



avanze  
 decisión  
política 2008

¡El voto Hispano cuenta!

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Before the dust had even settled on the 2004 election that kept George W. Bush in office, the political punditry class had laid that victory squarely at the feet of Hispanics. Dick Morris, political strategist and former Bill Clinton advisor, penned an article for NewsMax on Friday of that same week, only three days post-election. The title? "The Hispanic Vote Elects Bush"<sup>1</sup>.

While a complete analysis of the polling data would later contest some of the assertions in Morris' article<sup>2</sup>, particularly regarding the Hispanic percentage of votes cast and the margin afforded to Bush vs. Kerry, the overall message remained clear. Hispanics present an important voting constituency in the United States and candidates for office ignore them at their own peril.

The objective of this paper is to provide an updated assessment of the state of mind of the Hispanic electorate, less than one-month before the kick-off of the 2008 election cycle at the Iowa Caucuses. A lot has happened in the past four years, particularly for the Hispanic population.

- The Iraq War started in 2003, will have lasted five and one-half years by Election Day in 2008. As Hispanics are disproportionately represented in the US Armed Forces, how will Hispanics react to proposals for continuing or ending the Iraq War?<sup>3</sup>
- A steadily growing economy has provided above-average wage and salary growth for Hispanics. Still, Hispanic households earn vastly less than their non-Hispanic counterparts. How will Hispanics react to candidates' economic proposals?<sup>4</sup>
- Immigration reform has come and largely gone, leaving in its wake an American population antagonized by anti-immigrant rhetoric and a Hispanic population disillusioned with a political process that sometimes seems to do more harm than good. Who, if anyone, do Hispanics trust to address this issue?

This paper explores past behavior and present attitudes with an eye toward how political parties and candidates can best speak to this population segment. Drawing on information gained from 539 telephone interviews among a representative sample of Hispanic registered voters in the top five Hispanic states (California, Texas, Florida, New York and Illinois), the observations in this paper give voice to an under-represented and often unheard group of Americans.

As is so often the case, it would be a mistake to assume that Hispanics are a monolithic voting bloc. Registered Hispanics are a wide and varied political constituency with divergent opinions on issue prioritization and policy prescriptions.

The data presented in this white paper show that, while Democrats are currently leading in the battle for presidential candidacy support, this race should not be a throw-away for the Republicans. Hillary Clinton may currently have the support of 42% of Hispanics, but a full 35% are yet undecided. Her support could wax or wane in the upcoming months. Rudy Giuliani currently performs well in the state of Florida and particularly among Cuban voters. How the Republican candidates navigate the mine-field of social, economic and particularly, immigration issues could well determine if they too can siphon enough Hispanic votes from the Democratic candidate to tip the scales.

Misunderstanding Hispanic self-identification with terms such as conservative, moderate or liberal with easy support on a variety of issues would be a mistake. Democrats currently benefit by being seen largely on the right side of the immigration debate, the economy, healthcare and Iraq. There are, however, important potential opportunities for Republicans:

- On immigration, the term "amnesty" is politically charged and represents an opportunity for Republicans to paint the Democrats in a less than favorable light among Independents.
- About a quarter of Independents (28%) trust the Republicans more to handle the economy.
- More than half of registered Independents (57%) would prefer a timetable for an Iraq withdrawal or staying "until the job is done".

The Democratic Party and Democratic candidates should also not assume the Hispanic vote. Universal healthcare stands as an example where the Republican Party will have trouble competing. Cultural values may introduce enough doubt to keep voters home even if they don't vote Republican. Hispanic registered Independents are supportive of the death penalty, opposed to same-sex marriage and on balance opposed to legalized abortion. The Democrats need to keep the Hispanic population focused on the issues that they say matter most to them: Iraq, immigration reform, the economy and healthcare.

January 29, 2008 will mark the first primary among these five states in Florida. Less than one week later on February 5, the other four states will cast primary ballots. For candidates who need to reinforce their numbers or grow their support, Hispanics in these states provide an opportunity.

Registration and Voting Behavior

- A majority of Hispanic registered voters in these states are registered as Democrats (58%), while 20% are registered as Republicans and 15% as Independents or some other political party.
- In 2004, registered Republicans were more likely than Democrats or Independents to cast a vote. 92% of Republicans cast a vote for President as did 83% of Democrats and 71% of registered Independents.
- 85% of Democrats who voted cast a vote for John Kerry and 88% of Republicans cast a vote for George Bush. Importantly, only 53% of Hispanics registered as Independents voted for Kerry, resulting in a larger than expected overall Hispanic vote for George Bush (33%)<sup>5</sup>.
- The candidates themselves account for the largest reason that Hispanics consider they might not vote. Importantly, about half of Hispanic voters say they don't always know enough about the candidates (50%), the candidates are not very charismatic (46%) and/or they sometimes don't like any of the candidates (52%).
- Less than half of registered voters interviewed (45%) say that they have given a lot of attention to the 2008 presidential election. Those who have given the 2004 presidential election a lot of attention generally tend to be better educated and have higher household incomes.

