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Hispanic PR

An Insider's Media Report for PR & Marketing Pros

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La Opinión Demands PR Respect Earned By 70 Years Publishing, 110,000 Circulation

After 20 years with *La Opinión*, Geraldo Lopez knows in a heartbeat "good" PR operators from "bad." He's open to the former and has little tolerance for the latter.

Those who fit the "good" label in the eyes of Lopez, ed. of the largest and oldest Spanish-language daily newspaper in the country, "try to think of journalists and the readers we're trying to reach. They offer practical, useful and timely information," he says, "usually are very creative in the ways they approach us, pitch us good story ideas we can use. They hardly bother you."

"Bad" PR practitioners, on the other hand, "just want us to run plain advertising," complains Lopez, 46, who has been editor a year and a half. "They bother the hell out of you. They have no imagination, no creativity. They just inundate us with a lot of trash."

The miscreants "confuse us" with something the 110,000-circ. broadsheet published 7 days a week isn't, he says. "We are a serious, professional publication and we want to be treated like any other large newspaper," certainly one befitting its size and reputation built in the years since its founding in Sept. 1926.

Audience for *La Opinión* is a mixture of mostly blue-collar readers of Mexican-American or Mexican

descent. Most sales are single-issue buys, primarily on newsstands. The paper focuses its coverage on the metro LA area, where its heaviest circ. is, but distribution also is made in Tijuana, Mexico, and in No. Calif., as well as other parts of the US.

The daily has 1-person news bureaus in Wash., DC, and Mexico City and operates with a lean home-office editorial staff in LA. The main news staff is not as large as Lopez would like because of the difficulty in recruiting people—"the right people. It's tough to get bilingual journalists," he says.

La Opinión has departments in sections familiar in most daily US newspapers. "Espectaculos" ("Entertainment") is edited by Antonio Mejias; Jaime Olivares is "Ciudad" ("Metro") section ed.; "Deportes" ("Sports") is edited by Fernando Paramo; Katia Ramirez heads the Thurs. "Comida" ("Food") section, and Cruz Alberto Mendez is editor for the Sun. and Wed. local community "Vida y Estilo" ("Life & Style") sections.

The paper runs a weekly business section on Tues. that is unlike similar sections in most dailies. It's geared mostly to small business operators, providing them "practical information," says Lopez, who joined the paper as a reporter, fresh out of Calif. State University, Northridge, where he majored in journalism. "Ciudad" includes some state and national news with the main local LA metro news. Lopez describes *La Opinión's* sports section as "very solid and widely

read." Travel—mostly on Calif., Mexico, Hawaii, Central America and occasionally South America—also is part of the "Vida y Estilo" Sun. section and also is edited by Mendez.

PR Contact: Go directly to the individual section editors, by regular mail or fax. Lopez doesn't want the paper's e-mail cluttered with press releases so won't publicize its electronic address. Otherwise, reach staffers at *La Opinión*, 411 West 5th St., Los Angeles 90013, phone (213) 896-2333; fax: (213) 896-2177.

Hispanic Magazine Is 'Always Looking For Ideas'

Hispanic Magazine, with a BPA-audited controlled circ. of 250,000, claims to be the fastest-growing monthly publication in English for Hispanics. The national, general-interest monthly's 4 subject focus areas are business, careers, politics and culture. Readership concentrations are a third in the Southwest, another third in Calif., most of the rest in the East and Midwest.

Its targeted audience is upwardly mobile, college-educated Hispanic professionals, "which includes everything from students and educators to corporate executives and entrepreneurs, as well as community leaders, members of Hispanic organizations and others interested in the Hispanic community," says ed./publisher Alfredo Estrada.

Havana-born Estrada, 37, now actively heads the family-owned Hispanic Publishing Corp. in Austin,



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Tex., as president. The company also publishes the recently launched *Moderna* (see next story) and *Vista* magazines. The flagship *Hispanic* was started in '88 by Estrada and his father, who no longer is involved in day-to-day operations.

"Typically, our audience tends to be second or third generation, fairly affluent, about 95% bilingual. They prefer to speak English, which is why the magazine is in English," says the younger Estrada, who came to the States with his family at age 2, earned his undergraduate degree from Harvard and graduated from the Univ. of Texas law school. He practiced law several years in NYC and Wash., DC, then joined the publishing operation full time.

