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November 16, 2009

C2PO 2010 Census Integrated Communications Research Memoranda Series

No. 15

MEMORANDUM FOR Distribution List

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Subject: 2010 Census Communications Campaign Creative Copy
Testing (Phase 2) Summary of Results

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Attached is a C2PO 2010 Census Integrated Communications Research (ICR) document about the 2010 Census Communications Campaign Creative Copy Testing (Phase 2) Summary of Results. This is one of a series of comprehensive reports of the Integrated Communications Campaign (ICC) research plan that includes several phases of qualitative and quantitative research conducted over time.

The purpose of creative copy testing is to ensure that all messages developed for the 2010 Census Campaign resonate with target audiences. Phase 2 tested new messages developed in response to results from Phase 1 testing and also tested new messages that were developed for additional audiences and in additional languages. This research will aid in the selection and prioritization of the most effective campaign messages prior to final production.

This is a high-level summary. Detailed Phase 2 results are available in the C2PO 2010 Census ICR Memoranda Series No. 16.

Attachment

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2010 Census Communications Campaign
Creative Copy Testing Phase 2 Summary of Results

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What?

Creative Copy Testing is one part of a comprehensive Integrated Communications Campaign (ICC) research plan that includes several phases of qualitative and quantitative research conducted over time. The primary purpose of Creative Copy Testing is to ensure that all messaging developed for the 2010 Census resonates with its respective target audiences.

The respondent feedback obtained from this research will help to:

- Determine if messages are culturally relevant, improve knowledge, and prompt participation
- Aid in the selection, refinement, and prioritization of the most effective campaign messages prior to final production

Phase I copy testing was conducted January through March 2009. A total of 1,400 interviews were conducted in 27 cities across the U.S. and Puerto Rico and 114 messages were exposed. The Final Report and Executive Summary for phase I are available on the Census website. This additional round of copy testing was conducted in order to test new messages that were developed in response to learnings from phase I of testing and to test new messages that were developed for additional audiences/languages. This effort is included under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

When?

A total of 314 interviews were conducted in August 2009.

Who?

Interviews were conducted among a cross-section of the population (see Detailed Summary on next page). Participants reflected a range of races and ethnicities, hard-to-count and undercounted populations, and a mix of age, gender, marital status, education, income, etc. For each audience, recruitment also included relevant Census Barriers, Attitudes, and Motivators Survey (CBAMS) mindsets (see footnote on next page). Sessions were conducted either in English or in-language with an English translator present.

How?

In order to gauge reactions to campaign messaging in the early stages of development before final production, a total of 78 messages were exposed in a very “rough” executional format. Creative concepts in the form of video storyboards were used to depict TV. These consisted of illustrated drawings (not live action) with a non-professional “announcer” voiceover. Other print and radio messaging used illustrations or “stock” music and “stock” photography that captured the essence of the creative concept but not what will ultimately be final music, casting, and/or scenery.

The following provides a summary of results. The Maya Group, which was contracted to conduct this research, will issue a more comprehensive final report in October 2009.

DETAILED SUMMARY

Background and Method:

On behalf of the U.S. Census Bureau, Team Census 2010 engaged an independent research company—Maya Group—to test creative messaging developed for the 2010 Census communications campaign. Messaging was exposed in a very “rough” executional format that was not reflective of final casting, photography, and/or music or voiceovers. The final report for phase I—“2010 Census Communications Campaign Creative Copy Testing Final Summary Report,” May 2009—is posted to the Census website. For this second phase, Maya Group conducted qualitative-only sessions among targeted respondents across the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

- 37 in-depth qualitative focus group sessions, 78 messages exposed
- 314 total respondents
- 9 cities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico
- Census Bureau HQ staff and external stakeholders were invited to attend
- Conducted August 2009

Sample Composition:

Participants reflected a range of races and ethnicities, hard-to-count and undercounted populations, and a mix of age, gender, marital status, education, income, etc.

New messages based on phase I learnings were exposed to:

- Diverse Mass (diverse mix of races/ethnicities who consume English-language media)
- Diverse Mass displaced persons and “hosts” *
- Black (African American)
- Hispanic (in-language Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central/South American, Mexican, Dominican, Salvadorian, and Caribbean)
- Hispanic displaced persons and “hosts” *
- Puerto Rico (in-language Puerto Rican urban/rural and Dominican)

New in-language messages were developed for the following languages:

- Asian (Bangladeshi, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani)
- Armenian and Iranian
- Greek
- Portuguese

For each audience, recruitment included relevant Census Barriers Attitudes and Motivators Survey (CBAMS) mindsets, which are Leading Edge, Head Nodders, Insulated, Unacquainted and Cynical Fifth. See CBAMS Analytic Report for more information.¹

* Displaced persons are defined as people not currently living in their permanent residence due to job loss, natural disaster, or property foreclosure. “Hosts” are people who have displaced persons currently residing in their home.