### Affiliation and Party and Candidate Preferences

- When asked about their political views overall, 39% consider themselves conservative, 36% moderate and 21% liberal. Interestingly, these political views do not correspond neatly with the way such labels are generally interpreted in American politics.
- Over half of those who consider themselves conservatives (55%) are registered as Democrats as are 58% of moderates and 65% of liberals.
- Candidate and party preferences for President do not neatly break down according to party registration. One-in-five registered Republicans (21%) favor a Democratic candidate, while almost half (44%) do not yet have a preference.
- Among Democrats, Hillary Rodham Clinton tops the preference for 2008 election with 55% of Hispanic registered voters expressing an early preference for her. Barak Obama nets only 6% in comparison, though he does get higher preference among better-educated and higher-income Hispanics. Other candidates mentioned included Al Gore, Bill Richardson, Joe Biden and John Edwards, though none gets better than 5%.
- Among the Republican candidates mentioned by registered Republicans, Rudy Giuliani is in front with 23% preferring his presidency to all others. A full 44% of registered Republicans do not appear to prefer any of the other Republican candidates at this time, even though many prefer a Republican presidency. Other candidates mentioned included Duncan Hunter, Fred Thompson, John McCain, Mike Huckabee and Mitt Romney, though none gets better than 5%.
- Registered Independents prefer a named Democratic candidate by a margin of five-to-one (55% to 9%). The most popular named candidate among them is Hillary Clinton with 44% preference among this group. When a generic party preference is indicated, registered Independents prefer a Democratic presidency by a margin of 65% to 24%.
- When candidate and generic party preferences are totaled, Hispanics prefer a Democratic President by more than a 3-to-1 margin (72% vs. 20%). This 52% margin far surpasses the Democratic registration advantage of 58% to 28% (a 30% margin).
- In general, Democrats have an upper-hand among registered Hispanic voters at this time, but there is strong potential for Republicans to meet or exceed the estimated 40% support that George W. Bush garnered in 2004. A good portion of Hispanic registered voters appear ready to vote for a Republican, but no single candidate has cracked the code on reaching them.

### Issues

- All candidates and parties must speak to their would-be supporters in terms of issues that are important to them.
- Asked on an open-ended basis, the top five issues that Hispanic registered voters expect to take into account when they decide for whom to vote are:
  - War in Iraq                    38%
  - Immigration                    33%
  - The Economy                    30%
  - Healthcare                    30%
  - Education                    17%
- National Security and Terrorism placed far lower in the list of issues, only mentioned by 6% and 2% respectively. It should be noted, however, that among Republicans, National Security fails to enter the top five issues, with Taxes being more important and replacing Education.

### The War in Iraq

- The war in Iraq has been an important theme in the 2008 presidential primary campaigns with candidates supporting an immediate withdrawal of troops, some sort of timetable for withdrawal or President Bush's "Get the Job Done" message.
- Almost half (49%) of Hispanic registered voters want an immediate and orderly withdrawal of troops from Iraq, while another 29% favor a timetable for removal. Only 18% believe that the forces should stay in Iraq "as long as it takes".
- Not surprisingly, registered Democrats and Independents are more likely to favor an immediate withdrawal (59% and 42% respectively) than registered Republicans (23%).
- Almost half (48%) of Hispanic registered voters have a family member or personally know someone affected by the war in Iraq.

### Immigration

- On immigration, the vast majority of Hispanics are in favor of temporary worker legislation (76%), a path to citizenship for undocumented Hispanics (84%) and some form of amnesty (68%).
- Likewise, there far less support for strict fines for employers of undocumented Hispanics (34%) and expanding the security fence along the border (34%).
- There is only marginal support (14%) for legislation that would restrict the right of children of undocumented workers in the US from claiming US citizenship (14%).
- While there is little disagreement between registered Republicans, Democrats and Independents in terms of support for a guest worker program and opposition to deny children born in the US of undocumented parent citizenship, Registered Republicans are more likely than registered Democrats to support strict fines for employers and expanding the security fence and less likely than registered Democrats to support any type of amnesty or a path to citizenship.
- Registered Independents are more likely to side with the Democrats on the issue of the security fence and a path to citizenship, but more likely to agree with the Republicans on the issue of amnesty.

