

# TARGETING THE KALEIDOSCOPE

**Marketing in a multi-cultural age**

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## INTRODUCTION

The structure of this paper is as follows:

- First we outline the background to the Common Good Research and to ethnic minority communities in the UK;
- Second, we describe five major cultural trends which were uncovered during the research and which, we believe, are relevant all global marketers;
- Third, we present a communications planning tool developed from the research to assist marketers in targeting ethnic minority communities;
- And finally we describe the dissemination strategy for the research, designed to ensure the findings were as widely understood and used as possible.<sup>1)</sup>

## **Background to the COI Common Good Research Programme**

COI is the Government's communications agency, managing research and advertising for issues as diverse as Armed Forces recruitment, the tax and benefits systems, food hygiene, health and many others. In addition to managing the Government's TV and Press advertising, COI also handles digital media, sponsorship, public relations and events for a wide range of public sector bodies.

Historically, many Government campaigns have targeted similar audiences – youth, elders, or employers, for example. However, the research is usually focused on particular campaigns for individual client organisations rather than on each different target audience. So, although there was a vast amount of information available it tended to be rather fragmented and there was a lack of overarching research on specific target groups to aid future strategic planning.

To address this gap, in 2002 COI Communications initiated the Common Good Research Programme, so called because its findings were to be shared across all Government departments and agencies. Over thirty Government departments were consulted in defining the brief, scope and coverage of the research. The programme has so far encompassed two important audiences for COI's government clients – Small and Medium Enterprises, and Ethnic Minority Communities. In both cases, extensive desk research was conducted at the initial stage, followed by major programmes of qualitative research.

The broad aims of the Common Good research programme are:

- To deliver fresh insight and inspiration to Government departments and their agencies;
- To provide effective and practical information;
- To be a long term planning tool to assist in strategic, creative and media planning.

There is also a proactive dissemination strategy for the research, including a website and a series of workshops to enable clients to extract the maximum practical value from the findings. These will be described in more detail later in this paper.

The objectives of the research among ethnic minority groups were to explore:

- Lifestyles, culture and feelings of identity;
- Media consumption and attitudes towards the media;
- Attitudes towards the representation of ethnic minorities in advertising;
- Information sources and delivery channels.

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## Research Methods and Sample

The Common Good research programme aimed to uncover new insights and to explore these communities more deeply than previous research projects. We wanted to know what people said about their media habits, but we also wanted to know how they behaved in their home environments and how families interacted in their day-to-day life. To this end, new approaches and combinations of methodologies were used, and new target audiences included, to gain the maximum insight from the research.

The project used entirely qualitative methods, comprising a mix of conventional and innovative approaches:

- *Two-hour workshops* were the primary method used; these are similar to group discussions, but include a wider range of tasks and activities for respondents.
- *Standard group discussions* were used for respondents over 65, as we thought two hours would be too long for this group;
- *Individual depth interviews* were conducted among those who had recently sought information about a range of public issues (careers, schools, health, etc.)
- *Family visits* were conducted in order to explore media consumption in the home; these sessions lasted between two and three hours and took place in people's homes, videoing their media consumption patterns and observing their behaviour. Although this method has been used in media research with the general population, we believe this is the first time it has been used among ethnic minority groups.
- *Community centre visits* were also conducted, to see how intermediaries such as advice workers actually used the Government information that they received. In addition to interviewing the workers, we also spent time observing the activities of the centre, taking photographs, and talking informally to centre users where possible.

We also asked respondents to take photographs of their day-to-day lives and to fill out a media diary prior to attending the groups, interviews and workshops.

The sample covered the major visible ethnic minority communities in the United Kingdom, with a focus on those who had not been adequately covered in previous research, or who might have particular communications difficulties. Refugees and asylum seekers were not covered, as they were likely to have very different concerns. Also white ethnic minorities, such as Polish, Albanian or Kurdish people were not included. Table 1 contains details of the ethnic breakdown of the UK population in April 2001 (see table 1).

