IN P L A I N S I G H T

The Black Consumer Opportunity

Reaching BlackConsumers.com
WE WROTE THE GAME, AND WE ARE REWRITING IT EVERY DAY.

For over 40 years, Burrell has earned the trust of leading brands and connected them to what we know best: the African-American consumer. With over a trillion dollars in spending power, the African-American consumer market is still one of the fastest growing economic powers in the world. You don’t just stumble into success, you earn it. To learn all the reasons why you should get in the black, visit burrell.com/trillion.
Sometimes the best opportunity is right there in front of you, but you don't see its true value because it's too familiar. You think you already know what it's about, and you have a standard way of dealing with it.

These pages will open your eyes to the major brand-building opportunity that’s in plain sight: the Black consumer market.

All advertisers want to minimize their targeting assumptions and maximize their targeting assurances. In these pages, we break down the prevailing assumptions and practices used for reaching Black consumers to reveal an assured targeting opportunity—increasingly influential, educated, entrepreneurial and mobile, but also decidedly culturally distinct.

U.S. Census Director Dr. Robert Graves says, “The delivering of a message about a product or a service is best done when the advertiser understands the lens through which a consumer is viewing both the culture they’re in … and how their own experiences map onto it.” This market-first collection of the most in-depth Black consumer research draws from a wide range of highly respected industry experts and research organizations. It spells out the cultural distinctions and provides a wealth of insights for credibly customizing the advertiser’s pitch to this pivotal group of product purchasers.

We knew now was the time to bring you this package of actionable insights; while our Reaching Black Consumers website launched only five months ago, the volume of inquiries from interested marketers compelled us to distribute “In Plain Sight” as widely as possible.

Many elite U.S. marketers are already “all in” on the Black consumer investment, recognizing the value of these influencers to overall brand performance. Inside you’ll hear from McDonald’s, Coca-Cola, State Farm, Procter & Gamble, General Mills and Ford about their successes in turning the Black consumer opportunity into big impact on their sales.

The opportunity detailed within these pages becomes both a self-evident sales win and a powerful rebuke to the “We’ll get Blacks along with everybody else” thinking and practice. Black-specific, culturally relevant marketing is the clear way forward.

Sean Cunningham
President
Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau

Cynthia Perkins-Roberts
Vice President,
Multicultural and Emerging Markets
Why do we use the term Black instead of African American?
Although African Americans are the majority at 89 percent, the U.S. Black population is representative of the entire Black diaspora, including Black Hispanics, Caribbean and African immigrants and those who identify as a combination of Black and another race.

Many Black Caribbean immigrants, along with Canadians or Europeans of African descent, feel excluded by the term “African American”—or believe that it does not accurately reflect their cultural background.

In most cases, the use of either term is acceptable today and, as in this publication, they are often used interchangeably.

What is buying power?
Simply defined, buying power is the total personal income of residents that is available, after taxes, for spending on virtually everything they buy. It does not include money that was borrowed or that was saved in previous years. Total buying power for 1990, 2000 and 2010 equals disposable personal income as reported in the National Income and Product Accounts tables by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System.

Based on the data provided by the Commerce Department, the Selig Center prepared projections of total buying power for 2011-17. It should also be emphasized that buying power estimates are not equivalent to aggregate consumer expenditures as reported in the Consumer Expenditure Survey conducted each year by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. For more information on Buying Power, visit www.terry.uga.edu/selig/.

Is there a Black middle class?
Despite the many stories about the disappearing middle class, the reality is that the African-American population is decidedly middle class and growing. Most working-age Blacks have college experience, and Black households with two or more earners have above-average incomes. Black workers are more likely to be managers and professionals than service workers. Among Black householders age 45 and older, most are homeowners.

The affluent class is covered in this supplement. For more information on other socio-economic groups, please visit our website, ReachingBlackConsumers.com.

What is ReachingBlackConsumers.com?
ReachingBlackConsumers.com is a groundbreaking new website that synthesizes expert data on today’s Black consumer in one convenient place. A team of industry experts and top research companies share relevant, timely insights needed to reach this dynamic consumer segment.

ReachingBlackConsumers.com is designed to deliver targeted data and effective strategies to help you and your brands connect with all segments of the Black consumer market.

Visit ReachingBlackConsumers.com today and register for full access.
IN PLAIN SIGHT

Executive overview: Can you see me now?

When it comes to marketing, Blacks are an integral and influential part of the consumer dynamic. Yet often the Black consumer isn’t a consideration in serious marketing conversations and planning. The reasons behind and rationale for this are complicated. Some marketers are concerned about making a mistake and in so doing offending their audiences. Others may think it’s more efficient to simply cast Black actors in their general-market campaigns. Then there’s the current notion that we’ve become a “post-racial” society, where it’s more progressive not to acknowledge or address issues of race. Although the post-racial ideal may seem noble, it can actually appear insensitive because it disregards the importance of Black identity.

This data-rich collection of articles, supported by recent research, shows that, in fact, culture does matter significantly to Black consumers of all socioeconomic backgrounds and, more important, all age groups. Some marketers may want to view this group as part of the general audience, but in reality Blacks see the world through a distinct cultural lens that affects their consumer behavior in critical ways.

Understanding the cultural commitment

To help marketers better understand the dynamics at play here, “The Great Debate” (page 18) and “Getting Real” (page 30) examine cultural filters and cultural fluency, countering the widely held notion that young Blacks aren’t invested in their ethnic heritage and culture as much as Black Boomers and Gen-Xers. In fact, they are proud of their culture and committed to preserving it—a critical insight for marketers, considering the number of Black Millennials and their growing influence on the general market.

While Blacks’ shared history unifies generations, there are still some generational differences in terms of attitudes, expectations, aspirations and sensitivities. “Generation Gaps” (page 10) explains what marketers need to understand to effectively connect with various age groups in the Black consumer segment.

Household trends are on the rise

Surprising stats abound in these pages. Contrary to popular assumptions, while Blacks were hit harder by the recession than most other groups, they weathered the downturn by adjusting spending earlier, came out of it more quickly and their buying power is actually rising faster than Whites’ (“Buying Power,” page 6)—fueled by rising education levels, strong entrepreneurialism and population growth. The Bureau of Labor Statistics’ most recent survey of consumer spending shows that since 2005, Black households have increased their inflation-adjusted spending despite the recession (“Spending Trends,” page 7). And 10 percent of Blacks make $100,000 or more annually. “Black Affluents” (page 8) reveals the cultural mindset and value systems of that high-earning, high-spending subsegment.

Household numbers are part of the spending equation. Black households now number more than any other multicultural group, including Hispanics. “Hot Households” (page 9) shows how the composition of Black households is changing, with many now moving into their peak spending years. At the same time, where these households are being formed also has major implications for marketers. “Key Markets” (page 15) charts the regions with the largest Black populations, and “Trading Spaces” (page 14) discusses the recent (and ongoing) migration of Blacks from the urban North to the suburban South—which translates to higher rates of home ownership there and more spending on the trappings that go along with that.

Contrary to long-held beliefs that Blacks are fiercely brand-loyal, today’s brands that already have relationships with these new-home-owning consumers will have to keep working hard to hold on to them. As revealed in “Loyalty Limits” (page 12), Blacks equate brand names with quality and status, but they’re also early adopters, likely to switch for the sake of novelty, image or to be on the cutting edge.

How major marketers reach Black consumers

To see how some major brands have inspired long-term Black consumer loyalty by understanding their cultural touch points, check out “Marketer Insights” from the CEOs of McDonald’s, General Mills and other major advertisers (starting on page 20). They share how they connect with Blacks in an authentic, credible way via campaign elements as well as through media channels that resonate with the audience and reflect its values.

Blacks are avid media consumers, and that hunger extends to all manner of media programming, advertising and marketing efforts (“Content Is King,” page 27). Blacks just don’t see enough of themselves portrayed accurately in the media and in marketing efforts. They’re a large, highly influential consumer segment, in plain sight, yet overlooked—or misunderstood—by many marketers. The wealth of new stats and insights in this white paper gives marketers a capital opportunity to increase their share of this engaged and motivated consumer segment and discover how to get the maximum bottom-line benefit in the process.
**BUYING POWER**

**Assumption:** More negatively affected by the recession than other population segments, Black buying power has been flattened.

Despite the severe impact of the Great Recession, the economic clout of Black consumers continues to energize the U.S. consumer market. The University of Georgia’s Selig Center for Economic Growth estimates that the nation's Black buying power is rising, from $316 billion in 1990 to $1.038 trillion in 2012 and projected $1.307 trillion in 2017.

The 2000-12 gain of 73 percent in Black spending outstrips the 60 percent increase in White buying power and the 67 percent increase in buying power of all consumers. In 2012, Black consumers’ share of total buying power is projected to be 8.5 percent, up from 8.2 percent in 2000 and 7.5 percent in 1990. That is expected to rise to 8.7 percent in 2017—almost nine cents out of every dollar spent.

The gains in Black buying power reflect much more than just population growth and inflation. Of the many diverse supporting forces, one of the most important is Blacks starting and expanding their own businesses. The 2007 Survey of Business Owners, released by the U.S. Census Bureau in June 2011, shows that the number of Black-owned companies was 61 percent higher in 2007 than in 2002—more than three times the 18 percent gain in the number of all U.S. companies. Between 2002 and 2007, the receipts of Black-owned companies grew by 55 percent compared with a 34 percent increase in the receipts of all U.S. companies.

