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Gorilla Nation Adds Sites, Staff To Multicultural Vertical

by Tanya Irwin, Tuesday, Aug 5, 2008 8:16 AM ET



Gorilla Nation is adding both new Web sites and personnel to its rapidly growing GNMulticultural vertical.

The online ad rep firm has hired three executives for its dedicated GNMulticultural vertical sales team and plans to hire 3-4 more, said Gorilla Nation President Brian Fitzgerald. In addition, the vertical adds four new African-American Web sites to the fold this week, he said. The vertical now includes 44 African-American and Hispanic sites and reaches 16 million unique visitors monthly--roughly 13 million AA uniques and 3 million Hispanic uniques.

The newest member of the sales team is Cristina Wismann, account executive, who previously was a planner and Jr. AE at Gorilla Nation. Ad sales veteran, Rudy Tabasa, based in San Francisco, leads the team as director of sales. Susan Morgan is the Midwest Account Executive located in the Chicago office. GN plans to hire an executive to lead Hispanic efforts, and adding Hispanic properties will be a priority in the next several months, Fitzgerald said.

The firm has always represented a lot of urban hip-hop sites, Fitzgerald said, but the recent emphasis in acquiring new sites has been to branch out into other areas of the AA experience. The firm has only been adding Latino sites for about four months, he added.

Hispanic-Americans are the largest minority group in the U.S. according to the U.S. Census Bureau 2007. The Hispanic consumer market represented an \$860 billion opportunity in 2007, projected to grow to \$1.2 trillion by 2011.

eMarketer predicts that well over 3 million new African-Americans will join the Internet-using population in the next three years. African-Americans also represented an \$860 billion opportunity in 2007, which is projected to grow to \$1.1 trillion by 2012. Among those African-Americans already online, African-American Internet users are spending 26% of their total media time online. More than nine out of ten African-American teens surveyed said they used the Internet, and two-thirds of African-American Internet users said they had shopped online.

Two of the new sites are from PeopleMedia, which operates more than 20 vertically focused online communities primarily devoted to dating. BlackPeopleMeet.com (www.blackpeoplemeet.com) is the largest individual dating site reaching African-Americans online, with nearly 1 million unique visitors per month and 287 million page views. The site attracts about 1000 new members a day and was recently redesigned with a clean, new look. The other PeopleMedia site, BlackChristianPeopleMeet.com (www.blackchristianpeoplemeet.com), one of the largest dating sites for African-American Christians.

Also signed were BlackWebPortal.com (www.blackwebportal.com), a destination providing affluent African-Americans with abundant information and resources surrounding the black community, and Rap-Up.com (www.rap-up.com), an urban blog featuring the hottest hip-hop and R&B news, new music and videos, seven days a week. The site is also home to *Rap-Up*, the national glossy print magazine with a targeted circulation of 90,000.

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