¹ The primary purpose of CBAMS was to support the development of the Census Integrated Communications Campaign (ICC). In particular, the CBAMS was designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the public’s opinions about the 2010 Census. The survey asked questions about Census awareness, intent to participate in the 2010 Census, potential barriers to participation, and attitudes and motivators toward the 2010 Census. The addition of this information provided a robust and comprehensive segmentation model to lead us into 2010 and beyond in informing tactical and strategic decisions.

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Objectives:

- To determine if messages are culturally relevant, improve knowledge, and prompt participation
- To obtain feedback that will help refine, optimize and prioritize messaging prior to production

Universal Learnings:

Across all audiences, several positive overarching themes surfaced that were consistent with findings from the previous round of copy testing. There were also some additional learnings uncovered that can be leveraged to strengthen the creative messaging even further.

- All of the print messaging units would benefit from a larger font size to enhance readability.
- A slowing down of the messaging in radio would serve to enhance comprehension.
- Associating benefits with the Census and creating a link between these benefits and why participation is important needs to be a key messaging component across all audiences.

OVERALL MESSAGING STRENGTHS

Attention Getting

- *Findings from this round of testing, indicate that messages once again captured attention, particularly among those who had never heard of the Census or those who only thought of it as a “count” of the population.*

Culturally Relevant

- The majority of messages resonated with each of the respective target audiences. Multicultural audiences appreciated the fact that the Census wanted to include them and sought to depict them with cultural sensitivity and, where relevant, in their own language.

Enhanced Favorability

- Overall, messages raised feelings of favorability towards the Census and demonstrated the potential to overcome skeptical attitudes. *Across audiences, favorability improved on a pre-/post-exposure basis (with two exceptions noted in the audience specific findings).*

Raised Level of Knowledge

- Once again, there was particular resonance around the idea that *participation is quick and easy (10 questions/10 minutes).*
- Showing *the actual Census form demystified the Census*, reinforcing its ease as well as safety.
- Providing a more detailed understanding of Census “operations,” as well as a URL/website for respondents to seek out more information was well received.
 - Timing: look for the form in mid-March; look for it in the mail
 - Expectations: mail it back today/now
 - URL/website (i.e., for more information go to 2010census.gov)
- *Respondents found messages of confidentiality/security reassuring*, especially during NRFU.
- Clarifying the NRFU Phase, making clear *who* will come to your door (with Census ID badge, someone from your neighborhood/community, sworn to protect the privacy of your answers) as well as conveying *why*—that if the Census has not received your form, someone needs to follow up so you and your community are represented—served to alleviate fear. For many, it also served to promote early mail return to avoid someone coming to their door.

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- For most audiences, the messages successfully conveyed the fact that a *wide range of benefits are associated with Census and they created the link between these benefits and why participation is important.*

Motivated Participation

- Respondents clearly understood *that receiving benefits is contingent upon participation*, and messaging not only prompted *them* to want to participate but to also encourage others to do so.
- Depictions of diversity and “people from all walks of life” was highly motivating—*the work felt inclusive*—respondents came away feeling that the Census is everyone’s responsibility and everyone can benefit.

Effective Call to Action

Ultimately, it is recommended based on the copy testing research that the tagline should be **“We can’t move forward until you mail it back.”** The change from “send it back” to “mail it back” is based upon findings from research conducted for the digital component of the campaign in which some people thought it was possible to fill out the Census online.

The testing of **“We can’t move forward until you send it back”** showed that the tagline works well conceptually, creates a sense of accountability, and is empowering. Once again, it was seen as a strong motivational call-to-action that positively aligned with receiving benefits.

At the request of the Census Bureau, Team Census 2010 developed and gained consumer feedback from Diverse Mass and the Black audiences to an alternate tagline. The original tagline, and the alternate version, **“Together we move forward when you mail it back,”** were both exposed to participants in this second round of copy testing.

