

CAMBIO EN CLAVE · SALSA SCHOOL, PUERTO RICO

Cambio en Clave, the movement

A free salsa class in a Río Piedras café that became the largest dance project on the island. We have been its brand, its website and its strategy since 2009, and each time the school outgrew a room we built the next one: the rebrand, eight years at the Coliseo, the move to the Museo de Arte, the foundation, and for the twentieth anniversary a new site the school publishes itself and a campaign that trades a cause for a \$20 course.



17

YEARS WORKING TOGETHER, 2009 TO 2026

60,000

PEOPLE THROUGH THE SCHOOL'S CLASSES

2

LAUNCHES FOR THE ANNIVERSARY SEASON: A NEW SITE AND A CAMPAIGN

BRAND

GROWTH STRATEGY

PLATFORMS

// 01

The context

Cambio en Clave began in 2006 when Rafa Cancel, then a law student, emailed a few friends about a free salsa class at Taller Cé in Río Piedras. He expected twenty people and 175 came. Within a year the classes were structured courses and 400 people paid in four days. By 2009 the school had moved to Punto Fijo in Santurce with groups of 120 to 160, and our founder, then running the digital agency Pixelogic, joined the project. The school's published history names him as one of the three people who took it to its next stage.

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The challenge

A crowd is not an institution. The school had more demand than it could seat, a name written three ways online, a website built as a members' forum, and nothing a sponsor could say yes to. Growing meant convincing three audiences at once: people sure they had two left feet, venues large enough for a whole season, and brands that needed to see a movement rather than a dance class. The price had to stay where a student could afford it, and the problem comes back at every stage: when the school fills a room, the next one has to be ready.

// 03

How we worked

We treated the school as a brand with a product and worked the whole funnel. A rebrand gave it one name and one mark. A new website sold classes in the students' own voice, with their excuses printed on the homepage and answered. Enrollment moved online. Free music, a blog and a newsletter kept people in orbit between seasons, and every press hit was archived where a sponsor could find it. With that in hand the school walked into the Coliseo de Puerto Rico, and twelve years later into the Museo de Arte, as an institution. Each stage since has added infrastructure: sponsor collateral, a membership card, a nonprofit, and for the twentieth anniversary a site the school runs itself plus a campaign microsite built in days.

CLIENT

Cambio en Clave · Salsa school,
Puerto Rico

SECTOR

Culture and community

YEAR

2009 to 2026

LIVE

www.cambioenclave.com

BUILT WITH

Brand identity and art direction, copywriting in the students' voice, five generations of website including an open-source content platform with a custom enrollment module, a design-led content management platform, and today's server-rendered site with its own editorial publishing system on managed Postgres, a serverless API layer, one-time-code admin access, subscribable calendar feed, transactional email and a private media store, anniversary campaign microsite with cause-based coupon flow, scheduled communications and consent-gated analytics, email marketing and social programs, sponsorship collateral and proposals, out-of-home and print advertising, membership card program, nonprofit definition and setup, count-trainer web app with a Python audio analysis pipeline

“Every time Cambio en Clave has had to grow, from the café theater to the Coliseo, then to the Museo de Arte, and now with the Foundation, Gino was already there with the brand, the site and the plan. We stopped seeing him as a vendor a long time ago. He's been part of the project's story for seventeen years.”

RAFA CANCEL, FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, CAMBIO EN CLAVE

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What we built

01 One name, one mark

In 2009 the brand was still written as one word on its own site. We settled the name as Cambio en Clave and designed the five-dot mark in black and orange. It carried the Coliseo years on billboards, newspaper ads, backdrops, staff shirts and credentials, and it still opens every page of the 2026 site, under the line the school lives by: tú eres la clave.

02 Five website generations, three of them ours

The orange site of 2011 opened with ¡Vamo! a salsear! and a custom enrollment module that took a season's registrations without a line at the door. For the anniversary we rebuilt the site from the ground up: server-rendered pages, and a publishing system the school operates itself with draft, preview and publish. Courses are permanent pages with sessions, every class day sits on a subscribable calendar, an English edition is built in, and sixty-seven old addresses forward to their new homes.

03 Mass appeal, in the students' voice

The communication strategy started from the excuse. The homepage printed them as spoken (chico, es que yo tengo dos pies izquierdos; es que no tengo pareja) and answered each one. Around that sat free music downloads, a salsa blog, the Catedráticos de la Salsa series, a newsletter and a social presence that today reaches more than 70,000 followers.

04 Twenty years, five causes, twenty pesos

The anniversary campaign turns a discount into a commitment. Pick one of five causes, among them a farm morning in Río Grande and an inclusive dance night at Casa Bacardí, and the school emails you the coupon for a six-class course at \$20. We built the microsite, the five request forms, the coupon flow into the school's online store and the panel Rafa runs it from. Registrations opened October 3, 2026.

05 Sponsors, a membership card, a foundation

Heineken signed first, then Medalla for years, then Pepsi, Neutrogena, Ford, Listerine, Dentyne, Finlandia and AT&T. The sponsor program has its own page with fifteen named assets, among them the membership card: each student's entry credential, handed out before the course starts, and the key to rewards and discounts with local partners. In December 2024 the school launched Fundación Cambio en Clave, which we helped define and set up, so the interpreters, the assistants for blind students and the scholarships have a home of their own.

