

LETTERS

# In Diversity Marketing, Don't Forget Literacy



Kudos for your article on "Creating Opportunity from Diversity"!

— Rose Rios

## Creating Opportunity from Diversity

It is unfortunate that quality health education to culturally diverse populations is so sparse. While emphasis is now being put on appropriate translation of materials into other languages, please do not forget the literacy of the materials. When materials are translated and the content analyzed, messages often lose their simplicity. All health education materials

should provide for ease of comprehension and a call to action. As a first-generation American, I am still quite surprised how often I am asked to translate Spanish health education materials into a colloquial dialect because the core message is unclear, despite being in a patient's native language! For example, there are many different dialects in the Spanish language. An individual from Mexico may not fully comprehend materials written in a dialect most often used by Dominicans. Therefore, it is important to tailor the message appropriately.

*Rose Rios, MPH*  
ACCOUNT MANAGER  
DOCTORS+DESIGNERS

## An Important Frontier

Kudos to the PharmaVOICE team for having brought together a very useful forum on the topic of diversity and multicultural market development for the pharma industry.

I received many calls from the industry, and the topic and the theme is definitely going to be an important frontier for pharma marketing.

*Rupa Ranganathan*  
ETHNIC STRATEGIST AND SENIOR VP  
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## Letters

Send your letters to [feedback@pharmalinx.com](mailto:feedback@pharmalinx.com). Please include your name, title, company, and business phone number. Letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity. All submissions become the property of PharmaLinx LLC.

## What's Your Opinion?

### THE CHALLENGES OF NEW INDUSTRY GUIDELINES

There is a movement afoot on the state level that would require pharmaceutical companies to disclose any gift or payment of \$25 or more to doctors, hospitals, nursing homes, pharmacists, or health insurers for the purpose of marketing their products. Pharmaceutical companies would not have to disclose the value of free drug samples or medical student scholarships.

Vermont was reported to be the first state to initiate such action. State officials said they planned to make the information available to the public, possibly via the Internet, so that patients can see what gifts their doctors have accepted.

The only state with a similar law is Minnesota, which according to the New York Times, in the mid-90's prohibited companies from giving gifts valued above \$50 to doctors or other healthcare providers. Furthermore, as reported by the New York Times, legislators in other states, including New York, have proposed bills to prevent drug companies from deducting the cost of advertising on their state tax returns. In all, measures regulating pharmaceutical company marketing have been introduced in at least 15 states, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

PharmaVOICE wants to know: have state legislatures gone too far? Or, is the pharmaceutical industry now having to atone for questionable marketing tactics?

**WHAT'S YOUR**  
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