Still another positive factor pushing up the group’s buying power is that African Americans continue to experience rising education levels, which should allow proportionally more Blacks to enter occupations with higher average salaries. Census data show that the percentage of Blacks 25 years and older who have completed high school or college rose from 66 percent in 1990 to 84 percent in 2010. Also, the 2010 Current Population Survey indicates that 20 percent of Blacks had a bachelor, graduate or professional degree.

Favorable demographic trends also boost buying power. The Black population continues to grow more rapidly than the total U.S. population. From 2000 to 2012, the nation’s Black population grew by 16 percent, compared with 7.6 percent for the White population and 12.2 percent for the total population. From 2012 to 2017, the nation’s Black population is projected to grow by 6.9 percent, compared with the 5.7 percent growth estimated for the total U.S. population. Also, the Black population is younger. The 2010 Current Population Survey estimates the median age of Blacks is 31.4 years compared with 38.2 years for the White population and 36.7 years for the total population. Compared with the older White population, larger proportions of Blacks will be entering the workforce for the first time or will be moving up from entry-level jobs. For example, 30.9 percent of Blacks are 15 to 34 years old, compared with 26.6 percent of Whites and 27.4 percent of the total population. This will provide an extra push to the group’s overall buying power.

Conversely, smaller proportions of Blacks have reached their career pinnacles, where the annual percentage increases in wage and salaries often begin to decelerate, or are of traditional retirement age. In 2010, only 8.6 percent of Blacks were 65 years and older, compared with 13.8 percent of Whites and 12.7 percent of the total population.

Because the Black population is so much younger, African-American consumers increasingly are setting trends for youth (and young adults) of every background. This isn’t surprising, given that 29.4 percent of the Black population is younger than 18, compared with 23.4 percent of the White population and 23.7 percent of the total population.

This youthful profile does have its downside. Young people, regardless of race, are more exposed to job losses in economic downturns. In this regard, Black buying power is vulnerable to the effects of recession, but over time the above-average growth of Black buying power has more than compensated for that cyclical exposure.

**The Opportunity:** As African Americans’ share of the nation’s total buying power expands, business-to-consumer companies will benefit from devoting more resources toward developing and marketing products that meet the needs and match the preferences of Black consumers.
**Assumption:** Black household spending dropped during the recession at the same rate as the general market.

While marketers have been busy creating strategies to mitigate the effects of the recent economic downturn, they’ve missed opportunities in the African-American market. A closer look at spending statistics during this period might have helped some brands ride out the recession in better shape.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics annually surveys more than 35,000 households nationwide and estimates total consumer spending by age, race and other demographic characteristics. In its most recent survey, with data for 2010, a comparison of Black household spending over the past five and 10 years shows that Black households increased their real inflation-adjusted spending since 2005 despite the recession. Their increase in consumer expenditures outpaced the average for all households both over the past five years and the past 10 years.

The 2010 BLS survey estimated that 14.8 million Black consumer units, or households, spent an average of $35,863 each, or a total of $531.5 billion, on a variety of consumer goods and services. Even after adjusting for inflation over the past five years, that figure was 3 percent above the total of $515.1 billion for 2005. It was also 12.7 percent above the $471.6 billion in 2000, expressed in 2010 dollars. By comparison, all U.S. household spending as measured in those BLS surveys rose 10.6 percent from 2000 to 2010 in constant 2010 dollars, but actually declined 4.2 percent from 2005 to 2010 in constant 2010 dollars.

Black spending exceeds general market in key categories

The BLS 2010 Consumer Expenditure Survey shows that after-tax income of Black consumer units (CUs) was on average equal to 75 percent of the after-tax income of all U.S. households, and their overall spending was, as expected, 75 percent of that for all U.S. households. But in several categories, Black household spending accounted for far more than 75 percent.

The Opportunity: Despite lower income levels, Black households spend nearly as much as the average U.S. household for certain products and services, and in some cases even more. Marketers should target this consumer segment understanding that they spend disproportionately to their incomes and comparatively to the spending levels of other population segments.

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**SUMMARY OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY, BLACK CONSUMER UNITS VS. NON-BLACK CONSUMER UNITS 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVERAGE ANNUAL EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>BLACK CU</th>
<th>NON-BLACK CU</th>
<th>BLACK CU AS A % OF NON-BLACK CU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Products/Services</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>89.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>14,102</td>
<td>16,899</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel and Related Services</td>
<td>1,429</td>
<td>1,737</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Contributions</td>
<td>1,334</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>79.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>4,796</td>
<td>6,314</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>5,724</td>
<td>7,950</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Products, Smoking Supplies</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Insurance and Pensions</td>
<td>3,401</td>
<td>5,647</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>1,734</td>
<td>3,355</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>1,352</td>
<td>2,665</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic Beverages</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts for People in Other Households</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>1,105</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>51,163</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Taxes</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>1,959</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumption: Affluent Blacks will adhere to the values of their socioeconomic group rather than those of their ethnic heritage.

Marketers have long held that the affluent in the United States are more like each other than they are like members of their own ethnic groups. From that, they reason that upper-class ($100,000-plus income) Blacks, who make up about 10 percent of the Black population, will adhere to the values of their socioeconomic group rather than those of their ethnic heritage.

According to data from the 2011 Mendelsohn Affluent Survey, conducted by Ipsos MediaCT, 74 percent of Black affluents agreed that “my cultural or ethnic heritage is a very important part of my life,” a sharp contrast to the 34 percent of White affluents.

Black culture in full effect

Family and religion are pillars of Black culture and are quite relevant to Black affluents. Being around family members and enjoying them is a high priority for Black affluents. Overall, they are an optimistic and happy group, which could be a result of their spiritual grounding.

I enjoy spending time with my family ................................................................. 86%
My family is my top priority in life ................................................................. 82%
I am a very happy person ........................................................................... 77%
My cultural or ethnic heritage is a very important part of my life ........ 74%
I am a spiritual person .................................................................................. 73%
I am an optimistic person .............................................................................. 72%

Being the boss

While they think of themselves as creative people, Black affluents are creative in a disciplined way; they work hard at what they know. That effort, along with out-of-the-box thinking, makes more than half of Black affluents sure of themselves as leaders and helpers.

I think of myself as a creative person ............................................................ 59%
I spend time researching products and services before purchasing ......... 57%
I tend to take the lead in decision making .................................................... 53%
I like to offer advice to others ....................................................................... 53%
I consider myself an opinion leader ............................................................ 50%

It’s all about the Benjamins

While they are satisfied with how well they are doing financially, Black affluents keep their noses to the grindstone to make sure they keep doing well now and for the future. While they have adjusted their spending because of recent economic conditions, Black affluents haven’t stopped rewarding themselves for their accomplishments.

I am actively involved in the management of my personal finances ....... 79%
A person is responsible for his/her financial security in retirement ........ 68%
Sometimes I treat myself to something, even though I don’t need it .... 67%
Though the recession is over, I am still spending cautiously ............. 62%
I still have some money left over for a little indulgence ...................... 60%
I am very worried about the state of the economy ............................... 60%
I am satisfied with my standard of living ................................................. 56%
It is important to me that I make as much money as possible .......... 55%

Image and style

One way Black affluents reward themselves is by purchasing quality products. This not only brings them pleasure but also defines who they are. Image and fashion are important for Black affluents.

I dress to please myself, not others .............................................................. 81%
When it comes to quality, I believe you get what you pay for .............. 80%
Good value for the money is more important than price ................. 70%
Being well dressed is important to me ..................................................... 64%
My fashion represents who I am as a person ........................................ 58%
Owning good quality things brings me enjoyment ............................ 58%
I have an excellent sense of style ............................................................. 53%

Base: 413 Black adults with household incomes of $100,000 or more.
Mendelsohn Affluent Survey, conducted by Ipsos MediaCT.

Insights

In their quest to define themselves by their style and image, to celebrate life and to live a spiritual existence, Black affluents affirm their connection to the basic tenets of African-American culture despite their economic privileges. They are Black first and affluent second.

The Opportunity: Making a powerful connection with this affluent market should include the use of Black cultural filters. Those who continue to believe that Black affluents will respond to general-market advertising “just like everybody else” will miss a key opportunity to engage brand-loyal consumers who enjoy spending substantial amounts of money on quality products and rewarding themselves and their families.
Since the release of the 2010 U.S. census, much has been written about the growing numbers of Hispanics and Asians. But what has gotten lost in the story about America’s multicultural makeup is that the African-American segment remains an important growth opportunity for many marketers. A closer analysis of household formation reveals insights that marketers should consider during planning season.

Household numbers
According to the 2010 census there are 82.3 million non-Hispanic White households; 14.1 million Black households; 13.5 million Hispanic households; and 4.6 million Asian households out of a total 116.7 million households nationwide. This 2010 census count of households by race reveals two important considerations about African-American consumers’ comparison growth and the absolute numbers vs. other multicultural segments:

■ Black household growth has outpaced that of total households in the U.S. in the last decade (17 percent and 11 percent, respectively).
■ Although Hispanics are the largest minority population segment, there are actually more African-American households in the U.S. than any other minority group.

For marketers of household products, goods and services, this suggests that the African-American market is a growth segment worth investing in. In that same vein, it is just as interesting how the composition of Black households is evolving in terms of size and formation.

