

## The 10 Most Connected Hispanics on LinkedIn

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LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network on the Internet with over 150 million members worldwide, including executives from every Fortune 500 company.

It's is a one stop shop for anyone who is looking for networking opportunities, business deals, or job opportunities. In December 2011, LinkedIn was ranked as the 36th most-visited website worldwide, according to comScore, up from 45th in 2010.

I recently read the list Lori Ruff compiled on the Ten Most Connected Women on LinkedIn and I was curious to find out who were the ten most connected Latinos. To help answer this question, I reached out to Lori (known as the "LinkedIn Diva") who has published one of the leading books on LinkedIn, and together we compiled the list.

The top 10 most connected Hispanics world-wide on LinkedIn are:

- [Charles P. Garcia # 14](#)
- Rob Navarette # 184
- Ramon Solis, Jr. # 361
- Anthony Casas # 388
- Roberto Suarez # 430
- Art Martinez # 582
- Nathan A. Perez # 605
- Carlos Scarpero # 610
- Eric Mata # 679
- Raul Mendoza # 795

I thought it would be beneficial, informative, and maybe even fun to do a series where I interview several of these social media mavens. I would translate their best ideas on how to leverage LinkedIn to help meet your professional and personal goals.

To begin this series, I reached out to the #1 most connected Latino on LinkedIn -- who is the 9th most connected person on LinkedIn in the U.S. and 14th in the world.

#1 Most Connected Latino: Charles P. Garcia

Charlie Garcia has a LinkedIn network that reaches over 30 million people. Not surprisingly he is connected to me on LinkedIn. For full disclosure, I've known Charlie for five years now. Charlie has an eclectic personality defined by a mix of three characters.

First, Charlie is wicked smart, think Matt Daemon in the movie Good Will Hunting. He started a company out of a cleaned out broom closet. It grows to 60 offices in 7 countries with \$2 billion in assets becoming at one point the 8th fastest growing company in America. Top graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. Authors two bestselling leadership books. First in his Columbia Law School class to publish in the prestigious law review. His scholarship (while a student) is so widely quoted it helps change the way police conduct search and seizures in people's homes. You get the picture.

Second, Charlie pops up in the middle of big events - think Forrest Gump. He's worked for four Presidents, both Republican and Democrat. He was a close advisor to a former NATO Supreme Allied Commander. President Obama appoints him Chairman of the U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors. During the Iraq War he's the behind-the-desk military analyst for Telemundo. President Reagan selects him as a White House Fellow. The Secretary of the Air Force last December on Capitol Hill pins a medal on his breast -- the Distinguished Public Service Award. He's now speaking on Latino issues for CNN and a Huffington Post contributor. A Fortune 500 board member. Five years on the Florida State Board of Education. I know it's exhausting.

Third, Charlie has a high octane danger streak - think agent Jack Bauer in 24. High altitude skydiver, former counter terrorism officer and military commando. He trained Latin American militaries during the wars in Central America and he was deployed all over South America against narco-traffickers in the war on drugs. Did I mention that he races an 800-hp Dodge Viper, rides a Harley, plays competitive soccer year round, and surfs around the globe?

I recently caught up to Charlie to discuss social networking, and he had no idea he was ranked so high. He told me that connecting people is one of his gifts and that he's passionate about it. "After all, it's just a few clicks on a keyboard to help someone out" he stressed. Charlie added that "When I connect people it's like throwing a pebble in a pond, you never know how far the ripples will reach."

When I asked him to give me a name of someone he connected in the last 24 hours, he referred me to a Palm Beach attorney he hadn't spoken to for five years. This lawyer told me that he knew a young person that wanted to attend the Air Force Academy and connected to Charlie through LinkedIn for advice. Within 15 minutes of sending the email, Charlie had connected him to the top Air Force Academy recruiter in the country to assist and guide this individual in the application process.

I asked Charlie if there were any hidden tools within LinkedIn that most people don't know about. Charlie thinks the most powerful - yet overlooked-- tools in LinkedIn are the ability to form groups and post questions. For example, he created and currently runs the Young Presidents Organization (YPO) group with over 3,000 members, which he says is a powerful forum for group members around the world to interact for business purposes. And any time he needs a thoughtful answer to a thorny problem he posts it in the Q&A section and will get a few dozen responses within 24 hours, most of the time resolving the problem or pointing him in the right direction.

Since Charlie has maxed out with 30,000 LinkedIn connections, I asked him how he connects to new people. He said he lists his website on his LinkedIn account and people can contact through there, and he also opened a twitter account last year where he's fast approaching 50,000 followers. You can follow him @charlespgarcia.

To close, I asked him for a final piece of advice and Charlie mused "Remember the world is not coming at you, it's coming from within you."

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