

101

How to Choose a Hispanic Advertising Agency

Written by



dieste

1. The Lowdown

Hispanics are the youngest, fastest-growing demographic, with more than 43 million people in the nation. In recent years, the Census has demonstrated that growth is spurred by native-born Hispanics, which will have significant repercussions on how marketers communicate to and engage with the demographic.

The pool of shops offering multicultural services has expanded in recent years, including general market agencies that have assembled small teams to offer this capability. Looking at the roster of the Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies, brands can find a list of more than 70 member agencies ready to assist.

2. Why Do I Need to Know About It?

The right multicultural and/or Hispanic advertising agency will serve the role of a key partner willing to build bridges and create programs that can sustain and build on equity and consumer trust. When the choice is right, these partners will stay with your brand for years to come and equip you to be ready for the rapid changes on the horizon as consumers become increasingly pan-cultural, multicultural, millennials.

Besides sheer population size, Hispanics command \$860 billion in consumer spending—the equivalent of Mexico's economy.

Searching for the right Hispanic advertising agency requires time and research. Here are seven key recommendations to keep in mind during the selection process. Before starting your search, get your internal selection team ready. When looking for a Hispanic or multicultural shop, be sure to include any in-house experts in the process so that they can help you navigate cultural clues.

3. What do I need to do?

These seven points will help you address most of the important criteria you should evaluate when looking at a communications partner to help connect with Hispanics.

The right agency fit will be the foundation to successfully meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's multicultural consumer.

- Start with a mix: Depending on your budget and goals, select three to eight shops that fit your criteria regarding location, services, or other assets. Investigate how the agencies handle their Hispanic and multicultural work from a structural (administrative, staff) and philosophical standpoint and how well equipped they are to manage your account in house.
- Consider size: The size of your agency should match the size of your business, your goals, and commitment to the market. A true partner should be able to complement and amplify your team, effectively delivering the strategic execution necessary to win in your space.



- **Culture counts:** A deep connection to the Hispanic and multicultural market is fundamental to any insightful and effective strategy. Ask about the senior talent and day-to-day contacts on the account and understand how they view the multicultural market, how they interpret it, and how they participate in it. Learn about their heritage and background and/or language fluency—the right team can help you break through and interpret your brand for consumers in any cultural system.
- **Approach matters:** Ask the multicultural agency to succinctly explain how it approaches the market, speaks to each demographic, and its recommendations in terms of a media mix. The answer must make sense to your brand, and case studies are an easy way to illustrate this. Also, watch for buzzwords. The 360-approach, all-digital philosophy, or language-based segmentation is almost never the right solution. Look for an agency that can deliver full solutions through the filter of seasoned brand leaders who will put your business needs at the center of all strategies.
- **Be a critic:** When presented with reels and capabilities that demonstrate award-winning campaigns, look for details and ask questions about results achieved, communication challenges addressed, and the longevity of any efforts. Not all integrations on Univision, or big celebrity-driven efforts, have the same impact, but they are great “eye candy.” Look for variety too; consumers today don’t always respond to the 30-second television spot.
If you are presented with Spanish materials, ask for translations and for meaning interpretations.
Also, inquire about how the Spanish work is done—a good shop will do its copywriting in Spanish.
- **Look for the wow:** The right agency knows how to market top brands and will pay special attention to them. Look at the use of the latest technologies or mastered innovations, investigate the agency’s role in the industry, and see how the firm talks about itself. Also, look at how it interacts with the rich Hispanic advertising agency or trade field.
- **Understand access:** Multicultural marketers know that reaching the Hispanic demographic requires experience, understanding, and passion. A team of experts committed to being your brand leaders will make your investment generate the desired results. When in the chemistry check process and while getting to know the team, be sure to determine how much access you will have to the senior talent to discuss your issues and how engaged they will be with your brand. Look for an agency willing to commit to you and be a counselor. The agency should be willing to offer up senior people who best understand your brand.

4. The Thing to Remember Is...

When the fit is right, a Hispanic agency can help brands grow their relationships with multicultural consumers by developing meaningful, powerful interactions that make sense and connect with consumers’ lives. The wrong choice can put your efforts in question, since this savvy demographic is always on the watch for commitment and for brands that really speak and interact with them. Always remember your brand will evolve as consumers evolve, as they touch it—the

right partner will help you develop strategies that sustain a relationship with your brand, no matter where consumer trends may shift.

Find out how we are leading the marketing community at ana.net