Household size
While Black households became smaller over the past decade, they are still slightly larger than the average for total households.

Average household size among African Americans was 2.74, according to the 2000 census, compared with 2.63 in the 2010 census. For total households, the numbers were 2.59 in 2000 and 2.58 in 2010.

Some reasons for smaller household size over the past decade have been the growth in Black married households and the decline in Black married couples with children. These changes in household composition reveal trends that marketers of household products, furnishings and appliances would be wise to note.

Household formation
A greater percentage of Black households are in their peak household formation and spending years than are all U.S. households. A solid 44 percent of Black households are either Millennials or Gen Xers, compared with 38 percent of all households. The same percentages of each (40 percent) are Baby Boomers, where income peaks. They represent a strong block of prime shoppers for various types of products.

The Opportunity: Understanding the census data on African-American household size, composition and formation outlined above allows savvy marketers to see trends and growth opportunities as they evolve.

The smaller household size and increase in households without children translate into more per capita income per household and greater amounts of discretionary income for goods and services.

The large number of Black households reflects a portrait of evolution, providing marketers with a pathway toward growth.
The shared connection of Black history, culture and experience forms a unifying bond that spans all age groups among African Americans, but major social, political, economic and technological changes have impacted the worldview of each generation of Blacks, and marketing messages must reflect this to be effective.

The pre- and post-Civil Rights mind-set
Some generational differences transcend race. For example, all Millennials grew up in a more technologically advanced society compared with their Baby Boomer parents. They were exposed to an ever-expanding variety of media at a much earlier age and to a significantly greater degree. Among African Americans, there is also a notable difference in viewpoint on race and on society at large between those born before the Civil Rights Movement (prior to 1964) and those born after. Black Boomers are the last generation of African Americans to have personally experienced legal segregation. By the time Black Gen Xers reached school age, many of the gains of the Civil Rights Movement were in place. School segregation was virtually over. There were Black mayors and members of Congress, and Black college enrollment was climbing. Post-Civil Rights Black women have also benefited from the gains made by the women’s movement, such as increased access to managerial and executive-level positions in the corporate world.

Growing up in an era of freedom from the oppressive impact of Jim Crow laws in the South or the more subtle segregation and attitudes of the Northeast and Midwest granted both Black Gen Xers and Millennials a level of inclusion and access previously unheard of, and gave them a different view of their place in the world as a result.

Author and researcher Pepper Miller highlights significant differences in attitudes and beliefs between pre- and post-Civil Rights African Americans (see table).

Both generation and race provide important insights
Generational differences in attitudes and beliefs among African Americans can be as significant as the variations of acculturation in the Hispanic market. For example, while pre-Civil Rights era African Americans tend to be more race-focused in their interpretation of world and national events, the post-Civil Rights generation tends to be more inclusive and view race as less divisive. This trend toward inclusiveness is the reason more biracial Millennials are acknowledging all facets of their identity.

At the same time, similarities exist among African Americans across generational lines as well because some values speak to race more powerfully than to age. The generational distinctions are mainly the degree to which they hold these values.

Black consumers of all generations have more confidence in the economy
Black consumers have been more confident about the economy since the 2008 presidential election. At the time of the election, Black Millennials were the most confident generation. Fueled by Barack Obama’s message of hope and change, they believed the election meant that race no longer mattered.

Older generations, especially those of the Civil Rights era, realized that President Obama was an ally and a champion who gave...
them hope that things would get better. Their confidence has grown based on events outside themselves, such as the resurgence of the auto industry and new health care laws.

By 2012, Black Millennials had the lowest level of confidence among Blacks. Now faced with high unemployment, student loan debt and a divided political environment, some Black Millennials have become discouraged. While job prospects for many are bleak, disappointment among Millennials may be somewhat reflective of unrealistic (or uninformed) expectations of the president’s ability to effect change rather than disillusionment with the man himself.

Although Black Millennials have the lowest level of confidence among Black generations, it is still significantly higher than that of the general population.

**Black Millennials still plan to spend**

Black consumers are more likely to make big-ticket expenditures in the next six months compared with non-Black consumers regardless of generation. Black Millennials and Gen Xers are most likely to plan a major purchase within the next six months, even though Millennials had the lowest level of consumer confidence. Higher purchase intent of big-ticket household items among the younger cohorts is attributable to first-time household formation, while lower levels of purchase intent among Black Boomers reflects the fact that they already own furniture, appliances, electronics and computers.

**Aspiration**

Black adults 18 and older are more likely to view “aspiring to get ahead” and “having material possessions, a lot of money” as very im-

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CONFIDENCE AMONG CONSUMERS, 2008 VS. 2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>NOVEMBER 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLACK ADULTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation Y (Millennials)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silent Generation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| ASPIRATIONAL VALUES OF ADULTS 18+, BLACK VS. NON-BLACK, 2011 |
| Source: 2011 GfK Roper Values. |
| COMPARISON OF VALUES RANKED VERY IMPORTANT |
| BASE: 52,027 adults, 18+, weighted to population (000). |
| NON-BLACK | NON-BLACK | NON-BLACK | NON-BLACK |
| Aspiring to get ahead | 73.0 | 69.3 | 68.1 | 62.3 | 65.1 | 50.7 | 51.8 | 38.5 |
| Having material possessions, a lot of money | 49.5 | 38.9 | 45.6 | 37.1 | 44.8 | 34.0 | 38.1 | 27.5 |

portant compared with non-Black adults regardless of age group. According to research conducted by GfK MRI in 2011, although more Black Millennials than Black Boomers value “aspiring to get ahead,” Millennials’ values are actually more in line with non-Blacks in their own generation (a 3.7 percentage point difference). By contrast, Black Boomers believe that “aspiring to get ahead is very important” at a significantly higher rate than non-Black Boomers (14.4 percentage point difference and 13.3 percentage points for the Silent Generation).

Despite these differences, messages targeted to the African-American market that focus on aspirational themes will be successful across all generations.

In general, however, it is important for programmers and marketers to put some thought into messages intended to appeal to the entire segment. While an all-Black cast in a TV show or commercial may be important to Boomers, a Black cast alone probably won’t be enough to engage a Gen Xer or Millennial. A commercial or program that uses race-based humor may not raise the eyebrows of most Black Gen Xers but could infuriate Black Boomers.

**The opportunity:** Black attitudes and beliefs vary widely between the generations in many cases. Although Black audiences share cultural and historical insights, it is vital when targeting African Americans to determine if generational differences in attitude could impact the effectiveness of advertising messages or programming appeal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR PURCHASE PLANS IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS (PERCENTAGE BY GENERATION)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMPUTER</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK ADULTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation Y (Millennials)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silent Generation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOBILE DEVICE</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK ADULTS</td>
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<td>Generation Y (Millennials)</td>
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<td>TELEVISION</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK ADULTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation Y (Millennials)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silent Generation</td>
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<td>FURNITURE</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK ADULTS</td>
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<td>Generation Y (Millennials)</td>
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<td>Generation X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silent Generation</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOME APPLIANCES</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK ADULTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation Y (Millennials)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
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<td>Silent Generation</td>
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Many marketers have consistently thought of the Black consumer as fiercely quality-conscious and subsequently brand loyal. From this, they’ve reasoned that if a brand could make inroads into the segment, then it could count on having customers for life. On the other hand, African Americans also have been acknowledged as early adopters of brands and trends in many product categories. Add to that the findings that the Black consumer is price-conscious, and the resulting equation produces a conundrum: How can a consumer be loyal to quality brands yet also be an early adopter when something new and interesting comes along, all the while looking for the best deal? What exactly is the Black consumer market loyal to?

According to researcher and author Pepper Miller, president of the Hunter-Miller Group, African Americans have “identity-shaping relationships” with brands. In Ipsos Mendelsohn’s 2011 study about affluents, 58 percent of affluent Blacks agreed with the statement, “My fashion represents who I am as a person.” Similarly, in the “2011 American Pantry Study: The New Rules of the Shopping Game,” a CPG study by Deloitte and Harrison Group, 53 percent of Blacks said brands can say a lot about who they are (vs. 39 percent of total shoppers). Even during the recession, when consumers were tightening their belts, the “Effects of the Recession on Brand Loyalty and Buy-Down Behavior” study by comScore (October 2011) found 54 percent of African-American women saying they “buy the brand that I want most,” compared with 42 percent of White women.

Brand names equal quality
These higher levels of affinity with brands are seen across all Black generations when compared with non-Blacks. GfK MRI data reveal that Black consumers are 24 percent more likely than all consumers to agree that “I would pay extra for a product that is consistent with the image I want to convey,” and that Blacks are 17 percent more likely to agree that “Brand name is the best indication of quality.” For many Blacks, brand names not only ensure a higher level of quality but also make a statement about the person who buys them. Black consumers are invested in quality brands that represent the type of image they want to project to the world. In other words, Black consumers are not loyal to a brand per se, but rather to the image of a brand that they find compatible; thus, it is the relationship that inspires their loyalty.

The “Burrell: Project 40” study conducted by the Futures Co. notes, “African-American values fuel purchase decisions. Black consumers look for products that strengthen and reflect their core cultural values: pride, legacy, perseverance, originality, independence, self-esteem, celebration of life and responsibility.”