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Every time it outgrew the room

01

2006 · Taller Cé, Río Piedras

An email to a few friends about a free class. 175 people arrive. Once the classes become structured courses, 400 people pay in four days and the first waiting list forms.

02

2009 · Punto Fijo, Santurce

Groups of 120 to 160. Our founder joins the project: one name, a new mark, a new website and a growth strategy. Heineken becomes the first international sponsor.

03

2011 to 2012 · The Coliseo de Puerto Rico

A trial class in the Atrio in December 2011. Enrollment opens in February 2012 with six groups and 1,500 students a season. Waiting lists run 400 to 800 people every season for eight years.

04

2012 to 2019 · A movement

Pepsi, Neutrogena, Ford, Listerine, Dentyne and Finlandia join. Classes reach public housing with Boys and Girls Club. Trips take students to nine countries. BBC, NPR, the Travel Channel and Japan's CREA Traveller film the classes.

05

2020 to 2023 · The pause

The pandemic stops the season. The school calls it a reflective recess: time to rethink and prepare the return.

06

2024 · The Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico

CEC v3 opens in the museum's Atrio Principal as a formal alliance. A new website, a sponsor program, a gift card and the membership card arrive with it. In December, at the Rumbón Navideño, the school launches Fundación Cambio en Clave.

07

2026 · Twenty years, two launches

A new cambioenclave.com that the school publishes itself, with every course, event, venue and class day in one editorial system, and 20.cambioenclave.com, where a commitment to one of five causes earns a full course for twenty dollars. Encuentra el 1, the count-trainer app, waits in curation with the instructors.

UNDER THE HOOD

Brand identity and art direction, copywriting in the students' voice, five generations of website including an open-source content platform with a custom enrollment module, a design-led content management platform, and today's server-rendered site with its own editorial publishing system on managed Postgres, a serverless API layer, one-time-code admin access, subscribable calendar feed, transactional email and a private media store, anniversary campaign microsite with cause-based coupon flow, scheduled communications and consent-gated analytics, email marketing and social programs, sponsorship collateral and proposals, out-of-home and print advertising, membership card program, nonprofit definition and setup, count-trainer web app with a Python audio analysis pipeline

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Then and now



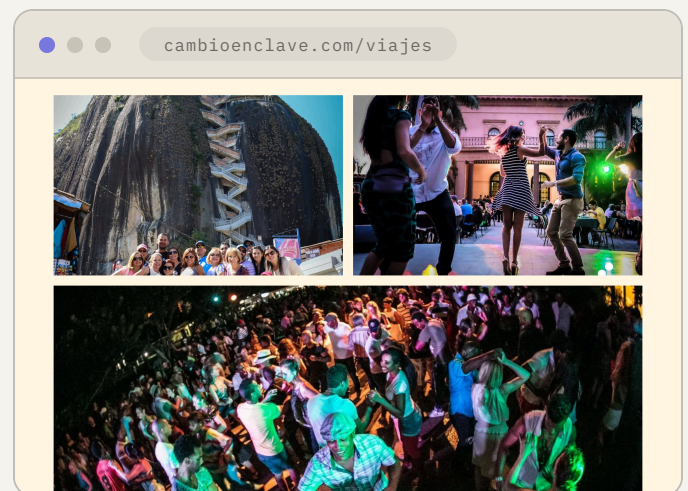
The 2011 homepage: ¡Vamo' a salsear!, ten weeks of classes from 48 dollars, free music downloads, a student's quote and the BBC and Travel Channel press badge.



Catedráticos de la Salsa, the editorial series that made the site a place to read about salsa, not only to enroll: Richie Ray and Bobby Cruz, Rubén Blades, Ismael Rivera, Johnny Pacheco, Oscar D'León.



The event archive on the 2026 site: the Rumbón en el Museo posters, each past night kept with its date, venue and photos once it leaves the calendar.



Viajes: the trips that have taken students to nine countries, told in the school's own photographs, Colombia first.

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By the numbers

20

YEARS OF CAMBIO EN CLAVE, 2006 TO 2026

60,000

PEOPLE THROUGH THE SCHOOL'S CLASSES

1,500

STUDENTS A SEASON DURING THE COLISEO YEARS

8

YEARS AT THE COLISEO DE PUERTO RICO

67

OLD ADDRESSES FORWARDED ON THE NEW SITE

5

CAUSES, ONE FULL COURSE, TWENTY DOLLARS



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What this demonstrates

- Brand and identity systems
- Growth and communication strategy
- Platforms the client runs



17

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LAUNCHES FOR THE ANNIVERSARY SEASON: A NEW SITE AND A CAMPAIGN

A class that expected twenty people now fills a museum atrium every Monday. Twenty years in, our job is unchanged: make showing up easy, and have the next room ready before this one is full.

ABOUT MUTINY LABS

Mutiny Labs is an innovation and strategy studio in Puerto Rico. We build digital infrastructure for organizations that move the island forward, designed with the people who use it and built to be run by the teams that own it.

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Web applications, portals and operations software shaped around real workflows.

Applied AI

Generative and analytical AI placed deliberately, private by construction.

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