

# **Branding Hispanic On-line Personality Assessments**

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April, 2006

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## 1) Market Demand

Hispanic youth have higher risks of developing behavioral disorders than non-Hispanic youths. The duality of living in both American and Hispanic culture affects this group, sometimes in negative ways. As an example of the type of negative experiences they face, in a recent focus group, Hispanic mothers described situations where Hispanic children had been diagnosed as having behavior disorders due to their outgoing/energetic personalities. However, being constantly active is a positive healthy indicator in Hispanic culture. This discrepancy exemplifies the obstacles and, sometimes, emotional traumas that young Hispanics faces when adjusting to U.S. culture. These negative experiences can have an impact on children and can lead to further consequences such as academic failure, dropping out of school, low self-esteem, poor social skills, and even more serious emotional problems, such as depression. However, at early stages, simple preventive actions focusing on improving skills such as self-control, emotional awareness, communication, social problem solving and academic support can be effective.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, Uniquely You personality assessments can be helpful to the Hispanic Youth community. Mels Carbonell, PhD in Human Behavior Science and founder of Uniquely You believes that

by knowing what your specific and/or other's personalities are, you can respond to life's challenges more wisely. To help different people, Uniquely You has numerous scientific personality assessments focusing on several different areas of life. For example, you may want to complete a profile on yourself as a parent or stepparent, or on your elementary age child. You can then see how your and your child's personalities relate, and how to improve your parenting skills.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the insights revealed by the personality assessments can help young Hispanics better understand the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and, consequently, improve their self-confidence and social skills.

## 2) Marketing Problem

Although Uniquely You has been successful and grows at a rapid rate, there are some obstacles that the company faces when targeting Hispanics:

### 2.1) On-line competition

Some of the important competitors are:

- Institute for Motivational Living: has a set of products (such as personal profile assessments and books) prepared to target young children (7 to 12) and teenagers (13 to 17). However, their goal is to guide students regarding enhancing learning experience and further choosing a career path.
- InScape: provides personality professional assessments. InScape focuses on developing leadership, teamwork and listening skills. Although it has a different focus, InScape is one of the best-known

websites for personality assessments, and they use the same technology to assess personality (DISC), as does Uniquely You.<sup>3</sup>

- E-harmony – Although E-harmony uses different technique and target couples, in a recent interview, Hispanics thought of E-harmony services as being comparable to Uniquely You.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it is necessary to clarify and emphasize the difference between the two of them.

## 2.2) Marketing Saturation and Little Reliability

Besides the main competitors, there are numerous companies that offer personality assessment on-line, which make it difficult to gain market share. Moreover, many of the on-line services available are not reliable. Therefore, it is a challenge to establish credibility since the personality assessments market has many unreliable companies.<sup>5</sup>

## 2.3) Lack of Knowledge about Personality Assessments

In a recent focus group, Hispanic parents demonstrated the need for better education regarding preventive mental health action. In addition to this issue, most non-Hispanics are unfamiliar with terminologies such as Behavioral Social Sciences and personality profile assessments, and for Hispanics, those concepts are almost completely unknown. Therefore, Uniquely You must educate the Hispanic population regarding its services: its purpose, what it does, who is it for, what are the benefits, etc.

## **3) Uniquely You Marketing Objectives**

Uniquely You has the desire to become a leading Personality Assessment Company to the Hispanic community. Uniquely You's goals are:

- Establish Uniquely You brand among Hispanic Community by increasing awareness by 50%.
- Increase market share by 25%
- Throughout the marketing campaign, increase their on-line business by 20%.
- Increase the on-line traffic at Uniquely You website by 20%.

## **4) Target segment and its justification**

To achieve this goal, Uniquely You should target specific segments of Hispanics.

### 4.1) Primary Target: Hispanic Mothers

Among Hispanics, there is a shared set of beliefs and values that encourage parents to provide their children with things they couldn't have when they were young. To give to their children what they did not have growing up is rewarding and compensates for a past of poverty.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, this cultural behavior can be an opportunity to offer products that improve the lives of Hispanic children.