Blacks as trendsetters
So what happens when another brand comes along with an image that is more compatible with a Black consumer’s self-image? In the 2005 book “What’s Black About It? Insights to Increase Your Share of a Changing African-American Market,” co-authors Pepper Miller and the late Herb Kemp review Black consumer market data from a number of categories and conclude, “African Americans are more likely than Whites to be among the first to set new trends and to consider themselves on the cutting edge.” This clearly indicates that marketers should not take Black consumer loyalty for granted, as African Americans are inclined to adopt new trends and switch brands.

According to MRI, the Black consumer market is 36 percent more likely than the general consumer market to change brands often for the sake of variety and novelty, perhaps wanting to align with an image that better reflects who they are. For example, an Ipsos OTX study commissioned by Google with GlobalHue, called “Five Truths of the Digital African-American Consumer,” notes, “African Americans are early adopters [of digital] and are more likely to watch video online and to access online content via smartphones and other alternative..."
platforms.” Their tendencies to seek out the new explains why Nielsen Co.’s 2011 study “The State of the African-American Consumer” found that Black consumers who were once thought to be brand loyal to BlackBerry (whose platform innovations have lagged behind others in the industry) are now connecting with Android forms that they find more compatible with their image and lifestyle.

Searching for that which is new means a lot of shopping, something the Black consumer does, and enjoys, more than the general-market consumer. All that effort has made Black consumers quite savvy about shopping practices. According to a 2011 study conducted by Shopper Sciences on behalf of Google, shoppers in general use an average of 10.4 different sources in their product decision-making process while African Americans use an average of 16.3 sources. According to Deloitte’s “American Pantry” study, African Americans were even more likely to believe they have become a lot smarter about the way they shop vs. a year ago (84 percent vs. 75 percent).

Although Black consumers say their goal is to save money, they are less likely than all consumers to purchase generic brands because they also are less likely to believe generics and store brands are of the same quality as name-brand products. While store brands are stronger among total shoppers, Black consumers are less willing to switch to store brands or generics to save money. According to the Deloitte study, African Americans said they are trying fewer store brands than in the past (44 percent vs. 31 percent among total shoppers). Black shoppers who switched to store brands say they intend to buy more national brands instead of store brands as the economy improves (52 percent vs. 35 percent of total shoppers).

**Insights**

- Black consumers are loyal to brands they have relationships with, brands that reflect their image.
- As the Black consumer market grows, develops and changes, it remains loyal to quality brands that resonate with African Americans and continually talk to them about their relationship.

**The Opportunity:** Brands looking to sustain or increase their share of market by engaging with African-American consumers should not rely on past marketing efforts. Marketers should develop fresh, relevant strategies to ensure their brands are top of mind for the Black consumer market. Brands must continually communicate their messages in a way that speaks to the many dimensions that Black consumers use to engage with their brands—that is, quality, status and value.
TRADING PLACES

Assumption: Blacks are only located in urban areas, so marketers should concentrate their efforts there.

Smart marketers make sure their brands are available where consumers are, so when the customer moves, the brands follow. The 2010 census confirms that multicultural segments are on the move, and the Black consumer segment is making two big shifts.

First move: A return to the South
Perhaps the largest internal migration in American history was the early 20th century movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban Northeast and Midwest. The 2010 Census confirms that in many respects that migration has been reversing. Over the past decade, Blacks have been moving from the urban Northeast and Midwest to the suburban South and West.

Black households have been increasing far faster in the South and slightly faster in the West than in the other two regions. Nationwide there were 2 million more Black households in 2010 compared with 2000, and two-thirds of those new Black households (1.4 million) were created in the South.

CHANGES IN BLACK HOUSEHOLDS BY REGION, 2000–2010
TOTAL BLACK HOUSEHOLDS IN THE U.S.: 14.13 MILLION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hhlds. millions</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number (000) and increase</td>
<td>227 10.8%</td>
<td>285 12.5%</td>
<td>1,400 21.3%</td>
<td>163 15.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This movement of Black households to the South is a strong indicator of both present and future income growth for these households. Job growth is higher in the metropolitan areas of Southern states, and the cost of living is less than in the Northeast and Midwest.

Second move: From urban to suburban
Just as important as the regions Blacks have moved to in the past decade is that not all Black consumer growth is occurring in metropolitan areas. Importantly, two-thirds (67 percent) of that metropolitan growth in Black households and adults occurred in the suburbs.

This movement to the suburbs by Black households is significant for a number of reasons. The most important is that a typical suburban Black family’s median income is 41 percent higher than that of a Black family living in the city and 76 percent higher than for a typical Black family living outside a metro area, according to the 2010 American Community Survey.

A second reason this is significant is that in the suburbs, a majority (52 percent) of Black households own their homes, while in cities just 36 percent are homeowners. Between 2000 and 2010, Black homeowners in suburban areas rose 35 percent compared with a 4 percent increase in cities and a 15 percent drop in nonmetro areas.

A third reason is that suburban Black households are more likely to be married couples, the vast majority with two income earners. In metro suburban areas, 36 percent of Black households are married couples compared with 23 percent in cities and 29 percent in nonmetro areas.

The Opportunity: As Black consumers trade urban for suburban, this opens opportunities for marketers in a number of categories.

Transportation: Many urban dwellers traditionally did not have cars and instead used public transportation. In suburban surroundings, a car is a necessity.

Home furnishings/appliances/electronics: The move into new homes or even apartments larger than their previous urban dwellings establishes a need for furniture, appliances and, of course, electronics.

Supermarkets/food warehouses/clubs: Consumers living in urban areas typically do not have access to large supermarkets and food clubs. The shift to the suburbs allows Black consumers the opportunity to shop in these stores and subsequently buy more.
The widespread African-American market
One characteristic that sets the African-American consumer market apart from the Hispanic and Asian markets is that it is not concentrated in a handful of states. This vibrant consumer market is widespread,
The Black consumers’ experience is a unique one. Their history has shaped their present and future like no other group. Black culture transcends race and influences the actions and imaginations of our country and the entire world. Music has always been an integral part of that culture. The struggles and triumphs of Black people have given birth to musical geniuses as diverse and rich as jazz and gospel, and as smooth and rhythmic as R&B and hip-hop.

As we look at the demographic trends of this important consumer group, it is only fitting to highlight their accomplishments and ambitions within a few of the many songs that reflect their dynamic culture.

**Population and Household Growth**

The rise of the Black population yields growth in all types of households.

**Black Population Growth** (alone or in combination with another race)

1990: 30.5 M
2000: 37.1 M
2010: 42 M
2012: 43 M
2017: 45.5 M (Proj.)

**Household Growth**

- Males: 15.6 M
- Married: 10.7 M
- Female: 4.9 M

There is a 148 percent increase in the number of Blacks who have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

There are more Blacks in management and professional positions than any other occupational category.

**BLACK POPULATION GROWTH (ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WITH ANOTHER RACE)**

- 1990: 30.5 M
- 2000: 37.1 M
- 2010: 42 M
- 2012: 43 M
- 2017: 45.5 M (Proj.)

**Education and Occupation Growth**

Increased population development leads to accelerated rates of higher education, and ultimately higher-paying occupations.

**Blacks by Occupation**

Management and Professional: 27.2%
Service Occupations: 25.9%
Sales & Office: 25.3%
Production & Transportation: 14.7%
Construction & Maintenance: 8.2%
Armed Forces: 0.7%

**Income and Spending Growth**

Spending increases as the Black population continues to move into positions with higher incomes, reflecting a more positive outlook on the economy.

**Total Black Consumers**

- 1990: $316.3 B
- 2000: $599.8 B
- 2010: $946.6 B
- 2012: $1 T
- 2017: $1.3 T (Proj.)

**Consumer Confidence**

- Black Consumers: 66.4%
- Total: 59.7%

**Conclusion**

The rise of the Black population yields growth in all types of households, occupations, and income levels. The Black consumer market continues to grow, and their influence on the economy is becoming more significant. As we look to the future, it is clear that Black consumers will continue to play a vital role in shaping the economic landscape.
Is America today a “melting pot,” where differences are blended into one homogeneous soup, or a “tossed salad,” where different vegetables maintain their individual color, flavor and texture, but coexist deliciously? That’s at the core of the current debate over a multicultural vs. cross-cultural marketing-communications approach. But when you compare these conflicting segmentation strategies, you find the debate really comes down to the significance of culture as a major demographic factor and a driver of decision making:

- The multicultural approach distinguishes consumer segments by cultural factors in addition to other segmentation factors. It suggests that cultural differences affect consumer decision making and consumption behavior, so the marketing stimulus should be designed to leverage cultural insights to effectively motivate consumer behavior.

- The cross-cultural strategy suggests combining cultures within a segment, as opposed to separating by culture. It increases the diversity within segments, reduces the number of segments and suggests that leveraging unique cultural insights is not as effective in motivating consumers.

For advertisers, the cross-cultural strategy gives permission to adopt a cost-efficient, one-size-fits-all marketing-communications approach. But while it might seem to offer better reach metrics, it won’t be effective for connecting with targets whose identities are closely tied to a specific culture or race; they may even view such an approach as personally diminishing and politically incorrect. African Americans are clearly this kind of target group, as race and culture define who they are and strongly affect their behavior. Contrary to the idealized notion that we should aspire to a more homogeneous society, a new study by Burrell Communications shows African Americans “remain culturally distinct at the deepest, most important levels” and this distinction “affects how they view the world…who they trust…what organizations they belong to…what they buy, read, record, save, surf, connect with….”

