



The National e-Commerce Extension Initiative Announces 2010 – 2011 Mini-Grant Program

The National e-Commerce Extension Initiative under the direction of The Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) is pleased to announce new quarterly rounds of funding to help foster the implementation of its e-commerce curricula products. Land-Grant University (LGU) Extension educators or teams (involving both Extension and non-Extension partners) are invited to submit workshop proposals outlining how their workshop will introduce one of the e-commerce educational curricula that the National e-Commerce Extension Initiative has released. These resources are intended to expand the adoption of e-commerce strategies by communities, small/micro businesses, and entrepreneurs across the country. The maximum amount allowed for any proposal is \$3,000.

Quarterly Proposal Submission Date - Notification of Award

Wednesday, October 27, 2010 - Friday, November 12, 2010
Wednesday, January 26, 2011 - Friday, February 11, 2011
Wednesday, April 27, 2011 - Friday, May 13, 2011
Wednesday, July 27, 2011 - Friday, August 12, 2011

For further information and the complete RFP please go to:
<http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/grants/minigrants.html>

Got Security Concerns?

Whether you are a one-person business or have multiple employees, the newest learning module to the National e-Commerce Extension Initiative's Learning Center has something for you. The video series, [The Security Squad: Keeping your Equipment and Information Safe](#) is a learning module that was developed to address the main areas of equipment and data security. The goal of the security plan is not to completely eliminate all risks at whatever cost, but to develop a system that helps to minimize the risks and potential losses to the company and its employees.

Developed by the University of Nebraska team of Marilyn Schlake, Connie Hancock, Diane Becker, Mike Hendricks and with video production by Mike Kamm the new learning module brings together an informative and entertaining video series with practical worksheets, that create a workable in-house security plan. To learn more or to access to the complete learning module go to: <http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/learningcenter>

Advisory Board Expanded

The National e-Commerce Extension Initiative would like to welcome the newest members of its Advisory Board.

- Monica Babine, Washington State University
- Jenny Fertig, West Virginia State University
- Andrew Lewis, University of Wisconsin
- Joel Schumacher, Montana State University
- Brian Whitacre, Oklahoma State University

Their agreement to serve and be part of our program growth has been met with much excitement and enthusiasm. They join an already very active team of Extension Educators who see the promise of e-commerce efforts as a means to create greater economic opportunity in rural communities across our nation. In addition to advising on programmatic issues and making funding proposal and budgetary decisions, this group provides a level of overall leadership that allows for program evolution and expansion in the ever changing world of technology and e-commerce. Welcome to the team.

In Focus: Hispanic Small Businesses and e-Commerce.

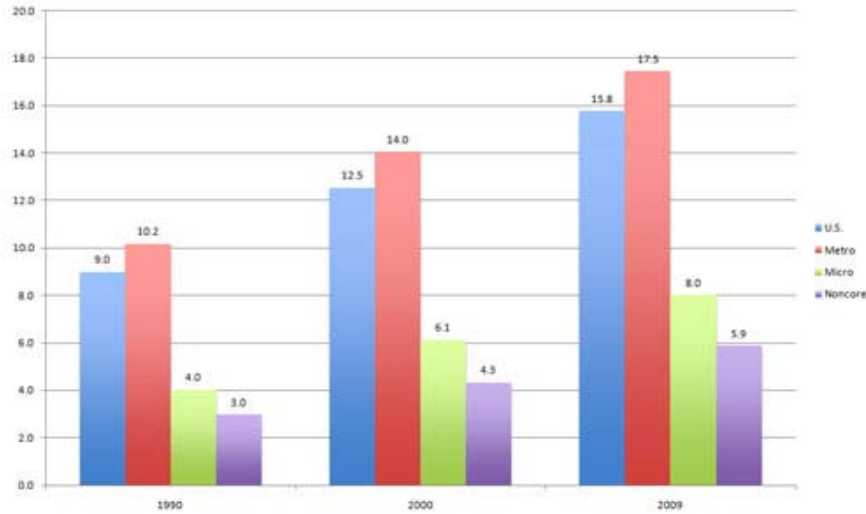
From the utilization of Census data, as shown below, it is easy to draw the conclusion that the Hispanic Community in rural areas is increasing in population. While the increase in Hispanic population across all areas is easy to conclude, expansion in rural areas brings about unique challenges and also high levels of new opportunity. As Hispanics migrate into rural areas, what arises is the need for businesses to service this new population. Because rural America is not always outfitted with specialty stores and marketing efforts designed for the ethnically Spanish shopper, many turn to e-commerce to meet their needs. Activities like ordering distinctive product lines, ordering in Spanish, and finding businesses in a geographic area that carry certain items are becoming online activities that require firms to be responsive to the Hispanic consumer.

Because this need was identified early on by many Extension Researchers and Educators in the e-commerce arena, the National e-Commerce Extension Initiative is outfitted with several resources to help small business and entrepreneurs meet the needs of an ethnically changing business landscape. These resources, available in both English and Spanish, are listed below with links for further investigation.

[Web site Basics: A Primer for Hispanic Small Businesses](#)

[Tutorías en Español](#)

Percent Hispanics of Total Population by Rurality
1990, 2000, and 2009



Contributed by Roberto Gallardo, Southern Rural Development Center

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Two-Thirds of U.S. Hispanics Go Online Monthly

Hispanics in the U.S. are now online in overwhelming numbers, and are taking full advantage of the Internet as a primary tool for finding and contributing information, researching and making purchases, being entertained, and networking with others, according to recent research from Ipsos. [View the latest demographics complete with charts.](#)

Best Practices for Engaging the Online Hispanic Market: An Interview with Best Buy's Ana Grace

Posted by Daniel Dahlman

Best Buy has long been a leader in successfully reaching Hispanics across multiple channels. The retail chain currently maintains a complete Spanish language site while also leveraging successful mobile, online, and traditional elements in their Spanish language marketing mix. Interviewing Best Buy's Hispanic Initiatives Site Manager, Ana Grace, to discuss the retail chain's strategy in engaging the Hispanic market can give many valuable insights into the Spanish Language customers' needs. [Access the full interview.](#)

Assuring Quality in the Language E-Commerce Customers Speak

By Chris Coles

It's not enough to provide multilingual customer service in a contact center if it doesn't meet the same standards as the service provided in the dominant language. In order to ensure a high-quality customer experience overall, it's important to develop procedures that will improve communications and encourage rapport, regardless of the language spoken – and to monitor actual outcomes. [Click here to review the complete article.](#)

Overcoming Challenges

The U.S. Hispanic and Latin American markets are made up of diverse and distinct cultures, nationalities, and contexts that require a great deal of sophistication and insight to approach and engage. Bilax, an online resource, helps organizations overcome these cultural and communication barriers to create an effective, meaningful, and memorable dialogue. [Learn more by visiting their site.](#)

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