Presentation brief on media and advertising

By Patricia Rimok, Chair Conseil des relations interculturelles (Government of Québec)

A fair representation and treatment of ethnocultural diversity in media and advertising

Montreal, Centre Mont-Royal

June 9, 2009

Prepared by Ralph Rouzier
Plan

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1. The mission and vision of the Council

- **Mission**
  - Consulting and research group that advises the Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities
    - Policy planning, coordination and implementation
      - Intercultural relations
      - Integration of immigrants
      - Intercultural understanding
      - Acceptance of diversity

- **Vision**
  - Contribute to building an inclusive Québec by enabling all of society to grasp the opportunities and meet the challenges associated with ethnocultural diversity
2. The mandate from the Minister, Yolande James

- As part of the government action plan that accompanies the *Government policy to promote full participation by Quebecers of all backgrounds*, the Minister asked the Council to prepare:
  - a position on the “treatment in the media of Quebecers from the cultural communities in order to improve their representation in those media.”
  - an exploratory investigation of the representation of Quebecers from the cultural communities in Québec’s advertising industry, in order to propose recommendations on the appropriate follow-up to this investigation.

- Both subjects covered should make it possible to better document “the treatment given to Quebecers of the cultural communities by the media and advertising agencies.”
3. The problems facing the market

- The Council began its research as the media and advertising industry were undergoing a profound transformation
  - Free newspapers, electronic newspapers, the disappearance of analog television to be replaced in 2011 by digital television, new media and multimedia, media concentration, media convergence, especially on the Internet, etc.
  - In the 2000s, advertising agencies have had to face the growing globalization of trade and development of new digital technologies and the Internet
  - The boundaries between the various types of media have blurred, challenging the advertising industry
    - The issues are difficult to understand, even for the players in these fields, professionals and researchers
The problems facing the market (cont’d)

• The Council completed its research in a context of economic crisis, which has naturally also affected the media and advertising
  – Declining revenues and job losses for instance at the CBC/Radio-Canada and CTV
  – Because of fragmentation, advertising revenues are declining, since production is also done outside Québec and even Canada, affecting agencies that are only located in Québec
• For example, 6% less advertising content was prepared in Québec in 2008 than in 2007
  – In short, this is hardly a context that is opportune for promoting ethnocultural diversity, in hiring, among other areas
4. The place currently given to the cultural communities

Status of the generations– 15 years and older – Québec

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 census
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

Status of generations and “visible minorities” or not, 15 years and older Québec

Source: Statistics Canada
2006 Census
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

- Review of 600 newspaper articles published in 2008
  - 48% of articles had negative implications, 29% positive and 23% neutral
  - The articles appearing in the first 6 pages more often than note reported information with negative implications about immigrants
  - 74% of the articles put the emphasis only on the immigrant status of the persons discussed and the implications were relatively negative
  - The Montreal press (including *The Gazette*) publishes more articles with negative implications than elsewhere in Québec
  - Some groups were mentioned more often than others. That was the case for the Black and Arab communities, which took up the most space (12% and 10% of the articles, resp.)
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

- Exploratory analysis of programming on French-language television
  - Radio-Canada: overall rate of presence on the screen was 11.5% (soaps, news and public affairs, entertainment programs; Radio-Canada.ca)
  - Télé-Québec: overall rate of presence on the screen was 26% (culture and entertainment, documentaries; telequebec.tv)
  - TVA: overall rate of presence was 7%, based on the biographies of people appearing on screen presented by TVA (tva.canoe.ca)
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

- Review of 1,652 commercials broadcast one time on Québec television in 2008
  - Less than one commercial in five includes a person reflecting ethnocultural minority, a rate of 16.8%
  - In 68.1% of cases, this person appeared as an extra
  - The rate is slightly less for commercials broadcast on French language networks: 16.1%
  - Among the advertisements produced for the French language network, commercials translated from English to French have the highest level of representation of ethnocultural minorities, which would validate the perception that commercials produced elsewhere show greater diversity
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

First-generation population 15 years and older (born outside Canada)

Source: Statistics Canada
2nd generation population 15 years and older
(born in Canada of one or two immigrant parents)

