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Medill News



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Oct. 23, 2003

## Cultural communication is key to Hispanic consumers, marketing expert tells IMC students

by Liz McCulloch, IMC04

Medill's integrated marketing communications students learned about the Hispanic-American community — consumers they may soon market to, when George San Jose, founder and president of The San Jose Group, a marketing communications company specializing in multicultural markets, lectured on Friday, Oct. 10, in the McCormick Tribune Center Forum.



*George San Jose, founder and president of The San Jose Group, said Hispanics typically can't be reached with English.*

San Jose explained how Hispanic and traditional U.S. cultures have merged and created the art of Hispanic marketing.

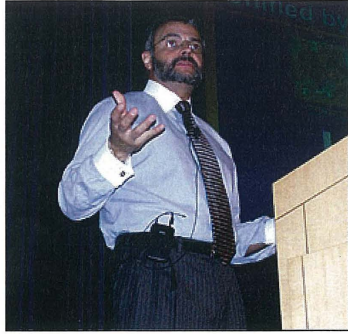
More than two dozen nationalities, including Mexican, Central and South American, Puerto Rican and Cuban can be classified as Hispanic or Latino, yet many share the same cultural and family values, religion, heritage and above all, the Spanish language.

"Hispanics are more unified and have more commonalities than any other group," San Jose said. "They are maintaining their own identity, culture and traditions. There is no melting pot. America is not absorbing them anymore, but winding them into one."

The Hispanic market is estimated to have \$630 billion in purchasing power. Yet, companies continue to market to Hispanic-Americans with general marketing messages and wonder why Hispanic consumers don't purchase their products.

Without specialized marketing campaigns, most companies often miss half the market, San Jose said.

————— "Some people still think they can reach



*Will North and South America one day be unified as one trading block, with English and Spanish as its official languages? San Jose predicts just that.*

Hispanics with English, but the truth is we speak a different language,” he said. “Companies can no longer allocate whatever is left over for Hispanic marketing just to be politically correct. They must address the multi-cultural nation and even focus specifically on the Hispanic population.”

Even marketing messages directly translated into Spanish often fail to reach the 11 million Hispanic households. Ads must be in Spanish, but also must be culturally relevant to Hispanic consumers, San Jose said. Marketers must understand how products and services personally benefit Hispanic people.

For example, general market ads for Caller I.D. systems directly translated into Spanish didn’t appeal to Hispanics until The San Jose Group revamped the marketing message. Instead of general advertisements to tell consumers how Caller I.D. systems screens out unwanted calls, the new ads featured family members greeting each other by name. The effectiveness of the new campaign outperformed the non-Hispanic campaign four to one, San Jose said.

San Jose emphasized an integrated approach with every aspect designed with the consumer in mind, including bilingual customer service and spokespeople, Spanish brochures, press releases and Web sites and promotions at family-focused special events such as festivals, parades and sporting events.

Some predict that within four years the U.S. will be the single largest Spanish-speaking country in world, San Jose said. He predicts that North and South America will one day be unified as one trading block with a single currency and both English and Spanish as its official languages.

“Language is half the battle. Cultural communication is the key,” San Jose said. “Messages must be in Spanish, but also must fit into Hispanic people’s lives. Nothing compares in terms of effectiveness.”



Link of the Week



Medill Global Journalism
The newly revamped site, featuring updated news and a global blog.

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Other News

Garcia named admissions director (10.9.03)

Calendar

Week of Oct. 19 - 25

Homecoming weekend

Friday: Classes without quizzes: Professors Jack Doppelt, John Greening, Joe Angotti and special guest speaker Robert Feder (BSJ75) will lead presentations on global journalism, advertising and broadcast news, 3-4 p.m. in the MTC. Dean's reception in the MTC Lobby, 4-5 p.m. Homecoming Parade at 8 p.m.

Saturday: Homecoming tailgate party in the parking lot of Manufacturers' News, 1633 Central Street, Evanston.

Week of Oct. 26 - Nov. 1

Monday, 4 p.m.: Crain Lecture Series: Science Writing Panel, featuring Journalism Professor Tim Ferris with author Deborah Blum, moderated by Nobel Laureate Dr. Leon Lederman. "Is Science Writing Coming of Age?" MTC Forum.
Wednesday, 6 - 8 p.m.: Medill Alumni Club of Chicago present a panel discussion on Product Placement Buzz. Kellogg Education Center, 340 E. Superior St., 4th Floor Cost: \$15 members, \$20 non-members. For more information, contact Heather Malec at hmalec@vahoo.com or 312-602-8431. RSVP via www.medillalumni.chicago.com

Week of Nov. 2 - Nov. 8

Monday, 9 a.m.: Information session for prospective graduate editorial students. Fisk Hall, 1845 Sheridan Road.
Monday, 4 p.m.: Crain Lecture Series: Pulitzer Prize-winning writers Robert Butler and Jack Fuller (BSJ68), President Tribune Publishing Company; Valerie Martin, author, "A Conversation: Writing About Human Nature." MTC Forum.
Wednesday, 6- 8:30 p.m.: The Northwestern Alumni Association and Northwestern University Medill School of Journalism in conjunction with the NU Club of Washington, D.C. invite you to "Interests and Obligations: Exploring the U.S. Role in Foreign Affairs." National Press Club Ballroom (529 14th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.)
Wednesday, 7-9 p.m.: Medill Club of Greater New York presents a Celebrity Journalism panel. Sponsored in conjunction with New York University's School of Continuing Education. Silver Building, 24 Waverly Place, Room 714. Northeast corner of Washington Square Park, New York, NY. 7-9 p.m. \$15 for Medill Club members, \$30 for non-members. Deadline to RSVP is Oct. 29. For more information, please contact Lauren Young.
Friday, 9 a.m.: Information session for prospective graduate IMC students. Fisk Hall, 1845 Sheridan Road.

Week of Nov. 9 - Nov. 15

Monday, 4 p.m.: Crain Lecture Series: Former NU Writer-in-Residence Tracy Kidder, Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award winner and author of "Mountains Beyond Mountains," "The Soul of the New Machine" and "Houses," will present a Crain Lecture on "The Purpose of Journalism: Reporting that Matters." A book signing will precede the lecture and a question & answer session will follow. McCormick Tribune Center Forum.
Tuesday, 5 p.m.: Information session for prospective part-time IMC students. 210 S. Clark St, 2nd floor, Chicago. Contact Keri Lindemann for more information.
Friday & Saturday: Medill co-hosts the annual meeting and awards dinner of the Online News Association. Omni Orrington Hotel, 1710 Orrington Avenue, Evanston.

Hispanic Marketing 101

George San Jose, founder and president of a marketing communications company that specializes in multicultural markets, discussed how to better communicate with the elusive Hispanic audience during a recent lecture to IMC students.

News Archive

CBS Chicago anchors Blakley and Burns discuss news contracts and their competition



IMC Chair Mulhern joins Dean's list

First Crain Lecture of year sees Latin American journalists challenging their countries' press freedoms



Presidential hopeful Clark criticizes Bush at military journalists conference

IMCers detail their experiences and expertise from summer-long residences

News Archive

Student Work

Summer Projects Wrapped Up

More Projects



HereAndNow Northwestern's comprehensive student web page

George L. San Jose President & Chief Creative Officer of The San Jose Group a Multicultural Advertising Agency