

Let's Resolve To Take the Hispanic Market to a New Level In '09

It's February and we are all well on our way to keeping our New Year's resolutions – we are all going to lose weight, exercise more and quit smoking. We'll look fantastic by the end of the year! But what can we do to make sure that our beloved Hispanic marketing world looks as great as all of us at the end of the year? Let's put forward some resolutions!

As one of the pioneers in the Hispanic marketing and advertising world, having opened our doors for business more than 27 years ago, we at The San Jose Group have an inspiring mix of experience and talent. Lately, we have had a lot of conversations about the countless changes that have occurred in the Hispanic marketing world and hurdles that need to be overcome for the industry to evolve to the next level. In the spirit of collaboration, we have decided to share our thoughts with the hopes of a beautified, even healthier industry at the end of the year. With no further ado, here is what we propose:

1 – Unearth new insights – In his AdAge article entitled *The Problem with 'Hispanic Insights'*, Tommy Thompson provokingly began by saying "All Latinos love music, soccer and food, don't they? These seem to be the 'insights' all marketers have been leveraging into their Hispanic advertising approach for years now." While this is certainly an oversimplification, there is a bit of truth to it. Let us continue to make the case for Hispanic research dollars, let us continue to encourage industry-wide projects like AHAA's Latino Identity initiative. Heck, let's all spend a couple of hours each week away from our desk and on the street.

2 – Commit to more enhanced measurement – According to a study commissioned by Heidrick & Struggles, 84% of marketers that target the multicultural market believe that multicultural marketing is critical to their business. However, almost 40% of respondents said they don't know the financial value of multicultural groups to their companies! It sounds like a recipe for budget cuts to me! Let's pledge to be more innovative with our measurements, more committed to results, assuring our clients internal wins along the way.

3 – Work toward an industry-wide acculturation model – We all fight the good fight every day to get client commitment and unlock budgets dedicated to the Hispanic consumer. While proprietary acculturation models may provide agencies with an interesting talking point, it also creates another point of confusion for clients, which often results in indecisiveness and a lack of action. The sooner our industry can land on a universal acculturation model, the more consistent conversations we can have, the easier it will be for clients to talk to multiple partners (e.g. agency and research partners), and the sooner we will be able to move into the next level of depth in Hispanic market segmentation.

4 – Not hiding behind the veil of Spanish – All trends suggest that there will be a stable base of Spanish-dominant Hispanic consumers – yes, Univision and Telemundo will be in business for many years to come. However, there are also significant trends that show the emergence and growth of the bilingual and English-dominant target. If we don't figure out how to connect with these consumers, how can we expect them to respond to our advertising? Let's embrace the new media efforts (e.g. MTV3, SiTV, etc), continue to explore insights that make this consumer different from the general market, and develop innovative programs that connect with them.

Remember, New Year's resolutions can be difficult to follow come June, let alone as we begin February. One way to up the odds of success is for agencies to keep in mind that we often have the same goal in mind, despite our healthy competition for accounts. In addition to practicing what we preach, we here at the San Jose Group will be doing our part by continuing our *Adelantando* series throughout this New Year, addressing the above issues and many more. What will you do to make next year better than the last?

George L. San Jose, president & chief creative officer of The San Jose Group, a multicultural advertising agency.

Hispanic DMA Spotlight: Chicago

- 1.8 million Hispanics reside in the Chicago DMA representing 19% of total population
- 53% of Hispanics in Chicago own their home
- Median household income is \$48K

Source: Claritas 2008

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