Source: Statistics Canada
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

• Analysis of microdata from the 2006 Census
  – In 2006, the proportion of “visible minorities” of the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} generations with a job in professions belonging to the \textit{arts, culture, sports and leisure} sector was around 20\%
    • In fact, people from 1\textsuperscript{st} or 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation “visible minorities” represent approximately \textbf{38.7\% of the} population of these two groups
    • There is therefore a disparity to correct, compared to the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation ethnocultural minorities not identified as “visible minorities”
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

• In 2006, in Québec, 41% of all immigrants (840,970 individuals 15 years old and older) were born in Africa, Asia or the West Indies
  – Among immigrants born in Africa, Asia and West Indies with a job in the media sector
    • ± 8% are actors
    • ±19% are broadcast technicians
      – There is a disparity between the immigrants born in Africa, Asia and West Indies compared to immigrants born elsewhere
The place currently given to the cultural communities (cont’d)

• 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation ethnocultural minorities (visible minorities or not)
  – Represent 12% of the workforce but 25.8% report being actors and 19% report being journalists
    • Greater presence of self-employed or part-time workers
    • Work fewer weeks per year and fewer hours per week
    • Significantly higher rate of non-participation in the workforce
    • More often unemployed
    • Greater job insecurity compared to the rest of the population
    • After-tax income equal to or below the poverty level more frequently than the rest of the population
5. The position of the media and advertising players

- The organizations say they are open to diversity but admit that they have to do more in terms of both content and hiring
  - There are still systematic barriers (e.g. resistant to the veil)
  - They justify a lesser presence in content and hiring by the fact that ethnocultural minorities do not choose the media for their careers
  - The low levels in certain professions, e.g. journalist, are justified by the fact that it requires very good mastery of French
  - As far as journalistic content is concerned, they say diversity should not be promoted or emphasized because journalists just report facts
  - They say also that these are ultra-competitive fields
The position of the media players (cont’d)

- The new media are more expressive of diversity than the traditional media and some advertising agencies are expressive of diversity
  - Because of the demographics
    - Young workers open to diversity and diversified organizations
  - Because of the opportunities offered by the Internet
    - Expansion of the offering through various media
    - Expansion of the representation of diversity and its diverse expressions
  - The paradox: the majority of players recognize ethnocultural diversity as an added value, even if it is not necessarily fairly represented and fairly treated
6- The position of the cultural communities and consumers

- 577 ethnocultural associations were invited to reply to an “informal” survey
  - Only 38 replied, mostly because the associations do not think that this type of consultation will have any impact on the current situation
The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

Rate of satisfaction with respect to representation and treatment (TV and dailies; n=38)

The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)
The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

• The English language television and daily papers are better perceived by the respondents in our sample than their French language counterparts
  – Only 4 respondents of 38 described the representation in the French language written media as “good”. The respondents complained in particular of:
    • “reporters, columnists or editorial writers with unusual sounding names are rare”
    • “Québec journalists of French-Canadian origin are preferred for dealing with the news about the cultural communities rather than perfectly qualified people who come from these communities”
The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

• For consumers, the Council had Léger Marketing conduct a survey of 1,004 people identified as members of ethnocultural minorities (1st, 2nd and 3rd generations) and 1,026 persons in the majority (4th generation or more)
  – The more recent their generation, the more they consider their representation in the media to be unfair and their treatment inadequate
  – Such perceptions are also notable in persons identified as belonging to “visible minorities”
The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

Proportion of respondents who think the ethnocultural minorities do not have enough place in the media, French vs English (TV and dailies)
Certain groups feel more strongly that the place reserved for them is inadequate on French-language TV, compared to English-language TV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>Place perceived as inadequate on television</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab/Asian</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin-American</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast/South Asia</td>
<td>39%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Certain groups feel more strongly that the place reserved for them is inadequate in French language daily papers compared to the English-language ones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>Place in the dailies perceived as inadequate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab/Asian</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>LatinAmerican</td>
<td>17%</td>
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</table>
The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

Proportion of respondents who consider treatment on French TV and dailies adequate compared to English (TV and dailies)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Dailies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>71%</td>
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The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

