



MULTICULTURAL MARKETING RESOURCES, INC.

The 2021 Multicultural Marketing Growth Imperative: The Collision of Covid, Technology and Census

The threat of Covid, social distancing and 'cancel culture' has prompted reflection, deleting what's unnecessary, and changing the status quo from consumers shifting values, lifestyle and priorities to companies permanently going to flexible work schedules, more equitable D&I practices, and re-focusing on key growth areas, led by Multicultural and Digital marketing. My prediction for 2021 is that companies finally do Multicultural marketing right, and allocate the commensurate fair share of budget, resources and attention to this business imperative.



The marketplace has evolved. Wake up and follow the money. Ad revenues will resurge in 2021 with booming streaming TV, digital, social, E-commerce and 'essential' services like grocery stores, DIY and telecom. Covid underscored Multiculturals' power with double-digit growth in Spanish broadcast and African-American platforms, while overall linear TV further erodes, which should convert to tangible Multicultural ad dollar increases, especially with the upcoming 2020 census release. Yet projected Multicultural ad spend is \$30Billion, still a 5% morsel of total ad spend – while Multiculturals represent 42% of the population. They are the majority in the <35 age group, states like CA, NY, Texas and Florida, driving clients' business growth in the top 10 categories, and account for 100% of all growth in pop, new HHs and jobs.

Data is my lifeblood, so I'm baffled why Multicultural marketing is still ignored by half of Fortune 500 companies, who must live in a bubble, under a rock, or ready to retire. The good news: some major companies reinstated their center of MCM expertise, leadership and accountability after the debacle of the 'Total Market approach', that works with cross-functional teams to be effective across the P's. Yet many companies still fall into the trap of considering MCM after marking GM strategies and budgets, which leads to internal budget and territorial battles, and diminishes total market returns. Others still apply marginalized MCM strategies to metrics, marketing and creative with cookie cutter research, segmentation, media and digital buys, assuming Multiculturals are effectively reached with GM efforts and purchase triggers and consumer truths resonate equally. Brown casting is not a multicultural strategy, Spanish is not a Hispanic Marketing strategy, and 'Spanglish' is clever no more. 77% of Multiculturals choose brands that properly portray and understand them. Cultural identity is stronger than ever and more vital in marcomm. Here are my top 10 trends for companies to put at the forefront:

1. The Digital transformation has been accelerated. Multiculturals, already higher Mobile, Internet, gaming and tech users, will only increase use of CTVs, E-Sports, OTT streaming, Virtual events, Digital media, wallets, DIY, and E-commerce. This means reassessing channels, formats and the buyer's journey, with more focus on OTT, CTV, relevant Digital and Social efforts, websites, buyflows, Shopstreaming, and Virtual experiences.
2. Multiculturals remain resiliently optimistic even though disproportionately impacted by Covid, but will be increasingly discerning in their purchases. The lower-income will cut non-essentials, moderate-income will weigh value more carefully, while affluents constrain spend due to a sense of guilt. This means adjusting value propositions and promotions, and revalidating target needs and segmentation.
3. All consumers will redefine success to what Multiculturals know: the priority is taking care of family needs, desires, growth and development. This means re-filtering how to meaningfully bring your brand position to life across platforms, and more 'personal' marketing.
4. The social justice movement impacted already woke Multiculturals, and equality is the #1 value. They will favor companies who stand for something, share their values, and work to earn their trust. This requires brands to realign themes, have more human, customer-centric marketing, and make social impact and community engagement a priority.
5. Brand trust and being 'real' will have even stronger value, and Multiculturals will backlash against the 'fake', social frivolity, or brands who do token, blended and stereotypical MCM efforts. This means a

truly authentic brand voice, more cultural relevance, empathetic service, leveraging trusted ethnic influencers, and trust-building initiatives.

6. They will seek higher quality, life-enhancing products/services. Covid taught us to slow down and 'less is more' so the fewer things bought will matter more. This means screening brand content with both cultural and empathy filters.
7. There is a heightened need for intimacy, connections and shared experiences, already highest among Hispanics, whether with must-see TV, Houseparty app, or video chats. This means more shared brand experiences, and relevant intimate video marketing, email, DM and social.
8. There is a renewed 'Be local' focus resulting from the 'zoomed in' life approach of focusing on what truly matters and virtually sharing what's happening. The 'local' goes beyond bodegas or farm-to-table and spans culture, geography, community, family, and passion-points, which means brands need to have higher engagement levels across these multiple pillars.
9. The real and virtual worlds blending will speed up, with adaptive AI experiences and virtual events matching the value of in-person events, which will cause a reversal of urbanization as you can do it from anywhere. As an agency, this has become BAU. All our campaigns are virtual productions, and we recently produced a virtual livestream concert, and got awards for the Best use of AR/IMR Tech.
10. Home is the new 'command central' for all work, play, dining and activities for larger MCM families, all seeking quick answers, engagement, and brands that help solve problems and make their lives easier and better. This means SEO featured snippets and educational content are key, and the brands that will win enable home solutions, connectivity, entertainment and learning, reduce stress or time, and offer meaningful personalized experiences, and soft toilet paper and stylish masks. 😊

As marketers, we must always evolve to align with customers' demographics, habits and needs for business growth. We need a smarter, nimbler playbook to succeed in the ever-more diverse, digital and Covid-altered reality. If you're not doing effective multicultural marketing, you're not doing effective marketing.

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INFUSION is a full-service, WMBE agency that gets results for Fortune 100 clients, led by dynamic Stanford MBA Liz Castells and a powerhouse team with diverse General market, Multicultural and Client experience, known for infusing analytics and insights for deeper strategies, first-in-kind thinking, and cultural narratives that compel ROI-Powered ideas. Their Transculturation™ model helps Clients profitably integrate Multicultural across the P's factoring both ethnic needs and GM commonalities, to develop a cogent mix of unique, universal and cross-cultural Marcomm approaches.

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