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EXPLAINING THE TREND TOWARD ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING IN HISPANIC-AMERICAN TELEVISION: WHY NOW?

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EXPLAINING THE TREND TOWARD ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING
IN HISPANIC-AMERICAN TELEVISION: WHY NOW?

by

Elizabeth L. Levine

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of
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EXPLAINING THE TREND TOWARD ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING
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University of Nebraska, 2014

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The United States Hispanic population is growing at an exponential rate. There are now more than 100 television networks in the U.S. catering to Hispanic audiences – mostly in Spanish. Now, contrary to logic, more English-language programming for Hispanic-Americans is making its way to television. With immigration from Hispanic countries on the decline, most of the growth among the U.S. Hispanic population comes from Hispanics born in the U.S. Hispanic-Americans growing up in the U.S. are more likely to grow up speaking English and consuming media in English. The U.S. Hispanic audience is expected to reach one-third of the total U.S. population as early 2050, so it is clear that broadcasters cannot ignore this group. It appears the latest trend in attracting this audience, particularly the rapidly growing Hispanic millennial audience, is creating content that caters specifically to U.S. Hispanics, but in English.

But why is this trend emerging now? Networks may now be strategizing differently because of the changes in the makeup of the U.S. Hispanic audience – particularly among the millennial audience. After a thorough literature review, this thesis identified a set of factors explaining the trend: an increasing amount of Hispanic-Americans now growing up speaking English, a lack of non-stereotypical English-speaking Hispanic characters on mainstream television, an increase in U.S. Hispanic

buying power and subsequent interest from advertisers, business partnerships and opportunities for networks and media moguls and ease of acquiring a cable network at a time when the Spanish-language television market is heavily saturated.

To explore and confirm these explanatory factors, personal interviews were conducted with program executives at Hispanic television networks that offer English-language programming. These interviews along with secondary research indicate that an increase in Hispanics born in the U.S., growing use of the English language among Hispanics and the lack of non-stereotypical English-speaking Hispanic characters on television are important driving forces behind this trend toward English-language programming catering to Hispanic-Americans.

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I. Introduction

Hispanic-American audiences have become an important television audience in America. Over the last few decades, there has been tremendous growth in both the United States Hispanic population and the amount of Spanish-language broadcasting catering to Hispanic audiences. As the U.S. Hispanic-American population continues to grow exponentially, and more and more Hispanic-Americans learn and speak English, one cannot help but wonder how the landscape of television aimed at Hispanic-American audiences will change. When television networks began catering to the U.S. Hispanic population, all programming was originally in Spanish.

After decades of an evolving audience, networks have added new strategies to reach Hispanic-American audiences, including making broadcasts available in Spanish via secondary audio programming and introducing Hispanic characters into television shows. With a growing interest from Hispanics in social media, networks have embraced the TV Everywhere initiative to make programs available through digital platforms. And now, English-language programming appears to be playing a growing role in attracting this audience.

Between 1980 and 2011, the U.S. Hispanic population increased from 14.6 million to almost 52 million people.¹ As of 2012, that number grew to 53 million, or 17 percent of the U.S. population.² By 2060, U.S. Census Bureau estimations project the U.S. Hispanic population will nearly double to 31 percent.³ Other estimates suggest the U.S. Hispanic population will reach 133 million people as early as 2050, meaning nearly one in every three Americans will be Hispanic-American within 40 years.⁴ With such a

significant portion of the United States population being Hispanic-American, one cannot help but wonder if, and how, television is changing to reflect the demographic makeup of the country. This research explores the trend of Spanish-language networks now embarking on bilingual and English-language ventures. With the U.S. Hispanic demographic growing, it seems counterintuitive and almost illogical that networks like Fusion, El Rey Network and MiCasa Network are launching, with exclusively English-language programming, aimed at Hispanic-American audiences.

With more than 37 million people speaking Spanish in the United States,⁵ and with the population projected to be about one-third Hispanic-American in the near future,⁶ many people would assume the growth in television would be in Spanish-language programming. However, networks seem to be going against logic by introducing more English-language availability into the broadcast spectrum. The background research looks at some related topics and explore further questions to find out how the increase in the U.S. Hispanic-American population affects the landscape of American broadcasting.

This thesis will look at how popular SAP is among Hispanic audiences and how Hispanic audiences react to English-language network television shows featuring Hispanic characters. Furthermore, it will look at how parents and children react to Hispanic characters in children's programming. With a new focus in the media industry on social and mobile media, the interest Hispanic audiences take in digital media also cannot be overlooked.

After a burst of availability of Spanish-language programming, it seems a new trend in broadcasting has emerged: English-language and bilingual programming targeting Hispanic-American audiences. This thesis will investigate the reasoning behind this shift in strategy. SiTV re-launched as NUVOtv in 2011,⁷ Fusion launched in October 2013,⁸ El Rey Network launched December 2013,⁹ mun2 is moving more toward English programming in its bilingual strategy¹⁰ and MiCasa Network will expand to U.S. markets with large Hispanic populations, beyond Houston, in 2014.¹¹ Four of these five networks broadcast predominantly in English, but promote themselves as networks for Hispanic audiences, and mun2 promotes itself as a bilingual network for the modern bicultural Latino. According to the 2013 Multichannel News and Broadcasting & Cable Guide to U.S. Hispanic Channels, a number of other networks targeting Hispanics are tapping into English or bilingual programming as well. Univision's Telehit offers both Spanish and English programming, Olympusat's Ultra Americano targets the U.S. bilingual market with productions focusing on Latinos that are produced in English and Al Jazeera Media Network's beIN Sport USA programs sports in both English and Spanish.¹² Why do Hispanic networks now appear to be headed toward more English-language and bilingual programming?

This thesis uncovers the reasoning behind this new strategy in reaching out to Hispanic-American audiences. Perhaps the trend is due to Hispanic-Americans learning and using more and more English as an increasing percentage of the U.S. Hispanic population is born in and grows up in the U.S. Maybe the trend is a reaction to Hispanics comprising 21 percent of the millennial population in the United States¹³ or the fact that

65 percent of all Hispanic-Americans are millennials.¹⁴ It could be an attempt to capitalize on business relationships or grow corporate brands by establishing partnerships with trusted names in Hispanic-American broadcasting. Maybe it simply has to do with economic factors and attracting advertisers, given the growth in Hispanic-American buying power and value of reaching this audience in English. Or perhaps this is an attempt to bring more Hispanic characters to television shows given the underrepresentation of Hispanics in American media. Another possibility is that from a competitive standpoint, there are already many networks catering to U.S. Hispanics in Spanish, but few in English, so there is more room for growth in this category. With more networks appearing each year and with a rapidly changing audience, it is possible that Spanish-language programmers have oversaturated the Spanish-language television market, and now they seek new opportunities for expansion.

This thesis identifies and examines the factors that explain the trend toward English-language programming catering to Hispanic-American audiences. It provides an overview of the U.S. Hispanic television industry and literature characterizing the nature of Hispanic-American television audiences. Interviews were conducted to provide further understanding and confirmation of the factors driving the trend. This study will serve to help programmers and researchers by explaining the reasons networks are now providing more English-language programming options specifically for U.S. Hispanics. Discussion and conclusions follow.

II. Background

This section will provide background information and an overview of some of the most popular Spanish-language television networks in the United States (Telemundo, Univision, Galavisión, ESPN Deportes, Azteca América, Estrella TV, Tr3s, MundoFox, Mexicanal, etc.) and networks targeting Hispanic-American audiences with programming in English or a mix of English and Spanish (El Rey Network, Fusion, NUVOtv, mun2 and MiCasa Network). A recap of the history and growth of Hispanic-aimed networks in the United States will emphasize the importance of Hispanic-American audiences in American broadcasting. This section will discuss the growth and success of these networks and how the content of these networks differs from non-Spanish language networks – especially the English-language programming aimed at Hispanic audiences that appears to be growing. This section provides an overview television-viewing habits of U.S. Hispanics, the use of secondary audio programming, Hispanic characters on television and Hispanic-American engagement in digital media, which all help in understanding the trend of catering to the Hispanic-American audience with English-language programming.

State of the Industry

Univision and Telemundo once largely dominated Spanish-language television. In the early 2000s, there were only about 14 broadcast and cable networks geared toward Hispanic audiences.¹⁵ For many broadcasters, the 2010 U.S. census, which revealed that roughly 16 percent of the United States population was Hispanic, was a wake-up call. Between 2000 and 2012, the Hispanic population rose by about 55 percent, which is more than quadruple the growth rate for the general American population.¹⁶ This growth made an opportunity evident to broadcasters, and today there are more than 100 broadcast and cable networks catering to Hispanic audiences,¹⁷ though Univision and Telemundo still remain at the top of the industry. The 2013 Multichannel News and Broadcasting & Cable Guide to U.S. Hispanic Channels listed more than 130 channels aiming for the Latino audience.¹⁸ This is an increase from 114 in 2011 and 85 in 2008.¹⁹

Currently, most U.S. television targeting Hispanic-American audiences is broadcast in the Spanish language. Hispanic-American audiences now have many choices in Spanish-language broadcasting, including Antena 3, Azteca América, Bandamax, beIN SPORT en Español, Canal Sur, Caracol TV, CentroAmerica TV, CNN en Español, De Película, De Película Clásico, Discovery en Español, Discovery Familia, Discovery Kids en Español, Discovery Travel and Living en Español, Ecuavisa, ESPN Deportes, Estrella TV, FOX Deportes, FOX Life, Galavisión, History en Español, HTV, Latinoamérica Televisión, Mexicanal, Mexico TV, MundoFox, Nat Geo Mundo, Ritmoson Latino, ¡Sorpresa!, Sur Peru, Telefe International, Telehit, Telemundo, TV Chile, TV Colombia, TV Venezuela, TyC Sports International Channel, UniMás,

Univision, Univision Deportes, Univision Deportes Dos, Univision Noticias, Univision tlnovelas, VH Uno and WAPA-America.

With so many channels available in Spanish, networks need to find a new way to attract viewers. With more than one fifth of Hispanic-Americans now speaking only English at home,²⁰ broadcasters are now appealing to an English-speaking Hispanic-American audience with English programming and bilingual programming, and English-language subtitles have even made their way to the airwaves on Telemundo and Univision.²¹ Bilingual options include Go!TV, La Familia Cosmovision, Tr3s, mun2 and LATV Network. On mun2, subtitles are common. Laura Dominguez, coordinator for program scheduling at mun2, said subtitles are offered in both English for Spanish audio and in Spanish for English audio on about 90 percent of programming.²²

Following are descriptions of some of the most popular networks catering to Hispanic-Americans as well as descriptions of up-and-coming networks targeting young, bilingual or English-speaking Hispanic-American audiences.

Telemundo

Telemundo, a division of NBCUniversal, is a global media company aiming to “inform, empower, inspire and entertain Hispanics in the U.S. and audiences around the world.”²³ Launched in 1987, broadcast network Telemundo is a leader in Spanish-language television. The network has evolved from acquiring programming to creating original content for its audience. Telemundo is now the top producer of Spanish-language primetime content²⁴ and the network reaches 210 markets comprising 94 percent of Hispanic households in the United States.²⁵

Univision

In 1961, KWEX in San Antonio was the first station to transmit Spanish-language programming in the United States.²⁶ This station would eventually grow into what is now Univision. In the 1980s, Spanish International Network's television stations were sold to Hallmark, Inc., and its minority partner First Chicago Venture Capital, which established Univision Holdings, Inc. Spanish International Network was then renamed Univision Network. Univision has continued to grow, launching Univision Online in 2000, Telefutera (now UniMás) in 2002, acquiring Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation in 2003 to launch Univision radio and starting Univision.com and Univision On Demand in 2009.²⁷ Also in 2009, Univision started Univision Studios to aid in producing content for all the network's platforms.

Over the last few years, Univision's growth has continued beyond its titular broadcast network. The network has launched Univision Deportes, a 24-hour network dedicated to broadcasting sports and Univision tlnovelas, which airs novelas, or Spanish-language soap operas. Univision also started new cable offerings: De Película, De Película Clásico, Bandamax, Ritmoson, Telehit and Distrito Comedia, ForoTV, a 24-hour cable network dedicated to news and UVideos, the first bilingual digital network serving Hispanic America.²⁸

In the realm of broadcasting for Hispanic-Americans, Univision is the network to beat. For more than two decades, Univision was the only national Spanish-language broadcaster, and as of 2012, the head start was still apparent, with 48 of the 50 most popular television shows among bilingual Hispanic-Americans appearing on Univision.²⁹

Galavisión

Launched in 1979 and owned by Univision Communications, Galavisión has been the leading Spanish-language cable network for more than 25 years.³⁰ Galavisión offers its viewers a variety of content, including sports, news, entertainment, lifestyle and community programming³¹ and has more than 69.1 million subscribers.³² In October 2012, Sebastian Trujillo, senior vice president and operating manager for Galavisión said, “Once again Galavisión’s diverse programming has allowed us to maintain a leadership position in this highly competitive marketplace. We are proud that season after season Galavisión continues to be the No. 1 Spanish-language cable network.”³³

Azteca América

Azteca América was founded in 2001 as a broadcast television network for Spanish-speaking families in the United States. It is owned by Mexico’s TV Azteca, which as of 2002 was one of the top two producers of Spanish-language programming in the world. It first launched in Los Angeles in 2001, reaching 18 percent of the Hispanic-American population.³⁴ By the end of 2001, Azteca America infiltrated San-Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, Sacramento-Stockton-Modesto, Reno and Houston to reach 28 percent of Hispanics in the United States.³⁵ In 2002, coverage leaped to 52 percent, by 2003 it was up to 69 percent, and in 2004 it reached 77 percent.³⁶ The network has continued to grow substantially, and as of October 2013, it operates in 75 markets,³⁷ including the top ten Hispanic-American markets,³⁸ reaching more than 89 percent of Hispanic households in the United States.³⁹

Estrella TV

Estrella TV is owned by Liberman Broadcasting, Inc., the largest privately-held, minority-owned Spanish-language broadcaster in the United States.⁴⁰ When the network launched nationwide in 2009, Co-Founder and Executive Vice President Lenard Liberman said, “Estrella TV’s quality and diversity differentiate our ever-expanding network from other Spanish-language broadcasters. The nationwide launch of Estrella TV gives the network a chance to spread its wings, to demonstrate the clear advantage it has over the other Spanish-language networks available in the United States.”⁴¹ The 2009 expansion grew the reach to 68 percent of Hispanic audiences in the United States.⁴²

Tr3s

The MTV Networks launched MTV Tr3s (pronounced “trés,” as in the Spanish word for the number three) in September 2006 with the goal of the new network becoming the premier cultural outlet for young Latinos.⁴³ In 2010, the network changed its name from MTV Tr3s to Tr3s.⁴⁴ It features mostly Spanish versions of MTV reality shows and music-related programming. For example, the network airs *Quiero Mis Quinces*, a show about lavish quinceñera celebrations for girls’ 15th birthdays, which is similar to MTV’s *My Super Sweet 16*. Originally, MTV launched MTV en Español in 1998, but switched to a bilingual format in 2006 with its re-launch as MTV Tr3s to attract more Hispanics born in the United States.⁴⁵ As of 2013, Tr3s had an estimated 35.5 million subscribers.⁴⁶

ESPN Deportes

ESPN Deportes originally started in July 2000 as a Sunday night programming block when ESPN partnered with Major League Baseball to offer Spanish-language telecasts of the Home Run Derby and select Sunday Night Baseball games. Eventually, it expanded to become its own network. Launched January 7, 2004, ESPN Deportes is ESPN's multimedia, Spanish-language sports brand dedicated to providing the widest variety of sports to U.S. Hispanic sports fans.⁴⁷ According to SNL Kagan, ESPN Deportes had 15.5 million subscribers as of 2013.⁴⁸ The network offers more than 2,500 hours of live and/or original hours of sports programming each year, including soccer, baseball, American football, motor sports, tennis, golf, boxing and mixed martial arts.⁴⁹

Mexicanal

Mexicanal, launched in 2005 by Castalia Communications Corporation of Atlanta and Cablecom of Mexico, is a television network aimed at Mexicans living and working in the United States, Canada and Mexico.⁵⁰ It offers news, sports, entertainment and children's programming and is transmitted via DIRECTV as well as over the air.⁵¹ The network places a specific emphasis on children's programming because of what is perceived to be a growing influence of the English language on the Hispanic-American population.⁵²

Mexicanal Senior Vice President of Production and Programming Maria Urquiaga believes Univision and Telemundo have largely ceded the children's market and sees this as an opportunity for Mexicanal. She said, "I want to groom my audience from age zero. I think it is very important that we maintain the Spanish language. At Mexicanal with our

children's programming we are trying to make that into a reality so children will not lose their parents' language. We are a way of keeping that from the beginning to adulthood.”⁵³

MundoFox

MundoFox, launched in the fall of 2012, is a joint venture Spanish-language television network between Fox and Colombia's RCN Television Group that caters to Hispanic-Americans. MundoFox's content comes from RCN Television S.A., Fox International Channels, Fox Deportes, Shine Group, NTN24 and third-party suppliers.⁵⁴ Fox International Channels President Hernan Lopez, described the channel, saying “MundoFox looks and feels like US television, but it just happens to be in Spanish.”⁵⁵

MundoFox launched in 49 markets in January 2012, reaching an estimated 80 percent of U.S. Hispanic households, and has added at least ten more affiliates as of April 2013. President of MundoFox Emiliano Saccone said in May 2012 “The ‘New Latino’ audiences we are targeting are clearly more demanding than previous generations. The mere fact that a program is in Spanish is not enough of a differentiator. Today's Latino wants content that is more enriching, challenging and ‘*Americano como tú*’ (American like you),” acknowledging the network's tagline.⁵⁶

LATV Network

LATV claims to be the only remaining Latino-owned television network in the Hispanic television space. The bilingual network caters mostly to 18-49 year-old bicultural Latinos born in the United States. LATV features both originally produced shows and licensed content that has never been aired before in the United States, including music, entertainment and sports programming.⁵⁷ Launched in Los Angeles in

2001, the network is now available in more than 40 markets in the United States, including the top 25 Hispanic markets.⁵⁸

mun2

Part of Telemundo Media, a division of NBCUniversal, mun2 (pronounced as “mundos,” which is Spanish for “worlds”) is a bilingual Hispanic cable network aimed at millennials.⁵⁹ With programming ranging from music to reality television and sports, mun2 is a lifestyle network connecting American and Hispanic cultures for bicultural Latinos. It is now distributed to an estimated 40.4 million households,⁶⁰ including the top 20 U.S. Hispanic markets,⁶¹ a tremendous increase from the 2.8 million Hispanic households it reached when it launched in October 2001 to replace GEMS Television.⁶²

As of 2013, the median age of mun2 viewers was 29 years old and 52 percent of the audience was bilingual in English and Spanish.⁶³ With a bilingual audience, it is not surprising the network airs programming in both English and Spanish, often including audio in one language and subtitles in the other. According to General Manager of mun2 Diana Mogollón, the network does not want to peg itself as either an English-language network or a Spanish-language network exclusively.⁶⁴

NUVOtv

NUVOtv is the original English-language television network aimed at Hispanic-American audiences. Originally it started out as a production company, making English-language, but Latino-focused, shows like *The Brothers Garcia* for Nickelodeon.⁶⁵ Called SÍTV since its start as a cable network in 2004, the network re-launched as NUVOtv in July 2011.⁶⁶ Chief Executive Officer of NUVOtv Michael Schwimmer said of the

network's former name, "SíTV was confusing. People would ask if that was 'sea' like the ocean or 'see' like you can see television. You can imagine what it's like dealing with that sort of confusion." He added, "We also did some proprietary research and realized that it also conveyed a sense of exclusivity. The bicultural Latino audience is much broader than that. It's second-generation, fourth-generation Latino. They don't see themselves watching a television network that has a Spanish-Language name."⁶⁷ The name combines the first two letters of the words "nuevo" (Spanish for "new") and "voice," which is a nod to the network's dual cultural focus. Schwimmer said, "The NUVOTv network will stay true to SíTV's original mission of serving culturally relevant content in English to this dynamic community, one that uniquely integrates an American lifestyle with strong bonds to a rich Latino culture."⁶⁸