Moreover, in Hispanic families, mothers hold the primary responsibility of keeping their children happy and healthy. Hispanic mothers always think of their children first; therefore, all their efforts go to make their children better, happier, healthier. Despite this sacrifice of providing for their children's happiness, Hispanic mothers find their personal efforts to be rewarding: "Mothers find reconfirmation of their identity as their children love the things they provide for them".<sup>7</sup> Therefore, Hispanic Mothers, with kids in the household, are the primary target for Uniquely You services.

#### 4.2) Secondary: Hispanic Children/Teenagers

Of all members in Hispanic households, children are usually the bridge between Hispanic and American culture. Children are often the educators in their homes, bringing trends home such as what is new in the electronic world. For example, Hispanic parents usually listen to their children's advices when purchasing computers, DVDs, mp3, etc. Moreover, Hispanic parents willingness to provide things for their kids to compensate for a past of poverty, gives the children an important place in the final decision of what to purchase. Furthermore, another important reason for Uniquely You to target Hispanic children is because they are the segment that will benefit the most from Uniquely You services. Therefore, Hispanic children and teenagers (10 – 18 years old) are Uniquely You's secondary target.

### **5) Positioning and consumer insights**

Uniquely You wants to become the number one personality assessment to the Hispanic community by providing an experience that will be positive and life-changing. To do so, Uniquely You plans to humanize its on-line services by creating a close relationship with its target and going beyond the traditional consumer-company relationship style. Uniquely You ultimately wants to be seen as a company that cares for its customers and wants to become a "Hispanic" traditional brand where customers will recommend its services to others.

To accomplish these goals, traditional door-to-door marketing is the most effective. Hispanics respond best to this type of marketing because face-to-face contact allows Hispanics to ask questions, discuss ideas and establish relationships, creating a personal connection to the brand. This was also confirmed during the interview with Hispanic mothers where they said that a face-to-face conversation would make them more secure about the effectiveness, benefits and accuracy of Uniquely You services. This is the most effective way to create brand loyalty and emotional bond between Uniquely You and the Hispanic community.

While the traditional door-to-door approach is an important strategy, on-line marketing efforts must happen simultaneously. Like never before, Hispanics are relying on the web as a major source of information about brands, services and entertainment. According to the website iMediaConnection, Hispanics turn to the Internet as a medium of self-improvement and as a means of making a better life for their kids. Furthermore, Hispanics say they would spend even more time online if they were given information that is relevant to their community. They, for

example, still search for more information about finance and health improvement<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, Uniquely you can expand their Internet use to advertise Uniquely You products and services to this segment and to customize on-line communication with Hispanics by providing relevant information that meets their needs.

Nonetheless, appropriate language is fundamental when designing a marketing message to Hispanics. An effective message must be created in a Hispanic context, and the language chosen is an essential part. However, when it comes to the best language to communicate with Hispanics, there is some controversy. For example, the Hispanic youth population has indicated that a campaign does not need to be necessarily in Spanish, as long it has Hispanic content.<sup>9</sup> Other studies, though, such as the one developed by iMediaConnection shows that most on-line Hispanics prefer content in Spanish.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, in the interview, Hispanics said that either Spanish or English would be effective when asked about their language preferences. Therefore, the best way of catering to their language needs and not making mistakes is by creating a bilingual campaign where the content would be available in both languages (Spanish and English). This would maximize the visibility, giving the option to the viewer to choose the language.

