

Brands in Latin America are striving for more diversity in their advertising

Article

Latin America is a region of many paradoxes. It is home to one of the world's most racially diverse populations, yet many groups remain underrepresented or

stereotypically portrayed in the advertising there.

The population comprises of immigrants from Europe, Asia-Pacific, and the Middle East, as well as indigenous Amerindian populations and African groups descended from slaves. It is also one of the most unequal regions in the world in terms of wealth and income, according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), a United Nations regional commission to encourage economic cooperation.

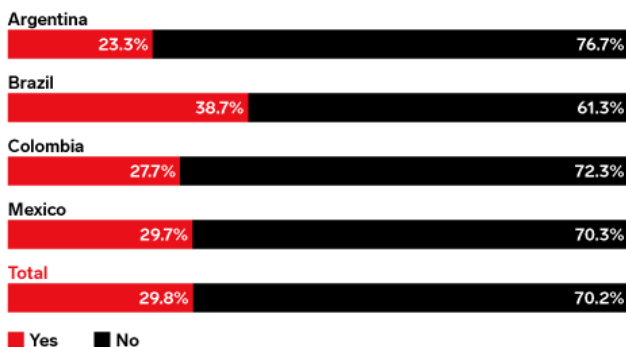
Despite Latin America breaking from its colonial past with Spain and Portugal roughly 200 years ago, its advertising industry is still troubled by a notable lack of diversity and representation.

“While brands have made a concerted effort to increase their representation of various racial and ethnic backgrounds and to break away from the traditional portrayal of gender roles in marketing materials, a large percentage of consumers still do not feel represented in advertising,” said Matteo Ceurvels, eMarketer director of Latin America research at Insider Intelligence, and author of our recent report [“Analyst Take: How Brands in Latin America Are Addressing Diversity and Representation in Advertising.”](#)

About seven in 10 (70.2%) adult internet users in Latin America said they did not feel represented in the majority of digital video ads they saw, according to a March 2021 survey conducted by EMI Research Solutions for Penthera.

Internet Users in Latin America Who Feel Represented in the Majority of Digital Video Ads They See*, by Country, March 2021

% of respondents in each group



Note: n=1,200 ages 18-50; *while streaming digital video content
Source: Penthera, "Latin America Video Streaming Behavior Survey: Q1 2021" conducted by EMI Research Solutions, March 25, 2021

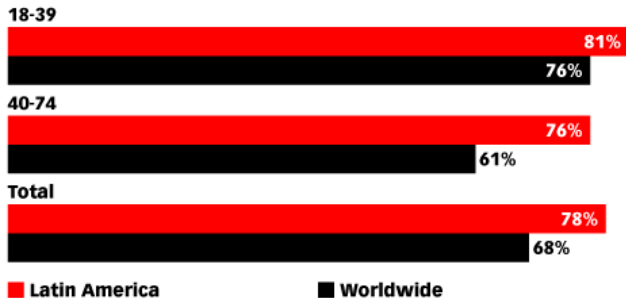
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As consumers in Latin America become more attuned to brand purpose and messaging, it is increasingly important that companies accurately portray the local communities they target—while also fully embracing diversity in their marketing campaigns. This was a belief shared by more than three-quarters (78%) of internet users in Latin America ages 18 to 74 surveyed in July 2019 by YouGov for Getty Images.

Internet Users in Latin America vs. Worldwide Who Believe It Is Important that Companies* Celebrate Diversity of All Kinds, by Age, July 2019

% of respondents in each group



Note: *from which they make purchases

Source: Getty Images, "Visual GPS" conducted by YouGov, Aug 17, 2020

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Latin American ecommerce giant Mercado Libre is one example of a regional company that has embraced diversity in its marketing materials. The company’s July 2020 video ad, titled “Libre de ser quien soy” (or “Free to Be Who I Am” in English), reflected on how its diverse employees are empowered to bring their whole selves to work to drive innovation at the company.

In an official **statement**, Mercado Libre said, “We continue to promote equal opportunities because we believe that diversity is the foundation of innovation [for our users], and that differences both enrich and drive growth.”

Brazilian flip-flop and sandal company Havaianas has also taken steps to address diversity and inclusion in its ad content. With its summer 2020 campaign titled #DiasMaisColoridos (#MoreColorfulDays), the company set out to showcase Brazil’s vibrant and diverse culture, while leveraging color to celebrate the product’s positive energy. A 1-minute video ad demonstrated how the sandals were present in the happy moments of people’s lives: dancing samba, playing with friends on the beach, or enjoying a quiet afternoon out at sea.

In an **interview** with Brazilian news outlet Propmark, creative director Henrique Del Lama said, “The campaign seeks good feelings and all the positive energy associated with each color—an element that is very present throughout the [video]. For example, orange is joy, red is passion, black is strength, yellow is optimism, lilac is wisdom, and white is peace.”

The campaign also partnered with Young, Gifted, and Black (YGB), an image bank that offers photos taken by Black women, of Black women. YGB provided pictures of six women to be part of the campaign’s out-of-home (OOH) and social media elements.

In the same Propmark interview, YGB founder Joana Mendes said, “Doing this job for Havaianas was very important [to us] since we were able to showcase [Black] women in different positions than people are used to seeing—both in front of and behind the camera.”

For more on how brands in Latin America are striving to be more inclusive, especially of historically underrepresented or stereotypically portrayed groups, Insider Intelligence subscribers can read our recent report:

Report by Matteo Ceurvels May 06, 2021

Analyst Take: How Brands in Latin America Are Addressing Diversity and Representation in Advertising