The final sample for the Common Good research covered:

- Indians, including Hindus and Sikhs;
- Pakistani Moslems;
- Bangladeshi Moslems;
- Chinese people, including Christians and Buddhists;
- Black Caribbean people, mainly Christians;
- Black African people, from a range of African countries;
- Young people of mixed race origin – from a range of mixed backgrounds.

The total sample comprised twenty-four workshops, four group discussions, fourteen depth interviews, four paired depth interviews, ten family visits and six community centre visits.

**Table 1**  
**UK POPULATION BY ETHNIC GROUP, APRIL 2001**

	<i>Total population</i>		<i>Ethnic minority population</i>
	<i>Count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>White</i>	54,153,898	92.1	N/A
<i>Mixed</i>	677,117	1.2	14.6
<i>Asian or British Asian</i>			
<i>Indian</i>	1,053,411	1.8	22.7
<i>Pakistani</i>	747,285	1.3	16.1
<i>Bangladeshi</i>	283,063	0.5	6.1
<i>Other Asian</i>	247,664	0.4	5.3
<i>Black or Black British</i>			
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	565,876	1.0	12.2
<i>Black African</i>	485,277	0.8	10.5
<i>Black Other</i>	97,585	0.2	2.1
<i>Chinese</i>	247,403	0.4	5.3
<i>Other</i>	230,615	0.4	5.0
<i>All ethnic minority populations</i>	4,635,296	7.9	100
<i>All population</i>	58,789,194	100	N/A

Source: 2001 Census/ Office for National Statistics

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As mentioned previously, we aimed to include those people who had not been adequately covered in previous research. The Chinese community, for example, has rarely been researched in depth largely due to recruitment difficulties (Gervais and Jovchelovitch 1998). Black African people have rarely been researched separately from Black Caribbeans. The mixed race population – one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United Kingdom – has also been absent from much research. Finally, we went to considerable lengths to ensure that non-English speakers were included in the Asian and Chinese groups.

Recruiting the sessions was a challenge, as some of these groups have been omitted in the past precisely because of difficulty in gaining access to certain sections of the community. We did not use fieldwork agencies for recruitment on this project because of the problems they confront when trying to work within these communities – especially non-English speakers and more traditional Africans and Chinese people. We used specialist recruiters, many from ethnic minority backgrounds themselves, to ensure that our sample was as representative as possible (for a fuller discussion of these issues, see Desai and Sills 1996, and Sharma and Bell 2002).

We also had the benefit of a fully multi-cultural research team, including researchers from Black, Asian and Chinese backgrounds. Sessions conducted in “mother tongue” languages were translated back into English, and internal debriefs were held to ensure that particular insights from each cultural group were fully understood.

## **FIVE GLOBAL CULTURAL TRENDS**

Our research found that ethnic minority cultures in the United Kingdom are constantly changing – adapting to new circumstances, influenced by local events, international migration, and global cultural and political forces. Five cultural trends were identified, which we believe are relevant to all multi-cultural societies, although derived from fieldwork in the United Kingdom.

The five trends are:

1. The rise of religion;
2. The hardening of ethnic boundaries;
3. The fragmentation of communities;
4. Cultural transplants and transfusions;
5. Hybridity and the incorporation of minority cultures into the mainstream.

Interestingly, these trends pull in different directions – some towards greater integration and mutual understanding, others towards fragmentation and isolation. The outcomes of these changes are by no means certain, and within individual communities there may be conflicts and contradictory tendencies. These reflect differences between men and women, between older and younger generations, and between individuals with different cultural outlooks. Some people embrace change and cultural interaction, whilst others fear it and revert to defensive forms of ethnicity and cultural identity. Marketers and social policy makers need to understand these dynamics for two reasons: firstly, to develop communications which engage more effectively with diverse markets; and secondly, to influence the direction of change in a positive way, encouraging greater integration and cultural exchange and reducing defensiveness and cultural isolation.

