

Hispanic Market Overview.

Vol. 16

2025
EDITION

The multicultural advertising, marketing and public relations industry's annual State of the Industry report



Voz Of The American Influencer

Washington, D.C. has changed. But, as you'll read in this 16th annual report, the need to target Hispanic consumers in the most efficient way possible has not. Here's how to "Hear their Song" – and not get drowned out by loud distractions.



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OYE NUESTRO CANTO

"We draw our strength from the very despair in which we have been forced to live. We shall endure." — Cesar Chavez



It's interesting how digging up an old song that once struck a chord with you, a classic track you haven't heard in ages, can suddenly stop you in your tracks, as if you've just had a giant lightbulb delivered by an invisible drone appear above your head.

As we started production on the 16th annual edition of *Hispanic Market Overview*, the mood of the station was as fickle as an infant in a high chair. In Palm Beach County, Fla., the high temperature was the coolest for a late March day that anyone could remember. On Wall Street, "volatility" was the word of the day — again. In Washington ... yeah, *that*.

Since the return to the White House of President Donald J. Trump, there's been a lot of noise. A *lot* of it. This led us to ask one simple question to Hispanic marketing and advertising industry leaders: *What NOW?* The answers were positively reassuring, and while starting the editing process, we went to a mix of songs that were popular 35 years ago.

"Oye Mi Canto" — or, "Hear My Song," from Gloria Estefan — came on the Bluetooth speaker. Her words, in Spanish, were divine. In 1990, it was seen as a "return to her roots" by one publication. If one were to hear her song today, it means so much more.



ISAAC
MIZRAHI



HORACIO
GAVILAN



ALEX LOPEZ
NEGRETE

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Until we heard the lyrics to “Oye Mi Canto,” we were going to devote this space to the epic achievement “Debí Tirar Más Fotos” by Bad Bunny.

And, if you’ve not listened to that album from start to finish, we urge you to. Right now. Then come back to this and understand why a largely forgotten 35-year-old song is relevant today. Why? In 1990, “Latin Music” was in its most transformative moment. Only, the “total market” had no knowledge of this. In Spain, Mecano had just peaked while Héroes del Silencio were soaring, ending an era when “La Movida” meant rock en español. In Latin America, Soda Stereo had conquered the continent. In the U.S., a quarter-page in Billboard Magazine put a spotlight on Juan Luis Guerra y 4.40. Luis Enrique and Gilberto Santa Rosa at pivotal moments in their respective careers. The seeds were planted, but Gloria Estefan was the face of Latin music across the globe. Singing in English, after a formidable run in the early 1980s as a popular Spanish Pop act in a handful of places including Puerto Rico, Estefan and Miami Sound Machine rocketed to fame in Europe with “Dr. Beat” and then conquered the U.S. with “Conga.” Then came “Oye Mi Canto.”

The lyrics largely reflect a Cuba under Fidel Castro from the point of view of exiles in Miami. But, after the first stanza when hearing the song in 2025, it takes on a whole new meaning. In English, she says:

Free... free to express
What I feel in my heart
I don't have to keep quiet
You have... that freedom too
That's hard to share
And you know it well

The Hispanic community in the U.S. today is at a pivotal moment today. One may argue if there is any “community” within the Hispanic community, with a host of nationalities all lumped into a singular category, and all experiencing different challenges amid the triumphs and celebrations.

While it may not be seen or heard, it exists. It persists. The U.S. Hispanic community, one comprised of individuals with a variety of socioeconomic levels and a bevy of backgrounds, is one. Now, it needs to be heard. With English-language advertisements airing on the radio warning undocumented immigrants to pack up and leave before getting caught in a raid, a non-Hispanic may believe that Latinos across the U.S. are living in fear. Not true. One may believe that an effort to dismantle Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs being waged by the White House is squelching any actions designed to appeal to the Hispanic consumer. Not true.

“But did all of the cacophony from the Nation’s Capital drown out the Hispanic voice in the U.S.? Are the leaders of Hispanic-focused marketing and advertising shops muted, or in a bind?

“Agencies that truly understand the power of multicultural marketing are not muted, but they are navigating a more complex landscape,” says **Luis Miguel Messianu**, President and CEO of multicultural shop MEL. “The bind is that many brands see Hispanic outreach as an optional initiative rather than a core strategy. Agencies are often tasked with pushing for authentic representation while also addressing brand concerns about political repercussions. But we are not muted. The agencies that thrive are the ones helping brands understand that speaking to the Hispanic community isn’t just about inclusion — it’s about growth, loyalty, and long-term success.”

“Agencies are often tasked with pushing for authentic representation while also addressing brand concerns about political repercussions. But we are not muted. The agencies that thrive are the ones helping brands understand that speaking to the Hispanic community isn’t just about inclusion — it’s about growth, loyalty, and long-term success.” — **Luis Miguel Messianu**

Messianu has more to say, as do others who have long advocated for more attention — and bigger budgets — from CMOs and brand managers across the U.S. To be clear, the end of the DEI Era has many asking questions about what’s next for their U.S. Hispanic marketing efforts. “The dismantling of DEI frameworks has undoubtedly created confusion, but it hasn’t and shouldn’t neuter multicultural marketing,” Messianu says. “DEI was never synonymous with marketing — it was a corporate commitment to equity and inclusion. Multicultural marketing, on the other hand, is about understanding consumer behavior, recognizing purchasing power, and respecting cultural nuances. While the political winds may shift, the market realities do not. Brands that pull back from Hispanic marketing aren’t just losing cultural relevance — they’re giving up billions in potential revenue.”

Others across this edition of Hispanic Market Overview 2025 express similar thoughts. In the end, we must remember to “hear our song” as we call on Hispanics to unite. There’s a story that will continue to be told. To paraphrase Bad Bunny, we cannot forget. We cannot erase. That era begins today.

The ‘Ungeneral’ Agency Marches On

In March 2024, one of the Hispanic marketing and advertising world’s most prolific shops debuted a new market position. It was totally about the “total market,” and how to break free from it. Today, **Alma** and its Chief Executive Officer, Isaac Mizrahi, are focused on staying connected to multicultural and cultural trends — along with what clients are gravitating toward as the months progress.



For Mizrahi, saying Miami-based Alma is the “ungeneral agency” comes in response to how he would describe what the shop is in 2025, some 16 years after he came on board and played an integral role in the release of a pivotal White Paper focused on “Fusionistas.”

Mizrahi recalls, “For many, many years a lot of professionals in the marketplace had divided their agency selections between the general market and the multicultural world, and a lot of customers were led to believe this was mutually exclusive and a binary choice. From a marketing and business standpoint, this mutually exclusive choice didn’t reflect marketplace conditions, and didn’t reflect marketplace expectations.”

For Mizrahi, it is very hard to draw a line between the multicultural consumer and the total market consumer. Why? Consider the nation’s demographics, and the fact that the U.S. is a multicultural country. Period.

This illustrates the importance of moving old, outdated research from the active file and into an archive, including the first-ever *Hispanic Market Overview* report in 2010. When what was then Alma DDB produced its report on “Fusionistas,” it spoke of teens born in the U.S. to parents who were born in Latin America. Today, many of these individuals could be married, or are highly focused on home ownership and career advancement. They could have children of their own, ready to forge the next path for U.S. Hispanics.

The “Fusionistas” were labeled as bicultural. Today, it is the *multicultural* Hispanic, sharing and absorbing trends and evolving with the culture, that is shaping all of what American consumers crave. It is linked to the ongoing evolution of the Hispanic consumer — a subject Mizrahi never tires of discussing. That’s a good thing, considering the average length of tenure for a Chief Marketing Officer in the United States today.

Mizrahi acknowledges that there is significant executive turnover on the client level, and this can be frustrating for the multicultural agency. But, he notes, young professionals are entering the workforce armed with more studies and data than ever. This has empowered them, along with conversations from industry veterans including Mizrahi, to participate in the ongoing transformation of the U.S. consumer marketplace.

Mizrahi has done his part, offering monthly articles to Forbes for nine years and publishing in 2023 a book focused on case studies. He's also teaching at the university level in Miami. "There was a lack of preparation at our institutions about the changes and the lack of representation in marketing in America," he says.

THE CULTURAL SHIFT

In the 16 years that the "Fusionistas" report was published, one clear change has been seen by Mizrahi: the power of culture as a content driver for Hispanic marketers has risen to the forefront of the conversation. "In the 1970s and the 1980s, marketing to Hispanics was dominated by language," he recalls. "It is still a very important component, but culture is even more important. How culture can shape the nature of the conversation is perhaps most important, as this can connect with the consumer in whatever language they prefer to use. If you get the culture, authenticity and message correct, you can connect with the Hispanic consumer."



www.TheUngeneralAgency.com

Mizrahi uses the word "connect" deliberately. Why? Because reaching the Hispanic consumer is not the same thing as connecting with them.

"Reach is the effect of a successful media buying strategy," he explains. "Reaching doesn't necessarily connect in an emotional level, and this is our role at Alma and our peers in the industry, to bring that emotion to life."

Reaching and connecting results in ad effectiveness, Mizrahi concludes, ultimately bringing growth and ROI. And, to be clear, **hablar y compartir en español debe continuar.**

"Spanish-language communication is still extremely important," Mizrahi says. "It is not one or the other."

"If you get the culture, authenticity and message correct, you can connect with the Hispanic consumer."

"The consumer has been looking for content that is relevant to them and there are moments where there is content delivered to them in Spanish," he continues. "It could be a Liga MX match, or a music event, or news."

Like other executives interviewed for Hispanic Market Overview 2025, Mizrahi stresses the following statistic:

Two-thirds of the Hispanics in the U.S. were born here, and they are bilingual.

As such, any media company that is delivering content in Spanish that is of interest to this audience can still benefit from marketing initiatives that include them.



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Mizrahi also believes marketers and advertising agency leaders should be challenging the assumption that one should build an efficient campaign, versus building an effective campaign. That said, he acknowledges that for many of his peers, “the pressure is real.”

He comments, “Budgets are limited. When the client is looking for efficiencies, they aren’t just looking for higher effectiveness and ROI. Efficiency is one of the goals, but a campaign that measures efficiencies has very little chance of being effective.”

In the last few years, data has offered insight into several campaigns that have maximized ROI. As Mizrahi observes, this is connected to a Latin sense of humor, a strong emotional narrative, and other key elements that Mizrahi and his team at Alma gain from various studies. “This is not an assumption,” he says. “This is not an opinion. This is based on science and based on real ROI and agency recommendations to go beyond simple transcreations.”

And with diversity, equity and inclusion programs under attack from Washington, Mizrahi urges marketing professionals to separate the noise from the reality of the U.S. today. For Alma’s clients, the focus remains steadfast, with a range of initiatives targeting the Hispanic consumer in play.

In 2019, Mizrahi was already vocalizing the fact that DEI was not marketing. Now, with DEI under attack from Washington, he wants marketers to concentrate on one of the oldest tools in advertising: segmentation.

“There are several ways you can separate the market,” Mizrahi says. “Culture is one of the ways you can segment from an ethnic standpoint, and from a non-ethnic standpoint.”

With the 2020 Census showing that 100% of the U.S. population growth came from multicultural segments, clients understand that, Mizrahi says. “If clients don’t target multicultural segments, they will significantly limit their growth potential. That is the reality of the marketplace. Out of 65 million Hispanics, two-thirds are born here and are part of the multicultural marketplace. They maintain aspects of their mainstream culture and of their Hispanic culture.”

Once one wades past the vitriol-fueled conversations and chatter flung across social media, where does the Hispanic community stand as the second half of 2025 awaits?

“From a marketing standpoint, it is about growth, growth, growth,” Mizrahi insists. “It is purchasing power growth and demographic growth. Educational attainment improvements are being seen.

“Household income growth is seen,” Mizrahi continues. “These are all indicators that a CEO is looking at. We need to have Hispanics as loyal customers of our services and products. I’m still very bullish. I know there are still some uncertain times ahead and some fears to be seen, but if you remove the noise from the conversation, all opportunities point to growth. How to maximize growth with our consumers should be the No. 1 focus of advertisers and marketers today.”

“Out of 65 million Hispanics, two-thirds are born here and are part of the multicultural marketplace. They maintain aspects of their mainstream culture and of their Hispanic culture.”



Two Alma creatives, **Daniel Correa** and **Bruno Trad**, were selected for the Shortlist jury at this year’s [@newyorkfestivals](https://www.newyorkfestivals.com) Advertising Awards, which recognizes the best creative work across the globe.

Learn more about the awards at [newyorkfestivals.com](https://www.newyorkfestivals.com).

The final deadline for entry submission is May 9.

Sirius XM Helps To Draw The Multicultural Marketing Map

It's noticed the shift in consumption habits among its subscribers, and says "quiet connectivity" and "joy seeking" are key mindset and consumer traits as the second half of 2025 awaits. "Seeking communities that are closer to our culture and increased human interaction" is also a key takeaway **Nidia Serrano, SiriusXM's Senior Director of B2B Marketing**, had to share during a webinar held March 27 — featuring an A-list panel of multicultural marketing experts.

GroupM Multicultural President **Gonzalo Del Fa** appeared virtually alongside **Omnicom Media Group's** cross-cultural center of excellence leader **Michael Roca**, Burrell SVP of Media Services **Donna Hodge** and **Arnetta Whiteside**, the SVP of Multicultural Consulting, Agency and Brand Readiness at **Publicis Media**.

While Roca noted that marketers are looking for guidance. As such, they need to follow the money — and multicultural consumers can bring growth. That said, Whiteside added that a company must have the mechanisms in place to follow the money.

The session also proved to yield many of the market assessments shared by Hispanic advertising leaders interviewed for this report: Hodge is not detecting any shift or decline in budgets. "I'm optimistic that budgets will continue to remain flat, and in some cases we are seeing some of those budgets jump year after year," she said.

Are brands investing with the same fervor? Del Fa echoes the team at López Negrete Communications, saying any pullback is an excuse for trimming their budgets. "This is about business — this is *pure business*," he said.



Del Fa's commentary touched on recent Executive Orders from the White House regarding the diversity, equity & inclusion efforts seen across the U.S. by suggesting that, if one were to interpret it word-for-word, a marketer may end up refraining from targeting women. And, he surmises, that's not going to happen. As such, Whiteside says, "It is time to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. It is the only way you as a marketer is going to grow, and it is the only way your client will continue to grow."

Hodge agrees, noting that targeting consumers remains in place. "As long as we move the work forward ... it is semantics," Roca added. "We've built so much momentum that we can't go back. We have to continue to move forward."

While language is a concern, a "privacy first" world is making it harder to determine who the customer is for a marketer — creating gaps and audiences who are invisible, in particular in the social and digital sphere. Yet, Roca says, key categories including QSR and Automotive can simply see who the customer is walking through the door and define their advertising the right way based on this alone.

For Whiteside, attribution is key for driving growth. Del Fa agrees, while arguing that not including Hispanics and Blacks in the general market isn't the "general market." As such, targeting these audiences within the total market has to be done. Period.

DEI vs. Multicultural Marketing

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Focuses on workforce diversity and equitable hiring policies
- Responsible for inclusive workplace culture and employee resource groups
- Deals with supplier diversity and corporate social responsibility initiatives

≠

Multicultural Marketing

- Uses consumer insights and cultural intelligence to engage diverse audiences
- Focuses on authentic messaging, audience relevance, and media investment
- Directly impacts brand growth, purchase intent, and market expansion



Determining who the person is who is buying a product is perhaps one of the key desires of Del Fa, adding his thoughts as to why attribution is a No. 1 need for the marketer of today.

As the professionals discussed opportunities to impact business outcomes, attendees watching the webinar were actively participating in a Q&A chat. Why multicultural media buys remain important and essential to advertiser growth, **Horizon Media** Associate Director of Multicultural Business Solutions **Whitney Dihmes Arzola** shared, “They’ll drive more outcomes and engagement given how ingrained in the community these publications are compared to mass pubs.”

Addressing the noise fueled by national politics, **Dana Storm Santiago**, VP of Inclusive Partnerships at media company **Raptive**, added, “As experts in [the] space as agencies, publishers, and marketers, we have to challenge these fear tactics to do what is necessary for growth and also the right thing to do.”

THE DIGITAL/SOCIAL STORY

What are the qualifiers of the audience you seek? Del Fa says this is one of the ways to best answer the difficult question of how to best target Blacks and Hispanics in streaming platforms.

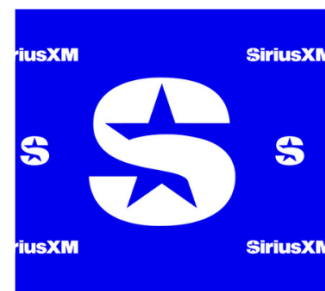
It’s easy to argue that reaching these segments through media devoted to them works. But ... what media? If digital/social is driving the dollars, what media is that? ViX? And what is the ViX in the Black market? If it is still radio/TV, is that a losing value proposition?

“Because TV may not work for one audience doesn’t mean it won’t work for another audience,” Del Fa argues. For Whiteside, multiplatform investment is part of a strategy that can speak to and engage with consumers in the right way.

Where does the product lend itself, with respect to the type of media? That’s what Roca asks when judging where the media ad spend is best suited for a particular brand.

For Roca, audio advertising is a favorite. The same goes for **Nikki Buchanan, Sirius XM’s Senior Sales Director for Multicultural**, as determining how culture is moving, with music playing a strong role for marketers.

“This crew has the receipts,” Buchanan concluded. “They have the tools and know what works and what doesn’t work.”



The Globalization Of Latin Music

Sirius XM has a selection of audio channels devoted to Spanish-language music and Hispanic-influenced styles, including “Pitbull’s Globalization,” featuring a blend of rhythmic pop and Latin rhythmic artists. There’s also Latin Pop “Hits Uno,” Tropical Hits “Caliente,” regional Mexican “Aguila,” gold-based Adult Latin Hits “En Vivo,” and classic Tropical “Latin Vault.”

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Hispanic Market Guide



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CONQUERING THE COMMOTION

At **Lopez Negrete Communications**, business is booming. Why, it's thanks to smart marketers who have risen above the cacophony of clamor from Inside the Beltway.

"I'm happy to report that **we are busier than we've been in quite a while**, not only because of new business activity but thanks to our old clients as well," says **Alex López Negrete** (seated, at right). "We are very fortunate, and it is an indicator that while there are clouds in the sky and there is a lot of rhetoric out there, the good marketers realize that there is just a lot of noise. The business opportunity remains. Latinos continue to remain an enormous part of the growth of this country, and good marketers are not forgetting that."



Alex participated in a roundtable conversation with Sonny Villarreal, VP of Brand Leadership at Lopez Negrete Communications (pictured, at right), and Patrick Lopez Negrete, VP of Brand Strategy, that assures multicultural marketing and advertising professionals that the path they take is not strewn with storm debris awaiting a chainsaw. Rather, it is one full of green.

"You hit the nail on the head with Hispanic being an unshakable business imperative across the board," Pat said, responding to Alex's comments. "The noise? That's not necessarily new. Every time there is an election cycle, Hispanics become a major talking point. But when taking perspective of client needs and expectations, the marketer needs to focus on the Hispanic consumer specifically in order to achieve the growth they need to succeed."

As Pat sees it, "Noise and fluctuation should be when you are doubling down on your largest growth market. You can't avoid the health and welfare of the Hispanic consumer, and perhaps you should be worried about people who are worried. Thus, more sensitivity can be shown in the messaging to these consumers."

Sonny is very aware of what's been airing on newscasts across the U.S. "When you have very polarizing political events on the news, for sure people are in panic mode," he acknowledges. But, simple math and dollars are all that the CMO needs to comprehend.

In 2015, Hispanic market buying power stood at \$1.7 trillion. "Today, we know we are arguably at \$3.2 trillion, depending on some reports, and all of our campaigns are rooted on those numbers," says Sonny. "Clients understand the importance of Hispanic buying power and I think they get. Yes, it is scary to see what is happening on the news, but the business imperative is dictated by multicultural consumers."

NOTHING MORE THAN AN EXCUSE

Many Hispanic market professionals have been preaching over the last several years that "DEI is not marketing." With diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives being silenced with the changes in Washington politics, is there concern that multicultural and Hispanic advertising will also be frozen?

"Fortunately, no, and here's why," Alex responds. "We are blessed that we have good clients that understand the difference between DEI and segment marketing. Hyundai? It is full steam ahead." In particular, the Kona model is a focal point for its "Where To Now?" campaign, which includes a social media influencer component and multi-pronged total market and U.S. Hispanic-focused messaging.

Alex also says longtime Texas-based supermarket chain H-E-B "knows where their bread is buttered." Having said that, he admits there are some clients out there "that are pumping the brakes a little bit," under the guise of DEI's demise.

"But let me say something controversial," Alex continues. **"Marketers that want an excuse to not do Hispanic marketing will use this an excuse."**

Alex warned the industry in 2020 about this concern, and again in 2022 when DEI initiatives "became the belle of the ball." When it comes to diversity, equity and inclusion activity, that should have been "table stakes" some 30 to 35 years ago. "Being inclusive and seeking representation of the very audiences you seek should have been table stakes all along!" Alex says. "The dangerous part is that marketers got confused – conveniently so – and took budgets that everyone had been taking three decades to build and were absorbed into DEI."

¿De aquí a dónde? Di sí a cualquier plan.

Di sí a cualquier plan.

Nuevo Hyundai KONA.  Nuevo Hyundai KONA.  Nuevo Hyundai KONA.

Where to now?
Say yes to any plan.
Hyundai KONA.
It's your journey.

And Sports events field signage.

The result, Alex says? “That went to an infrastructure-building side of the ledger. Give something like that two to five years, and the growth starts slowing. Then the board asks where the growth went, and the answer is you stopped catering to them.”

Pat nodded in affirmation, noting that Alex “made a good point in that if this was your core initiative to drive growth — DEI — you just were not doing it right in the first place.” He reiterates that if an organization’s Hispanic marketing is built on DEI initiatives, they are not necessarily doing it correctly. “You need to reach out and connect to a new segment that has the potential to build new business,” he says.

Sonny then chimed in, pointing to Pat’s assessment that DEI “has never served as a ‘North Star’ and should not.” He comments, “Having seen some client-side action personally, DEI should have never been a steering wheel to marketing success. We are very, very fortunate that our clients have been focused on the prize — growth for their brands. That comes from Hispanics and the multicultural consumer.

For Alex, the message is simple: “If clients are expecting a different outcome, then they have to tolerate, invest in and commit to a different process. That speaks to having groups that are reflective of the audiences you are trying to attract and serve and have them participatory at the right stages of the marketing process.”

It’s a story that goes back years: having a seat at the table from the very first client meetings, alongside the “total market” agency and the media buyers. Addressing some marketers that have been forced to “walk it back” due to the noise emanating from The White House, Alex shares, “I’m afraid that it is not only unfair to communities and diverse professionals, but it will also harm them because it will cut off new processes of representation that will lead them to 21st century marketing. We’ve never had a more prepared group of diverse marketing professionals than we do right now, and there’s a ‘really broken process’ within some marketers’ organizations.” This leads Pat to offer a simple directive to the CMO when it comes to the Hispanic market: Understand It. Appreciate It.

IN-LANGUAGE, IN CULTURE

The language debate remains a big one with respect to Hispanic advertising, but are we now at a turning point where those “winks and nods” in total marketing advertising are set to fade? And, if so, is this an opportunity or a concern for Hispanic marketing pros?

For Alex, the nod and the wink is what makes the “new mainstream” effective, but even with newborn U.S. Latinos, language and culture remain very important. “Look at the mainstream — it has fundamentally changed and it is diverse, with Latinos leading the charge,” he says. “However, once you start getting into endemic audiences, the expectation of the consumer is even higher. This means everything has got to be right, and got to be better than ever.”

This leads Sonny to bring up an anecdote about “being invited to the party.” It is 2015. “I was in the industry with fresh eyes and there was a hesitation with baking a second language into our scopes of work,” he recalls. “We not only were asked to do English and Spanish but also included ‘Spanglish’ assets. We are in a landscape where we have three languages, because we need to speak authentically.” What did the client have to say? “We are fortunate that they get it,” Sonny says. Still, there are needs that require nuanced and expert answers: How do we use the right language, the right cues and the right tonality so we address the target audience in the most relevant way possible?

For Pat López Negrete, the language discussion from planning and strategic perspective means that how you speak to the target Hispanic audience is a tactic — not a strategy. “But it is a very important tactic, so language has a key role,” he says. Still, Pat adds, “culture overrides everything for us. When looking at companies right now, 70% are targeting millennials and Gen Z. And, they are ‘acculturated,’ but that’s not the case. They are deeply invested in their culture. Reaching by total market initiatives? That’s not the case. They are expecting cultural relevance and communication and connection that is much deeper than a wink and a nod. They want that, but they want more.”

THE POWER OF CULTURA



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Indeed they do, says Alex. Consider the way today's Latinos in the U.S. use social and digital platforms. "Straight-line Spanish seems awkward, but so do adaptations of English-language work," he says.

Alas, some brands are quick to take the money-saving route at the expense of quality and true growth. "The clients and agencies that just want to do less, and don't want to have the budget and hide behind efficiency, hide efficacy and say they can reach the Hispanic consumer through the total market effort. This has nothing to do with politics and what is in the news and everything to do with where there head is at ... the business imperative will prevail."



PERSISTENCE AND RESILIENCE

It seems that the Hispanic community has always overcome challenges. Today, one would believe that a core theme that encapsulates the U.S. Latino consumer today is "Persist" — that with the right fight, the community will thrive.

Is that the correct word to use? What sort of discussions are there between agencies and marketing pros, if at all, and what are the clients saying? "We are very blessed to have a very diverse community and the different accents, music, foods ... it is what makes our community so beautiful," Alex says. "But my wish is that we could unify on just two or three things, and you see that in different communities across the U.S. I wish we could have leadership that could get us there."

While a call for Hispanic community unity has been a rather muted one of late, Alex believes, "There are some things that will come out in the wash — education is one of those. The economy can be a unifier at certain points as well."

Alex continues, "Our strength as a working people and as an engine of the U.S. economy can be another. But I've been preaching more unity for 40 years, instead of letting external parties divide us."

One thing Alex think will be a constant is something Pat had brought up in a recent discussion. "He sees the optimism and resilience, and this strength and persistence we have are what Pat sees as tenets," he notes.

Pat chimes in, commenting, "Culture is our core, and understanding microcultures of consumers is vital today. But, consistently, we are the most optimistic segment in the U.S. even though we are the most stressed. That resilience is one of the definitional aspects of who we are, and that is kind of beautiful. But to the point of unity, it is almost contradictory in that the Hispanic superpower is community, but on a national level we do not have a unified voice. Anecdotaly, **the Hispanic consumer wishes they had a more unified voice nationally. There is a hunger for that.**"

While Sonny sees one underlying unifier — diversity within diversity and not just a singular U.S. Hispanic community — "naturally we see differently." And, the non-Hispanic gatekeeper is more cognizant of this. "We had a line of copy in Spanish for our Spanish-language work [for one client] and there was a concern of what it meant in English. While legal and corporate affairs were worried about how a non-Hispanic would take that line, it was a non-Hispanic who said it was relevant, and approved it. I don't know if that would be the case a decade ago."

While that's a reason to cheer, Alex believes a persistent lack of a strong national voice needs to be tackled next. "We've had a leadership vacuum in our country from a Latino perspective," he says. "We can disagree on all sorts of things, but education, labor (us being the engine behind economic labor in this country) and economic disparity are the three unifying things."

Sonny couldn't agree more. "Progress was my first thought!" he admitted as the conversation came to a close, but not before Alex had the final thought. "Progress requires hard work and sacrifice and tolerance. It's not all just roses and hunky dorky. If you paint that word properly, it has the good and the bad and the 'oh-shits.'"



MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

In a time when the contributions and struggles of immigrant communities are being systematically erased from public consciousness, the Immigrant Archive Project (IAP) stands as a powerful counterforce—preserving the stories that define America's rich and diverse narrative.



The IAP, the leading oral history project documenting the modern immigrant experience, is more than a repository of memories, says **Tony Hernández**, founder of the Immigrant Archive Project. "It is an essential safeguard against the dangers of historical erasure, and its work has never been more crucial than it is today," he says.

In Hernández's view, the past several years has seen a "deliberate and systematic effort to minimize, and in some cases, completely erase the accomplishments and struggles of Latinos, African Americans, and other minority communities from federal websites and public platforms." A March 2025 controversy that briefly removed the story of trailblazing professional baseball player Jackie Robinson from a government website is part of what Hernández alludes to.

He also points to content "scrubbed" from the Department of Justice and Department of Labor websites, while the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) removed information on what Hernández calls healthcare protections for vulnerable communities. "These actions not only distorted public perception of immigrant communities but also deepened societal divisions and fueled misinformation," Hernández says. "In this climate of erasure, the Immigrant Archive Project serves as a critical lifeline—ensuring that the voices of immigrants are not just preserved, but amplified."

Hernández also tackles the delicate subject of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives at corporations across the U.S.

“Equally troubling is the growing trend of leading American companies retreating from their DE&I initiatives—many of which were designed to uplift and support the U.S. Hispanic market,” Hernández says. “These initiatives, once seen as an essential component of a company’s responsibility to reflect and serve the diverse communities they market to, are now being placed on the back burner.”

As Hernández sees it, this retreat not only threatens progress but also sends “a chilling message to communities of color—that their contributions are being devalued and their experiences ignored.” He continues, “In an environment where even corporate champions are stepping back, the Immigrant Archive Project remains steadfast in its mission to elevate immigrant stories and ensure their rightful place in the American narrative.”

That’s why Hernández believes the dangers of ignoring immigrant voices are profound. “Historical erasure undermines efforts to address systemic inequalities, leaving future generations ill-equipped to understand and confront ongoing challenges,” he says. “It weakens policy decisions, perpetuates discrimination, and erodes the fabric of a pluralistic democracy. When immigrant stories disappear from the national conversation, we risk creating a society that forgets its own foundation—a nation built by individuals from diverse backgrounds who dared to dream and contribute.

Why the Immigrant Archive Project Matters More Than Ever

Preserving an Accurate Historical Record

The IAP collects and archives first-hand testimonies from immigrants of all backgrounds, safeguarding their experiences for future generations. At a time when immigrant stories are being silenced, these testimonies become invaluable primary sources that paint an unfiltered, authentic portrait of America’s evolving identity.

Giving Voice to the Marginalized

Erasure leads to invisibility. By amplifying the voices of immigrants, the IAP ensures that their journeys—often marked by sacrifice, resilience, and hope—are heard and acknowledged. These stories break through stereotypes and challenge one-dimensional narratives that reduce immigrants to political talking points.

Combating Misinformation

In the absence of truthful narratives, misinformation thrives. The IAP’s work provides a factual, human-centered counterpoint to divisive rhetoric that seeks to scapegoat immigrants. By showcasing the real-life contributions and struggles of immigrant communities, the IAP fosters understanding and empathy.

Protecting Democracy and Inclusivity

A healthy democracy thrives on diverse voices and perspectives. When those voices are muted, society becomes less inclusive and less just. The IAP’s work to document and share immigrant stories is an act of resistance against forces that seek to diminish the role of immigrants in shaping the nation.

‘We’re Not Muted. We’re Mobilized.’

As INFUSION by Castells founder and leader **Liz Castells-Heard** shares, marketers aren't scared when it comes to reaching multicultural consumers. Agencies aren't quieting down either. "Culture doesn't pause for politics—or ROI," she says.

"We expect 2025 to be a strong year," Castells-Heard said as the second quarter of 2025 began. "No, we're not scared or silenced—we're recalibrating." For her shop, which counts Charter Communications' Spectrum among its largest clients and is unaffected by its total market creative and media shop changes, the bigger concern isn't political pushback. Rather, Castells-Heard comments, "It's the one-size-fits-all mentality some clients still cling to, which this does feed."

For Liz, multicultural agencies have never had the luxury of complacency. "We've always had to prove ROI—and fight harder to prove the business value of cultural relevance with data. This moment just reminds us to be more focused and louder .. if that's even possible for me," she says with a laugh, as Castells-Heard has long been known for her deep and highly audible speech.

INFUSION by Castells' clients also include McDonald's and Toyota. All understand that cultural marketing isn't a "nice-to-have" thing. Rather, they see it as a growth engine. Commenting on the political discourse sweeping our nation on a day when President Trump signaled a potential departure from the administration of SpaceX, X and Tesla head Elon Musk, Castells-Heard said, "The headlines may be loud, but no brand is willing to forfeit sales tied to multicultural audiences."



"Latinos now make up 43% of the U.S. population and consistently outperform on ROI," she continues. "In-language and in-culture efforts aren't optional—they're business necessities. The real risk isn't backlash—it's brand irrelevance. We're not in a bind. We're building the bridge."

**“THE HEADLINES MAY BE
LOUD, BUT NO BRAND IS
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SALES TIED TO
MULTICULTURAL
AUDIENCES.”**

THE **CULTURAL AGENCY** BUILT FOR WHAT'S NEXT.
AI-ENHANCED CREATIVITY, AGILE AND SMART. ROI-POWERED IDEAS® PROVEN EFFECTS.
FUSING CULTURES, TRUTH AND HEART. MIXING SCIENCE, STRATEGY AND ART. BREAKING THE MOLD.
ALWAYS BOLD. WE DON'T QUIT UNTIL OUR CLIENTS REPEATEDLY WIN. NO BS, JUST RESULTS.



Asked if the end of DEI has neutered multicultural marketing, Castells-Heard replies, “DEI may shrink. Demand for relevance doesn’t. Growth strategies like multicultural still stand.”

She also believes that the “DEI is not marketing” clarion call was never a dismissal. Rather, she says, it was a clarification. “DEI (Internal) belongs in HR and corporate,” she explains. “Multicultural marketing (external) belongs in brand, media, and strategy. While some DEI departments have gone quiet, the need for cultural fluency hasn’t changed. If anything, it’s clearer now who really understood the difference—and who never did.”

For Castells-Heard, the numbers speak volumes:

- 90% of U.S. adults believe inclusive ads are necessary
- 65% still feel underrepresented in mainstream media
- 68% of non-Hispanic whites believe a multicultural majority enriches American culture, and multicultural opinions even influence their brand choices.

“Marketing to multicultural audiences isn’t ‘woke’—it’s smart business,” Liz declares. “There’s strong demand for both inclusive and uniquely multicultural messaging. And they have to be delivered with both authenticity and accountability.”

