

Kicking It New School

"Hispanic Marketplace" is dedicated to educating self-storage professionals about the possibilities of the burgeoning Latino market. The U.S. Hispanic population—and its buying power—is growing at an astounding rate, making it an attractive target for businesses that appreciate Latinos' loyalty to brands and reliance on word-of-mouth for making purchasing decisions.



Latinas Struggle and Soar

Latinas lag far behind Hispanic men and American women when it comes to confidence, knowledge and involvement in financial decision-making, according to a new study by NOP World, a market-research company. When asked about their financial savvy, 49 percent of Hispanic women cited limited knowledge about monetary matters as a personal problem, pointing to a lack of Spanish-language resources as the primary culprit. More than half of the women surveyed expressed a wish for financial agents, toll-free numbers, brochures and statements available in their native language.

Hispanic women did feel highly confident, however, in the field of cuisine. Puerto Rican cooking expert Daisy Martinez, host of the *Daisy Cooks!* how-to series on PBS, has become yet another Latina television personality. Her show has expanded to more than 200 stations in 20 of the network's top 25 markets. For her part, Martinez is happy to put an end to the unspoken belief that Latinos don't watch public television. Response to the bilingual website, www.daisycooks.com, has been tremendous, with an estimated 20,000 registered users who also receive a monthly newsletter.

Confidence in cooking aside, statistics show Latinas are engaged in the seemingly universal female struggle with body image. There is no ready translation into Spanish for the phrase "extreme makeover," but this has not prevented a soaring number of Hispanic women from pursuing plastic surgery. Between 2000 and 2004, the number of cosmetic procedures performed on U.S. Hispanics jumped 49 percent, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. Latinas account for 6 percent of the total surgeries performed annually. The most popular procedures they

pursue are breast augmentation, nose reshaping and liposuction.

Cable Connection

"Manu Mania" may soon hit the U.S. Hispanic advertising market. NBA star Emmanuel "Manu" Ginobili from Argentina, a 6-foot, 6-inch forward for the San Antonio Spurs, is one of the most successful Latino basketball players. Last year, he signed a six-year contract for an estimated \$55 million and led the Argentine national team to a gold medal in the Olympics.

Fluent in English, Italian and Spanish, Manu was hired by Time Warner Cable to pitch products to San Antonio subscribers. The company now says it will expand its Spanish-language television campaign throughout Texas by the end of 2005, and is thinking about taking the marketing effort national.

Cyber-Spanic

U.S. Hispanic consumers with Internet access are more likely than their general-market counterparts to use instant messaging and chat rooms, and are increasingly using the web to print out coupons for big-ticket items and basic household goods, according to the third annual U.S. Hispanic Cyberstudy, commissioned by America Online and conducted by Roper Public Affairs. Of the Hispanics surveyed, 55 percent said they listen to music online, compared to 41 percent of the general population, and approximately 37 percent are downloading music, compared with 25 percent of the general market.

Opportunity on the Menu


Analysts say there is great opportunity for food manufacturers to tap into the Hispanic market, as Hispanics are just as likely as the overall population to use common foods such as sweetened breakfast cereals, rice, spaghetti sauce, cold cuts and potato chips. On the other hand, their usage falls well below the average

when it comes to flour, hot cereals, frozen vegetables, potatoes, nuts and, surprisingly, tortilla chips.

Market analysts, promoters and media buyers believe the success of food items and other general-consumption products marketed to Hispanics has a lot to do with luck and timing. But most agree there are four basic tenets to follow: Promotional messages should be culturally relevant, respectful, inspirational and educational.

New-School Marketing

Hispanics are less frequently moving into areas with high populations of their ethnic group, according to recent Census data. In the 1990s, most Hispanic immigrants came to the United States through five gateways: California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas. Now they are equally likely to end up in Iowa, South Carolina or Tennessee. The spread of Hispanics challenges the communities in which they settle, as most local schools and governments are not adequately equipped to accommodate Spanish speakers.

Reaching out to Hispanic populations has become such big business that college students can actually secure a degree in the subject. Florida State University is launching the country's first center for Hispanic marketing communication, which will offer graduate certificates and undergraduate minor programs. 

Myrna Sonora is the director of Hispanic business for The Michaels/Wilder Group, a specialized advertising agency incorporating three divisions: Yellow Pages, Internet, and Recruitment Advertising. Based in Phoenix, the award-winning firm is celebrating its 15th year of business thanks to a loyal client base that includes hundreds of self-storage owners and managers. For more information, call 800.423.6468; visit www.michaelswilder.com.