International superstar Jennifer Lopez, who is Chief Creative Officer at NUVOTv, said, "Latinos are a force in this country. We are an engine for growth – we have huge economic power and unprecedented political and cultural influence and it's time for television to reflect who the modern Latino actually is – not who we are believed to be – not who we may have been – but who we are now."⁶⁹

Annette Villarreal, coordinator of programming & development at NUVOTv, explained, "NUVOTv is definitely the next chapter of our network, where we are now, we're way more polished, our programming is so much more of quality, and we've reached out and created relationships with talent that people know, like Angela Johnson, Gabriel Iglesias, and our recent partnership that we formed with Jennifer Lopez and her

production company, Nuyorican. The changes from then to now are really outstanding. We've really stepped up our game. NUVO is so much different than SíTV.”⁷⁰

NUVOtv describes itself as “the destination for quality programming for the Modern Latino – American Latinos 18 to 49 who prefer their entertainment in English. Featuring new stories, new characters and no stereotypes, our unique line-up of original programming engages and connects with the powerful audience.”⁷¹ NUVOtv is available nationwide on Dish Network and is available in most major U.S. markets, as well as in all of the top 15 Hispanic DMAs.⁷² As of 2013, NUVOtv had an estimated 34.1 million subscribers.⁷³

Fusion

Jorge Ramos, a news anchor at Univision who now appears on Fusion, understands the challenges media companies face in attracting young Hispanic audiences. In a bid to lure in a young Hispanic audience, Spanish-language media company Univision Communications entered a joint venture with Disney/ABC Television. In the 50-50 venture, Univision and ABC launched Fusion, a cable channel designed to appeal to young viewers including Latinos, in October 2013.⁷⁴ Fusion is a 24-hour news, information and entertainment channel broadcasting exclusively in English. Fusion is attempting to lure millennial viewers, or those 18 to 34 years old.⁷⁵ In 2013, Fusion had an estimated 25.7 million subscribers.⁷⁶

Fusion's CEO Isaac Lee said, “[Fusion] is targeted at a very specific psychographic. We want to reach young millennials that consume media in a completely different way. We are going to do current events, news, pop culture, satire, but we're

going to do it in a way that they can see the transparency, the honesty, the authenticity, and everything that we're going to do. It's going to have the adequate dose of humor, and that is a big change.”⁷⁷

An ABC Spokeswoman told SNL Kagan that Fusion is a channel “tailored to U.S. Hispanics — specifically English-predominant and bilingual Hispanics — that offers culturally relevant programming in English.”⁷⁸ She added that even though the channel provides news, it “would be a mistake to compare it to the general news services that are already out there,”⁷⁹ and continued that it also should not be compared to Spanish-language news channels. She went on, “We don't think there is a competitive set for this channel yet,” she said. “There are plenty of general news services in English, and obviously Univision is the best in the game at offering content, whether its news or entertainment programming, to Hispanics in Spanish. But there has never been a network that offers coverage of the issues that matter most to U.S. Hispanics in English.”⁸⁰ When asked what the programming would include before Fusion's launch, the ABC spokeswoman said it would be a mix of news and information, but it would also include lifestyle and entertainment, possibly featuring health and wellness and pop culture.⁸¹

President of the Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies Roberto Orci is optimistic about Fusion's future. He told SNL Kagan, “I think it's a brilliant move by Univision and ABC. It's addressing two issues — one is there is no 24-hour cable news show that Hispanics can turn to, so it fills that need. Two, there is also a need for programming aimed at the growing English-speaking and bilingual population. That's a reason why it makes so much sense.”⁸² Edward Rincón, president of the multicultural

research firm Rincón & Associates, wrote of Fusion in a blog post, “Let us hope that the proposed network fulfills its ambitious goals and does not disappoint the underserved English-speaking Hispanic audience.”⁸³

El Rey Network

In December 2013, filmmaker Robert Rodriguez, Univision and FactoryMade Ventures⁸⁴ launched El Rey Network, an English-language television channel intended to attract a young, English-speaking, Latino audience in the United States.⁸⁵ With so many options in broadcasting directed at Hispanic audiences, Rodriguez understands the importance of content. He said, “You really want authentic voices. So what this network will allow is for people who have that voice, who have that interest, who have that background to come and see a truly authentic product that will resonate better with the audience because it’s coming from the right place.”⁸⁶ Rodriguez wants the network to resemble the “face of the country” and have an eye toward diversity.⁸⁷ El Rey features reality shows, scripted series, news, comedy, music, animation, movies, documentaries and sports programming.⁸⁸ El Rey aimed to reach 40 million homes by early 2014.⁸⁹

MiCasa Network

MiCasa Network, broadcast by MCB Network Corp. and based in Houston, is a provider of bilingual entertainment for the modern Latino community.⁹⁰ According to MiCasa Network's web site, "MiCasa Network is the only place where you'll find the quality programming tailor-made for today's Latinos craving real connection to their roots. Bold, fun, proud – MiCasa is the perfect mix of the two cultures it calls home. Its programming offers something for everyone delivered in a compelling way—in the evolving predominant language of English with a distinct Latino flavor."⁹¹

MiCasa Network offers more than 350 hours of original programming in HD and 1,500 hours of licensed programming. The network aims to be a one-stop shop for all Latino entertainment, including comedy, music, reality, news, sports, politics and lifestyle entertainment.⁹² MiCasa Network offers "family-friendly programming that touches the heart and soul of Hispanic-Americans in urban and rural markets."⁹³ MCB Network Corp. aims to capitalize on the opportunity to serve and represent the growing Hispanic-American community.⁹⁴

Airing on television only in Houston since 2010, the network has plans for expansion. In March 2014, MiCasa Network's CEO Johnathan Gwyn said the network aimed to launch in 20 million homes by the end of the month in Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, Washington D.C. and a few cities in Texas.⁹⁵

Bilingual Hispanic-Americans' Television-Viewing Habits

In determining programming strategy, network programmers undoubtedly look at trends in viewing habits among target audiences. According to a 2002 study by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) of 1,232 respondents living in Los Angeles, Houston and New York City, 75 percent of Latino adult viewers watch television in both English and Spanish.⁹⁶ This study found that most Latino adults consumed news in Spanish. Of 1,098 respondents reporting that they watch news programs, 16.3 percent reported they watch in English, 57 percent reported they watch in Spanish, and 26.7 percent reported that they watch a mix of Spanish and English news programs.⁹⁷ Approximately two thirds of the respondents in this study reported that their children preferred English-language programming.⁹⁸

Rincón & Associates concluded in a 2004 study that Hispanic children are more likely to watch television in English than Spanish. Of those in the study, 52.9 percent of immigrant children and 76.8 percent had a stronger likelihood of watching children's programming in English.⁹⁹ Those children are now part of the millennial audience that broadcasters and advertisers prize. According to Nielsen, young Hispanics are the most susceptible and responsive demographic to advertising and commercial brands.¹⁰⁰

According to the TRPI study, Hispanics engage English-language and Spanish-language programming differently depending on the type of program offered. While just 16.3 percent of respondents reported watching news programs in English, 39.2 percent of respondents chose English for watching movies. For sports, 30.2 percent of respondents

reported choosing English, 36.1 percent chose Spanish and 33.7 percent reported choosing a mix of English and Spanish.¹⁰¹

Rincón & Associates studied 1,536 Latinos in Los Angeles, Miami, New York and San Antonio between August and October of 2003. This study concluded that Nielsen might be significantly underestimating the Latino audience for English-language television programs.¹⁰² In the Rincón & Associates study, respondents of all four cities reported that the programs they are most likely to watch in English were news programs,¹⁰³ which is different from the results of the earlier TRPI study.

The 2002 National Survey of Latinos by the Pew Hispanic Center found that 46 percent of second-generation Hispanics – and 78 percent of third-generation Hispanics – speak mostly English.¹⁰⁴ According to U.S. Census data, as of 2012, 54.7 percent of all U.S. Latinos speak both English and Spanish. With a growing number of Hispanic-Americans choosing English as a primary language, one cannot help but wonder what the necessity will be for Spanish-language broadcasting in the United States in the future. Rob Rose, a 20-year TV industry veteran who left his job at Univision to found Artist and Idea Management in February 2000, said, “Research says that the biggest determining factor on whether an individual will consume TV in English or Spanish is where they were born. Born in the U.S.A., they watch mostly English-language television; born elsewhere, they watch Spanish-language TV.”¹⁰⁵ Rose adds as a complaint, “Nielsen simply does not know what percentage of their sample is U.S.-born versus foreign-born, and so have no way of knowing whether they are under representing or over representing a segment. We believe they are over-indexing immigrating Latinos, and that’s the

biggest holdup to our market's growth.”¹⁰⁶ It is worth noting that Nielsen has made public statements that it is working to fix this problem, and that when that glitch is fixed, English-language programming for Latinos may boom.¹⁰⁷

Meanwhile, the success or failure of Hispanic themed shows will not depend completely on language. Vice President of Research and Marketing for Cultural Access Group Michele Valdovinos points out that it is hard to describe what will make a show successful among young, acculturated Hispanics, “but it must have resonance for those with a foot in both worlds. They don't want to be one or the other.”¹⁰⁸

According to research conducted by the Pew Research Center, as of 2012, 82 percent of Hispanic adults in the U.S. reported getting at least some of their news in English, which is an increase from 78 percent in 2006. Additionally, the number of Hispanics claiming to get at least some of their news in Spanish declined from 78 percent in 2006 to 68 percent in 2012. Half of Latino adults reported getting their news in both English and Spanish, which is a decrease from 57 percent reporting to get their news in both languages in 2010.¹⁰⁹ The survey showed an increase in Hispanic adults who get their news exclusively in English as well. This number rose to 32 percent in 2012, up from 22 percent in 2006. The number of Hispanics consuming news exclusively in Spanish fell from 22 percent in 2006 to 18 percent in 2012.¹¹⁰

Clearly, with the growth of English-language among Hispanics-Americans, the entire U.S. Hispanic population cannot be reached solely through advertising on Spanish-language television networks. According to the 2011 Nielsen data, Hispanic households in the U.S. actually watch more television than other Americans, and many U.S. Hispanic

viewers actually watch no Spanish-language television programming at all, and many more watch very little.¹¹¹

In 2011, Simulmedia, a New York-based television ad targeting company using data-driven technology to help improve the relevance and results of TV advertising, mapped Nielsen's national viewing panel with the daily anonymous television-viewing behaviors of 30 million Americans and found that U.S. Hispanics spent the majority of their television-viewing time tuned in to English-language programming.¹¹² The study also showed that 37 percent of U.S. Hispanics could not be reached at all on major Spanish-language television networks. The monthly reach of the Spanish-language networks was strong among households speaking only Spanish with a 93 percent reach and was strong among those households speaking mostly Spanish reaching 88 percent of those homes, but the reach was significantly weaker among bilingual households at 71 percent, while only 30 percent of households speaking mostly English and just nine percent of Hispanic households speaking only English were reached through major Spanish-language television networks.¹¹³

According to CEO and founder of Simulmedia Dave Morgan, the non-Spanish viewing of some Hispanics is unique and can be quite predictable at times. According to data from Simulmedia, Hispanic viewers have a tendency to watch late-night sports. On a Wednesday night in late night, Hispanic-Americans comprised 54 percent of SPEED Channel's audience mid-week, 53 percent of GOLF Channel's, and 40 percent of ESPN news. During daytime, midweek, Hispanics made up 68 percent of LOGO's audience, 37 percent of G4's audience and 25 percent of Planet Green's audience. Morgan also

mentioned that Hispanics are 30 percent more likely than non-Hispanics to watch Fox Business on Sunday mornings.¹¹⁴ He also noted that Simulmedia's data leverages anonymous set-top box data and Nielsen national audience data, but should not be misinterpreted as a verified output from Nielsen. Simulmedia's data does not include over-the-air viewership, which is a factor in analyzing television viewership of any kind.¹¹⁵

Morgan clarified that Spanish-language networks do an extraordinary job and are unmatched when it comes to reaching U.S. Hispanic viewers. Major Spanish-language networks like Univision and Telemundo are very powerful and very valuable properties in the media industry, and Morgan believes that as the U.S. Hispanic population continues to grow, these media properties will only become more valuable. However, Morgan said in 2011 that he believes as Hispanic immigrants watch more non-Spanish-language programming, these networks will have no choice but to integrate more English language content into their programming.¹¹⁶

Trends in viewing habits make it clear that programmers must consider the importance of English-language programming when trying to reach U.S. Hispanics. With a growing number of Hispanic-Americans growing up speaking English in the United States, the value of using English-language programming to reach U.S. Hispanics cannot be overlooked.

Secondary Audio Programming (SAP)

One way programmers have tried to cater to the U.S. Hispanic audience is by offering Spanish-language audio for English-language programming. This method of reaching the U.S. Hispanic audience has been met with some resistance, due to both lack of availability and some programming not transcending language barriers. This section will provide an overview of secondary audio program (SAP) use and availability in the United States. As the Hispanic-American population grows, how is SAP availability influencing the trend of programming in English for U.S. Hispanics? This section will explore how often U.S. Hispanics are using SAP to watch English-language programming dubbed in Spanish.

Secondary audio programming is one way for Hispanic-American audiences to access Spanish-language television. SAP allows viewers to substitute Spanish for English on programs offering the alternate audio feed. The majority of televisions and VCRs manufactured since 1995 are equipped with SAP technology, though a 2001-02 Tomás Rivera Policy Institute study revealed only about 42 percent of Latino bilingual viewers reported having SAP technologies on their home television sets.¹¹⁷ One out of six participants in the research study reported using SAP often.¹¹⁸

In 2001, WRAL-TV, a CBS affiliate in Raleigh, North Carolina, decided to take advantage of a growing Hispanic audience by offering its local evening news in Spanish via Secondary Audio Program, or SAP.¹¹⁹ After two years, WRAL-TV ended the SAP venture at the end of March 2003. WRAL-TV Director of Special Projects John Higgins said, “We felt like we were doing a wonderful community service, but we got very little

feedback on it.”¹²⁰ The station was paying a lot of money for translation services, but generated little enthusiasm about the SAP availability. In 2000, ABC attempted to draw Hispanic audiences by offering a Spanish audio track for *World News Tonight*. The telecasts were made available to Hispanic households via 39 ABC affiliates, which covered 6.2 million of the 8.6 million Hispanic homes at the time. The markets ranged from New York and Los Angeles to Lansing, Michigan and Jonesboro, Arkansas.¹²¹ The offering was dropped after just one year when the network noticed no change in viewership.¹²²

In a market with a high volume of Hispanics, it is not uncommon for English-language news broadcasts to be simulcast in Spanish. In 2003, Tribune Company’s WPIX-TV in New York started simulcasting news in Spanish. Former General Manager Betty Ellen Berlamino said the Spanish track is sponsored by Pontiac to cover some translation costs. Berlamino explained that each night, a translator in a booth in Argentina listens to the newscast and translates the content over a high-quality phone line back to New York. She considered the effort worthwhile, saying, “Before I had 100 percent chance of not reaching the Spanish-speaking population. With SAP, I have some chance. Is it slim? Yeah. But it’s a chance.”¹²³

It is only a chance, though. In Houston, for example, KRIV, a Fox affiliate, offers its programming in Spanish via SAP, but it remains a distant second to Univision among local Hispanic viewers. It is important to keep in mind that as with all viewers, program choices are not selected solely on the basis of language – the content, or in this case, news topics covered, has a big influence on programming selection.¹²⁴ Antonio R. Flores,

president and CEO of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, said “Across the board, there is not enough media coverage of Hispanic culture and issues, and for young Hispanics the problem is especially pronounced. The implicit message is that their cultural values and upbringing are not that important.”¹²⁵ Thusly, it should come as no surprise that Spanish-language newscasts continue to beat English-language newscasts that are dubbed in Spanish, especially since Spanish-language newscasts address the topics most relevant to Hispanics. As Hofstra University journalism professor Bob Passer points out, “There’s no question that, overall, the biggest growth in local TV news in the last few years has been at Hispanic stations.”¹²⁶

When ABC aired *Monday Night Football*, it made the telecasts available via SAP, as well as soccer, boxing matches and a number of movies in addition to the previously mentioned newscasts. Former President of ABC Alex Wallau said in 2000 that making the news available in Spanish was challenging because much of the newscasts had to be interpreted on the fly. By comparison, voiceovers for movies could be done in advance, and generally, Spanish-speaking announcers do sports broadcasts separately. While Wallau found the news in Spanish venture challenging, he said it was the “right thing to do. We are trying to enhance our connection with a very important audience.”¹²⁷

In 2000, Fox also reported airing some NFL and MLB games in Spanish via SAP, as well as specials including the Billboard Music Awards and Emmy Awards. The network also made primetime programs *Cops* and *America’s Most Wanted* available via SAP. Fox did express the desire to make more programs available in Spanish, but said

that sometimes time constraints for voiceovers or rights issues make such offerings impossible.¹²⁸

CBS still offers its 30-minute soap opera *The Bold and the Beautiful* in Spanish, and Fox offers primetime shows like *The Simpsons* in Spanish via SAP.¹²⁹ In 2012, CBS announced it would make every NFL game it aired in the 2012-13 season available in Spanish via SAP, which included that season's Super Bowl.¹³⁰ CBS continues to offer its NFL games in SAP. While Spanish SAP offerings have had limited success on broadcast networks, cable networks seem to have more interest in Spanish-language availability. For example, as of 2003, 90 percent of HBO programming was available with a Spanish-audio feed.¹³¹

In 2009, a survey by the Screen Actors Guild revealed *The Simpsons* was the most-watched English-language television show dubbed in Spanish for SAP. Thirty-five percent of the survey respondents reported watching *The Simpsons* using SAP over a three-month span. Among the five most-watched English-language programs dubbed in Spanish were also *Ugly Betty* at 23 percent, *CSI Miami* at 22 percent, *Desperate Housewives* at 16 percent and *Dancing with the Stars* at 16 percent.¹³²

According to the survey, 80 percent of respondents had used SAP – 59 percent in the prior week, and 15 percent in the prior month. The survey also revealed that 88 percent of Spanish-speaking viewers would watch more English-language program if SAP were easier to find, 82 percent of respondents said they watched a show more often if available in SAP, 69 percent said they have an easier time understanding a story line when a program is offered in Spanish via SAP, 64 percent said they would watch more

English-language programming if more shows offered SAP, 48 percent said they watch programs they would not usually watch simply because they offer SAP, and 91 percent of the 2008-09 network primetime shows offering SAP were renewed for the 2009-10 season.¹³³

According to SAG's Director of Spanish Language Organizing Carlina Rodriguez, "This report shows that there are Spanish-speaking consumers eager to watch English-language programs if they are dubbed with Spanish audio. At a time when Spanish-language television networks dominate the ratings, the U.S. English-language networks and advertisers may be missing out on a lucrative opportunity to expand their audience nationwide."¹³⁴

Of 1,177 Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) 2001-02 Latino Viewing Choices Survey respondents asked if the televisions they regularly watch are equipped with SAP, 41.6 percent said yes. The survey went on to ask: How often do you use the SAP device when you watch television at home? Do you use it very often, often, seldom, or do not use it at all? Of 486 respondents for this question, 10.9 percent reported using SAP very often, 27.8 percent reported using it often, 28.2 percent reported seldom use, and 33.1 percent responded that they do not use SAP at all.¹³⁵ The problem is somewhat cyclical: Hispanics will not use the SAP if there is not a lot of programming available, and networks will not commit to offering programming in Spanish unless there is evidence Hispanics will use it. Nielsen does not track SAP usage, so television networks and stations can only infer usage through increases in viewership in Hispanic households, assuming that they are watching in Spanish.¹³⁶

The TRPI study also concluded that bilingual Hispanics prefer to watch news on Spanish-language stations rather than via SAP on English-language stations because the Spanish-language stations tend to offer more local and international news. Also, news translated into Spanish tends to be “tremendously different from Spanish news,” according to an executive at a Spanish-language network. “Usually, there’s only one voice translating every anchor and reporter. There’s a bit of delay. And the stories are aimed at Anglos, not Latinos.”¹³⁷ What makes it more difficult for Hispanic-Americans to watch programs via SAP is that the SAP features are usually buried in submenus only accessible through TV remotes or VCR remotes.¹³⁸

According to a 2004 Rincón & Associates study, 34.7 percent of foreign-born Hispanics with access to SAP on their televisions use it either “often” or “very often,” but only 8.8 percent of Hispanics born in the U.S. reported using SAP either “often” or “very often.”¹³⁹ The study also showed that Hispanics born in the U.S. watched 65.5 percent English programming, compared to just 21.3 percent for foreign-born Hispanics.¹⁴⁰ The Rincón & Associates study concluded that English-language networks need to reevaluate the audience of Hispanics born in the U.S. and gain a better understanding of what they consider to be good entertainment in order to be more competitive in terms of viewership from this audience.¹⁴¹ It appears this opportunity stands out to executives at English-language and bilingual networks aimed at Hispanic audiences.