### **The Rise of Religion**

The importance of religion, both within the United Kingdom and on the international stage, has increased in recent years. Debates in the United States around abortion, in the United Kingdom around women priests, and in France around the wearing of the veil by Moslem schoolchildren – all show the continuing power and importance of religious belief. And of course, since the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in September 2001, there have been highly emotional debates about the role of Islam in the modern world.

Let us take first the example of Islam. Since the mid-1990s, there has been a growth in what has been termed “political Islam”. Whilst Islam has long been a major global religion, it is only in recent years that this religious awareness has become linked to global politics. Some Moslems see themselves as a persecuted group throughout the world, as a result of perceived injustices in Israel and the occupied West Bank, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Iraq. This sense of global injustice links to the perception – and reality – of discrimination at a local level, resulting in a powerful connection between local and global experiences. In the United Kingdom, for example, British Moslems have been subjected to hostility, aggression, verbal and physical abuse since the events of 9-11. In some cases, this has led to a stronger sense of religious identity, as people in Bradford sympathise with their fellow Moslems throughout the world.

This revitalisation of Islam in the United Kingdom has led to the building of many new religious institutions, such as the large East London Mosque which sees 5,000 worshippers weekly and provides study and welfare facilities. It has also, in some cases, led to a division between the religion as practiced by the older generations and the younger generations. In the past, Moslem imams (priests) were usually brought to the UK from the Indian sub-continent, spoke

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little English, and had little in common with the British born younger generations. However, there are also now British born and educated young men serving as imams. These men are much closer to the concerns of the younger generations, speak fluent English, and often command considerable respect among the younger generation. Thus, not only is Islam increasing in importance in the UK, but there is also a greater diversity of belief and practice that needs to be understood by marketers and social policy makers. The UK government has successfully developed advertising campaigns using religious themes, for example to give up smoking at Ramadan. Local agencies also use religious themes in communicating with Moslem communities about drug addiction.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assume that religious revival is restricted to Islam. Our research found that within the Black African and Caribbean communities, various Christian denominations were also important. For a significant minority of the British Black people, religious worship was central to their sense of kinship and community. This was strongest among pensioners and older women, but was not restricted to older people alone. Going to church on Sundays, dressing up in “Sunday best”, the music and “sense of family” offered by the Church were all highly motivating to some older women. In parts of London, religious events with well-known preachers command large audiences. In some urban areas, teams of “street pastors” (outreach workers linked to local church groups) work at night, making contact with groups of young people to dissuade them from lives of crime. Indeed, British Telecom has successfully used images of a British Caribbean wedding in their advertising, in an execution that was popular among all ethnic groups.

Finally, Hinduism and Sikhism were also influential among the British Indian community. Although these religions have a less high profile in the media, they are no less relevant in local communities. The London suburb of Neasden contains one of the largest and most spectacular Hindu temples in Europe, funded by donations from the local community and built by Indian craftsmen. In the city of Leicester, in the East of England, the celebrations for the Hindu festival of Diwali are on an international scale, with the streets decked with lights, and fireworks displays throughout the city. Equally, the visits by well known preachers from India, who recite religious texts at major festivals, can command audiences in their thousands. Some public sector organisations have used sponsorship and outreach work at religious events, including the British Army and the Metropolitan (London) Police. However, as yet commercial marketers have made only limited use of these opportunities.

Thus, the rise of religion presents a range of new opportunities for marketers and social policy makers, as well as potential pitfalls. The opportunities include:

- A range of religious media outlets, including television channels, short service radio stations for special events, religious audio cassettes and videos of preachers;
- New contexts and arenas for outreach work in the community and sponsorship opportunities;
- New Opinion Leaders and influencers, whose attitudes and outlook need to be understood.

However, there are also potential pitfalls, including:

- Being perceived as exploiting religious beliefs for marketing purposes;
- Tying a brand or social initiative to one section of the community and alienating others;
- Linking up with religious groups whose range of activities and beliefs may not be fully known and may damage your brand or message, such as homophobic beliefs or anti-semitism.

