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THE MINORITY REPORT: SELLING TO ETHNIC GROUPS *An Excerpt*

Forrester Research singles out LanguageSpeak in its 2003 Minority Report

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RACIAL MINORITIES SPEND MORE THAN \$460 BILLION A YEAR

The U.S. Census Bureau's report that the Hispanic population grew more than 50% between 1990 and 2000 threw many retailers into a tailspin, asking if and how they need to change their marketing, stores and sites to keep up with the changing face of America.

RETAILERS NEED TO TURN RACIAL MARKETING ON ITS HEAD

On the macro level, consumers of a specific socioeconomic group have similar shopping attitudes – regardless of race. However, consumer tastes on the micro level often differ by race. How does a retailer deal with this paradox? Traditional approaches to ethnic marketing sometimes work, but they don't always address the complexity of the issue. We recommend that retailers take three steps that reflect how race does and doesn't make us different consumers:

1. **Identify shopper's racial mix.** Retailers need to understand their shoppers' overall racial mix so they can reflect this diversity in their national advertising and marketing campaigns, as well as at the local level.
2. **Create messages based on demographics, then race.** Retailers should speak to shoppers' demographics first, and then reflect the racial diversity of the consumer. They must create marketing messages and merchandising assortments that reflect the consumer. *Office Depot has already done more than most retailers to reach out to Hispanics by developing a Spanish-language Web site with LanguageSpeak.*
3. **Learn from leaders.** Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and while ethnic marketing is more an art than a science, some companies and organizations have already made great strides. Gap celebrates diversity minus the controversy by displaying consumers of all races throughout its Website, uses models of all ethnicities in its store signage, and even features music from a variety of ethnic roots for its store soundtracks.