Can you blend the Black?
African Americans bear a visible difference that loudly announces a unique history, experience and cultural behavior. The U.S. government recognized this profound distinction when President George W. Bush signed into law the establishment of a National Museum of African American History and Culture. Black culture cannot be blended with other cultures because of the massive distinctions from the American majority. African Americans view the world through a historical and cultural lens that reinforces them as culturally different citizens and consumers.

With differences that are visible, historical, social, geographic and experiential, the insights that motivate and affect behavior are also distinctive. Considering the magnitude of these differences, cross-cultural attempts to “blend the Black” are at best challenging and at worst futile.

These additional “Burrell: Project 40” findings reinforce the distinction of being Black in America:

- 73 percent of African Americans age 16 to 24 agree that their roots and heritage are more important to them now vs. five years ago.
- 88 percent of African Americans agree that discrimination is still part of their day-to-day lives.
- 85 percent agree that being part of the Black community is extremely important to them.

Cultural and racial differences can’t be erased—and shouldn’t be dismissed by marketers hoping for expedient solutions. With a strategy segmenting people by culture, advertisers can leverage cultural insights to create more engaging messaging for any given target.

At the same time, segmentation in marketing does not suggest that different cultures don’t interact. The proliferation, popularity and acceptance of different cultures in the U.S. are visible in the increasingly wide range of ethnic eateries, music, popular media and entertainment.

The growth trends in diverse food, music, entertainment and media consumption punctuate increasing cultural differences in the general population; the more variety, the better. It seems that increasing desire for and general acceptance of diversity is driving growth in these various areas. So why are we debating the importance of culture in marketing segmentation?

The Opportunity: Segmentation is an effective strategy when it allows the advertiser to have a more insightful, more relevant, more meaningful connection to target consumers. For certain consumer segments, culture is a huge part of their identity. To ignore distinctive cultures is commensurate with not recognizing those consumers. This is the case for African Americans. Culture is too important to be ignored.
Introducing ASPIRE, a new television network created by legendary athlete and entrepreneur, Earvin “Magic” Johnson. ASPIRE celebrates the African American experience. It’s a channel that creates opportunity for new voices, new vision and the next generation of ground-breakers and game-changers.

Our past. Our now. Our next.

This is ASPIRE.
Never before has reaching the Black consumer been so critical for marketers. In 2011, advertisers spent $2.114 billion to reach the African-American audience through targeted media, according to Nielsen Co., a 4.9 percent increase over 2010 spending.

Some companies stand out for their efforts in advertising to the Black consumer and inspiring confidence and loyalty—including Coca-Cola Co., Ford Motor Co., General Mills, McDonald’s Corp., Procter & Gamble Co. and State Farm.

On the following pages, top marketers from these leading companies talk about why the African-American market is so important to their brands. They offer lessons they’ve learned about reaching this key audience, including the value of understanding their cultural touch points and relating to Black consumers specifically. In addition, they talk about campaigns that have worked and why—and how these efforts have gone on to win over the general market as well, demonstrating the expanding cultural influence of the African-American audience.

In addition, each consumer category includes a list of the top 10 advertisers by spending to the Black audience in that category, offering an insight on which companies are working to reach this market.

The Black consumer market is a thriving, growing segment—and one that spends well for what it wants and needs. Marketers that heed the advice of the experts have much to gain, as the following figures demonstrate:

**BLACK HOUSEHOLDS’ LIFETIME CUMULATIVE SPENDING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>SPENDING PER HH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Household Consumer Expenditures</td>
<td>$1,381,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>65,083</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automotive (Purchases/Repairs)</td>
<td>84,469</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beverages at Home</td>
<td>8,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>53,925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage at Fast Food Restaurants</td>
<td>40,466</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food at Home</td>
<td>99,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>9,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Products &amp; Services</td>
<td>20,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>230,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Insurance</td>
<td>34,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Geoscape Consumer Spending Dynamix.
AUTOMOTIVE

Black consumers are more likely to plan to buy or lease a car or truck within the next six months (27.4 percent) than all adults 18 and older (16 percent). —BIGinsights

LESSONS FROM THE LEADERS: FORD

Jim Farley
Group VP-Marketing, Sales & Service
Ford Motor Co.

African Americans have traditionally been an important source of sales for our truck products and, more recently, our cars. They overindex on vehicle purchases, and we’ve spent incremental marketing resources to reach out to them. We’ve had an African-American agency partner for more than 20 years.

But there’s more to it than that. The African-American community has been a big part of Ford for a long time. We’ve been very inclusive as a company, starting in the 1920s and ’30s when we expanded our hourly workforce and many people moved from the South to the Midwest to build and engineer our products. So the African-American market is more than math to us. It’s part of the fabric of Ford, part of our DNA. During the financial crisis of 2008–09, many of our competitors walked away from discrete advertising to the African-American community, but Ford never wavered.

Our marketing to African Americans in recent years has really been innovative; it has tried new things that have since moved into the general market. Traditionally, Ford has not really focused on celebrity spokespeople. But our relationships with Tom Joyner and Steve Harvey have worked a new muscle for us: They’re very authentic to the African-American audience, and that’s part of the appeal of Ford. Working with them has taught us a lot, and now we’re applying those lessons learned in the general market.

The most important tip I can give advertisers is to be authentic. Authenticity is the currency of effective communications. You need to develop a genuine relationship with the consumer. You can’t take a cookie-cutter approach. Those who have, have failed miserably.

In the last three or four years what’s been different about our marketing efforts to African Americans are the digital and experiential activities. A personal favorite campaign of mine is one we did at the BET Awards last June. Consumers registered ahead of time and were notified via Twitter of a special hashtag to use during the ceremony for a chance to win a Ford Focus. It was crazy popular and showed that we understood how highly engaged the community was with this marquee event and with social media.

One of our most popular campaigns with dealers and consumers was a TV commercial for the new Ford Explorer with comedian Kevin Hart. It was developed for African-American audiences, but [then] we used it for the general market—it was one of our key ads for the Explorer launch.

Our new launch of Ford Escape had initially not been part of the African-American marketing mix; then we decided to add African-American cultural touch points such as the BET Awards, the Essence Music Festival and the Steve Harvey Hoodie Awards. Everything we do with our agency now goes through the filter of being culturally relevant.

We use a number of third-party resources to measure the effectiveness of campaigns and ROI, and we have a Ford African-American quarterly tracking study with consumers. What’s more important, though, is our support for historically Black colleges and universities and for Steve Harvey’s Hoodie Awards, now in its 10th year of recognizing neighborhood leaders across the United States.

It’s that kind of handshake, not the graph or the data, that I care about. It’s what makes Ford different.

LEADING AUTOMOTIVE ADVERTISERS
SPENDING TO BLACK CONSUMERS (USING TARGETED MEDIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENT COMPANY</th>
<th>2011 $(000)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Motors Corp.</td>
<td>$19,206,344</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiat</td>
<td>$17,734,568</td>
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<td>Toyota Motor Corp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ford Motor Co.</td>
<td>$15,104,724</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nissan Motor Co.</td>
<td>$6,844,588</td>
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<td>Hyundai Motor Co.</td>
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<td>Kia Motors Corp.</td>
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<td>Bayerische Motoren Werke AG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honda Motor Co.</td>
<td>$2,252,698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volkswagen AG</td>
<td>$1,716,044</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Nielsen Co.
FOOD

Blacks are more likely to choose a frozen food based on the reason “brand I trust” (50 percent) than all adults 18 and older (44.4 percent). —BIGinsights

LESSONS FROM THE LEADERS: GENERAL MILLS

Mark Addicks  
CMO  
General Mills

It’s hard to imagine the American cultural landscape without the influence and impact of African Americans. They represent all the iconic cultural markers of our society: business, music, entertainment, fashion, sports, government, education. In every aspect they’re seen as cultural thought leaders.

Marketing to African Americans will only increase because demographics show that they continue to grow as part of the American mosaic. And their influence continues to grow, too. We want to partner with them as market leaders.

Data show that African Americans are incredibly brand loyal—much more so than the general market—and they place a high value on brands. They use brands more as a badge than other market segments.

We were doing dedicated African-American market ads for Cheerios when I managed that brand some 15 years ago. We did a famous spot, “Quiz,” where an African-American kindergartner was learning the state capitals with his mom and dad. We started out thinking it would be a targeted ad but tried it in the general market at the same time, and it proved to be a great spot for the entire brand. It was a unique fit for Cheerios: simple and fundamental. Since then we have been doing dedicated radio and TV for Hamburger Helper and have been very hands-on in the community and on TV for Honey Nut Cheerios, a brand that has resonated with African Americans.

My advice to marketers seeking to connect with African-American consumers is to think of them as lead consumers to influence your market. You can start to market their ideas to the general market; they can influence an entire campaign if you get close to them. Although they represent 12 percent to 13 percent of consumers, their influence on consumption can be much bigger than that. You can do brand campaigns with African Americans at their heart that can drive the entire business.

The Yoplait Light “Curves” spot we did with Burrell Communications that targeted African-American women was rooted in cultural perspectives; it was less about being an ideal size and more about celebrating me and my unique inner and outer beauty. It also did well in the general market. Who doesn’t want that kind of personal affirmation?

