It’s time to support and empower women in South & Central America
If your brand isn't communicating well with women, your brand is losing.

You are losing women's attention and trust while missing out on their massive buying power.

In recent months (OK, years), many brands across South & Central America have caused controversy and attracted the wrong kind of attention with sexist advertising campaigns that have drawn widespread criticism on social networks and in public forums.

For a long time, countries across the region – and industries of all varieties – have been guilty of using out-dated gender stereotypes or objectifying women to sell products and services.
In March 2015, Brazilian nail lacquer brand Risqué launched the Homens Que Amamos (‘Men We Love’) line of products. They featured names of men, accompanied by proud, supposedly romantic phrases, such as ‘João disse eu te amo’ (‘João said I love you’), ‘Fê mandou mensagem’ (‘Fê sent a message’) and ‘André fez o jantar’ (‘André cooked dinner’). “What makes a woman happy is not a man who thinks making dinner is the exception, but understand that this is his task as it is a woman's task”, from Petiscos, Julia Petit's blog from Brazil.
An advertising piece distributed by the Colombian energy company Codensa in March 2015 angered its users on social networks. A flyer distributed with household bills included the phrase ‘I have to ask my husband what insufficient funds means’, accompanied by an image of a woman shopping. After much controversy, the company removed all the ads from the campaign.
In March 2014, following multiple complaints (and a Change.org petition that attracted more than 1,500 signatures), the Puerto Rican government asked gum brand Dentyne Ice to remove an ad campaign from all subway cars. Showing a seated man, the ad read: ‘Do not give up your chair. Offer your lap. Dentyne ICE: Ready for every chance.’
Of course, when it comes to Latin America, beer advertising is still the most consistent offender.

In February 2015, Brazilian beer brand Skol launched an advertising campaign for Carnival with phrases that mentioned a ‘lack of control’, such as ‘I accept it before learning what the question is’ and ‘I left my ‘no’ at home’. After widespread media criticism and a social media backlash, Skol removed the ads.

Conti beer were another offender, accused of sexism after an ill-advised post on the brand’s Facebook page. It read ‘tenho medo de ir no bar pedir uma rodada e o garçom trazer minha ex’ (‘I’m afraid to go to a bar and order a round of beer* in case the waiter brings out my ex’), and ended with a request for suspension and a warning to the agency that conducted the campaign.

*in Portuguese, the expression used for “round of beer” is the same as the one for “a woman who’s been around”
Yet women across the region are becoming more empowered...

... as consumers, students, politicians, entrepreneurs and more.

In Brazil, women make BRL 1.1 trillion per year and are responsible for 85% of shopping decisions.  
(Data Popular, September 2014)

In Mexico, women are graduating from college more than men. The Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES) revealed that the enrolment of women in graduate programs is 50.4%, while among specializations women make up 51%.

The participation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the labor market had the largest increase among all regions globally – increasing from 40% to 54% between 1990 and 2013.  
(UN, April 2015)
These socioeconomic changes are yet to be reflected in much of the marketing that reaches women.

This means the gap between a modern woman’s reality (or at least, desired reality) in Latin America and how they are portrayed in marketing is widening.

This is not just about being ‘politically correct’. It’s about effectively communicating with a very large proportion of your customer base. Women are not a market niche – if your brand is not talking to them properly, you are losing money.

Beyond being bad for business (it has been scientifically proven that sex doesn’t sell!), misogynist messaging contributes to a more unequal and dangerous society for women. It propagates a culture that impacts the numbers of rapes, murders and cases of domestic abuse – in Brazil, for example, there’s one rape every 10 minutes (Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2014).

To put it simply, out-dated brand messages cause more harm than hurt feelings.
65% of women in Brazil don’t identify with the way they’re represented in campaigns.

DATA POPULAR AND INSTITUTO PATRÍCIA GALVÃO, AUGUST 2013
“When hypersexualized beer advertising objectifies a woman so aggressively, it’s saying to people throughout the country that a woman is an object. And an object has an owner. The man is the owner. And, as owner of the object, he can do whatever he wants with it.”

MARIA GUIMARÃES, CO-FOUNDER OF CERVEJA FEMINISTA
In Latin America, women are fighting for equality in public and private life. Brands that not only avoid harmful stereotypes or objectification but also actually support women’s causes and better communicate with modern women will be loved – at the expense of those that don’t.

We’ve said before – brands across the region are now expected to be part of the social tissue, to fight the same fights people are engaged in as groups or individuals. The fight for gender equality is one of these issues (in South & Central America and, of course, elsewhere in the world).

More and more, if a brand is not part of the solution, it will be seen as part of the problem. It’s time to break away from gender stereotypes, communicate with women in the manner that they deserve and empower them to live the lifestyle they desire.
JOIN THE CLUB
Women face different challenges from region to region. But many share a passion for change, and inspire each other across borders.

