

The evolution of the U.S. Hispanic construction market

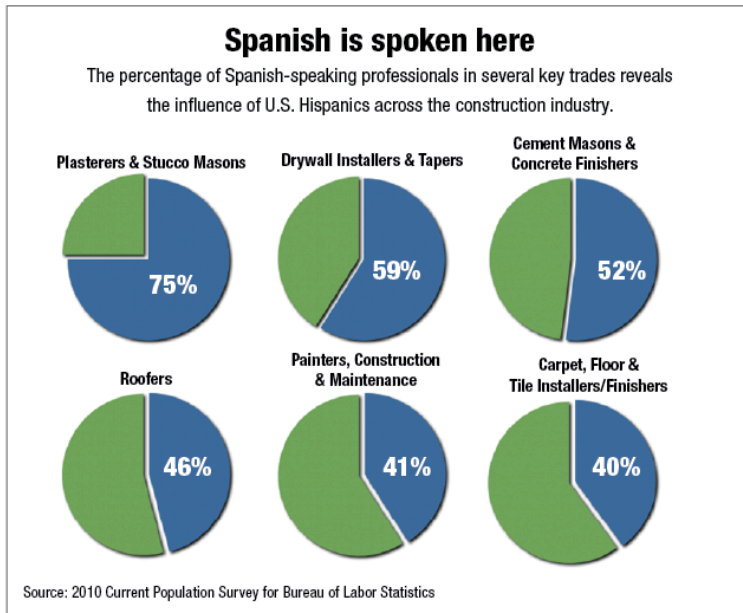
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OCTOBER 18, 2013 | BY [KEVIN KILPATRICK](#)

For many years, the U.S. Hispanic construction market was considered “nice to have” but reaching this segment had little or no impact on the marketing budgets of retailers and manufacturers.

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However, with the dramatic growth rates, documented industry penetration and impressive purchasing power of that segment in recent years, the U.S. Hispanic construction market has gained serious attention in marketing budgets and is now a legitimate discussion in the C-suites when considering how to achieve positive change in the bottom line.



Growth of the market

The U.S. Hispanic worker accounts for a large percentage of the construction and building maintenance occupations. In fact, more U.S. Hispanic men work in construction and building maintenance than any other field (Simmons Spring 2011).

In addition, the growth rate of the Hispanic construction and building maintenance workforce is increasing rapidly, even as the total construction workforce is declining (2000 – 2010 Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor). With projections on a linear trend, we forecast that by 2025, 43% of the entire U.S. construction workforce will be Hispanic.

Purchasing power

Some construction fields are already dominated by Hispanics and, as such, are driving those industries. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 77% of plasterers and stucco masons and almost 60% of drywall installers in this country are Hispanic. Further, 52% of concrete finishers, 46% of roofers and 41% of painters are Hispanic.

“In surveys and other research, Hispanic men typically list multiple professions when asked about the work they do,” said Kevin Kilpatrick, publisher of Constru-Guía al día magazine. Digging deeper into this in qualitative research, we found the U.S. Hispanic male does whatever he needs to do on the job site and from job to job his role may change. As a direct result of the varied types of work he does, he buys product from many products categories.

There is a common misconception that all U.S. Hispanics are laborers only and do not influence purchasing decisions. However, there is strong evidence to the contrary.

“Constru-Guía al día magazine is written for the U.S. Hispanic construction market,” said Kilpatrick. “Our 2013 Readership Survey found that while 26% of those who receive Constru-Guía al día are non-supervisors and/or laborers, the majority (74%) are owners or supervisors. They are decision-makers at the retail purchasing level and will have direct impact on which brands and services will be successful in the future.”

Reaching the U.S. Hispanic

Marketing to this segment presents some challenges — with language being the first concern.

Most Hispanic men in construction blend Spanish and English in their businesses – 42% of Hispanic owners, i.e. purchasing decision makers, say they “only or mostly” speak Spanish on the job, and another 37% report speaking “about the same” amount of Spanish and English.

At home is a different story, where the majority speaks Spanish, and in the media they prefer. “Our research has found that the Hispanic construction segment prefers their newspapers, magazines, radio and television in Spanish,” said Kilpatrick.

The issue is not whether retailers and manufacturers should market to the U.S. Hispanic, but how they'll reach out to this dynamic, vital and growing segment.

Kevin Kilpatrick is publisher of Constru-Guía al día magazine, the website MiConstruGuia.com, an electronic newsletter and syndicated radio segments on 115 radio stations. Kilpatrick can be contacted at Kilpatrick@CGaldia.com.

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