Thus, marketing messages linked to religion need to be handled carefully, but the examples above show that it is possible create successful partnerships through religious festivals or institutions.

### **The Hardening of Ethnic Boundaries**

The second major trend is the hardening of ethnic boundaries between groups and individuals. Although there is evidence of integration and hybrid cultures being formed (which we shall discuss later), this is balanced by a contrary trend that resists these processes. In our research, we found some young people rejecting their British identity and also rejecting multiple or hybrid identities, such as “British Moslem” or “Black British”. They reverted instead to more exclusive forms of identity, saying for example that they were simply “black” or “Moslem”. This trend was most common among younger black and Moslem men.

We believe this is best viewed as a reactive form of identity, as these young men feel they themselves have been rejected. In spite of being born in Britain, educated in the British system and speaking English as a first language, their Britishness is not accepted by mainstream society. Therefore, as a defence mechanism, they reject that identity and revert to a more isolationist position, which effectively insulates them from further rejection.

Moslem young men, for example, sometimes felt that since the events of September 11th 2001, they had been subjected to higher levels of discrimination on the basis of their religion. Physical and verbal abuse, and general racist hostility, was part of their day to day lives. They also said that

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they were stereotyped as “terrorists”, especially if they wore visible signs of their religion, such as beards, caps, or traditional Moslem dress. They felt that the police often stopped them for no good reason and, effectively, they were not welcome in British society. Unsurprisingly, this led a minority to identify with a more exclusive version of their religion, saying that British identity was irrelevant and that their only loyalty was to Islam.

Young black men, especially those from Caribbean backgrounds, also sometimes rejected their British identity. They felt they were stereotyped as a criminal group, seen as aggressive and unintelligent, associated with gangs and gun crime in British cities. They felt victimised by the police and did not feel accepted as part of British society. This again led them to adopt more exclusive forms of identity, preferring to see themselves as simply “black” rather than “black British.”

Thus, our research found that there is a group of young men within the ethnic minority populations who feel rejected by British society, and who reject it in their turn. They are sceptical about government and official bodies, feel discriminated against and marginalized, and are not receptive to government messages. However, we feel that underlying this hardening there is a genuine desire to belong, and that these young men still seek and value inclusion in the mainstream. This can reflect itself in conspicuous consumption of branded clothing, which is a notable feature of black and Asian youth cultures. We also found that marketing communications portraying positive images of ethnic minority young people, playing a normal role in British society, could be highly appealing. However, these need to part of sensitive, credible and long term marketing strategies if they are not to be dismissed by this sceptical target audience.

### **The Fragmentation of Communities**

The third trend relates to shifts in global migration, as well as to relationships between existing communities in the United Kingdom. The first major migration to the United Kingdom in modern times took place in the 1950s and 1960s. The migrants came from parts of the British Empire which had recently gained independence, particularly the Indian sub-continent, the Caribbean and Africa. These migrants settled in urban areas and formed ethnic communities, resulting in the Pakistani population of Bradford, the Indian population of West London, or the Caribbean population of Bristol, for example. Although these groups had internal differences – between different islands in the Caribbean, or the regions of India – they nevertheless had much in common. This included language, religion and family patterns.

However, recent migration to the UK comes from a far more diverse range of countries and continents compared with the more homogeneous earlier

migrants. There is a much wider range of smaller groups who have little in common. This includes people from Africa (Somalia, Zaire, Zimbabwe); Russia and parts of the former Soviet Union; Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Poland); and the Middle East (Iraq, Turkey, Kurdish people, etc). There is less scope for social interaction between these groups, as they have different religions, languages, and cultural backgrounds. And this has resulted in parts of urban Britain containing a very wide range of small communities, living side by side in many urban areas, but knowing relatively little about each other. Each may develop their own cultural institutions, religious bodies and community organisations, but as yet we see only limited evidence of cross cutting cultural ties.

In addition to the relationships between minority communities, there is also the issue of interaction between these groups and the white UK population. In some areas there is considerable social and cultural interaction between black, Asian and white populations, in others this is not the case. For example, South London and Birmingham are often cited as areas where different ethnic groups, including the white population, interact with relatively little tension. In contrast, in northern English towns such as Bradford and Oldham, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and white populations live in different parts of the city and social interaction appears limited. This results from cultural, religious, and linguistic differences, as well as historical patterns of housing allocation, the ethnic make up of local schools, and racial prejudice.

This fragmentation of community has serious implications for policy makers and marketers, especially for delivering services or products at the local level:

- It will be increasingly difficult to develop national approaches for the delivery of social programmes and, perhaps, product launches. Central departments may need to restrict themselves to providing guidelines, resources and training for staff.
- There will need to be greater local autonomy in the delivery of products or services. This is because there will be ethnic groups which are highly significant locally, but which appear insignificant at the national level.
- There will be a need for better knowledge management, including systems for quick and effective feedback from local staff, and ways to share best practice across organisations. This is because the local staff will be in the best position to identify rapid changes in the market.
- National policy makers will need to develop strategies for bringing together different ethnic communities, identifying common interests and grounds, to avoid further fragmentation and to encourage community cohesion.

The Department for Work and Pensions, which delivers benefits and job related advice to local communities throughout the UK, has been developing approaches to address this diverse and fragmented market. For example, the DWP is combining local autonomy with central guidelines and quality control for the production of translations, as well as using its intranet to share best practice between regions and divisions.

Thus far, we have outlined trends that tend towards greater division between communities. However, there are also powerful contrary trends which bring together people from different backgrounds, renew and regenerate existing communities, and create new identities based on shared cultures and experiences. The remainder of this section focuses on these integrating trends.

### **Transplants and Transfusions**

When the first generation of migrants came to the UK in the 1950s and 1960s, they were mainly single young men looking for work. Often, they did not intend to stay in the UK for more than a few years and did not immediately think of “settling down”. Indeed, many returned to their countries of origin to marry, and then returned to the UK alone to continue working and sending money to their families at home. However, as it became apparent to them that they were likely to stay for longer than they originally planned, many reunited their families in the UK, bringing wives and younger children to live with them. This is most characteristic of the Asian, rather than the Caribbean, communities.

Communities were formed in the UK that, in many ways, replicated the places from which people had migrated. Many Pakistani people bought terraced houses in Bradford near to family members, partly recreating the social environment of a Pakistani village. This phase of migration also saw the establishment of community facilities, such as shops, restaurants, community centres, places of worship, and cinemas. This network of resources and social support allowed early migrants to service their own needs, and also to minimise the impact of discrimination in the wider society. This is what we mean by referring to these communities as “transplanted” – they recreated the lifestyle and cultures of the places from which they had migrated.

However, over time these communities in the UK could get out of touch with changes in their home countries. Effectively, the early migrants brought with them the attitudes of India, Pakistan or Bangladesh in the 1950s and 1960s. This could result in attitudes, values and beliefs that seemed “stuck in the past” in comparison with the reality of modern life in Bombay, Lahore, or Dacca. Indeed, when family members from India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh visit their UK resident relatives, they may see these families as old-fashioned compared with their own lives overseas. This is why sources of renewal – “transfusions”

– are important to any diaspora community. Visits to their countries of origin, as well as arrivals in the UK from these countries, can bring with them new attitudes which allow communities to change and renew without simply adopting Western lifestyles.

Take the example of the Bangladeshi community in the UK. It is common for young people in the UK to marry partners in Bangladesh who may then join their spouse in the UK. We have found that in some cases, these recent arrivals can bring with them attitudes, beliefs and practices that help to modernise and revitalise the UK resident community. For example, many older British Bangladeshis (over 50) do not speak English and have little involvement in mainstream British society. They find it hard to help their children with schoolwork, get involved in their education, or to play an active role in the wider community. However, we have found that younger, more recent arrivals are often keen to learn English, to get involved in their local communities, and to play an active role in UK society. Indeed, these younger Bangladeshis, along with the British born younger generations, serve to revitalise the community.

