

not vary much across income ranges. Both high and low income Latinos buy meat in large quantities as indicated in the 150 plus index points in the heaviest meat range (8+ pounds of cold cuts per week) according to a Packaged Facts report. (The general market is indexed at 100 points which works as the benchmark for comparison).

Moreover, Hispanics tend to be more price-sensitive than the general market in relation to meat products. Regardless of their income level, Latinos seek good-value deals

and will often try and substitute closely related meat products or brands as a reaction to price change. However, a promotional war can only hurt marketers, and smarter branding strategies should be considered. Latinos are holistic shoppers who balance price, loyalty and promotional opportunities while open to advertising messages. As such, the best way to reach them is by means of an integrated multi-point approach both above and below the line.

Taste and preference over packaged meats is another realm. As noted by George

San Jose, COO of multicultural marketing agency SJG headquartered in Chicago, "there is an emotional element by which Hispanics have meat in their meals. Understanding this connection is important when developing communication strategies in the segment." Differences in taste are reflected in product consumption. Latinos are heavy consumers of chicken sausages and frankfurters as noted in a whopping 250+ index.

Also high are beef sausages, spicy meats and arc/rope-shape sausages, all indexing in the 150-180 preference range. Conversely, links, patties, kielbasas as well as uncooked meats and 'light' deli cold cuts are not consumed as often (standing in the meager 60-70 index range). Still, close to general market levels, processed pork, particularly bacon, provides new opportunities for marketers in the Hispanic segment. Historically valued across Latin American and Iberian cultures, pork-based products may catch their attention when marketed under well-crafted branding strategies.

Regionalism and biculturalism in meat consumption

In addition to differences in shopping and

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preference habits, the national background of Latinos and their place of residence in the U.S. also affect how they purchase and consume meats. Whereas beef is favored by Latinos in the Midwest region, poultry and pork have an edge in the South. Mexicans consume more beef than Central Americans who favor poultry, whereas Puerto Ricans enjoy a rich seafood tradition, and South Americans (particularly Argentinians, Uruguayans and Brazilians) favor thick beef steaks as seen in trendy *gaucho*-style steak houses where large chunks of barbecued meat are dramatically sliced from a spit directly onto your plate. Although regularly neglected in general market strategies, the impact of these intracultural and regional differences need to be considered by regional marketers as well as by national ones seeking to optimize their distribution systems.

Another crucial dimension in Hispanic marketing is acculturation, the gradual process of acquisition of a second culture in addition to one's native culture. Indeed, most U.S. Hispanics incorporate mainstream habits and preferences but these are learned through homeland dispositions, resulting in hybrid lifestyles. The entry of Hispanic women in the U.S. labor market is a good example. As time available decreases, the need for convenience and pre-cooked foods grows as a consequence; nonetheless, Latinas will still enjoy shopping at *carnicerías* visited along multiple "fill-in," low-spend trips, influenced by their children. As new hybrid habits crystallize in consumer preferences, meat marketers must be creative when exploring merchandising and branding opportunities in the Hispanic segment.

New trends in Hispanic marketing

Forty million U.S. Hispanics will be actively engaged online by the mid-2010s.

Marketing to this segment must stand in line with the current digital consumer revolution. Latinos overindex in a variety of online activities: creating social media pages and blogs, posting comments, downloading video and music content, sending and receiving tweets, etc. Latina moms are one of the most active online groups, partly due to their lower average age and a semi-domestic, but growingly mobile lifestyle. However, Latinos are largely underserved in Spanish online. According to Mike Kolin, VP of Channel Strategy at SJG, "given that less than 20 percent of Latinos prefer to speak English at home, developing an online conversation in Spanish provides a competitive advantage for marketers in the digital space."

Not by accident, leading brands are developing digital campaigns aligned with their marketing strategies both above and below the line. This is not about having a standalone website showcasing product

lines in Spanish, but in creating a multi-pronged platform that entwines website, social media and mobile resources seeking to engender a consumer community. Beyond promotions, brand loyalty is key. As Mark Revermann, VP of Insights and Integration at SJG notes, "an integrated marketing approach with multiple touch points for information, engagement and interaction is ideally suited for this particular multicultural segment. To that end, multicultural expertise is recommended to optimize ROI in the Hispanic segment." ■


By Tony D'Andrea, PhD, Director of Planning and Research at The San Jose Group (SJG). SJG is a leading independent multicultural marketing communications agency, celebrating 30 years helping brands connect with people. For more information on this article, please email sjgpr@sjadv.com or visit www.thesanjosegroup.com.

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How to Market Your Product to Hispanics



By Alejandro Salazar, NovaScala

STROLL THROUGH MANY A SOUTHERN California supermarket and you will likely find a Hispanic family shopping together for groceries. It is very characteristic of the culture to shop as a family, interchanging the flow of Spanish and English. Purchases are made through family consensus, which entails multiple influences stemming from generational and bi-cultural motivators. Marketers are beginning to take note of these characteristics as Hispanic buying increases.

This heightened attention is not surprising given the results of the most recent U.S. Census. According to the PEW Research Center 2010 Census tabulations, the nation's Latino population has surpassed the 50 million mark, a 43 percent increase since the year 2000. The Hispanic population also accounted for most of the nation's growth—56 percent—from 2000 to 2010. To add perspective, this number is closely equivalent to the total populations of the African-American and Asian-American communities combined.

The question is then, how to best capture the buying power of this burgeoning populace. The key consideration is that such an audience is as complex as its size. Some recent data lends important insight and validates anecdotal cultural values and behaviors.

Women decision makers

According to a November 2011 Nielsen Company report, Hispanic women play a significant role in purchasing decisions about food. The report indicates that both Hispanic and African-American women view themselves as the primary decider about food purchases, whereas Asian-American and Caucasian women are more likely to include men in the decision.

It is therefore imperative for companies to implement a marketing strategy that capitalizes on the influential buying power of the Hispanic woman.

Television and media

TV and media continue to be a successful part of a marketing strategy aimed at Hispanic communities. Also according to the Nielsen report, Spanish-language television commands a strong presence in the Hispanic household, even when the individual is not primarily a Spanish speaker as indicated below:

