

Digital Media and Multicultural Consumers

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Digital & Multicultural Marketing

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During the years when broadband internet connections were growing rapidly, we began to see a true divergence in how specific target audiences were able to access the internet and consume content. The “digital divide” was defined by social economic status, which dictates whether computers were used privately in the home, or used publicly in libraries and cafes. This also influenced the content being consumed. A divide between multicultural and white audiences became distinct and started to shape the future of the online multicultural channel.

This dominance of mobile access presents multicultural marketers with a new opportunity to reach consumers digitally but also presents a challenge.

Use stated that on a typical day, white Americans are more likely to access the internet at home on a personal computer, while African Americans are 70% more likely to access the internet through a handheld device.

Between 2007 and 2009 the African American and English-speaking Hispanic audiences saw a jump from 41% to 58% and 45% to 53%, respectively, in accessing the internet on a handheld device compared to just 29% to 33% among white Americans. Meanwhile the LGBT audience, which makes up around 7.9% of the adult online population (as noted by the eMarketer report titled “Gay and Lesbian Internet Users:” The GLBT community is not covered in the Pew report) remains widely acknowledged as adopting new technology at a faster rate than the general population and has a higher disposable income, both of which translate to higher quality hardware and use of cutting edge technology. It is realistic to conclude that for LGBTs, use of handheld devices for accessing online media would also be high.

This dominance of mobile access presents multicultural marketers with a new opportunity to reach consumers digitally but also presents a challenge. We must target digital messaging, media, and content to a specific delivery channel (mobile devices) with a unique set of parameters and constraints. Marketers must identify creative solutions for the limitations of mobile devices, like limited screen size and resolution,

less-than-optimal keyboard and navigational systems, and more rudimentary delivery and software applications compared to the full online personal computer experience.

Creating compelling and effective digital efforts for multicultural audiences requires understanding not only the target's preferred channel of access but also their preferred uses. As of 2009, the top uses of a handheld device for African Americans and English-speaking Hispanics were text messaging, playing music, instant messaging and taking pictures, accessing the internet and emailing. It is not clear the percentage of users in these groups that have a cell phone versus a smart phone, but a campaign should always plan for the lowest common denominator when designing for the mobile channel. With this in mind, the general rule for targeting this audience is to keep the message relevant and concise. The design of the lite webpage or content should feature limited links and images, and enable as much of the content to be shared via mobile systems as the Pew report states that African Americans and English-speaking Hispanics are more likely than whites to see mobile

access as a way to share content with others while on the move.

These guidelines change when considering the LGBT market. With high incidence of modern devices that now have larger screens (thereby increasing user interactivity), marketers can push the boundaries of mobile and make the most of broadband's great potential through micro-targeted initiatives, custom-tailored creative and cutting edge executions.

In 2010, we see that content remains king, but now it is content generated especially to support the channels for each specific target audience. The need to deliver more engaging experiences through handheld technologies has ultimately given birth to modern, multimedia-enabled mobile devices. These devices have created a wide array of exciting new features for multicultural digital marketers in a multichannel environment to reach their highly targeted audiences.

Prime Access is a leader in digital multicultural marketing. Call us to find out how your brand can benefit from our cutting-edge services. Prime Access. The Way In®.

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