

Diversifying the audience for **PUBLIC RADIO**

Insights from NPR's Black & Latinx Online Community

April 8, 2021



I: HOROWITZ

What we needed to learn:

NPR commissioned this research to help gain an in-depth understanding on perceptions, barriers, and opportunities around NPR programming and content among Black and Latinx audiences.

The learnings translate well for local public radio (and TV) stations.

What we did:



ONLINE INSIGHTS COMMUNITY
Sept. 21
TO
Nov. 22, 2020

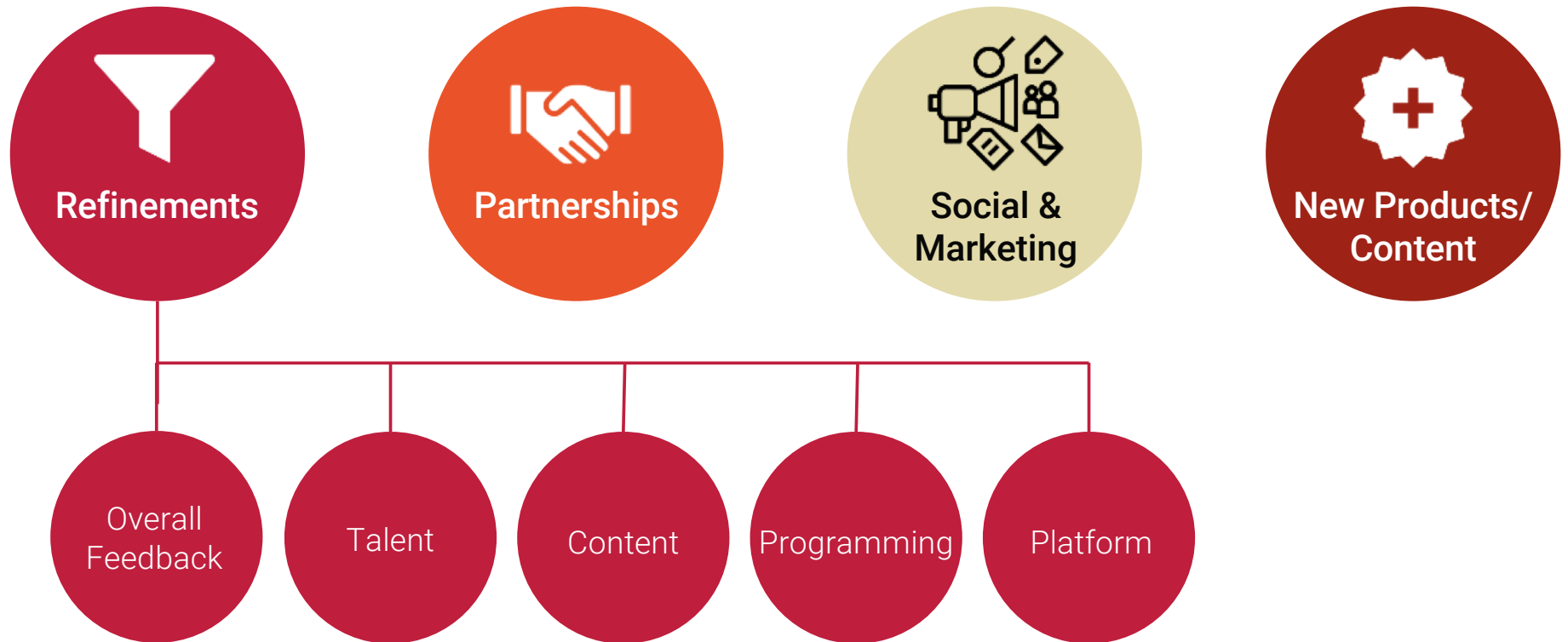


176 Black & Latinx news consumers
who are not regular users of NPR

95 Black, 73 bicultural/acculturated Latinx, 8 Afro-Latinx

- »» Ages 25-45
- »» NPR non-rejectors
- »» 40% hardly ever use; 60% never use

WHAT WE LEARNED



It's not only about diversifying. It's about being authentic and inclusive.

Talent should...