In June 2015, the “Ni Una Menos” campaign reached 110 cities in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Mexico, as people protested against femicide. In Mexico, #NoAcosoCallejero (‘no street harassment’) took to social networks and the streets. In Puerto Rico, women created the hashtag #andandolacallesola (‘walking the streets alone’), in protest against comments by a high-ranking police officer that women should not walk alone late at night.

And in January 2015, the documentary used by the Chega de Fiu Fiu campaign (against women harassment on the streets) in Brazil was funded using the crowdfunding platform Catarse. In July, the country also saw the creation of Cora Coralina, a public library focused on feminist subjects.
Latin America is the leader in women’s political representation.

In political leadership, the region has Cristina Kirchner in Argentina, Dilma Rousseff in Brazil and Michelle Bachelet in Chile. In the NGO sector, there’s Relinda Sosa from Peru and Sandra Ramos from Nicaragua. In the world of business, María Mercedes Cuéllar is president of Federación Latinoamericana de Bancos (Felaban), Paula Santili is Senior Vice-President of PepsiCo Mexico, and Luiza Trajano is CEO of Magazine Luiza.

**Across the board, women in SCA are doing it for themselves. They can assume political power, run NGOs and start their own businesses** (and crowdfunding platforms like Catarse, Idea.Me or Fondeadora are making this easier than ever!).

Just one example of the rising power of SCA's women? According to the latest survey by the Ministry of Economy on Entrepreneurship and Gender (March 2015), 38% of micro-entrepreneurs in Chile are female, and 40% of those are heads of household.
Social rules and traditions are being challenged or ignored in many societies. Individuals are forming their own singular definitions of what they seek from their own lives. Formal entities (governments or organizations) are less able to impose values or expectations.

Success and status have been redefined in personal terms. Consumers are less accepting of media organizations or brands that dictate who they are and how they should behave. From sexuality to career choices, it’s up to the individual to decide.
As much as SCA’s women feel empowered, they’re also looking to brands to be partners in change. That means taking a BRAND STANDS on issues around gender prejudice.

In March 2015, Cannes Festival introduced “The Lion For Change” category, rewarding actions that challenge gender stereotypes. Three out of 18 shortlisted winners were from Latin America. In Brazil, interest is growing in new ways to portray women in advertising. In August 2015, São Paulo-based Escola Superior de Propaganda e Marketing (ESPM) launched “Publicidade e Mulheres: um novo jeito de fazer publicidade para mulher”, a course designed to introduce marketing professionals to new ways to advertise to women.

Years ago, marketing used weaknesses to try and sell products and services to women. Today, brands must offer empowerment.
1. BLOW THE WHISTLE

Denounce oppression and highlight gender inequality
The perception that there is sexism in Brazil is almost unanimous among people aged between 16 and 24 years, with 96% saying that it’s a problem within the country.

AVON/INSTITUTO PATRÍCIA GALVÃO, DECEMBER 2014
FEATURED INNOVATIONS: BLOW THE WHISTLE

Everlast

Campaign sees mothers scold catcallers

In November 2014, Everlast partnered with the Peruvian NGO Paremos El Acoso Callejero (Latin American Observatory Against Street Harassment) on Silbale a tu madre. The sports brand contacted the mothers of men caught catcalling women on the streets. Mothers were disguised with clothes and wigs, and taken to witness their child’s behavior - whilst receiving phone tips from Natália Málaga, the trainer of the Peruvian women’s volleyball team. When their sons said something derogatory, the mothers shouted at them, scolding them for their treatment of women.
Nunca Más a Mi Lado

Unveiled in Argentina in June 2015, literary project Nunca Más a mi Lado took a poetic approach to creating awareness of and denouncing the violent abuse women suffer across the country. The website includes around 120 real stories, all received anonymously and rewritten (though still remaining true to the facts). They are designed to expose the verbal, physical, psychological and sexual abuses suffered by the characters in a deeper literary style to resonate with readers.

"Sólo llora cuando me agredía, sólo lo hacía cuando las cosas duraban lo suficiente como para no aguantar más el dolor"

"Estoy sufriendo violencia?"
Si dudas de tu situación, to´l vez te sirve leer los tipos de violencia existentes y sus claves:

**Tipos de violencia**
- **Física**: Es el tipo de violencia empleada contra el cuerpo de la mujer produciendo dolor, daño o riesgo de provocarlo y cualquier otra forma de miedo y violencia que afecte tu integridad física.
- **Psicológica**: Causa daño emocional y disminución de la autoestima o perjudica y perturba el plano personal. También busca degradar y controlar sus acciones, comportamientos, creencias y

Contá tu historia
Este es el lugar para que cuentes lo que tu pasó. Puedes escribirlo en forma de historia, o en un diario. Añade también texto: escribiendo una carta, describiendo detalladamente una situación, ponerte en el lugar de otra persona, dale vida a un objeto. Lo importante es que describas tu mundo en ese momento. Lo que te pasa en el cuerpo cuando te acuerdas de los momentos luchando además tuyo.

Exito.
**FEATURED INNOVATIONS: BLOW THE WHISTLE**

**Carefree/Johnson & Johnson**

Brand's website promotes conversations to discuss women's insecurities

Carefree, a Johnson & Johnson brand, revealed Desabafo Entre Amigas in July 2015. The digital campaign promoted conversations that made women feel more confident; in 10 episodes aired on YouTube different women discussed the insecurities of the female universe, talking about beauty standards, self-esteem, sexism and similar issues.

www.trendwatching.com/trends/fempowerment
Ramona

Brazilian restaurant highlights the pay gap with higher prices for men

A day-long promotion implemented at the Ramona restaurant in São Paulo in April 2015, The Unfair Menu drew attention to the salary gap between men and women. All menu items were 30% more expensive for men – the average pay gap between the sexes across Brazil. Diners who questioned the price difference were presented with a leaflet explaining the action and drawing attention to pay equality.
FEATURED INNOVATIONS: BLOW THE WHISTLE

Instituto Maria da Penha

NGO's interactive campaign denounces domestic violence

In July 2015, NGO Instituto Maria da Penha launched Marcas Escondidas ('Hidden Marks'), an interactive campaign on YouTube using squares (to imitate post-its) consisting of lies used to cover up injuries, signs of violence that women have suffered. The campaign used annotations with common excuses used by women to hide the truth behind their injuries – for example, “I was distracted and hit my head on the kitchen cabinet.” Once the clip's annotation is closed, the injury then becomes visible.
Experience the trends LIVE

More info: trendwatching.com/LIVE

Recent engagements:
2. HOW TO TALK TO WOMEN

Forget the stereotypes.
Intelligence is the main feature that Brazilians would like to see advertising focus on when portraying women (85.8%), followed by independence (72.3%).
“In Mexican advertising, women have been depicted as objects (in beer campaigns and wearing bikinis) or in their home role (as housewives). Now, they are starting to be represented in their moments with friends, laughing about guys, fighting for their dreams as individual rather than with her family – it is a new sight. Smart and strong are the new sexy.”

ABRAHAM ESPINOSA, SENIOR STRATEGIC PLANNER AT D EXPÓSITO & PARTNERS NYC AND BLOGGER AT URBANSTALKERS.COM
Las Cachás Grandes

Restaurant offers space for women to breastfeed their babies for free

In August 2015, to offer comfort to women who need to breastfeed their babies, the Las Cachás Grandes restaurant in Chile put a sign at the front of the restaurant that read: “If you want to breastfeed your baby, you don’t need permission. And request a free tea if you like. No need to buy anything.”
In July 2015, Budweiser chose Ronda Rousey as the face of the brand in Brazil. Rousey, a UFC champion, starred in a series of TV spots promoting an inspirational message of resilience, strength and courage – proving that a woman can advertise beer without being objectified.
Chirimbote

Chilean publisher launches ‘anti-princesses’ books

In August 2015, the Chilean publishing house Chirimbote released Antiprincesas (‘Anti-princesses’): a collection of books for kids. Each book depicts a Latin American woman as the protagonist (like Frida Kahlo, Violeta Parra, and Juana Azurduy), with the aim of breaking down old gender stereotypes that often feature in children’s books.
FEATURED INNOVATIONS: HOW TO TALK TO WOMEN

Avon

Brand's website and campaign promotes female empowerment

In July 2015, Avon launched Beleza Que Faz Sentido: a campaign and website that gathers content about female empowerment. These include lists of words related to the topic, as well as articles, videos and statistics about gender equality.

In March 2015, Avon created the 180 Line – a make-up line sharing its name with the number for the Violence Report and Woman Service Center. The products were empty, a move intending to show that violence can't be covered-up. A magazine (inspired by the traditional Avon Sales publication), informed readers about types of domestic violence, how the law protects the victims and punishes the aggressors. The magazine was distributed by Avon Representatives, women trusted by other women, who often have access to homes that (in many instances) not even the police can gain entry to.
“I’ve been an Avon consumer since an early age, and campaigns like this inspire me to support a brand that understands the environment in which it’s inserted. And the opposite is also valuable: I’m much more likely to boycott ‘risqué’, sexist nail polish campaigns and brands that are completely unaware of consumers’ reality!”