For a long time, if Latinos in the U.S. wanted to watch English-language programming with a Spanish flavor, SAP was the only option. Now, with networks like NUVOtv, mun2, El Rey Network, Fusion and MiCasa Network, more options exist for

reaching the U.S. Hispanic audience. SAP only recognizes one part of the Hispanic culture: the Spanish language. With the makeup of the Hispanic-American audience rapidly changing, it is clear that simply dubbing programming in Spanish is not a sufficient way to reach this audience.

Hispanic Television Characters on English-Language Television

The majority of non-stereotypical Hispanic characters on television appear on Spanish-language networks. Until recently, Hispanic television networks had ignored the need for English-speaking U.S. Hispanics to see themselves properly represented on television. English-language networks have tried to draw in Hispanic audiences by incorporating Hispanic characters or themes into English-language programs because they believe Hispanic-Americans will watch shows with characters and themes they relate to.¹⁴²

By introducing English-speaking Hispanic-American characters into traditional English-language programming, broadcasters are trying to draw in English-speaking U.S. Hispanic viewers. But because most writers, directors and producers are not Hispanic, many of these attempts come off as stereotypical and, at times, offensive. With a growing number of English-speaking U.S. Hispanics, perhaps it is time to integrate more English-speaking Hispanic characters into television shows, and it is important to do so in a non-stereotypical fashion.

A study by UCLA's Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies analyzed more than 1,000 television scripts from the 2011-12 season and found that shows with more diverse casts added up to stronger ratings. Bunche Center Director Darnell Hunt said, "It's clear that people are watching shows that reflect and relate to their own experiences." He continued, "Everyone in the industry talks about the importance of diversity, but it clearly isn't priority one when decisions are made. And it's not going to be a priority until people realize how it affects the bottom line."¹⁴³

Lisa Navarrete of the National Council of La Raza advocacy group in Washington said, “There’s no question that the last place you’d know Latinos are the largest minority is by watching television. It’s a measure of how unreflective primetime television is of what’s really going on in America and what America looks like.”¹⁴⁴ Robert Rose, a former Univision sales executive adds, “It can’t be healthy for young Latinos growing up not to see themselves and their culture reflected on TV. It’s such an influential medium – there have to be some self-esteem issues involved.”¹⁴⁵ According to the 2011 Maximo Study by Motivo Insights and New Generation Latino Consortium, 64 percent of Hispanic millennial respondents said they would be more likely to attend a movie if it had a story about Latinos in the U.S., a story about Latinos in Latin America, or a Latino lead in an ensemble cast.¹⁴⁶

A 1980 study by Greenberg and Baptista-Fernandez identified that even though somewhere between six and nine percent of the U.S. population was Hispanic at the time, only 1.5 percent of television characters were Hispanic. In 1979, a similar decade-long study by Gerbner and Signorielli found that three percent of characters on primetime television dramas were Hispanic.¹⁴⁷ Though not many studies currently look at Hispanic representation in print media, a 1997 study by Bowen and Schmid analyzed 1,969 print advertisements published between 1987 and 1992. The results showed that Hispanics were represented in just 1.5 percent of print advertisements in 1987, and a strikingly low 0.6 percent of print advertisements in 1992. Similar results were found in studies of popular films as well. A study of the 50 most popular films of 1996 revealed that only two of 147 lead characters – or 1.36 percent – were Hispanic.¹⁴⁸

Whether in print media, film or television, it appears underrepresentation of Hispanic characters is a recurring theme. Children Now's Fall Colors 2003-04 Prime Time Diversity Report revealed that from 2001 to 2003, the percentage of Hispanic characters on television rose from four percent to 6.5 percent, and the percentage of Latino characters in opening credits increased from two percent to six percent. By 2003, 52 percent of all primetime programs included at least one Hispanic character.¹⁴⁹ Additionally, 38 percent of Hispanic characters played roles that were integral to the storyline of the television show.

GLAAD's *Where We Are on TV* report looked at 701 broadcast series regulars in the 2012-13 season and determined that just four percent of characters were Hispanic, compared to 78 percent white, 12 percent black, five percent Asian-Pacific Islander and one percent "other."¹⁵⁰ The number of Hispanic characters as series regulars on broadcast television actually dropped to four percent from 5.6 percent in 2011, continuing to make the Hispanic community one of the most underrepresented ethnic populations in American media.¹⁵¹ So how have Hispanic characters been represented on television?

Played by Lucille Ball's real-life husband Desi Arnaz, the Cuban character of Ricky Ricardo on CBS's *I Love Lucy* was an early depiction of a Hispanic character on television. By the mid-1950s, *I Love Lucy* was reaching nearly 50 million viewers each week.¹⁵² At this point in U.S. history, the stereotype of Ricky Ricardo was one of the few sources of information Americans had about Cuban culture. His character reinforced the following images: "rumba band leader, heavily accented English, excitable, always slightly out of place and hence slightly vulnerable, perhaps even childlike and non-

threatening.”¹⁵³ In an official history of *I Love Lucy*, Michael McClay wrote that Ricky Ricardo was “a combustible combination of cockiness and stubborn authority.”¹⁵⁴

Throughout the series, Lucy frequently made a mockery of Ricky’s accent. For example, in season 6, episode 162, the following dialogue took place after Lucy tried to say something in Spanish, and Ricky made fun of her attempt:

Lucy: I don't think that's very nice making fun of my Spanish.

Ricky: Well you've been making fun of my English for fifteen years.

Lucy: Well that's different, Spanish is a foreign language.

Ricky: Well English is a foreign language to me.

*Lucy: Well the way you speak it, it is to me too.*¹⁵⁵

While Hispanic-American characters may have developed over the years, some stereotypes have remained unchanged. John Markert studied 46 episodes of *The George Lopez Show*, which aired on ABC from 2002 to 2007, to assess how Latinos are presented on primetime television.¹⁵⁶ The show focused on a character, George Lopez, played by George Lopez, who worked at an airplane-parts factory in Los Angeles. He was promoted from a blue-collar worker position to a management position, where he becomes the boss of his mother and close friend. Lopez’s father-in-law Vic, played by Emiliano Diez, was a first-generation Cuban doctor who moved to Miami to escape Castro’s rule. Much like Ricky Ricardo, Vic has a very thick Cuban accent. Vic frequently makes condescending remarks about his Cuban daughter marrying a lowly Mexican.¹⁵⁷ An example of this was Lopez’s father-in-law saying, “That’s as bad as the

Mexican theme at your wedding,” to which George responded, “That wasn’t a theme, that was my family.”¹⁵⁸

On the sitcom *Scrubs*, which aired on NBC from 2001 to 2008 and ABC from 2009 to 2010, Dominican nurse Carla Espinosa was portrayed as hot-tempered, gossipy and sassy.¹⁵⁹ A recurring theme throughout the show is that her significant other does not know her ethnicity, and he frequently labels her as Puerto Rican, Mexican or a descendent of another Spanish-speaking country.¹⁶⁰ While some may view this as stereotyping men as forgetful, others may view this as stereotyping all Hispanic cultures to be the same, which could be considered offensive.

Playing the fiery Colombian Gloria Delgado-Pritchett on ABC’s *Modern Family* since its debut in 2009, Sofia Vergara topped the 2013 Forbes’ list of Highest-Paid TV Actresses for the second consecutive year.¹⁶¹ While some critics say that her portrayal is only furthering a stereotype of Latina women, Vergara defends her role on the popular sitcom. Her character is a “hyperbolic embodiment of all stereotypes of Latinas.”¹⁶² Compared to other ethnic groups, Hispanic characters are more often portrayed with heavy accents.¹⁶³ Gloria has a very thick accent that is often mocked, and she frequently shows off her body and sexuality.¹⁶⁴

Vergara asked, “Who ever said that all Latin women are the same? It’s impossible to caricature millions of women from 20 countries. There are many kinds of Latinas, just like there are many types and styles of women all over the world.” She went on to say that she is portraying somewhat of a stereotype, but that it “goes more toward seeing us as all about our families, hard working, standing up for ourselves, ultra-protective of our

kids, and that we do ourselves up more than others, because a lot of us wear perfume even to take the kids to school in the morning.”¹⁶⁵

Despite criticism about furthering stereotypes, Vergara is at the top of her career. Her earnings reached \$30 million due to her role on *Modern Family* and her numerous endorsement deals, including commercial deals – some in English and some in Spanish – with Diet Pepsi, CoverGirl, Rooms To Go, Synthroid (a thyroid medication), laundry detergent, Comcast and State Farm Insurance. She also promotes her own clothing line at Kmart.¹⁶⁶

The growing Hispanic-American population has only furthered her popularity with retailers. As a bilingual actress appearing on one of the most popular American sitcoms, Vergara has massive appeal as a spokeswoman.¹⁶⁷ But even with Vergara’s popularity, *Modern Family* is not a hit among Hispanic-American viewers. In the 2011-12 season, the show averaged roughly 798,000 Hispanic viewers of its overall viewership of 12.9 million people. That means Hispanic viewers only made up about six percent of *Modern Family*’s audience that season, despite Nielsen monitoring 48 million Hispanic-American television viewers.¹⁶⁸ On the night of the May 2012 *Modern Family* season finale, Univision drew in 5.2 million viewers for its telenovela *La Que No Podía Amar*.¹⁶⁹

George Lopez has arguably been the most successful English-language broadcast network show centering on a Hispanic family to date. The 2010 NBC series *Outlaw*, which starred Jimmy Smits as a former Supreme Court judge, was canceled after just eight episodes. The 2012 CBS midseason sitcom *Rob*, which starred comedian Rob Schneider as a man marrying into a large Mexican-American family, also lasted just eight

episodes.¹⁷⁰ Not only did critics respond unfavorably to *Rob*, many also found it to be inappropriate. The TV critic for the *Denver Post* called the show “genuinely offensive,” while *The New York Times* said the show was “predicated on cheap ethnic humor,” and Matt Roush of *TV Guide* referred to the portrayal as “a sprawling brood of shockingly stereotypical clichés.”¹⁷¹ In the 2013-14 season, NBC debuted *Welcome to the Family*, which focused on the merging cultures of a Caucasian family and a Hispanic-American family as two adult couples find out that not only are their teenage children in love, but they have also just learned of an unplanned pregnancy. The show was canceled after three short weeks.¹⁷²

Whether due to content or offensive stereotypes, this approach of using Hispanic characters in English-language television shows to lure Hispanic viewers does not appear to be working among adults for English-language networks despite English-speaking Hispanics claiming an interest in Hispanic-American characters on television.¹⁷³ Perhaps there is a right way to introduce English-speaking Hispanic characters on television, though. NUVOTV, mun2, El Rey Network, Fusion and MiCasa Network all feature English-speaking Hispanic characters on television in a non-stereotypical way. By employing Hispanic writers, directors and producers, these networks ensure that the English-speaking characters they introduce will be relatable rather than offensive.

Hispanic-Americans and Children's Television

Hispanic children in the U.S. are growing up in a much different world of media than the world their parents grew up in. U.S. Hispanic children now see themselves represented on television in non-stereotypical, non-offensive ways. While Hispanic adult characters have not proven to be very successful in mainstream television, younger generations of English-speaking Hispanics are being portrayed more favorably on television. Nickelodeon found a hit with an animated seven-year old Latina with *Dora the Explorer*. In its first year, the show became the top-rated program for preschoolers ages two through five.¹⁷⁴ At one point it was aired on weekdays on Nickelodeon as well as on CBS on Saturday mornings. More than a decade ago, the success of *Dora the Explorer* raised the question of how successful Hispanic-oriented programming can be on mainstream television. Lisa Navarrete said, "Nickelodeon is breaking the myth that non-Latinos won't watch a program about Latinos. These are shows that are appealing to all kids."¹⁷⁵

The August 2000 premiere of *Dora the Explorer* was Nick Jr.'s highest rated premiere. In 2001, the show was averaging 1.2 million viewers ages two through five, which was nearly triple the audience of its closest competitor. The Nick Jr. package that once aired on CBS helped to increase viewership among viewers ages two through five by 51 percent on Saturday mornings.¹⁷⁶ *Dora* remains popular to this day, and her show even inspired more than one spinoff, including *Go, Diego, Go!* Both *Dora* and *Diego* help young viewers learn some Spanish-language vocabulary while also helping viewers with math skills, music skills and physical coordination.¹⁷⁷ With 20 percent of the total

audience for *Dora the Explorer* and *Go, Diego, Go!* being comprised of Hispanic children, Hispanic networks have reason to believe this age group will respond favorably to English-language programming.¹⁷⁸

Nickelodeon was not the only network to air animated programming with Hispanic stars. From 2004 to 2007, PBS aired 65 episodes of a half-hour daily strip, *The Misadventures of Maya and Miguel*, which featured ten-year old Hispanic twins and was designed as an educational sitcom for viewers six to eight years old.¹⁷⁹ Disney's *Handy Manny* also went over well with Hispanic mothers. According to Nancy Kanter, executive vice president of original series programming at Disney, Hispanic mothers were happy to hear Spanish included in the programming their children watch because they feared their children were, "losing touch with their Spanish."¹⁸⁰ Horowitz & Associates vice president Adrianna Waterston said English-dominant Hispanics say it is important for their kids to have Spanish-language programming because they are not able to teach their kids Spanish, but they still want them to learn.¹⁸¹ Watching children's shows with Hispanic characters will not teach children to fluently speak Spanish, but Hispanic mothers are "thankful [their children are] hearing Spanish on preschool TV."¹⁸² This may appear to detract from the trend, but language use statistics prove that English-language continues to grow in dominance despite a stated desire to see the Spanish language flourish.¹⁸³

University of California at Irvine Professor Rubén Rumbaut explained that it is normal for cultures to experience language loss after multiple generations. In a 2011 interview with Morning Edition Host Renee Montagne, he spelled out, "The first adult

generation of immigrants ended up speaking survival-level English with an accent. You know, maybe think of Desi Arnaz in *I Love Lucy*. The second generation, they remain bilingual, albeit their proficiency faded over time. And finally, the third generation, grandchildren, grew up speaking English only, perhaps with a few quaint vestiges — *muchas gracias*. You know, and the overarching story remains essentially that which we have seen throughout American history; a three generational story of language death, which unfortunately is what has given the United States a reputation as a language graveyard.”¹⁸⁴

Surprisingly, even with the success of Hispanic-themed children’s programming, market-leader Univision put forth little effort in the realm of children’s programming, and in 2007 Univision was actually fined a record-breaking \$24 million for failing to meet the requirement of airing three hours per week of education and informative programming for children, as outlined by the Federal Communications Commission.¹⁸⁵

Rick Rodriguez, one-time president and general manager of qubo, which manages children’s television programming blocks for Ion Media Network stations, NBC and Telemundo, said the FCC fine for Univision should have come as a wake-up call for other networks. He said reaching out to Hispanic children with quality Spanish-language programming is a worthwhile challenge, and said that networks need to take efforts more seriously in reaching out to Hispanic children.¹⁸⁶ After all, these Hispanic children will grow up and eventually join the ranks of the coveted 18-34 year old demographic advertisers and programmers prize. Would it not be smart to target this audience as children and create a loyal fan base from an early age? Maria Urquiaga, Mexicanal’s

senior vice president of production and programming, thinks so. She believes Univision and Telemundo have largely ceded the children's television market. She said, "I want to groom my audience from age zero. I think it is very important that we maintain the Spanish language. At Mexicanal with our children's programming we are trying to make that into a reality so children will not lose their parents' language. We are a way of keeping that from the beginning to adulthood."¹⁸⁷

Tom Ascheim, executive vice president and general manager of Nickelodeon Television, says the success of *Dora the Explorer*, *Go, Diego, Go!* and *The Misadventures of Maya & Miguel* has dramatically reshaped Hispanic children's programming, and the idea of including bilingual characters in children's programming has become "an unbelievable cultural phenomenon."¹⁸⁸ Carlos Cortes, professor emeritus of history at University of California-Riverside, who was also a member of the advisory board for *The Misadventures of Maya & Miguel*, said before these children's programs, "there was always kind of an embarrassment"¹⁸⁹ that children linked to speaking Spanish. It is now safe to say that with the success of these programs, that embarrassment has disappeared. Perhaps the success with Hispanic characters among these young viewers foreshadows success down the road with Hispanic characters on television when these viewers grow up and become part of the highly valued 18-34 age group. With non-stereotypical, English-speaking Hispanic characters proving successful among these children at a young age, programmers see an opportunity to provide English-language programming to this generation once it outgrows children's programming. Moving from

these programs to English-language programming catering to U.S. Hispanics will be a natural progression.

Hispanic-Americans' Engagement in Digital Media

In a world of media consumption that now frequently has users viewing more than one screen at a time, social media usage cannot be overlooked. U.S. Hispanics have shown a particularly strong interest in digital and social media, so it is not surprising to see networks place a stronger focus on this sphere. In 2012, programmers made an effort to expand content availability by making Hispanic offerings available to consumers in the U.S. not only on television, but also online and on mobile platforms as part of the national TV Everywhere initiative.¹⁹⁰ Hispanic-Americans have shown a strong interest in online and mobile media. It is also important to recognize that social media among Hispanics appears to be trending toward English. With frequent crossovers between television and social media in the modern digital age, it is not surprising to see similar trends emerge on both television and social media.

Marisol Martinez, senior director of relationship marketing for Time Warner Cable, said, "We know that Hispanics over-index on programming on the go [consuming more video via mobile devices than general-market consumers], and our specific focus will continue to be supporting the company's mission of enabling customers to access entertainment across multiple devices."¹⁹¹ Time Warner Cable is the second largest cable operator in the United States, and it now carries roughly 40 Spanish-language channels on its online and mobile app for computers, Apple iOS and Android devices.¹⁹²

While, as of 2013, 70 percent of white, non-Hispanic Internet users engage in social media, 80 percent of Hispanics on the Internet use social media sites. Additionally, 28 percent of Hispanic users use Twitter, compared to just 14 percent of

non-Hispanic white Internet users.¹⁹³ Research from SocialGuide, part of Nielsen Company, revealed that social media audiences of Spanish-language television programs tend to generate more social media engagement per user than their English-language competition. For example, while there are generally fewer viewers tweeting about *Despierta América* than about *Today* or *Good Morning America*, those tweeting about *Despierta América* average two and a half to three tweets per broadcast compared to about two tweets per user for *Today* or *Good Morning America*.¹⁹⁴

According to the Pew Hispanic Center, in 2012, 68 percent of Hispanic Internet users reported using Facebook, Twitter or other social networking sites, compared to 58 percent of all U.S. Internet users.¹⁹⁵ Not surprisingly, Hispanic-Americans ages 18 to 29 are most likely to engage in social media, with 84 percent saying they do. Additionally, 63 percent of foreign-born Hispanics in the U.S. report using social media compared to 73 percent of Hispanics born in the U.S.¹⁹⁶ While 76 percent of English-dominant Hispanics report using social media, 67 percent of bilingual Hispanics and 61 percent of Spanish-dominant Hispanics in the U.S. say they use social media.¹⁹⁷ Among Hispanics who use social media sites, English is the most frequently used language, with 60 percent of users saying they use mostly or only English on social media sites. When looking only at U.S.-born Hispanics, 86 percent of users said they use mostly or only English on social media sites.¹⁹⁸ Perhaps seeing the trend toward English on social media has influenced broadcasters to reevaluate programming strategies.

With Hispanic-Americans so engaged in social media, it should come as no surprise that the Premios Billboard tried to capitalize on the viewers' Twitter use in 2013.

While engaging in social media is not out of the ordinary, what made this interesting was the decision to include two active Twitter feeds during the music awards ceremony – one feed in Spanish and one feed in English. In doing this, Telemundo acknowledged that while many U.S. Hispanics want to engage in Hispanic media, a large number of them struggle to read and write in Spanish.

