

# EMERGE SMARTER

eBOOK INSIGHTS

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INCLUDING THE MULTICULTURAL VOICE IN YOUR INSIGHTS + MARKETING STRATEGY PROGRAMS

As the U.S. continues to become more diverse, understanding the unique needs and desires of each multicultural cohort while striking the balance between authenticity and empathy in your marketing is paramount. This eBook is a primer to understanding why it's important to include these cohorts in your research program and marketing strategy.

**C+R**  
RESEARCH



## Introduction

The recent release of the 2020 Census results has revealed that the United States is [more diverse and multicultural than ever before](#). In addition to an increase in almost all racial groups, over the past ten years, the multiracial population has increased 276%, from around 9 million people in 2010 to 33.8 million people in 2020. In contrast, the White only population, while still the largest cohort overall, declined 8.6% in the past decade.

When combining these Census findings with the overall increase in awareness of multicultural issues over the past 18 months (e.g., the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent [Black Lives Matter protests](#); the [Stop Asian Hate campaigns](#) that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic-related racism against Asian Americans; and the record breaking number of [LGBTQ+ political candidates winning office](#) after throwing their hats into the political arena in an effort to combat legal threats to their community, perhaps the most well-known being the trans military ban), an important insight for market researchers becomes clear: the “Gen Pop” audience is being redefined.

Marketers looking to take the pulse of the “average” American will need to cast a broader net when defining “average” if they hope to gain true representation. Additionally, brands will need to learn more about the unique needs and desires of each cohort to ensure their brands, products and services resonate with all consumers.

C+R Research has long recognized that considering the unique needs of multicultural consumers leads to more successful marketing campaigns and brands; it’s why we began our multicultural market research practice three decades ago. Our early work in the 90s focused more on respondent procurement and Spanish-language research which led to building a community of Hispanic consumers with the launch of LatinoEyes in the early 2000s. After the release of the Census data in 2000 and more companies recognizing the importance of including multicultural consumers in their marketing plans, we expanded our offerings to help clients build more foundational knowledge for their Black/African American and Hispanic initiatives. Our CultureBeat experts have now become a sought-after resource to help companies build out their overall multicultural practice, including Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian and LGBTQ+ consumers.

Because of our long history conducting multicultural research, C+R knows that a successful strategy for any business when targeting multicultural consumers requires more than just testing specific initiatives. It requires that the internal client teams make a commitment to understanding these unique multicultural consumer cohorts, building empathy, and partnering with in-culture experts .

That’s why our approach goes beyond simply providing the research results – we help your internal teams truly understand multicultural consumers. Once you build that understanding and empathy in your insights and marketing (and among your company’s leadership), subsequent learning surrounding specific marketing/product initiatives will make more sense and will lead to better business decisions.

## Multicultural Inclusion in Market Research and Marketing: Why It Matters

We believe there are three key reasons why brands should incorporate a multicultural perspective in their insights program, with the goal of developing and guiding multicultural marketing initiatives.

### 01 ➤ Reason #1: The market sizes of multicultural consumers are increasing.

As mentioned above, the size of the multicultural population is growing in the United States. Other than multiracial, most notable is that of Hispanics, whose numbers have risen 23%; and the Asian population in the US has risen 35% from the last Census. Additionally, non-governmental research suggests that over 18 million people identify as LGBTQ+. The table below outlines the current populations of some multicultural segments, including (where available) how they are expected to grow in the future.

Multicultural Segment	Current Population (2020)*	Current % of US Population (2020)*	Projected Population***
Asian	19.9 M	6%	41M by 2055 and projected to be largest immigrant group
Black/AA	41.1M	12.4%	59M by 2055
Hispanic	62.1M	18.7%	128M by 2055
LGBTQ+	At least 18.5 M **	≈5.6%	Projected to grow, <a href="#">as 1 in 6 of adult Gen Z</a> identify as LGBTQ+

\*Source: United States Census Bureau: Improved Race and Ethnicity Measures Reveal U.S. Population is Much More Multiracial. August 12, 2021. Numbers reported are for that race “alone” (Asian, Black/AA, Hispanic).

\*\*Source: Gallup Poll Social Series - LGBTQ Identification Rises to 5.6% in Latest U.S. Estimate- February 24, 2021

\*\*\*Source for Projected Population: Pew Research Center – U.S. Population Projections: 2005-2050



**02 >> Reason #2: As market sizes of multicultural consumers grow, so too does their annual buying power.**

With the growth in the numbers of multicultural consumers comes a growth in their overall impact to the economy. Therefore, brands who fail to focus on the unique needs of their multicultural consumers may lose their share of the (increasing) dollars these consumers spend.

The following table outlines the current buying power of some multicultural segments; please note that members of the LGBTQ+ community are also reflected in the ethnic groups (Asian, Black/AA, Hispanic).

