Regional Mexican Music Goes Mainstream. Here's Why Marketers Should Be Thinking Ahead

> It's no secret that collaboration is essential to growth, but the how of it isn't always so clear—and it's the understanding of how that is a true competitive advantage. Join Adweek X, a uniquely formatted event on December 4 in LA, to unlock fresh perspectives, true collaboration and growth.

There was a time—not so long ago, actually—when mentioning the artist Bad Bunny among a bunch of brand marketers would have elicited several confused-looking faces at best. But now? You'd probably get an obvious nod.

This major cultural shift is perfect evidence of just how reactive the marketing industry can be, oftentimes waiting for cultural waves to peak and then ride, as opposed to jumping in and creating the wave itself. And today the cultural shift that marketers may not see coming is the coast-to-coast impact of regional Mexican music, corridos in particular.

Mexican corridos is a music genre that uses instruments and lyrics based on the traditional style of Mexican folklore and includes storytelling that ends with a moral. The genre has been here for centuries, dating back to the early 1800s, and has been an integral part of not only Mexican culture but the surrounding Latin American countries that were introduced to it during the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema.

When it comes to the marketing industry, this isn’t an “I told you so,” sort of moment, but instead the perfect time for marketers to get ahead of the game.

The next Bad Bunny

One of the next, soon-to-be-household names that might still inspire a confused look, is Peso Pluma.

Like Bad Bunny, Peso Pluma is an artist whose meteoric crossover success has created a gateway for millions of young people in the U.S. to turn their attention to corridos and crossover tracks, which intentionally blend a couple of different genres, with Mexican regional melodies firmly in the driver seat. His hit single with Eslabon Armado, “Ella Baila Sola,” was the first regional Mexican song ever to enter the top five on the Billboard Hot 100 and reach number one on the Billboard Global 200.

Other appearances in mainstream culture: Peso Pluma was the first ever regional Mexican artist to perform on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon and the first to perform corridos music at the 2023 Billboard Music Awards (also winning top Latin song for the aforementioned song), propelling him even deeper into pop culture. Additionally, performing at Coachella with Becky G gave avid music lovers the chance to experience him in person and add him to their playlists, which is another place he is breaking records as the number five most-streamed artist in the history of Spotify, hitting the Top 50 Global chart five times with his collaborations.

Some of the other well-known corridos artists are Armado, Natanael Cano and Fuerza Regida, while some of the classics are Banda El Recodo, Banda MS, Banda El Limón, Valentín

Elizalde, Los Tigres del Norte and Los Tucanes de Tijuana. So, the musical revival is here, with a twist, and it's continuing to gain ground and popularity.

Why marketers should care

A recent study by Orci and Think Now explores the impact that corridos and Mexican regional music are having on pop culture. Speaking to both US Hispanics and non-US Hispanics, the study sought to understand just who is listening to this previously niche style of music and what they really think of it. Here are a few applicable insights and lessons for marketers about the cultural shift behind corridos music.

The storytelling resonates

Despite what some may think about the niche nature of Mexican regional music, the study showed that this genre is very popular among both U.S. Hispanics and non-U.S. Hispanics, driven in large part by the fusion of styles. In fact, more than half (59%) of non-U.S. Hispanics enjoy "mixing new styles,"which is very telling of how new genres like the aforementioned Bad Bunny-fueled reggaeton revolution came to life.

Another reason for the increased interest in this music? Storytelling. Despite the language barrier, nearly two-thirds (64%) of non-U.S. Hispanics stated that they can "identify with/relate to the emotions conveyed in the songs." This speaks to the broader importance of storytelling as a way to not only connect with younger generations, but provide meaningful content for them as well.

This is a big cultural moment

Both U.S. Hispanics and non-U.S. Hispanics see corridos and Mexican music as having an important impact on culture now and in the future. In fact, four-out-of-five (80%) of non-U.S. Hispanics say it "has the potential to break down cultural

barriers.” So much so that when asked if the musical genre was a positive influence on young generations, 71% of U.S. Hispanics said it was a very positive influence, a point echoed by an even higher percentage (89%) of non–U.S. Hispanics.

The brand ambassadors the next-gen is looking for

While young talent, particularly in the music industry, can sometimes feel risky for brand associations, this research shows that 76% of non-U.S. Hispanics think Mexican regional artists “provide good models and spokespersons for brands.” While every brand has to take into consideration its own safety and alignment concerns, the data suggests that this genre as a whole is seen positively by young consumers.

What does this all mean?

For one, culture shifts quickly. Which in turn means that brands must always be thinking about the next thing—the next wave.

Given the rise of this emerging popularity around corridos music and culture, brands are doing themselves a disservice if they don’t proactively embrace these things now, as a means of demonstrating—even proving—that they have their pulse on culture. The opportunity to be a leader in this space and therefore lead with young consumers is now.

Recommended articles
https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/regional-mexican-music-goes-mainstream/