

# BUSINESS

## "ETHNIC MARKETING IN LAS VEGAS—IT'S GOOD BUSINESS!"

By Diana Aird, president of Aird & Associates, specializing in Marketing, PR and Special Events Planning

### PART III: THE ROLE OF THE 'IMAGE MAKERS'

The advertising industry plays a key role as "image makers" for their clients as well as in creating messages to inspire consumers to buy whatever they are selling. And, as "image makers" they exercise a great deal of influence on the manner in which that message is portrayed. As a result, ad agencies have a responsibility to see that what they produce is endemic to our diverse marketplace.

It is a known fact that a large majority of ethnic consumers find less in common with general advertisements than in ad messages that mirror their own cultures, lifestyles and needs. Too often, corporations and advertising agencies fall short in addressing the tastes, likes, dislikes, special cultural nuances and taboos of ethnic groups in their advertising messages. If, for example, a company or agency's marketing pros do not speak another language, are unfamiliar with foreign accents or customs, do not know the ethnic media outlets and/or are afraid to spin off a part of their general budget to address the ethnic consumer, the usual



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decision is to maintain the 'status quo' . . . to affect no changes in their present program . . . and to hope that no one notices.

Local advertisers are missing the boat by using the "one-size-fits-all" approach. Three out of every ten Southern Nevadans is an ethnic minority. Yet still, there is an indifference on the part of most local advertisers to include ethnic marketing to their program plan. You'd think the smart money would see the light as clearly as if it were atop the newly opened Luxor.

Why would otherwise progressive industry leaders and

ad professionals ignore the lucrative ethnic consumer market? Is due to fear of the unknown, unfamiliarity with ethnic groups, lack of knowledge, insularity or traditionalism? The answer: All of the above!

J. Melvin Muse, president of Muse Cordero Chen, Inc. in California states, "When ethnic groups represent a key customer group, we need to design and implement micro-programs that capitalize on their diverse cultural backgrounds, their needs and, if required, their languages — without creating or perpetuating negative stereotypes. We should coordinate ethnic advertising and marketing programs with general programs instead of ignoring them, or creating fragmented messages. These should be included into the thrust and themes of mainstream advertising for products and services. In not doing this, most advertisers are missing the boat."

The African-American influence on the images of American advertising is very evident as seen in national campaigns (i.e. the Coca-Cola "Always" campaign, Gatorade- drinking kids who "Want to be Like Mike," California Raisins take-offs on Motown hits, Burger King snippets and Kriss-Kross' and other young, funky rap artists doing "I Like The Sprite In You," et al). Charlie Rice, associate creative director with the black-owned Caroline Jones Advertising Agency in New York says, "The contributions that African-Americans have made in the cultural arena — from music and dance to clothing and slang — have had a major impact on advertising. Although advertising continues to borrow from African-American culture, ad executives have not expressed the same enthusiasm about working with black creative people."

A major part of the reason advertisers are missing the boat is the lack of ethnic minority representation in the corporate boardrooms and in the advertising and public relations industry throughout our region. There has been no focus on the issue of ethnic minority hiring in the ad industry — the main communications and "image makers." Nor, in contracting the services of local ethnic minority media professionals and consultants.

So far, the ad businesses and the tourism industry have not undergone the scrutiny in

ethnic minority hiring that governmental agencies and companies receiving government contracts face. Take a look and try to see how many ethnic-minority advertising, marketing or public relations executives you will find in local corporations, hotel properties, or anywhere in the region as a matter of fact. See how many senior vice presidents, creative directors, media directors, public relations specialists, account executives, graphic artists or any such talents you will find within the ad industry who are qualified minorities. And, when you don't find them, don't accept the excuse: "We can't find qualified minorities to fill these positions."

It seems as if it's only when things get shaken up that some industry insiders will admit that racism and apathy — not a lack of potential ethnic minority talent — are the causes of the industry's lack of diversity, sensitivity and lack of respect towards the ethnic minority as a valuable, respected consumer.

Las Vegas' tourism industry proudly proclaims the fact that they are "putting a new face" on the messages sent forth about out town in order to attract more families and conventions to our burgeoning city, with it's new resorts and theme parks along with the expansion and upgrading of other properties along the

(See Ethnic Marketing, Pg 21)

## Real Estate Perspective

By Loretta A. Hall



### "HERE ARE 5 REASONS SOME HOMES MOVE MORE QUICKLY THAN OTHERS"

Listen up prospective sellers, just in case you have not heard — it's a buyers market. If you are serious about selling your home, here are five reasons some homes move more quickly than others. When a home sells today there are usually several reasons it stands out from the crowd whereas other homes languish on the market for many months unsold. Here are five primary reasons homes sell: HOMES that are in the best condition with no necessary repairs. The moral is get your home into tip-top condition before putting it on the market for sale. HOMES that are priced realistically also sell rapidly. If your home is priced above it's market value, both the real estate agents and the prospective buyers know it. Don't hop some stupid buyer from out of town will overpay for your home. It just doesn't happen. HOMES listed with the most successful real estate agents sell quickly. However, even the best real estate agents have difficulties selling homes today, so list your home for sale with the top three agents, listen to their presentations, study their comparative market value analysis forms, ask lots of questions about fees, services and marketing plans. Then insist on receiving a list of the nearby homes that have sold in the last six months in your

area. Phone the sellers to ask if they were satisfied with their agent and if they would list their home for sale with the agents again. You might want to think about signing a listing longer than 90 days without cause. The reason is long listings make some agents lazy. Agents work hardest, smartest and fastest just before their listings expire, so you want to keep your agent hustling to get your home sold. HOMES with easy financing sell quickest. If you can help finance the sale, as many retirees can, by carrying back a first or second mortgage you will make your home easy to buy. That should be your goal to get buyers to choose your home over the dozens available homes out there today. Lastly, HOMES that are easy to show to prospects sell quickly. Be sure your home has a multiple listing service lockbox so all member agents can easily show your home to buyers on short notice. Example, several months ago while with a client and on the way to look at another home, the client spotted a for sale sign on a house and asked me if we could inspect it. Since it was vacant and had a lockbox we instantly inspected it. The client bought that home and is living in it today. This is just one example of why it is so important to make homes easy to show to prospective buyers. Add these five helpful tips and make your home move more quickly than other homes that are on today's real estate market!

As always please contact a professional for all your real estate needs or write to me c/o REAL ESTATE PERSPECTIVE, Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice Newspaper, 1201 South Eastern Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89104.

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