



Case Study:

Nestlé USA: NESCAFÉ Clásico

Year: 2021



Good Food, Good Life

This case study was prepared for the client Nestlé USA for the product NESCAFÉ Clásico during Covid times to add a new message that coffee at home can also mean a great moment with the people you love the most. It was developed and designed by the Casanova//McCann. In the Best Hispanic Cultural Insight category, it won silver.

Executive Summary:

In 2020, NESCAFÉ had just launched a new campaign with the objective of driving brand loyalty and purchase. The campaign, “Estando cerca, llegamos más lejos. (We get further by staying closer.)”, set out to enable moments of connection, inviting consumers to get closer with friends and family over a cafecito. As NESCAFÉ, we know these shared moments with loved ones push our Hispanic consumers to keep moving forward. Then everything changed. “Getting closer” was suddenly not part of our day to day. At least not like it had been. In the middle of a global pandemic, we needed to reframe our brand message while staying true to what NESCAFÉ is: a catalyst that helps you connect with those you love. So, we reminded consumers of just that – NESCAFÉ at home meant more moments to share with those closest to us. We shifted the negativity and uncertainty of the time to a positive and hopeful message for Hispanics, one of the most affected segments by Covid-19. The results, both in brand attitudes and sales, were unprecedented. Not only did we exceed all communication norms but increased sales by 11% and recruited nearly two million new households across the NESCAFÉ brand.

Definition of your challenge:

In early 2020 we had one objective in mind – continue to drive purchase and loyalty of NESCAFÉ. While the brand has long been the leader in Latin America, in the U.S. brands like Folgers continued to be right on our heels as consumers explored different coffee formats and flavors. We needed to continue to drive relevance and brand preference. Little did we know that we were about to be faced with the added challenge of doing this amid a global pandemic. When the Covid-19 lockdown hit, it had every brand out there scrambling to figure out what to do with their advertising. But NESCAFÉ had an even more dire challenge: the core message of the ad we had just produced was an invitation to get together with your friends to recharge over a coffee break. The exact opposite of what consumers were being told to do. What’s worse, we knew that our core Hispanic target was likely to be hit even harder by the impending health and economic fallout. With less than 2 weeks to air, we had to adapt how we brought our core message to life, create, and produce an entirely new ad that was not only right for the business, but the right thing to do for the Latino community.

The Key insights & Strategy:

Our strategy hinged on an important data point: 51% of Hispanics were experiencing higher or medium levels of emotional distress during this time, the highest of any group (Source: PEW 3.24.20). This unlocked a clear pain point to address. So, we identified three important contextual insights about life during the lockdown to help us do just that. First, from a climate perspective, we were seeing how most brand messages during this time talked about “unprecedented times” which only served to cue uncertainty. Even though their reassuring intent was in the right place, it tended to have the opposite effect by sending consumers down a path of doom and gloom. We realized we had an opportunity to instead pivot to a message of positivity and hope, which was more in line with our brand personality. Second, from a category perspective we knew that with most coffee shops closed, people would need to make their own coffee at home for the foreseeable future. So, we focused our message to show the benefit of having coffee at home: more *sobremesa* moments around the table with those who matter most, typing directly into our brand role of being the catalyst that helps you connect to your loved ones. Third, from a cultural perspective, one of the most beautiful values of Latin culture is the importance placed on optimism. Latinos know from past experiences in crises of both country and family, that by sticking together and staying positive, they can get through anything. Sewing these threads together, we found an uplifting silver lining even among this darkest of times. In being forced to stay home, we were being given a gift: we’re more united and connected than ever. Our media plan focused on two key touchpoints: TV and social media. Both aligned with the key media habits of our consumer, especially during the pandemic where there was a significant increase in both television and social media consumption.

Execution:

A silver lining amid the challenges of 2020 was the opportunity for families to spend more time together, and we showcased just that. We reframed our message while staying true to our strategy, establishing NESCAFÉ as the catalyst

for moments of connection with *your gente* (your people). Focusing on the positive aspect of quarantine, our TV and social executions reminded consumers that enjoying NESCAFÉ at home meant more moments to share with those closest to us – keeping families more connected and united than ever.



Results:

The campaign proved we had locked on to a highly relevant message of hope for our Latino consumers. “More United Than Ever” TV delivered the strongest brand effects in recent history, surpassing all recent brand & category benchmarks for ad memorability, brand linkage and brand recall. The ad proved that we had a more empathetic grasp on current cultural context than ever before in recent NESCAFÉ history, within the coffee category and even within the much wider food & beverage category. It had the second highest brand linkage (93%) and brand likability (75%) of all NESCAFÉ brand ads. It exceeded coffee category norms across all metrics, most notably in the most important metric, brand memorability, by a whopping 83%. And it exceeded food and beverage norms across all metrics, most notably in brand memorability by 53%. Our social asset exceeded key media metrics, including CPM and impression benchmarks. Most importantly, total NESCAFÉ brand sales grew 11%, outpacing the category and bringing in nearly two million new households, representing 49% of all household sales. By December 2020, we had grown 1.5 share points, while our top competitor continued to decline.

Industry Impact:

Nobody expected the challenges 2020 would bring. Everyone across the country (and the world) was impacted by the pandemic; however, widespread market changes don't affect all audiences equally. Brands need to make the effort to look through the lens of the multicultural audience to understand if and how they are affected in unique ways before jumping into messaging that may not be as relevant to them. In this case we understood that messages focusing on the uncertainty of this unprecedented time would not be right for our brand or our Hispanic consumer. We also know that when big, swift, unexpected changes happen in the marketplace, we can't take the safe “wait and see” approach. Brands need to have a deep enough understanding of their brand and target to allow them to pivot in a nimble and relevant way that feels seamless to their consumers.