Multicultural Segment	Current Annual Buying Power*
Asian	\$1.3 T
Black/AA	\$1.6 T
Hispanic	\$1.9T
LGBTQ+	≈\$1 T**

**03 >> Reason #3: Brands that embrace diversity have better outcomes.**

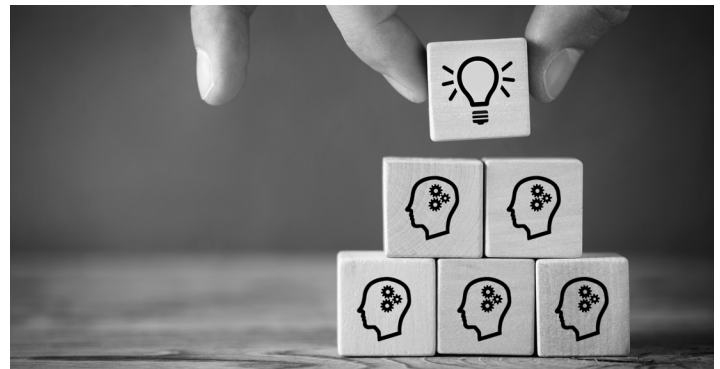
A 2019 [study](#) by Deloitte’s Digital Heat suggests that companies who invest in diverse and inclusive advertising enjoy greater gains both in their average stock prices (approximately 44% higher) and in reported consumer preference (around 83% higher) than brands without diverse advertising.

C+R has seen similar results with regard to consumer preference. We recently helped a retail client looking to make [inroads with the LGBTQ+ community through targeted advertising](#). Our client had created several concepts and wanted to know which resonated most with LGBTQ+ audiences. Using a three-phase, multi-method approach, we helped our client discover which ideas were viewed most favorably with this cohort. More broadly, we learned that LGBTQ+ individuals are highly interested in seeing LGBTQ+ representation in advertising, as long as it is a genuine attempt to support the community.

**Multicultural Market Research: Our Multi-phased Approach**

Once you have your internal team committed to understanding multicultural audiences, how do you best go about acquiring this knowledge? While C+R will help you create a customized approach that meets the needs of your unique business questions, the research trajectory tends to fall within three broad phases:

- Phase 1: Foundational Learning
- Phase 2: Conducting the Research
- Phase 3: Putting Insights into Action



**01 Phase 1: Foundational Learning**

If your insights and marketing teams don’t already have a deep understanding of, and empathy with, multicultural consumers, it’s important to start with foundational research prior to jumping into specific tactical projects. Two great ways to increase your team’s understanding of multicultural audiences are via C+R’s 101 Presentations and/or Cultural Immersion offerings.

Our 101 Presentations are cultural deep dives into various multicultural segments. Led by members of our CultureBeat team, they help your team learn about and get grounded in the culture of the consumer segment you will be researching, which can in turn help your team to better appreciate the research learnings. These level-setting presentations help embed foundational knowledge about cultural cohorts within marketing teams to more savvily define their strategy and research objectives, by bringing a baseline understanding of these groups.

\*Source: UGA Today. Consumer Buying Power is More Diverse than Ever; August 11,2021 (for Asian Black/AA and Hispanic)  
\*\*Source: Forbes. The \$1 Trillion Marketing Executives are Ignoring; August 14, 2018.

C+R currently offers 101 Presentations for Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latina/Latino, and LGBTQ+ audiences. Each presentation includes an overview of who the cohort is, key trends and cultural themes in the community, media usage, shopping habits and spending power. The presentations conclude with a Q&A session to ensure all of your team's questions are answered by C+R's experts. The presentations can also be customized to focus on areas of interest relevant to your industry.

One of our clients, [a greeting card company](#), recently began a multi-phase project with CultureBeat's Black/African American 101 presentation. C+R presented proprietary insights surrounding African American families, culture, rituals, and lifestyle culled from CultureBeat trends and our proprietary YouthBeat® data. This grounding into the unique culture of Black/African American consumers helped our client's team to better leverage the insights they received from the later phases of the research, which included remote in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus groups.

Another great tool to build cultural understanding and deep empathy for consumer groups is CultureBeat's Cultural Immersions. Through these immersions, our multicultural research practitioners lead client teams through a cultural exploration on site, touring neighborhoods as well as cultural, lifestyle and commercial hubs; exposing the client team to immersive sensorial and cultural experiences that elevate the realities of these cohorts, figuratively and literally aiming to 'walk a mile in their shoes'.

An ingredient company wanted to build an understanding of the cultural perspectives among Hispanics revolving around bread and pastries. The CultureBeat team created a Cultural Immersion plan to expose the client to the ins and outs of Hispanic bread and pastries consumption preferences and habits, including visits to local bakeries, pastry shops, food tours and consumer intercepts across three markets. The client emerged with a clear understanding of the importance of bread in Hispanic households.



## 02 Phase 2: Conducting the Research (Qualitative and/or Quantitative)

After your team has been grounded in your consumers' culture, it's time to conduct the research. CultureBeat will work with you to design the research that will not only answer your business questions, but also keep the unique experiences of multicultural consumers at the forefront throughout to ensure your team continues to build understanding and empathy.