NAYARA MOIA, MARKETING MANAGER AT ACAJU DO BRASIL
Sephora

Brand’s campaign suggests women don’t use cosmetics to please men

In September 2015, Sephora Brazil released a campaign to promote a new collection of lipsticks with 83 different shading options. The campaign featured the phrase: ‘Women get dressed to please men’, replaced below with: ‘Do you think I got 83 lipsticks to please someone who doesn’t know the difference between bordeaux and burgundy?’
3. GET MAKING

Modern women demand products and services that meet their modern needs and tastes
FEATURED INNOVATIONS: GET MAKING

M’Ana - Mulher Conserta para Mulher

Home repair company provides services for women

In August 2015, after being bullied by a man who was carrying out work in her home, Ana Luisa Correard created M’Ana – a home repair company dedicated to carrying out services for women. She and her partner do all kinds of home repairs, from painting walls to fixing electrics.
Cerveja Feminista

Beer brand works triggers discussions about sexism in beer campaigns

In March 2015, a group of Brazil-based advertising creatives launched a red ale called Cerveja Feminista (‘Feminist Beer’). The label featured the symbol for gender equality to encourage the advertising industry to discuss how women are portrayed in beer advertising, as well as the lack of female art directors in Brazil. The women who created the label also founded an activism group called 65|10 – a name inspired by two facts: 65% of Brazilian women don’t feel like they’re represented in ads, and 10% of creatives at advertising agencies in Brazil are women.
Nike

Sports brand creates a sports experience for women

In Mexico City in August 2015, Nike launched a sports club for women (exclusively for those who use the brands’ app, Nike+). The space includes specialist bra fittings, a health coach, footstep analysis and gym sessions, with each woman encouraged to take set challenges and goals, with guidance from experts. Inspired by traditional art and painted by local artists, the design celebrates the beauty and intensity of Mexican females – images include Mexican athletes, such as Paola Longoria (racquetball player), Nayeli Rangel (soccer player), Jessamyn Saucedo (heptathlonist), Alejandra Orozco and Paola Espinosa (both divers).
Minha Melhor Semana

Subscription club’s products help women during their menstrual cycle

Launched in May 2015, Minha Melhor Semana (‘My Best Week’) is a Brazilian subscription club that accompanies the menstrual cycle, supplying products that women need for intimate care. A box, containing all the resources needed for a woman’s period, is sent before it begins, with members able to choose from sanitary napkins to facial soaps. Each delivery is always accompanied by wipes and chocolates.
Ladies Rock Camp

Event empowers women through music

July 2015 saw the first edition of Ladies Rock Camp: a women's empowerment program centred around music. Taking place in the city of Sorocaba, Brazil, the event was billed as an ‘adult’ version of Girls Rock Camp, a holiday camp where girls learn to play instruments, create a band and participate in activities related to self-esteem. Attendees perform a song they composed to their friends and family in the final day. Ladies Rock Camp, open to women over 21 years old, has the same objective as the children's version: to encourage collaboration, empower and promote self-esteem amongst women.
Women's empowerment will impact the consumption arena – and your brand too!
The power of local

In Latin America, empowered women – many working more and earning more – don’t want to follow European or North American standards. Instead they want to reaffirm their own identity – and that means tailoring products and services to their particular needs.
Look to independents

Many of the innovations featured in this bulletin come from ‘independent groups’. Brands seeking (F)EMPOWERMENT should consider how they can leverage the creativity and passions of these groups. Just make sure you're in it for the long haul.
More than beauty

In recent years, we have seen many campaigns encouraging women to accept of their bodies or take care of the house without a man whilst still being a diva (like the recent Bombril campaign that created controversy in Brazil). But now it’s time to take a step forward. What other issues can your brand address to empower women?
Humor vs. Sexism

You don’t have to stop being playful. Avoiding hurting people’s feelings doesn't put an end to fun messages – you just need to be more creative. Are you up to the task? ;)

NEXT
Open range

This is about giving women CHOICE – the choice to be who they want to be, whatever that is. It’s time for brands to offer women (and consumers in general) more options instead of forcing them to fit a certain type. More and more, consumers expect brands to help or enable them – food for thought in your next planning session.
“We applaud campaigns that portray attitudes that might not be mainstream, labelling them as ‘different’. For example: an image of a man that washes dishes and sings melodies mostly linked to women. This, and other campaigns that portray attitudes that might not be conventional, are considered as ‘extraordinary”’

ANA LAURA RAMÍREZ RAMOS, FROM LA CABARETIZA A.C.
It's over to you!

How are women represented in your brand's communications? Which products can you create to meet the needs of the empowered woman? How will you contribute to gender equality? Take this trend for a brainstorming session in your company and create your own trend-driven innovations that will delight Latin Americans!
If you have any comments, suggestions or questions then please do let us know. Just email:

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