Another way in which communities can be revitalised is via travel to their countries of origin. This allows people to see how society is changing there, take part in social and cultural debates, and see how important social issues such as the role of women, or religious issues, are dealt with “back home.” Within the Asian communities, some young people may be sent to study in India, Pakistan or Bangladesh for a year, or may make extended visits after finishing their studies. This allows them to take part in popular culture in these countries – film, music, dance, night clubs – and thus return to the UK with new ideas about what it means to be an Indian person, for example. Thus, rather than remaining stuck in the past, the flow of people and ideas across national boundaries allows communities to remain lively, up to date, and dynamic.

### **HYBRIDITY AND MAINSTREAMING**

The final trend identified in the research was the tendency of ethnic minority cultures – whether in the context of music, film, fashion or dance – to enter mainstream UK culture. There are two ways in which this may happen:

- Mainstreaming, where cultural forms are accepted with little or no adaptation to the local context;
- Hybridity, where ethnic minority cultures mingle with existing UK cultures, adapt themselves and adopt aspects of the local culture, to create new cultural forms.

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Indeed, minority cultures can become the mainstream, thus dissolving the boundaries between minority and majority.

There are many aspects of Asian popular culture that are now firmly part of the UK mainstream. For example, fifteen years ago Bollywood films would have been a minority interest and the general population would have shown little interest in this genre. However, this has changed dramatically in the last few years. One of the most popular London musicals in 2003 was *Bombay Dreams*, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber and with music by the great Indian composer, A.K. Rahman. Similarly, Bollywood styles can form the basis of popular advertisements that have nothing to do with Asian products. The Halifax Building Society has an execution featuring branch staff in a Bollywood style dance sequence, whilst Walkers Crisps show footballer Gary Lineker dressed as a Bollywood bridegroom. In the world of fashion, the London Department store Selfridges recently featured Indian styles as its summer theme, decking its window displays out with saris and other Asian clothing.

As well as being accepted wholesale, there are many examples of Asian culture being adopted and adapted in the British context, to create new, hybrid cultural forms. It is now common knowledge that chicken tikka masala is Britain's favorite food, a so-called Indian dish created in the UK that does not exist in India. However, cultural hybridity extends much further than that. Recent films such as *Bend it like Beckham* and *East is East* portray British Asian lifestyles and preoccupations. The musical world is replete with fusions between hip hop, ragga and disco, with bhangra (traditional Punjabi folk music) and Bollywood songs. Indeed, the 2002 hit *Mundian To Bach Ke* (Beware of the Boys) by Punjabi MC, a British Asian musician, combined the theme from a 1980s action show, *Knight Rider*, with traditional Punjabi folk music. And the fashion world, young Asian women in Britain's cities combine traditional Asian scarves and tops with jeans, trainers and western shoe brands such as Kickers.

The mainstreaming of Caribbean culture is known well accepted in the UK, and indeed it would not be an overstatement to suggest that global youth culture is, to a large extent, black youth culture. The influence of music and dance from Jamaica is huge in the UK and internationally. Jamaican dancehall singers such as Sean Paul and Beenie Man are global stars, and their dances, accents and clothes are imitated by young people of all ethnic backgrounds within the UK.

In addition to accepting Caribbean cultural forms as they arrive, there are many examples of hybrid black British cultures as well. Styles of music such as garage and jungle were developed in the UK, drawing on and adapting musical styles from the Caribbean. Two London based rappers, Roots Manuva

and Dizzee Rascal, have both developed a specific UK rap sound, talking about life on the council estates of the London. In fashion, Caribbean styles of clothing and dress have been adopted by British celebrities, most famously David Beckham's "corn row" hairstyle. And young people of all ethnic origins in London can be heard speaking with the unique "British Jamaican" slang, developed in south London by British born black young people.

