Discover D49 Magazine



COSPRA Golden Achievement

Community outreach and public engagement

Discover D49: The Magazine

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Discover D49: The Magazine







Summary of the program/project/campaign (300 words max)
Discover D49: The Magazine is a bi-annual public engagement initiative delivering in-depth coverage in a contemporary, periodical format, to all households within School District 49's 133 square mile boundary. The initiative targets primary stakeholders, in particular our neighbors and community members who support our district fiscally, but do not have a direct connection to the district and may not actively engage with our standard communication channels such as our website or social media feeds.

Research

- Total households in D49: 45,474 *Source: D49 Community and Facility Planning Manager/El Paso County Assessor
- Targeted households - resident, non-district connected: 29,733 (roughly 61%)
- Magellan Strategies survey conducted summer 2023
  - Just over half respondents in recent poll approve of job D49 does in educating students
  - Approximately 63% respondents in recent poll have a favorable opinion of D49

Planning and Implementation

The communications team relies on an established planning process that begins months ahead of publication. Planning includes researching design concepts, actively gathering reporting opportunities, meeting with school principals and managing a ticketing system that allows us to receive and evaluate requests for coverage. Early in the process we set a schedule with an external publisher, which manages printing and distribution of the final proof to the households within the district boundary. We have also added a short run of Spanish translated versions of Discover D49: The Magazine, for which we target distribution in partnership with D49 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education Department. Production costs are managed from the department's advertising budget, supported by sponsorships from local business partners.

Evaluation

We closely measure the success of our distribution rates by way of postal service tracking. Positive polling data is also an indicator of engagement and satisfaction with D49 among our resident stakeholders.







Detailed Summary and Supporting Documentation

Discover D49: The Magazine - Spring/Fall 2024

Situational Analysis

The magazine is one of our highest-profile communication vehicles, targeted to reach all households within our 133 square mile boundary. The D49 Communications Department leads all SPRA-related efforts for traditional stakeholder groups including our workforce, parents and students, all of whom have a direct connection to School District 49 through work and enrollment. We determined a need for this engagement initiative to provide direct reporting all households– in particular our neighbors and community members who support our district fiscally, but do not have a direct connection to the district and may not actively engage with our standard communication channels such as our website or social media feeds. By simply taking the short walk to their mailbox, our supporting community will learn through top-notch reporting, photography and design how D49 is working hard every day to enrich the lives of young learners through rigorous academics and engaging activities while they plot their individual pathway to success.

Relevant Data

- Students served by D49 portfolio of educational choices is 26,000 >
- 61% of households are resident stakeholders: Community who fiscally support the district, but do not regularly receive direct comms
  - Targeted households - resident, non-district connected: 29,733 (roughly 61%) *Souce: D49 Community and Facility Planning Manager
- 39% households within district boundaries receive direct communication from their school and district
  - Included in magazine distribution

Planning and Implementation

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Overview: Timeline, Planning and Implementation

*Note: planning timelines for each edition follow rhythm outlined below

August 2024

- Newsstand periodical review - design and layout research for concept inspiration
- Initial story request/idea evaluation
- Notify publisher to set publication dates

September 2024

- Comm check-ins - Regular, in-person meetings scheduled by the comms team at every D49 campus – A cross section of school staff including campus leadership are invited to attend and discuss topics to report
- Evaluate requests submitted via Comm Plan portal
- Initial editorial meeting and assignments
- Story assignments must include the following topics
  - Superintendent message
  - Student profile (individual)
  - Workforce profile (individual)
  - Student and staff recognition
  - Keeping up with alumni
  - By the Numbers
  - Arts in the schools
  - Athletics
- Schedule interviews and photos
- Where Are They Now - Alumni Outreach



October 2024

- Check in editorial meetings (October 9, 11)
- Deadline: Photos and writing (October 11)
- Proofing (October 14)
- Design and Layout (October 14 - 20)
- Final proof to publisher (October 21)
- Distribution - All mailboxes in D49 footprint (October 28)

November 2024

- Spanish translation - (small run)
- Proof Spanish translation
- Final proof to publisher
- Distribution - Spanish translation
- Cost considerations Production costs are managed from the department's advertising budget, supported by sponsorships from local business partners.

Final Products

Discover D49: The Magazine - Spring 2024 (Issue 6) [Google Drive Link]
Discover D49: The Magazine - Spring 2024 (Spanish) [Google Drive Link]
Discover D49: The Magazine - Fall 2024 (Issue 7) [Google Drive Link]
Discover D49: The Magazine - Fall 2025 (Spanish) [Google Drive Link]



Setting Up Multilingual Students For Success

"I'm interested in other people's opinions and experiences. I also want to share my experiences."

Faviola Gomez Garcia

By Joel Quevillon

Faviola Gomez Garcia grew up in Mexico and has been in Colorado for less than a year. When she enrolled at Falcon High School this semester she took a language proficiency test.

"We are required by the State of Colorado to gather a body of evidence to review a student's language profile," said Grant Geis, Coordinator of D49's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE). "That survey asks questions about a student's language background. Like, what is the first language they learned? What language is primarily used at home?"

At the time of enrollment all new students are required to complete the home language survey. Any answer other than English lets the CLDE department know further testing and investigating is needed.

"The language proficiency test is not easy, and I wonder how many English proficient students would pass it," Geis said. "It demands listening to extended speech and then answering questions you don't know are going to come up. It requires students to write, using their best academic vocabulary and grammatical structures. They have to speak in complete sentences."

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Evaluation

Indicators of success:

- Per issue tracking of delivery rates and impressions - 40,000-plus households receive editions via USPS
- Cross promotion on social media channels earns consistent likes and shares
- Tracking replies for requests for copies has allowed us to expand our reach beyond our targeted audience
- Overall positive polling data (Magellan Strategies, 2023 - 60% of those surveyed have a favorable opinion of D49) is also an indicator of engagement and satisfaction with D49 among our resident stakeholders

Additional Evaluation:

- Based on feedback from previous SPRA reviews the communications team implemented the following improvements:
  - Enhanced our design strategy by adding a research tactic into our planning phase, reviewing similar, popular periodicals for concept inspiration
  - Added more visuals, showcasing photography in our layout choices
  - Enhanced infographic design
- In the spring of 2024 we added a limited run of Discover D49: The Magazine translated into Spanish, targeting distribution in partnership with D49 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education Department.
- The CLDE team paired the communications team with licensed interpreters to oversee the translation
- Using available demographic data in the SIS, the CLDE hand-delivered editions to Spanish speaking families served by School District 49

An audience survey for the Fall 2025 edition is in the development stages