Even with growing engagement in digital media among Hispanics, a group of industry executives at the NATPE (National Association of Television Program Executives) conference in January 2013 said no matter how much the Internet and other technology advancements change the landscape of television, rapid growth in the U.S. Hispanic population makes for a bright future in television aimed at Hispanic-Americans.¹⁹⁹

III. Research Questions

The overarching question of this research is: Why are Spanish-language networks now targeting Hispanic-Americans with English-language programming? El Rey Network launched in December 2013, Fusion launched in October of 2013, NUVOTV re-launched in 2011 and MiCasa Network is planning to reach areas outside of Houston by the end of March 2014. What is the motivation behind launching an English-language network targeting Hispanic-American audiences? This research discovers what research led to this development and if this is a new way to compete with traditional English-language networks. It is possible that networks have oversaturated the Spanish-language market and need a new outlet for programming, so they have turned to English. Perhaps Spanish-language networks fear losing viewers as younger generations tend to speak more English than Spanish.

With many possible factors contributing to a new trend, the author looks at the following research questions to determine why programmers now appear to be trending toward English-language programming aimed at Hispanics:

RQ1: With the most growth among U.S. Hispanics coming from births within the U.S., and with these Hispanics grow up speaking English, how much of a factor does this play in deciding to program in English for Hispanics?

RQ2: With Hispanics becoming a very significant part of the U.S. population, and mainstream media having been largely unsuccessful in capturing this audience with

relatable, English-speaking Hispanic characters, how much demand is there for English-speaking Hispanic characters on television?

RQ3: Do advertisers have more incentive to reach U.S. Hispanics in a new way given the increase in Hispanic-American buying power?

RQ4: Do business opportunities or partnerships encourage programmers to reach out to Hispanic audiences with English-language programming?

RQ5: Has the Spanish-language television market become too saturated, creating a market for new cable networks to reach young Hispanics in English?

IV. Research Justification

The growth of the Hispanic-American population – and television-viewing audience – is too significant to overlook. This thesis explores why Spanish-language networks appear to be trending toward English-language programming, and what led to this shift in strategy. With the recent growth in English-language ventures for Hispanic-American audiences, one cannot help but wonder: what is driving this trend?

With the trend being fairly new – NUVOtv rebranded itself in 2011, El Rey Network and Fusion launched in 2013, MiCasa Network is rolling out in new markets outside of only Houston in 2014 and mun2 is beginning to shift more toward English-language programming in 2014 – this is a relatively untapped fountain of information. This research will be beneficial to professionals and academics alike by exposing not only a need within television programming, but also the reasoning behind the growing need, and an explanation of the industry's response. Programmers can look to this study to better understand programming strategies that are forming this trend.

V. Methodology

This thesis is an exploratory research study to find out what is driving the trend of catering to U.S. Hispanics with more English-language programming. This research identified five sets of factors to explain the trend:

- An increase in U.S. Hispanic birth rates leading to more Hispanic-Americans growing up speaking English,
- A lack of non-stereotypical, English-speaking Hispanic characters on television,
- Increased buying power among U.S. Hispanics becoming more attractive to television advertisers,
- Business opportunities and partnerships to help grow audiences for major players in the Hispanic-American television industry and
- Creation of a market for English-language television catering to U.S. Hispanics with so many Spanish-language options already available.

This research included six in-depth interviews with industry experts, executives at English-language or bilingual networks aimed at U.S. Hispanic audiences, to determine how the growing Hispanic population, particularly the percentage born in the United States that grows up speaking English, affects network decisions to cater to U.S. Hispanics with English-language television. Interview participants included executives at El Rey Network, MiCasa Network, mun2, NUVOtv and Fusion. These interviews were conducted over the phone and were audio-recorded with permission. All recordings were transcribed, and recordings were deleted at the conclusion of the research.

The primary research consisted of intensive interviews with programming executives at broadcast networks catering to Hispanic audiences. The Institutional Review Board approved the participant informed consent form (included in Appendix B) and the research methodology, and a certification of exemption (included in Appendix C) was granted on February 28, 2014. Each interview participant was emailed a copy of an informed consent document, and each participant responded electronically to confirm receipt and understanding. Interview participants included: James Kanatas, Director of Programming, El Rey Network on March 3, 2014; Johnathan Gwyn, Chief Executive Officer, MiCasa Network on March 4, 2014; Laura Dominguez, Coordinator of Program Scheduling, mun2 on March 6, 2014; Annette Villarreal, Coordinator of Programming & Development, NUVOTV on March 6, 2014; Nando Vila, Vice President of Programming, Fusion on March 11, 2014; and Miguel Tamayo, Director of Programming & Development, Fusion on March 11, 2014.

No confidential information was collected, and the interviews posed no known risks to participants. Participation in interviews was completely voluntary, and interviewees were entitled to withdraw at any point of the research. Interviews were conducted to determine networks' rationale for programming decisions and new programming strategies. The interview questions, included in Appendix A, touched on the five previously identified factors to determine the role each factor plays, if any, in the trend of catering to U.S. Hispanics with English-language programming.

VI. Findings

Interviews with six industry professionals, supplemented by secondary research, revealed reasons behind the trend of shifting toward English-language programming catering to U.S. Hispanics. Whether it be the independent networks, MiCasa Network and NUVOtv, or the products of the traditional Spanish-language powerhouses, mun2, El Rey Network and Fusion, it is clear networks are picking up on the need to program for an English-speaking Hispanic audience.

Following are the factors this research found to explain the trend:

1. The changing U.S. Hispanic demographic, most notably that most of the growth among the U.S. Hispanic population comes from Hispanics born in the U.S. who grow up speaking English, is a driving force behind networks programming in English to reach Hispanics.
2. English-speaking Hispanic characters generally have not been portrayed positively by mainstream television networks, therefore Hispanic networks now see an opportunity to fill a programming void by depicting English-speaking Hispanic characters in a more realistic, relatable way.
3. The buying power of U.S. Hispanics is growing rapidly, and this audience has become increasingly appealing to advertisers as advertisers look for ways to reach U.S. Hispanics in their language of choice, which is trending toward English as the population grows and ages.
4. Reaching Hispanic audiences with English-language programming presents a number of new business opportunities and partnerships for

media moguls and networks alike, so big names in the business see opportunities for business growth through programming in English for U.S. Hispanics.

5. It is now relatively easy to acquire a cable network, and with so many networks catering to U.S. Hispanics with Spanish-language programming already, it is now an opportune time to reach out to this audience in a new way, with English-language programming.

According to former Univision Networks President Ray Rodriguez in 2002, Hispanics are, “watching [mainstream] English-language television because they don’t have a choice.”²⁰⁰ As of 2009, at least four national television channels aimed at Hispanics, but airing bilingual or English-language programming, had been launched: mun2, SÍTV (now NUVOtv), Tr3s and LATV. Of young, bicultural Hispanics, Alex Pels, general manager of mun2, said, “We feel this is a segment that is completely underserved in terms of general market programming; even the Spanish networks are not serving them.”²⁰¹ It appears more industry executives are trying to catch up now with new programming strategies.

According to Jeff Bercovici and Dorothy Pomerantz at Forbes, it is no mystery what is driving all this activity in the Hispanic television market. The growth of the Hispanic population may be the most significant demographic trend reshaping America, as the 2010 census suggests. There are more than 52 million Americans of Hispanic descent, and by 2050 that number is projected to reach 133 million, which means almost

one-third of Americans will be Hispanic. A full 50 percent of U.S. population growth over the past decade has come from this group.²⁰²

With population growth comes other factors, like business opportunities and changing economics. Additionally, as the television business expands with population growth, perhaps there is simply more room to reach audiences in a variety of ways. Additionally, with the growth of the U.S. Hispanic population, the representation of Hispanics on television becomes even less representative of the American population breakdown. Federico Subervi, a communications professor at the University of Texas at Austin said in 2001, “We absolutely need more English-language programs for Hispanics, especially young Hispanics. We’ve been saying it for years, but nobody seems to listen.”²⁰³ More than a decade later, it seems networks are now listening and responding to the need. The following sections will discuss factors contributing to this trend in programming.

Nature of the U.S. Hispanic Television Audience

One factor that explains the trend toward English-language programming for U.S. Hispanics is the changing makeup of the Hispanic-American television audience. Most growth in the U.S. Hispanic Television audience comes from U.S.-born, English-speaking Hispanics. As early as 2006, births were outpacing immigration as the main source of growth of the Hispanic population.²⁰⁴ These American-born Latinos are less likely to speak only Spanish, more likely to speak English as a primary language, and they are more likely to seek higher levels of education, obtain higher-paying jobs and marry outside of their ethnic group than are the preceding generations of Hispanic-American immigrants.²⁰⁵ According to Kanatas, birth rates were an important factor contributing to the launch of El Rey Network. “Cross-border immigration has dropped off dramatically, so the growth is coming from births,” he explained.²⁰⁶ What is more compelling is the 2012 finding from the Pew Hispanic Center that net migration flow from Mexico to the United States has not only stopped, it may have actually reversed due to increased border patrol and a less-than-appealing U.S. economy.²⁰⁷

Spanish-language use and proficiency is decreasing with each generation as English-language use and proficiency rise.²⁰⁸ According to a 2012 Pew Hispanic Center study, 82 percent of Hispanics living in the United States report speaking Spanish, and 95 percent say it is important for future generations to continue speaking Spanish.²⁰⁹ Of all Hispanics in the 2012 Pew Hispanic Center study, 82 percent said they speak Spanish “pretty well” or “very well,” and 78 percent said they read Spanish “pretty well” or “very well.” Among first-generation U.S. Hispanics, the number is 91 percent in both

categories. Among second-generation U.S. Hispanics, 82 percent of respondents said they speak Spanish “pretty well” or “very well,” and 71 percent read Spanish “pretty well” or “very well.” Just 47 percent of those respondents who are third-generation or higher U.S. Hispanics reported speaking Spanish “pretty well” or “very well,” and that number drops to 41 percent for Spanish reading abilities.²¹⁰ Evidently, Spanish-language proficiency is on the decline, and programmers would be remiss to assume they can reach all U.S. Hispanics with Spanish-language programming.

In the 2012 National Hispanic Consumer Study, Experian Simmons found that 48 percent of Hispanics predominantly speak Spanish at home, but 57 percent mostly speak English outside of the home.²¹¹ The reasons for Hispanics passing along Spanish-language skills at a decreasing rate are varied, but include avoiding discrimination, a desire for economic advancement and the belief that English must replace Spanish in order to truly assimilate and become American.²¹² Susana Rivera-Mills, a professor of Spanish at Oregon State University, says “interlinguistic” marriages play a significant role in the declining use of Spanish among Hispanic-Americans.²¹³

These “interlinguistic” marriages may also lead to more people growing up bilingual, which may actually be beneficial in a number of ways. Yudhijit Bhattacharjee wrote in a 2012 piece for the *New York Times Sunday Review*, “Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.”²¹⁴ Being bilingual in English and Spanish may make it easier to get a job, will make it easier to raise kids to speak Spanish, can be very useful for travel, will help people improve

overall vocabulary, will help people communicate more fluidly with a larger number of people, makes it easier to learn a third language, improves cultural understanding of Hispanic cultures, helps people to avoid reading subtitles during foreign films and will aid in understanding of foreign songs.²¹⁵ Studies also show that being bilingual can be beneficial to the brain, making it nimbler, quicker, better to deal with ambiguities, resolve conflicts and even resist Alzheimer's disease for longer periods of time.²¹⁶ While some of these benefits may be more useful than others, this non-exhaustive list proves there are many benefits for native English speakers to gain from learning to speak Spanish.

One study reveals that even though the overall number of Spanish-speaking Americans may be on the rise, this is not being fueled by Hispanic-Americans. Given the list of benefits to being bilingual, this should not come as a surprise. Non-Hispanics are helping their children to grow up bilingual to not only pass on what they have learned in school, but also to take advantage of business opportunities.²¹⁷ Many non-Hispanics are also teaching their children Spanish because they have a Spanish-speaking spouse, despite what Rivera-Mills has found in "interlinguistic" marriages. Mark Hugo Lopez, director of Hispanic Research at the Pew Research Center said, "even though the number of Spanish speakers is projected to grow, among Hispanics, the share that speak Spanish is projected to fall from about 75 percent now to 66 percent in 2020."²¹⁸

As of 2011, 37.6 million people were speaking Spanish at home, and 2.8 million of those people are non-Hispanics. Spanish is by far the most spoken non-English language in the United States. For comparison, 2.8 million people in the U.S. speak Chinese at home, which is the same number as only the non-Hispanics who speak

Spanish at home.²¹⁹ The racial composition of non-Hispanics in the U.S. who speak Spanish is similar to that of the overall U.S. population. Of this group, 80 percent speak English “very well” and an additional 11 percent speak English “well.”²²⁰ As the number of non-Hispanics speaking Spanish at home rises, so too will the number of Hispanics speaking English at home. It is estimated that 34 percent of Hispanics will speak only English at home by 2020, which is an increase from 25 percent in 2010.²²¹

Sixty-one percent of Hispanic adults in the U.S. say they can carry on a conversation in English either “pretty well” or “very well,” and 60 percent say they can read a book or newspaper in English “pretty well” or “very well.”²²² Among only the second-generation Hispanics in the U.S., these statistics increase to 92 percent and 91 percent respectively, and among third-generation or higher, the numbers grow to 96 percent and 94 percent respectively.²²³

Sixty-nine percent of third-generation or higher U.S. Hispanics are English dominant, 29 percent bilingual, and just one percent is Spanish dominant. Among the third-generation and higher U.S. Hispanics in the study, 74 percent listen to music mostly in English,²²⁴ 83 percent watch television mostly in English²²⁵ and 80 percent think mostly in English.²²⁶ In the 2004 Rincón & Associates study, 29.3 percent of foreign-born U.S. Hispanics reported the last movie they saw was in English while 81.3 percent of Hispanics born in the U.S. reported the last movie they saw was in English.²²⁷

Some believe immigrants have to learn English to be successful in America. Former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appears to hold this belief. In 2007, he said at the annual convention of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists,

“You’ve got to turn off the Spanish television set.” He said that when Hispanic-Americans stop watching Spanish-language television, “you’re just forced to speak English, and that just makes you learn the language faster.”²²⁸ Schwarzenegger, himself an immigrant from Austria, said this in response to questions about how Hispanic students in the U.S. can improve academic performance. He explained, “I know this sounds odd and this is the politically incorrect thing to say and I’m going to get myself in trouble. But I know that when I came to this country, I very rarely spoke German to anyone.”²²⁹ Rafael Olmeda, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists said that most members of NAHJ would agree with Schwarzenegger’s comments. Olmeda said after the event, “Most people I’ve spoken to walked away believing that he was trying to say that we must learn English to succeed in American society.”²³⁰ But regardless of language, a growing number of Hispanic-Americans see themselves as fitting into American society.

According to the Pew Hispanic Center, 47 percent of Hispanic-Americans say they are typical Americans – with that number increasing to 66 percent when looking only at Hispanics born in the U.S. – and 87 percent of Hispanics living in the U.S. say it is important for immigrant Hispanics to learn English in order to be successful in this country.²³¹ Pew research also found that 38 percent of Hispanic-Americans are Spanish dominant, 38 percent are bilingual and 24 percent are English dominant. Of those born in the U.S., 51 percent are English dominant.²³²

Research shows that Hispanic millennials want to define themselves without sacrificing their culture. They want to embrace their roots but still define themselves as a

new generation of Hispanics.²³³ Tr3s, MTV's bilingual network for Hispanics in the U.S., unveiled research in 2011 dubbed "Death of the Hispanic Adult Demo as We Know It." Senior Vice President of Research for Tr3s Nancy Tellet recognizes the importance of monitoring changes in U.S. Hispanic demographics. "This research helps us understand the massive changes taking place within the Hispanic adult segments, especially 18-34s, as U.S.-born Hispanic millennials begin to dominate the 18-29 segment. We need to develop strategies that consider this demo, to better serve the Hispanic market and deliver results," she said.²³⁴

The Tr3s study revealed many key findings about Hispanic millennials. Among these findings were results that show Hispanic millennials

- Have more respect for parental authority than their non-Hispanic counterparts,
- Live at home longer than their non-Hispanic counterparts,
- Prefer old-fashioned romances and tend to reject the more modern idea of "friends with benefits,"
- Prefer to purchase brand names, particularly with food and cleaning products,
- Have adopted "American open-mindedness,"
- Feel that evolving technology is their "millennial turf," and try to police technology usage of their relatives, and
- Want to stand out and be noticed as unique, but not be labeled as freaks.²³⁵

This research makes it evident that this demographic is looking for relatable programming that does not make them feel like a segmented audience. As the title of the

study suggests, these young adults cannot be reached with the same type of programming as previous adult U.S. Hispanic demographics.

Research also shows that the majority of millennial Latinos watch mostly English-language television,²³⁶ but 79 percent of Hispanic millennials speak Spanish regularly, and 97 percent believe it is important to stay in touch with their Hispanic culture and traditions.²³⁷ With this kind of information, a new niche in television for this demographic is too sensible to ignore.

Despite Telemundo's success with Spanish-language programming, it added a new strategy in 2011: appealing to audiences with English. The network started Spanglish programming and English-language subtitles to attract both new viewers and advertisers.²³⁸ This new approach started with a Sunday variety show hosted by Cuban television personality Cristina Saralegui as well as with telenovelas. Telemundo's president, Emilio Romano, who joined the network in October 2011, explained that his goal was to, "focus on a more acculturated, more bilingual" audience while still engaging the Spanish-speaking audience.²³⁹ Interestingly, *Pa'lante con Cristina* was canceled after just one season.²⁴⁰

Though Romano initially expressed an interest in bilingual audiences, his strategy changed by 2013. As Univision ventures into English-language territory, Romano expressed in 2013 that Telemundo is committed to Spanish-language programming, and is concerned with viewers who primarily watch television in Spanish.²⁴¹ He believes that once immigrant groups begin habitually speaking English, they will want to watch mainstream English-language entertainment and not specialized content for Hispanic-

American audiences. He rationalized, “I don’t see any English-language channels for Italian-Americans.”²⁴²

Telemundo has long been competing with Univision to be the top Spanish-language network, but Romano reversed his competitive strategy and chose to focus solely on Spanish-language programming. Once Telemundo became able to reach as many Hispanic viewers as Univision, Romano felt Telemundo would be able to compete with Univision.