## **6) Strategies**

### **6.1) On-line marketing**

The Internet has a major influence on Hispanic consumer behavior. In 2004, Synovate estimated that there were 4.5 million Hispanic households with Internet access at home.<sup>11</sup> A recent survey states that by now, around 16 million Hispanics are "in linea", with projections of growing 33% a year in the next 5 years.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, AOL found that over 40% consider the Internet advertising informative and over 61% consider Internet a major source of information. Hispanics are also more likely to visit chat rooms and online message boards, use instant messenger, send pictures of family, do more downloads and listen to music and see videos than the general population.<sup>13</sup> Since Uniquely You services are available online, the recommendations to reach Hispanics are:

- **Advertisement at Hispanic Websites**

Over 45% of the Hispanics in the US use AOL as their Internet service provider, which makes AOL the number one Hispanic website. At the "Tu vida" section, AOL Latino provides tips on lifestyle, personal relation, and in sub channels it offers help on subjects such as education and kids. One possible way of reaching Hispanics for Uniquely You would be to place banners at the home page of AOL Latino with web links to its main site. Another possibility could be sponsoring a lifestyle section on the website, such as "Tu vida".

- **Partnership with schools websites**

A partnership with primary and secondary school websites could also be a good option. In this case, a banner could be placed at the home page of the school where students could log on and take the profile assessment.

Cities with high concentration of Hispanics, such as Miami, Los Angeles, Dallas and New York, are the recommended places to start.

- On-line viral marketing communication (Networking marketing)

The fact that Hispanics are active on-line creates an opportunity to interact with this segment through viral marketing, a phenomenon that facilitates and encourages people to pass along a marketing message.<sup>14</sup> One idea would have Uniquely You develop a sample of personality assessments where users could get brief results, and send the links to their friends (or email the samples to others to take the assessment). At this time, a sign up would be required, where users also could sign up to receive more information about the subject through a newsletter.

- Newsletter

Once the viral marketing starts to build a potential clientele email list, Uniquely you could keep in touch with these potential customers, by sending periodic newsletters with promotions and articles regarding improving lifestyle, communication and relationships.

## 6.2 – Word of mouth Strategy

Word of mouth marketing is probably one of the oldest ways of marketing and still one of the most effective among Hispanics. According to Felipe Korzenny, for Hispanics “the recommendations of others who are trustworthy are greatly valued and accepted. That is why neighbors and friends open their doors and their wallets to others they trust. As a result, there are multiple examples of network marketing that have succeeded in the Hispanic market.”<sup>15</sup> In this context, Uniquely You could have an enormous advantage over other on-line competitions by creating this type of personal relationship with this segment. The recommendations are:

- Workshops to the Hispanic Community

Primary and secondary schools are probably the social organizations where we will most likely find both targets together: mothers and students. In addition, in many public schools the majority of students are Hispanics. Cities with high concentration of Hispanics, such as Miami, Los Angeles, Dallas and New York, are the recommended places to start.

The job of Uniquely You would be, at first, to introduce its services to the school board and explain the benefits. This can be a double opportunity: the school can embrace Uniquely You services as a school project and invest its own budget into it, or the school can become directly involved by allowing Uniquely You to speak with the mothers and students of the selected school.

Uniquely You has bilingual trainers (Spanish and English) who are properly qualified to speak about the importance of understanding the dynamics of human interpersonal relations. These training seminars could be held at different places and at different times to accommodate all schedules. Also, mothers and students could attend the seminars. The goal of the seminars would be to create a relationship with the audience,

to explain the services and have all the answers from the audience answered. Once the relationship is established, Uniquely You products would be offered. The audience can do the profile assessment electronically or take the paper-based product. As a next step, after student's or/and mothers take the personality profile assessments, Uniquely You could offer an extra seminar to help the audience interpret the results. A different way of working the door-to-door strategy would be to have Uniquely You working with students and mothers of students who have a history of problems at school or have Uniquely You conducting in-housing meetings. These meeting can be held in a regular home, where neighbors, family members and friends can be invited.

Other media such as TV and radio could be used effectively, but due to budget constrains, those types of media aren't recommended at this stage.

## **7 – Evaluation of Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of this campaign can be verified by the following ways:

### 7.1) On-line Strategy:

- The number of people included in the mailing list to receive a newsletter could be a measurement of how many people the viral marketing impacted and who expressed interest in the topic.
- The return of advertising/sponsoring the AOL website can be evaluated by the number of page views and click throughs. Also, the effectiveness can be determined by the time people spend at the Uniquely You website. The increase in daily personality assessments sales can be another way of evaluating the effectiveness.

