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Spanish market: undersold, undervalued

BUT ADVERTISERS ARE BECOMING MORE AND MORE AWARE OF ITS POTENTIAL

More than 450 years after the explorer, De Soto, advertising agencies in growing numbers are beginning to discover Spanish U.S.A.

The quest has been long, tedious and skeptical. But in the past few years Madison Avenue and the other advertising alleys in major U. S. cities have been discovering that the approximately 8.5 million Spanish-speaking Yanquis can be a loyal and responsive audience for a host of mass-consumed goods and services.

And advertisers have been discovering too that the spoken word, particularly on radio, can be a prime catalyst in helping to move more than \$8 billion of goods and services each year to households of Spanish Americans stretching from New York to Miami, San Antonio, Tex., Los Angeles and numerous other communities in the nation.

Now Emerging ■ With discovery, admittedly, has come no bonanza. But this market, which had been virtually and figuratively an "invisible America" to many advertisers and agencies a few years ago, is emerging from the shadows. And it is edging into the marketplace as a target for an expanding list of advertisers.

In 1966, for example, national, regional and local advertisers are expected

to invest an estimated \$11 million in Spanish radio and television here. This sounds, in the vernacular, poquito ("a little bit"), and it is. But it is approximately twice the amount that was funneled into these specialized broadcast media five short years ago. And the horizon appears brighter.

In the Hispanic media mix, radio is, of course, the leader by nature of the large number of stations programming to this audience. There are only a few TV stations in the U. S. with a dominant Spanish appeal. The most authoritative estimates are that \$8 million will be allocated to Spanish radio this year and in the neighborhood of \$3 million to TV.

New York is the number-one market, earmarked for approximately \$5 million in advertising expenditures, with radio garnering about \$4 million and TV, \$1 million. The runner-up, Los Angeles, is touted as a \$3 million broadcast sector, with \$1.5 million each allotted to TV and radio. San Antonio is tabbed a \$1.2 million market with television gaining \$500,000 and radio \$700,000. Spanish radio billing in Miami is placed in the neighborhood of \$300,000 and the remainder of the country is gauged at \$1.5 million. (These estimates were provided in talks with agencies, stations

and representatives involved with the Spanish media.)

It is obvious there are no easy shortcuts or get-rich-quick schemes to sell Spanish radio and television. It is a long and hard sell. But it is moving ahead.

Undersold ■ It is the conviction of many station operators and representatives that despite the advances made, the Spanish market is undersold, underbought and undervalued.

They recognize that they have been remiss in providing agencies and advertisers with desired qualitative and quantitative research information. But some station officials contend they are moving in as quickly as finances can permit to fill the "figures gap." They realize, too, that a reinforced sales, advertising and promotion effort is required to tell and retell their story.

But on the other side of the coin, media officials believe that many agencies, despite the heightened interest, still underbuy and undervalue the medium. They contend that except in isolated instances, advertisers regard Spanish TV and radio as media to be

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