILDING**, or do you want them to do something? That's a **CALL TO ACTION**. Both are very important, but both have different approaches. And don't worry, your message can have both! It is common for a campaign to build awareness (Did you know...?) **AND** call to action (Here's what you can do about it!)




**To help you identify the PURPOSE of your message, consider these questions:**


 **Do people generally know about your issue? Do they know enough to talk about it with one of their friends?**

If 'no' then you might have to start with an **AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**. They have to know about it to care about it. And care about it to act on it.

If 'yes', then you could be good to develop a **CALL TO ACTION**.

 **Does your audience feel the same way you do about your issue?**  
If 'no' then your **AWARENESS CAMPAIGN** should be designed to bring your audience to your side. If your audience shares your views on the problem, then they're more willing to move to action.

If 'yes', then your **CALL TO ACTION** can take advantage of that support to mobilize their networks.

 If the purpose of your message is to **RAISE AWARENESS**, then you have to craft a message that will give people enough information to understand the issue, care about it, and want to act on it.

If your message is meant as a **CALL TO ACTION**, then you have to be specific about that action. What is it *exactly* that you want your audience to do about your issue? If you want them to write a letter, make sure to tell them who to send it to. If you're starting a social media campaign, use a common hashtag that is unique and memorable (more about that later...).

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To help you identify the **PURPOSE** of your message, consider these questions:



What does your audience know about the Census? Do they know:

- ☐ what the census is used for?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
- ☐ why a complete count is important?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
- ☐ how to complete their Census document (or complete it online)?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
- ☐ what's at stake if there isn't a complete count in the 2020 Census?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No

If you marked 'No' for most of these questions, then consider creating an **AWARENESS CAMPAIGN** before calling your audience to action.

If most are marked 'Yes', then your audience might be ready for a **CALL TO ACTION**.



Does your audience feel the same way about your issue as you do?

- ☐ **Yes** – Your message and campaign should focus on using this to call them to action.
- ☐ **No** – Find out why they don't agree with you and focus your message on having them see the importance of your side.



**Awareness Campaign:** What information does your audience need to support your effort?

**Call to Action:** What specific action(s) do you want your audience to take?



# What's your angle?



Every good campaign has an angle, something that will hook an audience in to pay attention to you. Some groups respond better to a funny or comical campaign while others like a more serious tone. Equally important, some topics work better with different angles. Using the wrong angle on your audience can result in a less than successful campaign.



**To figure out the best angle to engage your TARGET AUDIENCE with your MESSAGE, consider these questions:**



**Would your audience appreciate a message with humor?**

Though your topic is serious, for some audiences, humor is a good way to get their attention and get them to listen to your message. If your topic is a very serious one (like school violence, or something dealing with a painful subject, for example), DO NOT use humor. This will appear insensitive and your audience will not listen to your message.



**Is your audience interested in facts and figures?**

For some audiences, the best way to get their attention (and support) is to very simply tell them the facts and figures (numbers) that describe your topic. If they see that not taking your action will end up losing their community money, and you tell them how much they can lose, then you'll grab their attention and they'll listen to the rest of your message.



**Just about every audience likes to hear a real-life story.**

Whether it's a story about someone who has been affected by your topic or a story about someone who has taken the action you're promoting, your message should always look at the 'human' angle. Using humor or giving your audience the hard facts may grab their attention, but almost everyone is drawn to a personal story. If they can see someone that looks like them or could be their neighbor telling them about your topic, more often than not, they'll pay attention.

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**To figure out the best angle to engage your TARGET AUDIENCE with your MESSAGE, consider these questions:**

## **Humor**

Is humor appropriate for your message and audience?

Can you take a humorous angle without appearing insensitive or disrespectful?

How can you do this? Give an example:

## **By the Numbers**

What are the most important data (facts and figures) about the census to present to your audience? What's the best way to present these data?

## **A real-life story**

Is there someone who can talk about their past experiences with the Census?

What would you want them to tell people about the Census?

**For our audience, our message or campaign should include:**

☐ Humor ☐ Data (facts and figures) ☐ Personal Story ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

# What's the best way to deliver your message?



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**To help you identify the best way to deliver your message to your target audience using the appropriate angle, consider these questions :**



## **How does your audience typically communicate with each other?**

While just about everyone has access to the internet and social media, if your audience doesn't use those platforms, it wouldn't make sense to create a social media campaign targeted toward them. If your audience DOES use social media to communicate with each other, then a social media campaign could be the perfect way to get your message across.

For some audiences, newspaper articles or letters to the editor will be better received than a Public Service Announcement (PSA). What's the easiest way to figure out how your target audience communicates? ASK THEM! Often, simply asking the group you're targeting how they would want to hear your message will give you all the direction you need.



## **Would something visual help you convey your message more effectively?**

If your message contains a lot of facts and figures, then it might be best to display them on a screen (like in a PSA) or in a poster. Sometimes seeing the data in a graph or pie chart can show how important your issue is.

Also, if your message includes a story about someone who is affected by your topic, it might be powerful for people to see that person speaking, or at least to hear the story in their own voice.

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Take some time to review the earlier pages of this guide. Based on your message, the purpose of your message, your identified audience, and the angle that will best interest your audience, what are the best ways to deliver your message?

## Public Service Announcement (PSA):

A message created and distributed with the objective of raising awareness of, and changing public attitudes and behavior towards, a social issue. A PSA may also include a call to action. PSAs can be short videos or audio clips presenting your message.

## Informational poster or infographic:

A visual representation of your topic and issue, designed to quickly inform your audience of the important facts, statistics, or other information they need to raise their awareness about the topic or call them to action.

**Social Media Campaign:** A coordinated marketing effort to raise awareness about an issue or call individuals to action using one or more social media platforms.

Campaigns have a singular focus, are targeted to an audience, and may contain a variety of media (PSAs, infographics, etc.).

**Public Forum:** An event that brings together speakers or experts on a given topic where participants can learn about and discuss an issue and focus on solutions or actions that individuals can take to bring about change.

**Rally:** An event used to draw attention to an issue through public participation and through media coverage.