



Die Native-Speaker Agentur

## **newstalk 1, 2008: The potential of ethnic marketing**

Immigration, integration. Fraught with tension, they're major issues in American, British, and German election campaigns. At englishtalk, we wondered how ethnic marketing could help defuse this issue – and how German brands could unearth a gold mine of potential.

### **Ethnic marketing: a crash course**

Also known as inter/cultural or multicultural marketing, ethnic marketing “is the promotion of a brand’s product or service to one or more targeted ethnic groups, or to an ethnically diverse consumer base.”\* Ethnic marketing is well established in the United States and other English-speaking countries, but seems to be still in its infancy in Germany. Yet some have taken up the cause: e-plus, Yello Strom, Telekom, VW, and Mercedes-Benz have run campaigns in Turkish. And the carefully chosen visuals and messages they used have paid off – since 1995, Mercedes-Benz has grown its market share for that target group by 4.8%.

But how can ethnic marketing build bridges between people? And build brands?

### **Moving forward, together**

Germany continues to welcome new immigrants, but much of ethnic marketing’s target group spans second and third generations. Segmentation and campaigns that recognize and play to minorities’ different family structures, purchasing habits, and values – as well as their lives in Germany now – are overdue. Discounted phone rates to the “home country,” for example, don’t mean much when the target group considers Germany home.

A good example of moving forward, together: the “Are You a Positive Role Model?” campaign by the Grey Group for the New Zealand Department of Corrections. Designed to attract top talent to the DOC, visuals and copy successfully targeted the resident European, Maori, and Polynesian population by speaking to their new futures in New Zealand.

### **Moving brands forward, together**

Ethnic marketing is good news for brands, too. Facing a saturated market or in one already? Reaching out in different languages with different visuals and messages can uncover hidden target groups and carve out niches you never thought possible. This kind of approach allows consumers to perceive your brand in a whole new way without forcing you to sacrifice existing business.

A good example of moving a brand forward, together: a campaign targeting African-Americans to help McDonald’s launch its new Snack Wrap products. Lead agency Burrell Communications knew of the target group’s special preference for snacks, so the agency approached the task like any other – uncovered the challenge, objective, and obstacles – to help sales surpass the forecast by 18% and test market results by 21%.

### **Take the first steps!**

Ethnic minorities are set to keep growing in Germany. Now’s a good time to start thinking about how to put your brand in front people in these diverse groups. Most importantly, steer clear of generalizations. Like any target group, ethnic minorities are made up of pastry-lovers, technophobes, renters, and countless other segments. Pinpointing them takes time.

\*Delightfully concise definition courtesy of Fuse Marketing in Vermont.

© 2008 englishtalk GbR. All rights reserved. Need to quote this article? Please let us know.

englishtalk GbR | Neue Brücke 3 | 70173 Stuttgart, Germany | Tel: 0711 88 27 307