

The Art of Stereotypes

I want everybody to picture a Chinese marketing manager. He's overseeing the entry of authentic pre-made dumplings to Australia. His target market are suburban "true blue" Australians who like a bit of oriental cuisine, but find going to the crowded stores in Chinatown to hunt through suspicious products in foreign languages rather intimidating.

"Well first of all I know Australians like Green and Gold" he says to his copywriter, "make all the ads green and gold". "We'll plaster the adverts all over the Cricket and NRL matches!" he loudly declared to no one in particular. "Better yet, can we get one of the sporting stars to endorse our dumplings?"

"Australians may not be used to chives and dried shrimp, we should also create a range of flavours for them" he said on the phone to R&D. "And I want to really speak our consumers' language, we should never fail to refer to our consumers as 'mate'".

"...on second thoughts, Australians like blue even more I think, make some adverts blue". Six weeks later, 'Shane Warne's Bangers and Mash Dumplings' ("full of fair dinkum flavour") is ready for launch. Seems farcical right? Yet we often do this in ethnic advertising. We assume that cultural traits apply to everyone within the culture, and this quickly becomes patronising, if not extremely superficial.

Lahle Wolfe writes in *Women in Business*: "You cannot peg individuals into mass impersonal groups based on stereotypes" and "the more you see and treat customers like individuals, the more loyal they'll be to your business".

What applies to gender stereotypes applies to cultural stereotypes as well. Gary Nelson, creative director at Organic, a US multicultural ad agency, described his frustration with seeing a tyre store advert where a black woman danced incessantly to hip hop. Media is rife with such adverts, from huge Hispanic family gatherings to a black woman shaking her booty in the office.

Sure, the (very clichéd) relevance to the ethnicity is achieved, but where is the relevance to the product?

"As a Black man in the advertising industry, I find myself struggling with the ethnic marketing question." Nelson said "most consumer needs (both retail and beyond) are cross-cultural... such campaigns don't have to revolve around tired clichés and lowest-common denominator stereotypes."

Indeed, such stereotypes are not only ineffective, but can be patronising or insulting. They also assume incorrectly that consumers are incapable of empathising with people of a different ethnicity. The sooner we gain a holistic understanding of ethnic minorities as individuals, with both differences and similarities to so called mainstream audiences, the sooner we better communicate to ethnic communities, and the sooner black women can stop needlessly dancing to sell tyres.



From the Editor's Desk



Last week a very dear friend bounced back into my life. For a long time she was out of action, appearing at intervals rather apologetically, rather timidly.

Some people said that she was a failure, they attributed numerous faults to her. But I remembered her as a hardworking, sincere and a compassionate soul. She was enlightening and irrevocably enriched our society. I am referring to my dear friend – Multiculturalism.

The federal government has recently reaffirmed its support to multiculturalism and lauded the success of Australia's unique model of multiculturalism in a key note speech delivered by the Minister for Immigration, Chris Bowen. This speech was accompanied by a host of policy changes regarding multiculturalism. I had the opportunity of interacting with the minister on this issue and was heartened to hear his description of Multicultural Australia as one of an 'integration model rather than a melting pot'. Integration respects each culture without demanding unequivocal assimilation into one main culture.

To me, the implications of this are two fold: one, that multiculturalism will continue to play an increasingly important role in Australia, and this importance extends to the business world, and two, that there are stated benefits of a multicultural society, not just intangible benefits of compassion, tolerance and diversity, but very real economic benefits conferred upon all of society. Multiculturalism: is certainly good for our social fabric and even better for our wallet.

Sheba Nandkolyar

multi- BUZZ

In the Defence of M

by Hansen Ding

In recent years, Multiculturalism has been maligned by opponents to the point that even political supporters often avoid the issue due to it's controversy. Politicians skirt around it so much one would think it was a shameful word. The modern debates which revolve often around issues of asylum seekers, boat people and integration of Muslim communities have threatened to derail one of the fundamental arguments in support of multiculturalism: the economics.

Australia has an aging population. This leads to decreased GDP per capita, decreased tax revenues, increased strains on pension welfare, decreased labour market supply, which all leads to making us less competitive in the global marketplace. It's simple maths: over 50% of migrants are aged 15-34, compared to just 28% of Australians; 2% of migrants are over 65, compared to 13% of Australians.

Creedy and Alvarado in their book "Population Ageing, Migration and Social Expenditure", projected that by 2031, if net migration was 170,000 per year, the proportion of over 65's would fall by 3.1%. An added benefit is that most migrants come after completing tertiary and professional education and are ready to work, lessening the cost and burden on public education too.

There has always been a fear that increased migration would lead to working and middle class Australians losing their jobs. Such a fear is understandable but unwarranted. Ross Gittins, chief economics columnist at Fairfax Media, counters that migrants consume and generate jobs as much as they take them. Truly, there has been no study which found higher unemployment linked to migration. Rather, migration is found to have generally decreased unemployment as shown by Addison and Worswick in

"The impact of immigration on the earnings of natives: Evidence from Australian micro data"; furthermore, there is also no evidence that migration decreases the average wages of Australians.