Thus, even with the death of DEI for some U.S. corporations, “You can’t freeze what’s fueling growth,” Castells-Heard says.

Welcome to the era of “Culturenomics.” She comments, “The backlash against DEI is largely political—rooted in fear of quotas and isolated controversies. But the Fortune 500 companies, the latest wave being tech, retail, and finance, are keeping their DEI. All the major players are still investing in cultural marketing. Why? Because it works.

“Political noise may temporarily pressure companies to abandon DEI programs, but culturally fluent marketing isn’t going away, especially with the consumer’s high expectations of personalization. Gen Y and Gen Z consumers demand to be seen. Personalization for Hispanics and multicultural consumers is rooted in their cultural lens and identity.”

Some brands that treated culture as a PR tool may pull back, Castells-Heard says. For those that pull out, “they will be back soon because they will see sales erode just like last decade with TMA (total market vanilla that reached no one effectively).”

Marketers with a long-game mindset are doubling down. “They know that Hispanic consumers, in particular, are essential to growth,” she says. For Castells-Heard, the U.S. is now in an era when culture drives sales and where deep cultural expertise is critical to creative, media, and messaging strategy. This allows brands to show up authentically in the lives of multicultural consumers—and drive their business, she says.

“Cultural agencies like ours fill that needed gap of cultural knowledge as a complement to and collaborating with larger general market agencies,” Castells-Heard shares. “That’s the smart play for clients, and all agencies should play nice in the sandbox for the shared client success.”

INFLUENCE THAT POWERS PROGRESS

Hispanic Market Overview shared with Liz that an early theme of this year’s report was “Persist.” Asked if this is a word that best describes the Hispanic community and the multicultural marketer today, Castells-Heard comments, “Persistence isn’t survival—it’s influence and powering progress. It’s not just a theme. It’s our reality. Latinos do persist. We always have. But now we’re not just adapting and we’re leading. Bi-culturalism is at an all-time high, and U.S. Latinos are shaping what’s mainstream. They’re driving population growth and redefining what American culture looks like. Brands that get that win. Brands that don’t fall behind.”

Clients are asking better questions, Castells-Heard says. To that, “we’re delivering bigger answers but always rooted in culture, driven by performance. Multicultural and Hispanic agencies always pushed forward. Now we’re doing it with broader sharper insights, clearer KPIs, and more control of our narrative. ‘Persist’ hits home.”

As the conversation neared its conclusion, Liz was asked if she started her agency in 2025 instead of perhaps 40 years ago, would she still do it? “The short answer is: Same purpose. New playbook,” she responds. “Absolutely. I left investment banking for this ... where I’d probably be long retired. I’ve never looked back. As a Stanford MBA and a Latina, I launched this agency to uniquely focus on creative driving results (which no one was doing back then), and secondly, to elevate multicultural market representation in advertising to empowered, multidimensional portrayals. Ads feed perception, and perception shapes reality.”

That’s why Liz considers INFUSION by Castells to be “a cultural agency.” She says, “We understand both general market and multicultural consumers and where they overlap, diverge, and connect. Today, with AI tools, we’re assuring ethnic bias and blind spots are balanced. We can scale cultural relevance in smarter ways than ever before. That’s the future and we’re ready for it. It’s not just a profession. It’s purpose. It’s legacy. This isn’t the end of multicultural marketing. It’s the cultural evolution—and we’re built for it.”



‘Alarming and Disturbing’ ... But Not A Concentration Breaker



Casanova/McCann President/CEO **Ingrid Otero-Smart** started her career at McCann Erickson in her native Puerto Rico, then moved to the U.S. to work on the Hispanic market for the past 20+ years. She joined Casanova after three years as president of Anita Santiago Advertising. Her client experience includes automotive, packaged goods, travel, pharmaceuticals, QSR, financial services, retail and technology categories. Otero-Smart is considered one of the nation's foremost experts on Hispanic and multicultural marketing.

HMO: *There is so much noise coming from Washington, D.C. Do you believe this is simply a distraction that clouds the true story of where the Hispanic market growth opportunity is for marketers perhaps swayed by political discourse?*

INGRID: All the noise and rhetoric is certainly alarming and disturbing, but smart marketers are not losing their focus: they know the Hispanic market is critical to their success. We are seeing our clients as committed as before with a couple increasing their investments. They know the numbers and they know our market is strong, determined, and resilient.

We did a short, quantitative study of 500 Hispanics in the past couple of weeks to take a pulse on our target, and it confirms our segment is not going anywhere. For example, 82% said they are spending as usual, 58% said they are not making any changes to their lives, and 70% said they are not afraid. They will persevere and so will we.

HMO: *If "DEI" isn't marketing, and DEI programs are winding down at some companies, does this threaten dollars — or only in cases where it is another excuse not to invest in Hispanic marketing?*

INGRID: Those that implemented DEI policies because they felt they had to were never committed, so this is just an excuse to not invest. We predicted this would happen, as you could tell there was little substance to the programs they were implementing. DEI was the right thing to do but the current state of affairs should not impact marketing in a significant way. Our clients are cautious but remain optimistic. Hispanic marketing is a growth, if not survival, initiative.

*There are things that only happen
when you're independent.*

Good and Bad. Thankfully, way more good than bad. But the best part—the thing that truly makes all the difference—is the freedom. Because being *independent* isn't just a business model. It's a way of life. It means that when crisis hits, we choose *people-over-profit*—because, honestly, there's no other way we'd do it. It means that when governments change, our values stay rock solid. It means we still work three days from home, not because we're told to, but because *it's good for our work-life balance*. We don't follow trends — *we carve our own path.*

We close on our own Independence Day because, for us, that day isn't just a holiday. *It's a reminder of why we do what we do.* When we win, we celebrate on our own terms. Not with empty speeches, but with actions that speak volumes. With a print ad that doesn't just say we were named

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but one that also proudly shouts to the world that we're a *Woman-Owned* company, and that empowers us. That we're proud to put our creativity and talent behind causes that matter—like the *LGBTQ Center of Orange County, and Brady,* among others. That when the world paused for a "Day Without Immigrants," we shut down our office and stood in solidarity—because our roots and our people are what drive us. And the next day, we promised ourselves to keep going, no matter how dark things might seem. Being independent has given us more than awards. *It's given us family. It's given us purpose. It's given us the joy of loving what we do and who we do it with.* It's made us bolder, stronger, and more ourselves.

*Because being independent,
without a doubt, is the greatest award of all.*

CASANOVA
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STAYING SHREWD AND BUSINESS SMART

AT D EXPÓSITO & PARTNERS,
POLITICS WON'T IMPACT
EXISTING CLIENT ACTIVITY.
IT'S LURING NEW BUSINESS
THAT REQUIRES AGENCIES TO
LEAD BUSINESS BEYOND THE
DISTRACTIONS AND THE NOISE.

The main objective of an agency is to find the best opportunities for your client. And, when one out of every five people in the country is Latino, good business sense suggests that winning those Hispanic consumers is nothing but a critical business imperative. That's what the team at **d expósito & Partners** – including Founding Partner **Jorge Ulla** and Managing Director **Louis Maldonado** – say in response to concerns that some clients could end up pulling back on their Hispanic market activities as diversity, equity and inclusion programs at their companies come to an end or get a significant overhaul.