- Learnings from Phase 2 of copy testing confirmed that the communications campaign continue to adopt **“We can’t move forward until you send it back”** as the tagline for both Diverse Mass and the Black audiences. Results showed that this line conveys a strong sense of obligation and responsibility and serves as a strong call-to-action. Importantly, it conveys more of a sense of urgency — a critical factor given our small window of opportunity to generate mail-back response. In this context, it succeeds in adding an element of immediacy to “It’s in our hands” (which was originally created as the sole tagline for the campaign).
- Though **“Together we move forward when you mail it back”** reinforced the thematic idea of collective opportunity and coming together, overall it was not seen as adding a strong enough call-to-action. Only half of respondents in Diverse Mass groups stated that it conveys “it is very important to return their Census form” compared to **“We can’t move forward until you send it back.”**
- While it is true that one Black focus group (Houston) in Phase 2 preferred **“Together we move forward when you mail it back”**, all other Black audiences in both phases reacted positively to **“We can’t move forward until you send it back.”**
- Although there was no perceived difference between “*mail* it back” or “*send* it back” in this research, consideration should be given to stating *mail* in the tagline (**“We can’t move forward until you mail it back”**) since this would tend to clarify any confusion over an online response mode. In discussions over banner ads, respondents do question whether or not they can fill in the form and send it in online.
- For non-English audiences, individual taglines will be tailored for language and cultural nuances that work to strengthen even more the call-to-action for each audience based on research findings (For example, the Hispanic line is —“Para progresar, lo tenemos que enviar” [“To move forward, we have to send it back.”]). Only Diverse Mass and Black

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audiences will have the exact **“We can’t move forward until you mail it back”**.

Audience-Specific Learnings:

New messages were developed for the following audiences in response to phase I learnings.

These new messages successfully built upon the previous messaging strengths to ensure that we are moving forward with the most effective campaign messages prior to final production.

Black audience:

- More realistic, inspiring, and direct messaging exposed in this round of research clearly communicated that the Census is coming, it is important to participate and that African-American participation can make a difference in their community.
- \$400 billion in federal funds was singled out as “new news” and motivating to African Americans because it also helped to explain the purpose for the Census and for what it will be used.

Hispanic audience:

- As with previous rounds of testing, Hispanic sense of “pride” and impact on the country was a key element in the new round of work. This messaging resonated with Hispanics and reinforced the value of “being counted.”
- More aspirational messaging, situations, and characters served to communicate progress and achievement.
- Appealing to the Hispanic community at large, their immediate community, family, and future generations was compelling.
- Since the forward/back wordplay of the original tagline didn’t translate well, a new tagline—“Para progresar, lo tenemos que enviar” (“To move forward, we have to send it back.”) was tested among Hispanics. The word “progresar” strengthened the line. It was clearly understood, served as a call-to-action, and was very well received by the respondents.
- Adding messaging that conveys that confidentiality is protected by “Federal law” enhanced credibility.
- Referencing the bilingual form and availability of language assistance guides built confidence that the Census has taken Hispanics into account.
- Referencing \$400 billion was confusing to Hispanics and raised skepticism. It was more important to be told that their “fair share” of funds is there and that it will go towards schools, hospitals, roads, etc. It was not necessary to state the actual number.

Hispanic displaced persons and “hosts” audience:

- Message that there are clear benefits associated with everyone being counted, including displaced people, was motivating and well received.
- There is an opportunity to clarify confusion around who should be included—when a “visitor” becomes more than a visitor and should be counted.

Puerto Rico audience:

- More diverse, culturally relevant imagery was presented in this round of work and it successfully served to further enhance relevance and motivation.
- Pride in Puerto Rico and the appeal for unity and cooperation in order to improve the long-term future for themselves and their children resonated very well.
- Specific messaging for Dominicans was also added to this round of copy testing. They were pleased to see that they were being included in the Census. To these participants, it

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meant that they are being acknowledged as a contributing segment of the population in Puerto Rico.

- NRFU, not shown in phase I research, was a big motivator for respondents to participate on time to avoid a visit from the Census Taker. They wanted to avoid opening their door to a stranger, even though they were reassured by knowing *who* (with proper ID) and *why* (if you haven't mailed it in) someone would need to follow up.
- Two alternative taglines were exposed—"Con el Censo nos movemos hacia adelante" (With the Census we move forward) and "Con el Censo avanzamos todos" (With the Census we all advance). Although both versions were positively received, "Con el Censo avanzamos todos" (With the Census we all advance) was deemed more "all-inclusive" and more "group" and "we" oriented. Importantly, it appeared more successful in making people feel it is important to mail back the form.

