

Targeting minorities is a sound business practice

[Business](#)



1 Targeting Minorities is a Sound Business Practice Introduction A target market is the market segment which a particular product is marketed to and often

defined by age, gender, and/or socioeconomic grouping. Smart businesses are discovering the

buying power of the nation's minorities. Experts say that minority consumers show a high

degree of loyalty. When a business addresses their need directly, it can have an enormous

impact. The explosion of ethnic and racial populations across the U. S. has caused business to

realize that targeting minorities is a sound business practice.

Sound Advice

Don't make the mistake of thinking that all minorities are alike. The four major

sub-groups of the Hispanic market are Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and "other Hispanic."

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which includes Spanish-speaking people from Central and South America, the Caribbean and

Spain. There's a tremendous difference between the preferences and buying patterns of Puerto

Ricans living in New York, Cubans in Miami, and Mexicans in the southwestern states.

There are more than two dozen ethnic groups within the Asian community. Within the

African-American segment, French-speaking Haitian-born Americans, for example, may have

little in common with American-born blacks.

Equally important are generational differences. Consequently, it's virtually impossible

to create generic advertising or promotional tools that appeal to all segments. The solution is to

pick a very specific target and tailor your message to their needs. If trying to attract more than

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one target, it would be wise to create more than one message.

Learn as much as you can about your potential customer's traditions and beliefs. Be

careful when translating English, especially slogans, into foreign languages.

Sharpen your

sensitivity to cultural slurs or taboos. Successful marketers have their promotional materials

reviewed by members of the minority group or groups being targeted.

The protocol of customer relations in any culture is always prompt, courteous service.

However, the requirements of courtesy may differ among various ethnic groups. Asian-

Americans place great value on respect for elders, whom salespeople should treat with honor

and greet specifically, if not first, when they come to the store with younger family members.

Asian-Americans differ, however, in their behavior as customers.

" Chinese-Americans ask many questions," says David Hsu, co-owner of Huan Yuan

Restaurant in Oakland, California, " and they are very picky." They want informed answers

without high-pressure selling, which they find impolite. Korean- and Filipino-Americans, in

contrast, ask few if any questions. " Koreans are very sensitive about loss of face," says Harry

Kim, chairman of the San Francisco-Seoul Sister City Committee, so they are uncomfortable

showing they don't know.

Latinos also ask few questions and are highly brand-conscious. They are turned off by

sales pressure and will walk away. Caucasian and African-American customers, on the other

hand, may ask numerous questions. Caucasians are very careful about

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details.

The Korean style of business is, " We make a friendship, then do business with friends,"

says Hiroyasu Kitagawa, San Francisco manager of Matsuzakaya department store. Asian-

American etiquette Chinese-Americans depart from this style; they wrap up a transaction in a

single meeting, with " no time to develop a relationship."

Socializing is part of the Hispanic business culture, and politeness toward all is essential.

As for etiquette, last names and handshakes, or hugs, are used, and punctuality is required. In

African-American and Caucasian companies, first names are often used, firm handshakes are the

gesture of greeting, and punctuality is appreciated.

Conclusion

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Ethnic groups respond to ads tailored to them. Cultural sensitivity is imperative when

developing promotional tools. Always keep in mind that some colors can be offensive, words

can often translate poorly, and certain products or services may conflict with religious or

moral beliefs. Using the language of the group is essential

Ethnic groups provide a large and growing market for business operators and

entrepreneurs. While these markets have existed for a long time in larger cities, they are

becoming increasingly significant in smaller communities.

Ethnicity, as parts of their cultures, have proven to provide loyalty to the businesses

which do their research and provide the diverse groups the products and services which are

important to them, and in the manner to which they can relate.

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July 27, 2003

Let's Talk Business

May, 2004

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