Then there are the intangible economic benefits of a diverse migration program. Most of Australia's immigration comprises of skilled migrants who are largely



Did You Know?

One of Australia's most well known business-men was actually part Chinese. In 1903, Leslie Joseph Tingyou was born to a Chinese father and an Australian mother. He changed his last name to Hooker, and thus was born one of Australia's largest real estate agencies – LJ Hooker!



educated and earn an above average income. These people are likely to form businesses or to travel back and forth between their home country forging links in trade and foreign investment. This in effect diversifies our national business and insulates us against many marketplace shocks.

Joseph Assaf, founder of Multiculturalism in Australia and Chairman of the Ethnic Business Awards, said that migrants allow for "huge export opportunities with their countries of origin through international business networks" as well as being "a shot in the arm which immunises us against economic schisms. Migrants are also great brand ambassadors for Australia!"

And these are the factors we begin to forget; that we've had an intensive migrant program all throughout history precisely for economic benefits.

Past and present Prime Ministers, whether Labor or Liberal, understand this. Ben Chifley implemented vast post war European migration, Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser ended White Australia, John Howard presided over one of the largest migration booms in Australian history, each time there was strong opposition, but each time Australia has grown and prospered. In the last month, both Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott have reaffirmed their support of multiculturalism; the Government has also implemented a sweeping ten point strategy to ensure the further success of multiculturalism. The future of a diverse Australia, propelled to prosperity by migration, has never looked brighter.

Multiculturalism: it's good for our soul and good for our wallets too.



From Holi to Halloween

by Priya Rao



It's 11:30 am. You are walking past Sydney's iconic Darling Harbour as your iPod croons M.J.'s 'Black or white'. You suddenly see a whole lot of people coated in colour from head to toe playfully spurring water on each other. As you revel in this moment of contradiction, you realise the synchronicity of Australia and India during the month of March.

On one side there is a vivid and beautiful autumn bloom of Orange- the Color City of Australia. On the other side in India, it is the spring time festival of colours- Holi.

Holi celebrations include lighting of bon fires to signify the death of the demon and throwing colours at each other in a playful spirit. In countries like South Africa, Trinidad, United Kingdom, United States, Mauritius, and Fiji, March is also the time for advertisers and marketers to put their thinking caps on to maximise on the buying power of their large Indian diaspora. The Citibank NRI ad last year targeted the Indian audience in America with the line 'Holi to Halloween and Lassi to Latte'.

Metlife, a leading global insurance provider also punched in some colour with a campaign featuring six T.V commercials showing profound cultural occasions in a South-Asian American's life.

The angle was quite simple, it is important to pass on cultural values and traditions to future generations, as it is important to pass on a secure financial future to your next generation. Metlife realised this in their marketing messages "With you in your life".



When it comes to reaching the multicultural audiences, culturally relevant ads are an excellent avenue, however experiential marketing and community event sponsorships are other forms of direct marketing reaching the audience, when they are most receptive to such messages.

Photo by Aundray Cheam



Meet "The Sanchuation"

Sanchay Mohan
Multicall's Account Executive

So Sanchay, how do you earn a scrap at Multicall?

I'm currently an Account Executive after being an intern here in this agency during my university days about 2 years ago. After working in the advertising industry as an intern, I picked up and learnt fast on how to work and fit into the agency work style.

It is all about today, no yesterday's laurels to rest on! I like working in this industry and see myself in it for a while.

How does the Indian community here celebrate Holi?

Being from an Indian background this is one of our bigger festivals. It's a colourful festival where people gather and throw colour at each other, as weird as that sounds. Its gets everyone together and everyone is happy, people wish each other "Happy Holi". I celebrate Holi at a big festival here in Sydney where most off the community meet up and celebrate Holi by throwing colour at each other and celebrate life! The festival takes place in Darling Harbour every year.

Aside from Holi, are there other key celebrations for the subcontinent diaspora in Australia?

Diwali "festival of lights" is another massive festival where Indians gather in large numbers. Traditionally it is almost as big as the "Chinese New Year" we all get on the streets and light fireworks all night. Here in Sydney we celebrate but without all the fireworks. None the less we have a lot of fun! Also a great time for receiving presents and buying large ticket items.

Mr. Sanchuation, please explain the appeal of Jersey Shore, because it completely eludes this interviewer?

Haha.. Well as you know the main character in Jersey Shore is "The Situation" my friends gave me the name "Sanchuation". I'm always at the Gym or at the beach or getting ready to head out to the town with my fresh haircut and clothes. Let's just say I have been doing the "GTL" long before the show that's why when it did all my friends gave a twist on "The Situation". Although the show takes everything to the next level regardless I think it's an entertaining show. Its one of my favourites at the moment.

And, for the benefit of everybody who hears Indian cuisine and thinks butter chicken lunch deal at the food court, where is the best Indian place to eat in Sydney?

If you eat REAL Indian food, you will know there is no such thing as "butter chicken". If you go to India and ask them for that they will probably have no idea what you are talking about. Best place to eat Indian..? Like any real ethnic will tell you, at home cooked by your mother or grandmother nothing will ever beat it. And the next best thing is to get yourself invited by an Indian friend to his home for a meal!

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