Diverse Mass audience:

- More anthemic, awareness-building messaging (one message in particular that leveraged the idea—"Before we discover what we can be, we have to know exactly who we are.") that creates more of an emotional connection with the Census was exposed in this round. This and other new messaging ideas generated a sense of pride, unity and responsibility, resulting in respondents being not only encouraged to participate, but compelled.
- The concept that "one voice," when accompanied by others (neighbors, co-workers, community, etc.), empowers us to make a difference, was quite motivating.
- Respondents agreed that hearing/seeing/being told the benefits to their communities, and to their lives, is a major motivator in their participation in the Census.
- While \$400 billion in federal funds was compelling to some, to others "fair share..." was just as motivating and had more credibility.

Diverse Mass displaced persons and "hosts:"

- Messages clearly communicated that the Census is coming, it is important for even the displaced to participate, and that they can make a difference by participating.
- Displaced persons were "touched and moved" that the Census is saying they count, they matter, and that even if they do not have a home of their own, they need to be counted.

New messages were developed for the following additional audiences/languages. Overall, these audiences were very positive and appreciative of being included in the Census and communicated to in their own language. Some reactions from multicultural audiences also indicated that while they appreciated the specific cultural sensitivity and focus, they also appreciated the messaging that depicted diversity, since they see themselves living in a more diverse world, not one defined solely by their race or ethnicity.

Across audiences, there is also an opportunity to:

- improve in-language translations to make them more fluid and colloquial
- clarify that Census and/or funding is not just for their community alone, whether through messaging (e.g., your fair share) or depicting ethnic diversity

Additional opportunities were uncovered, with respect to each of the individual audiences, to enhance the messaging even further. These are listed in the learnings below:

Bangladeshi audience:

- Messages were found to be informative, motivating, and empowering. They served to galvanize the community spirit of respondents—all intended to fill out the form and spread the word to others in the community. Some, especially those who didn't know much about the Census, even welcomed *more* information.

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- On learning about \$400 billion in federal funding per year, participants were excited about the potential benefits for their community.
- The depictions of multi-ethnic groups signified communal harmony and cooperation.
- Messaging around confidentiality was able to calm fears and dispel doubts.
- Although both lines were positively perceived, “It’s our responsibility” was more motivating than “It depends on us.”

Hmong audience:

- Due to the lower level of education and the relatively poor socioeconomic status of their communities, Hmong are particularly sensitive to the message that the Census is working hard to count everyone and that you need to cooperate to get your community’s share of funding.
- They greatly appreciate the Census reaching out to ensure that they, too, are counted.
- The in-language translation of “It’s in our hands” was taken too literally. An alternative, “It’s our responsibility” resonated better with this audience.

Laotian audience:

- Messages served to increase their awareness about the Census and their role. The importance of everyone’s participation and the simple process of filling out the form were clearly conveyed and convincing.
- The potential positive impact of Census benefits on the Laotian community generated feelings of hope for the future.
- Most participants believed the Census takers would visit regardless of them mailing back the form. Better clarity in terms of this operational aspect is needed for this audience.
- “It’s our responsibility” was found to be very motivating and empowering.

Thai audience:

- Overall there is an opportunity to simplify messaging for better comprehension among the Thai community. Although better language translation would serve to help clarify messages and offer more reassurance, participants remained a bit confused and overwhelmed by what was perceived to be complicated information. They had limited prior knowledge of the Census and would benefit from simple facts like what the Census is all about, who would benefit from it, and how individuals should complete the form. The more direct the messaging was, the more it was appreciated.
- Because of this lack of understanding, it is not surprising that this group showed virtually no real positive shift in the pre-/post-exposure exercise. (Although, it is interesting to note that most started out fairly positive). Clearly, an enhanced understanding of the Census and its benefits would serve to better engage this group and increase their positive predisposition.
- The line “Success is in our hands” was taken too literally; they didn’t understand the context behind “success.” An alternative line, put into proper context when new messaging translations are being made, should be considered.
- There is the potential to strengthening confidentiality, especially in the NRFU phase, without being too forceful. Respondents were discomforted by “required by law,” which was seen as enforcement.

Pakistani audience:

- Messages were thought to be informative, inclusive, and motivating. This group was very appreciative of the recognition of Pakistanis and the efforts to count them in the 2010 Census.

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- While clearly understood, participants felt that some of the language was too sophisticated or highbrow and could be scaled back to reflect more colloquial Urdu. Some of the language was cited to be more of a literal back-translation from English rather than conversational.
- Participants believed \$400 billion in federal funding per year would be beneficial to their communities' future. Others sought clarification as to whether the funds would be allocated to Pakistanis or everyone in the U.S.
- "It's in our power" evoked a sense of collaboration and was found to be inspiring.

