‘This is About Humanity’: How LA’s Hispanic Agencies are Responding to ICE Raids

Downtown Los Angeles is under curfew as military vehicles rumble down Olympic Boulevard and protests continue across the city.

At LA’s ad agencies—particularly those led by and built to serve the Hispanic community—the fear is both intense and deeply personal.

Since June 6, when the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) launched coordinated raids across LA and into Orange County, dozens of undocumented immigrants have been detained at worksites including warehouses, car washes, and Home Depot parking lots.

Meanwhile, hundreds of demonstrators have taken to the streets, protesting what they describe as racially motivated attacks on Hispanic and immigrant communities.

In a federal intervention not seen since the 1992 Rodney King riots, National Guard troops have been deployed—without the governor’s request—to support ICE operations. As of Friday morning, June 13, President Trump has maintained temporary control of the National Guard in LA, after an appeals court ruling the night prior. Officials have indicated that the military-backed raids could continue for up to 60 days.

“They are us,” said Marina Filipelli, CEO of LA-based creative agency Orci, of those being detained. “They are our neighbors, our friends, and our family members. It’s really close to

home.”

The situation, she said, has “shaken us to the core.”

“This is about humanity,” Filipelli continued. “Everyone deserves, in our country, to be treated with a certain level of respect and with due process.”

Here’s how LA’s advertising scene is responding to the situation on the ground.

Addressing Staff Needs

When the raids began, Orci, which was founded by Mexican American immigrants in 1986, immediately addressed staff and offered the option to work remotely, despite the agency’s two-day in-office policy. Those who wanted to come in were invited to an open forum to talk about how they were feeling.

“We’ve always heard from people that come from other agencies or other workplaces that when these things happen, [they] feel very alienated when they go to work,” said Filipelli.

Acento, another LA-based agency founded by Mexican immigrants, is also allowing employees to work remotely, as many have to cross curfew zones or navigate public transit to get to work. The agency has an internal channel where team members share news and resources, and which offers safe space to connect.

“We enjoy that kind of culture of flexibility, but also mutual support,” said Acento CEO Donnie Broxson.

Casanova//McCann, based in Costa Mesa, has remained open, but employees don’t have to come in. While most staff are legal residents or citizens, many still carry paperwork with them daily.

“We’ve continued to remind people: keep your paperwork with you at all times,” said CEO Ingrid Smart. “It’s sad that we have to do that, but better safe than sorry.”

Smart, who owns the now-independent agency, which is certified as both minority- and female-owned, said Casanova is offering counseling support, mental wellness perks, and even a sound bath to help staff cope.

“Our vision is to be the most caring agency, and we have to prove that to our employees on a daily basis,” she said.

At Relevant+, a Hispanic-owned media agency in LA, staff are being offered fully paid mental health days. The agency also shared know-your-rights guides and immigrant protection resources from trusted organizations, including the Immigrant Defense Project and Informed Immigrant.

“We didn’t want anyone to ‘power through’ this moment,” said CEO Jonathan Patton. “We wanted them to feel seen, supported, and held.”

Engaging Clients & Community—and Speaking Out

Acento has been bracing for this moment since Trump returned to the oval office January, Broxson said.

Prior to the raids, the agency had already begun advising clients—including LA Metro, Banner Health, and Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E)—on how to adjust their marketing campaigns to communicate safety and care in light of heightened fear among immigrant communities.

The agency advised clients to adjust in-market messaging to emphasize security and proactively assure people that their brands were supportive to immigrants, and not a risk.

“The fear pervades all aspects of your life,” said Broxson. “It impacts your purchase decisions… We had already started adjusting our shopping and purchasing habits based on an uncertain economy and the tariff war. It adds an extra layer.”

Other agencies are supporting their communities. Orci, for its part, is matching employee donations to organizations like

CHIRLA, which helps detainees and their families. And Casanova//McCann is encouraging staff to use their three paid annual volunteer days now, while also developing a community-focused pro bono initiative.

For Relevant+, standing up is about speaking up. The agency underscored its mission to empower the U.S. Hispanic community in a LinkedIn post that emphasized how many of its team members come from immigrant families shaped by sacrifice and that cultural advocacy is core to its identity.

“When dignity is on the line, we don’t look away,” the post read. “It’s not about left or right. It’s about human rights.”

“This particular wave of ICE raids felt especially cruel,” Patton added. “And what hit even harder was the silence that followed.”

Staying Resilient

While agencies are doing what they can to support their talent in a turbulent situation, they underscored the role brands can play in showing up to support diverse audiences.

“This work can’t just exist when it fits a campaign cycle,” Patton said. “If you claim to stand with these communities, that has to mean something when it’s uncomfortable, when it actually costs something.”

Filipelli agreed: “To target U.S. Hispanics as an audience, to sell them products and services, but then turn your back on them when they’re being vilified in certain ways… just doesn’t sit quite right with me.”

As the protests continue on, all four agency leaders underscored the unique resilience of immigrant communities during times of crisis.

“The immigrant mind is resilient, is strong, is fearless—and we are staying strong for our people and our consumers,” Smart

said. “And we’re not going away anytime soon.”

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