Univision, on the other hand, sees English-language networks as its main competition – not Telemundo.²⁴³ Univision’s President and Chief Executive Officer Randy Falco said in 2012, “I don’t think you can talk about the “Big Four” networks anymore when we beat NBC 195 nights out of the year last year in primetime.”²⁴⁴

Univision also beat the Big Four networks in 146 of the first 231 days of the 2004-05 broadcast television season.²⁴⁵ In the 2012-13 season, Univision consistently outperformed NBC in primetime viewership among the coveted 18-34 demographic.²⁴⁶ In July of 2013, Univision reported quarterly profits of \$40.7 million, up 28 percent from the same period in 2012. During that same month, Univision flaunted that its ratings among 18-49 years olds beat ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox. In fact, national advertisements boasted, “Número Uno is the New #1.”²⁴⁷

In 2013, Univision took part in launching two networks, Fusion and El Rey Network. Univision partnered with Director Robert Rodriguez and FactoryMade Ventures to form El Rey Network, and Univision teamed up with ABC News to launch the English-language network Fusion, targeting acculturated, English-speaking, Hispanic-

American millennials with hard news, news satire, sports and commentary.²⁴⁸ Catherine Sullivan, who is senior vice president of ABC news Sales, explained, “We are winking at Hispanic, it is not overtly Hispanic. If you are not Hispanic, you won’t feel like the network isn’t for me.”²⁴⁹

In 2006, then-president of Telemundo Don Browne said that Univision was “as good as it’s going to be,” and that Telemundo was “not even close to as good as we’re going to be.”²⁵⁰ Miguel Barrientos, an expert on Hispanic marketing and the host of a radio program on KRLV 1340 AM in Las Vegas sees success Telemundo Media’s future. He said, “I think NBC and Telemundo are poised for the future. They are going into the younger Latino market and they are tapping into English dominant and bilingual Latinos. I think mun2’s programming, the reality shows, the bilingual and ‘Spanglish’ programs attract the younger market. That’s something we don’t see with Univision. They are sticking more to the Spanish-language programming and trying to control the market with that.”²⁵¹

Laura Dominguez of mun2 said, “We’re in a transition period right now, and we’re being directed to go a little more toward English.” She elaborated, “We have a new person overseeing Telemundo Media, Joe Uva, and he thinks we can reach more people with more English being spoken. His whole purpose has been to move us a little more toward English. I think it has to do with aligning ourselves more with mainstream broadcasting.” Dominguez expanded, “Our niche is Hispanic bilingual programming. Joe Uva is pushing for more English, but he doesn’t want it all in English. I don’t think

Telemundo will ever air English programming. They'll cater to the Spanish-speaking audience and then we'll come in with the bilingual [programming].”²⁵²

Even though Univision has historically resisted English-language programming, and even though ratings have been strong, Univision recognizes that demographic trends are shifting from foreign-born, Spanish-dominant Hispanics to Hispanics born in the United States who are growing up speaking English.²⁵³ Marc Morse, senior vice president of national broadcast for RJ Palmer, said of Fusion, “I think this will be very successful. Yes, you can find Hispanic viewers in other places, but marketers who dedicate time and money on programming specifically targeting the Hispanic market have greater recall.”²⁵⁴ Caleb Windover, vice president and managing director at MediaVest’s multicultural MV42 said there is a void in programming that speaks to Hispanic millennials in a relevant way. He reiterated that one in three millennials are Hispanic, and he said, “They are watching general entertainment TV, but not as much as you would think.”²⁵⁵

According to Alex Nogales, president of the National Hispanic Media Coalition, “So far, we don’t get enough news from English-language sources that are very directly aimed at us.” He believes Fusion will be successful and will become very attractive to advertisers as they realize the network’s potential. He said, “They look at the numbers and they’re saying to themselves, ‘There’s great potential here. If we can get into this very young population, we’ve got a huge customer base, not only for right now, but for the future.’”²⁵⁶

With Univision now focused on targeting English-speaking viewers, Telemundo feels the time is right to pounce on the opportunity to lure the predominantly Spanish-

speaking viewers. Even with so much popularity, Univision is still susceptible to competition, and its share of the Spanish-language market has dropped to 73 percent from 79 percent a decade ago due to growing competition in the marketplace.²⁵⁷

While Univision's primary audience overall will continue to be Spanish-speaking Hispanic-Americans, Cesar Conde still sees a growth opportunity among English-speaking audiences – both Hispanic and non-Hispanic. Conde said in 2012 that optimizing Univision's product to be consumed in both English and Spanish is a priority.²⁵⁸ He said, "I think it will be great for our Hispanic community, but I think more importantly, it will also help begin to transcend some of that English-language non-Hispanic audience that has a real interest in the type of programming that we have."²⁵⁹ Part of his goal is being realized with Fusion, Univision's joint venture with ABC. Conde said of Fusion before its launch, "If done the right way, this network will have broad appeal, beyond just the Latino community."²⁶⁰ Conde also said the venture is "an extension of [Univision's] vision to deliver the most relevant news and information, regardless of language, to all Hispanics."²⁶¹

CEO of MiCasa Network Johnathan Gwyn said the increased use of English among U.S. Hispanics "was a huge factor" in launching the network. "If you're Hispanic in America, the majority of us speak English at home, we speak English at school, and you know, we're here. If we go to Mexico, we have to speak Spanish. We're in America. I don't think the whole country should have to adjust and become bilingual. This country was built on the English language, and more than ever, there's more Hispanics born here and speaking English. And that's not going to stop," he said.²⁶²

Orci said that the lack of programming targeting the English-speaking and bilingual Hispanic community has been a missed opportunity for both programmers and advertisers, and he said, “We have to appeal to [Hispanics] in culture, but in the language of their preference. And a lot of the bilingual Hispanics watch English-language television and Spanish-language television. So you want to be able to reach them where they are.”²⁶³ He elaborated, “If you look at the demographics moving forward, the bilingual/English-speaking population is going to grow dramatically, much more so than the Spanish-speaking population. So from a targeting standpoint, as well as from a content standpoint, it’s a very smart move. And I think it fills a need that we as marketers have because we are a Hispanic ad agency — we are not a Spanish-language ad agency. So we’re looking to reach Hispanics in English and Spanish, and this gives us another avenue to reach that segment.”²⁶⁴

Fusion’s CEO Isaac Lee explained of his network, “We are trying to reach millennials, but what we’re not going to do is ignore that 20 percent of millennials are of Hispanic descent, that they have a huge influence in culture, in society, in politics, in the economy. And the best way for us to reach Hispanic millennials as a core audience is to give them great content. They do not want to get content that is specifically targeted at them. They just don’t want to be disregarded or appear to be invisible. So what we have seen in the research that we have done over the past two years is that the opportunity is huge, that we will be reaching not only Hispanic millennials but millennials, but for sure we will have a Latino edge, and for sure we are a product of the Disney company, of

ABC News and of Univision News. And you cannot be a child of Univision without having Latino blood.”²⁶⁵

Lee’s counterpart at ABC, Ben Sherwood, was quoted in *BusinessWeek* as saying his interest in Anglicizing Univision was spurred by a book he read in the 1990s about the declining population of white America. Even though he abandoned the book, he found the demographics convincing. He explained, “I’m a Californian, and in the 1990s I saw California go through the demographic changes that are now taking place throughout the United States.”²⁶⁶

Miguel Tamayo added, “The idea was essentially, with the trends in birthrates and the demographic shift, that the majority of Hispanics in the United States are either bilingual or English-dominant, and that number is going to continue to go up as the children of the immigrants continue to age and have their own kids. So Isaac [Lee] saw this as an area that mass media was missing out on. No one was speaking to this generation, and he felt like we could fill a void.”²⁶⁷

While networks are trying to fill a void in programming that speaks directly to Hispanic millennials, reaching millennials in general is difficult. With so many media options available – including online and social media – millennial audiences can be rather elusive. David Acosta, a Hispanic media specialist with The Arenas Group, a Los Angeles-based marketing agency, said, “Hispanic teens watch more English-language TV than they do Spanish-language TV, but it’s important to understand that nobody has been able to attract this audience. These teens are tough to reach everywhere.”²⁶⁸

Fusion, NUVOtv, mun2 and El Rey Network are hardly the only networks focusing on millennials. New cable networks, including Pivot and Sean “Diddy” Combs’s Revolt are also trying to grab the attention of millennials in the United States.²⁶⁹ What makes Fusion unique is the challenge of using television news as part of its strategy to attract millennials. While it is difficult for cable news networks to attract viewers of any age, it is especially difficult to attract viewers in an age group that relies heavily on the Internet and social media for its news. Instead of looking to the Associated Press as a primary source for news, it is entirely possible that Fusion will look to online discussions, Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr.²⁷⁰

Executives at Fusion pointed out that in this digital age, millennials are still watching more than 26 hours of linear television each week. Fusion’s plan to win its share of the millennial audiences involves infusing comedy and “irreverence”²⁷¹ throughout its programming, with shows similar to Comedy Central’s *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*. From 9 p.m. to 10 p.m., Fusion will air a satire block led by David Javeraum, who is a former executive producer and head writer for *The Daily Show*. The satire block includes a sports show and an animated news program.²⁷²

Familiar faces, including Univision’s anchor Jorge Ramos and Los Angeles broadcaster Leon Kraze, lead Fusion’s primetime news block. *The Morning Show* on Fusion runs from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. on weekdays, and on weekends there is a mix of documentaries and originals such as *Strange Medicine*, which is a 12-part series seeking to find the strangest cures and most exotic medicines around the world, and *Back Home*, which features different tastemakers each week as they travel to the home countries of

their families.²⁷³ By incorporating international themes into the programming, Fusion is able to entice Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike.

When interviewer Jeremy Hobson asked if in 20 years Lee thinks all Hispanics in America will be speaking English as their first language, he said, “No, I don’t think so. I think that if you see today, there are 35 million Hispanic households, speaking Spanish, and in 1980 they were ten million. So it’s an increase of 25 million. That’s why Univision, it’s growing. That’s why Univision ratings are increasing in double digits. That’s why they were the number one network in the sweeps of July. And at the same time within that growth, we have a huge opportunity with the second and third generation of those households to do good journalism. And what I can tell you is that when I was born, 87 percent of this country was white Anglos, and in 20 years, Jeremy, it’s going to be very close to 50 percent. That’s a huge demographic change that we cannot miss. And when you have 50 percent of the country that is young, that is diverse, that is multicultural, you have to adapt. You have to change, or you will be part of the past and not the future.”²⁷⁴

Programmers at mun2 appear to be noticing the same changes in the U.S. Hispanic population. Dominguez said of the changing audience, “I think that’s why we’re moving more toward English. The bilingual millennials are getting older, and a lot of the new generations, people in their 20s, are kind of abandoning the Spanish language, and they’re not as bilingual. A lot of my friends speak really bad Spanish. For whatever reason, as generations are here longer, they’re abandoning the Spanish-speaking culture.”

In programming for U.S. Hispanics, broadcasters have to account not only for the Hispanic audience, but also for the peers of the Hispanic audience. Vila noted that Hispanics are the ethnic group most likely to have friends of other races and most likely to intermarry. In the Hispanic community, only about ten percent of people do not have friends of a different race, and roughly half of Hispanics who have a spouse or partner are in relationships with non-Hispanics, compared to one tenth of white people and black people in relationships.²⁷⁵

Vila explained of reaching out to the Hispanic-American audience, “If you ignore their friends, they won’t want to watch. [They] want to consume media that allows [them] to relate to [their friends and significant others], not something that’s exclusionary to those people. So if it’s not interesting or entertaining for [their peers], it’s not going to be entertaining for them either. The media these days isn’t so much a personal experience; it’s a social experience.”²⁷⁶

Dominguez added, “I think [the U.S. Hispanic audience] will keep growing, but the number [of U.S. Hispanics] speaking Spanish will decline, so we’ll have to cater our programming to that [audience]. I think we’ll probably move a lot more toward English, and have Hispanic characters and Hispanic culture, but in the U.S. A lot of the novelas we have now take place in Mexico.”²⁷⁷ She explained of the reason mun2 is trending more toward English, despite being a child of all-Spanish Telemundo, “I think it’s just the growing bilingual Hispanic population. There’s enough of an audience out there to support a whole network.”²⁷⁸

With a rapidly growing U.S. Hispanic population, there seems to be a false sense among the general American population that Spanish-language will eventually be dominant in the United States. Perhaps this is due largely to exaggerations from fictional television shows, such as Fox's *Glee*. On the February 7, 2012 episode of the show, a character portrayed by Ricky Martin cited a fake statistic and asked, "Do you know that the U.S. Census believes that by 2030 the majority of Americans will use Spanish as their first language?"²⁷⁹ This misrepresentation contributes to the perception that this trend of programming in English for U.S. Hispanics is illogical. But this assessment is completely inaccurate. The U.S. Census Bureau confirmed that this statistic was fake and added that they do not regularly do projections of spoken languages. Census demographer Jennifer Ortman and survey statistician Hyon Shin projected that somewhere between 13 and 15.3 percent of the U.S. population older than five would speak Spanish by age 2020, and they say the number may grow only slightly by 2030. They both agree that *Glee*'s statistic is nowhere near accurate.²⁸⁰

With the Hispanic population in the U.S. rapidly growing, it would be a mistake for programmers to assume Hispanic-Americans are only interested in Spanish-language programming. Contrary to what mainstream media has suggested, U.S. Hispanics are actually trending more toward English-language content as the largest growing percentage of the U.S. Hispanic population comes from those born in the United States. With more Hispanic-Americans speaking English as a first language, it is more than sensible for networks to respond with English-language programming catering to Hispanic audiences.

Hispanic Representation on Television

Another factor explaining the trend is the lack of non-stereotypical, English-speaking Hispanic characters on television. Spanish-language networks have a wide array of Spanish-speaking Hispanic characters, but non-stereotypical English-speaking characters are few and far between on U.S. television. With a growing percentage of the U.S. Hispanic population being English-dominant, programmers see a need to more accurately represent the population with realistic English-speaking Hispanic characters.

As discussed in the literature review, mainstream English-language networks have been largely unsuccessful in attracting U.S. Hispanic viewership with Hispanic characters. With traditional English-language networks having limited success introducing English-speaking Hispanic characters on television, Hispanic networks now see an opportunity to showcase English-speaking Hispanic talent in a non-stereotypical, non-offensive way.

Perhaps the limited success among mainstream English-language networks stems from a lack of understanding of the audience and a general tendency to stereotype the audience, but networks continue to try this method, and may finally be gaining momentum, which appears necessary with added English-language competition coming from Hispanic networks. Christy Haubegger, an agent with Creative Arts Agency, mentioned that more shows on traditional English-language networks continue to try to maximize U.S. Hispanic viewership with Hispanic characters, and she noted the success of *Devious Maids* on Lifetime and *The Bridge* on FX, which “are able to succeed in a

large part because they are attracting a large Hispanic audience, more than 20 percent of the viewers,” she said.²⁸¹

Haubegger added that she has seen similar success on Hulu, which is not surprising given the aforementioned large Hispanic interest in digital and online media. She discussed the success of *East Los High*, an English-language show returning for its second season in the summer of 2014, which is a teen drama Web series with an all-Latino cast. “It did so incredibly well on Hulu — it delivered more audience for the month of July than all of the Spanish-language programming combined,” she said, and then added that the next generation of Hispanic viewers is “more likely to consume both digitally and in English.”²⁸²

But even with these recent on-air and digital successes, Hispanics are still largely underrepresented in the media. According to a study released by the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, Hispanics are especially underrepresented in films. The study evaluated the 500 top-grossing movies released in the U.S. between 2007 and 2012, and researchers found that U.S. Hispanics buy roughly 26 percent of movie tickets, yet they have only 4.2 percent of speaking roles in the films. Katherine Pieper, a research scientist at Annenberg’s Media, Diversity & Social Change Initiative, said, “At the core, this is a visibility issue. Who we see in film sends a powerful message about who is important and whose stories are valuable, both to international audiences and to younger viewers in our own country. Are films communicating to audiences that only certain stories are worth telling?”²⁸³

Fusion's Vila thinks television networks can learn a lot from movies. He says the *Spy Kids* and *Fast and Furious* franchises do very well with Hispanics, and they have a much more subtle approach to engaging Hispanics. He explains, "They look and feel like regular Hollywood movies, but they feature Hispanic characters in a way that most other movies would never do. Those movies over-index in U.S. Hispanic viewership. The model we're looking at, [our television programming] has to look and feel like it could be for anyone. Everyone likes those movies, but they feature Hispanics in a non-typecast way."²⁸⁴

Time Warner has tried to establish itself in the Hispanic market with CNN en Español, People en Español and HBO Latino, but Time Warner's head of diversity Lisa Quiroz says that is only a start. Now that 90 percent of U.S.-born Hispanics are watching television in English, programming in Spanish is obviously not enough to draw in viewership. Quiroz said, "If you're looking under the age of 30, it's a new America, if you will. Those niche brands have been incredibly important to us to help us understand those markets. [But] the biggest opportunity for us right now are our general-market brands."²⁸⁵ In terms of Time Warner's general market brands, HBO has been somewhat successful attracting Hispanic viewers. Both *True Blood* and *Game of Thrones* have audiences consisting of about 11 percent Hispanic-Americans. That may not be on par with the 16 percent of the general population that is Hispanic, but it is close to double the Hispanic audience of *Modern Family*, and as Quiroz points out, "I don't think anyone would call *True Blood* a Hispanic show." She adds, "I don't think anybody's solved the puzzle yet of what content appeals to U.S.-born Hispanic adults."²⁸⁶

Michael Finn, senior vice president of sales at El Rey Network recognizes the same gap in American television programming. He said, “Because [millennials are] the most ethnically diverse generation in history, we are focused on making sure that generation sees itself well represented on the screen.”²⁸⁷ Like Fusion, El Rey Network’s aim at Hispanics will be subtle at times. Finn said, “We are not targeting Hispanics with Spanish-language ads or programming, and our consumer ad campaign won’t target Hispanics, but we do expect them to come because of the programming, along with the general market millennials.”²⁸⁸ According to James Kanatas, director of programming at El Rey Network, the network is designed to appeal to young Hispanics, ages 18-34 or 18-49, and will skew male.²⁸⁹ The network’s original programming is designed to appeal to Hispanics, but to also be interesting to a general American audience. It is relatable, young-male skewing, programming where the characters, writers and producers just happen to be Hispanic.²⁹⁰

Kanatas added, “We’ve got people who by virtue of being second- or third-generation Hispanic have lived lives that help them bring a different viewpoint. They bring perspective to the content. In general, the way you program at a network, you go hire creative people to do something, and when you hire them, you hire them with the understanding that they bring a certain sensibility. They have a certain background, they have certain emotional and intellectual baggage. And I don’t mean that in a negative way, I just mean who they are. So you hire people who have the correct baggage, who bring the right style and sensibility and history in their lives to the property.”²⁹¹

NUVOtv shares a similar strategy. Villarreal explained, “Our programming strives to reflect what we consider an authentic Latino point of view, which means that the stories we tell are American completely, except that they’re told through the lens of Latino creators, whether that’s the producers, the cast, the company behind it, the writers, everyone involved in the creative process, on and behind camera, is getting a little bit of their taste of their culture.”²⁹²

Gwyn said of MiCasa Network’s purpose, “I would say we’re 18-49, we’re very family-driven, family-oriented. At the same time, I think we’re hip, young and cool, and going after that audience as well. We also show a lot of historical documentaries about people who are doing things for the community, standing up for American Latinos. I think it’s also wise to open up our eyes on politics. A lot of networks think all Latinos are one-sided and that we all want amnesty and that we all think like immigrants. But there are a lot of educated Hispanics in America that are not all pro-amnesty, some are more concerned about education and jobs. There are two sides to everything, and a lot of times that’s not talked about in mainstream media. You know, ‘Latinos are all one way,’ and that’s not true. We want to be American, we want to do what’s right and live by our forefathers, and that’s why we’re in this country, and that’s why our ancestors came to this country, and I think we need a voice.”²⁹³ But with a number of networks employing a new, similar programming strategy, the question begs to be asked: why is there a sudden focus on English-language and a hybrid of Spanish- and English-language programming aimed at Hispanic audiences?

El Rey Network's Kanatas spoke of Robert Rodriguez's idea behind the network. "We spoke with Robert, and he said, 'You've got all these kids at home who never see themselves on television. You know, they're born in America, they speak English, and they're never portrayed in heroic, iconic, cool ways. They're always sidekicks or villains or drug dealers or something.' So that was the idea. So there was a market demand for this and it was also a heavy personal component."

He continued, "El Rey is designed to be a network that reflects modern America. It's hard to talk about young, modern America without talking about Hispanics. As Robert [Rodriguez] said, these kids at home are not seeing themselves on TV. There's a pressing need, or a particularly strong need there, but just in general, there's probably a bit of a lack of diversity on television relative to what the actual demographics in America look like. El Rey is about an Americana cultural experience."²⁹⁴

Rodriguez is not alone. MiCasa Network's Gwyn said, "I truly believe that our young Hispanics – and some aren't even young, you have baby boomers that are Hispanic-American or Mexican-American that have been born here, and they've lived here for 60-70 years, and they recognize themselves as American. There's always been a lack of what we are on mainstream media. We're politicians, we're attorneys, we're doctors, we're leaders, and mainstream has yet to fill that void for us. I really feel that there isn't a sense of leadership on television for Hispanics, especially Hispanic-Americans. We don't have anyone we can really look up to. My goal is to create heroes for the Latino community."²⁹⁵

Gwyn said the launch of a network like MiCasa network is long overdue. He explained, “Our children need heroes. Our kids have acculturated into different cultures for a long time, and I think now there’s an opportunity to steer them in our direction. At the same time, I think we’re doing this to give people a sense of pride that they’re American, and it’s important that we become American, and that we get out and vote. It’s important that we have a voice in America. I think the main reason we do this is to create heroes, and create a voice and fill a void and show we’re American. Yeah we’re Latino, but we’re American.”