Armenian audience:

- Respondents would welcome more messaging content that explains what the Census is and how it would help the community. They indicated that the Armenian community would be open and ready to receive more information.
- The difference in Eastern vs. Western Armenian dialects posed a difficulty in reaching this audience as a single group. Utilizing a simple, more conversational Eastern Armenian (which would be better understood by the Western population) or creating two separate in-language versions to distinguish between the dialects is recommended.
- "It's in our hands," not effective as a literal translation from English, needs better transcreation to enhance its effectiveness. Respondents suggested a more symbolic translation such as "The Census is our responsibility."

Iranian audience:

- Participants felt that the messaging informed them enough so they would be able to tell their friends and family members how the Census worked, when it would be taking place, that the form needs to be mailed back, and what would happen if people don't fill it out.
- This group was one of only two that showed virtually no positive change in the pre-/post-exposure exercise. Some were positive initially, others remained neutral, and no one started out really negative. It is hypothesized, however, that using more conversational Farsi would go a long way with this group to increase cultural relevance and positive predisposition. Some respondents expressed concern that the messaging "did not sound Iranian." The translation was not wrong, per se; rather, it was not translated in a way that a native would speak.

Greek audience:

- Most participants did understand that the Census was important after reading the messaging in its entirety, and they appreciated that the messages were speaking directly to them in their own language. However, the link to being Greek with filling out the Census form did not resonate at first. The messages in the headlines were misleading and confusing because you cannot check "Greek" on the Census form. There is an opportunity to more directly link the benefits of the Census to the Greek community up front in the headlines.
- The language at times suggested a literal translation of English that made it sound contrived and in some cases even incorrect. The Greek messaging would benefit from more idiomatic translation.
- Participants hungered for a better explanation of the Census...what it is, why it takes place, what the benefits are, and who would benefit. And while the mention of \$400 billion drew curiosity, it also generated some confusion and skepticism. A better language translation would serve to help clarify that the funding was a "fair share" for the area/district in which Greek people live and not exclusively for the Greek population.
- "It depends on us" generated a sense of importance that Greek people should participate by completing and sending in their forms.

Portuguese audience:

- It made Portuguese-speaking people feel good that messages were reaching out to them in their native language. Messages clearly taught participants something they did not know before and gave them a rough idea about the Census.
- There were cultural differences between Brazilian and African Portuguese speaking groups that suggest the need for versioned messages to address these audiences more effectively. Learnings suggest several insights and cultural cues that can be applied, and how messaging transcreations can be more culturally nuanced and more precise, to strengthen individual communications moving forward.
- Messages about how the Census impacts the future were appealing and gave hope because they touched on the reason this audience came to the U.S.—a better future for self and family.
- While some messaging components played a supporting role, relaying more secondary messages, there is a definite opportunity to treat every piece as a stand-alone in order to educate this audience more fully in terms of Census operations as well as the benefits of participation.
- While reassurance of confidentiality is important to both groups, African Portuguese speakers need further assurance (to assuage immigration fears) that “the Census and Immigration are two separate entities.”

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The new messages that leveraged learnings from phase I were very successful in generating cultural relevance, improving knowledge, and prompting participation in the 2010 Census. They serve to strengthen the entire body of creative work even further and help to ensure that we are moving forward with the most effective messages prior to final production.

In-language messages developed for new languages/audiences, while also successful for the most part, will further benefit from this additional phase of copy testing learnings. Across audiences, there is also an opportunity to:

- improve in-language translations to make them more fluid and colloquial
- clarify that Census and/or funding is not just for their community alone, whether through messaging (e.g., your fair share), or depicting ethnic diversity

Additionally, several nuanced opportunities uncovered for each of the individual audiences will enhance the messaging even further. These audiences were very positive and extremely appreciative of being included in the Census and communicated to in their own language.

NEXT STEPS

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|--|-----------|
| ▪ ARRA creative refinements made based on copy-testing feedback | Sept. |
| ▪ Presentation of ARRA refinements to Census Creative Review Panel | 9/14 |
| ▪ Census Bureau to provide recommendation/prioritization of ARRA creative concepts | 9/15 |
| ▪ Begin ARRA pre-production/production process | Oct./Dec. |

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- Review almost finished ARRA Creative (Census Creative Review Panel, Advisory Committee, DOC and Capitol Hill) Dec.
- Finalized creative shipped Jan. '10
- 2010 Census paid campaign commences Jan. '10