Thus, cultural trends and influences may come from around the corner, or from around the globe. Marketers need to monitor these global movements – of people, music, film, dance, and fashion – to identify where the newest trends may emerge. Marketers and advertisers also need to remember that the marginal can become the mainstream, and that minority cultures are not sealed off from mainstream cultures. Indeed, it may be at the margins that the most cultural creativity is to be found. This also means that marketers need the sensitivity to identify these trends, either through close links to the communities or, of course, if they come from different backgrounds themselves.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, the five major trends identified pull in different directions – some towards greater fragmentation and isolation of communities, others towards greater integration and cultural understanding. For the marketer and social policy maker, they present a number of important opportunities for:

- New target audiences, with new and emerging forms of identity;
- New sources of inspiration and creativity for marketing communications;
- New media channels and opportunities for outreach and sponsorship;
- New product opportunities.

However, marketers need to be being sufficiently immersed in these cultures to identify the relevant trends, and having sufficient cultural understanding to use them sensitively and effectively in marketing communications.

## **COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING IN MULTI-CULTURAL MARKETS**

As well as identifying cross cutting cultural trends, the research was also tasked with guiding communications strategies to focus on specific ethnic minority groups in the UK. Some marketing campaigns may have a very broad target audience and therefore require a generally mainstream approach – where the communications are relevant to all ethnic groups, but do not target any one community specifically. However, the UK government increasingly also conducts targeted campaigns on issues relevant to specific communities – for

example, smoking among the Asian population, or organ donation among the black population.

To assist with these targeted campaigns, and to avoid an approach which might lead to the lowest common denominator being selected, Turnstone developed a communications planning model for each of the communities researched. This model identified the specific issues which need to be born in mind when developing marketing targeting each group, as well as allowing marketers to see where commonalities exist across groups. The planning tool analyses each ethnic community according to four key criteria, and concludes by suggesting the most powerful communications opportunities. The four attributes included in the model are:

1. *Identity position* – how people see their position in British society, and how they believe they are viewed by society;
2. *Media attitude* – how people believe they are portrayed by mainstream British media;
3. *Media and channels* – specialist media relevant to this community, and potential distribution networks;
4. *Cultural references* – possible ideas for campaign themes which have particular relevance among each community;

We have included below the relevant planning models for the British Chinese and Black African communities for illustrative purposes. Clearly, communities change and, as we have demonstrated, are internally diverse. Therefore this model is a simplification of a complex picture. Nevertheless, we believe it represents a valuable tool for identifying the most effective approaches for specific ethnic groups, which could be applied not only within the UK but also across Europe.

## COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING TOOLS

### CHINESE COMMUNITY

<i>Identity position</i>	<i>Media attitude</i>	<i>Media and channels</i>	<i>Cultural references</i>	<i>Communication opportunities</i>
Not rejected, but not accepted either  Feel more comfortable among other Chinese people	Currently invisible or stereotyped  Feel very left out	<i>Media</i> -Chinese Channel - Internet - Video/ DVDs from Hong Kong  <i>Channels</i> -Restaurants -Video shops - Festivals	Chinese myths, legends history  Chinese festivals/ food  Hong Kong popular culture  Hong Kong music and movies  Martial arts	Offer inclusion and validation  First chance to see themselves in mainstream role  First mover advantage

### BLACK AFRICAN COMMUNITY

<i>Identity position</i>	<i>Media attitude</i>	<i>Media and channels</i>	<i>Cultural references</i>	<i>Communication opportunities</i>
Pride and strong sense of African identity  Keen to maintain heritage  Younger may reject African identity  Discriminated against, especially in employment	Feel they are completely absent from mainstream media  Only present as “starving Africans” on the news  Imagery is entirely negative	<i>Media</i>  • Mainstream – limited African media available  • African movies  <i>Channels</i>  • Church and religious groups  • Social/ cultural organisations  • African restaurants and clubs	Language and speech patterns  Food and cooking  Clothing/ dress  Religion and church  Festivals	First mover advantage  A strong, positive African character  Need to feel valued and included in GB society

## **DISSEMINATION STRATEGY**

A key function of COI's Common Good research programme is to provide practical guidelines to inform future communications strategy for a wide cross section of Government Departments. For this reason an important part of the exercise – built into the planning from the outset – is the process of sharing the findings with as many clients and agency colleagues as possible so that the learnings and insights can be discussed, understood and put into practice.