### 7.2) Word of mouth Strategy:

- The attendance at the seminars and training sessions and the numbers of personality profile assessments sold are the best way of verifying the campaign success.

## **8 – Conclusion**

Uniquely You personality profile assessments have grown at a rapid rate, and as part of its expansion plan, Uniquely You intends to become the number one online personality assessments provider for the Hispanic community. Hispanic children and teenagers reportedly have more interpersonal communication difficulties than non-Hispanic peers, which lead to more complex emotional problems, such as low self-esteem, and even failure in school. Uniquely You's goal is to help Hispanics to overcome those problems through an assessment that will provide knowledge about their own personalities and the personalities of others. The understanding of the uniqueness of every individual will boost the child's confidence to respond positively to every-day life situations/challenges.

To accomplish its goal, Uniquely You will be required to invest in a variety of marketing strategies. The campaign is based on two primary strategies: 1) Online strategy and 2) Word-of-mouth strategy. In both cases,

the main goal of Uniquely You is to establish a relationship and to get to know Hispanics better to customize its services for Hispanic needs. The return of the investments in this marketing campaign must be seen in the number of subscriptions to the online newsletter and the number of personality profile assessments sold. The campaign has great potential to succeed with Hispanics. However, creating an approach that caters to the needs of Hispanic is essential. A vital element then is to make sure that the marketing campaign is provided in both languages and to make sure the marketing campaign complies with Hispanic values.



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<sup>1</sup> Conduct problems prevention research group 2002, Ialongo et al. 2001

<sup>2</sup> Uniquely You. Retrieved on April 2006 from website [www.uniquelyyou.com](http://www.uniquelyyou.com).

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<sup>3</sup> The DISC Model of Human Behavior describes the four basic temperament types: **D** type: dominant, decisive; **I** type: interactive, inspiring; **S** type: specialist, stable; **C** type: cautious, calculating

<sup>4</sup> The interview consists of insights produced by a casual meeting with 4 different Hispanic mothers and students. The purpose of the informal interview was to find out what would make Uniquely You services successful among the Hispanic community.

<sup>5</sup> In a Google search for "personality assessment online", over 500 different companies were shown, with eight company-sponsored links. Some of the companies were assessa.com, tickle.com, personality100.com, personalitytestdirectory.com, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Korzenny, Felipe and Korzenny, Betty Ann. Hispanic Marketing: A Cultural Perspective. El Sevier Butterworth Heinemann: Miami, 2005 (p. 7).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 187

<sup>8</sup> Lopez, Mark. Reaching Hispanics Online. September 2005. Retrieved on April, 2006 from website [www.imediaconnection.com](http://www.imediaconnection.com)

<sup>9</sup> Williamson, Debra A. Reaching Hispanic Internet Users. April 21, 2006. Retrieved on April, 2006 from the website: [ww.imediaconnection.com](http://ww.imediaconnection.com)

<sup>10</sup> Lopez, Mark. Reaching Hispanics Online. September 2005. Retrieved on April, 2006 from website [www.imediaconnection.com](http://www.imediaconnection.com)

<sup>11</sup> 2004 Synovate U.S. Hispanic Market Report

<sup>12</sup> Williamson, Debra A. Reaching Hispanic Internet Users. April 21, 2006. Retrieved on April, 2006 from the website: [ww.imediaconnection.com](http://ww.imediaconnection.com)

<sup>13</sup> AOL Latino. Hoja de datos demograficos de los Hispanos en Los Estados Unidos. Retrieved on April, 2006 from website <http://www.aolepk.com/latino/spanish/datos.html>

<sup>14</sup>Marketing Dictionary. Retrieved on April, 2006 from website [www.Marketingterms.com](http://www.Marketingterms.com)

<sup>15</sup> Korzenny, Felipe. Key to reaching Hispanics: Word-of-Mouth, Door-to-Door, and Network Marketing. February 2003: Minorities in Business Magazine. Retrieved on April, 2006 from the website [www.cheskin.com](http://www.cheskin.com)