Gwyn continued, “There’s so much room for us to showcase our talent, and that’s what this network’s about: showcasing the future of Latinos and also to showcase and highlight the heroes that have made an impact in America thus far and have opened up the doors that are currently open for us.” He also added, “I think there’s a lot of misrepresentation about who we are. You know, we speak English. It’s important that we’re not misrepresented and that people look at us like we’re American and that we get a little more respect in this country.”²⁹⁶

Executives at NUVOTv have also noticed what Rodriguez and Gwyn have. Villarreal said of NUVOTv’s creation, “The initial motivation was that there was a lack of diversity on TV and we weren’t seeing ourselves being reflected on TV in English because we are second- and third-generation Latinos. You know, my grandmother watches Univision daily, 24/7, but my parents watch ABC and CBS in English, so I grew up consuming all my media in English as well. With that in mind, when we turn to these networks, it’s not our stories, it’s not our Latino experience that we experience that we

want to see reflected on TV. So that was the motivation to start a network like NUVO where people can come and see themselves being reflected on the screen.”²⁹⁷ Villarreal continued, “It starts with politics in the media. And they’re the ones saying we’re more of a majority, and they’re bringing awareness to this growing community. And then that community is responding by saying, ‘Well, we need to see ourselves reflected in the media, if the media is in fact noticing all of this change.’”²⁹⁸

Fusion’s approach to attracting modern Latinos is different from these other networks. One of Fusion’s motivations was to fill a need for culturally diverse, emerging young America, including Hispanics, in a relatable way that allows them to relate to their peers. The target audience is young Americans of all backgrounds who are “comfortable in a world of diversity. It’s more of a psychographic than a demographic,”²⁹⁹ Vila explained. While Fusion airs a lot of stories that skew Hispanic, and a majority of its talent is of Hispanic descent, the network features stories about diversity issues for many groups, including LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) and feminism stories. Fusion is “filling a void that hasn’t been filled by any big media company yet. It’s new and audacious. It’s trying new things. We’re catering to the fastest growing and most exciting generation in American history – a generation that has not entirely been captured by media the way that other generations were,” said Vila.³⁰⁰

Miguel Tamayo explained the shift in strategy, “When we first started, the idea was that Isaac [Lee] wanted to reach this Hispanic demographic, Hispanic millennials, and we were creating content that was extremely Latino, Hispanic-heavy,” but now, the network targets “multicultural millennials, but that’s kind of redundant because the

millennials are the most diverse generation in U.S. history. Months of research led us to the conclusion that Hispanic millennials, the one overarching idea of how they want to be reached, is to be reached just like any other millennial would be reached. So to pigeonhole them would miss the point of the assimilation of this second- and third-generation Hispanic generation that's in the U.S.," Tamayo said.³⁰¹

He continued, "The way that we do cater to the U.S. Hispanic demographic is that we acknowledge the U.S. Hispanic demographic. There are certain issues that hit closer to home with Hispanic millennials, the same way there are with other minorities. We are aware of how sprawling the millennial demographic is, and that the largest, fastest growing population within the demographic is the U.S. Hispanics. To give it the weight it deserves is essentially how we have treated the Hispanic demographic." He added, "The Latino soul is evident in our everyday programming just because a lot of the people in front of and behind the camera are of Latino descent. There's a different way of approaching issues and choosing issues."³⁰²

El Rey Network, Fusion and MiCasa Network are new players bringing new tactics to the field. But they are not the first networks to try to lure young Hispanic television-viewers. NUVOtv has been targeting young Hispanics since it started out as SÍTV in 2004 as the first cable channel to cater to Hispanics with English-only programming, and mun2 has been trying to draw in young Hispanics with bilingual programming since Telemundo acquired it 2001. In more than 40 million homes now, mun2 airs a mix of English and Spanish programming and averaged 89,000 total viewers in primetime during the third quarter of 2013.³⁰³

In this new frontier of English-language and bilingual programming, competition does not seem to be intimidating the involved parties. Schwimmer believes there is a gap in the television market, and NUVOTv is filling it. He said, “The millennial Latino is not being served by telenovelas, soccer -- this isn’t relevant to most millennials.” He added, “No one has questioned should there be a BET or, ‘do women need a channel for themselves?’”³⁰⁴ In 2012, NUVOTv raised \$40 million from its investors to produce a new lineup of English-language television programming. “This is the biggest injection of capital into NUVOTv since it was founded in 2004,” Schwimmer said. In the same year, NUVOTv announced new programs in the works from Jennifer Lopez, Emilio Estefan and Ricky Martin.³⁰⁵ Schwimmer further explained, “What we do is capture the essence of what it means to be Hispanic in the U.S. What we think is missing is an accurate, non-stereotypical portrayal of this cultural identity beyond the hackneyed telenovela. Our audience is not confined by language.”³⁰⁶

Schwimmer argues that both Fusion and El Rey Network are looking at a narrower segment of the audience, though, and he believes NUVOTv will achieve more viewership outside of the Hispanic millennial demographic on which Fusion and El Rey Network appear to be focusing. Schwimmer added that he thought there would be more competition in the market for English-language programming catering to Hispanic audiences in the future.³⁰⁷

NUVOTv’s Schwimmer said of the El Rey Network launch, “Before us, no one had dedicated themselves to creating a destination for Latinos born in this country or came here at a very young age to see their stars, to see their stories told. Does the

community deserve multiple networks that go after this audience in different ways?

Absolutely. There's room for TBS and there's room for USA. There's room for WE and there's room for Lifetime. Why shouldn't there be room for El Rey and NUVO?"³⁰⁸

Interestingly, Univision once ventured into similar territory before on its cable network Galavisión. In the early 2000s, Galavisión experimented with English language programming briefly, but ultimately returned to Spanish-language programming.³⁰⁹

Producer Jeff Valdez said, "There's nothing wrong with being bilingual. There's nothing wrong with programming that way."³¹⁰ About programming for a bilingual audience, he added, "As a Latino American, or an American of Latino descent, or whatever label we're putting on...we want to hear our stories. And that's a wonderful opportunity. I mean, it's an untapped market. And it's also smart business."³¹¹

Perhaps Univision was simply ahead of its time in the early 2000s, but the trend did not catch on and Univision abandoned the English-language effort at Galavisión citing low ratings. Lucia Ballas-Traynor, former general manager for Galavisión, said the bilingual effort was not only considered controversial at the time, but it was also hard to sell to advertisers.³¹² With English-language playing a more important part in Hispanic-American culture now, businesspeople expect greater success this time around with English-language and bilingual programming geared toward Hispanic-American audiences.

It is clear that Hispanics have not been properly portrayed on television – both in terms of reflecting an accurate percentage of the population and as far as stereotyping of hobbies and professions. Hispanics have traditionally been largely underrepresented on

English-language television, and when presented, they often are portrayed as maids, criminals or sidekicks. Evidently, stereotyping and underrepresenting the English-speaking Hispanic population has not gone over well with the U.S. Hispanic audience, and networks are now trying to rectify this issue in trending toward English-language programming that caters to Hispanic-American audiences.

Changing Economics and Increased Buying Power Among U.S. Hispanics

A third factor explaining the trend is the amplified attractiveness of this audience due to a significant increase in U.S. Hispanic buying power. The economics of the U.S. Hispanic audience are changing, and buying power among the demographic is rapidly growing. As U.S.-born Hispanics who grow up speaking English age, it is more likely for Hispanic working professionals to consume media in English. Consequently, more television advertisers desire to reach this audience, resulting in more programming targeted at Hispanics, especially in English.

Orci said that the lack of programming targeting the English-speaking and bilingual Hispanic community has been a missed opportunity for both programmers and advertisers, and he said, “We have to appeal to [Hispanics] in culture, but in the language of their preference. And a lot of the bilingual Hispanics watch English-language television and Spanish-language television. So you want to be able to reach them where they are.”³¹³ He elaborated, “If you look at the demographics moving forward, the bilingual/English-speaking population is going to grow dramatically, much more so than the Spanish-speaking population. So from a targeting standpoint, as well as from a content standpoint, it’s a very smart move. And I think it fills a need that we as marketers have because we are a Hispanic ad agency — we are not a Spanish-language ad agency. So we’re looking to reach Hispanics in English and Spanish, and this gives us another avenue to reach that segment.”³¹⁴

Robert Rose, who founded LATV Networks, remembers the first time he pitched advertisers the concept of an English-language television program centering on Hispanic

culture. “They were not receptive at all,” Rose said in 2009. He explained that advertisers “were loyal to the Univision model, which was that to reach Latinos, you had to do it in Spanish. Everyone had been saying the same thing for 25 years.”³¹⁵ Flavio Morales, an executive vice president at BIG VIDA Entertainment, shared a similar experience trying to get a Univision affiliate in Los Angeles to buy a bilingual music show. He said, “They wouldn’t take it. They didn’t want a bilingual show at Sunday night at midnight. It just was not a discussion.”³¹⁶

Morales said he now sees “a full-fledged initiative to embrace the entire Latino audience,” which includes U.S. Hispanics who consume media in Spanish as well as those who prefer their content in English. Morales described, “At the end of the day, what we’re seeing is co-viewing. We want to sit with our parents and talk about these [telenovelas], but our parents are also saying, ‘Did you watch *Oprah*?’ It’s this constant duality that we’re living in, and we’re a rich marketplace.”³¹⁷

According to a 2011 report by Scarborough Research, a consumer research firm, bilingual Hispanics (those speaking English and Spanish equally, or those who speak more English than Spanish) account for 82 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population. This demographic has more disposable income than more recent immigrants who speak more Spanish. The study showed that 12 percent of acculturated Hispanic families were earning \$75,000 to \$100,000 a year as of 2011.³¹⁸ In 2004, the annual buying power of U.S. Hispanics was estimated at \$530 billion, which is twice what it was ten years earlier.³¹⁹

As of 2013, even in a down economy, the success of Hispanics in the U.S. grew. U.S. Hispanic households earning \$50,000 or more annually are growing at a faster rate than total households, and the Hispanic population is expected to grow 162 percent by 2050.³²⁰ Now that U.S. Hispanic buying power is nearing \$1.3 trillion, the Hispanic-American market is increasingly important in the entertainment frontier.³²¹ Isaac Lee said of Fusion's launch, "This is a huge opportunity. Hispanics are young, and the purchasing power of millennials is going to be bigger than baby boomers' very soon."³²²

Villarreal of NUVOTV added, "We see, because we do a lot of research on them, that the Hispanic audience does not have the same income that most networks think they have – making a lower income. But in fact, the Hispanic audience that we track are people who are making the same salaries as middle-class America, white people, so we're trying to create an awareness with them that'll reflect their lifestyles. This isn't like everyone's driving a Ford Fiesta and a Toyota Corolla from '92 – we actually have a higher quality of life."³²³

According to the Selig Center at the University of Georgia Terry College of Business, U.S. Hispanics' buying power will increase from \$1 trillion in 2010 to \$1.5 trillion in 2015.³²⁴ To put that another way, if Hispanic-Americans were a nation by themselves, the nation would have the ninth largest economy in the world. In 2001, then-president of Telemundo James McNamara complained of the inequitable distribution of advertising dollars. He said many Hispanic television advertisers were for a few years "getting a free ride" because the Hispanic audience was undercounted, and that the prices advertisers were paying Hispanic media were "way under what they should be paying,

because, at any time, between five percent and six percent of the population is tuned into Univision or Telemundo, according to Nielsen. Yet we only get a little under two percent of the ad spend.”³²⁵ In 2006, advertising on Spanish-language television grew 14 percent to \$4.3 billion.³²⁶ The Hispanic market is no longer being viewed as a niche market for many companies, according to Alex Ruelas, cofounder of the marketing agency LatinWorks.³²⁷

Spending on Hispanic media is growing more quickly than it is in the general market, and increased 11 percent from 2011 to \$7.9 billion in 2012, according to Ad Age’s Hispanic Fact Pack.³²⁸ Television accounts for most of that spending, at \$5.8 billion, but only \$246 million of that went to Hispanic cable television networks. Ray Garza, owner and head of Las Vegas’s Diversity Agency, said in 2013, “The Hispanic market is ripe, low-hanging fruit. The harvest is there. Businesses just have to be smart enough to allocate the commitment of money, staff and time to see results.”³²⁹

The growing Hispanic population is not going unnoticed by advertisers, who are increasingly doing business with Spanish-language networks. Former Senior Vice President of Programming and Production at mun2 Flavio Morales notes, “From William Levy on *Dancing With the Stars* to Eva Longoria producing a new series and Sofia Vergara hosting *Saturday Night Live*, Latinos are front and center -- and advertisers are responding.”³³⁰

It appears Morales is correct. In the 2011-12 season, advanced advertising at Telemundo went up 25 percent from the previous season to more than \$400 million, and advertisers are willing to pay double the price per 1,000 viewers, according to NBC

Universal.³³¹ According to the Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies, Hispanics watch a lot of television as a family. It is common for Spanish-speaking grandparents to gather to watch television with their English-speaking grandchildren. Advertisers may be lured to programs appealing to both languages and cultures because they stand to profit from multiple generations.³³²

In 2012, David Lawenda, Univision's president of advertising and marketing, encouraged media buyers to shift 10-15 percent of their English language billings over to Univision. He noted that English-language networks' appeals for double-digit price increases while ratings were falling or staying flat were "the definition of insanity" while Conde added that advertisers are wrong to think they will be effective in reaching Hispanics through mainstream English-language programming.³³³ According to Nielsen, Univision beat NBC in the 18-49 age group during the February 2013 sweeps, the crucial quarterly ratings periods that local stations use to set their advertising rates.³³⁴ Executives at Univision used this victory to help argue for a larger share of television advertising dollars at the May 2013 upfront.

According to the Nielsen data for the February 2013 sweeps, Univision averaged a 1.5 rating in adults 18-49 compared to a 1.3 for NBC, and Univision beat NBC on 26 of the 28 nights in February. CBS led the sweeps period overall with its 4.4 rating well ahead of ABC's 2.4 and Fox's 2.3. In total viewers, Univision still ranked fifth with 3.7 million but it was up compared to 2012 and gained ground on NBC, who finished with 4.3 million total viewers. CBS won the month by a landslide with 15.8 million viewers, followed by ABC with 7.8 million viewers and Fox with 6.9 million viewers.³³⁵

Univision also finished as the top broadcaster on Friday nights in viewers 18-49 in the February 2012 sweeps, beating out runner-up ABC by 13 percent. This also made it five straight years for Univision as the top broadcaster on Fridays in February among the 18-34 age group. Moreover, Univision also finished the sweeps as the top broadcaster among adults 18-49 and total viewers in the Los Angeles market, and it ranked second among total viewers in Houston and in Miami, behind the CBS stations in both markets.³³⁶ These numbers make it clear that advertisers cannot afford to overlook television aimed at Hispanic audiences.

Univision's Falco said, "Our messaging to the advertising community is, 'Why would you continue to pay more for less on the English-language side, when the ratings on Univision continue to grow?' You can't ignore this anymore. You're on the wrong side of history if you do." And Falco is not alone. Ed Gold, the advertising director of State Farm, a longtime Univision advertiser, said in 2013 said he expects the Univision's victory over NBC in the sweeps will "have advertisers who haven't been advertising in the Hispanic market stand up and take notice that this is a very large market, a very loyal market, and, to a certain extent, there is not as much fragmentation as there is in the English-language audience."³³⁷

During the 2012-13 broadcast season, there was a significant growth in interest in Hispanic audiences compared to the 2011-12 broadcast season. With a growing number of Hispanic-Americans – especially those who are bilingual or predominantly speak English – demand among advertisers to reach Hispanic consumers is up. This equates to more effort by media companies to sell commercial time during shows that Hispanic-

Americans watch. Dan Lovinger, executive vice president for advertising sales and integrated marketing at Telemundo Media said that Telemundo had grown its sales force by more than 20 percent. The company added 12 advertisers in the first quarter, including advertisers in the automotive and pharmaceutical categories, continuing the success of the prior year, which included the signing of 50 new advertisers.³³⁸ Former president Romano said Telemundo would offer more than 800 hours of original programming, which he called “the largest and most ambitious slate of original content in our history,” and exceeded the previous year’s total by nearly 40 percent.³³⁹

It should come as no surprise that the first ad deal of the 2012-13 upfront season was struck with Univision, the leader of the Hispanic-American broadcasting industry, rather than with an English-speaking network. Starcom USA and Tapestry, two agencies owned by the Publicis Groupe, agreed to buy commercial time with Univision for clients including Burger King, Kellogg and Mars. According to Lawenda, this deal was valued well into nine figures. He commented at the 2012 upfront presentation, “Our niche has become your opportunity.”³⁴⁰

According to the AHAA, the Hispanic advertising industry is outpacing all other sectors of advertising with more than four times the amount of growth as other sectors. As of June 2012, growth in ad spending had increased by 20.7 percent for the Hispanic market compared to 1.7 percent in the non-Hispanic market.³⁴¹ Hispanic ad spending was up 11.1 percent in 2012 as marketers in the U.S. spent close to \$8 billion on major media targeted toward Hispanic consumers. With a 13.5 percent increase in ad spending in the first quarter of 2013, Spanish-language television saw its seventh consecutive quarter of

double-digit growth.³⁴² By contrast, advertising spending on traditional English-language television dropped 5.2 percent as a response to a decline in ratings.³⁴³ With U.S. Hispanics becoming such an appealing audience, advertisers have an increasing interest in reaching second- and third-generation Hispanics, who tend to be English-dominant. The interest in advertising for U.S. Hispanics is on the rise, and as more English-language content becomes available to Hispanic-Americans, advertiser interest in English-language Hispanic networks is sure to follow.

Luis Miguel Messianu, who is the chief creative officer of Alma DBB, McDonald's Hispanic ad agency, describes Hispanic millennials as a blend between two tastes, two cultures. "We refer to them as 'fusionistas.' They see themselves as 100 percent Latino and 100 percent American. They're perfectly comfortable navigating both worlds. They have a sense of pride back home even if they're born in the U.S.," Messianu said.³⁴⁴

Edward Rincón, president of the multicultural research firm Rincón & Associates, reiterated that roughly 90 percent of all ad dollars directed to U.S. Hispanics are delivered in Spanish, despite the fact that 63 percent of U.S. Hispanics are native-born and primarily use English-language media.³⁴⁵ He also restated that the proportion of Hispanic immigrants is shrinking even though the overall U.S. Hispanic population is growing. While 40.2 percent of U.S. Hispanics in 2000 were foreign-born, only 37.1 percent of U.S. Hispanics were foreign born as of 2010. Haubegger predicted a "tide of advertising money will flood" into Hispanic television in the coming years, especially due to the growth of the young Hispanic audience. She asked rhetorically, "If you're a marketer

and you've got to grow your market, are you going to focus on the part that's getting smaller and older? Or the part that's growing and younger?"³⁴⁶

Furthering this idea, Kanatas said of El Rey Network's launch, "There was knowledge from talking with advertisers several years ago, asking them, 'Who do you want that you can't get on television? What viewers?' And they said, 'Second- and third-generation Hispanic-Americans. They speak English, but they're not really concentrated in one place.'"³⁴⁷

Villarreal added, "Word on the street is that advertisers have been trying to reach this audience that we speak of for a while because now we're becoming more and more of a majority instead of a minority, so they're trying to figure out, 'how do I reach the Latino who wants to see themselves, has a higher quality of life, and wants to purchase our brand?' And I think NUVO, when you turn it on and watch our original programming – whether comedy, reality, music – that's something that we offer for people like us that no other networks provide."³⁴⁸

But with the changing makeup of the Hispanic audience in the U.S., advertisers are still trying to figure out what works. Hispanic women in particular have recently surfaced as noticeable contributors to the educational, economic and cultural wellbeing of American society.³⁴⁹ By 2060, Hispanic women are expected to account for 30 percent of the total female population while the white, non-Hispanic population is expected to drop 43 percent over the same period of time. It is expected that by 2060, there will be no dominant ethnic group in this country.³⁵⁰

According to Nielsen, U.S. Hispanic women spend more of their shopping budgets on newborns than other Americans, and Hispanic-American women are having more children than other American women.³⁵¹ Not surprisingly, this makes baby-product makers more eager to cater to Hispanic-American parents. This is just one example of the rise of corporate interest in Hispanic-American consumers. Hispanics born in the United States not only outpace births now, they accounted for 70 percent of the Latino population growth between 2000 and 2009.³⁵² Within the 18-to-34 year old demographic, the number of Hispanics born in the U.S. are growing roughly five percent each year while the number of foreign-born Hispanics drops about three percent each year, according to Andy Hasselwander, vice president of professional service and product development for Latinum, a business network that helps brands reach Hispanics.³⁵³

In some of the top metered markets in the country – Los Angeles, Miami, Houston, New York and Chicago – Hispanic millennials represent between 25 and 50 percent of the millennial population.³⁵⁴ From a marketing perspective, Hispanic millennials are important for more than just their population size. They are bringing about a new cultural identity in America. Fusion, El Rey, Hulu Latino and brands such as Taco Bell, Mattel and Doritos are all taking different approaches to engage the Hispanic millennial audience, and they anticipate large payoffs from focusing on this group.³⁵⁵ As part of its “Live Más” campaign, Taco Bell has aired commercials featuring English-language songs sung in Spanish, including Lionel Richie’s “Hello” as “Hola,” and Notorious B.I.G.’s “Big Poppa” as “Grande Papi.” Taco Bell’s Chief Marketing Officer Brian Niccol said these songs are purposefully chosen because these are songs

people will understand without having to know Spanish. He explained, “It adds another level of context to the brand around the experience we’re providing. It’s blending cultures. We’re a Mexican-inspired brand and we continue to push the boundaries of what that means.”³⁵⁶

What draws in advertisers even more is the age of the average Hispanic-American consumer. PepsiCo and Procter & Gamble cannot help but notice that Hispanics over-index in many categories, including carbonated beverages, apparel, consumer electronics and baby-related products.³⁵⁷ As of 2012, the median age of these consumers was 27-years old, which is right in the middle of the most desired 18-34 year-old demographic. By comparison, the median age of the average white, non-Hispanic in the U.S. was 42.³⁵⁸ What makes the 18-34 year-old age group so attractive to marketers? Marketers are willing to pay more to reach this group for a few reasons: their brand preferences are less established than those of older consumers; and they are disproportionately likely to be influencers on their peers, and endorsements can launch a trend. Additionally, this group is hard to reach through traditional channels,³⁵⁹ especially with the explosion of social and mobile media.