This is not research intended to sit on a shelf!

Although the findings were distributed to clients in the form of the usual report, we found that clients engaged much more strongly with the findings when they saw a live presentation of the issues. The difference in impact was so dramatic that we developed a programme of client presentations at off-site conference venues and turned the occasions into full-scale theatrical events. Using combinations of lighting, music, photographs and video footage, the clients were in effect sharing a multi-cultural experience.

Focussing their attention in this way meant that they not only absorbed the research findings more thoroughly but, importantly, it stimulated their imaginations and encouraged them to think about the issues of ethnicity in much greater depth.

The series of client presentations that we developed examined in detail different aspects of the research. Subjects such as youth, elders, and integrated campaign planning were chosen to enable clients to select the presentations that were most relevant to their needs. The presentations were further tailored to suit other audiences including mainstream agency media buyers, planners and creatives, and ethnic minority specialist agencies.

To extend exposure to the research still further, each of the clients was invited to define a specific set of issues in relation to their particular communications activity. We developed individually tailored workshops drilling down into the findings to examine the problems they were confronting and together arrive at practical solutions.

Ease of access to the findings is very important, especially for our agency planners who we wanted to encourage use of the research to inform their inputs on government communications programmes. With this in mind, we developed a dedicated website containing all the findings. The site architecture was designed to enable the information to be accessed logically and allow the users to follow their thought processes. There are links between all the individual items of information so that by simply clicking the mouse the user can navigate through the findings in whatever order they chose.

It is very important that COI's Common Good Research programme is seen to add value and for that reason significant emphasis is placed on the dissemination and implementation of the findings. Future Common Good projects are planned targeting particular audiences, and this approach will be maintained and developed further in all future Common Good projects.

## CONCLUSION

The global movement of people, music, films, cultures and ideas is the condition of modern marketing and modern life. Ethnic minority communities have contributed enormously to the cultural vibrancy of life across Europe. However, commercial marketers have been slow to grasp the opportunities this presents for new forms of creativity, new distribution channels, and new forms of cultural identity. As we have shown, the division between minority and majority cultures is not hard and fast, and the marginal can quickly become the mainstream. Indeed, popular urban culture in the UK seems to be far ahead of marketing communications in its ability to adopt and adapt new cultural forms. This paper has identified five global cultural trends which all marketers need to take account of when planning communications activities, to help in identifying the potential of these new opportunities.

However, these trends pull in different directions – some towards integration and creativity, others towards insularity and fragmentation. They also affect different groups in different ways, and therefore a lowest common denominator approach is unlikely to be effective in targeting multi-cultural markets. Rather, marketers need to be aware of the specific factors which impact on different communities, so they can explore how to develop creative work which is inclusive, resonant and engaging. We have presented a communications model which we believe is a valuable tool in helping marketers to do this. Indeed, if we are successful in this, we can not only market our products, services or policies more effectively – we can also help, in a small way, to make the new multi-cultural Europe a better place.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Common Good Research was conducted jointly by Turnstone Research and Consultancy, and Connect Research and Consultancy, two independent research agencies. The authors would like to acknowledge the contributions of all members of the research team – Karen Roberts, Rosemary Addison, Lisa Tang, Radhika Howarth, Madhu Jani, Sanmit Sawhney and Thomas Chan.

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**FOOTNOTE**

1. Those interested in more detailed findings can refer to the COI website ([www.coi.gov.uk](http://www.coi.gov.uk)) where a summary report can be downloaded.

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