

# Univision Brand Labs: A Year One Odyssey

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UNIVISION INSITES ARCHIVES



**When Univision brought advertising and media representatives together in midtown Manhattan for their annual Upfront event last May, they introduced a new venture to help make marketers' long-term commitments to Spanish-language campaigns more resourceful and more fruitful.**

That initiative was Univision Brand Labs, where clients can tap into the resources they need, at the level they choose, to develop advertising which stimulates upticks in product or service sales. One year later, Univision Brand Labs has established a solid track record

with hundreds of brands in a variety of product categories. Result: integrated linear, digital, and social media arrangements with often multi-million dollar budgets attached.

Leading the way: clients in the categories of consumer package goods, wireless phone providers, retail, automotive, entertainment studios and technology.

"This has opened a lot of doors for people," declares Rick Resnick, senior vice president of sales marketing strategy for Univision. "What this has done is reach out to new advertisers, eager about and intrigued by Hispanic consumers, (who) didn't know how to start or were afraid to make wrong moves. We're able to show them what the opportunity is, what the messaging can be, to have them say the right thing, integrate with the right shows, develop a media mix. All of this takes away the barriers to entry for them. That's the number one sign the effort is working."

A big part of that result stems from Univision Brand Labs not operating as a one-sized undertaking for all comers, Resnick continues. On an individual level, assignments are geared to what a client needs immediately. In some cases, that need is research or conclusions on a specific Hispanic demographic, the better to create commercials speaking right to that portion of the overall Latino population (now above 60 million people nationwide). In other cases, it's experimenting with the script for advertising messages, or matching message pairing with the best social media influencer to deliver that message.

Univision Brand Labs, largely based in Univision's Miami headquarters and key sales office in New York, handles assignments as they arise. The process is a step-by-step one. "A marketer reaches out to his or her salespeople, and they engage our team to figure out what's needed," explains Resnick. "We get together to understand their goals, direction, what they're trying to do. Most important, where they are on the journey."

"If they haven't quite started yet (with Hispanic ads), we show them insights in their category. Is there room for growth? Almost all the time, the answer is yes. It's a simple equation. If you've got a good product, but you're not speaking to tens of millions of Hispanic consumers who might be interested in your product, once you start speaking to them, you'll sell more. You'll have success. That's our proposition," he adds.

Many projects involving Univision Brand Labs are multi-media in nature, leading to commercial buys on Univision's linear networks (Univision, UniMas, Galavision and all-sports TUDN), digital channels, web sites and usage of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. In some cases, the campaigns include organic product or message integration on such Univision programs as the multi-hour morning show *Despierta America/Wake Up America*, or midday half-hour *Edicion Digital/Digital Edition*, which is simulcast live on YouTube and Facebook. Other campaigns mix in placement on Univision's high-rated lineup of annual primetime specials, from *The Latin Grammy Awards* to *Premios Juventud/Youth Awards* and *Premio Lo Nuestro/Our Awards*.



Amid the last two months of coronavirus epidemic across the country, Univision Brand Labs has counseled various advertisers about how to tailor their message to reach Univision's audience, which has led to several brands updating their messaging through branded on-air segments and timely public service announcements to address the current stay-at-home reality.

"It's very important that our community gets to hear these messages," insists Resnick. "It's almost a moral imperative that they get the same information the non-Hispanic community is getting. Everyone needs some help right now."

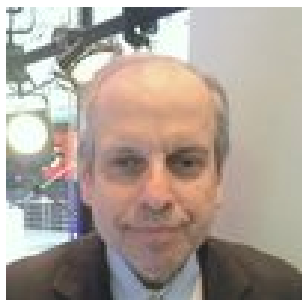
A few weeks ago, Univision launched *Diario del Coronavirus/Coronavirus Diary*, a daily mid-afternoon news hour focused on how the virus impacts Latinos. Some Univision Brand Labs users are participating advertisers on the program. (NOTE: On May 1<sup>st</sup>, Univision started *Unidos Por Los Nuestrs/United For Each Other*, an expanded multi-media campaign with public service announcement, virtual town halls, Facebook Live programming and text message outreach.)

Expect Univision Brand Labs to expand production and research capabilities in the year ahead, along with more use of program/product integrations and advanced technology. Look for some new approaches to social media the remainder of 2020 and early 2021, Resnick says.

*Photos courtesy of Univision.*

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### **Simon Applebaum**

Simon Applebaum has covered the TV medium for more than 38 years. Now a regular MediaVillage columnist, he produces and hosts Tomorrow Will Be Televised, a program all about TV, now in its 12th year. Previously, he was a senior editor for various TV-centric ...



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