PR Tips: "We're always looking for stories about Hispanic Americans, particularly success stories, role models, Hispanics within corporate America and Hispanics who are breaking barriers and glass ceilings," Estrada says. "We're always looking for new ideas."

Estrada is the primary contact; he'll traffic-cop press material to the appropriate editor or writer. Other key staffers are ME Melanie Cole, assoc. ed. Valerie Menard, and asst. ed. Alex Avila. *Hispanic Magazine* is "very visual," reminds Estrada, and is open to good graphic material. Art director is Alberto Insua.

Contact: Queries/info should be in writing, preferably faxed. Send to Alfredo Estrada, Editor, *Hispanic Magazine*, 99 San Jacinto Blvd., Ste. 1150, Austin, TX 78701, phone (512) 476-5599; fax (512) 320-1943; e-mail: editor@hisp.com. Check out the magazine and its sister publications on the Internet at www.hisp.com.

Moderna Makes Splashy Entry Into Latina Magazine Market

The claim has been that the Hispanic women's market has long been ignored by "mainstream" publications but what's billed as the fastest-growing segment of the US population is being well-served by a flurry of new magazines joining older publications that have Hispanic women in their promotional bull's eye.

One of the newest of this gender genre is *Moderna* (subtitled, "the latina magazine"), a biannual that debuted with a March preview issue to test the waters before publishing the 80-page "premier" Nov./Dec. '96 edition due in the mail and on newsstands the first week in Nov.

The goal is to boost the frequency to quarterly in '97, go to bimonthly the following year and shift to monthly publication in '99. "That's the game plan, anyway," says Christine Granados, 27-year-old ed. Preview edition test-market distribution in Miami, San Antonio and NYC sold out on newsstands, she says.

National circ. is put at 150,000. Content of the *Hispanic Magazine* and *Vista* magazine stablemate is tailored for college educated, upwardly mobile, bilingual Latinas, 18-44, who are entering the work force and starting families. Editorial mix includes the usual menu of fashion, beauty, health and fitness, relationships, parenting, food/recipes, travel, film and book reviews and profiles of Hispanic achievers and celebrities.

Coverage focus is on what mainstream publications overlook. Most direct head-to-head competitor is *Latina*, launched last May (profiled in the Aug. 20 *On the Mark With*

Hispanic PR). A promo blurb says *Moderna* "will be the medium which enables Latinas to see themselves as they truly are—successful, fashionable and beautiful."

Editorial copy is in English, save a fourth of *Moderna's* articles that are in Spanish and translated into English at the back of the book.

Mary Batts Estrada (wife of publisher Alfredo Estrada) is exec ed., fashion ed. is Gisela Torres-Barr, Nayda Rondon is beauty ed. and Valerie Menard, who's also assoc. ed. at *Hispanic Magazine*, is sr. ed.

PR Cue: E-mail contact is best. "We're looking for products made by Latinos, geared to Latinos, about Latinos," says Granados, a Mexican-American journalism graduate of the Univ. of Texas, El Paso. Among those sought are books, beauty, hair, recipe, CD, computer products. The magazine runs a calendar of events important to Latinas; listings go to Granados, who is a writing editor.

Moderna departments and sections include travel, food, cars, cosmetics, health, business/finance and features. Contributing editors do most of the writing. Color slides/photos are helpful. "We also like personality profiles on Latinas—celebrities and other well-known women, politicians, entrepreneurs," says Granados, who previously worked as a reporter for the *Austin American-Statesman*, Long Beach (Calif.) *Press-Telegram* and the *El Paso Times*.

Contact: Christine Granados, Editor, *Moderna*, 98 San Jacinto Blvd., Ste. 1150, Austin, TX 78701, phone (512) 476-5599; fax: (512) 320-1942; e-mail: moderna@hisp.com; Internet: www.hisp.com/moderna.

Got a publication, broadcast outlet or editor you'd like to learn more about how to interact with? Any "tough-hit" media with which you can't connect? Let *On the Mark With Hispanic PR* know and we'll get and publish the answers. Contact Art Garcia, Editor, phone (415) 421-6220; fax (415) 421-6225; e-mail: agarcia@aol.com.

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Tuesday, November 12, 1996
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Professional Telephone Skills & Techniques
Wednesday, November 20, 1996
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

I.S.D.N. Connections
Good or Bad, How & Why
Thursday, November 21, 1996
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

December 1996

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Wednesday, December 4, 1996
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Introduction to Computers
Thursday, December 5, 1996
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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