### Qualitative Research.

No matter if the qualitative approach is online or "live," C+R has in-culture moderators, who are always happy to walk the client team through every step of the process, both culturally and methodologically, setting the stage for meaningful cultural insights. The goal is to build a deeper understanding around the audience and the topic so our clients can build impactful strategies and tactics grounded in empathy that will, in turn, resonate with the target audience.

With qualitative research, one powerful strategy we have found to help client teams build empathy is video journaling. Multicultural consumers record video of themselves speaking on any subject important to your research, including aspects of their culture, current challenges they face, their feelings about your and competitor brands, etc. These videos allow your team to hear first-hand stories of multicultural consumers in their own voices. Video journaling can be added as a component of any online qualitative community or as an additional activity held prior to, or after, a traditional focus group or one-on-one interview.

C+R recently employed this method to [help a media client learn more about their multicultural consumers](#). Immersed in a hyper-competitive industry, the client needed guidance on how to remain relevant to audiences of diverse backgrounds. To do so, they sought to look beyond ethnicity to a more culturally inclusive viewpoint, acknowledging gender identity, the LGBTQ+ community), and other characteristics that make consumers diverse. As part of an online community, we asked parent/child pairs who represented diverse backgrounds to keep a video journal and record their thoughts surrounding multiculturalism and their vision of authentic inclusion and representation in children's media. These video journals provided our client with a powerful tool to bring multicultural consumers' realities to life in a medium that made socialization and embedment through the organization salient and memorable.

**Quantitative Research.**

Just as with the General Population, multicultural populations are not homogeneous groups. In addition to the standard demographic or other breaks you might want to capture in Gen Pop research, we need to consider additional subsegments to analyze within multicultural populations. Quantitative research allows us to do that so that we can better understand how to market to these audiences. This may involve looking at different levels of acculturation, language, closeness to culture, region, etc.

However, recruiting multicultural consumers for survey research can be more difficult. Depending on the segment(s) of interest, sample is often not as readily available as with the Gen Pop, and hence more expensive. Therefore, it's important to have a clear understanding of any subsegments of interest prior to recruitment and set expectations for achieving minimum sample sizes. The screening process is also vitally important to ensure you're capturing your target consumers and segments, and not inadvertently disqualifying certain consumers because you're not asking the right questions/providing the right options.

This is exactly what we learned when [a large rural lifestyle retailer](#) sought to gain a better understanding of how Hispanic and African American customers perceived their brand, as well as to identify ways the brand could more effectively engage with and serve these customers and their communities.



**03 Phase 3: Putting Insights into Action**

After the data have been collected, consider adding an activation workshop to ensure your team benefits from the insights gleaned and uses them in culturally appropriate ways. C+R offers a variety of workshops led by our experts that will help your team continue to build empathy with multicultural consumers while also, for example, crafting positionings or building strategies that are culturally relevant and compelling to multicultural audiences.

A client in the alcoholic beverage space recently utilized a series of strategy workshops to develop ways to [better engage with Hispanic women consumers](#) across various acculturation groups. Using a combination of presentations and activities designed to inspire out-of-the-box thinking, C+R helped the client team to ideate around products, merchandizing, communications, and promotions. Throughout the sessions, our in-culture facilitators kept the client team focused on the consumer, including the strong commonalities and the unique differences between unacculturated and bicultural Hispanics. As a result of the workshop series, our client came away with actionable strategies based on research insights that they could employ immediately to win Hispanic women consumers to their brand, including plans for a series of product innovations and brand extensions.

**CONCLUSION**

Multicultural marketing is becoming more important for brands, due both to the increasing size and buying power of the Hispanic, Black/African American, Asian, and LGBTQ+ communities and due to the fact that “gen pop” is becoming more multicultural.

Doing multicultural marketing right might seem intimidating, but don't worry! C+R's CultureBeat experts will be with you every step of the way, providing a connection to each cultural group and helping you understand what makes them unique and how they navigate their day-to-day lives. With this nuanced knowledge, you'll be able to deliver relevant products, services, and messaging while authentically demonstrating the empathy needed to win these consumers to your brand.



Contact us at:  
[crrresearch.com](http://crrresearch.com)  
[info@crrresearch.com](mailto:info@crrresearch.com)  
 312.828.9200

[View more of our Multicultural Research Resources](#)



**JORGE MARTINEZ**  
 Vice President,  
 CultureBeat & LatinoEyes  
[jorgem@crrresearch.com](mailto:jorgem@crrresearch.com)



**ASHLEIGH WILLIAMS**  
 Senior Research Director,  
 CultureBeat  
[ashleighw@crrresearch.com](mailto:ashleighw@crrresearch.com)



**SHAILI BHATT**  
 Senior Research Director,  
 CultureBeat  
[shailib@crrresearch.com](mailto:shailib@crrresearch.com)