Burrell also helped us launch Pillsbury Grands! Biscuit Sandwiches with African-American consumers as the brand champions who could influence the general market. The campaign featured custom music by gospel group Mary Mary and a lot of digital and social media aspects, including a surprise event at Chicago’s Union Station, integrations on Wendy Williams, in-store activities and an activation at Steve Harvey’s Hoodie Awards, which recognizes businesses and professionals across the nation that serve their communities.

Sometimes we have very specific campaigns within broader programs like Box Tops for Education to target the African-American community, such as our recent Education Town Hall at Morehouse College in Atlanta, hosted by Steve Harvey and Susan L. Taylor.

We believe that if you root yourself in the African-American culture and understand and value those rituals, customs and institutions, you can use that knowledge to help tell your brand story and engage consumers.

We do metrics, as most big advertisers do. But if you’re close to the community, especially with social media, you see comments about your work show up right away if it’s relevant and it resonates. Even before digital and social media, with Cheerios’ “Quiz” spot, we immediately heard African-American key influencers mention how affirmative and positive it was. Besides the numbers, that told us it was a good fit for the brand. We knew it was working.

We believe that if you root yourself in the African-American culture and understand and value those rituals, customs and institutions, you can use that knowledge to help tell your brand story and engage consumers.
**MARKETER INSIGHTS**

**BEVERAGE**

Black consumers are more likely to purchase bottled or flavored water once a month or more (73.9 percent) compared with non-Blacks (56 percent). —BIG insights

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**LESSONS FROM THE LEADERS: COCA-COLA**

*Kimberly Paige*
Assistant VP-African-American Marketing
Coca-Cola Co.

The Coca-Cola Co. has been marketing to African Americans since the 1930s. It’s amazing to see the efforts and leadership marketing campaigns that were executed in the ’40s and ’50s. From our partnerships with African-American business and entertainment icons to our presence and support of historically Black colleges and universities, Coca-Cola Co., and, specifically, Brand Coke, has always been about optimism and connection, and that has played true in relation to African Americans for many years.

African-American consumers are important to us for a variety of reasons. The growth in population trends along with their current contribution and future expected growth across our sparkling and still brand portfolio make them an important and viable consumer segment. In addition, African-American consumers continue to play a significant role in defining emerging and pop culture, which is often adopted by the broader consumer market. To that end, we’re always mindful of their influence and look to them for trends, especially for youth and the Millennial consumer.

We like to think of ROI as return on influence. If your brand is truly adopted by African-American consumers, the trajectory of the brand in appealing to a broader audience will advance above and beyond any investment you can make in the marketplace.

Our key strategy in reaching African-American consumers has been a two-pronged approach. The first prong is breadth—identifying the universal insights and values that connect and resonate with all consumers. The second prong is depth—being very surgical and precise to connect with African-American consumers based on a unique cohort insight or passion. We call this “The And Effect”—you’ve got to go broad and deep to build advocacy with consumers.

We’re proud of the smartwater campaign we launched featuring British actor and Golden Globe winner Idris Elba. He embodies all the characteristics of the smartwater brand. The feedback and level of consumer engagement have been significant.

We also launched our “Pay It Forward” campaign as part of Black History Month. Built on a simple premise, that we all are responsible for advancing the next generation, our “Pay It Forward” campaign provides deserving youth with an opportunity to experience a summer apprenticeship with a current celebrity or business leader and encourages others to do the same.

We have very disciplined metrics and measurement tools that give us insight on what’s working and not working. But the best way to know if you’re successful is to listen to consumers. If there’s a lot of social commentary, we listen to that—it’s real time, and if we’re not connecting we’re able to make adjustments.

It’s an exciting time to be in this industry. There have been so many shifts in the consumer landscape and in consumer thinking—consumers are much more engaged with brands today. But things are moving so fast that just when you think you understand African-American consumers, you don’t. You can’t be formulaic when targeting African Americans or any other consumers; you need to relentlessly seek to understand and pursue them. You have to always assume that things are going to change.

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**LEADING FOOD & BEVERAGE ADVERTISERS SPENDING TO BLACK CONSUMERS (USING TARGETED MEDIA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENT COMPANY</th>
<th>2011 $(000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hershey Co.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Mills</td>
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<td>PepsiCo Inc.</td>
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<td>Nestlé</td>
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<td>Mars Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kellogg Co.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Pepper Snapple Group</td>
<td>$6,074,247</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: The Nielsen Co.
MARKETER INSIGHTS

INSURANCE

Over the next three months, Black consumers (38 percent) are 31.9 percent more likely to increase their savings compared with non-Black consumers (28.8 percent). —BIGinsights

LESSONS FROM THE LEADERS: STATE FARM

Pam El
VP-Marketing
State Farm

State Farm is a 90-year-old company that has been serving African-American consumers for 90 years—our products and services are designed for all markets. Multicultural consumers are growing in numbers across the country and are very important to us. We take pride in having agents of all ethnicities who make sure customers’ needs are met in insurance and financial services. It helps that our agents are culturally relevant to the communities they live in and serve. They’re members of the churches their customers attend. Their kids attend the same schools.

The African-American community is a very loyal one. If you get an African-American customer, he’s likely to stay with you, and his children and grandchildren will do business with you. So it’s a long-term relationship we’re building.

To do that, we try to relate and connect to consumers in the communities we serve. We align ourselves with the needs and passions of the community. We sponsored the initiative “The 50 Million Pound Challenge,” about losing weight and getting healthier, and “26 Seconds,” about how one student drops out of high school every 26 seconds—many of them in urban areas, which means a lot in African-American communities. We sponsor the Essence Music Festival in New Orleans over the Fourth of July. Currently, our corporate theme is “Get to a better state” through improvements in health, education and finance—and that’s being put into practice by our agents in every community.

My advice to advertisers is to know the market and understand the cultural cues and passion points of the market. But you must be authentic—people will recognize a fake. Customers in every ethnic community know and see their State Farm agents all the time, so that authenticity is there for us.

Our “26 Seconds” campaign is not directly targeted to African-Americans, but it certainly is resonating with them across TV, print and a large online presence at 26seconds.com. Since it’s targeted to high-risk kids in high school, a lot tend to come from multicultural communities. When we run the commercials, we see a great amount of activity on the website; organizations get in touch wanting to be involved and help—they see this campaign making a difference and want to get on board. Ace Metrix told us that our “Wake Up” commercial for “26 Seconds” was the second-best-performing ad we rolled out in 2011—second only to our Sept. 11 tribute ad, which was rated best in the insurance category last year.

We try to make sure that our message goes beyond any one community you might believe it’s designed to touch on the surface. We may develop a commercial with African-American, Latino, Asian or Caucasian talent that resonates across different groups.

Our “State of Nostalgia (Thanks Hank)” life insurance spot features an African-American husband and wife, but is intended for all audiences and cultures. The concept of the spot appeals to different communities based on their needs, not their ethnicity.

State Farm enjoys a very strong and positive perception among African-American consumers, partly because we have served this market lovingly and genuinely with agents in the community for 90 years.

LEADING INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL ADVERTISERS
SPENDING TO BLACK CONSUMERS (USING TARGETED MEDIA)

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<tr>
<th>PARENT COMPANY</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>JP Morgan Chase &amp; Co.</td>
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Source: The Nielsen Co.
MARKETER INSIGHTS

PERSONAL CARE

Asked why they buy a personal care brand, 22.5 percent of Blacks chose “fragrance” as a top reason compared with 15.9 percent of all adults 18 and older. —BIGinsights

LESSONS FROM THE LEADERS: P&G

Alexandra Vegas
Multicultural Marketing Director
Procter & Gamble Co.

At P&G, the African-American consumer is critical to delivering our growth targets in the U.S. and therefore globally. There’s a myth that it’s hard to grow in developed regions, but if you focus on the right consumers—and African Americans are one of those groups—you can grow in the U.S. Our shares among African Americans are in line with our general market shares, and that’s our ultimate goal: to grow at that same rate.

Some marketers seem to have just discovered that African-American consumers exist. But Tide has done African American-targeted advertising for more than 30 years; Pantene, for over a decade; and Gain, pretty much all of its product life.

The consumer is at the center of everything we do at P&G, and it’s no different with African-American consumers. We take the same approach with this group as with every consumer segment: Invest in a lot of research and understand their practices, habits, motivators and needs, and how they evolve.

We take three different approaches to the African-American market. Sometimes we develop African American-exclusive marketing within a big-picture brand message. Take Pantene and its overall message of healthy hair, which means different things to an African American, a Hispanic, an Anglo. Pantene has developed different products to deliver on that promise, and we have developed different communications and marketing plans to bring credibility to those products.

Sometimes marketing is driven by universal insights, and we focus on a big idea across the board: We invest our dollars to reach more consumers in more places.

Some brands lead with African Americans and make that marketing work across the total general market. Certain brand segmentations tend not to be based on culture or ethnicity, but on attitudes and behavior. A brand like Gain decided that its experiential group became its critical focus group, so African Americans and Hispanics became the designated target for the brand. But marketing designed with them in mind—about the scent of clean laundry—

LEADING HEALTH AND BEAUTY ADVERTISERS

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GlaxoSmithKline</td>
<td>$6,936,021</td>
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Source: The Nielsen Co.

got great results in the general market, too.

My advice to marketers is to make African-American consumers a strategic part, not a tactical part, of your marketing. To win with this group you need to support them consistently, not just during Black History Month. You have to make a commitment. And stay authentic. That doesn’t necessarily mean African-American talent on screen, but telling the story in a genuine, real way.

