

## Do You Speak My Language?

A column by Cassandra Bremer, content developer at The San Jose Group

September 09, 2012

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What do Budweiser, Bounty, and McDonald's have in common? They have all successfully reached the Hispanic market with Spanish-language print, radio and television ads.



Spanish-language primetime advertising spots reach over half the Hispanic population ages 18-49, while English-language ads only reach 40 percent. Deciding to advertise in a particular language involves more than simply translating copy.

When done right, Spanish-language ads produce 30 percent higher recall among Hispanics.

Why?

**Mass Appeal.** Imitation is said to be the highest form of flattery. For that reason, people tend to imitate and follow their favorite celebrities. Celebrity product and brand endorsements can also be a huge influence on consumer behavior. The Hispanic market, which is primarily young, mobile and thrives on entertainment, responds greatly to advertisements centered on their favorite celebrities.

The only thing better than a celebrity endorsement is having that celebrity speak your target's language, literally.

Last year, Budweiser launched a large marketing campaign which included Spanish- and English-language television commercials, print, digital and retail advertisements centered on Hip-Hop sensation Pitbull. This famous Cuban-American not only resonates with the Hispanic community, but has enormous total market cross-over appeal, making the Bud Light campaign truly multicultural.

Thus far, Pitbull's celebrity endorsements have successfully extended out to other goods and products such as Dr. Pepper and Kodak cameras.

"Marketers should think about Hispanic family values and lifestyles plus acculturation levels before creating multicultural campaigns," says George San José, president and chief creative officer of The San Jose Group.

In all, launching a multicultural campaign takes much more than a couple of copywriters in a room with a translator (even though it doesn't always look that way). Language is an essential component in any multicultural ad.

If you want the Hispanic market to respond, hit them with an ad that speaks their language, speaks to their culture and isn't the same, old mundane idea marketers have beat into the ground: yes, Hispanics are family oriented, but no, it does not make sense to bring *abuela* into the bar with Pitbull.

So remember, language and how you combine it with your brand and your can play an important role in Hispanic ad recall. *¿Comprendes?*

**Portrayal of Culture.** Most successful Spanish-language ads involve an accurate portrayal of their culture. Sometimes advertisers have to find the common denominator of the culture to figure out what will best communicate to their targets.

The Hispanic culture has an abundance of the four F's: family, fun, *fútbol*, and fans.

Finding ways to hit the four F's and incorporating them into ads means connecting your brand with Hispanic cultural values, thereby giving your target market an ad that will surely resonate with them.

Crown Imports incorporated the four F's in a series of Spanish-language ads in 2008 with the tagline "*Nuestro orgullo. Nuestra cerveza.*"

The brand was able to portray different facets of Hispanic culture from weddings (family) to dancing (fun) and from playing and/or watching soccer (*fútbol*) sports to playing and/or watching other sports (fans).

The Latino community praised the ad because of the cultural connections they felt.

**Authenticity vs. Stereotyping.** Have you ever had anybody try to tell you what you believe? The gesture is quite obnoxious and annoying, especially when they are 100 percent wrong.

The same thing holds true for the early days of Hispanic advertisements when advertisers' only idea to get the market's attention involved mariachi bands.

Marketers were basically saying, "hey you, you're Hispanic; you must love mariachi bands and will, therefore, love my commercial and buy my product."

Moving beyond the stereotypes and authentically portraying a culture only increases ad recall. Effective advertising stems from understanding your market's interests - and language - and appropriately tying them in with your brand.

MillerCoors and Lopez Negrete have teamed up and produced several successful television commercials for Miller Lite beer. The ads often surround the social interaction of *fútbol* matches or interactions between couples... sorry, no mariachi bands here.

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