"Rather than succumbing to the futility of a debate whose time may have passed, we should wisely concentrate on the need of making compellingly evident to brands the need to be shrewd and business-smart," the d expósito & Partners team asserts. For the advertiser, asking which consumer segment leads in a certain category, and which consumer segment continues to really move the needle will yield the answer Hispanic specialty shops know all too well: Latinos.

"It's a clear-minded, non-political, unbiased approach for success-driven modern marketers anyone can understand: How much am I going to dedicate to this growth opportunity?," the d expósito & Partners team says.



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And relevance with responsibility.

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HISPANIC MARKET OVERVIEW 2025

Still, given the atmosphere of the U.S. since the change in executive branch leadership of the federal government suggest that the path multicultural marketers may take in 2025 is shrouded in fog ... or strewn with storm debris in need of a chainsaw.

If anything, the Hispanic market is hidden behind a marine layer, and one that can easily dissipate at the right moments. "Multicultural marketing and advertising are as strong and powerful today as they have ever been," the d expósito & Partners leaders say. "Data and research continue to show that Hispanic consumers identify even more strongly with their cultural or identity group than before, so our craft and skillsets are needed now more than ever."

As such, advertising industry professionals need to be even more astute and skillful, so that they may create "authentic and believable stories" based on insights, behaviors and trends that reflect the ways Hispanic consumers relate to, and use, brands. "Those companies that have multicultural marketing and advertising in their portfolios do it because it makes good business sense," the d expósito & Partners team asserts. "This will not change. If anything, this opportunity is only getting bigger, thanks to the phenomenon of cultural influences spreading beyond one culture. In this regard, Latinos are the engine of a multitude of cultural and consumption changes that are transforming commerce, culture and nearly all kind of interactions in this New America."

It is a "New America" where, for d expósito & Partners, it is "business as usual" — but in a different environment and cultural context given the current sociopolitical backdrop.

"That brings new questions and challenges, of course, but in many ways we tend to forget this has always been the case," they say.

This leads the d expósito & Partners team members to share how heritage and tradition remain key Hispanic consumer identifiers, across all age groups. "That is impressive, especially when one considers that a number of studies show Hispanic consumers, especially younger ones, still have high expectations from brands to relate to them in a way that reflects our culture and manners of expression, in both Spanish and English," the d expósito & Partners team says. "How could anyone explain, if not through these facts, that a brand like Calvin Klein has chosen no less than Bad Bunny for their new campaign? Here is a strong example of multicultural and cross-cultural meeting each other for good business."

They also say that the channel mix for each age cohort "may well be due to the adoption of new media, but the connection to culture and the impact it has on their perspectives, values, behaviors and purchase decisions are all heavily linked to their Hispanic culture."

"Those companies that have multicultural marketing and advertising in their portfolios do it because it makes good business sense. This will not change."

CONQUERING THE LANGUAGE DEBATE

The noise from Washington, D.C., also led Hispanic Market Overview to ask if we are now at a turning point where those "winks and nods" in total market advertising are set to fade? And, if so, is this an opportunity or a concern for Hispanic marketing pros?

The d expósito & Partners team members note, "In our view, the language debate was resolved 20-25 years ago, but it remains an ongoing conversation in many industry circles. Currently, a full 75% of Latinos — from Gen Zers to Boomers — self-identify as such. And when it comes to Spanish, roughly 70% across generations speak Spanish and consume Spanish-language media."

Why? “It not so much because of language dependency but because of the cultural value of its unique programming,” they say. “Culture has always been central to our personal and collective identities, influencing our values, beliefs and lifestyles. Cultural cues, winks and nods have never been enough to connect brands with Hispanics.”

For the d expósito & Partners team, a “doubling down” on the importance of connecting to all Hispanics with compelling creative and content that reflects the many ways culture influences all aspects of their lives is a core tenet. “We call it **cultural dexterity**,” they say.

Hispanic Market Overview was also curious if Mr. Ulla and **Daisy Expósito-Ulla** would be bold to start d expósito & Partners in 2025, if their shop had not existed until now. Their answer? “Can you think of a better business proposition than this?”

They continue, “We have a major advantage given the technological advancements over the last 40 years. We now have countless channels and platforms to reach all Hispanics. We also have the critical data and tools to more precisely connect and engage at all points of the customer journey, and we can deliver messages that resonate culturally and in motivating ways.”

The Hispanic marketing and advertising industry’s predecessors saw the opportunity back in the 1970s and 1980s, when the first Spanish-language radio and TV stations went on air. Fast forward to today, and the opportunity is “gigantically bigger.”

“We now have countless channels and platforms to reach all Hispanics, and we also have the critical data and tools to more precisely connect and engage at all points of the customer journey.”

The d’expósito team concludes, “Hispanics are rapidly growing in number – which is not the case with other segments. They are more connected to culture than ever. As a result, we continue influencing and shaping the mainstream –not just in the U.S., but globally.”

They point to their branding success with **Tajín** – once unknown outside of Mexico – as a perfect example of how Hispanics are reshaping what the total market craves and desires.

“Winning Hispanics is, irrefutably, a business imperative for long-term growth,” the d expósito & Partners team says. “Our agency is going to keep pitching great ideas that build brands with Hispanics, convert them to customers and incentivize cross-cultural exchanges that bring even bigger growth.”



Complete Reach: What's Driving TelevisaUnivision Across The U.S.



We hear about growth in OTT and free ad-supported streaming television (FAST) channels every day. But, where can that growth be found when it comes to the U.S. Hispanic market? Look no further than **ViX**, which has become a centerpiece for connecting audiences with advertisers for **TelevisaUnivision** across Iberoamérica and the continental U.S. **Fernando Romero**, Senior VP of U.S. Digital Advertising Sales, is particularly pleased to be associated with ViX.

As he sees it, ViX offers "a uniquely powerful proposition" for both viewers and marketers. How so? In-culture content delivered to U.S. Hispanics "with authenticity and scale" is a key reason. In fact, Romero goes so far as to call ViX "a force multiplier that goes beyond incremental—it's essential." He may not be exaggerating. For the first consecutive year, ViX is poised to take center stage at TelevisaUnivision's Upfront, as the company takes a cue from chief domestic rival NBCUniversal, parent of the Peacock app. For Romero and his team, selling ViX as the biggest over-the-top platform serving Spanish-language audiences a marketer can consider. Then, there is the unique audience appeal of ViX that Romero isn't shy in sharing — some 64% of ViX viewers aren't reached on the company's linear networks. "It shifts the scale for advertisers looking to expand reach and engagement," he says.

Still, TelevisaUnivision's Univision and UniMás television networks, its TUDN sports brand closely aligned with Televisa properties in Mexico, and its Uforia-powered audio offerings online and on the radio remain some of the strongest in the U.S. Hispanic media ecosystem. "Whether audiences are watching live on linear or streaming on-demand, we deliver advertisers full-funnel impact—driving reach, relevance, and results across every demo, platform, and point in the consumer journey," Romero says.