I love P&G’s “My Black Is Beautiful” campaign because it brings these points to life. It’s a multibrand program, a community effort that goes on 365 days a year. It started in beauty, celebrating the unique beauty of African Americans, then moved into household care products. It was an internal breakthrough for us—bringing multiple brands together under one theme—and the company is very proud of it. Our Facebook community is No. 1 in African-American women, and the conversations there are really inspiring.

In the end, marketers who win in the total market understand how the market is evolving and how to embrace our similarities and celebrate our differences. We have to evolve from very niche marketing to looking at how consumer groups can drive the total market.●
McDonald’s has cultivated a tremendous relationship with African-American consumers over the years. Ever since we opened our doors, we’ve been inviting all consumers, including African Americans, into our restaurants. We formally started advertising to the African-American market close to 40 years ago. We appreciate and value the great affection and loyalty many African Americans have for the McDonald’s brand. We also realize and value the enormous influence they have on lifestyle trends in the United States.

We adopted the principle “Lead with ethnic insights,” which is about ensuring that we understand and apply ethnic consumer perspectives at every point in the marketing process. A foundational part of this idea in practice is our engagement with African-American consumers in their communities. The best symbol of our commitment to engaging with the community in a way that’s relevant and timely on an ongoing basis is our 365 Black initiative. It serves as an umbrella for different engagements with the community, whether that’s the Inspiration Celebration Gospel Tour, the All-American High School Basketball Games or our support for the Essence Music Festival. The name 365 Black says we are committed to being deeply rooted in the community 365 days a year, touching and connecting with consumers.

If I could share one idea with marketers, it would be that it takes time, talent and financial resources to engage and connect with African-American consumers, but it’s the right thing to do for customers and generates a strong return in terms of business performance.

We did a recent commercial campaign with Burrell Communications called “Big Day.” Seen from a child’s point of view as he attends a wedding, the spot includes many touching moments. Nearly anyone would enjoy watching it and connect with the universal themes, but there are many components that resonate specifically with the African-American experience, like jumping the broom.

We’ve found that our work with Burrell for the African-American market is authentic because it taps into this segment’s more optimistic nature.

We can go back 20 years—people are still talking about our “Calvin” spot where a young African-American man walks through his community greeting friends and neighbors. He ultimately ends up at McDonald’s, turns his hat around and says, “Welcome to McDonald’s. Can I help you?” That commercial was developed by leveraging insights that were truer to the African-American consumer as well as incorporating cultural cues that would be easily recognized by African-American consumers. One key idea that was conveyed was that hard work fuels opportunity.

Both “Big Day” and “Calvin” are remarkably insightful to African-American consumers, yet still have a high relevance for the general audience. Our marketing is richer, deeper and truer for these ethnic insights. We plan to continue strong levels of engagement with African Americans in paid and nonpaid media and by supporting events in the community. We see African-American consumers as an important part of our growth.

Our focus is simple: We want to meet and exceed consumers’ needs for high-quality food at a great value that they can feel good about eating regularly. It’s what’s required of us to enjoy solid business momentum.

Black consumers spend an average of $12.55 on fast food each visit compared with non-Black consumers, who spend an average of $11.47 per visit. —BIGinsights
Across media platforms, Blacks look for content that reflects their lives, the lives of people like them, their culture and their values. According to the Time Warner "Multicultural Media Consumer Study" by Cheskin Added Value, African Americans are more likely than other groups to use media to mirror their racial identity as they search for "characters that look like me to connect with (in) a show or movie." At the same time they identify with diversity more today than ever and strongly desire media to represent different ethnic and racial perspectives as well as diversity among African Americans.

True seekers of relevant content, Black consumers across all media and age groups look for programming that resonates. According to the 2011 Millward Brown "African American Advertising Learnings" study, although African Americans are exposed to, and can be reached through, both targeted and mainstream media, Black media (including targeted options within mainstream media) tend to have a stronger impact among some African-American consumers. African Americans are more than twice as likely to trust Black media as they are to trust mainstream media—30 percent vs. 13 percent, respectively.

They consume both targeted and general market media, but the relationship is very different. In other words, while Blacks seek content across various media platforms, what they endorse must reflect the broad spectrum of their lives with relevant story lines. When they find what they like, they are loyal to it.

It is also interesting to note that while Black households have DVR penetration comparable to the total population, the usage is lower because they seek instant gratification and are still very much appointment viewers who want to see their TV shows when they are on rather than later. According to the Nielsen Co. cross-platform report, in third quarter 2011, Blacks watched an average of 205:56 hours of TV per month and only 8:25 hours of time-shifted (DVR) TV. Conversely, non-Black households viewed an average of 112 hours of TV and time-shifted an average of 12 hours. When Blacks find what they like, they want it now.

What type of content resonates and why?
The Time Warner/Cheskin Added Value study shows only 54 percent of African Americans surveyed said they strongly agreed that Black culture is "very visible" across different media. More than half agreed strongly that it is "very important that media represents different ethnic/racial perspectives," while 37 percent agreed strongly that the media should be airing positive portrayals.

According to the "Burrell: Project 40" report, "African Americans are sensitive to how the world interacts with and portrays them. They're seeking more positive representations in the media and believe that multidimensional portrayals of African Americans remain scarce. Black consumers can spot a fake and reject inauthentic, fake portrayals. They have their antennae up—ready to talk, tweet, blog and post about what they see."

Vicangelo Bulluck, a television producer who serves as executive director of the NAACP’s Hollywood bureau and producer of the organization’s annual Image Awards, says Black consumers “are looking for broad representation to show that the African-American experience is not singular. They want media to show the community is not monolithic, that there are lots of perspectives and viewpoints. That is the real cry about stereotypical portrayals. If it’s just singular, if just one aspect of our community becomes popular in the mainstream, then it is not a good representation of the African-American experience.”

THE NEED FOR SELF-REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA VARIES BY GENERATION

Source: Time Warner/Cheskin Added Value study.
Distinctively different choices

While all major studies show that television is the entertainment option of choice for all consumers, it is even more so for African Americans. According to Nielsen’s “State of the African-American Consumer” report, “African Americans watch more television than any other group. Not only does the average African-American household have four or more televisions, but it also spends an average of seven hours and 12 minutes each day—or 213 hours per month—watching them. This amounts to about 40 percent more viewing time than the rest of the population.”

While how much they watch is important, what Blacks watch is key. African-American consumers’ search for relevancy leads them to make media choices that are very different from those of the total population.

On the Internet, according to the Yahoo/Mindshare/Added Value study “Ethnodynamics: Marketing to African Americans”:

- 37 percent of Black consumers compared with 26 percent of non-Blacks look for or visit online content related to ethnicity on general websites.
- 30 percent compared to 20 percent visit websites geared toward [my] ethnicity.
- 29 percent compared to 20 percent look for content on ethnic-specific websites.
- 28 percent compared to 20 percent view videos geared toward [my] ethnicity.

Because of its strong targeting ability and wide array of programming options, a weekly list of top programs on cable by ethnicity clearly reveals that the programming preferences among Black viewers are very different from those in non-Black households. For instance, during any given week, of the top 10 prime-time cable programs for Black viewers ages 18 to 49, none is ranked among even the top 50 programs for White viewers of the same age.

According to David Morse in his book, “Multicultural Intelligence,” “In the pre-cable days, for better or worse, African Americans and Whites watched the same shows. There simply were no alternatives available. Because Whites represented the larger audience, programming was directed at their sensibilities. Today with the multitude of broadcast and cable networks on the air, Blacks and Whites are tuning in to different programs. The overall trend, at least on cable, is toward greater segmentation.”

Content that resonates

The cable industry has taken a multifaceted approach to connecting with these consumers, including targeted networks, culturally relevant programs on mainstream networks as well as ethnic leads and multiethnic casts. These options, along with key genres such as sports, movies and reality television, have all helped viewing shares to surge. The growth is based on giving the consumer content that resonates.

A CAb analysis of Nielsen data (total cable impressions) reveals that while Black consumers represent nearly 14 percent of the population, they deliver 20 percent of all cable impressions in prime time.

Consistency: A place to call home

The desire for consistently relevant content is answered by Black-targeted networks, which have strong credibility with Black consumers. BET, for example—the 24/7 source of features and programming related to Black culture—provides contemporary entertainment that speaks to young Black adults from an authentic, unapolgetic viewpoint of the Black experience. BET is the nation’s leading provider of entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programs specifically of interest to the African-American audience.

BET’s spin-off sister network, CENTRIC, is a 24-hour music and entertainment channel that reflects the lifestyle and sophistication of today’s African-American and multicultural adult viewer. CENTRIC features classic comedy programming and music docu-series featuring intimate portraits of today’s hottest soul artists.

Obviously, Black consumers wish media would portray the entirety of Black culture rather than focus on a narrow segment of the population. As America’s Black immigrant population increases, it is important that programming reflects the entire spectrum of the Black population. The Africa Channel airs English-language programming from African countries that appeals to the African immigrant population as

SHARE OF VIEWING–PRIME TIME: AFRICAN-AMERICAN HHS

12/27/2010-12/25/2011

According to the Time Warner study:

- Very few Blacks feel that African-American culture is very visible today across different media (particularly older African Americans).
- Black consumers are less likely to feel that media does a good job of portraying lives of African Americans in the U.S.
- African Americans are less likely to feel the news does a good job of covering issues that interest different races.
- In addition, 86 percent of African Americans said they have a strong desire for excitement from media and 75 percent have a strong interest in inspirational stories and programming.
a connection to their homeland and also acts as a bridge of common interest and understanding among the African-American population.