According to Tamayo at Fusion, “What makes our network unique is that there is no other network doing the type of programming with the variety of programming, targeting the younger generation. You have the standard big networks – ABC, NBC, Fox, CBS, that have variety – news, sports, entertainment, etc., but they skew older. We have a network that is producing on a daily basis a gigantic variety of content and we’re targeting a younger demographic and we’re really the only ones that have that

combination. That goes hand in hand with why advertisers would come. If we reach our goals we'll be one of the destinations for young people in America, and those are the people who spend money, so that's where advertisers should be." He added that the target demographic being attractive to advertisers was not a factor in the launch, and age was not really considered until after the research and social media efforts revealed Fusion should expand its content beyond news. The driving force of launching Fusion was to fill a void, not to attract advertisers, but, "As soon as we announced our shift from being news driven and shifted to where we are now, the advertisers took note and definitely came knocking on the door," Tamayo said.³⁶⁰

These interviews made it clear that both advertisers and programmers have had a hard time reaching the English-speaking U.S. Hispanic audience because these viewers do not concentrate themselves in one place. By introducing channels that specifically cater to this audience, advertisers and programmers may have more luck reaching this audience. It is evident that with the buying power among U.S. Hispanics continuing to increase, more programmers and advertisers will have a vested interest in reaching this audience. By reaching out to them on networks that cater to U.S. Hispanics in English, programmers and advertisers have a better chance of engaging Hispanic-Americans.

Business Opportunities for Media Companies and Moguls

A fourth set of factors explaining the English-language trend centers on business opportunities such as partnerships, financing, channel placement, packaging and license fees. From a business perspective, growing a brand always makes sense. Looking at the expansion of Spanish-language programming among networks that traditionally broadcast English-language programming, it makes sense that Spanish-language networks now see interest in turning the tables by launching English-language broadcasts. With networks and individuals in the media business now recognizing the growing opportunity to reach U.S. Hispanics with English-language programming, the time is ripe for new business ventures. For example, with both Fusion and El Rey having ties to Univision and mun2 being a spin-off of Telemundo, it is possible that English-language and bilingual programming is part of a strategy to grow the two biggest names in Spanish Television and their business ventures.

With an increasing number of Spanish-language networks being carried on English-language tiers, multichannel operators are able to offer hybrid packages, which alleviate the need for consumers to purchase multiple cable packages to watch television in both English and Spanish.³⁶¹ At the end of 2012, roughly 12 million Hispanic homes in the United States had multichannel services.³⁶²

A 2013 SNL Kagan analysis looked at 16 Hispanic television networks – including large players and some up-and-coming networks. The networks SNL Kagan looked at averaged 17.1 million subscribers in 2013. These networks are bringing in an average fee of 11 cents per subscriber per month, which is low considering the overall

cable network average per-subscriber fee was 28 cents in 2013.³⁶³ These low license fees may be attributed to being carried for free on many English-language tiers, but the networks are gaining subscribers through this process. For example, mun2 has had a 12.5 percent increase in subscribers from 2010 to 2013, and NUVOtv's subscribers increased by 40.9 percent.³⁶⁴

This model of getting onto English-language tiers to grow viewership can help companies like Univision by allowing them to use ratings success as leverage to get new cable networks on the air. Consistent with data that shows news to be the most popular programming bilingual viewers watch in Spanish, CNN en Español brings in the highest per-subscriber fee of the Spanish-language cable networks at 60 cents, and Hispanic news networks averaged 42 cents overall.³⁶⁵

For the time being, it seems the majority of cable offerings geared toward U.S. Hispanics is focused on Spanish-language programming. With more English-language programming catering to Hispanics airing now, it will be interesting to see if these offerings expand to include more English-language programming, particularly given the vested interest from major players in the market looking to grow audiences.

In 2003, Comcast rolled out lower-cost Hispanic tiers and has since expanded not only linear channels, but also free Spanish-language video-on-demand (VOD) content. Comcast now reaches more than five million Hispanic homes, including viewers in Miami; Houston; Chicago; San Francisco; Boston; Denver; Atlanta; Philadelphia; Sacramento, Calif.; and Albuquerque, N.M. Comcast was one of the first cable operators to dedicate significant resources to Hispanic markets. In December 2012, Comcast added

10 new Hispanic channels, including the interactive Xfinity Latino Entertainment channel. On September 23, 2013, Comcast launched what it refers to as the largest Hispanic on-demand event in television history, giving subscribers access to more than 1,000 hours of Hispanic entertainment.³⁶⁶

DirecTV is expanding its channel lineup with new Spanish-language channels, recently adding beIN Sport and beIN Sport en Español in HD, Univision Deportes Network in HD, Univision tlnovelas and ForoTV. As part of its expansion, it also launched both Galavisión and ESPN Deportes in HD. DirecTV makes many of its premium movie channels available in SAP, and DirecTV has a number of promotional discounts for subscribers to acquire more Spanish-language content, including discounts on the Óptimo Más, Más Ultra and Lo Máximo packages.³⁶⁷

Dish Network was the first multichannel provider to target the Hispanic market seriously, and it continues to have more Hispanic-package subscribers than any other cable operator. Dish recently added soccer to the game finder app in its Hopper whole-home DVR service, which was a popular move among Hispanic audiences. Dish Network has a number of Hispanic video packages and offers Spanish-language television shows and movies to subscribers with set-top boxes enable for on-demand content.³⁶⁸

Time Warner Cable serves the designated market areas (DMAs) where roughly 47 percent of all Hispanic-Americans live, including New York, San Diego, Los Angeles, Texas, North Carolina and South Carolina. Time Warner offers a number of Hispanic video packages, but its most popular is El Paquetazo, featuring between 65 and 80

Spanish-language channels. El Paquetazo was first launched in Los Angeles in 2008, but is now available in Time Warner's major Hispanic markets. Its expanded offerings of Spanish-language channels as well as video-on-demand content have helped grow its number of Hispanic subscribers.³⁶⁹

Time Warner Cable makes news available in New York with NY1 Noticias and offers Spanish telecasts of Lakers games for viewers in Los Angeles. Efforts like these earned Time Warner the Leadership in Hispanic Television Award at the Hispanic Television Summit in October 2013. In an interview with *Broadcasting & Cable/Multichannel News* contributor Stuart Miller, Melinda Witmer, Time Warner Cable's executive vice president and chief video and content officer, mentioned that Noticias has been a part of TWC's family of offerings for a decade. "It shows that our effort to take our relationship to the Hispanic community to another level has been part of our DNA for a long time,"³⁷⁰ she said. Witmer pointed out that Noticias is the only local 24-hour Spanish-language news channel in New York, and she mentioned the possibility of expanding with similar ventures in other markets.³⁷¹

Verizon FiOS TV offers a number of Hispanic packages, including the Spanish-Language Package and La Conexión. Its major Hispanic markets include markets in New York, New Jersey, Texas, California and Florida. FiOS recently added both Spanish and English feeds of beIN Sports, and it continues to research the needs of the diverse, and changing, Hispanic community. After research results showed an interest in English-dominant Hispanics having their children learn Spanish, FiOS started a campaign to promote its Spanish tiers, which resulted in more subscribers adding on a Spanish-

language package. FiOS continued to focus on adding new high definition channels for Hispanics, in addition to adding Spanish-language content to its mobile offerings.³⁷²

AT&T U-verse reaches Hispanic viewers in many of the top U.S. Hispanic markets, including cities in Florida, California and Texas. The U-verse movies library offers thousands of hours of both free and paid on-demand titles, including Spanish-language movies, children's programs and events. It also has video-on-demand content from five different Spanish-language networks. U-verse has also recently added Cine Estelar, Cine Nostalgia and beIN Sport for its Hispanic audience.³⁷³

Cox Communications reaches many Hispanic viewers, with many coming from Arizona, Southern California and Las Vegas. Hispanic video packages from Cox include Paquete Latino, El Mix and Super Mix, ranging from about 35 to 49 Spanish-language networks. Not only does Cox offer Spanish-language movies, television shows and music on demand, it also recently added both Univision Deportes and Univision tlnovelas to its Spanish-language offerings in Arizona, Nevada and California. Cox Communications Executive Director for Hispanic Marketing Luis Caballero noted the diversity of the current Hispanic-American market, and he has convinced Cox to "focus on the whole market," catering to Spanish-only speakers, English-only speakers and bilingual Hispanics.³⁷⁴

Charter Communications serves Hispanic audiences particularly in Los Angeles; Fort Worth, Texas; and Reno, Nevada. As Hispanic markets grow in other areas it reaches, including Tennessee, South Carolina and portions of Georgia, Nebraska and Washington, Charter is becoming more aggressive in the Hispanic market, adding new

packages and bundles and a growing library of Spanish-language video-on-demand content.³⁷⁵

Cablevision Systems reaches many Hispanics New York and New Jersey, offering Optimum en Español, with more than 48 Spanish-language channels and more than 150 hours of Spanish-language video-on-demand content each month.³⁷⁶

Bright House Networks reaches Hispanic viewers in Florida and Bakersfield, California. It has been working to improve its Spanish-language offerings, and now includes InfoMás in Florida on its digital tier. InfoMás is an exclusive 24-hour local Spanish channel with news, sports, weather and other programming. Bright House also offers its viewers in Florida and Bakersfield more than 300 hours of programming from Univision, Telefutera and Telemundo via Lo Mejor On Demand.³⁷⁷

With new networks emerging as part of a trend toward English-language programming, business partnerships are helping to create opportunities to grow brands. Kanatas discussed Univision's role in El Rey Network, "In addition to owning equity in El Rey, they handle things like our distribution deals with cable and satellite companies. So they negotiate our deals with Time Warner Cable and DirecTV and these kinds of companies. The value there is that we get bundled with Univision. We're put on the general entertainment English-language tiers. The value to Univision in El Rey is that we should be incremental to what they're doing. We should not be stealing viewers from their networks, like UniMás – 18-34 Hispanic males, we should be incremental to them."³⁷⁸ In other words, El Rey Network offers suitable programming for this

demographic in English to make relatable programming available to Hispanics who prefer to consume media in English.

Fusion is an equal partnership venture between Disney/ABC and Univision. Univision's Conde said the network would focus on the issues most important to U.S. Hispanics, such as jobs, healthcare, immigration and education. The launch of Fusion had an estimated cost of \$275 million, according to an analysis of Miami-Dade County documents by the *Miami Herald*.³⁷⁹ This is a great opportunity for ABC News to reach a younger audience. A 2010 Pew Research Center study showed the average evening news viewer is 53, while Univision's average primetime viewer is just 39.³⁸⁰

While Univision operates more than one network for Hispanic-Americans, Disney/ABC is known mostly for its efforts among English-language viewers, including ABC, The Disney Channel and the ESPN family of networks. But Disney does have experience reaching out to Hispanic audiences beyond its venture with Univision. Disney's ESPN Deportes is the Spanish-language member of the ESPN family. It has expanded soccer coverage, which is traditionally very popular among Hispanic-American audiences, and it launched a show "Redes #ESPN" dedicated to discussing sports topics in social media.³⁸¹ ESPN Deportes was recognized during the 2012 ESPN upfront presentation for its deal with liquor giant Diageo to advertise on national and local media properties that are part of ESPN Deportes.³⁸²

NUVOtv is also looking to expand its reach. Villarreal detailed, "Jennifer [Lopez] is our Chief Creative Officer. She has a stake in the company, and she has a lot of influence with everything that we do creatively – anything from marketing, she stands

behind as our executive producer. She's also a big part of our affiliate distribution agenda. Right now, we are distributed on Comcast, Dish, Time Warner, and all of those, but we're still missing from DirecTV, which would put us in 60 million homes plus, which would allow us to be rated as a big cable network, as the other ones are. Her efforts really do lie in marketing, bringing awareness to NUVO and getting us more distribution."³⁸³

NUVOtv is open to possible partnerships in the future, but for now, the network is privately funded, and because of this, "It's a little challenging to connect with the right advertisers. We're very stretched with our budgets. I think there's a disconnect with advertisers who help fund a lot of our shows as sponsors because they're trying to figure out the perfect formula to reach this audience with their brands. Having the funds to create the quality programming that reflects our mission has been the biggest challenge."³⁸⁴

While MiCasa Network is independently financed, Gwyn says the network is open to starting partnerships in the future. "We want to work with major studios. We want to get their attention and for them to notice what we're doing. I'm very excited to work with the big boys. It would be great for a major network to notice us and come work with us. I don't want to be independently financed forever. Starting this network without a big name has been very challenging," he explained.³⁸⁵ A connection to an established network would be an advantage, allowing for a smoother venture into English-language programming.

MiCasa Network has been successful in capitalizing on the large Hispanic interest in digital media, though. The importance of Hispanic engagement in digital media is a business opportunity that could not be overlooked. “We are doing a kind of soft launch. We launched on Roku devices, which has seven million people. We launched on that, which is a digital platform, and very soon, you’ll be able to order our network directly from the web site onto any device and watch it 24/7. That’s part of the technology that’s coming. You’ll be able to order it on your iPad,” said Gwyn.³⁸⁶

MiCasa Network is hardly the only new network to take notice of the strong Hispanic interest in digital and social media. In fact, Fusion is a product of social media. In March of 2011, Univision started using Twitter to disseminate news in English under a Twitter handle, @UnivisionNews. “We would try and find mostly Hispanic-related issues, but we were just basically a news Twitter account. [Fusion grew] entirely out of social media. For about a year and a half, almost two years, we were almost exclusively on social media,” Tamayo explained.³⁸⁷

When Univision News was first starting out on Twitter, the account would get responses immediately, in Spanish, basically asking, “Why is Univision tweeting in English?” The Univision brand is so strong and so closely related with the Spanish language that followers were thrown off. However, once people realized the intended audience of the Twitter feed, the questions died down.³⁸⁸ Now that Fusion has launched on television, it is able to take advantage of Disney’s “large and sophisticated sales and distribution team” while “Univision has the understanding and the know-how and the street cred with U.S. Hispanics that other networks don’t have.”³⁸⁹

Fox Hispanic Media is responsible for cable networks Fox Deportes, Nat Geo Mundo and Utilísima. After seeing success with these Spanish-language networks, Fox launched MundoFox in 2012 to compete with Univision and Telemundo.³⁹⁰ President and CEO of Fox International Channels Hernan Lopez said, “There is an increasing demand for quality Spanish-language content in the U.S. from both viewers and advertisers. Fox saw similar dynamics in play 25 years ago when it launched the Fox network, and it would be a missed opportunity not to provide an alternative for the 50-plus million Hispanic viewers who currently have limited options in Spanish-language broadcast television. Our partnership with RCN will help us do this, and we aim to do it in a big way.”³⁹¹

Discovery Communications, which operates many cable channels, including Discovery Channel, TLC and Animal Planet, has a Discovery U.S. Hispanic division, comprised of Discovery Familia and Discovery en Español. When asked about his reasoning, Chairman and Founder of Discovery Communications John Hendricks said he thinks it is “critical” to offer programming that appeals to Hispanic viewers, particularly because of the younger demographics of the U.S. Spanish-speaking population. He added, “That’s been the magic of our company: listening to our audience and then representing their diverse interests in how we program our channels.”³⁹²

But Vila does not think networks always go about attracting Hispanics in the proper way. “Our strategy has evolved in that, in order to reach the mass U.S. Hispanic audience, you have to be a lot more subtle than you would think. This whole idea of doing a news organization ‘for Latino,’ it’s a huge turnoff for U.S. Hispanics, we saw in

the research, and I've always felt that from anecdotal experience. So like, NBC Latino or CNN Latino. They don't respond to that sort of typecasting."³⁹³

The Big Four English-language networks all seem to be taking different approaches to engage the U.S. Hispanic audience. NBC is part of NBCUniversal, owner of Telemundo, ABC is involved in the newly launched Fusion, and Fox has Fox Hispanic Media, which oversees four Spanish-language cable channels, but CBS is the one network of the four that is not involving itself in any Spanish-language programming. With CBS placing such a strong focus on news, it comes as no surprise that the network looks for the top news talent in the business. Perhaps in recognition of the growing desire of Hispanics to hear relevant news and see Hispanics on television, CBS announced in February 2014 that Vicente Arenas will become its newest CBS News Correspondent. Arenas has served as president of the San Antonio Association of Hispanic Journalists and the Houston Association of Hispanic Media Professionals.³⁹⁴

Clearly, the Big Four Networks are all taking advantage of business opportunities in their own ways. MiCasa Network and NUVOTV are currently independently financed, but both are open to growing their brands with major players in the television industry. Furthermore, NUVOTV is capitalizing on the popularity of Hispanic superstar Jennifer Lopez by giving her such a vital role in growing the NUVOTV brand. From the perspective of growing a brand, mun2 certainly benefits from being a product of Telemundo. El Rey Network is taking advantage of business opportunities made possible by Robert Rodriguez, FactoryMade Ventures and Univision while Fusion is making the most of being a product of the media powerhouses that are Disney and Univision. All of

these business partnerships present opportunities for brand growth and network success with English-language programming catering to U.S. Hispanics.

Spanish-Language Television Market Saturation

Over the last few decades, there has been tremendous growth in the amount of broadcasting available to Hispanic viewers, but has the Spanish-language programming market become oversaturated, prompting a move toward more English-language programming targeted to Hispanics? With more than 100 broadcast and cable networks catering to Hispanic audiences,³⁹⁵ and most of them being in Spanish, the market may have reached its point of saturation. For years, broadcasters have been taking advantage of the opportunity to provide Spanish-language programming to Hispanic audiences living in America. But with the demographics of the U.S. Hispanic audience changing, and with so many options already available in Spanish, it seems practical to offer programming to this audience in another way.

According to SNL Kagan, a man in attendance at NATPE was thrilled to hear of the shift in strategy trending toward English-language programming for Hispanic-Americans. He spoke of how he tried to launch an English-language magazine aimed at Hispanics more than three decades ago. He said, “It was a tremendous success from all points of view except from advertising. We could not get the right kind of advertising simply because it was in English. Because the only way [supposedly] to reach Hispanics was in Spanish.” He added, “You cannot imagine how happy I am to hear you guys, this panel and this audience, talk about English-language programming as the wave of the future, without obviously ignoring Spanish language. I congratulate you, and I congratulate the entire industry for finally growing up and accepting the fact that both languages in this country are essential to reach Hispanics.”³⁹⁶

Nando Vila, Vice President of Programming at Fusion, explained, “The Spanish-language media market is dominated by Univision. It’s a very lucrative market, but it’s already well serviced. It’s already a crowded field. There’s the big, giant monolith, monopoly that’s called Univision, and there’s a very worthy competitor that gets everyone else in Telemundo. And then a handful of [networks] here and there that get the scraps. It didn’t make any sense to keep competing in that world, which is already well serviced. We’ve found from anecdotal experience and research that people born here prefer consuming their media in English. So you’re seeing Univision, which is the dominant player in Spanish-language programming getting into English language with Fusion and El Rey. It makes total sense.”³⁹⁷

With many Hispanic-Americans now speaking English, and with the Spanish-language television needs of the audience appearing to be met already by numerous available channels, broadcasters see an opportunity for expansion. According to Robert Rodriguez, it is not difficult to get a new cable network on the air, and there is no longer the idea of a network being too “niche” to make it on the air. In February 2014, Rodriguez said, “Comcast is giving away networks.”³⁹⁸ With companies looking to grow their brands and reach as many viewers as possible, it would be a missed opportunity to not try to reach this audience in what is becoming its dominant language: English.