### The Economy

- 62% of Hispanic registered voters feel that the Democratic Party would be better for the economy, while 24% believe the same of the Republican Party and 14% don't believe that there is any difference.
- Not surprisingly, registered Democrats are more likely to believe that the Democratic Party would be better for the Economy (83% vs. 14% for registered Republicans and 58% for Registered Independents).
- Likewise, registered Republicans are more likely to believe that the Republican Party would be better for the Economy (70% vs. 6% for registered Democrats and 28% for Registered Independents).

Healthcare

- 56% of Hispanic registered voters indicate that they are strongly in favor of Universal Healthcare, and another 24% are somewhat in favor.
- Interestingly, more than half of all Hispanic registered Democrats (87%), registered Independents (76%) and registered Republicans (60%) support the idea of universal healthcare.

Cultural Values

- Only 45% of Hispanic registered voters support the death penalty. Republicans and Independents are more likely to support the death penalty than Democrats (61% and 56% respectively among Republicans and Independents vs. 39% for Democrats).
- While legalized abortion is not particularly favorable among Hispanics in general (34% strongly or somewhat in favor), Independents (43%) and Democrats (35%) are more likely than Republicans (26%) to favor it.
- While same-sex marriage is likewise not viewed favorably in general, favorability decreases with age, but increases with education and income.

Communicating Political Messages to Hispanics

- English-language media dominates the sources of political information available to Hispanic registered voters as demonstrated in the table below:

	Language of Media	
	English	Spanish
TV	81%	65%
Radio	74%	62%
Newspapers	86%	45%
Magazines	84%	47%
Internet	93%	37%
Family and Friends	82%	77%

- Spanish-language media, however, has unrealized potential in terms of political information delivery. For example, 78% of registered Hispanics watch some Spanish-language television, yet only 65% derive useful political information from that source.

Language Dominance and Political Opinion

- English-only speakers are twice as likely to be registered as Republican (34% vs. 17%) when compared to those who speak some Spanish at home.
- English-Dominant Hispanics are more likely to have voted in 2004 (87% vs. 79% for bilingual Hispanics and 78% for Spanish-Dominant Hispanics)
- Spanish-Dominant Hispanics are more likely to feel that they don't have enough information about the candidates to vote (63% vs. 48% bilingual and 35% for English-Dominant Hispanics)
- Hillary Clinton enjoys a greater preference among bilingual and Spanish-Dominant Hispanics than among English-Dominant Hispanics (46% and 49% respectively vs. 32%). Among the English-Dominant Hispanics, Rudy Giuliani and Barack Obama are virtually tied for second place (10% each).
- English-Dominant Hispanics are generally more likely to take stronger stances on immigration issues than Spanish-Dominant Hispanics:

	English-Dominant (A)	Bilingual (B)	Spanish-Dominant (C)
Favor temporary worker status	75%	78%	76%
Favor path to citizenship	72%	85% <sup>A</sup>	93% <sup>AB</sup>
Favor strict fines for employers	50% <sup>BC</sup>	38% <sup>C</sup>	20%
Favor denial of citizenship to children born in US to undocumented parents	24% <sup>C</sup>	12%	8%
Favor of any form of amnesty	56%	67%	78% <sup>A</sup>
Support expanding the security fence along the border	47% <sup>C</sup>	36% <sup>C</sup>	22%

\*A/B/C represent significant differences at the 90% CL.

- On cultural values issues, English-Dominant Hispanics represent an interesting blend of socially conservative and socially liberal stances:

	English-Dominant (A)	Bilingual (B)	Spanish-Dominant (C)
Favor death penalty	60% <sup>BC</sup>	45% <sup>C</sup>	34%
Favor legalized abortion	50% <sup>BC</sup>	36% <sup>C</sup>	21%
Favor same-sex marriage	38% <sup>BC</sup>	32% <sup>C</sup>	18%

\*A/B/C represent significant differences at the 90% CL.

### Sample

- This poll was conducted using sample of registered voters with telephone numbers in the states listed (CA, FL, IL, NY and TX). The data was filtered prior to sample selection to increase the likelihood of reaching a Hispanic registered voter. In California, Florida and Texas, sample lists were filtered according to self-reported data on registration forms. In Illinois and New York, the sample lists were filtered to include those with surnames most likely to indicate Hispanic origin.
- The sample vendor was Marketing Systems Group, who sourced the data from the VotersListOnline product. This product contains detailed information about registered voters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The list is updated regularly.
- All respondents were screened for Hispanic self-identification and for being registered to vote. The incidence from this sample list meeting those two qualification criteria was 48%.