And, taking a cue from the marketing department, Romero believes TelevisaUnivision doesn't simply "show up for *nuestra comunidad* — we're built for it. From local communities to the national and global stage, we create unmatched cultural connection at every level ... For advertisers, that translates to trusted reach, authentic engagement, and performance that drives real results."

“There is too much noise, and there are too many distractions, clouding the U.S. Hispanic story.”

For **Horacio Gavilan**, Executive Director of the **Hispanic Marketing Council**, pulling back on media buying and scaling down budgets wouldn’t simply be caving to politics. Rather, it would be bad business and a CMO fail.

“Rather than retreat, we must come together and amplify our voices, unite as Hispanics of all ethnicities and nationalities and heritages, and stand all,” says Gavilan on the eve of the Hispanic Marketing Council’s 2025 Annual Summit in New York. “If not, the marketer that has no DEI in their organization could interpret that as ‘no multicultural marketing.’”

With a theme of connecting CMOs and advertising clients to “today’s growth market,” this year’s affair starts with **Fabiola Torres**, Global Chief Marketing Officer of **Gap**, for a keynote address on how the clothing and lifestyle brand is redefining inclusivity through innovative Hispanic and multicultural marketing strategies.

The agenda also includes a session devoted to addressable advertising and privacy laws featuring **Catherine Salazar**, Vice President of Global Agency Development at **The Trade Desk**, and **Rajeev Ranjan**, Senior Vice President of Product Management at **Nielsen**.

Critical Condition



Timely discussions on AI in advertising, and what longtime advertiser **The Home Depot** has gleaned from its multicultural and U.S. Hispanic advertising efforts are seen in the afternoon of the 2025 summit, with a pharmaceutical marketing session featuring **Katherine Freeley**, Head of Media Center of Excellence at Boehringer-Ingelheim, chatting with **Lili Gil**, the highly regarded entrepreneur and CEO of Culture+ Group.

In the middle of it all is formal recognition of the 2025 Hispanic Marketing Council’s Marketer of the Year: **AT&T**. Assistant VP of Corporate and Brand Advertising **Lianne Sinclair** will accept the award, which shines a spotlight on companies that demonstrate a top-down commitment to multicultural marketing—and allocate resources reflective of the Hispanic market’s consumer significance and buying power.

"Connection is universal, and our mission is to seamlessly bring people together through creativity, technology, and innovation," said Sinclair, who joined AT&T three years ago and was previously EVP/Managing Director of Energy BBDO. "We are proud to be recognized to do impactful work in the Hispanic market, a business imperative."

AT&T was singled out for no less than six specific reasons, leveraging the talent of Sofia Vergara while also tapping into the passion of soccer fans; interpreting the "richness" of being a "GIGillionaire"; and working with Hispanic agency of record **Dieste** on a *Madrin* campaign. For this latter effort, Dieste came up with a new kind of wedding role: the madrina of "best deals." This bilingual campaign was so successful that AT&T extended this campaign to all consumer segments.

"AT&T has been a consistent leader, strengthening its brand presence among Latinos, partnering with agencies with deep cultural expertise, and leading with cultural insights, which has earned them increased impressions, customer loyalty, and engagement across all segments," said HMC Chair **José Villa**, President/Chief Strategy Officer at Sensis. "They serve as an important case study for what it looks like to prioritize growth and recognize the Hispanic market as a key driver of the American mainstream – a true example of what it means to not Latino coat."

"Rather than retreat, we must come together and amplify our voices, unite as Hispanics of all ethnicities and nationalities and heritages, and stand all."

FACTUAL STATS

With an agenda planned for months, there's little that tackles the question of whether Hispanic and multicultural marketers are operating in fear. Perhaps there's a good reason for that: they simply aren't, says Gavilán. "Separating the noise" between what is happening in Washington and what is happening across the United States is the biggest challenge.

"One thing is clear: nothing has changed in terms of what our country is ... and the demographics are shifting," he comments. "Every demographic under 35 is majority-minority and that will continue to change, including the 55+ demographic."

Yet Gavilán acknowledges that, for the marketer, there is cloudiness ... "just like every single thing in the country right now." He continues, "More than ever, your Hispanic strategy is critical to growth. Again, nothing has changed, so still you need a robust Hispanic program. You have to. The business imperative hasn't really changed."

Gavilán is also among the many Hispanic marketing leaders who have made it clear for many years that marketing totally differs from diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives an advertiser may be engaged in. "This is not DEI," he says. "It is about ROI and about results. We continue to talk about the business of opportunity and for what I heard so far, most companies have a clear understanding that those two things are not one and the same."

This will be a theme shared across the HMC annual summit and from Villa, as he believes that, more than ever, it is critical for marketers to possess a Hispanic strategy. "You're going to hear that across the day," Gavilán says. "We need to keep looking at that, and most of our speakers will articulate that."

Despite its timing opposite the massive National Association of Broadcasters annual conference and expo in Las Vegas, HMC registrations as of March 14 were at 95% of where they were last year. For 2025, a more convenient Midtown locale is expected to make it another at-capacity affair.

FOLLOWING THE MONEY

The 2025 HMC annual summit will also feature a session that sees **Soo Kim** chatting with Group M Multicultural President **Gonzalo del Fa**. Who's Soo? For those in broadcast media, he's a very familiar figure as the head of **Standard General**, a hedge fund that failed to merge with TEGNA as the Biden-era FCC expressed too many concerns with the deal's ownership plan. Today, Standard General is the company that principally funded **MediaCo's** acquisition of **Estrella Media**. What could attendees glean from this conversation?

Gavilán comments, "It is a little bit outside of our scope, but the reason we want him to be there is because we wanted to hear why he decided to make this investment in media now. Everybody who hears about the conference and coverage afterward will know how a guy who could have invested anywhere decided to invest in Hispanic media. This is a session devoted to the *why* behind it." It's a deal that put **Albert Rodriguez** in a key leadership position over New York's "HOT 97" and WBLS, new Spanish-language properties, and the entire Estrella asset stable.

Hispanic Market Overview.

Vol. 16

**2025
EDITION**

The multicultural advertising, marketing and public relations industry's annual State of the Industry report

independently produced by
adam r jacobson
editorial services and research consultancy

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About The Author:

Adam R Jacobson has served as the publisher and content director for the *Hispanic Market Overview* series of reports since its debut in 2010. In addition to this annual report, the HMO brand extends to the *Hispanic TV Upfront Report*, the *Hispanic Content Report* and *Hispanic Market Thought Leaders* reports produced exclusively for HispanicAd.com.

Adam previously served as an editor at *Hispanic Market Weekly*, and began his career as an editorial assistant at *HISPANIC* magazine in fall 1993. He assisted in the 1994 launch of *Latina Style Magazine*, and served as a marketing and corporate research consultant for multiple radio broadcasting companies.

Outside of his work in the U.S. Hispanic market, Adam is the Editor-in-Chief for the Radio + Television Business Report, a Streamline Publishing title at RBR.com.



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