With increased market demand for Hispanic television content, and with technology allowing for more network creation, perhaps now it makes sense to launch these channels. Over the last few years, Univision has grown from three channels to 12 channels. It meets various needs, including entertainment, news and sports, but all of its

channels have been in Spanish until now.³⁹⁹ Univision feels it is important to cater not only to a Spanish-speaking audience, but also those who prefer to consume media content in English. According to Roberto Orci, who is CEO of Acento Advertising in Los Angeles, “Historically, Univision was Spanish first and Spanish only. They were adamant about that.”⁴⁰⁰ But things have changed.

Univision’s Conde feels that even though Fusion originally aimed to engage English-speaking Hispanics, it will be successful in drawing in non-Hispanic audiences as well. He said, “In the year 2013, the demographic change is having such prevalent impact across this country that now the Latino community is no longer a niche. It is part of the mainstream and the non-Latinos also want to understand the passions and topics that interest this community.”⁴⁰¹ The announcement of Fusion’s launch has generated high hopes and expectations even though previous similar ventures have been largely unsuccessful. Many media buyers, however, attribute the failures to poor timing.⁴⁰² Daisy Expósito, CEO of the Daisy Expósito-Ulla ad agency in New York, believes this is the perfect timing for such a business venture. She said, “Univision and ABC have come to the realization that the English-preferred segment of the market is starting to represent a significant number that can no longer be ignored by the media. As is always the case with media distribution, if demand is there, then supply must follow.”⁴⁰³

Expósito is not alone. Isabella Sanchez, vice president of media integration at Zubi Advertising in Miami added, “On behalf of our clients, we are constantly seeking additional opportunities to reach Hispanics, regardless of language,” and pointed to magazines like *Hispanic Business*, *Vista* and *Latina*, and news Web sites like

FoxNewsLatino and NBCLatino as examples. “They were all designed with the same mission that Fusion has now: providing culturally relevant content for Hispanics in English,” she continued.⁴⁰⁴

NUVOtv’s senior vice president of marketing Rafael Oller agrees. In 2011 he told *Advertising Age*, “Most everyone is focused on total U.S. Hispanics, but the real story is the bicultural Latino. Three out of four speak English well or very well. These bicultural Latinos self-identify as Latino and American and are looking for culturally relevant programming.”⁴⁰⁵ According to the 2011 Maximo Study, 49 percent of Hispanic millennial respondents said they want to see more bilingual, bicultural content representing who they really are.⁴⁰⁶

But Telemundo is not focused solely on the Spanish-speaking U.S. Hispanic audience – Telemundo’s mun2 is focused on the bicultural Latino. Forty percent of the programming it airs on mun2 is in English, which has included *I Love Jenni*, one of its most popular programs.⁴⁰⁷ As of 2012, mun2 finally started to see itself become more culturally relevant and is now considered a major commodity among advertisers looking to reach young Hispanics. General Manager Diana Mogollón said, “At first, people thought we were crazy. It’s only been in the last couple of years that people are finally realizing the power of the marketplace and the audience.”⁴⁰⁸

In his time at Telemundo, Romano remained clear that Telemundo’s main focus and domain was Spanish-language television. Telemundo understands that mun2 and Fusion are targeting different audiences. Telemundo sees mun2 as appealing more to a younger audience while Fusion’s content appeals to a broader age range.⁴⁰⁹ Romano went

on to say, “We consider that the Hispanic community, once they are comfortable to be entertained and informed in English, [is] looking for the best content possible, regardless of the content being Hispanic or not.” He believes that once Hispanics are fluent in English, they seek the same mainstream content as non-Hispanic, English-speaking viewers. With Romano resigning from Telemundo in October 2013,⁴¹⁰ it remains to be seen if Telemundo’s position on English-language programming will change. Romano was known for his strategy of making Telemundo a Spanish-language powerhouse, but NBCUniversal’s Chairman of Hispanic Enterprises and Content Joe Uva believes in more of a bilingual approach to the U.S. Hispanic television market.⁴¹¹

There does seem to be a belief that once Hispanics learn to speak English well, they become acculturated and use English as their primary language. But acculturation is a process, not an absolute classification. Assimilation with English language and adopting American traditions does not necessarily mean giving up culture, heritage and traditions. As of 2011, multi-language homes (English and Spanish) were still viewing about half of their television in Spanish.⁴¹² But as the acculturation and assimilation continue, and more viewers seem to be becoming English-dominant, television programming catering to Hispanic audiences will surely continue to change.

Romano pointed out, “I have not seen a media company that has successfully created a powerful content offering to entertain and inform Hispanics in English.”⁴¹³ Romano left the English-language programming to Telemundo’s parent company NBCUniversal. But with new players in the field of English-language television catering to Hispanic-American audiences, we may see a whole new ballgame.

With these ventures into this trend still being fairly new it remains to be seen if these attempts at reaching the English-speaking Hispanic audience will prove fruitful and if other networks will follow suit. For now, it is evident that Spanish-language channels far outnumber the English-language networks catering to U.S. Hispanics, and there is a growing opportunity to reach English-speaking Hispanic-Americans.

VII. Conclusion

This exploratory thesis investigated the rationale behind networks trending toward English-language programming to cater to U.S. Hispanics by looking at why Hispanic networks are now concerned with English-language programming. This research looked at strategies of networks targeting Hispanic audiences with English-language programming, and this thesis was aided tremendously by intensive interviews with industry experts. Generally, this research aimed to reveal the motivation of a trend toward English-language programming for Hispanics as the Hispanic-American population continues to grow.

It appears that bilingual Hispanic-Americans currently watch as much, if not more, English-language programming as Spanish-language programming, and it is the contention of the author of this thesis that Spanish-language networks are reacting to an increase of the use of the English language among U.S. Hispanics by adding more English-language and bilingual programming to the broadcast rotation rather than simply focusing on Spanish-language programming.

Nielsen data from April 2012 backed up the belief that young Hispanics are trending toward English-language programming, especially within the Hispanic millennial audience. The data revealed that 61 percent of television-viewing among Hispanic ages 18 to 29 went to English-language programming.⁴¹⁴ If the data is broken down further, it becomes clear that younger viewers account for more of the English-language television-viewing. Among those included in the data, 57 percent of programming watched by Hispanics 25-29 was in English compared to 65 percent by

Hispanics 18 to 24, and 77 percent of television viewing among Hispanic teens was in English.⁴¹⁵

According to the 2013 SNL Economics of Basic Cable Networks report, the television market for English-speaking Hispanics is undersaturated. As the report points out, the market is growing rapidly and many households are multigenerational – with some household members being Spanish-dominant, some being bilingual and some being English-dominant.⁴¹⁶ During a NATPE Market and Conference panel, Haubegger said, “We are finally going from programming in Spanish to programming for Hispanics,” which she said is “a long overdue evolution.”⁴¹⁷

Kanatas said the two main factors in driving the launch of El Rey Network were the lack of Hispanic representation on television causing a demand in the English-language programming market and the growing number of Hispanics being born in the U.S. who grow up speaking English.

Thoughts on the Direction of the Trend

While no predictions are made in this thesis, industry experts have thoughts on the future of this trend of airing English-language programming catering to U.S. Hispanics. When asked if he thinks more English-language networks catering to Hispanics will make their way to the airwaves, Kanatas said, “I don’t know. I tend to think as a new network, you need to have a unique sense of style and sensibility in order to stand out from the pack. If I had to venture a guess, I’d say yes, either more of these types of networks will appear, or more diversity will be represented in some fashion in English-

language media. By that, I mean more Hispanic characters on television shows, as well as more Hispanic directors and writers.”⁴¹⁸ Asked the same question, Gwyn said, “I think we’re probably at a point where it will slow down a little bit. There might be one more out there coming, but it’s not an easy challenge. It’s very complicated to do.”⁴¹⁹

When asked if she thinks more English-language or bilingual networks will appear on television, Dominguez said, “I think it might happen very slowly, and eventually I think networks will air shows with Hispanic characters but in the English-language. I see that happening. I could be wrong, but I see that happening more than bilingual networks popping up. I think the bilingual gray area will eventually fizzle out.” She also pointed out challenges to programming for a bilingual audience. “Not all English programming translates well,” she said.⁴²⁰

Dominguez clarified, “Like comedies. A lot of the humor doesn’t translate well when it’s dubbed through secondary audio programming. Sometimes it doesn’t transcend language. So we try to stay away from comedies and stick more with drama, reality and sports – shows that transcend cultural barriers.” She explained, “You can watch a soccer game on mute, and you still get it. Drama translates really well, and telenovelas. If we were to develop an original show, comedy is definitely on the table, but anything that we acquire from other places, comedy is the least of our interests.”⁴²¹

NUVOtv has seen success transcending cultural boundaries. Villarreal noted, “Even though we’re trying to reach [modern Latinos], we get a lot of viewers who aren’t Latino who love our programming. It’s nice to know that we’re creating this general market programming that is geared toward Latinos, but at the end of the day, it’s

American stories, so anyone – it’s very inclusive – anyone can tune in and watch and feel like they’re a part of the show, which is great. We didn’t want to create something that was so cul-de-sac and exclusive that people felt like they couldn’t tune in because they weren’t Latino.”⁴²²

Villarreal observed, “I would say that our strategy has been extremely successful because we were the pioneers of creating this new network that’s geared toward this audience that no one else had been going after. And then all of a sudden, Fusion and El Rey pop up, trying to do the same thing, which to us was like, ‘Oh look, see, there is an audience for this that other people want to go after, and we’re doing it first.’ Which was really assuring.”⁴²³

When asked whether she thinks more English-language networks for English-speaking U.S. Hispanics will appear in the future, Villarreal said, “That’s an interesting debate for us. When El Rey and Fusion first started, they were going for the same audience, Hispanics 18-34, but then as they got closer their launch, they changed their brand from that to you know, El Rey is now action-lovers who are male and Fusion is now going toward millennials. So they’ve kind of changed their messaging to reach a broader audience, but they’re still trying to accomplish the same mission. It’s interesting that of us three, we’re the only ones that are still going after the modern Latino who speaks English.”

Villarreal is also curious to see, “Does this mean there are going to be more networks that are seeing what we’re seeing? Or are they all going to try to do what we do, but not say it out loud? I also think that within the cable industry, all of the broadcast

companies that are already established, they're just going to start becoming more and more diverse. For example, one of our main talents here, Gina Rodriguez, was just cast as the lead in a CW show, *Jane the Virgin*. And it's really exciting that networks are now casting Latinos as the leads – not as the backup cop in *CSI: Miami* or the maid in *Devious Maids*. I think that the networks that are starting to pop up that are going toward the Latino audience are creating awareness that there is a need for this, but I also think that the established networks are going to start becoming more and more diverse because of it.”⁴²⁴

Villarreal commented on the surfacing of new networks appealing to the English-speaking U.S. Hispanic audience, “There's a need for it. There are a lot of non-profit organizations that are bringing awareness to it. There are a lot of A-list talent who are bringing awareness to it. They're like, ‘We need to create a forum that speaks to this audience.’ I mean I think the great thing about Jennifer Lopez is that she speaks the same brand. She wants to play roles that anyone can play – not just Latino roles that are Latino stories. Robert Rodriguez does it with *El Rey*. He's trying to create a forum, and he's the spokesperson behind it. So I think it's having the powerful, influential people at the top making those decisions, and starting to influence the rest of the industry. There's a need for this.” She added, “We've been in supporting roles for so long, we're ready for our time to shine.”⁴²⁵

At Fusion, both Vila and Tamayo anticipate more networks will try to cater to the U.S. Hispanic audience in the future. Vila expects more networks will take the same

approach as Fusion, and try to include U.S. Hispanics rather than try to categorize and compartmentalize them.⁴²⁶

Tamayo continued, “It’s definitely something that hasn’t been perfected by everyone, but I do think that everywhere you look, you’re seeing people making an effort to get a little closer to that demo. I do think you’re going to continue to see these [networks aimed at English-speaking Hispanics] crop up. I hope to see it normalize, so that networks aren’t targeting only Hispanics, but kind of treating the Hispanic population as part of the general U.S. population and giving equal weight to their programming accordingly. It’s not surprising to see these shifts. If you’re going with the younger programming, you need to be doing it in English.”⁴²⁷

Programming Strategy Explanation

There is not one sole reason for the shift in programming strategy of trending toward English-language programming for Hispanic-Americans. While each network has its own unique strategy, it is clear that a number of social and economic factors are helping to determine programming strategy trends. With more U.S. Hispanics speaking English, and with the U.S. Hispanic population rapidly growing, programmers simply cannot ignore the English-speaking Hispanic-American audience.

The executives interviewed for this thesis noted a need for English-language programming catering to U.S. Hispanics, and all believe either more networks for this audience will surface in the future or existing networks will alter programming strategies to better appeal to the English-speaking U.S. Hispanic audience. There are multiple driving forces behind the shift in programming strategy toward English-language

programming for the Hispanic-American audience. The research questions of this thesis appear to be supported by the five factors explored in this thesis, but programming executives decidedly focused on two main factors explaining the trend. Not only are networks responding to the fact that more U.S. Hispanics are growing up in the U.S. and are speaking English at higher rates, but networks are also fulfilling a need for English-speaking Hispanics to see other English-speaking Hispanics appear on television. Based on the interviews, these two factors – the increase in U.S. Hispanics growing up in America speaking English and the need for U.S. Hispanics to be more accurately represented by English-speaking characters on television – seem to be the most pressing factors in the minds of programmers.

As English-speaking Hispanic-Americans become a more significant percentage of the American population, it is important for the demographic shift to be reflected on television. While the business opportunities, new market for English-language Hispanic programming created as a result of oversaturation in the Spanish-language television market as well as changing economics and increased Hispanic-American buying power may be compelling reasons to pay particular attention to the U.S. Hispanic television audience and may be contributing to the trend to some degree, this thesis research makes it clear that the underrepresentation of Hispanics and Hispanic issues on television, an overall lack of diversity in the media, as well as the pressing need to cater to the increasing number of U.S. Hispanics who are born in the U.S. and grow up speaking and consuming media in English, are the driving forces behind the evident shift in programming strategy. In all likelihood, Spanish-language networks in the U.S. will not

disappear anytime soon, but it is probable they will face an increasing amount of competition from those networks offering English-language programming to U.S. Hispanic audiences. As the young, U.S.-born Hispanic population continues to grow and thrive, so too will the need for programming catering specifically to this audience.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Thesis Interview Questions

IRB# 13992

Working Title: Trends in Hispanic-American Television: Is English-Language Programming the Focus of the Future?

Target Interview Participants: Programming executives at El Rey Network, Fusion, MiCasa Network, NUVOTv and mun2. Interviews are subject to availability.

For English-language networks aimed at Hispanic audiences (El Rey Network, NUVOTv, Fusion, MiCasa Network):

- What is the motivation/rationale behind launching an English-language network for Hispanic-American audiences?
- Why was English chosen as the language for this network?
- Who is the target audience for your network, and why?
- How has the Hispanic-American audience changed over time, and where do you see it in the future?
- What research led to the creation of your network?
- Do you believe more English-language networks will be created for this audience?
- How will this network boost business opportunities and how will it grow your brand?
- What makes your network unique and appealing for advertisers?
- How does your programming differ from programming on traditional English-language networks?
- What can you tell me about your network's programming strategy?
- I've looked at economics, business opportunities, market saturation and changes in the makeup of the Hispanic audiences
 - How has the changing U.S. Hispanic audience affected programming decisions?
 - Is there more room now for an English-language network catering to a Hispanic audience to enter the market than there was previously?
 - What, if any, business opportunities or partnerships contribute to your programming strategy?
 - How will this strategy help to grow and expand your brand?
 - How have changing economics among Hispanics impacted your strategy?
- What challenges have you faced in offering English-language programming, and how have you minimized or overcome these challenges?
- How successful would you say your strategy has been so far? What are your expectations for the future?

Additional questions for NUVOTv:

- How is NUVOTv different from SíTV?
- Why was the network relaunched in 2011?

Additional questions for MiCasa Network:

- How do you plan to compete with Fusion, El Rey Network and NUVOTv for the Hispanic millennial audience?
- How is your network different from Fusion, El Rey Network and NUVOTv?

Questions for mun2:

- How much programming on mun2 airs in English, and how much programming airs in Spanish?
- Are there plans to air more or less English programming in the future, or will the current structure likely remain in place?
- What research led Telemundo to decide mun2 should air any programming in English?
- Who is the target demographic for the network and why that demographic chosen?
- Who does mun2 see as its main competitors?
- How has the changing U.S. Hispanic audience impacted programming strategies?
- How do you see the U.S. Hispanic audience changing in the future, and how will changes affect programming strategies?
- What, if any, business opportunities contribute to your programming strategy?
- How have changing economics among Hispanics impacted your strategy?
- How does English-language programming on mun2 differ from traditional English-language network programming?
- How often are subtitles offered for your programs, if at all? Are they offered more in English for Spanish-language audio, or more in Spanish for English-language audio?
- Is mun2 the only venture of Telemundo's involving English language?
- How does your Spanish-language programming differ from programming on all-Spanish networks like Telemundo?
- What makes your network unique/attractive to advertisers?
- What is the main motivation/rationale for airing English-language programming catering to a Hispanic audience?
- What role do you see the English language having in the future of broadcasting catering to the U.S. Hispanic audience?
- Do you believe more bilingual or English-language networks will make their way to the air in the future?
- What challenges have you faced in offering English-language programming, and how have you minimized or overcome these challenges?

Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

*Participant Informed Consent Form
(To be sent via email)*



IRB# 13992

Dear [name],

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in my research. Please see the informed consent information below:

Please read the information below. Once you finish, please place an "x" on this line and return this email to levine4@huskers.unl.edu to confirm you agree to participate in an audio-recorded interview: _____

Title: Trends in Hispanic-American Television: Is English-Language Programming the Focus of the Future?

By participating in this research project, you understand and agree to the following:

Purpose:

This research project will aim to uncover trends in American broadcasting targeting Hispanic-American audiences. I'm interested in learning about programming strategies at the networks and the role English-language programming is playing in those strategies. You are invited to participate in this study because you are an employee of a television network catering to Hispanic-American audiences.

Procedures:

You will be asked to participate in an interview. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes, and will be conducted via the telephone.

Benefits:

There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant.

Risks and/or Discomforts:

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Confidentiality:

No confidential information will be obtained during this study. The data will be recorded and kept on Elizabeth Levine's personal laptop for the duration of the study and will be deleted once the thesis is complete. The interviews will be transcribed, and the transcriptions will only be seen by the investigator and the thesis committee during the study and will be deleted once the project is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings.

Opportunity to Ask Questions:

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Freedom to Withdraw:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your participation confirms that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You may keep this email as a copy of the consent agreement.

Name and Phone number of investigator(s)

Elizabeth Levine, MS, Principal Investigator Cell Phone: (732) 742-██████
Laurie Thomas Lee, Ph.D., Thesis Adviser Office (402) 472-██████

Appendix C: Institutional Review Board Certification of Exemption

February 28, 2014

Elizabeth Levine
Dean's Office of Journalism and Mass Communications
[REDACTED]

Laurie Lee
Dean's Office of Journalism and Mass Communications
308 ANDN, UNL, 68588-0466

IRB Number: 20140213392EX
Project ID: 13992
Project Title: UNL CoJMC Thesis - Elizabeth Levine

Dear Elizabeth:

This letter is to officially notify you of the certification of exemption of your project. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as exempt, category 2.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 02/28/2014.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:

- * Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
- * Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
- * Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
- * Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
- * Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Becky R. Freeman

Becky R. Freeman, CIP
for the IRB