### Questionnaire and Data Collection

- The questionnaire for this poll was first designed in English and adapted into Spanish to provide equivalence of meaning when possible.
- The data collection was conducted by bilingual native Spanish-speakers using a computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI) system from Avanze's own 200 station call center. All interviews were conducted in the language of choice of the respondent. Approximately 51% of interviews were conducted in English and 49% in Spanish.
- Of 22,991 phone numbers dialed, 1,127 were screened to provide 539 completed interviews. Approximately 20% of interviews were monitored at random by supervisors.
- Data collection for this poll was conducted between November 27, 2007 and December 2, 2007. A combination of weekday/weekend and day/evening calls were conducted to minimize response bias.

### Data Analysis and Reporting

- Open-ended data was coded in language and applied to an English codebook to avoid loss of meaning.
- The data was weighted by state to more accurately reflect the population of Hispanic registered voters in these five states. The source of the weighting proportions was the dataset of the November 2006 Voting Supplement to the Current Population Survey (US Census Department).
- Statistical differences in this paper are based on a 90% confidence level. The margin of error for this study is +/- 3.6%.

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## **Avanze, Inc.**

### **Who We Are**

Avanze was founded based on the simple fact that there truly exists a deficiency in strong actionable research and true consulting in the changing U.S. and international business market. With over 100 years of combined experience in general market and multicultural research and consulting, Avanze offers your company the pathway and strategy to the opportunity that exists within your market. The dynamics and pitfalls of researching these communities require expertise and experience in the "correct" and accurate data collection methodologies and analysis using the latest analytics. However, something else has been missing, researchers that know and understand how to make the research actionable and provide true consulting. We combine high quality data collection and analysis with actionable strategy. This is a first in the industry.

### **Our Services**

We offer a range of marketing research solutions for every stage of the planning, development and evaluation process. Avanze offers full service on both qualitative and quantitative research projects as well as data collection alone. But we take research and consulting services a step further. We provide our strategy consulting as a standalone where in we analyze all of your current and past research to help determine the correct direction for your marketing strategy.

### **Quantitative Research**

As your full-service consultants on the multicultural markets of the U.S., we conduct concept, awareness, attitude and usage, segmentation, equity, impact and tracking studies using the most advanced analytics and quality control procedures. We offer multiple methodologies and with one of the largest Hispanic call centers in the nation and highly experienced management in the industry; our staff follows the highest standards as set by CASRO. We also go beyond those standards - your standards. Whether through our OWN call center or through our pre-qualified partners in online or face-to-face interviewing (CLT), we deliver accurate results with expedient turnaround.

### **Qualitative Research**

We employ a unique approach to qualitative research which allows us to provide you with the highest quality yet with low cost. Our resources include over a dozen general market and multicultural moderators that have been moderating for many years. Our experienced moderators cover a large array of topics to include general market, Hispanic, African American, Youth, Gay, and GLBT to name a few. We match up our team of experienced and capable moderators for your project requirements.

### **Why Use Avanze, Inc.**

We are professionals who are dedicated to creating the most effective approach to your particular research needs, from the most targeted to the broadest global scope. For more information about how Avanze, Inc. can help you with your multicultural research needs, please contact Everett Hernandez, President, at 619-336-0702 or 619-275-2440 or [Everett.Hernandez@avanzeconsulting.com](mailto:Everett.Hernandez@avanzeconsulting.com).

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- <sup>1</sup> NewsMax, "The Hispanic Vote Elects Bush", Morris, Dick, Friday, November 5, 2004.
  - <sup>2</sup> Pew Hispanic Center, "Hispanics and the 2004 Election: Population, Electorate and Voters", Suro, Robert, Richard Fry and Jeffrey Passel, June 27, 2005
  - <sup>3</sup> Pew Hispanic Center, "Hispanics in the Military", March 27, 2003 – This topic is the subject of some debate. While Hispanics are not over-represented compared to all Hispanics in the United States, they are over-represented when an equivalent comparison is drawn. ["In sum, Latino enlisted personnel are underrepresented when compared to the size of the civilian labor force of the appropriate age. They are on par when compared to civilian labor force of the appropriate age that possess the necessary educational credentials. And, they are overrepresented when compared to the civilian labor force of the appropriate age that possess both the necessary educational credentials and immigration status."]
  - <sup>4</sup> US Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey. Median household income for past 12 months among all households is \$48,451 vs. \$38,747 for Households with a Hispanic head of household.
  - <sup>5</sup> Pew Hispanic Center, "Hispanics and the 2004 Election: Population, Electorate and Voters", Suro, Robert, Richard Fry and Jeffrey Passel, June 27, 2005. Subsequent analyses performed on a national level arrived at an estimated 40% vote share for George Bush. It is important to note that this study was only conducted in the top five Hispanic states (CA, FL, IL, NY and TX) and some variance is to be expected.