**Reflecting the new face of America**

The face of America is changing and various networks get it. “We believe it is extremely important to reflect what the country looks like,” says Phil Griffin, president of news and information network MSNBC. “That is what we are working on doing. For many years this channel suffered in that area. We have made a commitment to finding the best people and talent out there, to offer different voices to our viewers. People tend to focus on diversity of appearance, but we think about diversity of ideas, and diversity in terms of where people come from.”

He points to Melissa Harris-Perry, a biracial Southerner and political science professor at Tulane University who this year began hosting her own show on MSNBC’s weekend morning slate. MSNBC last year also added “Politics Nation” with the Rev. Al Sharpton, the longtime civil rights activist from Brooklyn, to its nighttime lineup. Both hosts were regular contributors on MSNBC before being given their own shows. Mr. Griffin says the network’s diverse lineup of personalities appeals in particular to younger people of all ethnicities.

**Serving up Black culture in Black households and beyond**

In addition to serving the cultural entertainment needs of Black viewers, Scripps Networks is bringing Black culture to non-Black audiences as well. At Food Network and Cooking Channel, hosts such as Sunny Anderson and Pat and Gina Neely, and series like “Heat Seekers,” starring West Indian chef Roger Mooking, are a natural outgrowth of trends in the country’s food culture as well as population demographics.

Michael Smith, Scripps executive and current general manager of the Cooking Channel, says African-American audiences value content that features Black talent and culture. “According to research we have seen over the years, if you make something with an all-White cast, a White audience won’t notice it. But a minority audience will notice it,” he says. “And if you make something that has a significant presence of minority characters or a minority host, White audiences don’t notice that either. White Americans are just not as conscious of the ethnicity. But audience members of color will really feel good about it. For them, the presence of minorities on television is a message that ‘You reflect me, you validate my culture.’”

**Translating intimacy to relevancy**

One of the best ways to make sure programming resonates is to have writers and producers who are intimate with the segment. Turner Entertainment’s TBS has a relationship with Tyler Perry that has generated several successful series, including “House of Payne” and “For Better or Worse.” Sister network TNT features strong Black characters in dramas such as “Men of a Certain Age” and “Southland.”

Michael Wright, exec VP and head of programming for Turner, stresses the role of African Americans behind the camera in making TNT and TBS series resonate with Black viewers. “Many series on our networks are brought to life by award-winning African-American producers, writers and other creative personnel whose personal experiences and perspectives help inform their work. This work includes multiracial series like ‘Southland’ as well as more targeted series like the Tyler Perry shows,” he said. “We also have a very diverse group of people responsible for programming our networks, from developing and producing originals, to purchasing acquisitions, to scheduling them both. This diversity behind the scenes helps us maintain a diverse point of view with our programming choices.”

**Understanding what the consumer wants and needs**

Aside from offering an increased presence for African-American stars in lead and supporting roles across the cable dial, some networks stress the deeper needs of the Black community.

Brad Siegel, vice chairman of GMC TV and the new Aspire network, says his networks over the past six months have conducted focus groups of 35-to-45-year-old Black women to find out what they wanted to see on television. He said they asked for a “safe viewing environment” with stories that appeal to them, lighthearted and happy series, an escape from everyday reality and positive role models in Black fathers and mothers. They asked for programming that showed good people struggling but succeeding in the end. And they said they wanted to avoid negative portrayals of African Americans as well as violence, immorality, fighting and sex.

**Giving more voice to the Black experience**

Businessman and entrepreneur Earvin “Magic” Johnson, understanding the need for even more positive portrayals, relevant programming and opportunities for young talent, is scheduled to launch Aspire June 27. “There is a demand for more variety of African Americans in television roles and for more relatable types of story lines. The time is right for cable networks to serve this hunger for what African Americans can’t find on a consistent basis on television,” says Ty Johnson, VP-multicultural sales and development for GMC TV and Aspire. Aspire, which will debut to at least 2.5 million Comcast Corp. households, is a joint venture of GMC TV and Magic Johnson Enterprises. The basketball legend will serve as chairman of the network.

Aspire’s focus on putting African American talent in the spotlight is critical, Ty Johnson says. “Programming that is written by and for African Americans offers a more personal invitation to be engaged. There is still a [wealth] of stories that are relatable to the Black experience out there, yet to be told.”

**The Opportunity:** As with marketing to any segment, the message and the medium are important. When trying to connect with the Black consumer and maximize return on investment, marketers should align with media that resonate and that consumers will trust. Placement in targeted media is not only considered an endorsement, but also translates into the consumer believing “you know what I like” and often seeing it as support of the community.
To capitalize on the Black consumer market opportunity, marketers must understand how ethnicity is central to Blacks’ identity. In the recent Yahoo study “Ethnodynamics: Marketing to African Americans,” conducted in collaboration with Mindshare and Added Value, 70 percent of Black respondents said that “ethnicity is a significant part of my identity,” compared with 48 percent of the general population, and 82 percent of Blacks said that “I am proud of my ethnic identity, compared with 70 percent of the general population.

Across all Black generational segments, affinity for ethnic identity is strong. It’s not surprising that ethnic pride is higher among older age groups—with age comes a greater appreciation for heritage and culture—but nearly three-quarters of Millennials are just as proud of their ethnicity. This counters the common belief that African-American Millennials, raised in a more inclusive, multicultural, digitally influenced environment, are more likely to be connected to and influenced by their generational peers than to or by their ethnic culture. The marketing implications are significant because there are so many Black Millennials—nearly half of the African-American population is younger than 30—and they’re considered very influential.

**Internal vs. external expressions of ethnicity**

While older Blacks consider their ethnicity as foundational, Millennials are more expressive when it comes to ethnicity: 64 percent say ethnicity influences the way they talk to close family and friends, vs. 45 percent of African-American Boomers and 57 percent of Gen Xers. Black Millennials also express their ethnicity through their content choices. When compared to Gen Xers and Boomers, they’re more likely to say that ethnicity impacts nearly all of their digital content choices, including news, culture, lifestyle and shopping/product category information. Digital content and communication can provide a valuable platform to engage with younger African Americans.

**Authenticity in advertising**

To successfully market to this community, marketers need to be sensitive to how Blacks feel about media and marketing. Thirty-eight percent feel under-represented in media, 25 percent feel that many ads targeted to African Americans are offensive and only 26 percent feel that ads do a good job of speaking to their ethnicity.

To this end, outlined below are a set of best practices for marketing to Blacks, based on its survey findings:

1. **Show diversity, especially when targeting older African Americans.** When asked whether “ads would be better if they showed greater diversity,” the highest level of agreement wasn’t among African-American Millennials but among Boomers (Millennials, 62 percent; Gen Xers, 75 percent; Boomers, 80 percent).

2. **Merely including African Americans in ads is not the same as reflecting culture and values.** Diversity means more than just having a Black cast; the message of the ad should represent African-American values and culture. When asked whether they “appreciate seeing ads that accurately reflect their ethnic values,” 77 percent of African-American Boomers, 71 percent of Gen Xers, and 54 percent of Millennials strongly agreed.

3. **Ethnicity is more important in some categories than others. Know when and how to use targeted marketing.** Blacks cited several categories where targeting makes sense to them in terms of their ethnicity: health, skin care, hair care and personal care products are “extremely impacted by ethnicity, regardless of age.” However, Boomers are significantly more likely than Gen Xers and Millennials to desire ethnic targeting across the 30-odd categories studied.

4. **If nothing else, go positive.** Blacks want a “true understanding,” which translates into “celebrating my ethnic diversity in a relevant way” rather than a “superficial understanding” that “makes me look bad in front of others.” In fact, 79 percent of Boomers said ads should avoid obvious stereotypes, compared with 69 percent of Gen Xers and 61 percent of Millennials.

The conclusion is obvious: In order for advertising to have maximum impact, it is imperative that it is rooted in authentic cultural insights.
GET MORE OF THE DIVERSE EYEBALLS YOU NEED.

NONE OF THE ONES YOU DON’T.

Comcast Spotlight is opening a lot of eyes these days. Now, thanks to I+, you can reach more culturally diverse consumers in local markets whether they’re in cable, satellite or telco homes. But we’re not just delivering more eyeballs, we’re delivering the right ones. We deliver culturally-relevant content in the demographic areas where diverse audiences live and work. Also, our advanced targeting tools help you assemble all kinds of fragmented audiences within your markets. Which means you can reach your target with unprecedented accuracy. So if you’re looking for more of the eyeballs you value, look no further than Comcast Spotlight. We’ll get you the right eyeballs. Not to mention the left ones.

When it comes to delivering What’s Hot, What’s Next, and What Matters, there’s no limit to BET.

#1 Cable Network Among The People Who Watch The Most TV

Top 20 Cable Network Among All Adults

#1 Sitcom Premiere In Cable History: The Game

#4 Most Buzzed About Cable Network

Imagine a soulful place where music is its DNA; a place where life is always good. It’s Not Your Imagination…it’s Centric.

Top 10 Fastest Growing Network On Cable

Double Digit Growth