Some groups feel more strongly that the treatment is inadequate on French-language television than on English language television

<table>
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<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>Treatment perceived as inadequate on television</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast/South Asia</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab/Asian</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin-American</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The position of the cultural communities and consumers (cont’d)

Some groups think more strongly that the treatment is inadequate in the French language dailies compared to the English language ones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>Treatment perceived as inadequate in the dailies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast/South Asia</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab/Asian</td>
<td>24%</td>
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</table>
7- The limits of the regulatory procedures

• Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC): broadcasters must reflect Canada’s ethnocultural diversity in their programming and their employment policies
  – Not very compelling, even if they are asked to produce a company plan and an annual report noting progress (next hearings on this subject in 2010)
  – Public hearings on the new media and regulation/Canadian content in 2009 (will continue to exempt new media broadcasting services from its regulation)

• Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC): encourages Canada’s private broadcasters to self-regulate and ensure respect for the published standards
  – Based on the good will of the industry and acts on complaints
The limits of the regulatory procedures (cont’d)

• Québec Press Council: a self-regulatory authority whose mandate is to promote the respect for the highest ethical standards with regard to the rights and responsibilities of the press
  – Not concerned with anything unrelated to journalistic coverage

• Advertising Standards Canada: a self-regulatory organization
  – Based on the good will of the industry and acts on complaints
8. Recommendations/collaborations and/or partnerships

• Since the Québec Government invests nearly $125 million annually in advertising and since government ads should be examples of good practices in ethnocultural diversity:
  – it should ensure that the advertising industry and the media it does business with respect the principles of greater ethnocultural diversity in content

• Since the Québec Government ought to encourage diversified programming and the production of content reflecting ethnocultural diversity by tax incentives, e.g. reimbursable tax credit for Québec film or television production:
  – it should ensure that the existing evaluation grid for creative workers gives points for membership in an ethnocultural minority
Recommendations/collaborations and/or partnerships (cont’d)

• Since it is necessary to revise the courses for communications students to increase their intercultural competence and since the educational community can play a role in this area:
  – it should ensure that future communicators are trained in human rights, diversity, citizenship and the critical analysis of media, and such material should be accessible to people already working as journalists
Recommendations/collaborations and/or partnerships (cont’d)

• Since the presence of ethnocultural minorities in the media is small and the treatment given to them is sometimes inadequate:
  – they should favour hiring diversified personnel to promote the expression of equally diversified points of view
  – they should be more open to the cultural communities and develop ways of treating information that is more sensitive to certain realities
  – they should develop bridges with these communities
Recommendations/collaborations and/or partnerships (cont’d)

- Since there is little evidence of ethnocultural communities in the content produced by the advertising agencies in Québec and the treatment given them is sometimes inadequate:
  - they should encourage fair representation and treatment of diversity by putting “creative types” to work on these topics
  - they should promote the hiring of diversified personnel to favour an equally diversified representation and treatment

- Since there are inadequacies and shortcomings in collecting and handling complaints within the regulatory bodies, civil society should be persuaded to:
  - exercise vigilance in detecting remarks or programs that do not meet the criteria, so that complaints can be taken into account by the supervisory bodies and there is a ranking of media broadcasting such remarks
Recommendations/collaborations and/or partnerships (cont’d)

• Since the **cultural communities** consider themselves under-represented in the media and advertising and feel that their treatment is sometimes inadequate:
  – they should develop bridges with various media and advertising players and highlight their talent in both of these fields

• Since **research** into the representation and treatment of diversity in the media and advertising is rare or outdated:
  – encourage new researchers or graduate students to study these issues
9. Conclusion

The position that appeared to the Council to be the most promising was to apply sound ethnocultural diversity management practices with:

- a *human resources* dimension with the objective of reflecting as much as possible the representation of the communities served
- a *content* dimension that, beyond staffing, maximizes the integration of guests, interveners, experts, subjects and problems from the diverse communities served
- a *contact* dimension that develops a dialogue with all communities, including communities of interest as well as cultural communities
- an *outside management of diversity* dimension that imposes representativity and treatment requirements on projects and advertisements submitted by producers outside the organization
Thank you!