- » Use approachable, accessible language
- » Pay attention to tone
- » Be themselves

You should...

- » Normalize Black/Latinx inflection
- » Put multicultural talent in the public eye
- » Hire more young and also multicultural talent

Become a more diverse workforce at all levels of the organization

CONTENT REFINEMENT

By me.

POC POV ON **ALL** STORIES

- » Intersectional coverage
- » POC journalists/experts

For me.

UNDERSTAND THE **INTENDED AUDIENCE**

- » Assumptions about audience knowledge
- » Ex: Latinx voting, police brutality

About me.

TELL THE **RIGHT STORIES**

- » Celebrate, educate, empower
- » Balance negative and positive
- » Triggering themes

CONTENT REFINEMENT

The work of covering racial and social justice issues has only just begun.

Continuous coverage

Needs to be everywhere

All communities

Highlight intersectionality

“

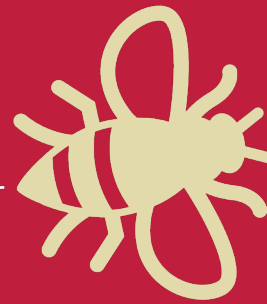
“I think race-related topics should be told in the media to educate people on racism. Not talking about it would be wrong. Don't tip toe around the race-related issues or pretend racism doesn't exist. Talk about it.” – Black Respondent

“I think they should tell the truth. I know this was a big year for social justice, particularly for Black people and I'm glad that White people are feeling the responsibility to also speak out against these injustices. I hope they support Latinos with the same intensity in the future.” – Latinx Respondent

MARKETING

The fragmentation of the media ecosystem is a major roadblock to discovery.

Public radio cannot rely on buzz.



**A REAL
MARKETING
STRATEGY
IS NEEDED**

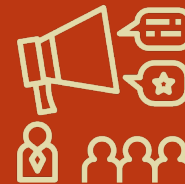
The marketing strategy for public radio needs to reinforce the core value it delivers to an audience who is largely unfamiliar.



Radio by, for,
and about
all of us



Truly “fair
and
balanced”



Public,
not
government

It's by and for the community.



Brand-building of talent and programs
representing and reflecting the diversity
of the communities you serve

MARKETING

Leverage local influencers for...



Promotion
of content



Shifting brand
perception



Generating
buzz



Generating
support

HOROWITZ



50 BLACK
INSTAGRAM
*Influencers to follow
right now!*



Become synergistic with the local diverse community



PROGRAMMING REFINEMENT

**Length, platform, and format
all need to be considered.**

Snackable yet thorough

Keep longer content concise

Understand platform usage

Video content is critical



**It is the preferred format for news-
especially for young people**

PLATFORM REFINEMENT



SEARCH &
DISCOVERY



OPTIMIZE
NAVIGATION &
ORGANIZATION



HYPER-LOCAL
CONTENT SECTIONS
(SPORTS?)



“PIZZAZZ”

“

“[NPR One App] I did not like that I am unable to filter because I have to read through all the names to see if there’s something that interests me.” – Latinx Respondent

“[NPR Website] I thought the structure of the website was effective, though it doesn’t have much pizzazz to it. It seems a bit bare bones, which works but isn’t anything special. It’s enough to get you through the site, but there isn’t much flair.” – Black Respondent

SOCIAL MEDIA

...Where public radio can be its best self.

Each platform has its own “raison d’etre”

It’s a synergistic relationship with linear/digital content

Hyper-local opportunities to engage

The more snackable, the better



Instagram



TikTok

New products/content:



LEAN INTO
VIDEO



HYPER-LOCAL



SOCIAL + DIGITAL
CONTENT

Last thoughts: To diversify the public radio audience, we must actively engage with diverse audiences where they are.

Your talent (journalists, reporters, experts, etc.) needs to authentically reflect (look like and sound like) the local audience it serves.

Offer intersectional content that celebrates, educates, and empowers its audience.

Must transition to being platform and format agnostic; while recognizing the power and importance of digital.

A transition towards video is critical.

Can't bet on organic marketing. Formal partnership, marketing, PR and distribution strategies are what will move the needle.



Thank you.

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